

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Angela Dodson

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Dodson, Angela P.
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Angela Dodson,
Dates:	March 7, 2013
Bulk Dates:	2013
Physical Description:	8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:56:21).
Abstract:	Newspaper editor and magazine editor Angela Dodson (1951 -) was the first African American woman appointed as style editor of The New York Times, where she later became a senior editor. She also served as executive editor of the Black Issues Book Reviews. Dodson was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 7, 2013, in Trenton, New Jersey. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2013_060
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Newspaper, magazine and books editor Angela P. Dodson was born on May 24, 1951 in Beckley, West Virginia to parents William Alfred, Sr., and Kira Evelyn. Dodson received her B.A. degree in journalism in 1973 from Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia and her M.A. degree in journalism and public affairs in 1979 from American University in Washington, D.C.

Having served as an intern at the *Charleston Gazette*, she accepted a full time position as a reporter for the *Huntington Advertiser* and later as a news correspondent with its parent company Gannett Co. Inc. at Gannett News Service in the Washington, D.C. bureau, and later for the *Rochester Times Union*. She also worked for the *Washington Star*, and the *Courier Journal* of Louisville, Kentucky. In 1983, Dodson moved to the *New York Times* as a National Desk copy editor and was soon promoted to editor for the “Living” section and head of the Style Department. In 1992, Dodson became the first African American woman promoted to be a senior editor at *The New York Times*.

After leaving the *New York Times* in 1995, Dodson contributed articles and served as an editor for various publications, including *Essence* and *Black Issues Book Review*, before being named executive editor of the book review in 2003. In 2007, she became a freelance editor, writer and publishing consultant, contributing frequently to *DIVERSE: Issues In Higher Education*. Dodson has edited and ghost-written many books for major publishers and numerous self-published authors. In 2012, she founded Editorsoncall LLC.

Dodson has been a consultant for the Maynard Institute for Journalism Education and Hampton University and is the host of an award-winning radio program, Black Catholics, Yes!, for the Diocese of Trenton, New Jersey. She has taught workshops on writing and editing for many organizations including the National Black Writers Conference, the National Association of Black Journalists, the American Press Institute, the American Society of

Newspaper Editors, and the Maynard Institute's Editing Program. She has served as an adjunct faculty member at Mercer County Community College.

Dodson was honored at Marshall University as the Black Alumna of the Year in 1998 and as a Distinguished Alumna in the School of Journalism in 1989. Dodson received a Black Achiever in Industry Award from the Harlem Y.M.C.A. in 1990 and the Feature Writing Award from the New York Association of Black Journalists in 2000.

Dodson lives in Trenton, New Jersey with her husband, Michael I. Days, editor of the *Daily News* of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They have four adopted sons.

Angela Dodson was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 7, 2013.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Angela Dodson was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 7, 2013, in Trenton, New Jersey, and was recorded on 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Newspaper editor and magazine editor Angela Dodson (1951 -) was the first African American woman appointed as style editor of The New York Times, where she later became a senior editor. She also served as executive editor of the Black Issues Book Reviews.

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:

Dodson, Angela P.

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Dodson, Angela P.--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

New York Times Gannett Co. Inc., Cox, Matthews & Associates

Occupations:

Newspaper Editor

Magazine Editor

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 Angela Dodson, March 7, 2013. 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 Angela Dodson, Section A2013_060_001_001, TRT: 1:31:52 ?

Angela Dodson was born on May 24, 1951 in Beckley, West Virginia to Kira Walthall Dodson and William Dodson, Sr. Her maternal great-great-grandparents, Milton Waller and Mary Waller, were born in the 1830s near Pittsylvania County, Virginia. Nearly a century later, Dodson's mother was born in 1922 in Altavista, Virginia. When she was five years old, her family relocated to the coalmining town of Helen, West Virginia. Dodson's paternal family originated in Rocky Mount, Virginia, the birthplace of her great-great-grandmother, Kizziah Dodson; great-grandfather, Obediah Dodson; and grandparents, John Dodson and Lucy Basham Dodson. Her father was also born in Rocky Mount, in 1922. By the late 1920s, all of his family members had moved to Slab Fork, West Virginia, where Dodson's great-grandfather relocated around 1900. Dodson's parents met in high school. During World War II, his mother worked in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, while his father served in the U.S. Navy. They married and settled in West Virginia in 1948.

Video Oral History Interview with Angela Dodson, Section A2013_060_001_002, TRT: 2:28:35 ?

Angela Dodson moved in the mid-1950s from Helen, West Virginia to New Castle, Pennsylvania, where her father, William Dodson, Sr., worked in the steel mills by day and studied electronics at night. Dodson's family belonged to the Second Baptist Church, and she attended the majority-white West Side Elementary School. Her household included her brother and stepsister, William Dodson, Jr. and Emilie Cook Wright. They lived in a large Victorian home, where they rented rooms to tenants and housed family members like Dodson's maternal grandmother, Lilly Waller Walthall. In 1962, Dodson's family relocated to Meyersdale, Pennsylvania, where her father secured a position at the Federal Aviation Agency as a communications tower maintenance technician. The town of Meyersdale was predominantly white, and many of the residents were recent immigrants from eastern and southern Europe. While there, Dodson attended Meyersdale Area High School, where she completed the sixth and seventh grades.

