

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with E. R. Shipp

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Shipp, E.R., 1955-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with E. R. Shipp,
Dates:	July 27, 2013
Bulk Dates:	2013
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:59:27).
Abstract:	Journalist E. R. Shipp (1955 -) is widely known for her work as a columnist for the New York Daily News, which earned her a Pulitzer Prize for commentary in 1996. Shipp serves as an associate professor and journalist-in-residence at Morgan State University. Shipp was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 27, 2013, in Baltimore, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2013_204
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Journalist E.R. Shipp was born on June 6, 1955 in Conyers, Georgia to Johnnie Will Shipp and Minnie Ola (Moore) Shipp. After her graduation from Rockdale County High School in 1972, Shipp entered Georgia State University. While there, she completed an internship at *The Atlanta Journal*, the afternoon newspaper that later merged with the *Atlanta Constitution*. She graduated with her B.A. degree in journalism from Georgia State University in 1976. In 1979, Shipp earned her M.S. degree in journalism from Columbia University.

Shipp joined the *New York Times* as a reporter in 1980. In 1983, she became a Chicago correspondent for the *Times*, covering education, politics and other topics. Shipp moved back to New York City in 1987, primarily focusing on legal affairs. That same year, she became part of a team assigned to cover the case of Tawana Brawley, an African American teenager who accused several men of raping her. In 1990, Shipp became an editor at the *New York Times*. In 1993, she left the *New York Times* to pursue graduate work and teaching at Columbia University. Shipp graduated with her M.A. degree in history from Columbia University in 1994, and then received her J.D. degree from Columbia in 1996.

In 1994, Shipp began writing a column for the *New York Daily News*. During 1995, Shipp's columns about affirmative action, the O.J. Simpson murder trial, the Million Man March and other controversial subjects earned her a 1996 Pulitzer Prize for commentary. She remained at the *Daily News* until 1998, when she became the ombudsman for *The Washington Post*. She served in that capacity for the *Post* until 2000. Shipp returned to teaching at Columbia University that year, and resumed her *New York Daily News* column. In 2005, she became a journalism professor at Hofstra University. From 2011 to 2012, Shipp contributed opinion pieces to *The Root*, an African American-oriented site owned by The Washington Post Company. Shipp was named an associate professor and journalist-in-residence at Morgan State University in 2012; and, in 2013, she began work as a columnist for *The Huffington Post*.

Shipp lives in Baltimore, Maryland.

E.R. Shipp was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on July 27, 2013.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with E. R. Shipp was conducted by Larry Crowe on July 27, 2013, in Baltimore, Maryland, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Journalist E. R. Shipp (1955 -) is widely known for her work as a columnist for the New York Daily News, which earned her a Pulitzer Prize for commentary in 1996. Shipp serves as an associate professor and journalist-in-residence at Morgan State 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:

Shipp, E.R., 1955-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Shipp, E.R., 1955- --Interviews

African American journalists--Interviews.

African American college professors--Interviews.

African American editors--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Journalist

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 E. R. Shipp, July 27, 2013. 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 E. R. Shipp, Section A2013_204_001_001, TRT: 1:29:25 ?

E.R. Shipp talks about her family background. Her maternal grandfather, Norman Moore, grew up in an orphanage in Covington, Georgia. He married Shipp's grandmother Ethel Moore in 1924. Norman Moore worked a series of jobs as a watchman, cobbler, and handyman, while Ethel Moore was a domestic and a homemaker. The two had eight children, including Shipp's mother Minnie Shipp in 1927. They lived in Statesville, North Carolina and Newark, New Jersey before settling in Conyers, Georgia. In the early 1930's, Norman Moore was nearly lynched and his case became an example in the NAACP's fight for an anti-lynching bill. Shipp's father, Johnnie Shipp, was born to Clarence and Celia Shipp in 1922. Clarence Shipp was a farmer, as well as a World War I U.S. Army veteran. Johnnie Shipp served in the U.S. Army during the D-Day Invasion, and returned from the war committed to helping others. Shipp talks about how her parents met. Johnnie and Minnie Shipp wed in 1950 in Georgia, where they had six children.

Lynching.

African American grandparents.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

United States--Armed Forces--African Americans.

African American parents--Georgia.

African American families.

Video Oral History Interview with E. R. Shipp, Section A2013_204_001_002, TRT: 2:28:34 ?

