

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Solomon Herbert

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Herbert, Solomon J.
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Solomon Herbert,
<b>Dates:</b>	December 19, 2013
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2013
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:52:59).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Publisher, journalist, and photographer Solomon Herbert (1939 - ) served as the second national vice president of the Congress of Racial Equality, and as president of the Bronx CORE. He published over 800 articles as a journalist, and co-founded Black Meetings & Tourism magazine. Herbert was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 19, 2013, in Zan Nuys, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2013_351
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Publisher, journalist and photographer Solomon J. Herbert was born on June 24, 1939, in New York to parents William and Margaret Herbert. He attended the City College of New York.

In the 1960s, Herbert served as second national vice president of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) under Jim Farmer for several years, and then under Floyd McKissick. He also became a member of the Bronx CORE, where, along with

several other CORE members from the Bronx, he participated in what was to become the first direct action/civil disobedience effort outside of the south when CORE members sat in at the White Castle restaurant chain to break their discriminatory hiring policies. Herbert later became president of the Bronx CORE.

After his involvement with CORE, Herbert went on to establish and run several programs for disadvantaged youth. From 1981 to 1994, he was self-employed as a full-time freelance print and photo journalist. During that period, over 800 of Herbert's articles appeared in numerous regional, national and international publications. Then, in 1994, he co-founded, with his wife Gloria, the award-winning *Black Meetings & Tourism* magazine, where he serves as publisher and editor-in-chief.

Herbert has held membership in several professional organizations, including the National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners (NCBMP), Meeting Professional International (MPI), Travel Professionals Of Color (TPOC), Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), Africa Travel Association (ATA), Travel and Tourism Marketing Association (TTMA), Black Business Association of Los Angeles (BBA), and Greater Los Angeles African American Chamber of Commerce (GLAAAC). He also sits on the board of the National Association of Black Hotel Owners, Operators and Developers, and co-sponsors the annual Multicultural Tourism & Hotel Ownership Summit & Trade Show. Additionally, Herbert is a member of the TPOC Advisory Board, and previously served as a member of the MGM Grand Specialty Markets Advisory Council.

In 2002, Herbert served as executive producer of *Globetrotting*, a travel television series he and his wife created, which debuted on BET on Jazz. He has also received many awards, including the 2002 National Coalition of Black Meeting Planner's Minority Business Award, the 2005 Regional Black Chamber of Commerce of San Fernando Valley's Small Business of the Year Award, the 2007 Outstanding Entrepreneur Award from the Black Business Association of Los Angeles, the 2008 California State Salute to Small Business Award, the 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award from NABHOOD, and the 2010 Small Business Award from the United Chambers of Commerce of the San Fernando Valley & Region.

Solomon Herbert was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on December 19, 2013.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Solomon Herbert was conducted by Larry

Crowe on December 19, 2013, in Zan Nuys, California, and was recorded on 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Publisher, journalist, and photographer Solomon Herbert (1939 - ) served as the second national vice president of the Congress of Racial Equality, and as president of the Bronx CORE. He published over 800 articles as a journalist, and co-founded Black Meetings & Tourism magazine.

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## **Restrictions**

### **Restrictions on Access**

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

### **Restrictions on Use**

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

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## **Related Material**

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

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## **Controlled Access Terms**

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### **Persons:**

Herbert, Solomon J.

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

**Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews  
Herbert, Solomon J.--Interviews

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**Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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**Occupations:**

Publisher

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Journalist

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Photographer

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**HistoryMakers® Category:**

MediaMakers

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**Administrative Information**

**Custodial History**

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

## Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Solomon Herbert, December 19, 2013. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

## Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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## Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Solomon Herbert, Section A2013\_351\_001\_001, TRT: 1:28:44 2013/12/19

Solomon Herbert was born on June 24, 1939 in New York City to Margaret Johnson Herbert and William Herbert, Sr. One of Herbert's maternal ancestors fought for the Union in the American Civil War. As a reward for his service, he became President Abraham Lincoln's barber. Herbert's maternal grandfather, Solomon Johnson, worked for the immigration office on Ellis Island in New York City. Herbert's maternal uncle, Solomon B. Johnson, acted in Oscar Micheaux's 'The Notorious Elinor Lee,' and later became a liquor commissioner in New York City. Herbert's father immigrated to the United States from Trinidad, and studied engineering and dentistry at Howard University. He served in World War I and World War II

with the 369th Infantry Regiment. He also practiced dentistry in the Jamaica neighborhood of Queens, New York, and later joined the electrical department at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Solomon's mother died from cancer at an early age.

Video Oral History Interview with Solomon Herbert, Section  
A2013\_351\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:19 2013/12/19

Solomon Herbert's father, William Herbert, Sr., immigrated to the United States from Trinidad. He became a U.S Army lieutenant at the age of twenty-one years old, and served in World War I with the 369th Infantry Regiment. He was gassed and wounded in France during World War II, and suffered from chronic health problems as a result. Herbert's father went on to work as a dentist in New York City, where he met Herbert's mother, Margaret Johnson Herbert. They married and raised a daughter and two sons, including Herbert. Herbert began his education in the preschool program at the Little Brown Schoolhouse in the Bronx, New York, which was founded by the black educator Helen Meade. Herbert also attended Meade's summer camp, Camp Craigmeade in Peekskill, New York. Herbert's father passed away at the age of fifty-nine years old, leaving Herbert an orphaned teenager. Herbert and his brother, William Herbert, Jr., went on to serve in the 369th Infantry Regiment in memory of their father.

