

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Bishop T.D. Jakes

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Jakes, T. D.
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Bishop T.D. Jakes,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 25, 2010
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2010
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:10:18).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Bishop Bishop T.D. Jakes (1957 - ) was a leading televangelist and the pastor of The Potter's House megachurch in Dallas, Texas. Jakes was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 25, 2010, in Dallas, Texas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2010_106
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Bishop T.D. Jakes, Sr., was born on June 9, 1957, in South Charleston, West Virginia, to businessman and entrepreneur Ernest, Sr. and educator Odith. The youngest of three children, Jakes was known in his community as “the Bible boy.” However, due to his slight lisp, he was told he would never preach. When Jakes was ten years old, his father developed kidney failure. Jakes and his mother cared for him until his death in 1973. Jakes preached his first sermon in 1976 and was officially ordained in 1979. He met his wife Serita Ann Jamison while guest preaching at her neighborhood church. In 1981, the two were married. In 1980, at the age of 23, Jakes established the Temple of Faith Church in Montgomery, West Virginia, a storefront church with only ten members. Jakes worked simultaneously at the Union Carbide to keep his ministry afloat. Friends International Christian University awarded Jakes his B.A. degree in biblical studies in 1985, his M.A. degree in biblical studies in 1990, and his D.Min. in 1995.

In 1987, Jakes was ordained into the Bishopric, and in 1992, he first preached *Woman, Thou Art Loosed*, a sermon that addressed the pain of women. The next year, Jakes launched a weekly television broadcast on the Trinity Broadcasting Network, catapulting himself into the world of televangelism. In 1994, he began his weekly broadcasts on Black Entertainment Television, and that same year, he initiated the first ManPower conference, designed to motivate men in their relational and community roles. In 1996, after moving his congregation from small town to small town in West Virginia, Jakes moved his family and fifty other church employees to Dallas where they established the Potter’s House. The first church service drew more than 2,000 people, and since then, the membership has grown to more than 30,000. In 1998, Jakes founded the Metroplex Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and established Clay Academy in the heart of Capella Park, a mixed-use, “new urbanism” community.

One of PBS Religion and Ethics Newsweekly’s “Top 10 Religious Leaders” in 2000, Jakes holds a place in the *Black Americans of Achievement* series, *The Encyclopedia of African-American Christian Heritage*, as well as the *Who’s Who Among African Americans*. In 2000, Jakes served as the keynote speaker at the annual conferences of

the National Council of Black Mayors, the National Black Police Association, and the 2000 Congressional Black Caucus. In 2001, *Time* magazine and CNN distinguished Jakes as America's Best Preacher, and the next year, *Savoy* magazine named him one of the "Top 100 Powers That Be." In 2009, President Barack Obama asked Jakes to deliver the morning service before the historic Presidential Inauguration. Bishop Jakes, having spent over thirty years in the ministry, is also the author of more than twenty books and a Grammy-award winning gospel musician. Currently, Bishop Jakes lives in Dallas with his wife, Serita. They have five children and two grandchildren.

Jakes was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 25, 2010.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Bishop T.D. Jakes was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on August 25, 2010, in Dallas, Texas, and was recorded on 4 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Bishop Bishop T.D. Jakes (1957 - ) was a leading televangelist and the pastor of The Potter's House megachurch in Dallas, Texas.

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## 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®.

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## 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.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

Jakes, T. D.

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Jakes, T. D.--Interviews

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## Occupations:

Bishop

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

ReligionMakers

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## 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 Bishop T.D. Jakes, August 25, 2010. 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).

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## 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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Bishop T.D. Jakes, Section A2010\_106\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:06  
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Bishop T.D. Jakes was born on June 9, 1957 in South Charleston, West Virginia to Odith Patton Jakes and Ernest Jakes, Sr. His paternal grandparents, Lorena Smiley Gray and T.D. Jakes, raised three children in Petal, Mississippi; and, after his grandfather's murder, his grandmother supported the family by working as a laundress. His father briefly attended Morehouse College, and was then drafted to the Cleveland Browns football team. Jakes' maternal grandfather, sharecropper Richard Patton, married missionary Susie Williams Patton, with whom he raised fourteen children. He eventually became a landowner in Marion, Alabama, where Jakes' mother attended the Lincoln Normal School alongside Coretta Scott King. She became a teacher at Springfield High School in Petal, where she met and married Jakes' father. They moved to the coalmining town of Charleston, West Virginia, where his father worked at the Nashville Stone Setting Company, and his mother raised three children in the segregated Vandalia neighborhood.

Video Oral History Interview with Bishop T.D. Jakes, Section A2010\_106\_001\_002, TRT: 0:27:15  
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Bishop T.D. Jakes grew up in the all-black Vandalia neighborhood of Charleston, West Virginia, where his father, Ernest Jakes, Sr., owned a custodial service that employed fifty-two staff members. Jakes sold Grit magazines and vegetables to earn extra money, and attended the segregated Vandalia Elementary School. There, he was treated for a speech impediment, and received encouragement from his mother, Odith Patton Jakes, who taught at the school. Later, Jakes was bused to the majority-white Weberwood Elementary School. When Jakes was ten years old, his father experienced kidney failure, and began taking weekly trips to the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio for dialysis treatments. During that time, Jakes managed his father's business. Jakes' parents divorced due to the strain of the illness, and his father remarried and moved to Mississippi. When Jakes was sixteen years old, his father passed away. He remembers attending his father's funeral at the East Pine A.M.E. Church in Petal, Mississippi.

Video Oral History Interview with Bishop T.D. Jakes, Section A2010\_106\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:54  
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Bishop T.D. Jakes left the Baptist faith during his teenage years, and joined a Pentecostal church in Charleston, West Virginia. He was called to the ministry at seventeen years old; and, when he was nineteen years old, preached his first sermon at Charleston's Greater Emmanuel Apostolic Faith Tabernacle. He was ordained three years later, and founded the Greater Emmanuel Temple of Faith in Montgomery, West Virginia, where he attracted a congregation of forty members. In 1980, Jakes relocated the church to Smithers, West Virginia, where his congregation grew to almost two hundred members. He remained in Smithers until 1990, when he moved the church to Charleston. There, he counseled women who had experienced abuse, and was inspired to create a sermon called Woman, Thou Art Loosed! In response to the program's popularity, Jakes published a book based on the sermon in 1993. That same year, Jakes was approached by the Trinity Broadcasting Network to become the host of 'Get Ready with T.D. Jakes.'

Video Oral History Interview with Bishop T.D. Jakes, Section A2010\_106\_001\_004, TRT: 0:44:03  
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Bishop T.D. Jakes moved his ministry to Dallas, Texas, where he attracted fifteen hundred congregants to his first Sunday service. In 1996, Jakes built The

Potter's House to house his growing congregation in Dallas. During this time, Jakes appeared on 'Larry King Live' and 'The Oprah Winfrey Show,' and was invited to the White House by President William Jefferson "Bill" Clinton. He was also featured on the cover of Time magazine in 2001. Jakes went on to create ManPower, a religious conference for men; and the MegaFest event, which drew over one hundred thousand attendees in Atlanta, Georgia and South Africa. Following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Jakes traveled to Louisiana, where he served as an advisor to President George Walker Bush. Jakes describes his hopes and concerns for the African American community, and talks about his missionary work in Africa. He also reflects upon his life, legacy, career and how he would like to be remembered.