

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Walter Broadnax

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Broadnax, Walter D.
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Walter Broadnax,
Dates:	August 24, 2005 and August 26, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2005
Physical Description:	9 Betacame SP videocassettes (4:17:40).
Abstract:	Public policy professor Walter Broadnax (1944 -) is the president of Clark Atlanta University, and has held appointments as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and as Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer for the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Broadnax was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 24, 2005 and August 26, 2005, in Atlanta, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2005_203
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Distinguished Professor of Public Administration and International Affairs, The Maxwell School, Syracuse University and former President of Clark Atlanta University, Walter Doyce Broadnax has led a distinguished life of public service. Born October 21, 1944 in Starr City, Arkansas to railroad man, Walter Broadnax and Mary Lee Broadnax, Broadnax attended Roosevelt Elementary School in Hoisington, Kansas. He graduated from Hoisington High School in 1962 as an outstanding senior. He earned his B.A. degree from Washburn University in 1967. A Ford Foundation Fellow, Broadnax earned his M.P.A. degree from the University of Kansas in 1969 and his Ph.D. from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University in 1975.

From 1974 to 1975, Broadnax taught at Syracuse University and was a staff consultant to the New York State Department of Correctional Services. In 1976, he was appointed co-director, Joint International City Management Association/National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, Urban Management Education Program, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, D.C. Until 1979, Broadnax was professor of public administration at the Federal Executive Institute while teaching at the University of Virginia, Howard University and the University of Maryland. He also worked as director of Services to Children, Youth and Adults for the State of Kansas in Topeka. Broadnax joined the Carter administration in 1980 as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. He was senior staff member for the Advanced Study Program of the Brookings Institution. In 1981, he joined the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University where he chaired the Massachusetts Executive Development Program and was founding director of the innovations in state and local government programs. In 1987, Broadnax was appointed president of the New York Civil Service Commission. He worked as adjunct professor of Public Policy at the University of Rochester from 1990 to 1993. In 1992, Broadnax served on the Harvard South Africa Program team and as a transition team leader for President Clinton. In 1993, he served as president of the Center for

Governmental Research, and from 1993 to 1996, Broadnax worked as Deputy Secretary and COO of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. He also worked as a professor at the University of Maryland and Dean of Public Affairs at American University.

In 2002, Broadnax became president of Clark Atlanta University. Founded as Atlanta University in 1865 and Clark College in 1869, Clark Atlanta University is the largest of the United Negro College Fund institutions with an enrollment of approximately 5,000 students. Under Broadnax's leadership, Clark Atlanta University is the only private historically Black College or university classified as a Doctoral/Research-Intensive institution by the Carnegie Foundation. Broadnax has served on Colin Powell's U.S. Secretary of State management advisory board, Controller General of the United States David Walker's Advisory Board and NASA's Return to Flight Task Force.

Broadnax is married to Angel L. Wheelock and has a grown daughter, Andrea.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Walter Broadnax was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 24, 2005 and August 26, 2005, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was recorded on 9 Betacame SP videocassettes. Public policy professor Walter Broadnax (1944 -) is the president of Clark Atlanta University, and has held appointments as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and as Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer for the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

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:

Broadnax, Walter D.

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Broadnax, Walter D.--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Clark Atlanta University

Occupations:

University President

HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers

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 Walter Broadnax, August 24, 2005 and August 26, 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).

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 Walter Broadnax, Section A2005_203_001_001, TRT: 0:29:20 ?

Walter Broadnax was born on October 21, 1944 in Star City, Arkansas to Mary Cotton Broadnax and Walter Broadnax. His mother was born in 1906 in Magum, Arkansas, a small town on the Mississippi Delta, to Rosie and Willis Bunns. Broadnax's maternal grandmother, Creola Peyton, lost her husband to an unexplained accident at work, which the family believed to be a murder related to a conflict with his white colleagues. Broadnax's paternal grandfather was also murdered by his neighboring farmers, due to a dispute about a fence on his property. The son of a railroad worker, Broadnax reflects upon A. Philip Randolph's role in establishing unions to protect African American rail workers. Named after his father, Broadnax's mother called him by his middle name, Doyce, even when he became an adult. He reflects upon naming conventions in the African American community, and how they sometimes clash with naming styles in the white community.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Broadnax, Section A2005_203_001_002, TRT: 0:25:00 ?

Walter Broadnax's mother, Mary Cotton Broadnax, grew up on a farm in Magum, Arkansas, where her family grew cotton. His father, Walter Broadnax, was born in 1895 near Helena, Arkansas, and only went to school until the third grade. Broadnax's mother taught their father alongside Broadnax and his brother, William. His father worked for the railroad, starting as a trackman, and working his way up to become a brakeman in Hoisington, Kansas, where his family moved when Broadnax was a few months old. Growing up in the 1940s, Hoisington was a rural town of a few thousand people, only receiving electrical utilities through President Franklin D. Roosevelt's rural electrification program. While the small African American population was not considered to warrant strict segregation rules, Broadnax remembers being aware of his second-class status. He also recalls his mother's ambition and high expectations for her family, her hard work as a homemaker, attending kindergarten in 1949, and the sights of Hoisington.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Broadnax, Section A2005_203_001_003, TRT: 0:29:40 ?

