

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Reverend Maxine Walker

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Walker, Maxine, 1936-2007
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Maxine Walker,
Dates:	April 28, 2007
Bulk Dates:	2007
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:19:00).
Abstract:	Minister Reverend Maxine Walker (1936 - 2007) created the first gospel magazine printed in Chicago, "The Platform." She also developed a television talk show, "Touching People," and was the editor of the gospel newspaper, "The Spiritual Perspective." Walker was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 28, 2007, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2007_172
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Religious leader Reverend Maxine Walker was born on July 25, 1936 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Bernadine Lucas, a columnist for *The Pittsburgh Courier* and the *Chicago Defender*, and Jack Lucas, a minor league baseball player. After moving to Chicago, Illinois at seven years old, Walker contracted tuberculosis and was unable to walk for a year during her illness. Walker graduated from Cortez Business College before receiving her degree from the Moody Bible Institute.

Shortly thereafter, Walker married Cecil Thomas Walker, a grocery and restaurant owner, and had nine children. Together, they worked in his business, Tom’s Kitchen, while Walker continued to take college courses.

During her career, Walker created the first gospel magazine printed in Chicago, *The Platform*. After the creation of her own publication, Walker worked for Gatlings’ entities as a public relations person. There, she formed relationships with prominent celebrities like Michael Jordan. Walker then developed another magazine, a television talk show entitled, *Touching People*, and a gospel play that appeared at the Regal Theatre in Chicago called, *One Lord, One Faith, and One Baptism*.

In 1980, Walker was called to the ministry and was ordained in 1997. She then became the editor of the gospel newspaper *The Spiritual Perspective*. In addition to Walker’s passion for teaching the public about spirituality, she is also in the process of writing her first book, *Ten Reasons Why You Should Not Use an Herbalist*, which educates people about health options when facing debilitating illnesses.

Walker has formed relationships with many notable people throughout her life, including Nelson Mandela and has preached in both Israel and Africa. She counts among her list of influential ministers, Apostle H. Daniel Wilson, Dr. Horace Smith and Bishop Willy Jordan, all of whom share Walker’s passion for teaching the community. In addition, Walker owned a fish market and a lounge on the south side of Chicago and worked as a classified

specialist for the *Chicago Defender*.

She passed away on November 2, 2007, at the age of 71.

Walker was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on April 28, 2007.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Reverend Maxine Walker was conducted by Sasha Dalton on April 28, 2007, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Minister Reverend Maxine Walker (1936 - 2007) created the first gospel magazine printed in Chicago, "The Platform." She also developed a television talk show, "Touching People," and was the editor of the gospel newspaper, "The Spiritual Perspective."

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:

Walker, Maxine, 1936-2007

Dalton, Sasha (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Walker, Maxine, 1936-2007 --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Minister

HistoryMakers® Category:

ReligionMakers

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 Reverend Maxine Walker, April 28, 2007. 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 Reverend Maxine Walker, Section A2007_172_001_001, TRT: 0:29:10 ?

Reverend Maxine Walker was born on July 25, 1936 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Bernadine Turner Lucas and Jack Lucas. Her maternal great-grandfather, Milton Turner, Sr., was a carpenter in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, as was her maternal grandfather, Milton Turner, Jr. Walker's mother and maternal uncle, naval analyst Milton Turner III, were raised in Coraopolis by her maternal grandfather after her maternal grandmother, Mabel Turner, moved to Chicago. In Pittsburgh, Walker's paternal grandfather was a coal miner, while her paternal grandmother, Rosa Lucas, was a farmhand. Walker's parents met, married and raised her in an integrated neighborhood of Pittsburgh. When she was seven years old, they moved to Chicago's South Side, where her father played minor league baseball, while her mother studied at DePaul University. Her mother became a secretary for the NAACP and the Marillac House, and organized the city's first Secretaries Week, in addition to writing for the Pittsburgh Courier and Chicago Defender.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Maxine Walker, Section A2007_172_001_002, TRT: 0:28:12 ?

Reverend Maxine Walker attended Zenos Coleman Elementary School on the South Side of Chicago, Illinois, where she was mentored by her second grade teacher, Tina Rosemann, who taught black history. She went on to attend Chicago's Corpus Christi School, and studied for one year at the St. Benedict the Moor School, a boarding school in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. At fifteen years old, Walker contracted tuberculosis, and returned to Illinois, where she was housed in the Oak Forest Health Center. Due to her illness, she was unable to walk for one year, and had surgery to remove five of her ribs. She was discharged from the sanitarium after two years and three months, at the age of seventeen years old. Rather than return to high school, Walker enrolled in college courses. She developed an interest in religion, and transferred to Chicago's Moody Bible Institute. During this time, Walker met businessman Cecil Walker, who owned Tom's Kitchen on the South Side. They married, and raised nine children.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Maxine Walker, Section A2007_172_001_003, TRT: 0:28:43 ?

Reverend Maxine Walker founded The Platform, which was the first gospel magazine in Chicago, Illinois, and published interviews of local pastors and ministers. Then, Walker became the head of public relations for Gatling's Chapel, Inc., and established the organization's magazine. Through her connections there, she befriended Deloris Jordan, whose son was basketball player Michael Jordan. During this time, Walker continued her studies at Chicago's Moody Bible Institute, where she grew frustrated with the discrimination against certain denominations. Influenced by these experiences, Walker later founded and hosted 'Touching People' on Chicago's WCIU-TV. Broadcast in the late 1980s, the program was one of the first gospel talk shows to teach about interfaith relations. Later, Walker wrote a play, 'One Lord, One Faith, and One Baptism,' which also addressed interfaith cooperation. In addition, Walker talks about her admiration of Minister Louis Farrakhan, and her missionary trips to Israel, Africa and Jamaica.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Maxine Walker, Section A2007_172_001_004, TRT: 0:28:15 ?

Reverend Maxine Walker wrote the play 'One Lord, One Faith, and One Baptism,' which premiered in the early 1990s at Kennedy-King College in Chicago, Illinois, and was later produced at Chicago's Regal Theater. The show promoted interfaith cooperation, and went on to be featured in theaters in Detroit, Michigan and St. Louis, Missouri. Called to the ministry in the 1980s,

Walker was ordained in the late 1990s by Bishop Willie Jordan at St. Mark's Missionary Baptist Church. In 1998, she founded The Spiritual Perspective, one of the most popular gospel newspapers on Chicago's South Side. The publication focused on faith topics, as well as community issues. Walker describes her perspective on healthcare, and her book, 'Ten Reasons Why You Should Not Use an Herbalist.' She also talks about those who influenced her ministry, including Dr. Horace Earl Smith and Bishop Arthur Brazier. Walker concludes this part of the interview by reflecting upon her life.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Maxine Walker, Section A2007_172_001_005, TRT: 0:24:40 ?

Reverend Maxine Walker was ordained in the late 1990s in Chicago, Illinois. Prior to joining the ministry, Walker owned a number of business ventures, including a tavern; a family-operated fish market called Seven Plus One; and a lounge on Chicago's South Side, where singer Paula Greer once performed. In addition, Walker served on the boards of several organizations based in Chicago, including Black On Black Love and the Rainbow PUSH Coalition. She talks about notable figures in Chicago such as Mayor Harold Washington; police officer Sylvester Washington, who was known as Two-Gun Pete; and politician Ralph Metcalfe. Walker also reflects upon her life, her hopes for the African American community and how she would like to be remembered. She concludes the interview by narrating her photographs.