

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Rudolph Brewington

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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>	Brewington, Rudolph W., 1946-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Rudolph Brewington,
<b>Dates:</b>	November 22, 2013
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2013
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:14:30).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Broadcast journalist Rudolph Brewington (1946 - ) was the co-founder of 'Black Agenda Reports.' He received a Pulitzer Prize nomination in 1990 for his investigative series, 'Domestic Surveillance: America's Dirty Little Secret.' Brewington was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 22, 2013, in Las Vegas, Nevada. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2013_318
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Broadcast journalist Rudolph W. Brewington was born on November 2, 1946 in New York City. He graduated from Cardinal Hayes high school in 1964 and then enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. Brewington served two years in the Presidential Honor Guard at Marine Barracks in Washington, D.C. before deploying to the Republic of South Vietnam from 1967 to 1968. Honorably discharged in 1968, Brewington worked in a number of jobs. After studying communications at the University of Maryland at College Park, Brewington transferred to Federal City College (University of the District of Columbia) and graduated with his M.A. degree in adult education. Brewington later studied business administration at Bowie State University and the College of Southern Nevada.

During the 1970s, Brewington held a number of broadcast positions in Washington, D.C. including news anchor at WUST Radio; news director at WOOK Radio; reporter and sportscaster at WWDC Radio; and, news anchor and correspondent at WRC/NBC Radio and WRC-TV. Brewington later co-founded “Black Agenda Reports,” a nationally-syndicated radio production company. He then accepted a position as talk show host at WOL Radio followed by a position as announcer with the nationally-syndicated television news program “America’s Black Forum.” Brewington joined the Sheridan Broadcasting Network in 1981 as a news anchor and correspondent where he covered politics and ten NASA space shuttle missions. Brewington was recalled to active duty in 1990 during the Persian Gulf War, where he served at the Pentagon as a spokesman for the U.S. Navy. He also served as assistant to the Navy’s Chief of Information (CHINFO).

In 1994, Brewington accepted a position as a public affairs expert with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service; and, in 1995, he co-founded B&B Productions, which produced the award-winning “Marvin Gaye: Pride and Joy” and “King: Celebration of the Man and his Dream.” In 1998, Brewington was appointed communications administrator with the United States chapter of Amnesty International in Washington, D.C. He also served in the U.S. Army Reserve and retired with the rank of Commander in the U.S. Navy Reserve.

Brewington has been actively involved with community groups and organizations including the American Federation of TV & Radio Artists, the National Naval Officers Association, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. and the Vietnam Veterans of America. He has garnered numerous awards and honors including an EMMY Award, the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award, the Chesapeake and Virginia AP Spot News Awards and other industry accolades. In 1990, Brewington was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for an investigative series entitled “Domestic Surveillance: America’s Dirty Little Secret.” His military awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy Commendation Medal, the Navy Achievement Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon, Vietnam Campaign and Service Medals, and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

Rudolph W. Brewington was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on November 22, 2013.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Rudolph Brewington was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on November 22, 2013, in Las Vegas, Nevada, and was recorded on 5 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Broadcast journalist Rudolph Brewington (1946 - ) was the co-founder of 'Black Agenda Reports.' He received a Pulitzer Prize nomination in 1990 for his investigative series, 'Domestic Surveillance: America's Dirty Little Secret.'

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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:

Brewington, Rudolph W., 1946-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Brewington, Rudolph W., 1946---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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## Occupations:

Broadcast Journalist

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakers

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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 Rudolph Brewington, November 22, 2013. 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 Rudolph Brewington, Section A2013\_318\_001\_001, TRT: 1:30:41 ?

Rudolph Brewington was born on November 2, 1956 in New York City to Moseetta Smalls and William Brewington. His mother was born in 1918 to Moses Smalls and Carrie Smalls in Charleston, South Carolina. Around 1930, her family relocated to New York City, where her uncle, Ed Smalls, owned the Small's Paradise nightclub. Two years later, Brewington's maternal grandmother died. From that time, his mother supported herself as a seamstress and cafeteria worker. She later married Brewington's father, who was born in 1919 to Henrietta Brewington and James Brewington in Sanford, North Carolina. They divorced when Brewington was three years old. From then on, he lived with his mother and twin brother, Ronald H. Brewington, in the St. Nicholas Houses in Harlem, where he attended P.S. 5. In the mid-1960s, Brewington's mother fell ill, and he and his brother lived with white foster families for eight months. Upon returning to Harlem, Brewington attended Catholic schools, graduating from Cardinal Hayes High School in 1964.

Video Oral History Interview with Rudolph Brewington, Section A2013\_318\_001\_002, TRT: 2:29:05 ?

Rudolph Brewington grew up in New York City's Harlem neighborhood. There, he was influenced by activists like Malcom X, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown. Brewington graduated from high school in 1964, shortly before the killing of black teenager James Powell by the New York City police. Despite his political doubts, Brewington enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in order to fund his education. He was one of the first African Americans assigned to the U.S. Marine Corps Honor Guard in Washington, D.C., where he served for several years before being deployed to Vietnam in 1967. He was discharged in 1968, and settled with his first wife in Washington, D.C., where he decided to pursue a career in the broadcast industry. Through the mentorship of Carl Ferguson, Brewington became a reporter for stations like WUST Radio, WOOK Radio, WWDC Radio and WRC Radio. He studied at the University of Maryland at College Park, and completed a master's degree at Federal City College.

Video Oral History Interview with Rudolph Brewington, Section A2013\_318\_001\_003, TRT: 3:31:25 ?

Rudolph Brewington worked as a reporter in Washington, D.C. during the 1970s. He hosted a talk show on WOL Radio as well as 'Evening Exchange' on WHUT-TV. Brewington also appeared on television programs like 'The Place' with Sue Simmons and Glenn Harris, and 'America's Black Forum' with Glen Ford. During this time, the city's black press included journalists like LaBarbara Bowman, Petey Greene, Maureen Bunyan, William Raspberry, Milton Coleman, Cathy Hughes, Jim Vance and Pluria Marshall, Sr. In 1974, Brewington received the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award for the piece 'Diagnosis: Desperate, A Report on Minority Healthcare.' He joined the Radio-TV Monitoring Service of Washington, D.C. in 1979, and became the public affairs director for Association Personnel, Inc. in 1980. The following year, Brewington was hired by the Sheridan Broadcasting Network, where he covered the U.S. space program. During the Gulf War in 1990, Brewington was recalled to active duty in the U.S. Navy public affairs office.

Video Oral History Interview with Rudolph Brewington, Section A2013\_318\_001\_004, TRT: 4:30:10 ?

Rudolph Brewington received a Pulitzer Prize nomination in 1990 for 'Domestic Surveillance: America's Dirty Little Secret.' The article addressed the availability of spying devices to consumers, and led to state and federal regulatory changes. From 1990, Brewington worked in various public affairs positions within the U.S. government. During the Gulf War, he served as the special assistant to the U.S. Navy chief of information. In this role, he liaised with the U.S. Department of Defense, and met Colin L. Powell. Brewington subsequently worked for the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the National Naval Medical Center. He also partnered with Vice Admiral David L. Brewer to use the USNS Comfort hospital ship to provide international humanitarian aid. Brewington worked for Amnesty International until his retirement in 1996, after which he remained active in the National Association for Black Veterans and the Knights of Peter Claver.

Video Oral History Interview with Rudolph Brewington, Section A2013\_318\_001\_005, TRT: 5:13:09 ?

Rudolph Brewington reflects upon the legacy of the African American community. He concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.