

THE HISTORYMAKERS®

Nation's Largest
African American Video
Oral History Archive



www.thehistorymakers.org

“...an inestimable trove to historians.”

David Levering Lewis | Professor Emeritus, New York University

ORAL HISTORY + ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

The HistoryMakers Digital Archive is an easy-to-use online database of stories from thousands of African Americans from a broad range of backgrounds and experiences. Unlike other primary source resources, *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive* provides high-quality video content, fully searchable transcripts, and unique content from individuals whose life stories would have been lost were it not for *The HistoryMakers*.



“The HistoryMakers Digital Archive is essential.”

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham | Professor, Harvard University

‘RIGHTING’ THE REAL STORY

The HistoryMakers Collection is unique because it is the first large-scale attempt to capture testimonies about the Black experience since the recording of the stories of former slaves during the Works Progress Administration Project of the 1930s. These testimonies, conducted in homes and offices across the United States and abroad, capture the narratives of African American men and women who have made significant contributions to American life, history and culture during the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Unfortunately, many of these contributions have largely been untold and unrecorded; hence, they are still largely “unknown.” They are “America’s Missing Stories.” *The HistoryMakers* Collection provides a firsthand view into the lives and experiences of both well-known and unsung African Americans, ranging from stories of:

- Vernon Jordan escorting Charlayne Hunter-Gault as she integrated the University of Georgia;
- Katherine Johnson’s calculation of John Glenn’s orbit around Earth;
- 221 of the nation’s top scientists;
- The false accusation, capture, imprisonment, and acquittal of Angela Davis;
- Alonzo Pettie, the oldest living black cowboy; and
- The stories of Harry Belafonte, Melody Hobson, Savion Glover, Melissa Harris-Perry, former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, Charles Blow, Whoopi Goldberg, James Earl Jones, and President Barack Obama (while he was still an Illinois State Senator), among thousands of others.

BY THE NUMBERS

3,600—Full-length video oral histories in *The HistoryMakers* Collection

413—Cities and towns where interviews have been conducted

28—Age of the youngest HistoryMakers at the time of interview, Ayisha McMillan Cravotta

109—Age of the oldest HistoryMaker at the time of interview, Louisiana Hines

148,000+—Stories currently available on *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive*

196—Colleges, universities, public libraries and K-12 schools that currently subscribe to *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive*

12,000—Hours of primary source material in *The HistoryMakers* Collection

51—Countries that use *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive*

1700s—Earliest recollection in *The HistoryMakers* Collection



These stories serve to educate the world about the depth of African American history, life, and culture. *The HistoryMakers* is a vitally important treasure trove of insights, career paths, role models, and perspectives. These stories, now and well into the future, will provide a more complete understanding of who we are as Americans as well as where we have come from and where we are going.

The HistoryMakers Digital Archive is poised to expand in future releases and include other stories and even other oral history collections. Now, the ever-increasing corpus within *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive* can be searched and viewed on all phones and mobile devices, delivering one-of-a-kind content to the palm of your hand.

WHAT'S IN THE DIGITAL ARCHIVE?

With over 11,000 hours of unique content, *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive* features videotaped first person testimony of both well-known and unsung African Americans recorded in over 413 cities and towns across the United States as well as places like Norway, Mexico and the Caribbean. Interviews in *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive* range from 90 minutes to 15 hours in length, and are housed permanently at the Library of Congress.

HistoryMakers are separated into fifteen distinct categories:

- Art
- Business
- Civics
- Education
- Entertainment
- Law
- Media
- Medicine
- The Military
- Music
- Politics
- Religion
- STEM
- Sports
- Style (Fashion & Beauty)

Searchable by subject and keyword, *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive*, and its easy to use inferential indexing system, currently places almost 3,400 video oral histories in the hands of students and teachers, with highlighted transcripts and curated story segments to aid in searching. The life stories and experiences of the individual HistoryMakers interviewed for *The HistoryMakers* Collection show the vast diversity of African American contribution and achievement in America and abroad. They span a broad range in terms of education, economic and social status, political affiliations and religious beliefs; they exhibit origins ranging from New England to Hawaii; and they share personal and family memories stretching from the 1700s to the present. Also found in the collection are thousands of little known histories: Blacks on Wall Street; Blacks in Hollywood; Black scientists, and others.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Access to same interviews housed permanently at the Library of Congress' Reading Room



POWERFUL SEARCH FEATURES

Quickly find the HistoryMaker or story you are looking for!



KEYWORD

- Search full transcripts, story titles, or biographies by keyword, and narrow results down to the story level
- Instantly find specific content



BROWSE

- Maker Directory for access to full interviews
- Filter by: Category, Gender, Decade of Birth, and more



TAG

Search the collection by themes such as Ethics, Faith, Racial Issues, and more

“Access to *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive* gave me the opportunity to write *Addie Wyatt's Great Migration* narrative.”

Marcia Walker-McWilliams | Professor, Rice University

“*The HistoryMakers Digital Archive* is a major contribution to the study of our country.”

