

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Darryl W. Dennard

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Dennard, Darryl W., 1957-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Darryl W. Dennard,
Dates:	January 23, 2014
Bulk Dates:	2014
Physical Description:	8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:37:54).
Abstract:	Broadcast journalist Darryl W. Dennard (1957 -) , founder of Double D Productions, Inc., has hosted and anchored nationally recognized television and radio programs, including “Ebony-Jet Showcase,” “Black Enterprise Report,” “Minority Business Report,” “Good Day Chicago,” the “Steve Harvey Show,” “Morning Riot,” and the “John Hannah Morning Show.” Dennard was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 23, 2014, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2014_020
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Broadcast journalist Darryl W. Dennard was born on September 18, 1957 in Harlem, New York to Eleanor Adamson and Glenn W. Dennard. He graduated from De Witt Clinton High School. Dennard was a member of Fordham University’s Upward Bound program and participated in its Bridge program by taking classes at Fordham University. He then went on to attend the State University of New York College at Buffalo and graduated with his B.A. degree in broadcasting in 1981. While at Buffalo State, he was a member of the Black Liberation Front student organization, where he was an executive board member, founding the college’s Minority Resource Center.

In 1980, Dennard was hired as a production assistant at the NBC affiliate WGRZ-TV in Buffalo, New York. He was promoted to a news reporter in 1983, and worked at WGRZ-TV until 1987. Dennard then became co-host of the “Ebony-Jet Showcase” from 1987 to 1991, and was hired as associate editor of *Ebony Man* magazine. He then served as co-host of the “Black Enterprise Report” and as host and producer of the “Minority Business Report.” Dennard also worked as an anchor of “Good Day Chicago” in the 1990s, and has hosted many other programs, including “Know Your Heritage.” He has worked on WVAZ-FM’s “Steve Harvey Show,” WCGI-FM’s “Morning Riot,” WGCI-AM’s “John Hannah Morning Show,” and WVAZ’s “Tom Joyner Morning Show.” In addition, he has interviewed many celebrities and notable figures, including President Barack Obama, Michael Jackson and Oprah Winfrey. Dennard served as Vice President of First Trace Communications, a strategic, cause related public relations firm, and Founder and CEO of Double D Productions, Inc., a full service audio/video production company, which produced the 1999 documentary “Heading West: A History of African Americans on Chicago’s West Side,” and the more recent documentary, “Culture of Calm: A Calming Presence,” which chronicles the Chicago Public School’s mentoring efforts directed towards “At Risk” youth in the wake of the Derion Albert beating death. Dennard’s professional affiliations include the National Association of Market Developers, the Black Public Relations Society, the 100 Black Men of Chicago, the Young Brothers for Christ Youth Ministry at

Apostolic Church of God, and the Radio and Television Broadcasting and Theatre Departments at Kennedy King College.

Most important to him are his wife Darlene, and their two children, Autumn, a graduate of Howard University and Darryl Jr, a fine arts graduate at The Cooper Union in New York City. Dennard also has a son-in-law, Brian, and two grandchildren, Ari and Milo.

Darryl Dennard was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on January 23, 2014.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Darryl W. Dennard was conducted by Larry Crowe on January 23, 2014, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Broadcast journalist Darryl W. Dennard (1957 -) , founder of Double D Productions, Inc., has hosted and anchored nationally recognized television and radio programs, including “Ebony-Jet Showcase,” “Black Enterprise Report,” “Minority Business Report,” “Good Day Chicago,” the “Steve Harvey Show,” “Morning Riot,” and the “John Hannah Morning Show.”

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:

Dennard, Darryl W., 1957-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Dennard, Darryl W., 1957---Interviews

African American television journalists--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Broadcast 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 Darryl W. Dennard, January 23, 2014. 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 Darryl W. Dennard, Section A2014_020_001_001, TRT: 1:28:52 ?

