

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Reed Kimbrough

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Kimbrough, Reed, 1951-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Reed Kimbrough,
Dates:	November 23, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2005
Physical Description:	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:27:47).
Abstract:	Newspaper publishing executive Reed Kimbrough (1951 -) was Community Relations Director and Director of Diversity Programs at the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Kimbrough was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 23, 2005, in Atlanta, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2005_248
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Reed D. Kimbrough is the Director of Diversity Programs and Community Relations for Cox Communications' *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (AJC). Kimbrough manages employee development and training at the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. He is the eldest of three children of retired United States army officer William Reed and Ernestine Willis Kimbrough. Born in Selma, Alabama, on February 27, 1951, Kimbrough spent his formative years between West Germany and the southern United States. Upon his return to the United States, Kimbrough graduated from high school in Fort Knox, Kentucky and entered Eastern Kentucky University where he graduated with a degree in business administration. In his second year at Eastern, he was instrumental in starting the first chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. He served in the United States Army and rose to the rank of captain with his primary duties in the 101st Airborne Division as a helicopter pilot. He is a retired Major of the U.S. Army Reserves.

Kimbrough joined the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* in the news circulation department. He was promoted to the production department where he managed building services, shipping, receiving, packaging, distribution and management-level employee development. He currently holds the position as Director of Diversity Programs and Community Relations.

Kimbrough is active in various organizations including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Association of Minority Media Executives (NAMME), the Celebrate Life Foundation, Hands on Atlanta, Habitat for Humanity, and the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. He serves on the board of Men Stopping Violence and is a long term member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.

Kimbrough is married to Charleye R. Kimbrough and is the father of Anthony M. Kimbrough.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Reed Kimbrough was conducted by Evelyn Pounds on November 23, 2005, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Newspaper publishing executive Reed Kimbrough (1951 -) was Community Relations Director and Director of Diversity Programs at the Atlanta Journal-Constitution

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:

Kimbrough, Reed, 1951-

Pounds, Evelyn (Interviewer)

Jackson, Adrian (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Kimbrough, Reed, 1951- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Atlanta journal-constitution.

Occupations:

Newspaper Publishing 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 Reed Kimbrough, November 23, 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 Reed Kimbrough, Section A2005_248_001_001, TRT: 0:29:25 ?

Reed Kimbrough was born on February 27, 1951 in Selma, Alabama to Ernestine Willis Kimbrough and William Kimbrough. Kimbrough's mother grew up as the middle child of Bessie Davis Willis and World War I veteran Andrew Willis. Kimbrough's grandparents owned forty acres of farmland, although the city eventually seized all but fourteen acres. Kimbrough's father was born in Clarkedale, Arkansas, although his family was originally from Kimbrough, Alabama. When Kimbrough's mother attended Alabama State

University in Montgomery, she lived with Kimbrough's paternal grandparents and met Kimbrough's father while he was home on military leave. They married in 1947. While Kimbrough's father was stationed in Korea, his mother lived in Selma. As a young child, Kimbrough spent holidays in Alabama along with his younger siblings, Mark Kimbrough and IVA Kimbrough. He recalls his maternal grandfather's funeral and drawing a plantation as a school assignment at the U.S. Department of Defense Dependents School in Germany.

Video Oral History Interview with Reed Kimbrough, Section A2005_248_001_002, TRT: 0:30:11 ?

Reed Kimbrough's family moved to Texas' Fort Bliss U.S. military base after his birth. From there, they relocated to an integrated and diverse U.S. military housing complex in Wiesbaden, West Germany. There, his mother supplemented the family's income by styling hair at home. His parents considered adopting a child but ultimately decided against it. After returning to the United States, their family took annual summer trips to Selma, Alabama, where Kimbrough recalls trying to pick cotton and African Americans' fear of attacks from white residents. After his maternal grandfather's death, Kimbrough's great uncle inherited the land. Kimbrough's family lived in Fort Sill, Oklahoma in 1956, where he attended Northwest Church of Christ in Lawton. At school, Kimbrough's teachers disciplined the children by using corporal punishment. He enjoyed going to the movies, watching television and shopping at Sears, Roebuck and Co. department store. His family returned to Germany when Kimbrough's maternal grandmother died.

