

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr.

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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>	Carruthers, Jacob H.
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr.,
<b>Dates:</b>	May 13, 2002
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2002
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:42:12).
<b>Abstract:</b>	African american studies professor Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr. (1930 - 2004 ) was professor emeritus at Northeastern Illinois University, and was the founder of the Kemetic Institute. A scholar of classical African civilizations, he was the author of, "Intellectual Warfare." Carruthers was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 13, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2002_072
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Professor Jacob Carruthers was born on February 15, 1930 in Dallas, Texas. He was a firm believer that a large part of liberating African American people comes from understanding and connecting history, culture and heritage. He received a B.A. from Samuel Huston College in Austin, Texas in 1950; an M.A. from Texas Southern University in 1958; and a Ph.D. in Political Studies from the University of Colorado in 1966. From 1966 to 1968, Carruthers worked as an assistant professor at Kansas State College before joining the staff of Northeastern Illinois

University's Center for Inner City Studies (CICS). Carruthers, along with Dr. Anderson Thompson, Robert Starks, Dr. Conrad Worrill and others shaped the CICS program into one that emphasizes self-determination, activism and study of the global black community.

In this context, Carruthers earned respect as one of the world's leading experts in classical African civilizations. His interests carried him throughout the continent of Africa, conducting study tours to Egypt, Ethiopia, the Nile Valley, Zimbabwe, Senegal, the Ivory Coast, and other parts of West Africa. Carruthers wrote or edited hundreds of essays and papers on his findings and his major works included: *The Irritated Genie: An Essay on the Haitian Revolution*, *Essays in Ancient Egyptian Studies*, *Intellectual Warfare*, *MDW NTR: Devine Speech and Science and Oppression*. He lectured at various educational institutions; served on evaluation teams for many area high schools; and worked as a consultant to both the Dayton and Chicago public school systems. Carruthers served as founding president of the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations for five years. In that capacity, he led a group of 1,000 black teachers, students, artists and scholars from the United States to the Nubian Cultural Center in Aswan, Egypt for a two week conference and tour of Nubia and Egypt.

He was a founding member and priest of the Temple of African Community of Chicago and founding member and director of the Kemetic (Egyptian) Institute, which sponsors the annual Teaching About Africa program for schoolteachers and administrators. He married his wife, Ifé, in 1986 and had four children.

Carruthers passed away on January 5, 2004 at age 73.

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## **Scope and Content**

This life oral history interview with Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr. was conducted by Larry Crowe on May 13, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 8 Betacame SP videocassettes. African american studies professor Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr. (1930 - 2004 ) was professor emeritus at Northeastern Illinois University, and was the founder of the Kemetic Institute. A scholar of classical African civilizations, he was the author of, "Intellectual Warfare."

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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:**

Carruthers, Jacob H.

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

Carruthers, Jacob H.--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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Northeastern Illinois University

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## **Occupations:**

African American Studies Professor

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

EducationMakers

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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 Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr., May 13, 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 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 Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr., Section A2002\_072\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:53 2002/05/13

Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers was born in 1930 in Dallas, Texas, to Marguerite Taylor, from Houston, Texas, and Jacob Carruthers, Sr., born in 1902 in Pelham, Texas. Carruthers' great-great grandfather, George Carruthers, was born into slavery, and founded the black community of Pelham, Texas, where Carruthers' family lived for generations. His father, Jacob Sr., was a Methodist minister who graduated from Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia, and played in the Negro Baseball League for the Arkansas City Oilers in Kansas. Carruthers' parents divorced when he was five, and he and his sister Carol moved eight times throughout Texas during his youth. He attended segregated schools, including Phyllis Wheatley High School in San Antonio, Texas, and experienced racism in the segregated West Texas. He enjoyed reading and was a good student. He describes friendships with people from Africa, becoming especially close with a man named Obediah while at Samuel Huston College in Austin, Texas from 1947 to 1950.

Video Oral History Interview with Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr., Section A2002\_072\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:56 2002/05/13

Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers attended Samuel Huston College, in Austin, Texas, and graduated with a degree in political science in 1950. In 1950, he was admitted to the University of Texas Law School, the same year that the U.S. Supreme Court mandated the integration of the University in *Sweatt v. Painter*. Carruthers entered law

school with Herman Marion Sweatt, though he dropped out after one year due to racist treatment. Carruthers then served in the U.S. Air Force from 1951 to 1953, and was discharged due to his health. Carruthers then worked as a reporter at the largest black newspaper in the state, the Houston Informer, from 1953 to 1956, and the U.S. Post Office from 1956 to 1961. During this time, he received his Master's degree in political science from Texas Southern University in Houston in 1958. From 1961 to 1964, he taught political science at Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical University, Texas, where he was part of the boycott of the segregated city of Hempstead, Texas. Carruthers then pursued his Ph.D. from the University of Colorado.

