

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Lorraine Miller

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Miller, Lorraine C., 1948-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller,
Dates:	July 27, 2013 and May 9, 2022
Bulk Dates:	2013 and 2022
Physical Description:	14 uncompressed MOV digital video files (6:55:32).
Abstract:	Political administrator Lorraine C. Miller (1948 -) served for over thirty years in the United States government, including working for Speakers of the House Jim Wright and Tom Foley as well as Congressman John Lewis and the FTC and FCC. From 2007 to 2011, she was the first African American to serve as Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives. She also served as acting president and CEO of the NAACP from 2013 to 2014. Miller was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 27, 2013 and May 9, 2022, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2013_215
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Political administrator Lorraine C. Miller was born on May 6, 1948 in Fort Worth, Texas to Lena Marie and Johnnie C. Miller. After graduating from Como Junior Senior High School in 1966, Miller enrolled at Jarvis Christian College in Hawkins, Texas. In 1968, she began attending the University of North Texas, where she received her B.A. degree in political science in 1972. Miller would later attend Georgetown University and graduate in 1998 with her executive M.B.A degree.

Miller initially worked as a high school government teacher in Fort Worth before she was hired by the Maryland Legislature in the late 1970s and enrolled in classes at American University in Washington, D.C. In 1978, she was hired to work for U.S. Congressman Jim Wright (TX) as his executive assistant when he was Speaker of the House from 1987 to 1989. Subsequently, Miller joined the staff of House Speaker Tom Foley (WA) and U.S. Congressman John Lewis (GA) in the early 1990s. In the mid-1990s, Miller served two years in the White House as the Deputy Assistant to President William J. Clinton. She then served as the Director of Government Relations for the Federal Trade Commission from 1995 to 1999. In 1999, Miller was appointed Chief of the Consumer Information Bureau for the Federal Communications Commission. She served as senior advisor to House Minority Whip Nancy Pelosi from 2001 until 2007, when Pelosi named Miller the Clerk of the House of Representatives, becoming the first African American to both hold that seat and to serve as an officer of the U.S. House of Representatives. She remained in these roles until 2011 after which she returned to the state of Texas and began a career in real estate with Keller Williams Preferred Properties and Northern Crain Realty in Fort Worth.

In 2004, Miller was elected president of the Washington, D.C. branch of the NAACP. Then, in 2008, she was elected to the NAACP National Board of Directors. From November 2013 to May 2014, Miller served as the

interim president and CEO of the NAACP. She joined the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments in 2010. In 2012, Miller became a member of the board of directors of DC Vote and a member of the Greater Capital Area Association of Realtors. She served as a Superdelegate for the state of Texas at the 2016 Democratic National Convention and as a co-chair of the Democratic National Committee's Rules and Bylaws Committee.

Miller lives in Fort Worth, Texas.

Lorraine C. Miller was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on July 27, 2013 and on May 9, 2022.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller was conducted by Larry Crowe on July 27, 2013 and May 9, 2022, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 14 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Political administrator Lorraine C. Miller (1948 -) served for over thirty years in the United States government, including working for Speakers of the House Jim Wright and Tom Foley as well as Congressman John Lewis and the FTC and FCC. From 2007 to 2011, she was the first African American to serve as Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives. She also served as acting president and CEO of the NAACP from 2013 to 2014.

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:

Miller, Lorraine C., 1948-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Miller, Lorraine C., 1948- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Federal Government Appointee

HistoryMakers® Category:

PoliticalMakers

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 The Honorable Lorraine Miller, July 27, 2013 and May 9, 2022. 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 The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_001_001, TRT: 1:28:23 ?

The Honorable Lorraine Miller was born on May 6, 1948 in Fort Worth, Texas to Lena Jones Miller and Johnnie Miller. Her maternal grandfather, James Jones, moved from Galveston, Texas to Winkler, Texas after the Galveston Hurricane of 1900. Miller's mother attended school through the tenth grade in Winkler, and then completed her diploma in Fort Worth. She went on to become a hairdresser. Miller's paternal grandfather, Cal Miller, was born in the rural town of Brushy Creek, Texas, where he worked as a farmer. Miller's father and uncle left Brushy Creek to join the U.S. Army. After World War II, they used funding from the G.I. Bill and studied to become barbers. Miller's father returned to Texas, while her uncle settled in New York City's Harlem neighborhood, where he had disembarked upon returning from Europe. Years later, Miller worked as a legislative assistant to U.S. Representative Jim Wright, who patronized her father's barbershop for over twenty years.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_001_002, TRT: 2:29:13 ?