Walter Broadnax grew up in Hoisington, Kansas, in the African American community on the south side of town. Unlike the north side, the south side did not have paved roads, indoor plumbing or sewage until 1956. On his first day of kindergarten at the predominantly white Roosevelt Elementary School, his teacher reminded him before his peers that his race made him different. Broadnax was exposed to thriving black communities such as those in Detroit, Chicago and St. Louis during visits to relatives. As a child, he enjoyed building cities out of sticks and sunflower stalks. Broadnax became interested in public policy and government as a child, which influenced his decision to study political science at Washburn University. His family attended First Baptist Church, where he became superintendent of Sunday school at the age of sixteen. He attended Hoisington High School on the north side, where he was encouraged by his third-grade teacher, Sarah Hamilton, and graduated as the outstanding senior student in 1962.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Broadnax, Section A2005_203_001_004, TRT: 0:31:10 ?

Walter Broadnax attended Hoisington High School in Hoisington, Kansas, where he graduated in 1962 as the outstanding senior student, with distinctions in academics, athletics and student government. He was contemporaries with student athletes such as his brother, William Broadnax, and Billy Kimble, who won records in track and field. Broadnax recalls the racial discrimination faced by Walt Chamberlain while attending the University of Kansas to play football. Following the Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court ruling, Broadnax was educated by young, progressive teachers who encouraged him to attend college. Although his counselor recommended trade schools, Broadnax applied to colleges like the University of Lovanium in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Frustrated because he was prevented from dating his white classmates in high school, he decided to attend Washburn University, the alma mater of civil rights activist Arthur Fletcher, where he could participate in black social life.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Broadnax, Section A2005_203_001_005, TRT: 0:31:10 ?

Walter Broadnax graduated from Hoisington High School in 1962. He enrolled at Washburn University, where he majored in political science and studied history extensively. As a college student, Broadnax was deeply influenced by the Civil Rights Movement. He also met and married his first wife, and the couple had a daughter. Upon graduating in 1967 with his B.A. degree, Broadnax served as coordinator of the War on Poverty program in the office of Kansas Governor Robert Docking. The same year, he enrolled in the University of Kansas M.P.A. program, graduating in 1969 with a comparative thesis on financial management practices in Costa Rica and in Kansas. Broadnax then joined the Kansas State budget office, where he was mentored by the state budget director, James W. Bibb. He returned to Washburn University in 1970 to direct the Upward Bound program, where he was inspired to attend graduate school. While earning his Ph.D. degree in public policy at Syracuse University, Broadnax was mentored by Alan Campbell.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Broadnax, Section A2005_203_001_006, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Walter Broadnax earned his Ph.D. degree in public policy from Syracuse University in 1975. His dissertation, 'Role Differentiation Between Minorities and Non-minorities in Urban Administration,' showed that, despite the high level of minority recruitment across the workforce, minority faced major obstacles after hiring. In 1981, Broadnax was appointed as the founding director of the Innovations in State and Local Government program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. While Broadnax was disillusioned by his salary at Harvard, he developed a network of notable social and academic figures. Broadnax served on President Bill Clinton's transition team with Vernon Jordan and Alexis Herman in 1992. In 1993, he was appointed as the deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the Clinton administration. Broadnax concludes this part of the interview by reflecting upon contemporary and future race relations in the United States.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Broadnax, Section A2005_203_002_007, TRT: 0:29:00 ?

Walter Broadnax was appointed by Governor Mario Cuomo in 1987 to serve as the president of the New York Civil Service Commission, where a national recession led to layoffs of over 30,000 employees. From 1990 to 1993, he served as a professor of public policy at the University of Rochester and the president of the Center for Governmental Research. In 1992, Broadnax spent two weeks with the Harvard South Africa Program team in Cape Town, advising the transition from the apartheid government to Nelson Mandela's African National

Congress. Broadnax also served on President Bill Clinton's transition team alongside Vernon E. Jordan and Alexis Herman. In 1993, he was appointed deputy secretary and COO of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where he advised the administration's policies on healthcare and welfare reform. From 1996 to 1999 he taught at the University of Maryland, before becoming dean of public affairs at American University. Broadnax reflects upon how his race affected his career.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Broadnax, Section A2005_203_002_008, TRT: 0:29:00 ?

Walter Broadnax served as dean of public affairs at American University from 1999 to 2002. He faced challenges as the department's first African American dean and tenured professor, and realized the importance of earning his faculty's trust despite their racial prejudice towards him. In 2002, he accepted the opportunity to become the president of Clark Atlanta University, where he hoped to educate African American students within the context of the black experience. Broadnax reflects upon the achievements and academic contributions of Atlanta University alumnus, W.E.B. Du Bois; the impact of higher education's desegregation on historically black colleges and universities; the history of Clark Atlanta University, which formed through the merger of Clark College and Atlanta University in 1988; and the obstacles HBCUs faced at the time of the interview. Broadnax stresses on the importance of maintaining HBCUs, to allow African American students to seek an education within the African American community.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Broadnax, Section A2005_203_002_009, TRT: 0:23:20 ?

Walter Broadnax was appointed the president of Clark Atlanta University in 2002. In this closing section of his interview, he describes his goals for the university. Broadnax also reflects upon his life and career; his legacy; his hopes and concerns for the African American community; and how he would like to be remembered. He talks about his wife, Angel Wheelock Broadnax, as well as his daughter, Andrea Broadnax Green. Broadnax concludes his interview by narrating his photographs.