

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with June Sallee Antoine

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Antoine, June S., 1929-2016
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with June Sallee Antoine,
Dates:	March 18, 2004
Bulk Dates:	2004
Physical Description:	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:24:48).
Abstract:	Educator and nonprofit executive June Sallee Antoine (1929 - 2016) co-founded The Adrienne Kennedy Society, a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to increasing public awareness and appreciation of African American literary artists. She worked for numerous arts, cultural, and civic organizations in Ohio. Antoine was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 18, 2004, in Shaker Heights, Ohio. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2004_027
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Educator and nonprofit executive June Sallee Antoine was born on March 3, 1929 in Sandusky, Ohio, to Cora Nell Collier Sallee and Charles Louis Sallee. She received her elementary and secondary education in the public schools of Sandusky. She earned a B.A. degree from Ohio State University in 1951 and a master's degree from Case Western Reserve University in 1956. She also completed additional graduate work at John Carroll University and Cleveland State University.

From 1955 until 1966, Antoine was a classroom teacher in the Cleveland Public Schools, and in 1969 she took a position as a guidance counselor at the Adult Education Center of the Cleveland Public Schools. In 1979, she became the assistant principal at Shaker Heights High School. Following her retirement from the public schools in 1986, she served as the director of the Harvard-East Branch of the Cleveland Music School Settlement, where she remained until 1995. In 1993, Antoine, along with Louise Kent Hope, became a co-founder of The Adrienne Kennedy Society, a non-profit arts organization dedicated to increasing public awareness and appreciation of the works of this great African American literary artist. The organization was later renamed Creative Writing Workshop Projects, and Antoine served as the executive director.

Antoine worked with numerous arts, cultural, and civic organizations, including The Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio Citizens for the Arts, The Cleveland Art Prize, The Women's City Club Foundation, and the Cleveland International Program. In 2002, she received an Arts Educator Award from Young Audiences of Greater Cleveland and The Northern Ohio Live Award of Achievement for Community Events for Creative Writing Workshop Projects' participation in the Langston Hughes Centennial Celebration.

In addition to her administrative work, Antoine performed with the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus and the Heritage Chorale in the United States and Europe. She was also a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Antoine passed away on November 15, 2016 at age 87.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with June Sallee Antoine was conducted by Regennia Williams on March 18, 2004, in Shaker Heights, Ohio, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Educator and nonprofit executive June Sallee Antoine (1929 - 2016) co-founded The Adrienne Kennedy Society, a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to increasing public awareness and appreciation of African American literary artists. She worked for numerous arts, cultural, and civic organizations in Ohio.

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:

Antoine, June S., 1929-2016

Williams, Regennia (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Antoine, June S., 1929-2016--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Educator

Nonprofit Executive

HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers|CivicMakers

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 June Sallee Antoine, March 18, 2004. 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).

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 June Sallee Antoine, Section A2004_027_001_001, TRT: 0:28:34 2004/03/18

June Sallee Antoine was born on March 3, 1929 in Sandusky, Ohio. Her mother, Cornell Collier Sallee, was born in Frankfort, Kentucky. She was fostered by her grandmother's friend who had been a house slave as child then married a minister. Collier Sallee was raised in a middle-class household, was a good student and was often teased for her long, straight hair. Antoine's father, Charles Sallee, was born in Harrodsburg, Kentucky and worked as a self-employed ornamental plasterer. Her paternal grandmother was a nurse and midwife in Kentucky. Antoine's parents migrated from Kentucky to Oberlin, Ohio in the early 1910s, following her father's sister, Margaret Sallee Barnes, a teacher and community leader. A few years later, they moved to Sandusky, where all but one of the Sallee children were born. Antoine and her siblings attended Campbell Street Elementary School in Sandusky, and they went on field trips throughout the Midwest. She also studied the violin and the viola.

Video Oral History Interview with June Sallee Antoine, Section A2004_027_001_002, TRT: 0:29:26 2004/03/18

June Sallee Antoine was one of fourteen children of Cornell Collier Sallee and Charles Sallee, Sr., only ten of whom survived childhood. All the Sallee children were taught the importance of voting by their father, took music lessons and recited poetry for their parents. The family attended Second Baptist Church in Sandusky, Ohio, which

was a stop on the Underground Railroad; Antoine's father and brother, Charles Sallee, Jr., contributed plasterwork and paintings to the church. Despite the integrated schools Antoine and her siblings attended, several places in Sandusky were segregated, including the school pool and the movie theater. During the Great Depression, Antoine's father had less contracts for building work, but the family was still comfortable financially. Antoine was a top student at Sandusky High School, where a history teacher once wrongly accused her of plagiarism because her paper seemed too knowledgeable. Her mother encouraged her children to pursue interests ranging from art to nursing.