Video Oral History Interview with Solomon Herbert, Section  
A2013\_351\_001\_003, TRT: 3:28:16 2013/12/19

Solomon Herbert attended preschool at the private Little Brown Schoolhouse in the Bronx, New York. The school was founded black educator Helen Meade, who also ran Herbert's childhood summer camp, Camp Craigmeade. Herbert completed the first grade at P.S. 40 in Queens, New York. He then transferred to P.S. 116, which was closer to his home in Queens' Jamaica neighborhood. Herbert graduated from the eighth grade at P.S. 36, St. Albans School, and then applied to Brooklyn Technical High School, where his brother, William Herbert, Jr., was already a student. He was discouraged by his school counselor, but passed the entrance examination and was accepted to attend. Although Brooklyn Technical High School was nominally integrated, the black and white

students did not socialize together. The administration favored the white students, and failed to notify Herbert and his peers when 'American Bandstand' visited the school to recruit students for a taping.

Video Oral History Interview with Solomon Herbert, Section  
A2013\_351\_001\_004, TRT: 4:31:19 2013/12/19

Solomon Herbert attended Brooklyn Technical High School in Brooklyn, New York. While he was a student there, his father, William Herbert, Sr., passed away. Unable to continue living in the family home, Herbert moved in with his maternal aunt. He graduated from high school in 1956, and began working for a friend's air conditioner installation business. Herbert soon obtained full-time work as a menswear salesman at the Macy's department store in East Garden City, New York. Then, he secured a position at a textile firm in New York City's Garment District, where he met his first wife. Herbert started in the stockroom, and was soon promoted to the art department. He was eventually hired by the Cohn-Hall-Marx Company, and created a freelance business called Anmar Designs. Herbert joined the Congress of Racial Equality in 1960, when CORE was protesting against discriminatory hiring practices at a White Castle in the Bronx, New York. The organization also focused on improving New York City's public schools.

Video Oral History Interview with Solomon Herbert, Section  
A2013\_351\_001\_005, TRT: 5:28:07 2013/12/19

Solomon Herbert was a member of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in the Bronx, New York from 1960 to 1967. During this time, the FBI and local law enforcement agencies planted informants and saboteurs into numerous civil rights organizations, including CORE. The undercover agents tried to foment domestic terrorism among the activists, and once created a scandal by making anti-Semitic comments during a meeting of the Bronx CORE. In 1963, Herbert helped organize the Bronx CORE chapter's attendance at the March on Washington. At this point, he talks about the organizers' focus on including white musicians and celebrities, who were intended to attract media attention to the demonstration. In 1964, Herbert was elected president of the Bronx CORE chapter.

Founder James Farmer left CORE in 1966, and Herbert became the group's national vice president under Floyd McKissick. Herbert left CORE in 1967, after becoming dissatisfied with the increasingly conservative views of national vice chairman Roy Innis.

Video Oral History Interview with Solomon Herbert, Section A2013\_351\_001\_006, TRT: 6:28:47 2013/12/19

Solomon Herbert photographed the activities of the Bronx CORE chapter and the Bronx Community Self Improvement Association during the 1960s. Due to his community activism, Herbert faced retaliation from drug dealers and the district attorney. In 1971, he moved to New Mexico, where he approached the actor Fred Williamson with a business plan for the Santa Fe Movie Caterers. Williamson became Herbert's first client, and he went on to cater one of David Bowie's films. After moving to Los Angeles, California, Herbert provided catering services on the sets of 'The Jeffersons' and 'Sanford.' During this time, he also worked as a freelance magazine writer, and sold a script for an episode of 'Bustin' Loose' to blaxploitation filmmaker Topper Carew. In the mid-1980s, Herbert was hired by Black Enterprise to document the second meeting of the National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners (NCBMP). He was then hired by NCBMP founder Howard F. Mills as the organization's official photographer.

Video Oral History Interview with Solomon Herbert, Section A2013\_351\_001\_007, TRT: 7:32:12 2013/12/19

Solomon Herbert partnered with Howard F. Mills, the founder of the National Coalition for Black Meeting Planners, to create The Black Convention magazine in 1994. After Mills left the venture, Herbert founded Black Meetings and Tourism, a similar magazine that featured vacation destinations and venue information for African American travelers. The magazine also highlighted businesses' efforts to support local black communities and black tourists. In 1998, Herbert cofounded the National Association of Black Hotel Owners, Operators and Developers, which aimed to increase black hotel ownership. In 2001, Herbert and his wife, Gloria Herbert, created the BET series 'Globetrotting,' a travel show about

destinations like the U.S. Virgin Islands. However, the show stopped filming after the attacks of September 11, 2001, which negatively impacted the tourism industry worldwide. Herbert was then commissioned to create an unofficial biography of Bill Cosby, which he coauthored with George Hill in 2004.

Video Oral History Interview with Solomon Herbert, Section  
A2013\_351\_001\_008, TRT: 8:27:15 2013/12/19

Solomon Herbert was the publisher of Black Meetings and Tourism magazine. Under his leadership, the magazine began a digitization project, and created a website that was accessible on mobile devices. Herbert also partnered with the Caribbean Tourism Organization to encourage black travelers to visit the Caribbean. At this point in the interview, Solomon talks about the importance of minority representation in the hospitality and tourism industries. He also describes his plans for the future, including his intention to resume filming for the BET television series 'Globetrotting.' Herbert reflects upon his life and legacy, as well as his hopes and concerns for the black community. He describes how he would like to be remembered, and concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.