

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Clarice Tinsley

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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>	Tinsley, Clarice, 1953-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Clarice Tinsley,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 6, 2014
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2014
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:58:52).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Broadcast journalist Clarice Tinsley (1953 - ) was an evening news anchor at KDFW-TV in Dallas, Texas for over thirty-five years. Tinsley was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 6, 2014, in Dallas, Texas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2014_082
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Broadcast journalist Clarice Tinsley was born on December 31, 1953 in Detroit, Michigan to Janet and Clarence Tinsley. She attended Beaubien Junior High School and Samuel C. Mumford High School. Tinsley graduated from Wayne State University with her B.A. degree in radio, television and film.

From 1975 to 1978, Tinsley worked for WITI-TV in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where she started as a general assignment reporter, and later became co-anchor of the weekday noon news as well as producer and co-host of two monthly public affairs shows. In 1978, Tinsley was hired as an anchor for the ten o'clock news at KDFW-TV, where she became the longest-serving news anchor in the Dallas/Fort

Worth television market. Tinsley has covered a number of major events, including the fall of the Berlin Wall, Operation Desert Storm, and Hurricane Alicia. In 1995, she established “Clarice’s Hometown Heroes,” a weekly KDFW franchise show that salutes volunteers in North Texas. Tinsley has also appeared as a news anchor or reporter in several Dallas-based television productions, including *The Good Guys*, *Prison Break*, *Walker, Texas Ranger* and *Wishbone*.

Tinsley has received the George Foster Peabody Award, a DuPont-Columbia Citation, two Emmy Awards, three Dallas Press Club Katie Awards, and two Awards of Excellence from American Women in Radio and Television. She has been honored with the Best Investigative Reporting Award from Texas Associated Press, the Texas Headliner Award for Investigative Reporting, the Journalistic Award for Excellence from the American College of Emergency Physicians, the Director's Community Leadership Award from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Asante Award from the Dallas Fort Worth Association of Black Journalists, the Dallas Historical Society Award of Excellence for Outstanding Contributions in the Creative Arts, the Mary McLeod Bethune Award from the National Council of Negro Women, and the inaugural “High Tea with High Heels” Award, among others. She was also inducted into the Lone Star Emmy Chapter's Silver Circle.

Tinsley is a member of the Board of Directors of Girls Scouts of Northeast Texas and SLANT. She is an Advisory Board Member of St. Philip's School in South Dallas, as well as an Advisory Board Member for the School of Journalism at Southern Methodist University. She is a member of the YET Board of Directors and chairs the YET Communications and Public Relations Committee. Tinsley was a member of the Super Bowl XLV Host Committee's Board of Directors and was Chair of the Super Bowl XLV Communications Action Team. She has been named a 2014 Style Council Ambassador for DIFFA/Dallas.

Clarice Tinsley was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 6, 2014.

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## **Scope and Content**

This life oral history interview with Clarice Tinsley was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 6, 2014, in Dallas, Texas, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Broadcast journalist Clarice Tinsley (1953 - ) was an evening news anchor at KDFW-TV in Dallas, Texas for over thirty-five years.

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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:

Tinsley, Clarice, 1953-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## **Occupations:**

Broadcast Journalist

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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 Clarice Tinsley, March 6, 2014. 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

## 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 Clarice Tinsley, Section  
A2014\_082\_001\_001, TRT: 1:25:48 2014/03/06

Clarice Tinsley was born on December 31, 1953 in Detroit, Michigan to Janet Lampton Tinsley and Clarence Tinsley. Her paternal grandfather, John Tinsley, was born in Forsyth, Georgia, and worked as a brick mason in Macon, Georgia. Tinsley's father was born there, and went on to serve in the U.S. Navy in World War II. Tinsley's maternal grandmother was raised in Centerville, Tennessee, and her brother, Tinsley's great uncle Dicky Wells, was a trombonist who played with jazz musicians like Count Basie and Duke Ellington. After Tinsley's grandparents married, they moved to the east side of Detroit, where they raised three children. Her grandfather, Edward Lampton, worked as an engineer at the Detroit Bank and Trust Company; and her great aunt Marsetta Wells owned the Three Sixes Club in Detroit's Paradise Valley area. Tinsley's mother graduated from Cass Technical High School in Detroit, and she went on to become an elementary school teacher. Tinsley talks about her parents' South African pen pal.

