

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Jesse Jackson, Jr.

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## Overview of the Collection

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| <b>Repository:</b>           | The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com  |
| <b>Creator:</b>              | Jackson, Jesse, 1965-   |
| <b>Title:</b>                | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jesse Jackson, Jr.,  |
| <b>Dates:</b>                | May 12, 2000  |
| <b>Bulk Dates:</b>           | 2000  |
| <b>Physical Description:</b> | 3 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:32:11).   |
| <b>Abstract:</b>             | U.S. congressman The Honorable Jesse Jackson, Jr. (1965 - ) is an influential legislator from the 1st Congressional District of Illinois. Jackson was first elected to Congress in 1995 and has won two more elections by a very large margin. Jackson was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 12, 2000, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| <b>Identification:</b>       | A2000_029   |
| <b>Language:</b>             | The interview and records are in English.   |

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Born on March 11, 1965, Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. literally was born into the civil rights movement. Son of the passionate activist, the Reverend Jesse Jackson, Jackson was raised in an environment that strongly advocated education. Jackson attended North Carolina A&T State University, graduating magna cum laude with a degree in business management. He later attended the Chicago Theological Seminary, earning his master's degree in theology. He continued his education at the University of Illinois College of Law, earning his J.D. in 1993.

In 1995, he won election to the U.S. House of Representatives. Currently, Jackson sits on the House Appropriations Committee and on the subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education. Jackson has been awarded honorary doctorate degrees from the Chicago Theological Seminary, North Carolina A&T State University and Governors State University. Jackson was reelected in 2000, with a ninety to ten margin, and then won again in 2004. Jackson is known for his liberal agenda and his broad appeal.

Outside of his political career Jackson has coauthored numerous books including *It's About the Money: How You Can Get Out of Debt, Build Wealth, and Achieve Your Financial Dreams* and *Legal Lynching: The Death Penalty and America's Future*. Jackson has also worked as national field director for the Rainbow Coalition.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Jesse Jackson, Jr. was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on May 12, 2000, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 3 Betacame SP videocassettes. U.S. congressman The Honorable Jesse Jackson, Jr. (1965 - ) is an influential legislator from the 1st Congressional District of Illinois. Jackson was first elected to Congress in 1995 and has won two more elections by a very large margin.

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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:

Jackson, Jesse, 1965-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Hayes, Frank (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Jackson, Jesse, 1965---Interviews

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African American legislators--Illinois--Interviews.

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African American politicians--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.

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Military education--Wisconsin.

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Private schools--Washington (D.C.).

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African Americans--Suffrage--Southern States.

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Racism--United States--History.

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Operation PUSH (U.S.).

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Jackson, Jesse, 1941-.

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Political campaigns--Illinois.

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Marriage--United States.

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North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University.

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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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Illinois

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## **Occupations:**

U.S. Congressman

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

PoliticalMakers

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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 The Honorable Jesse Jackson, Jr., May 12, 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 2/5/2020 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 The Honorable Jesse Jackson, Jr.,  
Section A2000\_029\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:30 2000/05/12

Jesse Jackson, Jr. describes his experience growing up as the son of famed civil rights activist Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr., especially as it related to how his peers treated him in school. He then talks about his family background, describing his grandparents from both sides of the family, who came from the South. Jackson reflects on the current and past conditions of the South as the manifestation of America's struggle with race and class. Jackson then talks about his childhood, explaining that in the Jackson household, encounters with celebrities were commonplace. He discusses his primary and secondary education, detailing his experiences at Le Mans Military Academy and St. Alban's High School in Washington D.C.

He describes both schools positively, crediting military school with instilling in him values that he keeps today. Jackson then recalls a speech he made at Operation Breadbasket at an early age, which was indicative of his childhood involvement with helping his father in the Civil Rights Movement.

African American legislators--Illinois--Interviews.

African American politicians--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.

Military education--Wisconsin.

Private schools--Washington (D.C.).

African Americans--Suffrage--Southern States.

Racism--United States--History.

Operation PUSH (U.S.).

Jackson, Jesse, 1941-.

Political campaigns--Illinois.

Marriage--United States.

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jesse Jackson, Jr.,  
Section A2000\_029\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:38 2000/05/12

Jesse Jackson, Jr. discusses the issue of race in American history, explaining his own thoughts about the subject and how the subject affects both himself and the lives of all Americans. Jackson relates the efforts of Operation PUSH to these ideas, describing the organization's role in providing a political voice for marginalized African Americans. He also describes the relationship between Operation PUSH and black churches. Jackson talks about his father, Rev. Jesse Jackson, and his integral role in making Operation PUSH a success, and discusses why it will be difficult to replace someone of his stature. Jackson, Jr. reveals his own personal beliefs in regard to the problems PUSH should help rectify: education, health care, and housing. Jackson then moves into a discussion about his education. He explains in detail why he chose to attend a historically black college, North Carolina A&T, citing a need to be educated in an African American environment. He then explains why he chose to attend a

theological seminary, saying that during his time there, he met many scholars who catalyzed his interest in social change.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jesse Jackson, Jr.,  
Section A2000\_029\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:03 2000/05/12

Jesse Jackson, Jr. tells of marrying his wife, Sandy Jackson, and describes her personality and his relationship with her. Jackson then articulates his views regarding the impact race has had on American history, explaining that these views formed the foundation of his career ambitions. He describes working at the Rainbow Coalition after graduating from law school, which he says taught him the value of political mobilization in minority communities. Jackson then details his successful campaign for the U.S. House of Representatives. He describes his opponents, the factors that led to his victory, and his campaign strategy, which he says created a "team" of African American politicians in federal and state politics. After remembering the night of his election, Jackson weighs the positive and negative experiences he has had as a congressman. Jackson then reflects on his accomplishments, and details his plans for the future, which include writing books about the history of race in the United States, an issue which Jackson believes must be directly addressed by all Americans.