Video Oral History Interview with Angela Dodson, Section A2013_060_001_003, TRT: 3:29:54 ?

Angela Dodson's family moved in 1964 to Charleston, West Virginia, where her father was placed by the Federal Aviation Agency. In Charleston, her family faced discriminatory realty practices. They struggled to find a house for several years, eventually settling in Chesapeake, West Virginia. As a result, Dodson attended several schools in the area: Woodrow Wilson Junior High School, Marmet Junior High School and East Bank High School, where she earned her high school diploma. Dodson developed an interest in writing at an early age, and published her first piece in the Marmet Junior High School newspaper. She went on to become the editor of her high school newspaper, The Pioneer Post. She had supportive teachers, and excelled academically. In 1969, Dodson enrolled in the journalism program at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia. There, she wrote for The Parthenon student newspaper. In 1970, she

covered the crash of Southern Airways Flight 932, which killed most of the school's football team.

Video Oral History Interview with Angela Dodson, Section A2013_060_001_004, TRT: 4:30:12 ?
Angela Dodson was a sophomore at Marshall University in 1970, when seventy-five of the school's football team members, boosters and coaches were killed in the crash of Southern Airways Flight 932. At this point, Dodson reflects upon how the event was represented in the media. Dodson was hired as a full-time reporter for The Huntington Advertiser in 1972, prior to her college graduation in 1973. While writing for the paper, she won an award from the Associated Press for a series of articles on the black community in Huntington. In 1974, Dodson moved to Washington, D.C. to work as a reporter for the Gannett Company, Inc. There, she was introduced to reporter Betty Anne Williams, and joined the National Association of Black Journalists. In 1977, Dodson was hired as the assistant news feature editor at the Gannett Company, Inc. She also met journalist Robert C. Maynard, and worked as an editing instructor at the Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education.

Video Oral History Interview with Angela Dodson, Section A2013_060_001_005, TRT: 5:31:14 ?
Angela Dodson worked at the Gannett Company, Inc. with John Curley, who subsequently became the news corporation's CEO. In 1978, she began a master's degree at American University, where she studied journalism and public affairs. To complete the degree requirements, she moved to Rochester, New York to serve as an intern at the Rochester Times-Union. There, she worked on the city desk and copy desk, and as a wire editor during the Iran hostage crisis. Dodson graduated in 1979, and joined the Washington Star in 1980. With help from journalist Mervin Aubespain, Dodson secured a position at the Courier-Journal in Louisville, Kentucky in 1981. On Dodson's first day at the Courier-Journal, the news broke that black reporter Janet Cooke had fabricated a Pulitzer Prize winning story. That same year, Dodson was elected national secretary of the National Association of Black Journalists. In 1982, she joined the staff of The New York Times.

Video Oral History Interview with Angela Dodson, Section A2013_060_001_006, TRT: 6:29:31 ?
Angela Dodson joined the staff of The New York Times in 1982. She began as an editor on the national desk, and then moved to the living section, where she worked with Daryl Royster Alexander and mentored food writer Jessica B. Harris. In 1991, Dodson replaced Claudia Payne as head of the style department, at a time when journalists of color were facing increased hostility from their white colleagues at The New York Times. Dodson was accused of being selected because of her race, and received backlash from her department staff. Shortly after the promotion, she replaced Paul Delaney as senior editor of administration. Dodson took a medical leave in 1994, and attempted to return to work in 1995. The newspaper refused to accommodate her carpal tunnel syndrome, and she filed a suit against them. Dodson went on to teach at Mercer County Community College, and worked as a substitute editor at Essence. She wrote for the Black Issues Book Review from 2003 to 2007, and then founded Editorsoncall, LLC.

Video Oral History Interview with Angela Dodson, Section A2013_060_001_007, TRT: 7:28:40 ?
Angela Dodson created the freelance editing service Editorsoncall, LLC in 2007. The company secured its early clients from Dodson's connections at The New York Times and the National Association of Black Journalists, and filled a niche created by the growth of self-published media. Dodson also worked as a freelance editor and writer with Yanick Rice-Lamb and Ingrid Sturgis. She interviewed scholars like Henry Louis "Skip" Gates, Jr., Henry Wiencek,

Raymond Dobard, Jacqueline Tobin and Annette Gordon-Reed for the Black Issues Book Review, which was renamed Diverse: Issues in Higher Education in 2005. With her husband, journalist Michael I. Days, Dodson adopted four sons: Edward Days, Adrian Days, Andrew Days and Umi Days. They raised their children with help from Dodson's stepsister, Emilie Cook Wright. At this point in the interview, Dodson shares her advice to aspiring journalists. She also reflects upon her life and her hopes and concerns for the African American community.

Video Oral History Interview with Angela Dodson, Section A2013_060_001_008, TRT: 8:26:23 ?
Angela Dodson describes how she would like to be remembered, and concludes the interview by narrating her photographs.