

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Spencer Crew

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Crew, Spencer R., 1949-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Spencer Crew,
Dates:	January 23, 2020
Bulk Dates:	2020
Physical Description:	9 uncompressed MOV digital video files (4:30:23).
Abstract:	Museum director and historian Spencer R. Crew (1949-) was director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History division of community life and president of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center before becoming director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture in 2019. Crew was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 23, 2020, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2020_006
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Museum director and historian Spencer R. Crew was born on January 7, 1949 in Woodmere Village, Ohio to R. Spencer and Ada Lee Scott Crew. Crew received his B.A. degree in history in 1971 from Brown University and his M.A. degree in history in 1973 and his Ph.D. in history in 1979, both from Rutgers University.

From 1978 to 1981, Crew was an assistant professor of African American and American history at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County in Catonsville, Maryland while pursuing his Ph.D. degree. In 1981, Crew began working as a historian at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History (NMAH). In 1987, he became a curator of the NMAH's division of community life and curated his first exhibit titled *Field to Factory: African-American Migration, 1915-1940*. At the same time, he also worked as a consultant for the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee and the Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham, Alabama. From 1991 to 1992, Crew served as the NMAH's deputy director and in 1992, he was named acting director of the NMAH until 1994 when he was made director of NMAH. In 2001, he left the NMAH to become executive director and president of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he stayed for six years. In 2008, Crew joined George Mason University as a Robinson professor in the history and art history departments. He was then appointed interim director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture in 2019.

Crew has been a member of the Organization of American Historians and has sat on the boards of the American Association of Museums and the National Council for History Education as chair. At Brown University, he served as trustee, president-elect of the Alumni Association, and on the Advisory Council on Diversity. Crew also served as an editorial board member of the *Journal of American History*.

Crew has won numerous awards for his work, including the Osceola Award in 1988 from Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the Robert A. Brooks Award in 1994, and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History Service Award in 1994. Crew was also inducted into the Hall of Distinguished Alumni at Rutgers University in 2003 and received the McMickmen College Distinguished Leadership Award from the University of Cincinnati in 2004.

Spencer and his wife, Sandra Lorraine Prioleau, live in Washington D.C. They have two children, Alika and Adom.

Spencer R. Crew was interviewed by *The History Makers* on January 23, 2020.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Spencer Crew was conducted by Larry Crowe on January 23, 2020, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 9 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Museum director and historian Spencer R. Crew (1949-) was director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History division of community life and president of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center before becoming director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture in 2019.

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®.

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.

Controlled Access Terms

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

Persons:

Crew, Spencer R., 1949-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Crew, Spencer R., 1949---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Museum Director

Historian

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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 Spencer Crew, January 23, 2020. 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).

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.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Spencer Crew, Section A2020_006_001_001, TRT: 1:29:20 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Spencer Crew, Section A2020_006_001_002, TRT: 2:29:50 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Spencer Crew, Section A2020_006_001_003, TRT: 3:29:39 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Spencer Crew, Section A2020_006_001_004, TRT: 4:31:24 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Spencer Crew, Section A2020_006_001_005, TRT: 5:31:16 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Spencer Crew, Section A2020_006_001_006, TRT: 6:29:06 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Spencer Crew, Section A2020_006_001_007, TRT: 7:28:28 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Spencer Crew, Section A2020_006_001_008, TRT: 8:29:21 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Spencer Crew, Section A2020_006_001_009, TRT: 9:31:59 ?