

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with C. Eileen Watts Welch

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Welch, C. Eileen Watts, 1946-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with C. Eileen Watts Welch,
Dates:	June 23, 2007
Bulk Dates:	2007
Physical Description:	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:57:20).
Abstract:	Academic administrator C. Eileen Watts Welch (1946 -) was Executive Director for Advancement at the Center for Child and Family Health, established by Duke University, the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and North Carolina Central University. Welch was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 23, 2007, in Durham, North Carolina. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2007_185
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Academic administrator Constance Eileen Watts Welch was born on March 28, 1946, in Durham, North Carolina to Dr. Charles DeWitt Watts, North Carolina's first African American surgeon, and Lyda Constance Merrick Watts, a community volunteer. Welch's family founded North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, the oldest African American life insurance company. Her maternal great-grandfather, Dr. Aaron McDuffie Moore was Durham's first black doctor and co-founder of North Carolina Mutual and the Durham Colored Library. Welch attended a segregated high school, Hillside High School, in Durham before heading to Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, where she received her B.A. degree.

Welch began her career in 1968 as a third grade teacher in Atlanta. She later taught in Arlington, Virginia when her husband was drafted for military service. She became a stay-at-home mother after the birth of her two sons in 1970 and 1972. Welch returned to work in the late 1970s and became founder and the chief operating officer of Book Art, Ltd., a chain of bookstores in Fairfax County, Virginia. In 1983, she was named regional manager of the Reston Employment Service where she designed marketing campaigns and negotiated contracts. In 1990, Welch was hired at Inova Health System where she worked in strategic planning, health promotion and disease prevention. In 1994, she was promoted to Director of Development for the Inova Annual Fund. In 1995, Welch earned her M.B.A. degree in public relations, management, and marketing.

After a long career in Virginia, Welch returned to North Carolina in 1996, when she was named Associate Dean of External Affairs at Duke University's School of Nursing. In 2005, Welch was named Executive Director for Advancement at the Center for Child and Family Health, established by Duke University, the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and North Carolina Central University. Welch has also served as a lecturer and community volunteer, serving The Links, Incorporated and the Durham County Library.

Constance Eileen Watts Welch was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 23, 2007.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with C. Eileen Watts Welch was conducted by Cheryl Butler on June 23, 2007, in Durham, North Carolina, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Academic administrator C. Eileen Watts Welch (1946 -) was Executive Director for Advancement at the Center for Child and Family Health, established by Duke University, the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and North Carolina Central University.

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:

Welch, C. Eileen Watts, 1946-

Butler, Cheryl (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Welch, C. Eileen Watts, 1946- --Interviews

African American academic administrators--Interviews.

African American health administrators--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Duke University

Occupations:

Academic Administrator

HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers

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 C. Eileen Watts Welch, June 23, 2007. 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 C. Eileen Watts Welch, Section A2007_185_001_001, TRT: 0:29:22 ?

C. Eileen Watts Welch was born on March 28, 1946 in Durham, North Carolina to Lyda Merrick Watts and Charles DeWitt Watts. Her maternal great-great-grandfather, Benjamin Spaulding, Sr., was born into slavery to a slave and her owner, Samuel Swindell, Sr.; and upon earning his freedom, bought his father's land. Welch's maternal great-grandfather, Aaron McDuffie Moore, was a prominent doctor in Durham, where he founded the Durham Colored Library, Inc. to provide books for the African American community. He and Welch's maternal great-grandfather, John Merrick, were also co-founders of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. Her maternal grandmother, Lyda Moore Merrick, volunteered at Durham's Lincoln Hospital, founded the Negro Braille Magazine, which published news articles in braille, and chaired the board at the Durham Colored Library, Inc. Welch's paternal grandmother, Ida Hawes Watts, was the daughter of Hampton Hawes, who was a freed slave, and Janie Glover Hawes, a Cherokee woman.

African American families--North Carolina--Durham.

Moore, A. M. (Aaron McDuffie), 1863-1923.

North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company.

African American surgeons--North Carolina.

African Americans--North Carolina--Durham.

African Americans--Marriage--Southern States.

Duke University.

Negro braille magazine (Durham, N.C.).

Video Oral History Interview with C. Eileen Watts Welch, Section A2007_185_001_002, TRT: 0:29:02 ?

C. Eileen Watts Welch was born and raised in Durham, North Carolina where her maternal great-grandfathers, Aaron McDuffie Moore and John Merrick, co-founded the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. Welch and her siblings lived briefly in Washington, D.C. while their father completed his surgical residency, after which the family returned to Durham to live with Welch's maternal grandparents, Lyda Moore Merrick and Edward Merrick. Welch's family was highly respected in the community, and the downtown department store employees treated them as they would their white customers, but ignored them on the street. Welch attended the segregated W.G. Pearson Elementary School, Burton Elementary School and Hillside High School in Durham, which were integrated during her high school years by the children of civil rights activist Floyd McKissick. Welch also attended Camp Oak Hill in Nottingham, Pennsylvania during the summer, in addition to working in her father's medical practice.

