

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Jerome Kearney

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Kearney Jerome, 1956-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jerome Kearney,
Dates:	March 13, 2018
Bulk Dates:	2018
Physical Description:	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:23:12).
Abstract:	Judge Jerome Kearney (1956 -) was the first African American to serve as an assistant federal public defender in the Arkansas Federal Public Defender Office. He went on to serve as a magistrate judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas from 2010 to 2018. Kearney was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 13, 2018, in Little Rock, Arkansas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2018_043
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Judge Jerome Kearney was born on May 30, 1956 in Gould, Arkansas to Thomas James Kearney and Ethel Curry Kearney. Kearney has eighteen siblings, including presidential appointee Janis F. Kearney. He graduated from Western Reserve Academy, a private college preparatory school in Hudson, Ohio, in 1974. He then received his B.A. degree in political science from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee in 1978, where he was founding member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. Kearney earned his J.D. degree from Vanderbilt University Law School in 1981.

While in law school, Kearney completed internships in the Tennessee Attorney General's office and the Davidson County Public Defender Office. Upon graduating, he began his legal career working in private practice with his older siblings in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. He then worked as a trial attorney in the Pulaski County public defender's office from 1982 to 1985. In 1985, Kearney was hired as a trial lawyer in the Arkansas Attorney General office, where he worked in the criminal appeals and litigation sections. From 1987 to 1990, Kearney worked as a trial attorney for the U.S. Department of Labor/Solicitors office in Dallas, Texas, handling cases in Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. He then joined the federal public defender's office in Oklahoma City, where he served as an assistant federal defender. In 1995, Kearney began working as a senior litigator in the U.S. Federal Public Defenders' office in Little Rock under Jennifer Horan, who promoted him to first assistant in 2002. Kearney was the first African American to assume the role. In 2010, Kearney was appointed United States Magistrate Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas and continued to serve in that role.

In 2006, Kearney received the National Outstanding Assistant Defender Award from the National Federal Defender Conference. Kearney served as a member and/or chairman of the Federal Practice Committee between 1997 and 2008, and was a member of the Henry Woods Inn of Courts legal practice society from 2003 to 2007.

Kearney is married to Nellie Faye Mays Kearney. He has four children: Bertrand, Sparkell, Jerome Jr., and Dylan.

Judge Jerome Kearney was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 13, 2018.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Jerome Kearney was conducted by Randall Pinkston on March 13, 2018, in Little Rock, Arkansas, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Judge Jerome Kearney (1956 -) was the first African American to serve as an assistant federal public defender in the Arkansas Federal Public Defender Office. He went on to serve as a magistrate judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas from 2010 to 2018.

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:

Kearney Jerome, 1956-

Pinkston, Randall (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Kearney Jerome, 1956- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Judge

HistoryMakers® Category:

LawMakers

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 Jerome Kearney, March 13, 2018. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 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 The Honorable Jerome Kearney, Section A2018_043_001_001, TRT: 1:30:08 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jerome Kearney, Section A2018_043_001_002,
TRT: 2:29:48 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jerome Kearney, Section A2018_043_001_003,
TRT: 3:29:30 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jerome Kearney, Section A2018_043_001_004,
TRT: 4:33:02 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jerome Kearney, Section A2018_043_001_005,
TRT: 5:30:13 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jerome Kearney, Section A2018_043_001_006,
TRT: 6:28:25 ?

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jerome Kearney, Section A2018_043_001_007,
TRT: 7:22:06 ?