

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Jesse Madison

Overview of the Collection

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| Repository: | The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com |
| Creator: | Madison, Jesse, 1939-2014 |
| Title: | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jesse Madison, |
| Dates: | August 21, 2000 |
| Bulk Dates: | 2000 |
| Physical Description: | 4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:00:00). |
| Abstract: | State representative The Honorable Jesse Madison (1939 - 2014) served in the Illinois House of Representatives, after which he was appointed as the Vice President of Finance and Administration for the National Urban League. He later accepted an appointment as the Commissioner of Consumer Services and Commissioner of the Chicago Park District under Mayor Harold Washington. Madison was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 21, 2000, in Springfield, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| Identification: | A2000_056 |
| Language: | The interview and records are in English. |

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Jesse Donald Madison was born on January 1, 1939 in Memphis, Tennessee to Mildred and Walter Madison. He graduated from Manassas High School in 1956 and moved to Chicago, Illinois to continue his education. Initially attending Wilson Junior College (now Kennedy-King), Madison soon transferred to Roosevelt University, where he received his B.A. degree in business administration. While in college, Madison married Frances Thornton. An accountant by occupation, Madison spent ten years in this field, rising to the position of Senior Accountant with the Maremont Corporation. While serving as Deputy Director of the Chicago Economic Development Corporation, Madison launched his political career by being elected in 1974 to the Illinois House of Representatives. During Madison's two terms in Springfield, he supported and helped pass the Public Aid Appropriations Bill, the Adult Education Bill and others. In 1976, he was voted the "Best Legislator" by the Independent Voters of Illinois.

Madison left the Illinois General Assembly at the end of 1978 and was hired by the Urban League to act as Vice-President of Finance and Administration. However, when Harold Washington decided to run for Mayor of Chicago, he asked Madison to join his campaign staff. Under Washington's leadership, Madison served as Commissioner of Consumer Services for three years. He was also Commissioner of the Chicago Park District, where he remained until Richard M. Daley became Mayor.

Since leaving city government, Madison served as the President and CEO of the Abraham Lincoln Center, a social service organization. He was also involved in many civic organizations, including the African American Family Commission, the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Child Welfare Advisory Council.

Madison passed away on August 8, 2014, at the age of 75. He and his wife had two daughters, Tracey and Lynn, and two grandchildren.

Jesse Madison was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 21, 2000.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Jesse Madison was conducted by Adele Hodge on August 21, 2000, in Springfield, Illinois, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. State representative The Honorable Jesse Madison (1939 - 2014) served in the Illinois House of Representatives, after which he was appointed as the Vice President of Finance and Administration for the National Urban League. He later accepted an appointment as the Commissioner of Consumer Services and Commissioner of the Chicago Park District under Mayor Harold Washington.

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:

Madison, Jesse, 1939-2014

Hodge, Adele (Interviewer)

Haynes, Frank (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Madison, Jesse, 1939-2014--Interviews

African American state legislators--Illinois--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Illinois

Occupations:

State Representative

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 Jesse Madison, August 21, 2000. 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 Jesse Madison, Section A2000_056_001_001,
TRT: 1:30:00 ?

Jesse Madison was born on January 1, 1939 in Memphis, Tennessee. He had five siblings: Ernest, Walter, Eugene, Elsie, and Edna. There were weeks when his family struggled when his father, Walter Madison, only brought home only \$12.50, and his mother, Mildred Peterson Madison, did not work, either. Madison spent much of his childhood playing with his sisters, as he was the second youngest between two girls. He remembers listening to his older sister, Elsie, tell stories at bedtime. Madison was a mischievous child who frequently got into trouble growing up. He attended Carnes Elementary School and Manassas High School in Memphis. Madison remembers his enjoyable high school years.

African Americans--Tennessee--Social life and customs.

African Americans--Tennessee--History--20th century.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jesse Madison, Section A2000_056_001_002,
TRT: 2:30:00 ?

Jesse Madison describes his experience attending Manassas High School in Memphis, Tennessee, where he fought with a white student on the school bus who would not let him sit down. For fear of being caught by the police, Madison did not attend graduation. Instead, he moved to Chicago, Illinois where he attended Wilson Junior College from 1957 to 1959 and Roosevelt University from 1960 to 1968 where he studied math and accounting. He also married his high school sweetheart prior to enrolling at Roosevelt University. Madison became involved in politics helping Carter Jones run for Alderman of Chicago's 27th Ward on the West Side of Chicago in 1963. In 1972, Madison was elected to the Illinois General Assembly.

Chicago (Ill.)--Politics and government.

Minorities--Political activity--Illinois--Chicago--History--20th century.

S.C.L.C. Operation Breadbasket.

Hampton, Fred, 1948-1969.

Elections--Corrupt Practices--Illinois.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jesse Madison, Section A2000_056_001_003,
TRT: 3:30:00 ?

Jesse Madison describes his service in the Illinois General Assembly from 1975 to 1978. After leaving the legislature, Madison worked at the Chicago Urban League and then joined Mayor Harold Washington's administration, where he was appointed as Commissioner for Consumer Services from 1983 to 1986. Following this, Madison served as the Commissioner of the Chicago Park District for four years. He also talks about Illinois' dirty politics as well as the different political camps that African American legislators sided on during his service in the Illinois General Assembly.

Elections--Corrupt Practices--Illinois.

Chicago (Ill.)--Politics and government.

Minorities--Political activity--Illinois--Chicago--History--20th century.

Washington, Harold, 1922-1987.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jesse Madison, Section A2000_056_001_004,
TRT: 4:30:00 ?

Jesse Madison describes his professional life and career in politics. In 1990, he

began working at Chicago's Abraham Lincoln Center as an accountant and manager and describes the growth of the organization. He then talks about his children and grandchildren as well as his legacy. Madison also provides advice for young people interested in politics, and encourages young African Americans to become involved in the political process in order to make social progress. Finally, he describes working on the Equal Rights Amendment in the Illinois General Assembly.

Minorities--Political activity--Illinois--Chicago--History--20th century.
Abraham Lincoln Centre (Chicago, Ill.).