African American children--North Carolina--Durham.

Segregation--North Carolina--Durham.

African American children--Education--North Carolina.

Segregation in education--North Carolina.

Video Oral History Interview with C. Eileen Watts Welch, Section A2007_185_001_003, TRT: 0:30:11 ?

C. Eileen Watts Welch's maternal great-grandfathers, Aaron McDuffie Moore and John Merrick, facilitated positive relationships between the North Carolina

Mutual Life Insurance Company and some of the prominent white citizens of Durham, North Carolina, such as tobacco industrialists Benjamin Newton Duke and James Buchanan Duke, despite racial discrimination and segregation. Welch graduated from Hillside High School in 1964, and matriculated at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, where she was a member of the glee club and the Granddaughters Club, as well as a lifeguard and swim instructor. She was elected Miss Junior Class on the court of the Miss Maroon and White pageant at Spelman and Morehouse Colleges. On campus, Welch attended a speech given by Malcolm X. Welch married Morehouse College graduate James Welch, in Durham just after her graduation. They returned to Atlanta, where she taught third grade in the newly integrated public schools.

Race relations--North Carolina--Durham.

North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company.

Spelman College.

School integration--Virginia.

African American teachers--Virginia.

Duke University.

African Americans--Marriage.

Video Oral History Interview with C. Eileen Watts Welch, Section A2007_185_001_004, TRT: 0:28:11 ?

C. Eileen Watts Welch and her husband James Welch moved to Arlington, Virginia, where she worked at the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, and taught in Arlington's public schools. After the birth of her second son, Sule Welch, the family moved to Reston, Virginia. Welch and her fellow African American neighbors, including Howard University Professor Marian Gray Secundy, founded Reston Black Focus, which organized the annual Black Focus Festival, and fought against the institutionalized racism in Fairfax County during the early 1970s, such as the celebration of Slave Day in the public schools. Welch went on to earn her M.B.A. at George Mason University, work for Inova Health System and own a chain of bookstores. In 1996, Welch returned to Durham, North Carolina to assist in the development of the School of Nursing and at the Center for Child and Family Health at Duke University. Welch reflects upon the history of Durham and her family's legacy; and concludes the interview by narrating her photographs.

African American families--Virginia.

Nursing school administrators--North Carolina--Durham.

George Mason University.

African American women--North Carolina.

Duke University. Nursing School.

Video Oral History Interview with C. Eileen Watts Welch, Section A2007_185_001_005, TRT: 0:29:20 ?

C. Eileen Watts Welch's mother, Lydia Merrick Watts, was born on October 17, 1920 in Durham, North Carolina to Lyda Moore Merrick and Edward Merrick. Merrick Watts' grandfather, Aaron McDuffie Moore, studied medicine at Raleigh, North Carolina's Shaw University, and was one of the first African American doctors in Durham. Moore was also instrumental in the creation of Durham's Lincoln Hospital, which served the African American community. Merrick Watts' other maternal grandfather, John Merrick, owned barbershops, before co-founding North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company with Moore. Her father became the company's treasurer. Merrick Watts' grew up in a

segregated neighborhood of Durham, where she attended W.G. Pearson Elementary School and Hillside High School. Welch's mother was a member of St. Joseph African Methodist Episcopal Church, and came to know many of Durham's notable African American residents, including Hattie Meadows who served as the company's cook.

African American families--North Carolina--Durham.

African American children--North Carolina--Durham.

North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company--Employees.

African American children--Education--North Carolina--Durham.

Video Oral History Interview with C. Eileen Watts Welch, Section A2007_185_001_006, TRT: 0:31:14 ?

C. Eileen Watts Welch's mother, Lyda Merrick Watts, grew up in Durham, North Carolina during segregation, where she attended Hillside High School before transferring to Alice Freeman Palmer Memorial Institute in Sedalia, North Carolina for her last two years. Upon graduating, Merrick Watts studied economics at Talladega College in Talladega, Alabama, where she was crowned Miss Talladega, and pledged Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Merrick Watts met her husband, Charles DeWitt Watts, while visiting a friend in Atlanta, Georgia, and later reconnected with him in Durham through her brother-in-law, James Joseph Sansom. Merrick Watts was a medical student at Morehouse College under physician Charles R. Drew, and went on to attend Howard University College of Medicine in Washington, D.C. She enrolled in a master's degree at Columbia University in New York City, but returned home at the start of World War II. Welch's mother reflects upon her family's legacy, and concludes the interview by narrating her photographs.

Segregation--North Carolina--Durham.

North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company.

Palmer Memorial Institute (Sedalia, N.C.).

African Americans--Education (Higher).

Columbia University. Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

Talladega College.