

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Barbara Ciara

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Ciara, Barbara, 1956-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Ciara,
Dates:	February 7, 2012
Bulk Dates:	2012
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:53:24).
Abstract:	Television anchor Barbara Ciara (1956 -) is a pioneering news journalist and past president of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), serving as the Hampton Roads, Virginia area's most enduring and visible broadcast news presences. Ciara was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 7, 2012, in Norfolk, Virginia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2012_023
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Television news anchor Barbara Ciara was born in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania on July 27, 1956 to Robert and Georgia Jones. Ciara received her G.E.D. at the age of 16 before moving on to Pima Community College and the University of Arizona in Tucson in 1974. Ciara left school to take a full-time position at Tucson television station KZAZ-TV in 1976. Two years later, Ciara was promoted to news director at KZAZ-TV, becoming the youngest and first African American female to attain a management position at a television station in the southwest region of the United States.

After working for KZAZ-TV, Ciara landed a co-anchor position with Norfolk, Virginia area television station and NBC affiliate WAVY-TV in 1983. She then served as a news co-anchor with Hampton Roads area television station and ABC affiliate WVEC-TV. After 12 years at WVEC, Ciara landed an anchor role with CBS affiliate WTKR-TV in 2000, anchoring three news telecasts. That same year, she completed her undergraduate education at Hampton University, graduating Summa Cum Laude. In addition to being a notable presence in the Hampton Roads community, Ciara gained a national profile in 2007 when she was elected president of the National Association for Black Journalists, the largest organization for journalists of color in the world. In the following year, Ciara assumed the role of president for UNITY: Journalist of Color, a coalition of four organizations representing Native American, Hispanic, Asian American and black journalists across the country.

Ciara is the recipient of numerous journalism awards, including an Emmy Award and a regional Edward R. Murrow Award for her broadcast journalism. She has also won an Associated Press award for her journalism and has been inducted into the Silver Circle of the National Capital Chesapeake Bay Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Ciara was featured in *Ebony* magazine. Her stateside coverage includes political campaigns, investigative reporting and interviews with luminaries like Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Oprah Winfrey.

She has provided analysis on CNN, CBS News, XM Radio, *National Public Radio* and the *Tom Joyner Morning Show* in addition to providing quotes for the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, among other news outlets. Ciara is married to her husband, Arthur Jarrett, Jr.

Barbara Ciara was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on February 7, 2012.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Barbara Ciara was conducted by Larry Crowe on February 7, 2012, in Norfolk, Virginia, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Television anchor Barbara Ciara (1956 -) is a pioneering news journalist and past president of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), serving as the Hampton Roads, Virginia area's most enduring and visible broadcast news presences.

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:

Ciara, Barbara, 1956-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Ciara, Barbara, 1956- --Interviews

African American television journalists--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

WTKR-TV (Television station : Norfolk, Va.)

Occupations:

Television Anchor

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 Barbara Ciara, February 7, 2012. 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 Ciara, Section A2012_023_001_001, TRT: 1:29:48 ?

Barbara Ciara describes her family's history. Her mother, Georgia Ann Jones, was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on November 20, 1930. Although she dropped out of school to help take care of her large household, she completed her high school education, attended trade school, and worked as a custodian in the Pittsburgh school system for over thirty years. Ciara's father, Robert Jerry Jones, was also born in Pittsburgh on August 4, 1934. He worked at a factory for most of his life, and then as a part-time security guard. Ciara talks about how her parents met and married, their divorce, and their joint custody of her. She discusses growing up in Pittsburgh, her likeness to her parents, her father introducing her to the Pittsburgh Steelers and Pirates, her family's interest in music, her exposure to television and newspapers, and her family's approach to religion. Ciara also recalls her early days in school, and her disinterest in school until she began working for her school newspaper in the eighth grade.

African American mothers--Pennsylvania--Pittsburgh.

African American fathers--Pennsylvania--Pittsburgh.

Childhood and youth--Activities--Pennsylvania--Pittsburgh.

African Americans--Education, Secondary--Pennsylvania--Pittsburgh.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Ciara, Section A2012_023_001_002, TRT: 2:30:38 ?

