

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Doris Ward

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Ward, Doris Margaret
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Doris Ward,
Dates:	October 14, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2005
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:20:32).
Abstract:	County supervisor The Honorable Doris Ward (1932 - 2018) is a former San Francisco County, California Assessor-Recorder and served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 2000. Ward was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on October 14, 2005, in San Francisco, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2005_244
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Doris Margaret Ward was born on January 27, 1932, in Chicago, Illinois, to Robbie Floyd and Jesse Keys. Ward's grandparents, Joseph and Julia Floyd, migrated from the South and settled in Gary, Indiana. Ward grew up in Gary and lived with her grandparents after her parents divorced. Ward's family also owned a grocery store in the community. Ward attended integrated Frable School from kindergarten through twelfth grade. While there, Ward was a member of the debate team and was queen of the Bud Billiken Parade in Chicago. She also became interested and active in the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement. Ward attended Indiana University and earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in education. During and after college, she participated in sit-ins at bars and other public areas in Indiana.

Ward started her career as a teacher, taught in Indiana for ten years and then moved to California. In 1968, Ward decided to continue her education and attended San Francisco State University. After that, Ward began her political career in 1972 when she became a trustee for the San Francisco Community College District. In 1979, Ward became a county supervisor, and in 1990, she became president of the Board of Supervisors. In 1996, Ward was elected San Francisco County Assessor-Recorder. In 2000, Ward served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention, representing California. In 2006, Ward retired.

Ward passed away on April 14, 2018.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Doris Ward was conducted by Loretta Henry on October 14, 2005, in San Francisco, California, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. County supervisor The Honorable Doris Ward (1932 - 2018) is a former San Francisco County, California Assessor-Recorder and served

as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 2000.

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:

Ward, Doris Margaret

Henry, Loretta (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Ward, Doris Margaret--Interviews

African American women civic leaders--California--San Francisco--Interviews

African American politicians--California--San Francisco--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

San Francisco County (Calif.)

Occupations:

County Supervisor

HistoryMakers® Category:

PoliticalMakers

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 The Honorable Doris Ward, October 14, 2005. 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 The Honorable Doris Ward, Section A2005_244_001_001, TRT: 0:28:40 ?

The Honorable Doris Ward was born on January 27, 1932 in Chicago, Illinois to Robbie Floyd and Jesse Keys. Her maternal grandparents, Julia and Joseph Floyd, came north from Gunnison, Mississippi during the 1920s and settled in Gary, Indiana, where they sent their children to the desegregated Froebel School. After leaving Gunnison, Ward's grandfather only returned once, for his sister's

funeral. Her parents were schoolmates, and they married and moved to Chicago. While they were having marital troubles, Ward moved to Gary to be raised by her grandparents. Her parents later divorced, and Ward's mother started her own business in Gary by purchasing a grocery store. She then entered local politics, becoming a precinct committeewoman, deputy sheriff, and secretary to the mayor. Ward took piano and ballet lessons during childhood, and her family belonged to First Baptist Church. She also attended Froebel School, where she joined the debate society because the drama club was not integrated.

African American women civic leaders--California--San Francisco--Interviews.

African American politicians--California--San Francisco--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Doris Ward, Section A2005_244_001_002, TRT: 0:29:10 ?

The Honorable Doris Ward recalls her friendship with Imogene Edwards, daughter to the woman who ran Mae's Louisiana Kitchen in Gary, Indiana; Ward defeated Edwards to become the queen of the Bud Billiken Parade in Chicago. Ward also recalls disappointing her mother by trying to cover up a car accident. At Froebel School, Ward was mentored by her English teacher, Lorraine Peabody. She was liked by the administration until she confronted teachers for consigning black students to one timeslot in a talent show. Ward graduated high school in 1949, but after the death of her grandfather, she delayed going away to college in order to care for her grandmother. She matriculated at Indiana University Bloomington, where she lived in, and was president of, Lincoln House before becoming the first black student to reside in the formerly all-white Sycamore Hall. Ward describes her husband, John Ward, who received his Ph.D. from Indiana before attending New York University School of Law as a Root-Tilden Scholar.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Doris Ward, Section A2005_244_001_003, TRT: 0:28:50 ?

The Honorable Doris Ward married John Ward in 1955. Her husband declined a job offer from Adlai Stevenson's law firm to start a practice focused on civil rights law. He established a firm in Indianapolis where he and Ward participated in sit-ins and she taught after receiving her master's degree in education from Indiana University Bloomington. After divorcing her husband, Ward moved to California in 1968 and became an administrator for the San Mateo County Office of Education. In that role, she recruited African American teachers from the Midwest, and helped her recruits get credentialed in California. She joined the San Francisco Community College Board of Trustees in 1972, and then was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1979, where she launched a set-aside economic program for minorities and women. Ward was appointed as the city assessor by Mayor Frank Jordan in 1992. She reflects upon Eldridge Cleaver and HistoryMaker Reverend Jesse L. Jackson's achievements in the Civil Rights Movement.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Doris Ward, Section A2005_244_001_004, TRT: 0:28:32 ?

The Honorable Doris Ward accepted the post of assessor for San Francisco, California in 1992 on the advice of her ex-husband, John Ward, with whom she stayed lifelong friends. As assessor, she supervised a team that set property values in the city. Ward standardized computerization in the assessor's office and created a job training program to recruit women and minorities to be appraisers and auditors. In recalling the construction of Embarcadero Center and high-rise residential buildings during her tenure as an elected official, Ward notes how gentrification affects historically African American neighborhoods

like Bayview-Hunters Point and the Western Addition. She co-chairs Black Women Organized for Political Action and belongs to several other organizations. Ward describes the impact of black political leaders like HistoryMaker Willie L. Brown and Sophie Maxwell, and considers how to maintain black representation in San Francisco in the future. She also recalls her battle with breast cancer.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Doris Ward, Section A2005_244_001_005, TRT: 0:25:20 ?

The Honorable Doris Ward, a breast cancer survivor, is active in community efforts to provide cancer care for those who cannot afford it. She shares her concerns about drug addiction among the youth, and calls for celebrities to use their platform to advance drug prevention campaigns. Ward maintained a close relationship with her mother, Robbie Floyd, who was the first black female deputy sheriff of Lake County, Indiana, and served as a personal secretary to multiple mayors of Gary, Indiana. Ward describes her future plans to possibly return to school to become an investment banker. Ward arranged a conference where she brought figures like Father Larry Lucas and Charles Garry to speak to high schoolers. She recalls the speakers' impact on Vicki Mack-Lataillade, the daughter of a personal friend who was inspired to found the label GospoCentric Records. Ward concludes the interview by reflecting upon her life, her political career, and how she would like to be remembered.