Darryl Dennard was born on September 18, 1957 in Harlem, New York. His mother, Eleanor Dennard, was born in 1938 in New York City. Eleanor Dennard worked a series of manufacturing jobs and as a cashier at the Pioneer Supermarket in Harlem, where Dennard also worked as a stock boy. His father, Glenn Dennard, was born in Tampa, Florida and migrated to New York City as a small child. He met Eleanor Dennard as a high school student, married, and had three children of which Dennard is the eldest of three. Glenn Dennard sold illicit drugs and spent a brief period incarcerated, later working for Fox Police Lock Company. Dennard was raised partially by his maternal grandparents, Lucille and Rueben Adamson, and his paternal grandmother and great-grandmother, Ollie Cammon and Ceola Jones. His grandmother Adamson lost her eyesight in her twenties from complications from diabetes. She reared eight children, however, and had a significant influence on Dennard's work ethic.

African American families--New York (State)--New York.

Childhood and youth--New York (State)--New York.

African American grandparents.

African American fathers.

African American mothers.

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl W. Dennard, Section A2014_020_001_002, TRT: 2:29:51 ?

Darryl Dennard talks about the Great Migration, his father's creative interests and extensive jazz collection. He also describes how his parents met, his younger sisters and his likeness to his parents. Dennard grew up in the South Bronx in close proximity to his extended family while spending time in New York City's Lower East Side near Delancey Street. As a child, he earned money with his father holding doors and shining shoes. At fourteen years old, he worked as a summer youth counselor for the Salvation Army and with Our Lady of Salvation Church on Washington Avenue. Dennard attended P.S. 59, The Community School of Technology; Elizabeth Barrett Browning Junior High School; Thomas C. Giordano Middle School 45 and DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx, New York, where he became interested in newspaper reporting and broadcasting. Dennard was also involved in the Upward Bound and College Bound college preparatory programs.

Migration, Internal--United States.

African American fathers.

African American families--New York (State)--New York.

Education, Secondary--New York (State)--New York.

Upward Bound Program (U.S.).

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl W. Dennard, Section A2014_020_001_003, TRT: 3:28:33 ?

Darryl Dennard describes his New York City public school education. He attended P.S. 59, The Community School of Technology, and later DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx, New York. Dennard describes being exposed to Broadway and opera with the Upward Bound and College Bound college

preparatory programs. Dennard grew interested in newspaper reporting and broadcasting at DeWitt Clinton High School and was enrolled in an English class at Fordham University in high school. He talks about African Americans like Max Robinson, Bob Teague and Gil Noble who integrated newscasts and public television in the 1970s. Dennard remembers his childhood summers in Crotona Park, Central Park and at Camp Eureka, a black summer camp in Roscoe, New York. In the fall of 1975, he enrolled at State University of New York College at Buffalo in the Department of Communications (Speech and Theater Arts).

Education--New York (State)--New York.

Upward Bound Program (U.S.).

Childhood and youth--New York (State)--New York.

State University of New York at Buffalo.

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl W. Dennard, Section A2014_020_001_004, TRT: 4:26:40 ?

Darryl Dennard remembers his first day at SUNY College at Buffalo, New York in 1975. Dennard was involved in SEEK, Search for Education, Excellence, and Knowledge, a continuation of the Upward Bound and College Bound programs. He describes the black student union, referred to as the Black Liberation Front, and how they gained political power on campus—including majority control of the student union board. Dennard also talks about his role in bringing musicians to campus. Dennard worked for the U.S. Customs Service through the SEEK program and in 1979, he met his wife, Darlene Dennard. He talks about finding his faith and also having stopped smoking marijuana. He and Darlene married in 1979; and in 1981, Dennard earned his B.A. degree in broadcasting from SUNY Buffalo State. He was offered an internship with WGRZ in Buffalo and a paid position as a production assistant shortly after. Dennard describes his tenure at the station, including covering a fire and Atlanta mayor Maynard Jackson's visit to Buffalo.

State University of New York at Buffalo.

College students--Employment.

College students--Political activity.

Marriage.

Television broadcasting.

Jackson, Maynard, 1938-2003.

