

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Ella Mizzell Kelly

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Kelly, Ella, 1939-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Ella Mizzell Kelly,
Dates:	December 14, 2004
Bulk Dates:	2004
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:02:23).
Abstract:	Academic administrator Ella Mizzell Kelly (1939 -) served as a speechwriter and senior program officer for the U.S. Department of Education, and later worked as a teacher and administrator at the Charles Drew University of Medicine. She was also a senior research scientist at UCLA's Center for Community Health, and later became the Deputy Director of Child Health at the Howard University College of Medicine. Kelly was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 14, 2004, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2004_262
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Ella Mizzell Kelly was born on March 17, 1939 in Columbia, North Carolina. Her father was a barber and her mother, a factory worker. During her early childhood, the family migrated to New York in search of better jobs. Shortly thereafter, her parents divorced and Kelly and her sister were raised by their mother. Identified as a gifted student during grade school, Kelly excelled academically. In 1955, she earned her high school diploma from Julia Richmond High School where she was active in the chorus, Latin Club and Student Government Association.

From 1955 until 1957, Kelly attended New York State Teachers College in Albany. She transferred to Howard University in 1957, where she earned her B.A. degree in history in 1960. During her senior year, she was selected to study abroad at Oxford in England.

From 1960 until 1968, Kelly taught history in the Washington, D.C. public school system, giving her students their first introduction to African American history. In 1963, Kelly earned her master's degree in philosophy from Howard University. Between 1969 and 1977, Kelly worked for the Department of Education as a speechwriter and senior program officer. From 1983 until 1985, Kelly attended the University of California at Los Angeles. Leaving there, she worked until 1990 as a research assistant at UCLA and served on a task force examining the under-representation of African American students in California. From 1990 until 1994, Kelly worked as a teacher and administrator at Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science in the departments of family medicine and nursing education. In 1995, she earned her Ph.D. in social research methodology from UCLA. From 1994 until 1998, Kelly served as a consultant on women's health issues for the California Public Institute and the UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research. From 1998 until 2003, Kelly was a senior research scientist at UCLA's Center for Community Health where she was responsible for developing initiatives to reduce health risks associated with HIV/AIDS and African American women.

In 2003, Kelly became the deputy director at Howard University College of Medicine in the Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, where she focuses on the impact of violence and substance abuse on low-income families and children.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Ella Mizzell Kelly was conducted by Racine Tucker Hamilton on December 14, 2004, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Academic administrator Ella Mizzell Kelly (1939 -) served as a speechwriter and senior program officer for the U.S. Department of Education, and later worked as a teacher and administrator at the Charles Drew University of Medicine. She was also a senior research scientist at UCLA's Center for Community Health, and later became the Deputy Director of Child Health at the Howard University College of Medicine.

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:

Kelly, Ella, 1939-

Hamilton, Racine Tucker (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Kelly, Ella, 1939---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Medical Administrator

HistoryMakers® Category:

MedicalMakers

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 Ella Mizzell Kelly, December 14, 2004. 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 Ella Mizzell Kelly, Section A2004_262_001_001, TRT: 0:30:21
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Ella Mizzell Kelly was born on March 17, 1939 in Columbia, North Carolina. Her parents, Minnie Hill Mizzell Jerry and Frederick Mizzell, were born in Columbia and grew up on neighboring farms. Her father was drafted soon after Kelly's birth to serve in World War II. Kelly and her mother moved to Norfolk, Virginia to live with a maternal aunt and work in war industries. Upon her father's discharge, Kelly joined him in New York, New York where her mother worked in garment and lighting factories until she was hired as a secretary by the state government. Her parents divorced during her early teenage years. Kelly's maternal grandfather, John Hill, was a Baptist minister and encouraged her to pursue college education. Kelly attended P.S. 194 Countee Cullen School and Junior High School 136 in New York and remembers field trips to New York museums. She converted to Catholicism at thirteen years old. Kelly had one sister, Joyce Mizzell Yeldell, who had recently passed away at the time of the interview.

African American grandparents.

African American families--North Carolina.

Columbia (N.C.)—Social life and customs—20th Century.

African American families--New York (State).

Video Oral History Interview with Ella Mizzell Kelly, Section A2004_262_001_002, TRT: 0:30:53
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Ella Mizzell Kelly did not maintain contact with her father after her parents' divorce; both parents eventually remarried. Kelly attended P.S. 194 Countee Cullen School in New York City, skipped first and fifth grades, and decided to attend college. She was a precocious reader and aspired to visit places she learned about in books. Kelly attended Junior High School 136 and worked at her maternal aunt and uncle's insurance company. At thirteen years old, Kelly enrolled at Julia Richman High School, a selective-enrollment public school for girls. She was a student government officer, chorus member, played the role of Cato in Latin club productions, and graduated in 1955 with a Regents Diploma. At sixteen, Kelly entered New York State College for Teachers in Albany. She worked as a crafts instructor at the town's boys' club. After experiencing racial discrimination from a college dean, she transferred to Howard University in Washington, D.C. There, Kelly was encouraged by mentors, including Eugene C. Holmes.

High schools--New York (State)

Howard University--Faculty.

African American mothers--New York (State)

State University of New York at Albany

Gifted teenagers--Education—New York.

Video Oral History Interview with Ella Mizzell Kelly, Section A2004_262_001_003, TRT: 0:30:13
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Ella Mizzell Kelly graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa with a B.A. in history from Howard University in Washington, D.C. in 1959. She obtained a Lucy E. Moten Travel Fellowship to study the Fabian Society at University of Oxford in Oxford, England. In 1960, Kelly returned to the United States to pursue her master's degree in philosophy at Howard University. She was introduced to feminism by her mentor, Eugene C. Holmes. She taught African history in Washington, D.C. public schools at a time when doing so was uncommon. In 1968, she was hired by the federal Office of Education. Kelly worked on the Equal Opportunity Commission and the Upward Bound Program, which led her to see the systemic nature of racial discrimination. Her son was

born in 1978. She worked at the Office of Educational Research and Improvement until 1982 when she divorced her husband and was accepted to the social research methodology doctoral program at University of California, Los Angeles. Kelly completed her Ph.D. in 1995.

Holms, Eugene Clay, 1907

University of Oxford

Howard University.

United States. Dept. of Education

Video Oral History Interview with Ella Mizzell Kelly, Section A2004_262_001_004, TRT: 0:30:56
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Ella Mizzell Kelly was a research assistant to Dr. Edmond J. Keller and a faculty member at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science while completing her doctoral studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). In 1994, she attended a women's health conference where she met Connie Chan Robison and Dianne Littlefield and helped them obtain funding for a grassroots women's health initiative. Kelly completed her Ph.D. in 1995 and was hired by Robison and Littlefield as a development consultant. Kelly also continued her research at UCLA's Jane & Terry Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior where she focused on HIV/AIDS risk in young women. In 2003, she took a position at Howard University College of Medicine in Washington, D.C. to head a research center focusing on HIV/AIDS and community health. Kelly talks about her son, current HIV/AIDS research, and how she would like to be remembered. She also gives advice to women regarding HIV risk and reflects upon history and her life.

Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science.

Women's Health—United States.

HIV/AIDS awareness.

Howard University. College of Medicine. Dept. of Pediatrics and Child Health.

University of California, Los Angeles. Neuropsychiatric Institute.