The Honorable Lorraine Miller and her sister, Maurietta Miller, were born and raised on the Southside of Fort Worth, Texas, in the predominantly African American neighborhood of Como. There, Miller and her family attended the Mount Zion Baptist Church, where she had opportunities for public speaking from a young age. She also sang in the choir, and took piano lessons for twelve years. Miller's parents were members of the Fort Worth Tarrant County Branch NAACP, and often brought her to meetings led by the branch president, George D. Flemmings. During this time, the NAACP faced frequent attacks by the state government, and Texas Attorney General John Ben Shepperd attempted to ban the organization because of its involvement with the voting rights movement. At this point, Miller remembers accompanying her mother to the central polling place in Fort Worth, where the sheriff's deputies and election judges tried to intimidate them. Miller graduated from Como Junior-Senior High School in 1966.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_001_003, TRT: 3:28:44 ?

The Honorable Lorraine Miller grew up in Fort Worth, Texas, where she attended the segregated Como Elementary School during the 1950s. There, she developed an interest in literature, and became an avid reader. She went on to attend Como Junior-Senior High School, and aspired to a career in medicine from the age of fourteen years old. During the 1960s, the local African American community gained political power with the election of Leonard E. Briscoe, Sr. and Walter B. Barbour to the Fort Worth City Council. The city also attracted a negative stigma after the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, who visited Fort Worth on the morning of his death. Miller participated in civil rights demonstrations in the area, where she was once spat upon by white counter protestors. After graduating from high school in 1966, Miller decided to enroll at the Jarvis Christian College in Hawkins, Texas.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_001_004, TRT: 4:28:29 ?

The Honorable Lorraine Miller enrolled as a premedical studies major at the historically black Jarvis Christian College in 1966. When Reverend Dr. Martin

Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in 1968, many of the students and faculty were frightened of white reprisals, as the Ku Klux Klan was active in Hawkins, Texas. As her studies progressed, Miller decided not to become a physician, and transferred to North Texas State University to study political science and be closer to her family. She worked as a grocery cashier to earn a living, and graduated in 1972. Miller then became a peer adviser and teacher at Arlington Heights High School and Trimble Tech High School in Fort Worth, Texas. After her mother's death in 1977, she decided to pursue her dream of becoming a politician, and moved to Washington, D.C. At this point in the interview, Miller talks about the national political leadership of black women from Texas, like Barbara Jordan and Eddie Bernice Johnson.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_001_005, TRT: 5:29:19 ?

The Honorable Lorraine Miller moved to Washington, D.C. in 1977, shortly after the election of President James Earl "Jimmy" Carter, Jr. With the help of Fort Worth City Councilman Jim Bagsby and State Representative Reby Cary, she secured a position in the office of U.S. Representative Jim Wright, where she served for eleven years. In 1980, Miller was responsible for organizing black voters in support of Wright's reelection campaign. She noticed that Wright spent minimal campaign funds on Fort Worth's black community, and instead rallied support by providing strong constituent services. Miller was promoted to a leadership staff position in the House Democratic Steering and Policy Committee, where she worked on the proposal to build a super collider in Waxahachie, Texas. In 1988, Wright was charged with ethics violations and resigned from the U.S. Congress. At this point, Miller describes the demographics of Jim Wright's staff, and shares her strategies for political success.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_001_006, TRT: 6:31:37 ?

The Honorable Lorraine Miller's employer, Jim Wright, resigned his position as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives in 1989. She considered joining the U.S. House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, but agreed to continue working as a legislative assistant under Wright's successor, Tom Foley. In 1991, Miller was invited to join the congressional delegation to South Africa, where she spoke to Nelson Mandela about his resemblance to her paternal grandfather, James Jones. After the Republican Revolution of 1994, Miller secured a position at the White House under President Bill Clinton. She attended the program for Senior Managers in Government at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 1995. Miller then secured a position at the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), where she worked on programs to stop identity theft. FTC Chairman Robert Pitofsky encouraged her to pursue an M.B.A. degree, which she completed at Georgetown University in 1998.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_001_007, TRT: 7:29:10 ?

The Honorable Lorraine Miller served on the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) from 1995 to 1999. During that time, she supervised the mergers and breakups of telecommunication giants like Time Warner, Inc., Bell Telephone Company and AT&T Corporation. In 1999, FTC Chairman Robert Pitofsky decided to move Miller to the Federal Communications Commission, where she headed the Consumer Information Bureau under Chairman William E. Kennard. She was responsible for addressing over one hundred thousand consumer complaints, and investigated unregulated billing by telecommunications companies. Miller then

returned to President Bill Clinton's administration as the executive director of the White House Community Empowerment board. After the election of President George Walker Bush in 2000, Miller left the federal government to work with the American Federation of Teachers. At this point in the interview, she talks about the inefficiencies of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and the movement to privatize education.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_002_008, TRT: 8:30:35 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_002_009, TRT: 9:31:26 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_002_010, TRT: 10:32:01 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_002_011, TRT: 11:29:35 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_002_012, TRT: 12:29:30 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_002_013, TRT: 13:28:59 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Lorraine Miller, Section A2013_215_002_014, TRT: 14:28:31 ?