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

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Madison, Jesse
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Hon. Jesse Madison,
Dates:	August 21, 2000
Bulk Dates:	2000
Physical Description:	4 Betacam SP videocassettes (2:00:00).
Abstract:	State representative Hon. Jesse Madison (1939 -) 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 . 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 Jauary 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 has served as the President and CEO of the Abraham Lincoln

Center, a social service organization. He is also involved in many civic organizations, including the African American Family Commission, the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Child Welfare Advisory Council. Madison and his wife have two daughters, Tracey and Lynn, and two grandchildren.

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

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Hon. Jesse Madison was conducted by Adele Hodge on August 21, 2000, in , and was recorded on 4 Betacam SP videocassettes. State representative Hon. Jesse Madison (1939 -) 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

Hodge, Adele (Interviewer)

(Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Madison, Jesse--Interviews

African American state legislators--Illinois--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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Illinois

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 Hon. 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 2/6/2013 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, August 21, 2000

Video Oral History Interview with Hon. Jesse Madison, Section A2000_056_001_001, TRT: 1:30:00 2000/08/21

Born on January 01, 1939 in Memphis, Tennessee, Jesse D. Madison is the youngest son of Mildred and Walter L. Madison, Sr. He has three older brothers, Ernest, Walter, and Eugene, one older sister, Elsie, and one younger sister, Edna. Madison discusses his childhood as poor but secure. His brother Eugene taught him to read while his sister Elsie would tell him and Edna bedtime stories. Madison discusses his mother as loving and supportive. He recalls a special moment he had with her after her first stroke. Madison then discusses his father and how protective he was of his children in the segregated South. He recalls a bittersweet moment with his father mere months before his death at ninety years-old. Madison discusses memories of his childhood and attending Carnes Elementary School and Manassas High School in Memphis.

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

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

Video Oral History Interview with Hon. Jesse Madison, Section A2000_056_001_002, TRT: 2:30:00 2000/08/21

Jesse Madison focuses on education and political involvement. He was athletic and academic in school but a traumatic altercation on a segregated bus prevented his participation in his graduation and prompted an early move to Chicago. Madison attended Wilson Junior College from 1957 to 1959, married in December 1959, and attended Roosevelt University part time from 1960 until 1968 where he obtained a degree in Business Administration. Madison became involved in politics in 1960 and participated in Carter Jones and Brenetta Howell's campaigns and Operation Breadbasket. His political interests renewed after the deaths of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. He helped Otis Collins' failed campaign before running himself in 1972 and losing by a few hundred votes. Campaigning early for 1974 helped him to win by less than two hundred votes. Madison credits U.S. Attorney Jim Thompson's prosecution of voter fraud and the Shakman Decree for reducing fraud today.

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 Hon. Jesse Madison, Section A2000_056_001_003, TRT: 3:30:00 2000/08/21

Jesse Madison discusses his political career. He was elected [to the Illinois General Assembly] as an Independent Democrat in 1974 and again in 976. During his first term, Madison received the 1976 Best Legislator Award from IVIIPO [Independent Voters of Illinois Independent Precinct Organization]. During Madison's second term, he was able to pass a public aid appropriation bill. His biggest loss was that he was unable to obtain an increase in allocation for public aid recipients due to resistance by the medical industry. Madison explains political "camps" and how the system has evolved away from that type of patronage. After leaving the legislature, Madison became the Vice President of Finance and Administration of the Urban League before leaving to work on Harold Washington's mayoral campaign and then in his administration. Madison was appointed Commissioner of Consumer Services before overseeing the Parks District until April 1990.

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 Hon. Jesse Madison, Section A2000_056_001_004, TRT: 4:30:00 2000/08/21

Jesse Madison discusses changes in politics and life after politics. He explains "hack" camps and posits that anyone who is a "hack" today is only so voluntarily. Madison recalls his most memorable experience in the state legislature around 1978. It was a speech he gave when the ERA legislation came up for discussion. Madison discusses the history of his current employer, Abraham Lincoln Center. He postulates that he was hired to bring the company into the twenty-first century with automation and basic business practices. Madison hopes his posterity will be his legacy. He has two daughters, Lynn and Tracey. Madison's advice to youth interested in politics is that they have a responsibility and obligation to take control of the political environment. He encourages children not only to stay in school but to make school meaningful. Madison also advises to maintain the spiritual connection as it is essential to survival.

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

Abraham Lincoln Centre (Chicago, Ill.).