

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Beverly Daniel Tatum

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Tatum, Beverly Daniel
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Beverly Daniel Tatum,
Dates:	March 17, 2006
Bulk Dates:	2006
Physical Description:	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:56:30).
Abstract:	College president and psychology professor Beverly Daniel Tatum (1954 -) was chair of the Department of Psychology and Education and, later, acting president at Mount Holyoke College, before becoming the president of Spelman College. She has also enjoyed a celebrated career as a clinical psychologist and author. Tatum was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 17, 2006, in Atlanta, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2006_039
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Educator and clinical psychologist Beverly Christine Daniel Tatum was born on September 27, 1954, in Tallahassee, Florida, to parents Catherine Faith Maxwell and Robert A. Daniel. After completing high school, Tatum received her B.A. degree in psychology from Wesleyan University in 1975. She went on to receive her M.A. degree in clinical psychology from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 1976 and later returned there to receive her Ph.D. in clinical psychology in 1984. In 2000, Tatum received her M.A. degree in religious studies from Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut.

Tatum began her career in higher education in 1980 as a lecturer in the Department of Black Studies at the University of California at Santa Barbara. During her teaching career, she held professorships in psychology at Westfield State College and Mount Holyoke College. During her tenure at Mount Holyoke College, she was promoted to chair of the Department of Psychology and Education. In 1998, Tatum was appointed as dean of the college and vice president for student affairs. By 2002, she was appointed acting president of Mount Holyoke College before assuming the presidency at Spelman College.

Along with distinguishing herself as a notable educator, Tatum has enjoyed a celebrated career as a clinical psychologist. She worked in independent practice from 1988 to 1998 focusing on individual and group counseling. She specialized in consultation and training related to diversity and multicultural organizational development. Tatum has also written two widely acclaimed books, *Assimilation Blues: Black Families in White Communities: Who Succeeds and Why?* and *"Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" And Other Conversations About Race*, which was named 1998 Multicultural Book of the Year by the National Association of Multicultural Education.

In addition to serving as president of Spelman College, Tatum serves as a member on many boards, including the

Board of the Association of American Colleges and Universities in Washington, D.C., and the Woodruff Arts Center Board in Atlanta, Georgia. She is also active in many professional organizations such as the American Psychological Association, American Educational Research Association and the American Association of University Women among others.

Tatum is married to Dr. Travis Tatum and is the mother of two sons, Travis Jonathan and David.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Beverly Daniel Tatum was conducted by Evelyn Pounds on March 17, 2006, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. College president and psychology professor Beverly Daniel Tatum (1954 -) was chair of the Department of Psychology and Education and, later, acting president at Mount Holyoke College, before becoming the president of Spelman College. She has also enjoyed a celebrated career as a clinical psychologist and author.

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:

Tatum, Beverly Daniel

Pounds, Evelyn (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Tatum, Beverly Daniel--Interviews

African American psychologists--Interviews

Clinical psychologists--Interviews

African American college presidents--Interviews

Women college presidents--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Mount Holyoke College.

Spelman College

Occupations:

Psychology Professor

College 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 Beverly Daniel Tatum, March 17, 2006. 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 Beverly Daniel Tatum, Section A2006_039_001_001, TRT: 0:29:20 ?

Beverly Daniel Tatum was born on September 27, 1954 to Catherine Maxwell Daniel and Robert A. Daniel in Tallahassee. Tatum's paternal great-grandfather was William Augustus Hazel, the first dean of the Howard University School of Architecture. Tatum's paternal grandmother was born in St. Paul, Minnesota and moved to Boston. She graduated from Atlanta University and met Tatum's grandfather, who emigrated from St. Thomas, at Tuskegee Institute. They co-directed the Cardinal Gibbons Institute in Ridge, Maryland, where Tatum's father was born. Tatum's maternal grandmother was from Spartanburg, South Carolina, where her family owned the Callahan Funeral Home. Tatum's mother was born in 1926 in Clayton, North Carolina, and grew up in Danville, Virginia. Tatum's parents met in high school in Washington, D.C. and attended Howard together. Her father served in the U.S. Army, received his M.F.A. from the State University of Iowa and taught art. Tatum describes the book 'Twenty Families of Color In Massachusetts.'

African American psychologists--Interviews.

Clinical psychologists--Interviews.

African American college presidents--Interviews.