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl W. Dennard, Section A2014_020_001_005, TRT: 5:28:16 ?

Darryl Dennard describes moving from Buffalo, New York to Chicago, Illinois to host the 'Ebony-Jet Showcase.' At WGRZ, Dennard earned \$20,000 a year, but due to staff cuts, moved from the technical side of broadcasting to the talent side. In 1987, Ozzie Bruno, Johnson Publishing Company vice president of sales and syndication, saw Dennard's photograph in the station at WGRZ and asked if he would be interested in an interview. Dennard flew to Chicago, Illinois and was interviewed and hired by HistoryMaker John H. Johnson, who offered him a salary of \$70,000. Dennard talks about his time hosting the 'Ebony-Jet Showcase' and recalls interviewing Michael Jackson prior to the singer's 'Bad' tour. Dennard reflects on African Americans in broadcasting in the 1970s and 1980s compared with today, including the effects of FCC deregulation on diverse workplaces. He laments the lack of black professionals working on the technical aspect of major television programs and stations.

Television broadcasting.
Television personalities.
Johnson, John H.
African Americans in television broadcasting.
Johnson Publishing Company.
Jackson, Michael, 1958-2009.

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl W. Dennard, Section A2014_020_001_006, TRT:
6:28:32 ?

Darryl Dennard talks about interviewing Sammy Davis, Jr. for the 'Ebony-Jet Showcase' in 1986 and also Oprah Winfrey, which aired in 1990. Dennard remembers 'Ebony-Jet Showcase' crew members, including his co-host Deborah Crable, and talks about the show's use of black production teams for their segments. He reflects on his own journalistic philosophy, and his disinterest in reporting personal celebrity news over celebrities' work and contributions. Dennard describes his preparation for his interviews and his work with Deborah Crable on the 'Ebony-Jet Showcase.' His family had to adjust to living in Chicago, Illinois. He describes his work between the years of 1991 and 1993, when he started on the show 'Minority Business Report' featuring minority business leaders in the Chicago area. Dennard talks about the structure of the show and the significance of black manufacturing companies.

Winfrey, Oprah.
Television broadcasting.
Interviewing on television.
Minority business enterprises.
African American families--Illinois--Chicago.

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl W. Dennard, Section A2014_020_001_007, TRT:
7:29:59 ?

Darryl Dennard talks about his interview show, 'Minority Business Report' and the significance in diverse business ownership. 'Minority Business Report,' later 'Black Enterprise Report,' featured minority business leaders in the Chicago area. Dennard shifted his attention toward his production company, Double D Productions, which produces documentary and commercial work. He describes the company's documentaries, 'Culture of Calm: A Calming Presence' and 'Heading West,' a documentary on the migration of Chicago's African American population toward the city's west side—including interviews with HistoryMakers Timuel Black and Vernon Jarrett. Dennard also worked as an administrator at Kennedy-King College in Chicago, Illinois in the school's television and production departments. He talks about various shows and events he has hosted and produced, and his membership in organizations such as 100 Black Men of Chicago and Young Brothers for Christ. Dennard reflects on youth violence, etiquette, and polite society.

Minority business enterprises.
Television broadcasting.
Kennedy-King College (Chicago, Ill.).
Documentary television programs.
Migration, Internal--United States.
100 Black Men of America, Inc.

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl W. Dennard, Section A2014_020_001_008, TRT:
8:17:11 ?

Darryl Dennard describes the current state of video production; contemporary newscasts; and why he does not use social media. He holds memberships in the National Association of Black Journalists and the National Black Public Relations Society. Dennard talks about HistoryMakers Pluria Marshall, Sr. and Pluria Marshall, Jr. as well as his work with Pluria Marshall, Sr. on the National Black Media Coalition. He describes his wife, children, grandchildren, and his relationship with his in-laws. Dennard ends the interview with consideration of his legacy and how he would like to be remembered.

Television broadcasting.

National Association of Black Journalists.

100 Black Men of America, Inc.

African American families.