

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Barbara Williams-Skinner

Overview of the Collection

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| Repository: | The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com |
| Creator: | Williams-Skinner, Barbara, 1943- |
| Title: | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Williams-Skinner, |
| Dates: | September 15, 2003 |
| Bulk Dates: | 2003 |
| Physical Description: | 6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:42:00). |
| Abstract: | Spiritual leader Barbara Williams-Skinner (1943 -) is the founder and president of the Skinner Leadership Institute. Williams-Skinner was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 15, 2003, in Tracy's Landing, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| Identification: | A2003_221 |
| Language: | The interview and records are in English. |

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Skinner Leadership Institute president Barbara Williams-Skinner was born in Antioch, California, in 1943. Williams-Skinner completed her undergraduate degree at San Francisco State University before attending the University of California, Los Angeles. Williams-Skinner went on to earn her M.S.W. and her J.D. degrees from UCLA. For several years, Williams-Skinner promoted urban leadership and inner-city concerns as executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus. Williams-Skinner also served on the boards of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center; Volunteers of America; the National Political Congress of Black Women; the Christian Community Development Association; and Evangelicals for Social Action.

In 1992, Williams-Skinner and her husband, the Reverend Tom Skinner, former chaplain to the Washington Redskins and New York Yankees, founded the Skinner Leadership Institute. The endeavor combined two of Williams-Skinner's core ambitions - leadership building and evangelism - into one occupation. The Institute offered leadership development and reconciliation to people of all backgrounds and faiths, especially leaders, students, and youth with emerging leadership potential. The Skinner Leadership Institute aimed to produce a new cadre of leaders who were both technically excellent and spiritually mature, pledged to promoting reconciliation, and working for those in physical or spiritual need.

Williams-Skinner also served as a board member of Operation Rainbow PUSH; the Christian Community Development Association; and the Neighborhood Learning Center. Williams-Skinner was involved with the Community Empowerment Equity Partnership, which ran an Urban Leadership Academy at Ballou Senior High School in Washington, D.C. Williams-Skinner provided leadership development curriculum and teacher training for the program.

Barbara Williams-Skinner raised two stepdaughters: Lauren Skinner Gaines, and Kyla Jewell Skinner.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Barbara Williams-Skinner was conducted by Larry Crowe on September 15, 2003, in Tracy's Landing, Maryland, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Spiritual leader Barbara Williams-Skinner (1943 -) is the founder and president of the Skinner Leadership Institute.

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:

Williams-Skinner, Barbara, 1943-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Williams-Skinner, Barbara, 1943---Interviews

African American religious leaders--Interviews

African American families

Grandfathers

African American mothers

African American fathers

Middle-born children

Church

Discrimination in education

African American students

African American High School Students

Leadership

Civil rights movement

Black Panther Party

San Francisco Bay Area (Calif.)

Race Relations

Congressional Black Caucus

Dellums, Ronald V., 1935-

Chisholm, Shirley, 1924-2005

McGovern, George S. (George Stanley), 1922-

Nixon, Richard M.--(Richard Milhous),--1913-1994

Religious awakening

Gang members

Marriage

African Americans--Religion

Howard University

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Nonprofit Executive

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 Barbara Williams-Skinner, September 15, 2003. 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 Barbara Williams-Skinner, Section A2003_221_001_001, TRT: 0:29:55 ?

Barbara Williams-Skinner talks about her family's background, specifically

telling about her grandfather's authoritarian role in her life. She introduces her mother and father, gives details about their personalities and then tells about how they met at a young age and migrated to California. Williams-Skinner explains her reasons for leaving the church even though her father was the minister. She then discusses her early home life in California and cites examples of family camaraderie. She talks about being a middle child and her relationship with her sisters. Barbara Williams-Skinner remembers the community she grew up in and describes the social climate in North Richmond, California. She then gives further details on why she disliked church as a youth.

African American religious leaders--Interviews.

African American families.

Grandfathers.

African American mothers.

African American fathers.

Middle-born children.

Church.

Discrimination in education.

African American students.

African American high school students.

Leadership.

Civil rights movements.

Black Panther Party.

San Francisco Bay Area (Calif.).

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Dellums, Ronald V., 1935-.

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Religious awakening.

Gang members.

Marriage.

African Americans--Religion.

Howard University.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Williams-Skinner, Section A2003_221_001_002, TRT: 0:28:50 ?

Barbara Williams-Skinner explains her early relationship with church and some of the reasons she questioned the church's role in the community. She then lists the elementary, middle and high schools she attended. Williams-Skinner mentions a history teacher and speaks about how he positively affected her educational experience. She also talks about how she faced racial discrimination from a high school counselor and how her mother was quick to respond to the situation. Williams-Skinner then talks about her high school experience and tells about some of her interests and activities as a student. She explains her ideas on leadership and states that she's always considered herself for the role, but in a more behind-the-scenes fashion. Williams-Skinner discusses civil rights activism during her college years and tells how she was involved with the Civil Rights Movement. Then, she considers the efforts of the Black Panthers, citing

examples of how she agreed and disagreed with their actions.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Williams-Skinner, Section A2003_221_001_003, TRT: 0:29:20 ?

Barbara Williams-Skinner discusses the racial and political climate of California's Bay Area in the 1960s. She goes in depth describing her thoughts on the role of leadership within movements. Then, she explains how she became involved with the Congressional Black Caucus through her work with Ron Dellums. Williams-Skinner talks about the 1972 Presidential election and how the Congressional Black Caucus dealt with the choice to support Shirley Chisholm or George McGovern. Next, she remembers the pioneers of the Congressional Black Caucus and cites the names that she felt were most important. Williams-Skinner talks about how the Caucus responded to Richard Nixon's actions regarding poverty and affirmative action. Finally, she tells about her husband Tom Skinner's background and religious beliefs.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Williams-Skinner, Section A2003_221_001_004, TRT: 0:30:20 ?

Barbara Williams-Skinner speaks in depth about her husband Tom Skinner. She tells the story of how they were introduced, their first date and how he ultimately impressed her with his intellectualism and faith. She then discusses her husband's religious awakening and talks about his former life as a gang member of the Harlem Lords. Next, she explains how, upon marriage, she left the Congressional Black Caucus to work for Tom Skinner's ministry and describes the differences that came with the career change. She discusses the ministry's goals in developing leaders. Williams-Skinner and interviewer Larry Crowe engage in a conversation about the many different denominations of which blacks are a part. She explains the Skinner Leadership Institute's philosophy on working with members outside of the Christian realm. She then talks about her decision to pursue studies in divinity at Howard University and remembers influential divinity scholars. Barbara Williams-Skinner considers the role of women in the black church.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Williams-Skinner, Section A2003_221_001_005, TRT: 0:30:20 ?

Barbara Williams-Skinner discusses the women's role within the church and cites examples why she feels women deserve more positions of power. Then, she talks about cultural interpretations of the Bible and states her own religious beliefs. Williams-Skinner then tells how religion ties into politics and the dangers that can arise when one adheres to a broad religious-based belief system in their picking of candidates. She talks about the role of Christianity in the creation of the United States. Barbara Williams-Skinner discusses her hopes and concerns for the black community.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Williams-Skinner, Section A2003_221_001_006, TRT: 0:13:15 ?

Barbara Williams-Skinner considers post-slavery reconciliation in the United States. Then she discusses the relationship between Africans and African Americans. Williams-Skinner considers her legacy. She then states her opinion on congregation size and explains the advantages of small ministries. Barbara Williams-Skinner considers what she might do differently had she the chance and then tells how she would like to be remembered.