

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Ronald Gerald Coleman

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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>	Coleman, Ronald G. (Ronald Gerald), 1944-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 17, 2008
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2008
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:59:31).
<b>Abstract:</b>	African american history professor Ronald Gerald Coleman (1944 - ) taught history and ethnic studies at the University of Utah from 1973. Coleman specialized in the history of African Americans in the American West, and received numerous awards for his teaching, scholarship and civil rights work. Coleman was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 17, 2008, in Salt Lake City, Utah. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2008_057
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

African American Studies professor Ronald Gerald Coleman was born on April 3, 1944, in San Francisco, California, to Gertrude Hughes, a San Francisco School District food service manager, and Jesse Coleman, a railroad waiter/bartender for Southern Pacific and Amtrak. He attended San Francisco's Pacific Heights and Emerson Elementary Schools and graduated from George Washington Senior High School. In 1966, Coleman graduated from the University of Utah with his B.A. degree in sociology. He was hired to teach in the San Francisco Unified School District and then at Sacramento City College.

In 1973, Coleman received his M.A. degree in social science from California State University, in Sacramento. Coleman joined the University of Utah faculty as an instructor of history and ethnic studies in 1973 where he taught courses on African American history. His work in history and ethnic studies has been presented at various professional meetings. He has also lectured on topics ranging from African American history to contemporary race relations in the United States. Coleman has written several publications including articles on western black history.

Coleman has served as a member of the University of Utah Senate, the Athletic Board, the faculty mentoring program, and the faculty affirmative action committee. He is also a member of the Phi Kappa Phi Fraternity and is a life member of the NAACP. He has received numerous awards and recognitions including the Calvin S. and Jeneal N. Hatch Prize in Teaching, the 2000 Governor's Award in Humanities and the Albert B. Fitz Civil Rights Worker of the Year Award.

Coleman lives in Cottonwood Heights, Utah.

Coleman was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* March 17, 2008.

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# Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 17, 2008, in Salt Lake City, Utah, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. African american history professor Ronald Gerald Coleman (1944 - ) taught history and ethnic studies at the University of Utah from 1973. Coleman specialized in the history of African Americans in the American West, and received numerous awards for his teaching, scholarship and civil rights work.

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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:

Coleman, Ronald G. (Ronald Gerald), 1944-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Coleman, Ronald G. (Ronald Gerald), 1944- --Interviews

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African American historians--Interviews

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African American college teachers--Interviews

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## African American civil rights workers--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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University of Utah

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### Occupations:

African American History 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 Ronald Gerald Coleman, March 17, 2008. 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 Ronald Gerald Coleman, Section A2008\_057\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:09 ?

Ronald Gerald Coleman was born on April 3, 1944 in San Francisco, California to Gertrude Welch Hughes and Jesse Coleman. Coleman's paternal great-great-grandfather, Charles Coleman, was born a slave in Mississippi, where he married Ann Coleman. Together, they moved to Sicily Island, Louisiana, where they raised Coleman's great-grandfather, also named Charles Coleman. He went on to marry Bulah Walker Coleman. Later, Coleman's paternal grandfather, Moses Coleman, moved to Monroe, Louisiana, where Coleman's father grew up. In Monroe, Coleman's maternal great-grandfather, Robert Sewell, was a sharecropper; and Coleman's grandmother, Marguerite Miller, worked as a domestic for Jack Rogers, a prominent car dealer. Coleman's parents met and married in Monroe, and then relocated to San Francisco, where his father found work on the railroad. Following his parents' divorce, Coleman lived briefly with his maternal grandparents in Chicago, Illinois, and began his education at William E. Gladstone Elementary School.

African American historians--Interviews.

African American college teachers--Interviews.

African American families--Louisiana--Monroe.

African American fathers--California--San Francisco.

Segregation in Transportation--Southern States.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman, Section A2008\_057\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:52 ?

Ronald Gerald Coleman grew up in the Fillmore District of San Francisco, California, where his family belonged to the Bethel A.M.E. Church. His neighbors included San Francisco 49ers Joe Perry and John Henry Johnson, and he saw James Brown and The Famous Flames perform at the neighborhood's Fillmore Auditorium. At this point in the interview, Coleman remembers San Francisco's entertainment venues, including the Texas Playhouse and Jimbo's Bop City. Coleman attended Emerson School under Principal William L. Cobb, and went on to study at the Pacific Heights School and then George Washington Senior High School, where he began playing football. Upon graduating in 1961, Coleman enrolled at the City College of San Francisco. He was later recruited by Coach Charles Chatfield to join the football team at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, where he played alongside future NFL player, Roy Jefferson; and was influenced by Professor Charles James Nabors, who was active with the local NAACP branch.

African American families--California--San Francisco.

African American children--California--San Francisco--Social life and customs.

African American college students--Political activity.

San Francisco (Calif.)--social life and customs.

University of Utah--football.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman, Section A2008\_057\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:15 ?

Ronald Gerald Coleman earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from Salt Lake City's University of Utah in 1966. He then moved to Sacramento, California, where he worked briefly for General Mills Inc. In 1967, Coleman earned a teaching certificate at Sacramento State College, and completed his training at

Luther Burbank High School. He went on to teach at A.P. Giannini Junior High School, and coached football at his alma mater, George Washington Senior High School. From 1970, Coleman taught at Sacramento City College, while studying for master's degree under black historian David Cavin at Sacramento State College. In 1973, he returned to the University of Utah to complete a Ph.D. degree. Coleman talks about John Hope Franklin's visit to Salt Lake City, and the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He also describes the prominent African American figures in Utah's history, like U.S. Army chaplain Allen Allensworth, and pioneers James Beckwourth and Jacob Dodson. National Urban League.

African American educators--California.

California State University, Sacramento.

General Mills, inc.

Mormon Church--History--20th Century.

University of Utah. College of Humanities.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman, Section A2008\_057\_001\_004, TRT: 0:28:15 ?

Ronald Gerald Coleman married Paula Coleman in 1995. At the time, he had three children from a previous marriage: Danielle Coleman, Joron Coleman and Cori Coleman. In addition, Coleman talks about Allen Allensworth, who served as a chaplain to the 24th Infantry Regiment at Fort Douglas in Utah, and went on to found the community of Allensworth, an all-black town in California. Coleman describes the tight-knit African American community in Salt Lake City, Utah, and shares his hopes and concerns for the African American community at large. He also reflects upon his life, legacy and how he would like to be remembered. Coleman concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.

Allensworth, Allen, 1842-1914

African American college teachers.

African American families--Utah--Salt Lake City.

Fort Douglas (Utah)