

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Kevin Willmott

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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>	Willmott, Kevin
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Kevin Willmott,
<b>Dates:</b>	November 8, 2019
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2019
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:28:58).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Filmmaker and screenwriter Kevin Willmott (1958- ) began filmmaking in 1991. He co-wrote the 2015 film <i>Chi-Raq</i> with Spike Lee and received an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay for his work as a screenwriter on Lee's 2018 film <i>BlacKkKlansman</i> . Willmott was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 8, 2019, in Lawrence, Kansas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2019_125
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Filmmaker and screenwriter Kevin Willmott was born on August 31, 1958 in Junction City, Kansas. After he attended Junction City High School and St. Xavier Catholic High School, Willmott received his B.A. degree in drama from Marymount College in Salina, Kansas in 1981. He went on to receive his M.F.A. in dramatic writing from New York University, Tisch School of the Arts in 1988.

Willmott worked as a peace and civil rights activist in Junction City, Kansas in between college and graduate school. After receiving his M.F.A. degree, he returned to Kansas to begin working on his first film, *Ninth Street*, which he directed, wrote, produced, and acted in. *Ninth Street*, which starred Martin Sheen and Isaac Hayes, premiered in 1999; and, in 2000, Willmott joined the Department of Film and Media Studies at the University of Kansas, teaching screenwriting, the history of African American images and film, anti-war and Blaxploitation films. The same year, he served as a writer for the NBC miniseries, *The 70s*. Willmott went on to direct and write the mockumentary *C.S.A.: The Confederate States of America*, which was released in 2004, and direct, write, and produce the film *Bunker Hill*, which was released in 2008. His film *The Only Good Indian*, which he directed and produced, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2009. In 2013, Willmott's films *Destination: Planet Negro!* and *Jayhawkers* were both released. He also served as a writer on Spike Lee's film *Chi-Raq* and as a screenwriter on Lee's film *BlacKkKlansman*, which premiered in 2015 and 2018, respectively. In 2019, Willmott began working on the film *Da 5 Bloods* with Spike Lee, the film *The 24th*, and the documentary *I, Too, Sing America: Langston Hughes Unfurled*.

In 2009, Willmott was named Best Director at the American Indian Film Festival for his work on *The Only Good Indian*. In 2019, he received an Oscar and a British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for *BlacKkKlansman*.

Willmott and his wife, Becky Willmott, reside in Lawrence, Kansas.

Kevin Willmott was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on November 8, 2019.

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# Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Kevin Willmott was conducted by Larry Crowe on November 8, 2019, in Lawrence, Kansas, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Filmmaker and screenwriter Kevin Willmott (1958- ) began filmmaking in 1991. He co-wrote the 2015 film *Chi-Raq* with Spike Lee and received an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay for his work as a screenwriter on Lee's 2018 film *BlacKkKlansman*.

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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:

Willmott, Kevin

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Willmott, Kevin--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:

Filmmaker

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Screenwriter

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### HistoryMakers® Category:

EntertainmentMakers

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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 Kevin Willmott, November 8, 2019. 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 Kevin Willmott, Section A2019\_125\_001\_001, TRT: 1:30:09 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Kevin Willmott, Section A2019\_125\_001\_002, TRT: 2:30:22 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Kevin Willmott, Section A2019\_125\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:54 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Kevin Willmott, Section A2019\_125\_001\_004, TRT: 4:30:03 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Kevin Willmott, Section A2019\_125\_001\_005, TRT: 5:29:48 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Kevin Willmott, Section A2019\_125\_001\_006, TRT: 6:32:31 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Kevin Willmott, Section A2019\_125\_001\_007, TRT: 7:26:11 ?