Video Oral History Interview with Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr., Section A2002\_072\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:54 2002/05/13

Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers pursued his Ph.D. in political science at the University of Colorado, where he was involved with the "Friends of SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee)." He wrote his dissertation on the theory of Nonviolent Civil Disobedience, drawing from his experiences in Hempstead, Texas, and the activism of Mahatma Gandhi and Albert Luthuli. After graduating in 1966, Carruthers taught at Kansas State College until 1968, where he was involved with several student demonstrations. In 1968, he joined the staff of Northeastern Illinois University's Center for Inner City Studies, where he helped develop an Africa-centered curriculum. The Center was located in the historic Abraham Lincoln Centre in Chicago, Illinois. Working with scholars such as HM Carol Adams, HM Richard T. Sparks, and Elkin Sithole, Carruthers became director of the program, which was renamed the Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies in 2004.

Video Oral History Interview with Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr., Section A2002\_072\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:11 2002/05/13

Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers developed an African-centered curriculum at the Center for Inner City Studies in Chicago, Illinois during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1973, the Center began publishing the Afrocentric World Review Journal. In 1974, Carruthers traveled to Cairo, Egypt to attend the

UNESCO Conference, where he met mentor Cheikh Anta Diop. With Diop, HM Yosef ben-Jochannan, and John Henrik Clarke, Carruthers formulated a curriculum of African-centered perspectives to history and philosophy, which he developed at the Center for Inner City Studies. He credits his relationship with Diop as helping him develop his curriculum, which he put into practice in 1978, when he founded the Kemetic Institute in Chicago, for the teaching of African history. Despite responses from opposing Eurocentric scholars, Carruthers and this group of African-centered scholars helped develop the philosophy over the next two decades.

Video Oral History Interview with Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr., Section A2002\_072\_001\_005, TRT: 0:30:45 2002/05/13

Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers founded and developed the Kemetic Institute in Chicago, Illinois in 1978. The Institute was modeled on the African-centered perspective of Cheikh Anta Diop, and Carruthers shaped the Institute with the help of A. Josef Ben Levi, Diedre Rekhety Wimby, and Roosevelt Roberts. He published 'Essays in Ancient Egypt Studies' in 1984. Carruthers, with HM Malauna Karenga, HM Yosef ben-Jochannan, HM Asa Hilliard, and John Henrik Clarke, formed the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations (ASCAC) in 1985. In 1987, Carruthers organized the ASCAC conference which was held in Kemet (Egypt), and over one thousand people attended the two-week long trip. He experienced a variety of responses to the conference and to his Kemetic curriculum, but he continued teaching and publishing an African-centered approach to philosophy and theory throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Video Oral History Interview with Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr., Section A2002\_072\_001\_006, TRT: 0:29:17 2002/05/13

After establishing the Kemetic Institute in 1978 and the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations (ASCAC) in 1985, Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers continued to develop and attend conferences on African-centered philosophy and Pan-Africanism around the world, including traveling to South Africa, Senegal, Ghana, London, and Trinidad. He published 'MWD:NTR: Divine Language' in 1995, 'Intellectual Warfare' in 1999,

and 'The African World History Project' in 2002. Carruthers continued to teach at the Kemetic Institute, formulating new ways to teach African history. He also founded and became a priest in the Temple of African Community in Chicago in 1998. He remained close with his family in Pelham, Texas, returning twice a year for reunions. He reflects on his career and what he wants his legacy to be.

Video Oral History Interview with Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr., Section A2002\_072\_001\_007, TRT: 0:31:10 2002/05/13

Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers developed the Kemetic Institute in Chicago, Illinois, in 1978, and has developed it into a leading institution promoting African-centered scholarship. He has collaborated with scholars who implement this perspective, including HM Conrad Worrill and Dr. Mario Beatty. In 1998, Carruthers founded the Temple of African Community in Chicago, Illinois, becoming a priest. In 2000, he retired from teaching at the Center for Inner City Studies in Chicago, Illinois after thirty-two years. Carruthers describes the value of this African-centered perspective and the study of the Nile Valley Civilizations for the African American community. He reflects on his legacy, and talks about his hopes for the black community, including that a restoration of African Civilization will be the base of liberation for all people of African descent.

Video Oral History Interview with Jacob H. Carruthers, Jr., Section A2002\_072\_001\_008, TRT: 0:13:06 2002/05/13

Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers narrates his photographs.