

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Sophia H. Hall

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hall, Sophia, 1943-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Sophia H. Hall,
Dates:	May 15, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:31:45).
Abstract:	Circuit court judge The Honorable Sophia H. Hall (1943 -) is a judge for Cook County, Illinois. Hall was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 15, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_107
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Sophia Hall was born on July 10, 1943 in Chicago, Illinois. After attending a parochial school, she went on to the University of Chicago Laboratory School, a high school program for gifted students. Hall attended the University of Wisconsin, earning her B.A. degree in history in 1964, and then attended Northwestern University School of Law, earning a J.D. degree in 1967.

After completing her law degree, Hall joined the firm of McCoy, Ming & Black in Chicago and remained there until 1976. During that time, she was also an administrative assistant to Stanley Kusper, Jr., former Clerk of Cook County, and was an adviser on election law. Hall joined Mitchell, Hall, Jones & Black in 1976, and she remained with them until her election to the bench in 1980. In 1983, she moved to criminal court, becoming the first woman to serve in that capacity in twenty years. She remained in that capacity for three years. By 1992, Hall was the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Division, and today she is the Presiding Judge of Juvenile Justice and Child Protection and is also assigned to the Chancery Division. Former President Bill Clinton appointed Hall to the Board of the State Justice Institute in 1998, where she continues to serve today.

Hall is active on a wide variety of committees, including the Supreme Court Rules Committee and the Illinois Judicial Ethics Committee. She is active with a number of professional organizations, including the National Association of Women Judges, and is currently the chairperson of the National Conference of State Trial Judges of the Judicial Division of the American Bar Association. Hall is a life member of the NAACP and has served in various capacities at both state and local level. She has been inducted into the *Today's Chicago Woman* Hall of Fame, received a Civil Rights Award from the Cook County Bar Association, and appeared in *Who's Who of America 46th Edition*. Hall has written numerous articles for various publications, speaks at a wide number of venues each year and has appeared on a number of television and radio broadcasts.

Hall was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on May 15, 2003.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Sophia H. Hall was conducted by Larry Crowe on May 15, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Circuit court judge The Honorable Sophia H. Hall (1943 -) is a judge for Cook County, Illinois.

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, Sophia, 1943-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Hall, Sophia, 1943---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Circuit 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 Sophia H. Hall, May 15, 2003. 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 Sophia H. Hall, Section A2003_107_001_001, TRT: 0:31:20 ?

Circuit court judge Sophia Hall describes her family background in detail, telling the story of how her grandparents came to Chicago from the South, and describing the long line of professionals and doctors in her family. Hall also touches upon the issue of passing for white, which some of her ancestors practiced. Hall then describes her childhood neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, and recalls her family's move to Hyde Park, where she entered a white environment and school for the first time.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Sophia H. Hall, Section A2003_107_001_002,

TRT: 0:30:25 ?

Circuit court judge Sophia Hall discusses her childhood interests, including her early fascination with the law. Hall then details her schooling, starting with her high school experience at the University of Chicago Laboratory School, then progressing to her studies in history at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and then her study of law at Northwestern University School of Law. Hall describes her academic and social involvements at each of these institutions.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Sophia H. Hall, Section A2003_107_001_003,
TRT: 0:29:40 ?

Circuit court judge Sophia Hall details her career as a practicing lawyer at the law firm McCoy, Ming and Black in the late 1960s. Hall explains how she, even as a young lawyer, was charged with arguing important civil rights cases, including a case in Rockford, Illinois that went to the Supreme Court. Hall also explains the activities of other activists, including Peoria, Illinois NAACP president John Gwynn, and explains how she and her firm represented him in a civil rights case. Hall then explains why she sought to become a judge and discusses the responsibilities and duties of a criminal court judge.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Sophia H. Hall, Section A2003_107_001_004,
TRT: 0:30:30 ?

Circuit court judge Sophia Hall uses her two decades of experience as a judge to comment on many current issues in the justice system. Hall discusses sentencing in regards to deterrence, race and crime, and shares her philosophy about how communities should be involved in conflict mediation and crime prevention. Hall then lists the many professional organizations in which she participates and holds leadership positions and discusses demographic shifts in the United States.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Sophia H. Hall, Section A2003_107_001_005,
TRT: 0:29:50 ?

Circuit court judge Sophia Hall expresses her hopes and concerns for the black community and shares her opinions about race reparations and affirmative action, stressing the importance of a diverse and equal society. Hall also reflects on her life and career, considering her legacy and how she would like to be remembered.