Video Oral History Interview with Clarice Tinsley, Section  
A2014\_082\_001\_002, TRT: 2:29:01 2014/03/06

Clarice Tinsley's parents met at a riding stable in Canada in the 1940s, and moved to the west side of Detroit, Michigan. Her father was a construction worker and supervisor for the City of Detroit, and her mother was an

elementary school teacher. Tinsley began her education at Sherrill Elementary School in Detroit. When her family moved to the northwest side of the city, she attended Detroit's Schulze Elementary School. Around this time, she was hit by a car while walking home from school. Tinsley's mother helped her develop her writing skills, and she joined the school newspaper at Detroit's Beaubien Junior High School, where she became interested in journalism. With her family, Tinsley attended Peoples Community Church on Woodward Avenue in Detroit. She had one younger sister named Alicia Petross, who later became a human resources executive at The Hershey Company in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Tinsley remembers the television news coverage of the Civil Rights Movement; and the riots of 1967 in Detroit.

Video Oral History Interview with Clarice Tinsley, Section  
A2014\_082\_001\_003, TRT: 3:31:02 2014/03/06

Clarice Tinsley grew up listening to Motown Records artists like The Supremes and Martha and the Vandellas in Detroit, Michigan. She changed her career aspiration from print to broadcast journalism during her senior year at Detroit's Samuel C. Mumford High School. At this time, she and her friends eschewed traditional social activities, like attending the prom, in favor of more intellectual interests. In 1971, she began her undergraduate studies under the mentorship of Dr. Jack Warfield in the radio, TV and film department at Wayne State University in Detroit. Upon graduating in 1974, Tinsley applied for broadcast journalist positions across the country; and was hired as a reporter at WITI-TV in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in the summer of 1975. In this role, she covered local news stories, including criminal activities at General Mitchell International Airport and the Common Council of Milwaukee meetings. Tinsley talks about the television series 'The Mary Tyler Moore Show' and its impact on her career outlook.

Video Oral History Interview with Clarice Tinsley, Section  
A2014\_082\_001\_004, TRT: 4:29:19 2014/03/06

Clarice Tinsley began her career in broadcast journalism at WITI-TV in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1975. After three years there, she was hired by producer Allen Levy to

become the anchor of the ten o'clock news at KDFW-TV in Dallas, Texas. She was also a special assignments reporter there, and her first news story was of the Super Bowl XIII, when the Dallas Cowboys played against Pittsburgh Steelers at the Orange Bowl field in Miami, Florida. In 1983, Tinsley reported on the Air Canada Flight 797 accident at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport; and Hurricane Alicia in Houston, Texas. The following year, Tinsley won a George Foster Peabody Award for her investigative story, 'A Call For Help,' which resulted in nationwide changes to 911 protocols. Around this time, she met her future husband, Stephen Giles, at a party in her honor. In 1991, Tinsley traveled on assignment to Kuwait City, where she reported on the aftermath of Operation Desert Storm.

Video Oral History Interview with Clarice Tinsley, Section  
A2014\_082\_001\_005, TRT: 5:28:56 2014/03/06

Clarice Tinsley worked as an anchor and special assignments reporter at KDFW-TV in Dallas, Texas, the nation's fifth largest television market. In the 1980s, she reported on the drug trade between Mexico and the United States; the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster at the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas; and the Republican National Convention in Dallas. During this period, Tinsley worked alongside other African American journalists like Gayle Joya, Shaun Rabb, Dionne Anglin and Baron James, with whom she co-anchored the night time broadcast. In 1995, the station transitioned from its CBS affiliation to being owned and operated by the Fox Broadcasting Company. Around this time, Tinsley created her weekly feature, 'Clarice's Hometown Heroes,' which highlighted the civic contributions of Dallas residents. At this point in the interview, she recalls the death of her father, Clarence Tinsley. She also talks about covering tragic news stories, such as the murder of James Byrd, Jr. in Jasper, Texas.

Video Oral History Interview with Clarice Tinsley, Section  
A2014\_082\_001\_006, TRT: 6:34:46 2014/03/06

Clarice Tinsley served as a broadcast journalist at KDFW-TV in Dallas, Texas for over thirty-five years. Given her affinity for community engagement, she participated in

Dallas' FBI Citizens Academy program in the early 2000s. On September 11, 2001, Tinsley and her fellow anchors provided all day coverage of the terrorist attacks from that morning. In 2003, she produced a series of special reports called 'Inside the FBI'; and in 2010, her team won an Emmy Award for their social media satire, 'Fox 4 Goes Social.' In addition to her career at KDFW-TV, Tinsley appeared as a fictional reporter on television shows like 'Prison Break' and 'Wishbone.' She talks about radio personality Tom Joyner; and her coverage of celebrity figures like President Barack Obama. Tinsley reflects upon her life, legacy and journalistic philosophy. She describes her hopes and concerns for the black community; and shares her advice to aspiring journalists. She concludes the interview by describing how she would like to be remembered.