

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dorothy Runner

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Runner, Dorothy, 1920-2010
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy Runner,
Dates:	March 17, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:00:45).
Abstract:	Civic volunteer Dorothy Runner (1920 - 2010) was an organizer for women's and health issues. Runner was a founding member of the South Side Auxiliary of Planned Parenthood and helped establish the 63rd Street Outpatient Clinic. Runner was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 17, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_048
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Civic volunteer Dorothy Runner was born on May 6, 1920, in Nitro, West Virginia; she attended segregated Dunbar Elementary School in Charleston, West Virginia. Runner was an active member of the B-Squares girls service club in a high school, where a significant number of teachers had graduate degrees from Columbia University. Runner graduated from Henry Highland Garnet High School in 1937; that same year, she entered Howard University. While at Howard, Runner joined Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority and was elected Ms. Gridiron. Runner was mentored by Howard's noted theologian, civil rights activist and mystic, the Reverend Howard Thurman. Earning her B.A. degree in social work in 1941, Runner went on to pursue graduate study at the University of Chicago under the guidance of Robert Hess.

While in Chicago, Runner met and married Dr. Charles Runner; she then worked briefly at Provident Hospital before beginning to raise a family. In 1951, Runner moved to Germany where her husband was stationed as an Army physician. While raising her two daughters, Runner's parental activities led her to heightened civic involvement. Active as a member of the AKA's, the Girlfriends, and other women's organizations. Runner developed her friends and associates into a useful network for social change.

Runner served as a board member of the Art Institute of Chicago and Chicago Urban Gateways; through her participation as a member of the New Provident Foundation, she raised \$100,000 for Provident Hospital's Building Fund. Runner received the Outstanding Volunteer Award from the National Society of Fundraising Executives in 1985. Runner was a founding member of the South Side Auxiliary of Planned Parenthood and helped establish the 63rd Street Outpatient Clinic; she was also a founding member the Hyde Park\Kenwood Auxiliary of the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society. As a member of the board of advisers of the Museum of Science and Industry's annual Black Creativity Exhibit, Runner continued to be a valuable contributor to the community.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dorothy Runner was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 17, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Civic volunteer Dorothy Runner (1920 - 2010) was an organizer for women's and health issues. Runner was a founding member of the South Side Auxiliary of Planned Parenthood and helped establish the 63rd Street Outpatient Clinic.

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:

Runner, Dorothy, 1920-2010

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Runner, Dorothy, 1920-2010--Interviews

African American women civic leaders--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews

Community activists--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews

Health reformers--Interviews

Human services personnel--Interviews

Neighborhood leaders--Interviews

Public health personnel--Interviews

African Americans--Genealogy

African American families

African Americans--Social conditions

African Americans--Social life and customs

African Americans--Segregation

Howard University

Segregation in education

Discrimination in higher education

Racism--United States

Early childhood education

University of Chicago

Social Work

Museum of Science and Industry (Chicago, Ill.)

Corporal punishment

Slavery--United States

Race Relations

Motivation in education

Child development

Discipline of children

Youth--United States--Attitudes

Parenting--United States

Urban youth

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Civic Volunteer

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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 Dorothy Runner, March 17, 2003. 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 Dorothy Runner, Section A2003_048_001_001, TRT: 0:29:45 ?

Dorothy Walker Runner has a great time with the word play of her maiden and married names. The interview opens with her recollections of her parents and grandparents lives in Virginia and West Virginia in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Runner recalls the close-knit black neighborhood she grew up in in Nitro and Charleston, West Virginia. It was a time when neighbors could scold misbehaving children with a stern look and reminder they knew who you belonged to.

African American women civic leaders--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.

Community activists--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.

Health reformers--Interviews.

Human services personnel--Interviews.

Neighborhood leaders--Interviews.

Public health personnel--Interviews.

African Americans--Genealogy.

African American families.

African Americans--Social conditions.

African Americans--Social life and customs.

African Americans--Segregation.

Howard University.

Segregation in education.

Discrimination in higher education.

Racism--United States.

Early childhood education.

University of Chicago.

Social service.

Museum of Science and Industry (Chicago, Ill.).

Corporal punishment.

Slavery--United States.

Race relations.

Motivation in education.

Child development.

Discipline of children.

Youth--United States--Attitudes.

Parenting--United States.

Urban youth.

Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy Runner, Section A2003_048_001_002, TRT: 0:30:34 ?

Dorothy Runner details her life growing up in the South in the 1920s and 1930s. In particular, she recalls experiencing Jim Crow segregation on the train on her way to start college at Howard University. Runner continues with more anecdotes about her tenure at Howard University and her mentor, Dr. Howard Thurman. She became interested in early childhood education and decided to

pursue graduate study. But because West Virginia colleges did not permit black students to enroll, she attended the University of Chicago. Runner was shocked to find the same racism and prejudice in the north. The university didn't allow black students to stay on campus. The interview closes with her recollections of her academic life and post-academic life in Chicago.

Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy Runner, Section A2003_048_001_003, TRT: 0:29:35 ?

Dorothy Runner's passionate interest and professional devotion to early childhood education and the improvement of the lives of America's disadvantaged youth is truly felt in this segment. Runner describes her various interests outside of social work, but a consistent thread of reaching out to children is always at the forefront. She helped inaugurate Black Creativity Month at the Museum of Science and Industry to reach and teach black families and children. She also offers her thoughts on corporal punishment, which she feels is a vestige of slavery and racism. An important goal to her is not only to uplift children, but also to teach their parents how to uplift and encourage their children, rather than discourage their intellectual and emotional development through verbal and physical abuse.

Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy Runner, Section A2003_048_001_004, TRT: 0:30:51 ?

As Dorothy Runner enters the middle of her 8th decade, she looks at life with a profound perspective. She shares her hopes for urban black youth. Still full of vim, Runner doesn't dwell on what her legacy will be. She is still actively involved in early childhood education. Her life's goal is to help others reach their greatest potential, and Runner's eyes are still on the prize. The segment closes with several photos from her young adult years and from many of the organizations of which she is a member.