

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Felicia Middlebrooks

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers® 1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Middlebrooks, Felicia
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Felicia Middlebrooks,
Dates:	April 3, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:12:30).
Abstract:	Production company chief executive and radio news anchor Felicia Middlebrooks (1957 -) is the co-anchor of WBBM's Morning Drive in Chicago. Middlebrooks-Hill was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 3, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_064
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Chicago radio journalist Felicia Middlebrooks was born May 29, 1957, in Gary, Indiana, to a teacher and a steelworker. Middlebrooks graduated from Gary's West Side High School in 1975; over the next seven years, she worked as a steelworker to finance her B.A. degree in mass communications at Purdue University, which she earned with honors. While pursuing her degree, Middlebrooks gained radio experience at four separate Northwestern Indiana stations.

Middlebrooks was hired as a full-time employee at WBBM news radio in 1983; for the next eighteen years, she worked as co-anchor of WBBM's *Morning Drive*, part of a lineup that toppled WGN's thirty-year streak as Chicago's top-rated morning station. The first woman and first African American to co-anchor *Morning Drive*, Middlebrooks was involved in numerous creative ventures; she served as the CEO of her own company, Saltshaker Productions. As a regular panelist on the Total Living Network's *Chicago Newsmakers*, Middlebrooks addressed spiritual issues; her written work appeared in a prestigious literary anthology, *Souls of My Sisters*. Middlebrooks contributed her time and talents serving as a trustee for the Children's Home and Aid Society, and was a member of the board of directors of WINGS, an organization founded to assist victims of domestic violence. Middlebrooks received the Associated Press Best Reporter Award for her insightful series of reports on domestic violence; the African American Leadership Council and the Urban League are among the many other organizations that honored her achievements.

When Middlebrooks left the air following a contract dispute in 2002, the Reverend Jesse Jackson and her fans intervened, and her needs were swiftly met. A longtime mentor to aspiring journalists, Middlebrooks continued working with young people in a teaching position at Purdue University's Calumet campus. In her spare time, Middlebrooks also wrote and published a novel.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Felicia Middlebrooks was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 3, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Production company chief executive and radio news anchor Felicia Middlebrooks (1957 -) is the co-anchor of WBBM's Morning Drive in Chicago.

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:

Middlebrooks, Felicia

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Middlebrooks, Felicia --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Radio News Anchor

Production Company Chief Executive

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 Felicia Middlebrooks, April 3, 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 Felicia Middlebrooks, Section A2003_064_001_001, TRT: 0:29:15 ?

Broadcast journalist Felicia Middlebrooks recounts her family history, including descriptions of her mother and father. She remembers her childhood home and describes her childhood personality. Middlebrooks discusses her family's involvement in the church and recalls her school years--from grade school through high school.

Video Oral History Interview with Felicia Middlebrooks, Section A2003_064_001_002, TRT: 0:28:40 ?

Broadcast journalist Felicia Middlebrooks continues to discuss her father's profession. She recalls her high school years, during which she discovered her interest in radio/television studies and came in contact with influential teachers. Middlebrooks discusses moments in the history of her hometown, Gary, Indiana. She describes balancing college and working in the steel mill and details her early career decisions.

Video Oral History Interview with Felicia Middlebrooks, Section A2003_064_001_003, TRT: 0:28:25 ?

Broadcast journalist Felicia Middlebrooks details the development of her career, including such highlights as: her first position in Chicago, Illinois, her production company, her most recent contract negotiations with WBBM AM 780, and the awards she has won for her news coverage. Middlebrooks also describes her skill set as a journalist and shares advice for aspiring journalists.

Video Oral History Interview with Felicia Middlebrooks, Section A2003_064_001_004, TRT: 0:31:00 ?

Broadcast journalist Felicia Middlebrooks discusses the activities she takes part in as a volunteer. Middlebrooks also discusses her hopes and concerns for the black community. She shares reflections on the course of her career and ultimately considers her legacy. Felicia Middlebrooks presents photographs of herself with family members and various celebrities.

Video Oral History Interview with Felicia Middlebrooks, Section A2003_064_001_005, TRT: 0:15:10 ?

Broadcast journalist Felicia Middlebrooks presents photographs of herself with family members, friends and various celebrities.