

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lorenzo Morris

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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>	Morris, Lorenzo, 1946-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Morris,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 28, 2005
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2005
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:05:39).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Political science professor Lorenzo Morris (1946 - ) is chair of the political science department at Howard University. Morris was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 28, 2005, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2005_153
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Political science professor Lorenzo Morris, chair of the Political Science Department at Howard University, and author and consultant on international and American public policy and electoral behavior, was born in Poughkeepsie, New York, on October 27, 1946. Morris’s parents, Annie Leola Crouch Morris and Henry Grady Morris, Jr. moved to Poughkeepsie from Columbus, Georgia, before Morris was born. Morris received his early education in Poughkeepsie public schools before continuing his studies at Fisk University, Oberlin College, and Yale University; he received his Ph.D. and M.A. degrees in political science from the University of Chicago.

In addition to his position at Howard University, Morris’s academic career included teaching at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a research fellowship at the Brookings Institution, and an appointment as a Senior Fellow in the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy. Outside of academia, Morris often provided commentary on public affairs for television and radio; he was the author of five scholarly books on race and presidential politics, higher education policy, and party politics as well as numerous articles on political matters including African American politics, and questions of race in American public policy. Internationally, Morris consulted on educational projects in Haiti, Botswana and Indonesia and on matters of electoral participation in Benin and Senegal. As part of the U.S. delegation to Haiti in 1990, Morris advised and observed during the election.

Morris’s additional leadership roles included acting as co-director of the Census Information Center at Howard University, president of the National Conference of Black Political Scientists, vice-chair of the University Senate, and president of Phi Beta Kappa at Howard University.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Lorenzo Morris was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 28, 2005, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Political science professor

Lorenzo Morris (1946 - ) is chair of the political science department at Howard University.

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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:

Morris, Lorenzo, 1946-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Burghelea, Neculai (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Morris, Lorenzo, 1946---Interviews

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College department heads--Interviews

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African American college teachers--Interviews

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African American political scientists--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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Howard University

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### Occupations:

Political Science Professor

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### HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers

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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 Lorenzo Morris, June 28, 2005. 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 Lorenzo Morris, Section A2005\_153\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:14 ?  
Lorenzo Morris was born on October 27, 1946 to Annie Crouch Morris and Henry Grady Morris, Jr. in Poughkeepsie, New York. His mother was born around 1921 in Columbus, Georgia. Although her family obtained land after the

Civil War, their claim to the property was disputed for many years. She met Morris' father when he joined the U.S. Army and trained at Fort Benning. Morris' father was born around 1920 in Vero Beach, Florida. When he was hired by IBM, Morris' family moved to Poughkeepsie. Morris' parents tried to shield him and his seven siblings from racism. Despite his family's middle-class status, Morris experienced several racist incidents throughout his childhood, especially within the Poughkeepsie school district. As a quiet and sickly child, Morris became interested in academics and political science. He searched for news sources outside of the local newspapers and stations, and debated the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson with his white teacher and classmates at Poughkeepsie High School.

College department heads--Interviews.

African American college teachers--Interviews.

African American political scientists--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Morris, Section A2005\_153\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:50 ?

Lorenzo Morris experienced racial discrimination as one of the few black students at Poughkeepsie High School. A chemistry teacher unfairly lowered his grades. Despite winning the New York State oratory award, the school failed to recognize Morris' achievements in speech and debate. Morris' first encounter with a large number of African Americans was when he traveled to the March on Washington in 1963. While attending Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, he participated in civil rights marches and protests. In one instance, he was almost attacked by a police dog. At Fisk, Morris studied physics, philosophy and political science with influential professors like Jeanne Meadows and Dr. Myron J. Lunine. After graduating with his B.S. degree in political science, Morris attended the University of Chicago for his master's degree. He avoided the draft by writing a paper criticizing its implementation. Morris remembers Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s death in 1968 and other political events of that year.

Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Morris, Section A2005\_153\_001\_003, TRT: 0:26:32 ?

Lorenzo Morris encountered people like John Hope Franklin, Charles H. Long and HistoryMaker Eddie Williams while attending the University of Chicago. Despite participating in civil rights demonstrations, Morris was interested in approaching politics from an academic perspective rather than as an activist. As a research fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., Morris' office was burglarized, possibly in connection to the Watergate Scandal. While traveling in France, Morris met a Quebecois couple who sparked his interest in the French-English Separatists Movement in Canada. He published a well-regarded paper on the movement after studying it in Quebec. As an advisor and lecturer for the United States Agency for International Development, Morris traveled to Haiti. Morris worked at the U.S. Embassy in Sierra Leone, where he was caught in the middle of a demonstration once. Morris describes his position as professor and chair of the department of political science at Howard University in D.C.

Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Morris, Section A2005\_153\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:20 ?

Lorenzo Morris met his wife, Marsha Morris, while they were attending the University of Chicago. She became the first black female actuary in the U.S. Morris authored three books on inequality and race in education. He also published 'The Social and Political Implications of the 1984 Jesse Jackson Campaign' and 'The Chit'lin Controversy,' which focuses on the need for further desegregation. Morris reflects upon the political impact of the National Black Political Convention in Gary, Indiana; the Supreme Court case of the

Regents of the University of California v. Bakke; and the Million Man March. He talks about how these events influenced his work. Morris helped form the National Conference of Black Political Scientists, and is a former president of the organization. He describes his political science colleagues within this organization and at Howard University. He reflects upon his hopes and concerns for the African American community, his life and his legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Morris, Section A2005\_153\_001\_005, TRT: 0:11:43 ?

Lorenzo Morris describes the professional achievements of his father-in-law, Dr. Walter S. McAfee, who worked as a physicist on the radar astronomy experiment, Project Diana. The McAfee Center in New Jersey was named in his honor and in recognition of his scientific contributions. Morris' wife, Marsha Morris, used her skills as an actuary to help Morris incorporate statistical information in his book, 'Elusive Equality: The Status of Black Americans in Higher Education.' Morris reflects upon his family's pride in his accomplishments. Although his parents separated, Morris visits them both often. Morris describes his work as chair of the department of political science at Howard University. As a political analyst and advisor for various groups, he often draws upon Howard University's Census Information Center, which he co-directs, to disseminate information. Morris describes how he would like to be remembered and concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.