Women college presidents--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Beverly Daniel Tatum, Section A2006_039_001_002, TRT: 0:29:30 ?

Beverly Daniel Tatum's paternal ancestor, William A. Kellogg, served in the Fifth Massachusetts Cavalry during the Civil War. Tatum's paternal grandfather left St. Thomas for the U.S. when he was eighteen. Tatum's maternal grandfather taught in Danville, Virginia while her grandmother worked as a dorm mother. Tatum spent her early childhood in Tallahassee, Florida where her father taught at Florida A&M University. Due to Florida's segregation laws, he was unable to pursue his doctoral studies at Florida State, so they moved to State College, Pennsylvania where he attended Penn State. Tatum's family then moved to Baton Rouge where her father taught for a year at Southern University before becoming the first black professor at Bridgewater State College in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. There, her family stayed at the home of a white pastor while searching to buy a house. An early reader, Tatum regularly visited the local library. She describes her Bridgewater neighbors, most of whom were Catholic.

Video Oral History Interview with Beverly Daniel Tatum, Section A2006_039_001_003, TRT: 0:31:00 ?

Beverly Daniel Tatum spent most of her childhood in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, a majority-white town. Since her father taught at Bridgewater State College, Tatum attended the affiliated Burnell Laboratory School, where she skipped the second grade due to her advanced reading skills. She recalls being one of the school's only African American students and her extreme shyness. From fifth through eighth grade, she attended Bridgewater Middle School, where she remained one of only a few black students. At Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School, she began socializing more. With her family, she attended Central Square Congregational Church where she sang in the church choir, and was active in Sunday school and the youth group. She recalls early experiences that made her aware of her racial identity and describes Bridgewater's religious demographics as well as her Catholic, Jewish and Cape Verdean neighbors. Tatum has one older brother and a younger brother and sister.

Video Oral History Interview with Beverly Daniel Tatum, Section A2006_039_001_004, TRT: 0:31:00 ?

Beverly Daniel Tatum attended Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. While working at the town's public library, she read a child psychology book that inspired her interest in the field. She explains her decision to attend Wesleyan University, which, at the time of her application, began admitting female students, and was also actively recruiting students of color. Before entering college in 1971, she participated in a summer program, Prospect Wesleyan, where she developed friendships with minority students. At Wesleyan, she had her first black professor, Faye Davis Boulware, who directed the African American Institute. Admiring Angela Davis and taking courses in African American studies, Tatum began developing a sense of black pride. Tatum volunteered at Cambridge's McLean Hospital and worked for Sears, Roebuck and Company before entering her graduate program in clinical psychology at the University of Michigan. She also reflects upon the formation of her racial identity.

Video Oral History Interview with Beverly Daniel Tatum, Section A2006_039_001_005, TRT: 0:28:10 ?

Beverly Daniel Tatum pursued her doctoral studies in clinical psychology at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. While she enjoyed her time there, she did not care for her program's emphasis on Freudian theory. Her dissertation advisor, Eric Berman, shared her interests in family psychology and encouraged her research on black families living in white communities. After marrying in 1979, she and her husband, Travis Tatum, moved to California where she completed her dissertation. At this time, she began working as a therapist at the University of California, Santa Barbara's counseling center. She also taught two courses within the university's black studies department, Education and the Black Child and Group Exploration of Racism. She compares her observations of racism in Santa Barbara, where she and her husband faced housing discrimination, with her childhood experiences in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. She also describes her older brother's musical education, career, and racial identity.

Video Oral History Interview with Beverly Daniel Tatum, Section A2006_039_001_006, TRT: 0:27:30 ?

Beverly Daniel Tatum left Santa Barbara, California for Westfield, Massachusetts, where she accepted a position as a psychologist at Westfield

State College. She negotiated with the institution to teach a course on the psychology of racism, a course that then propelled her research interests and her writing. In addition to teaching, she led anti-racism workshops and joined The Equity Institute, a social justice organization in Amherst, Massachusetts. In 1987, she published her dissertation, 'Assimilation Blues: Black Families in a White Community.' Looking for a reduced course load and more time to write, she joined the faculty at Mount Holyoke College's Department of Psychology and Education. While there, she continued teaching courses on racism and published her second book, 'Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria,' which explores the formation of group racial identity for black students in majority-white communities. Tatum also describes her research findings.