Barbara Ciara grew up in Pittsburgh, where she attended Knoxville Junior High School and Schenley High School. She talks about the cultural activities in Pittsburgh's black community in the 1960s, and her interest in singing. Ciara also discusses living in the St. Clair Village housing project, her involvement in her junior high school's newspaper, the mentorship of her English teacher, the growing prevalence of drug activity in her neighborhood, her parents as role models, and the increasing black presence in mainstream media. At the age of thirteen, Ciara became a teenage mother, leading to friction with her own mother, and her running away to New York City with a band, at the age of fifteen. She talks about living and working in New Jersey, completing her GED, and being advised to pursue college. Ciara remained estranged from her parents and her son, Robert, for two years, but visited her family in Pittsburgh before starting her freshman year in broadcasting at the University of Arizona in 1974.

African Americans--Education..

Public housing--Pennsylvania--Pittsburgh.

Mentoring in education--Pennsylvania--Pittsburgh.

Role models.

University of Arizona.

Teenage pregnancy.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Ciara, Section A2012_023_001_003, TRT: 3:31:03 ?

Barbara Ciara attended the University of Arizona from 1974 to 1976, where she majored in broadcasting. She describes her experience in Tucson, Arizona, her academics, university athletics, and the difference in the racial climate there as compared to the East Coast. In 1976, Ciara began working full-time at a local commercial television station, KZAZ, and decided to stop her studies at the university. She describes her experience at KZAZ, the sexism in the newsroom in the 1980s, her coverage of political news, and being promoted at the age of twenty-three, to become the youngest woman and first African American news director at a commercial station in the southwestern United States. Ciara also

describes her family's secrecy around mental illness, and her decision to move to Norfolk, Virginia.

Broadcasting--Study and teaching.

University of Arizona.

Television broadcasting of news--Arizona.

African American families.

Sexism.

Relocation (Housing).

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Ciara, Section A2012_023_001_004, TRT: 4:29:11 ?

Barbara Ciara moved to Norfolk, Virginia, in the early 1980s, where she began to work at WVEC-TV, the ABC affiliate television station for the Hampton Roads region. She describes the racial climate in Norfolk in the 1980s, the racial discrimination that she faced at WVEC, and her decision to move to WAVY-TV, the NBC affiliate station, instead of filing a lawsuit. Ciara describes her positive experience at WAVY, where she worked as a reporter and an anchor. In 1989, she returned to WVEC, which was under new leadership, and then moved to WTKR-TV, Norfolk's CBS-affiliate, in 2000. Ciara also talks about the Hampton Roads region, her coverage of a diverse range of news, the unsolved Colonial Parkway serial murders, and her Emmy Award nominations.

WVEC-TV (Television station) Norfolk, Va.

Discrimination in the workplace.

WTKR-TV (Television station : Norfolk, Va.).

Emmy Awards.

Journalism--Virginia--Norfolk.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Ciara, Section A2012_023_001_005, TRT: 5:30:54 ?

Barbara Ciara moved from WVEC-TV to WTKR-TV in 2000. She describes her reasons for the move, the highlights of her experience at WTKR-TV, including her one-on-one interview with President Barack Obama, her coverage of local news, and her projects in the communities. In 2007, Ciara became the president of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ). She describes her involvement with NABJ, and its response to race-based issues in the media. Ciara also describes her coverage of Operation Haiti in 1997, receiving the Edward R. Murrow Award, going back to college and completing her undergraduate degree at Hampton University, and UNITY.

WVEC-TV (Television station) Norfolk, Va.

WTKR-TV (Television station : Norfolk, Va.).

National Association of Black Journalists.

Hampton University.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Ciara, Section A2012_023_001_006, TRT: 6:21:50 ?

Barbara Ciara reflects upon her legacy, life and career choices, and how she would like to be remembered. She describes her coverage of controversial news in Norfolk, Virginia, and her coverage of a terror arraignment at Guantanamo Bay. Ciara also talks about the reasons for the disassociation of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) from UNITY. She closes her interview by discussing her family, and her investment in the African American community.

Journalism.

National Association of Black Journalists.

African American families.

Guantánamo Bay Detention Camp.