E. R. Shipp talks about her parents, grandparents, and what it was like to grow up in a large household. In Conyers, Georgia, her family's social life centered around the church. The fact that her parents had two sets of twins was known in the community, and Shipp was required to take care of her five younger siblings, Virginia, Norma, Johnnie Will Jr., Clarence, and Christopher. As a family, they would often spend time listening to her grandfather Norman Moore tell humorous stories. Manners and food were at the center of church life. Shipp remembers her mother cooking for the circuit minister and attending Homecoming at churches in the area. Shipp enjoyed school and reading from the beginning because it offered an alternative to home life. She attended the J. P. Carr School, which her father helped to found.

African American families--Georgia--Conyers.

African American churches--Manners and customs--Georgia--Conyers.

Childhood and youth--Activities.

African Americans--Education, Elementary--Georgia--Conyers.

Video Oral History Interview with E. R. Shipp, Section A2013_204_001_003, TRT: 3:31:20 ?

E. R. Shipp describes how the teachers at the J. P. Carr School encouraged her love of reading, and each year, Shipp was nominated by her teachers for Queen of the May Day festival, where she enjoyed the books she received as consolation prizes. Shipp states that her parents were not involved in the Civil Rights Movement; however, her mother was the first black woman to work on the production line of Ace Hardware, where she was harassed by coworkers. After the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., Conyers, Georgia desegregated its schools. Shipp describes her experience as one of the first black

students to attend Rockdale High School. She was placed in college prep courses and graduated as class salutatorian. Shipp describes herself as a good student that took on leadership roles. She wrote a paper which examined Abraham Lincoln's feelings about slavery. She also gave a controversial salutatorian speech and challenged the school's dress code by wearing an Afro.

African Americans--Education, Elementary--Georgia--Conyers.

Segregation in education--Georgia.

African Americans--Education, Secondary--Georgia--Conyers.

African American leadership.

Video Oral History Interview with E. R. Shipp, Section A2013_204_001_004, TRT: 4:28:59 ?

E. R. Shipp attended the University of Georgia in 1972, where she excelled as a student, led the Black Student Union, and sang in the choir. However, the environment was unwelcoming to African American students. She remembers William Shockley being invited to campus by a racist student group, she also remembers a visit from black nationalist Queen Mother Moore. After leaving the University of Georgia, Shipp interned at the Atlanta Journal Constitution and worked as a legal secretary before enrolling in Georgia State University. During this time, Shipp found Atlanta to be a welcoming place for young black professionals. In 1976, after graduating from Georgia State University, E.R. Shipp enrolled in Columbia University to study law and journalism.

University of Georgia.

Racism--Georgia.

Moore, Audley, 1898-1997.

Atlanta journal-constitution.

Columbia University.

Georgia State University.

Video Oral History Interview with E. R. Shipp, Section A2013_204_001_005, TRT: 5:29:37 ?

E. R. Shipp worked as a legal intern after her first year at Columbia University, working for Team Defense on death penalty cases. While serving in this role, she worked on the "Dawson 5" case in Georgia where she helped to educate black citizens about voting rights and jury duty and gained international media attention. In one example, Shipp used the media to force integration of the bathrooms at the Terrell County Courthouse. Her team was also successful in freeing the Dawson 5. After graduating from Columbia University in 1979, she started working as a reporter at The New York Times. Her column in the Metro section was very popular. In November of 1980, Shipp was given her first beat assignment covering the courts in lower Manhattan, where she transformed the role into a successful legal beat covering all aspects of the legal system.

Internship programs.

Team Defense Project.

New York times.

Journalism.

Civil rights movements.

Video Oral History Interview with E. R. Shipp, Section A2013_204_001_006, TRT: 6:31:32 ?

E. R. Shipp describes when she began working at The New York Times in January of 1980, at a time when race and gender discrimination lawsuits had been brought against the paper. Shipp met other black journalists such as Lena Williams and Chester Higgins while there. The first two major legal cases that she covered were Mark David Chapman's trial for the assassination of John

Lennon and the murder of Helen Hagnes Muntiks. Shipp explains that at both trials, her law degree proved an invaluable asset. After covering cases in New York City until 1983, Shipp served in the Atlanta bureau, covering cases as a national correspondent. Shipp describes how during this time, she gained national attention for writing about race relations in the South. In 1983, she was promoted to the Chicago bureau of The New York Times, right after the election of Mayor Harold Washington.

New York times.

Williams, Lena.

Higgins, Chester.

Lennon, John, 1940-1980.

Race relations--Southern States.

Washington, Harold, 1922-1987.

Employees--Relocation--United States.