Sarah Pritchard | Dean of Libraries, Northwestern University



SAMPLE SUBJECTS

- Foodways
- Film & Filmmakers
- Black Arts Movement
- Funeral Rites
- Public Health & Medical Workers
- Makings of Modern Music
- Poetry
- Entrepreneurs
- Black Radical Tradition
- Sports
- LGBTQ Stories
- Shifts in Beauty Culture
- Migration & the Black Diaspora
- Black Feminism
- Theology & Religious Life
- Sciences
- Black Towns & Land Ownership

CREATE YOUR OWN INNOVATIVE LESSON PLANS AND CURRICULUM

The heart of *The HistoryMakers*' mission is education, and K-12 curriculum materials such as *FutureMakers: How to Become A HistoryMaker*, *Pioneers in the Struggle: The History of African Americans in the Illinois General Assembly (1877-2001)*, and *ScienceMakers* have been made available for educators to use in crafting their own lesson plans and assignments using *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive* (www.thehistorymakers.org/education). In one instance, the Digital Archive has even been used to teach students vocabulary in context! In the higher education arena, *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive* has been used for:

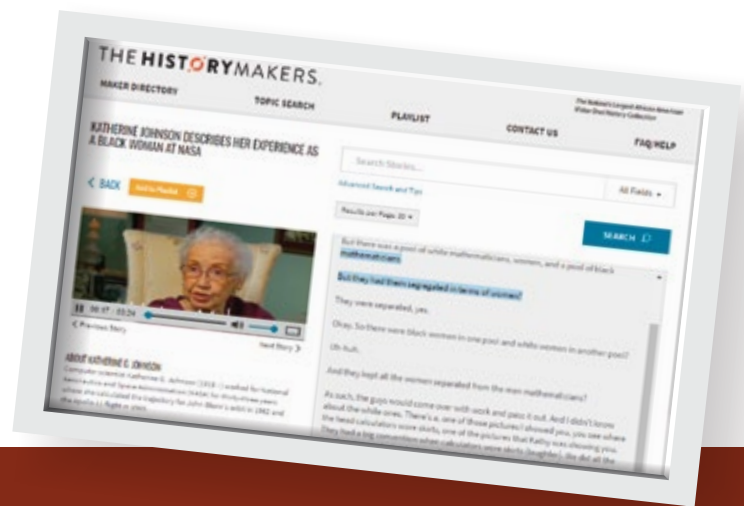
- Challenging recent perspectives on policing in America, from the South to the North, and from the past to the present
- Documenting the contributions of African American lawyers fighting for equality in education during the Civil Rights Movement in Virginia
- Tracing the origins of the artistic and literary explosion of the 1950s-1970s, called the Black Arts Movement
- Exploring the theme of intersectionality in the lives of black women leaders, activists, artists and thinkers, *among others!*
- Examining the varied reactions of African Americans to presentations of the Classics, and how this information can be utilized to increase diversity in the field
- Adding a real-world dimension through first-person testimony, to the study of affordable housing policy in business courses
- Evaluating the impact of literacy and education on the lives of African Americans from disparate locales, time periods, and socioeconomic statuses

“The HistoryMakers has revolutionized African American Studies for generations to come,”

Isabel Singer | Student, Yale University

“When John Glenn was going up, he called over and said, ‘Tell her if she gets the same thing the calculators got, then I’ll use their data.’ We didn’t have that confidence in calculators early, and he would take my hand calculations first.”

Katherine G. Johnson | NASA Research Mathematician
Interviewed February 6, 2012
Featured in the movie, *Hidden Figures* (2016)



ABOUT THE HISTORYMAKERS

Since its inception, *The HistoryMakers*, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit headquartered in Chicago, has grown to become *the* digital repository for the black experience. With education as its mission, this one-of-a-kind collection provides an unprecedented and irreplaceable physical and online record of African American lives, history and culture through unique first-person testimony and accompanying documentation. Thousands of video oral history interviews (11,000 hours) have been recorded in 413 cities and towns, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Norway across a variety of disciplines—including the arts, business, civic engagement, education, entertainment, law, the media, medicine, STEM, the military, music, politics, religion, sports, and fashion & beauty. The interviews, each lasting 90 minutes to 15 hours in length, include recollections referencing people and events dating back to the 1700s and thousands of subjects including business, technology, the Great Migration, foodways, poetry, the Black Arts Movement, funeral rites, public health, modern music, LGBTQ, STEM, theology, integration, shifts in beauty culture, black feminism, and more. In 2014, the Library of Congress became *The HistoryMakers*' permanent repository while heralding *The HistoryMakers* as a “one of a kind, unparalleled resource that is vitally important to the nation and the world and to those seeking a more complete record of our nation’s history and its people.” *The HistoryMakers Digital Archive* has been licensed by 150 colleges, universities (Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford, Howard, Spelman, Morehouse, Ohio State, University of Oregon, etc.), K-12 schools, and public libraries (Chicago, New York, Cleveland, Houston, Los Angeles, etc.) for use by faculty, students, and patrons.

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