

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with C. T. King-Miller

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	King-Miller, Carolyn, 1947-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with C. T. King-Miller,
Dates:	March 8, 2011
Bulk Dates:	2011
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:45:11).
Abstract:	Archivist and cultural activist C. T. King-Miller (1947 -) is best known for integrating Jones Valley High School in 1964. King-Miller was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 8, 2011, in San Francisco, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2011_009
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Researcher and activist Carolyn (Tasmiya) King-Miller was born in 1947 and is a native of Birmingham, Alabama. Her father, Floyd King Sr. was a reverend at a Baptist church in Birmingham. King-Miller attended Wenonah High School for three years and then transferred to Jones Valley High School where she graduated in 1965. King-Miller attended Miles College in 1965 and later transferred to Brooklyn College.

King-Miller was the first African American to integrate and graduate from Jones Valley High School in 1965. Her parents successfully petitioned the school board to admit her at the all white school. While there, she suffered from harassment from both her classmates and teachers. The dance was held at a secret location to intentionally exclude her from participating. After high school, she attended Miles College, an all African American school known for its work in civil rights activities, for two years. Later, she transferred to Brooklyn College in New York and studied communications. In New York, she married and had two children. From 1980 to 1989, King-Miller worked as a supervisor at Dean Witter in San Francisco. From 1989 to 1991, King-Miller worked at the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco as a supervisor. She worked at Charles Schwab Company, from 1994 to 1999, as a researcher. In 1999, King-Miller worked at Creative Genealogy Services and Research as a researcher. King-Miller's interest in genealogy extends to her own family, having conducted extensive research on both sides of her family. In 2000, King-Miller worked at Each One Teach One, an employment recruitment service for high school students. She also published, *Mama, I was the only one there!*, about her experience as a student in 1964.

King-Miller has continued her activism with her involvement at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, where she has participated in many events and programming, including a conciliatory forum that coincided with her first-ever appearance at the Jones Valley High School reunion for alumni from 1961-1969. The forum provided a space for the community to address past events. King-Miller was given the key to the City of Birmingham and honored with a street dedication for her role in desegregation. Her achievements have been recognized by President Bill Clinton, The St. John Missionary Baptist Church and many others. Her oral history is included in institutions such as the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Birmingham Black Radio, and the Smithsonian Institute.

King-Miller was interviewed by Larry Crowe on March 7, 2011.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with C. T. King-Miller was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 8, 2011, in San Francisco, California, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Archivist and cultural activist C. T. King-Miller (1947 -) is best known for integrating Jones Valley High School in 1964.

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:

King-Miller, Carolyn, 1947-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

King-Miller, Carolyn, 1947- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Archivist

Cultural Activist

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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 C. T. King-Miller, March 8, 2011. 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 C. T. King-Miller, Section A2011_009_001_001, TRT: 0:29:47
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C.T. King-Miller was born on July 7, 1947 in Birmingham, Alabama. She talks about her family history. Her maternal ancestors were enslaved in Virginia.

King-Miller's maternal grandfather, Dave Miller, Sr., was raised in Greene County, Alabama and may have been of Blackfoot descent. After serving in World War I, he became a coal miner, eventually retiring from Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company (TCI) in Birmingham, Alabama as a supervisor. King-Miller's mother, Eugenia Miller-King, was raised in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; she completed school through the eighth grade, later earning her GED and taking college courses. King-Miller's paternal ancestors were enslaved on the Somerset Plantation in North Carolina and later settled in Alabama. King-Miller's father, Floyd King, Sr. worked for TCI after serving in World War II. King-Miller describes how her parents met and their personalities. She also talks about her siblings and her earliest childhood memories of growing up in Birmingham.

