

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with James Eugene Clingman, Jr.

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Clingman, James
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with James Eugene Clingman, Jr.,
Dates:	March 15, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2005
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:17:23).
Abstract:	Syndicated columnist James Eugene Clingman, Jr. (1944 -) founded and served as the president and executive director of the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce. He is also the author of <i>Economic Empowerment or Economic Enslavement – We Have a Choice</i> , and <i>Black-O-Knowledge: Stuff We Need To Know</i> , and writes a nationally syndicated weekly column called “Blackonomics.” Clingman was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 15, 2005, in Sharonville, Ohio. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2005_064
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Businessman, author, and civic leader James E. Clingman, Jr. is a strong advocate of economic empowerment for African Americans. Born in Cincinnati, Ohio on August 11, 1944 to Verline Greene and James E. Clingman, Sr, he attended Paisley High School in Winston-Salem, North Carolina before graduating from Cincinnati’s Winthrow High School in 1963. He later earned his B.A. degree cum laude from the University of Cincinnati in 1977.

In 1985, Clingman was hired by Segmented Marketing Services as general manager, a position he held until 1988 when he formed his own consulting business, Clingman & Associates. In 1996, Clingman founded and served as president and executive director of the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce.

In 1996, a year after he participated in the Million Man March, Clingman wrote *One in a Million: Faces in the Crowd*. Other books he has written and published include *Economic Empowerment or Economic Enslavement – We Have a Choice* and *Black-O-Knowledge: Stuff We Need To Know*. A former editor of the *Cincinnati Herald* newspaper and an adjunct professor of African American Studies at the University of Cincinnati, Clingman writes a nationally syndicated weekly column called “Blackonomics”.

A member of the Cincinnati Black Business Association and the Harvest Institute, an African American think tank, Clingman and his wife Sylvia live with their daughter Kiah in Sharonville, Ohio.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with James Eugene Clingman, Jr. was conducted by Regennia Williams on March

15, 2005, in Sharonville, Ohio, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Syndicated columnist James Eugene Clingman, Jr. (1944 -) founded and served as the president and executive director of the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce. He is also the author of Economic Empowerment or Economic Enslavement – We Have a Choice, and Black-O-Knowledge: Stuff We Need To Know, and writes a nationally syndicated weekly column called “Blackonomics.”

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:

- Clingman, James
- Williams, Regennia (Interviewer)
- Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

- African Americans--Interviews
 - Clingman, James--Interviews
-

Organizations:

- HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)
 - The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection
-

Occupations:

Syndicated Columnist

HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakers

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 James Eugene Clingman, Jr., March 15, 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 James Eugene Clingman, Jr., Section A2005_064_001_001, TRT: 0:30:11 ?

James Eugene Clingman, Jr. was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on August 11, 1944. His mother, Verline Greene Clingman, grew up in a small mining town near Beckley, West Virginia. His father, James Clingman, Sr., grew up in Clemmons, North Carolina on a farm with his parents and seven younger siblings. He moved to Cincinnati when he was eighteen. Clingman, Sr.'s sister married Clingman's mother's uncle, and through them, Clingman's parents met. During his childhood in Cincinnati, Clingman visited his grandparents during the summers. He was excited by country living. His maternal great-grandmother was a midwife; she

lived with his family and delivered Clingman and three of his four siblings. Clingman was the second oldest in his family and often played with the two brothers who were closest to his age. Church and school were both emphasized in his household, but Clingman hated attending Heberle Elementary School. He made good grades until junior high, when he wanted to quit school in order work full time.

Video Oral History Interview with James Eugene Clingman, Jr., Section A2005_064_001_002,
TRT: 0:30:06 ?

James Eugene Clingman, Jr. was uninterested in school as a young teenager and more concerned about earning money through odd jobs. When he and a friend were caught stealing cars, Clingman was almost sentenced to reform school, but instead was sent to stay with his aunt in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He attended John W. Paisley High School there, and became an honors student. Clingman returned to Cincinnati, Ohio to attend Winthrop High School for his last year before graduating, and worked at a grocery store to supplement his mother's income as a domestic and hospital worker. In 1963, he entered North Carolina College at Durham, which put him in close proximity with the action of the Civil Rights Movement in the South. Clingman excelled during his first year and joined a choir that toured the East Coast. During his second year, he struggled to pay tuition and moved back to Cincinnati, Ohio. He joined the U.S. Navy to avoid being drafted for the Vietnam War, but faced racism while serving.

Video Oral History Interview with James Eugene Clingman, Jr., Section A2005_064_001_003,
TRT: 0:28:44 ?

James Eugene Clingman, Jr. was stationed in the Mediterranean for his service in the U.S. Navy. After being honorably discharged in 1968, he witnessed the riots in Cincinnati, Ohio after Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated. He returned to his job at the post office, but left to take a job as a management trainee for a bank, where he was the only African American. His former probation officer, Henry Christman, helped him obtain a position as a counselor for the Citizens Committee on Youth. In 1977, Clingman completed his bachelor's degree at the University of Cincinnati. He worked for a number of organizations in the public sector, including LIHEAP and a Head Start program where he served as director. He moved to Chicago, Illinois to work for a marketing firm during Harold Washington's mayoral administration. After the company downsized, he began his own consulting business. His economic development work inspired his idea of an African American Chamber of Commerce, which he started in 1995.

Video Oral History Interview with James Eugene Clingman, Jr., Section A2005_064_001_004,
TRT: 0:28:37 ?

James Eugene Clingman, Jr. worked with Harold Washington while he lived in Chicago, Illinois and admired the mayor's advocacy for marginalized communities. In 1995, Clingman attended the Million Man March in Washington, D.C. and was invigorated by the sense of community it fostered. He returned to Cincinnati, Ohio and started the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce. Though the march was a powerful experience for Clingman, he was disappointed that the money collected at the time was not put to use in a way that yielded lasting results. Clingman has spent his career as an educator and writer arguing for the importance of economic empowerment and the necessity of African Americans pooling their resources in that struggle. His 2004 book, 'Black-O-Knowledge: Stuff We Need to Know,' was written to remind African Americans of lessons from their ancestors so they might use

those to economically empower themselves. Clingman also talks about his family and reflects upon his legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with James Eugene Clingman, Jr., Section A2005_064_001_005, TRT: 0:19:45 ?

James Eugene Clingman, Jr. founded The Entrepreneur High School in Cincinnati, Ohio in 2001, which he regards as his proudest accomplishment. At the time of the interview, he was serving on the Local School Decision Making Committee for the high school and looking forward to seeing its first graduating class. He talks about the evolution of his religious views and their impact on his life. Clingman concludes by narrating his photos.