

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Patricia Hill

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hill, Patricia, 1951-2017
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Patricia Hill,
Dates:	June 25, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:57:32).
Abstract:	Community activist and police officer Patricia Hill (1951 - 2017) is chair of the African American Police League. Hill was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 25, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_081
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

The oldest of three children, Patricia Lynne Hill was born on July 10, 1951 in Chicago, Illinois. Her parents, Lucille Fleming and Hercules Richardson, migrated from the South. Hill (then Richardson) earned a diploma in 1968 from Harlan High School. As a youth, Hill excelled in athletics, touring the nation with Chicago's Mayor Daley Youth Foundation track team, where she was mentored by Olympians Willye White and Ira Murchison. Hill barely missed making the U.S. Olympic Team in 1968 at the finals in Pomona, California. In the 1970s, she was a pioneer in women's professional basketball as a member of the Chicago Debs.

Hill attended Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, but moved back home to finish her B.S. at Chicago State University. She spent her last year as a physical education instructor in the Chicago Park District, and then used her degree to become a public school teacher in 1974. Finally, Hill turned to a career in law enforcement in 1986, serving as a bodyguard to Mayor Harold Washington in 1987.

An outspoken community-oriented police officer, Hill served as both president and executive director of the African-American Police League. She brought her views on racial profiling of drivers and controversial shootings of civilians by police officers to such venues as the Medill School of Journalism and the Chicago Headline Club. She was a sounding board for the black media on important crime and safety issues.

A member of the Black United Front and the National Black Police Association, Hill also worked with Demico Youth, a cultural arts program serving the Cabrini Green housing project, where she developed the now famous Near North Little Leagues. She threw her hat into the political arena in 1999 when she unsuccessfully ran against Dorothy Tillman for the Third Ward aldermanic seat. Hill has three adult children: Trennie, Stacy and Ronald.

Hill passed away on September 3, 2017.

Dulaney, Marvin. *Black Police in America*. 1995.

Coyle, Daniel. *Hardball*. 1987.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Patricia Hill was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 25, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Community activist and police officer Patricia Hill (1951 - 2017) is chair of the African American Police League.

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:

Hill, Patricia, 1951-2017

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Hill, Patricia, 1951-2017--Interviews

African American civic leaders--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Community Activist

Police Officer

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 Patricia Hill, June 25, 2002. 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 Patricia Hill, Section A2002_081_001_001, TRT: 0:29:55 ?

Patricia Hill was born on June 10, 1951 in Chicago, Illinois to Lucille Ferguson Fleming, who was born in 1920 in Griffin, Georgia, and Hercules Richardson,

who was born in 1912 in Charleston, South Carolina. Her mother's parents, Trennie Ferguson, who was from Griffin, and Tomie Fleming, who was from Jamaica, moved to Lilydale in Chicago near where Hill was raised. Her father was from the Gullah or Geechee culture, from Saint Matthews County, South Carolina. Her father was related to another Hercules Richardson, who served under Major Martin Delaney's Regiment during the Civil War. Hill grew up in Princeton Park in Chicago, where her mother worked for U.S. Rubber Company and her father worked as an auto mechanic, with her younger siblings. Her pediatrician was the well-known Dr. Edward Beasley. Princeton Park in the 1950s was a segregated, black-populated neighborhood of renters, where Hill went to segregated stores and theaters. She attended Gillespie Elementary School in Princeton Park, and often played hooky when she was in kindergarten.

African American families--Illinois--Chicago.

Education, Elementary.

Chicago (Ill.)--Social life and customs.

Video Oral History Interview with Patricia Hill, Section A2002_081_001_002, TRT: 0:29:40 ?

Patricia Hill attended Gillespie Elementary School and Harlan High School in Chicago, Illinois, graduating from there in 1968. She participated in Richard J. Daley Youth Foundation Women's Track Team, coached by Ira Muchison and mentored by Historymaker Willye White, and she travelled to national meets. In 1968, Hill participated in the Olympic trials, along with Tommie Smith and HistoryMaker John Carlos, who were black nationalists and medalists in the 1968 Mexico City Olympics. Hill obtained a track scholarship to Lincoln University, Missouri, but opted to attend Northern Illinois University from 1969 to 1971, where she was active in establishing a Black Studies program at the school with HistoryMaker Robert Starks. While there, she participated with the men's track team, the basketball team, and was the first African American woman on their volleyball team. She married Donald Hill and transferred to Chicago State University in 1971, and after graduation, taught at Roberto Clemente High School and Taft High School in Chicago until 1986.

African American families--Illinois--Chicago.

African American children--Illinois--Chicago.

Black Panther Party.

Video Oral History Interview with Patricia Hill, Section A2002_081_001_003, TRT: 0:28:32 ?

Patricia Hill played semi-pro basketball until the age of thirty-five with Chicago's The Debs under coach Dorothy Gaters. After teaching high school for twelve years, she entered law enforcement and joined the Chicago Police Department in 1986. Hill was part of the security detail for Mayors Harold Washington and HistoryMaker Eugene Sawyer until 1987. In 1990, she became president of the African American Police League (AAPL), and became the target of many attempts to discredit her by members of the Department's administration, including framing her with illegal drugs. As president of the AAPL, Hill fought racial and sexual discrimination in the Department, including the ways the Department disqualified black officers. After Mayor Harold Washington's death in 1987, Hill began wearing an Ankh earring, which the Department used to disqualify her, and she filed a lawsuit based on the First Amendment and won. In 1998, Hill became executive director of the AAPL, and she continued community organizing, often fighting with Chicago Police Superintendent and HistoryMaker Terry Hillard.

African American police--Illinois--Chicago.

Police brutality--Illinois--Chicago.

African American civic leaders.

Video Oral History Interview with Patricia Hill, Section A2002_081_001_004, TRT: 0:29:25 ?

Patricia Hill has served as executive director of the African American Police League (AAPL) since 1999. She has been involved in community organizing to build a better relationship between the black community and the police force in Chicago, Illinois, which included working with the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition. Hill describes various cases against the Chicago Police Department of wrongful deaths of African Americans, including the 1999 LaTanya Haggerty and Robert Russ shootings. With the AAPL, Hill attempts to change the way the police force targets African Americans in various ways, and talks about the long history of police abuse of the black community. She campaigned for alderman of Chicago's Third Ward in 1999, but lost to HistoryMaker Dorothy Tillman. Hill then describes her philosophy of black nationalism, and then reflects upon her legacy and how she wants to be remembered.

African American police--Illinois--Chicago.

African American educators.

Police brutality--Illinois--Chicago.