

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with John S. Butler

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Butler, John S. (John Sibley)
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with John S. Butler,
Dates:	February 5, 2007
Bulk Dates:	2007
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:12:10).
Abstract:	Sociology professor and academic administrator John S. Butler (1947 -) was twice appointed to the J. William Fulbright Scholarship Board by President George W. Bush, and serves as the director of the IC2 Institute at the University of Texas at Austin. Butler was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 5, 2007, in Austin, Texas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2007_045
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

John Sibley Butler was born on July 19, 1947, in New Orleans, Louisiana, to Thojest and Johnnie Mae Butler. While attending the Washington Parish schools, Butler was in the honor society and played the trombone in the school band; he also was active in Little League baseball and the Boy Scouts.

Butler served in Vietnam in the 1960s. In 1969, he earned his B.A. degree from Louisiana State University. Continuing his education at Northwestern University as a Fellow of Social Change, Butler received his Ph.D. in sociology in 1974. After receiving his degrees, Butler taught M.B.A. programs in Mexico and Japan. Butler was the founding editor of the National Journal of Sociology, which he edited for 15 years. In 1988, the University of California at Berkeley sought Butler for a think tank on Testing and American Organizations.

Butler authored several books, published numerous journal articles, and was recognized with several awards. Butler was also one of the distinguished professors selected for the election committee advisory board for then Texas governor George W. Bush in 2000.

Butler became the chair of the Department of Management in the Graduate School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin in 1999; in 2002, he became the Director of the IC2 Institute where he also held the Herb Kelleher Chair for Entrepreneurship and Business and was the Sam Barshop Research Fellow. Butler served on the board of directors for Morehouse Research Institute in Atlanta, Georgia, and the Langston University National Institute for the Study of Minority Enterprise. In 2006, Butler was appointed by President Bush to the J. William Fulbright Scholarship Board; he was reappointed in 2007.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with John S. Butler was conducted by Denise Gines on February 5, 2007, in Austin, Texas, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Sociology professor and academic administrator John S. Butler (1947 -) was twice appointed to the J. William Fulbright Scholarship Board by President George W. Bush, and serves as the director of the IC2 Institute at the University of Texas at Austin.

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:

Butler, John S. (John Sibley)

Gines, Denise (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Butler, John S. (John Sibley)--Interviews

African American college teachers--Texas--Austin--Interviews

African American college administrators--Texas--Austin--Interviews

African American sociologists--Interviews

University of Texas--Faculty--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Professor

HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

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 John S. Butler, February 5, 2007. 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 John S. Butler, Section A2007_045_001_001, TRT: 0:27:50 ?

John S. Butler was born on July 19, 1947 in New Orleans, Louisiana to Johnnie Mae Sibley Butler and Thojest Butler, Sr. Butler's maternal grandmother, Jessie Cahee Downs, was an alumnus of Grambling State University; and his maternal grandfather, John Sibley, was a blues guitarist. His grandmother later married a second husband, Leon Downs, who worked for the Louisiana Power and Light Company. Butler's father grew up in St. Helena Parish, Louisiana, where his mother sold baked goods, and his father worked for a life insurance company. Butler's paternal aunts and uncles all attended graduate school, mostly in the North; while his father graduated from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and became an agricultural county agent and principal in Washington Parish, Louisiana. Butler's parents met while his mother was in college, and then married and raised Butler in Franklinton, Louisiana. He and his four siblings attended Washington Parish Elementary School, and all became college graduates.

African American college teachers--Texas--Austin--Interviews.

African American college administrators--Texas--Austin--Interviews.

African American sociologists--Interviews.

University of Texas--Faculty--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with John S. Butler, Section A2007_045_001_002, TRT: 0:28:30 ?

John S. Butler grew up in Franklinton, Louisiana, which was the subject of Horace Mann Bond's book, 'The Star Creek Papers.' Butler belonged to the Boy Scouts of America, served as president of his Methodist Youth Fellowship chapter, and often went fishing with his maternal grandmother, Jessie Cahee Downs. He also played guitar, piano and trombone; and attended Franklinton's Washington Parish High School, where he was mentored by his teacher, Eva Crain, and basketball coach, Walter Lee Johnson. Upon graduating in 1965, he enrolled at Louisiana State University (LSU) in Baton Rouge, where he and Brenda Temple Tull were among the school's first three African American students. Butler was the first black player on LSU's basketball team, and he also performed with the marching band. He graduated in 1969, and was drafted into the Vietnam War, serving as a medic at the 27th Surgical Hospital. Butler completed his U.S. military service in 1971, and went on to study military organizations at Northwestern University.

Video Oral History Interview with John S. Butler, Section A2007_045_001_003, TRT: 0:28:20 ?

John S. Butler studied sociology with Professor Charles Moskos at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. He also joined the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. Butler earned his graduate degree in 1974, and became a professor at the University of Texas (UT) at Austin. The next year, he joined a governmental research group, and studied the possibility of an all-volunteer U.S. military with colleagues like Israeli psychologist Reuven Gal. In 1986, Butler founded the National Journal of Sociology, which focused on African American topics. His research interests included educational testing, business formation in the black community and military organizations. In the 1990s, Butler was named the director of UT's Innovation, Creativity and Capital Institute. He also belonged to the boards of the Opportunity Funding Corporation and the Morehouse Research Institute. In 1997, Butler and Moskos, his former graduate professor, published the book 'All That We Can Be' about the history of integration in the U.S. military.

Video Oral History Interview with John S. Butler, Section A2007_045_001_004, TRT: 0:28:30 ?

John S. Butler served as a professor of sociology at the University of Texas (UT) at Austin, and spent the summers teaching at the Aoyama Gakuin University in

Tokyo, Japan. Butler was also a lifelong Republican, and often played golf with President George Walker Bush while he was the governor of Texas. During the presidential race in 2000, Butler was active with the George W. Bush Election Committee; and, after the election, he considered accepting a job at the Pentagon, but decided to remain in Austin, Texas. Instead, President Bush appointed him to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board in 2003. During this time, Butler continued to play the piano and guitar, and wrote UT's official song for the Rose Bowl Game in 2004. His academic research focused on the history of African American entrepreneurship, including the impact of segregation on black entrepreneurship in the South, and the prevalence of business ownership among black immigrant communities.

Video Oral History Interview with John S. Butler, Section A2007_045_001_005, TRT: 0:19:00 ?

John S. Butler served as the director of the Innovation, Creativity and Capital Institute at the University of Texas at Austin. The institute helped develop companies like GloFish, Inc., which was founded by Alan Blake in 2001 to develop genetically engineered fluorescent pet fish. In addition, Butler had a lifelong love of music, especially the works of Ray Charles, Lionel Richie and Bill Withers. He was married to Rosemary Griffey Butler, with whom he had one son, John Butler. Butler reflects upon his life, and his advice to future generations. He concludes the interview by describing his concerns for the African American community, and how he would like to be remembered.