

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with William Alexander Lester, III

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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>	Lester, Bill, 1961-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with William Alexander Lester, III,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 10, 2018
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2018
<b>Physical Description:</b>	9 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:41:14).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Race car driver Bill Lester, III (1961 - ) competed in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series, the Nextel Cup Series, the Rolex Sports Car Series, and was the first African American to race in the NASCAR Busch Series. Lester was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 10, 2018, in Atlanta, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2018_039
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Race car driver Bill Lester, III was born on February 6, 1961 in Washington D.C. to William Alexander Lester, Jr., an electrical engineering professor and researcher at IBM Corporation, and Rochelle Lester, a social worker and elementary school teacher. Lester graduated from Skyline High School in Oakland, California in 1979, and was awarded a Regents Scholarship to attend the University of California, Berkeley, where he earned his B.S. degree in electrical engineering and computer science in 1984.

Lester began his career as a project manager at Hewlett-Packard Company in Palo Alto, California. In 1985, Lester attended Sports Cars Club of America driving school; and that same year, he was named SCCA's Rookie of the Year for Northern California, winning the SCCA Regional Road Racing Championship in 1986. He made his International Motor Sports Association debut in 1989, finishing twelfth at Sears Point International Roadway race, part of IMSA's GTO Series. In 1998 and 1999, Lester competed in the 24 Hours of Daytona race, finishing fifth and tenth respectively. In 1999, Lester became the first African American to race in NASCAR's Busch Series, where he represented Team Rensi Motorsports and finished in twenty-first place. In 2000, Lester raced in the No. 8 Dodge Ram in NASCAR's Craftsman Truck Series for Bobby Hamilton Racing. In 2002, he began racing in the Craftsman Truck Series full-time in the No. 8 Dodge Ram. Lester switched to Bill Davis Racing in 2004; and in 2006, he began racing in the No. 22 Toyota Tundra. Lester became the first African American since 1986 to participate in the Nextel Cup at Atlanta Motor Speedway. He switched to Billy Ballew Motorsports for a season before leaving NASCAR racing in 2007.

The following year, Lester joined Southard Motorsports, where he drove in the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series from 2008 to 2010. Lester spent the 2009 season with Orbit Racing and the 2010 season racing for Starworks Motorsport. In 2011, Lester became the first African American driver to win any Grand-Am division. After retiring as a driver, Lester served as a member of the National Motorsports Appeals Panel as well as the NASCAR Diversity Council.

Lester and his wife, Cheryl, have two sons, William Alexander IV and Austin Richard.

Bill Lester, III was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 10, 2018.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with William Alexander Lester, III was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 10, 2018, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was recorded on 9 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Race car driver Bill Lester, III (1961 - ) competed in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series, the Nextel Cup Series, the Rolex Sports Car Series, and was the first African American to race in the NASCAR Busch Series.

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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:

Lester, Bill, 1961-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Lester, Bill, 1961- --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:

Race Car Driver

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

SportsMakers

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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 William Alexander Lester, III, March 10, 2018. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 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 William Alexander Lester, III, Section A2018\_039\_001\_001, TRT: 1:30:04 ?

Video Oral History Interview with William Alexander Lester, III, Section A2018\_039\_001\_002, TRT: 2:30:37 ?

Video Oral History Interview with William Alexander Lester, III, Section A2018\_039\_001\_003,  
TRT: 3:29:25 ?

Video Oral History Interview with William Alexander Lester, III, Section A2018\_039\_001\_004,  
TRT: 4:29:08 ?

Video Oral History Interview with William Alexander Lester, III, Section A2018\_039\_001\_005,  
TRT: 5:30:58 ?

Video Oral History Interview with William Alexander Lester, III, Section A2018\_039\_001\_006,  
TRT: 6:29:39 ?

Video Oral History Interview with William Alexander Lester, III, Section A2018\_039\_001\_007,  
TRT: 7:31:47 ?

Video Oral History Interview with William Alexander Lester, III, Section A2018\_039\_001\_008,  
TRT: 8:02:23 ?

Video Oral History Interview with William Alexander Lester, III, Section A2018\_039\_001\_009,  
TRT: 9:07:13 ?