Video Oral History Interview with June Sallee Antoine, Section A2004_027_001_003, TRT: 0:29:36 2004/03/18

June Sallee Antoine's family did not have to accept relief during the Great Depression. Her brother, Charles Sallee, Jr., did work as a visual artist for the Works Progress Administration, though. Her family, including her aunt, Margaret Sallee Barnes, who attended the 1940 Republican National Convention, were Republicans. Many of Antoine's paternal aunts were entrepreneurs. Her parents were avid consumers of the arts, teaching their children the poetry of Shakespeare and Paul Laurence Dunbar and attending Roland Hayes's concerts. Antoine graduated in the top 10 percent of her class at Sandusky High School in Ohio, and matriculated at The Ohio State University in Columbus. During her time there, she joined Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, heard Paul Robeson speak and met her husband, HistoryMaker Albert Antoine. Antoine describes her family's participation in World War II and her younger sisters' careers. She also talks about the need for government arts funding and her support for the Ohio Citizens for the Arts.

Video Oral History Interview with June Sallee Antoine, Section A2004_027_001_004, TRT: 0:28:44 2004/03/18

June Sallee Antoine attended a speech by Paul Robeson during her undergraduate years at The Ohio State University in Columbus. At Ohio State, Antoine met her husband, HistoryMaker Albert Antoine, who was studying for a Ph.D. in chemistry. They married in 1953. Antoine moved to Atlanta, Georgia for a year when her husband

accepted a position at Clark College. He was then hired as a scientist with the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics in Ohio while Antoine began her master's of music education program at Columbia University in New York City. She changed her focus to elementary education in the hopes of obtaining a job more easily and moved to Cleveland, Ohio to attend Western Reserve University. In 1955, Antoine began teaching at the majority-white Boulevard Elementary School in Cleveland Heights. She continued teaching in the Cleveland metropolitan area until 1979. Antoine shares her thoughts about the Reed v. Rhodes case regarding public school segregation and desegregation versus integration.

Video Oral History Interview with June Sallee Antoine, Section A2004_027_001_005, TRT: 0:29:41 2004/03/18

June Sallee Antoine became an administrator in the Shaker Heights School District, first as head of its alternative high school and then as assistant principal of Shaker Heights High School. Antoine partially educated her children in private schools, sending her daughter to Laurel School in Shaker Heights, Ohio for junior high and her sons to Hawken School, before all came to Shaker Heights High School to graduate. Antoine worked hard to ensure that prejudice would not stymie her children's educational attainments. All of Antoine's children achieved postgraduate degrees in engineering, a field in which African Americans are underrepresented, and her daughter taught at the University of Maryland in Baltimore County. Around the time of her retirement, Antoine became more involved in the arts, joining the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus in 1985 and founding The Adrienne Kennedy Society of Great Lakes Theater Festival in 1990. Antoine recalls her daughter's death in 1997 and talks about her grandchildren.

Video Oral History Interview with June Sallee Antoine, Section A2004_027_001_006, TRT: 0:28:37 2004/03/18

June Sallee Antoine founded the Creative Writing Workshop Projects (CWWP) along with HistoryMaker Louise Hope. This non-profit organization partners with arts institutions in the Cleveland, Ohio area to help students in public schools develop as writers. The

organization was initially inspired by the work of Adrienne Kennedy, an Obie Award-winning playwright. Antoine staffed CWWP with educators, artists and academics. She serves as a volunteer executive director in order to pay more local artists, especially African Americans, and has won grant funding from the Ohio Arts Council, the George Gund Foundation and Women's Community Foundation, among others. Antoine belongs to the Heritage Chorale, which specializes in African American spirituals and tours internationally. Antoine also volunteers as a community advocate for theater artists in the Cleveland region in order to provide them with full-time work. Antoine concludes the tape by reflecting on her contributions to education and the arts.

Video Oral History Interview with June Sallee Antoine, Section
A2004_027_001_007, TRT: 0:30:10 2004/03/18

June Sallee Antoine narrates her photographs.