Video Oral History Interview with Reed Kimbrough, Section A2005_248_001_003, TRT: 0:29:39 ?

Reed Kimbrough visited Selma, Alabama with his mother before living with his paternal grandmother in Montgomery, Alabama. The family then joined Kimbrough's father in Friedberg, Germany. Kimbrough was excited that Elvis Presley was in his father's platoon until he heard Presley's remarks about African Americans. Kimbrough attended Bad Nauheim Elementary School and developed a crush on a white female classmate whose father banned her from dating him because of his race. His family then returned to the United States, and moved near Fort Irwin National Training Center in California. There, Kimbrough sang in the all-region choir. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kimbrough feared for his father's safety. While Kimbrough's father was stationed at Fort Knox, Kentucky, Kimbrough attended Shawnee Junior High School, where he noticed increasing violence among his black peers in the mid-1960s. When his father was reassigned to Vilseck, Germany, Kimbrough attended Nuremberg American High School in Furth, Germany.

Video Oral History Interview with Reed Kimbrough, Section A2005_248_001_004, TRT: 0:29:22 ?

Reed Kimbrough attended Nuremberg American High School in 1965, where he lived on the school campus during the week and was taught by American teachers. Kimbrough played football, sang lead in a band and helped start a baseball team. He focused on school and extracurricular activities like the student paper and student government. In his spare time, Kimbrough sang in a doo-wop quartet on the street corners in Germany. Kimbrough admired the U.S. military officers, and recalls the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, Vietnam. Kimbrough did not realize the advance impact of the Vietnam War on soldiers until an encounter with a Vietnam War veteran. When his father was reassigned to Fort Knox, Kentucky, Kimbrough finished his junior and senior years on base at Fort Knox High School. He was in school when he learned of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy's assassination. After the students were sent home, Kimbrough watched the news on network television.

Video Oral History Interview with Reed Kimbrough, Section A2005_248_001_005, TRT: 0:29:44 ?

Reed Kimbrough's government teacher, Lucille McWilliams VanDyke, explained the importance of voting, especially after Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated. However, he was not old enough to vote in the 1968 presidential election. Kimbrough's high SAT score qualified him as a semi-finalist for the National Merit Scholarship, and he attracted the attention of Brown University and the University of Pennsylvania. However, Kimbrough hoped to attend the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs or the United States Military Academy in West Point. While interviewing for a Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) scholarship at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, Kentucky, Kimbrough met the admissions counselor, submitted an application and was accepted. Despite his fear of academic failure, his summer job as an assistant janitor motivated him to succeed. He joined the ROTC fraternity Pershing Rifles, the University Ensemble choir and the Black Student Union.

Video Oral History Interview with Reed Kimbrough, Section A2005_248_001_006, TRT: 0:29:33 ?

Reed Kimbrough successfully advocated for a black studies program at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, Kentucky. After completing the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program and graduating in 1973, Kimbrough became a U.S. Army second lieutenant. He married his wife, Charlye Ritchie Kimbrough, in 1978. Kimbrough completed his training at the U.S. Army Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia, and became a captain and qualified aviator. Upon retiring from the service in 1982, Kimbrough then worked at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. He began his career at the Atlanta Journal-Constitution delivering papers part time. After attending a seminar through the National Association of Minority Media Executives, Kimbrough was promoted to the management track. Kimbrough volunteered for many nonprofit organizations in Atlanta, and was nominated for a Golden Link Award. Kimbrough also talks about the Kentucky All-State High School Choir, and his hope that aspiring executives are encouraged by his story.

Video Oral History Interview with Reed Kimbrough, Section A2005_248_001_007, TRT: 0:29:53 ?

Reed Kimbrough shares a message for young people and explains the importance of history. He reflects upon his life and legacy. Kimbrough also describes his hopes and concerns for the African American community and how he would like to be remembered. He concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.