

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Melvin Miller

PERSON

Miller, Melvin B.

**Alternative Names:** Melvin Miller;

**Life Dates:** July 22, 1934-

**Place of Birth:** Boston, Massachusetts, USA

**Work:** Dorchester, MA

**Occupations:** Newspaper Editor

## Biographical Note

Newspaper publisher and editor Melvin B. Miller was born on July 22, 1934 in Boston, Massachusetts. Miller grew up in Boston's middle-class Roxbury neighborhood and graduated from Boston Latin School. He then enrolled at Harvard University and graduated from there in 1956 with his A.B. degree. Following a six month stint as an executive trainee at Aetna Insurance in Hartford, Connecticut, Miller was drafted and served for two years in the U.S. Army. He went on to enroll at Columbia University Law School and earned his J.D. degree from there in 1964. Miller was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar and the Federal Bar.

Upon graduation, Miller joined the U.S. Department of Justice as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Massachusetts. In 1965, he founded the Bay State Banner and served as the newspaper's publisher, editor, and chief executive officer. In 1973, the Massachusetts Banking Commission appointed Miller as the conservator and chief executive officer of the Unity Bank and Trust Company, Boston's first minority bank. In 1977, Boston Mayor Kevin W. White named him as one of the three commissioners of the Boston Water and Sewer Commission. Miller became Chairman of the Commission in 1980. Miller then became a founding partner in the corporate law firm of Fitch, Miller, and Tourse where he practiced law from 1981 to 1991. He also served as the vice president and general counsel of WHDH-TV, an affiliate of the Central Broadcasting Station, from 1982 to 1993. Miller was a director of the United States-South Africa Leadership Exchange Program (USSALEP). He has written editorials for The Boston Globe, The Pilot, and Boston Magazine, and is the author of How to Get Rich When You Ain't Got Nothing.

Miller is a member of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, the Harvard Club of Boston, and the St. Botolph Club. Miller is a director of OneUnited Bank and

MassINC. He is also a trustee of the Huntington Theatre Company and a trustee emeritus of Boston University.

Miller received the Award of Excellence from the Art Director's Club of Boston in 1970. The New England Press Association awarded Miller the First Prize in General Excellence and the Second Prize in Make-up & Typography in 1970. Miller is a recipient of the Annual Achievement Award from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored people. Miller received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Suffolk University in 1984 and an Honorary Doctor Humane Letters degree from Emerson College in 2010.

Melvin B. Miller was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 24, 2013.

## Related Entries

**Boston Latin School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Harvard University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Columbia Law School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**David A. Ellis Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Henry Lee Higginson Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Aetna Life & Casualty** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**NYC insurance company** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Insurance Investigator**

**Public Schools** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Substitute Teacher**

**United States Department of Justice** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1995 to ?]

**Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Massachusetts**

**The Bay State Banner** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1965 to ?]

**Founder/Publisher/Editor**

**Unity Bank and Trust Company** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1973 to ?]

**Conservator**

**Fitch, Miller & Touse** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1981 to 1991]

**Founder Partner**

**WHDH TV, Channel 7** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1991 to ?]

**General Counsel**

**National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity (Boule)** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Life Member**

**National Advisory Council for the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**St. Botolph Club** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Boston University** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Trustee/Executive Committee Member/Board of Overseers**

**Boston Medical Center Corporation** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Trustee Emeritus**