

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Linda Cropp

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Cropp, Linda W., 1947-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Linda Cropp,
Dates:	January 13, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2005
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:00:54).
Abstract:	City council member Linda Cropp (1947 -) was the first woman to chair the Washington, D.C. City Council, to which she was initially elected as councilor in 1990, replacing Marion Barry. In 1980, she was elected to her first public office on the city's Board of Education. Cropp was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 13, 2005, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2005_013
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Linda Washington Cropp was born on October 5, 1947, in Atlanta, Georgia. Her parents divorced when she was three years old, and she relocated to Philadelphia with her mother. As a single parent, her mother worked two jobs to support the family and send Cropp to Catholic school. Cropp earned her high school diploma in 1965 from Little Flower Catholic High School for Girls where she was active in student government and band. As a teenager, Cropp enjoyed photography and sewing, was a member of Girl Scouts of America.

In 1969, Cropp earned her B.A. degree in government from Howard University. During her senior year, she interned with the Washington, D.C., Board of Elections and Ethics. Shortly after graduation, she worked on her first political campaign, helping Marion Barry win a seat on the District of Columbia Board of Education.

Cropp began her teaching career in Washington, D.C., public schools in 1970. She earned her M.S. degree in guidance and counseling from Howard University in 1971. In 1980, she was elected to her first public office on the city's Board of Education. In 1990, Cropp successfully ran against former Washington, D.C., Mayor Marion Barry for an at-large seat on the Council of the District of Columbia. In 1997, Cropp was elected as the first woman to chair the city council. Under her leadership, she has improved the Council's use of technology and provided citizens greater access to the legislative process. In 2006, Adrian Fenty beat her out in the Democratic Primary for Mayor.

Cropp and her husband, Dwight, reside in Washington, D.C., and have two adult children.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Linda Cropp was conducted by Racine Tucker Hamilton on January 13, 2005, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. City council member Linda Cropp (1947 -) was the first woman to chair the Washington, D.C. City Council, to which she was initially elected as councilor in 1990, replacing Marion Barry. In 1980, she was elected to her first public office on the city's Board of Education.

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:

Cropp, Linda W., 1947-

Hamilton, Racine Tucker (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Cropp, Linda W., 1947---Interviews

African American women politicians--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews

African American women legislators--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews

City council members--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews

African American families--Georgia

Philadelphia (Pa.)--Social life and customs

Divorce--Psychological aspects

Catholic schools--Pennsylvania

Girl Scouts--Interviews

Racism--Southern States

Howard University

African American political activists--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews

Washington (D.C.)--Politics and government

African american women educators--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews

Elections--United States--Washington (D.C.)

Barry, Marion,1936-

Gentrification--Washington (D.C.)

Baseball--Law and legislation--United States

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

District of Columbia. City Council

Occupations:

City Council Member

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 Linda Cropp, January 13, 2005. 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 Linda Cropp, Section A2005_013_001_001, TRT: 0:29:44 ?

Linda Cropp discusses her parents' family backgrounds, sharing stories about her paternal and maternal grandparents. She details her childhood trips to Atlanta to visit her extended family after her parent's divorce. Cropp then talks about what it was like being raised in a single-parent household. Lastly, Cropp describes her neighborhood surroundings growing up in Philadelphia in the 1950s.

African American women politicians--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

African American women legislators--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

City council members--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

African American families--Georgia.

Philadelphia (Pa.)--Social life and customs.

Divorce--Psychological aspects.

Catholic schools--Pennsylvania.

Girl Scouts--Interviews.

Racism--Southern States.

Howard University.

African American political activists--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

Washington (D.C.)--Politics and government.

African american women educators--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

Elections--United States--Washington (D.C.).

Barry, Marion, 1936-.

Gentrification--Washington (D.C.).

Baseball--Law and legislation--United States.

Video Oral History Interview with Linda Cropp, Section A2005_013_001_002, TRT: 0:31:24 ?

Linda Cropp recalls her education in Philadelphia's Catholic school system. Cropp then discusses the influence Girl Scouts had on her maturation process, particularly in her motivation to do volunteer work. She then describes her high school experiences, talking about her academic success, student leadership roles, and extracurricular activities. Lastly, Cropp talks about a childhood encounter with racism while on a road trip to the South with her mother, an event which raised her racial and political awareness.

Video Oral History Interview with Linda Cropp, Section A2005_013_001_003, TRT: 0:29:22 ?

Linda Cropp discusses the culture shock she experienced coming from a strict Catholic school environment to Howard University's system in the mid-1960s, during a time when the campus was known for its activism. She explains how she integrated herself into the activist culture. Cropp then talks about the District of Columbia's local political system and how it differs from other cities in the U.S. She then briefly details her husband's career in teaching and politics. Cropp talks about her career in education after graduating from Howard as a teacher, guidance counselor and school board member. Cropp finally discusses her foray into D.C. politics with her 1991 election to the city council.

Video Oral History Interview with Linda Cropp, Section A2005_013_001_004, TRT: 0:30:24 ?

Linda Cropp talks about her political campaign against Marion Barry for a seat in Washington D.C.'s City Council in 1990, and becoming the first woman to chair the City Council. Cropp comments on gentrification in Washington and the effects the U.S. Congress has on the inner workings of the city. She then talks about the greatest challenge in her political career, opposing Major League Baseball's efforts to move a team to Washington. Lastly, Cropp comments on her legacy and how she would like to be remembered.