

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Shelvin Louise Hall

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hall, Shelvin, 1948-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Shelvin Louise Hall,
Dates:	September 26, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:51:15).
Abstract:	Appellate court judge The Honorable Shelvin Louise Hall (1948 -) was the Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court's First District as well as a chairperson of the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association. Hall was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 26, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_191
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Judge Shelvin Hall was born in Cuero, Texas, in 1948. Hall attended Proviso East High School and graduated from Hampton University and Boston University School of Law. After law school, Hall received training in civil rights law through the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund. She then went into private practice with four other women in Houston, Texas, establishing the first law firm in the nation that was run entirely by African American women. Over a six-year period, Hall gained extensive civil rights litigation experience. In 1982, she returned to Chicago and was admitted to practice law in Illinois. For the next eight years, she acted as general counsel to the Illinois Department of Human Rights, supervising civil rights, administrative, labor and legislative issues.

Hall was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1991, overseeing its Domestic Relations Division for four years. From 1995-1999, Hall presided over the Circuit Court's Law Division, hearing Cook County's largest civil cases. In 1999, Hall was appointed Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court's First District.

Judge Hall is chairperson of the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association. She is former chair of the Illinois Judicial Council, an organization of predominately African American judges in Illinois. She has served on the boards of numerous organizations, including the Cook County Bar Association, the National Bar Association, the National Bar Association's Judicial Council, the Lutheran Family Mission and the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago. She was the first woman judge on the executive committee of the Illinois Judicial Conference, and serves on its education committee. She has held memberships in the Illinois Judges Association, the National Association of Women Judges, the Illinois State Bar Association and other bar groups. She is a member of the Friendship Baptist Church where her father, the Rev. Dr. Shelvin Jerome Hall is pastor. Her sister, Justice Priscilla L. Hall, sits on the New York State Supreme Court.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Shelvin Louise Hall was conducted by Larry Crowe on September 26, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Appellate court judge The Honorable Shelvin Louise Hall (1948 -) was the Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court's First District as well as a chairperson of the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association.

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:

- Hall, Shelvin, 1948-
- Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)
- Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

- African Americans--Interviews
 - Hall, Shelvin, 1948---Interviews
 - African American judges--Illinois--Interviews
-

Organizations:

- HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)
-

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Illinois

Occupations:

Appellate Court Judge

HistoryMakers® Category:

LawMakers

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 Shelvin Louise Hall, September 26, 2002. 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 Shelvin Louise Hall, Section
A2002_191_001_001, TRT: 0:30:15 ?

Shelvin Louise Hall describes her family's history. Hall was born on June 15, 1948 in Cuero, Texas to Lucy Mae Lewis Hall and HistoryMaker Reverend Dr.

Shelvin Hall. Her mother was born on September 19, 1918 in Cuero, Texas to Birdie Thomas Lewis and Jonas Lewis. Her maternal grandmother Lubirdie Thomas attended college. Hall's father was born in Yoakum, Texas to Mamie Shelvin. His maternal grandmother, Priscilla Shelvin, was a sharecropper who encouraged her children's education. Her father attended Bishop College in Marshall, Texas and Howard University in Washington, D.C. and was a Baptist pastor. Her mother went to Prairie View A&M University in Texas and Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas and was a school teacher. In 1955, Hall's family moved to Chicago, Illinois where they experienced snow for the first time and she attended Herzl Elementary School before the family moved to Maywood neighborhood. Hall recalls growing up with Black Panther Fred Hampton and hearing of his death.

African American judges--Illinois--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Shelvin Louise Hall, Section A2002_191_001_002, TRT: 0:28:10 ?

Shelvin Louise Hall describes her education. In high school, she was involved in theater, debate team and orchestra. Her father, HistoryMaker Reverend Dr. Shelvin Hall was a leader in the Baptist Church and active in the Civil Rights Movement including marching in Selma, Alabama. Hall details meeting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. several times at Friendship Baptist Church and attending his rally at Soldier Field in Chicago, Illinois. After graduating from Proviso East High School in Maywood, Illinois, Hall attended Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia where she was active in student government and helped to stage campus protests in the late 1960s. In 1970, she enrolled at Boston University School of Law where she experienced racial hostility in the law school and the City of Boston, Massachusetts. Hall concentrated on civil rights law and helped to form the Black American Law Students Association [BALSA].

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Shelvin Louise Hall, Section A2002_191_001_003, TRT: 0:29:50 ?

Shelvin Louise Hall talks about her legal career. After law school, Hall received training in civil rights law through the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund. She then went into private practice with four other women in Houston, Texas, establishing the first law firm in the nation run entirely by African American women. Hall was the first female president of the Houston Lawyers Association. When Mickey Leland won his Congressional race, he asked her to serve as his legislative director in Washington D.C. She handled legislative issues for the committees that Leland's served on including energy, health care, and foreign affairs. She traveled to Cuba with Leland and met Fidel Castro. In 1982, she returned to Chicago and for the next eight years, she acted as general counsel to the Illinois Department of Human Rights, supervising civil rights, administrative, labor and legislative issues. Hall describes winning a case against the Chicago Transit Authority [CTA] to require busses to be handicap accessible.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Shelvin Louise Hall, Section A2002_191_001_004, TRT: 0:29:15 ?

Shelvin Louise Hall talks about her judicial career. Hall is chairperson of the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association. She is former chair of the Illinois Judicial Council, an organization of predominately African American judges in Illinois. Hall was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1991, overseeing its Domestic Relations Division for four years where she handled cases related to divorce and child custody. Hall talks about how she openly opposed the

nomination of Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1991 and describes a tense situation when Thomas was invited to be the luncheon speaker when she was chair-elect of the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association. From 1995-1999, Hall presided over the Circuit Court's Law Division, hearing Cook County's largest civil cases ranging from medical malpractice to corporate disputes. In 1999, Hall was appointed Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court's First District and then won election for the position in the following general election.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Shelvin Louise Hall, Section A2002_191_001_005, TRT: 0:27:45 ?

Shelvin Louise Hall talks about her career as Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court's First District. Although many voters are unaware of judicial candidates, Hall points out that newspapers and different bar associations publish information on them. Hall enjoys being an appellate judge due to the diversity of her caseload and the comradery with her judicial colleagues. She is proud of her family and talks about the supportive and competitive relationship with her sister, New York Supreme Court Justice, Priscilla Hall. Hall comments on the need for the black community to be united around issues of racial justice and not divided by socioeconomic issues. She wants to be remembered for her persistence, consciousness, and as someone who worked to improve people's lives.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Shelvin Louise Hall, Section A2002_191_001_006, TRT: 0:26:00 ?

Shelvin Louise Hall narrates her photographs.