

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Marvin Shelton

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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>	Shelton, Marvin L., 1931-2004
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Marvin Shelton,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 14, 2003
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2003
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:48:07).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Marvin Shelton (1931 - 2004 ) developed new technique for treating unstable ankle fractures. Shelton was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 14, 2003, in Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2003_190
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

In a family of medical doctors, Dr. Marvin L. Shelton has helped patients walk pain-free for more than thirty years. Born in Pittsburgh on July 25, 1931, Shelton has made a reputation for himself with his many discoveries and advances in his work as an orthopedic surgeon in treating ankle fractures.

Educated at Howard University, Shelton received his B.A. in 1951, an M.A. in chemistry the following year, and his M.D. in 1956. After completing his internship, he did his residency in Honolulu, Hawaii. Shelton then served as chief of the Orthopedic Section at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, until 1964. From 1966 to 1994, Shelton headed the Residency Training Program at Harlem Hospital

Center in New York. While at Harlem Hospital, Shelton saw a large number of unstable ankle fractures, leading him to further investigate the causes of such injuries. In 1967, he pioneered a new surgical technique that dramatically improved the prognosis for patients with this type of ankle injury. Shelton also helped to engineer a contoured plate system for fractures. This plate gained increasingly wide usage in the orthopedic field.

His discoveries and advances have made Shelton a highly sought-after speaker. Shelton has delivered more than two dozen lectures around the world; presented numerous papers and exhibits; and held visiting professorships at Yale University, the University of Minnesota and the University of Oregon. He also served as chairman of the Orthopedic Section of the National Medical Association and has been an active member and leader in many other professional associations and boards. In 1992, Shelton brought his trailblazing techniques to Presbyterian Hospital in New York, where he worked as an attending surgeon. Shelton and his wife, Arden Buckner, had four children.

Marvin Shelton passed away on July 07, 2004.

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## **Scope and Content**

This life oral history interview with Dr. Marvin Shelton was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on August 14, 2003, in Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Marvin Shelton (1931 - 2004 ) developed new technique for treating unstable ankle fractures.

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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

## 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:

Shelton, Marvin L., 1931-2004

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Shelton, Marvin L., 1931-2004--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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## Occupations:

## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

MedicalMakers

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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 Dr. Marvin Shelton, August 14, 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 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 Dr. Marvin Shelton, Section  
A2003\_190\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:39 2003/08/14

Dr. Marvin Shelton was born on July 25th, 1931 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His mother, Mable Butler Lloyd, was born in Darlington, South Carolina but eventually moved to Wilmington, North Carolina, where she worked as an elementary school teacher. Shelton's father was brought up in Terra Haute, Indiana and later moved to Wilmington where he became a French and history teacher and met Shelton's mother. The Shelton family relocated to Pittsburgh briefly, but returned to Wilmington, where Shelton and his two older brothers, Lee Raymond Shelton and Thomas Gerard Shelton, spent their childhood. Shelton's earliest memory is hearing singing and preaching from the Baptist church next-door. The family lived in a brick house in central Wilmington and took pride in having the best looking house on the street. The Episcopal church was a large part of his childhood and he remembers playing tennis on Dr. Hubert Eaton's court. Shelton attended Peabody Elementary School and Williston Industrial High School in Wilmington.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Marvin Shelton, Section  
A2003\_190\_001\_002, TRT: 0:31:15 2003/08/14

Dr. Marvin Shelton liked all of his teachers at Peabody Elementary School in Wilmington, North Carolina. At Williston Industrial High School, in Wilmington, he was an honors student and graduated second in his class in 1947 when he was fifteen years old. He describes himself as being a quiet young man. He wanted to attend Duke University, but went to Howard University in Washington, D.C. because Duke did not accept African American students. Shelton entered Howard at the time when many WWII veterans were entering college. At Howard, his classmates included HistoryMakers Andrew Young and David N. Dinkins. Shelton joined the ROTC his senior year, which allowed him to avoid being drafted for the Korean War and helped him pay for medical school. Shelton graduated from Howard in 1951. He was rejected by Howard University Medical School the first time he applied. He spent a year earning his M.A. in chemistry and

was accepted the following year. Shelton describes his undergraduate and medical professors at Howard.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Marvin Shelton, Section A2003\_190\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:44 2003/08/14

Dr. Marvin Shelton attended Howard University in Washington, D.C. from 1947 to 1951. There, his classmates included HistoryMakers Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr., Dr. Roselyn Payne Epps, Vernon Jordan and David N. Dinkins. Shelton entered Howard College of Medicine in 1952. He graduated in 1956 as the top student in his class. In medical school, anatomy, which was taught by Dr. William Montague Cobb, was his best subject and he became interested in surgical specialties. Shelton completed his internship and residency at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. Racial discrimination prevented him from pursuing his interest in neurosurgery. While working in orthopedics as a duty officer, he discovered his talent in orthopedics and accepted a residency in the specialty. Shelton reflects upon a question he was asked by U.S. Army officials during his interview for a neurosurgery residency, the medical opportunities received as a result of being in the U.S. Army and his privileged upbringing.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Marvin Shelton, Section A2003\_190\_001\_004, TRT: 0:31:15 2003/08/14

Dr. Marvin Shelton served in the U.S. Army for five years; he ended his Army career as a training chief at Fort Jackson in South Carolina. He accepted a position as head of Columbia University's orthopedic residency program located at Harlem Hospital Center in New York City. Harlem Hospital was affiliated with Columbia University's New York-Presbyterian Hospital, but many departments were not interested in working with Harlem doctors. Initially, residents from New York-Presbyterian Hospital rotated through Shelton's program at Harlem Hospital, but in 1966 he created an independent orthopedic residency program at Harlem Hospital. His program was cut and merged with a larger residency program in New York, when the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery decided to limit the number of residency programs in the country. Shelton remembers

other doctors at Harlem Hospital such as Dr. Aubre de Lambert Maynard and HistoryMaker Dr. Harold Freeman and talks about other orthopedic residency programs in the country.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Marvin Shelton, Section  
A2003\_190\_001\_005, TRT: 0:30:47 2003/08/14

Dr. Marvin Shelton was not respected by his colleagues at Columbia's New York-Presbyterian Hospital because he worked at Harlem Hospital Center. Since the 1960s, the funding for Harlem Hospital has shrunk and the hospital has fewer patients because private hospitals now treat patients who receive Medicaid. Shelton has developed several orthopedic medical devices, such as an NSG plate for the femur. The first device he designed was a plate and bolt system for difficult ankle fractures. He describes the process of getting the devices manufactured and approved by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA). Shelton reflects on his work on trimalleolar ankle fractures, and his visiting professorships, his favorite of which was at the University of Oregon in Eugene. He describes how orthopedics has changed over his forty-seven year career, why it's the most exciting medical field and his involvement in several professional organizations, including the National Medical Association, which he gives a brief history of.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Marvin Shelton, Section  
A2003\_190\_001\_006, TRT: 0:14:27 2003/08/14

Dr. Marvin Shelton talks about HistoryMaker Dr. LaSalle D. Leffall Jr. briefly, who attended Howard University in Washington, D.C. four years before Shelton. He describes his parents' happiness at his success, and his own happiness at seeing his daughters' successes. Shelton reflects on the importance of African American doctors, what it means to be a good doctor and the challenge, particularly for African Americans, to find a doctor who is up to par. Shelton reflects on his hopes for his own future and what he'd like his legacy to be.