Video Oral History Interview with C. T. King-Miller, Section A2011_009_001_002, TRT: 0:15:18
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C.T. King-Miller describes the sights, sounds, and smells of her childhood in Birmingham, Alabama where she attended all-black schools: Powderly Elementary School and Wenonah High School. Her mother experience worked as a maid for a white family. During the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955, King-Miller's father and others began riding bicycles instead; he was also a member of the SCLC and HistoryMaker Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth's Alabama Christian Movement for Civil Rights. King-Miller led a sheltered childhood with few interactions with the white community until the age of thirteen; she remembers how her parents trained her and her siblings to act outside of the black community. Civil Rights leaders who visited the family home included Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Dr. Lucius Pitts. King-Miller's father worked as a minister and sang baritone in the McMillan Gospel Singers. She talks about her childhood personality and experiencing racial discrimination in Birmingham.

Video Oral History Interview with C. T. King-Miller, Section A2011_009_001_003, TRT: 0:29:57
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C.T. King-Miller talks about her father's friendship with HistoryMaker Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth. King-Miller was trained in non-violent protest tactics by HistoryMaker James Bevel and William "Meatball" Douthard at 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama alongside other youth. During the Birmingham Children's Crusade in May 1963, King-Miller and her two older sisters were arrested and held at the city's fairgrounds for four days. Months later, she attended the March on Washington in August 1963 with her father, two of her sisters, and other members of St. John Missionary Baptist Church. King-Miller remembers living in a state of fear after the bombing of 16th Street Baptist in September of 1963 and the hope the black community placed in President John F. Kennedy before his assassination in November 1963. She also talks about bombings targeting Birmingham's civil rights leaders including Fred Shuttlesworth, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Ralph Abernathy.

Video Oral History Interview with C. T. King-Miller, Section A2011_009_001_004, TRT: 0:30:50
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C.T. King-Miller describes the impact of President John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963 among civil rights activists. After President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, King-Miller and others worked with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to test the enforcement of the act by visiting various restaurants, Woolworth's, and the Birmingham movie theater. She attended Wenonah High School in Birmingham, Alabama before

signing up to integrate Jones Valley High School with about twenty of her peers in 1964; King-Miller ended being the only black student at Jones Valley High School that fall. She enrolled despite threats of physical violence. King-Miller talks about her first stay of school and her experiences with racial discrimination at the high school. She also recounts the support she received from her church, St. John Missionary Baptist Church. Many of her family's immediate neighbors moved away in fear of retaliation by the Ku Klux Klan.

Video Oral History Interview with C. T. King-Miller, Section A2011_009_001_005, TRT: 0:30:36
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C.T. King-Miller lost all of her friends after integrating Jones Valley High School in 1964. On the day of her graduation in 1965, her classmates threw chalk dust on her gown. King-Miller remembers being excluded from her senior prom. She did not talk about her experience until 1996, and reflects upon the black community's lack of stories about school integration. King-Miller then attended Miles College in Fairfield, Alabama. After becoming pregnant her sophomore year, she moved to Brooklyn, New York, where she finished her degree at Brooklyn College in 1971. After her son's death at the age of five, King-Miller became politically active, working with Shirley Chisolm, the first African American to run for U.S. president on a major-party ticket. In 1975, she moved to San Francisco, California in 1975 with her husband. She began her career as an educator, and later worked as a financial researcher on Wall Street. King-Miller talks about her name change, a work injury, and her genealogical services business.

Video Oral History Interview with C. T. King-Miller, Section A2011_009_001_006, TRT: 0:28:43
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C.T. King-Miller talks about increased coverage of her integration of Jones Valley High School in Birmingham, Alabama after her son won an essay contest hosted by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. At the time, King-Miller was working at Charles Schwab on Wall Street. When she returned to Birmingham for her thirty-fifth high school reunion, her former classmates made excuses for their past behavior and apologized to her. King-Miller was also given a key to the City of Birmingham and issued a letter of apology from President Bill Clinton. She is committed to telling her story through various speaking engagements. King-Miller also talks about living with chronic pain, her hopes for the future, and her father's radio show, American Trailblazers. She owns her own genealogy business, Creative Genealogist Services. King-Miller reflects upon her hopes and concerns for the African American community, what she would do differently, her legacy, and how she would like to be remembered.