

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Shirley H. Jones

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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>	Jones, Shirley H., 1928-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Shirley H. Jones,
<b>Dates:</b>	July 24, 2001
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2001
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:02:26).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Marriage and family therapist Shirley H. Jones (1928 - 2019) is the co-founder of Kendren Community Mental Health Center, providing a full range of psychological services in the Watts-Compton area of Los Angeles. Previously, when the Head Start program began in 1965, Jones was appointed to set up the first ten Head Start centers in Los Angeles. Jones was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 24, 2001, in Brentwood, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2001_042
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Shirley Jones was born November 1, 1928, in New Orleans, and her parents divorced within a year of her birth. Jones spent the majority of her early childhood with her grandmother, as her mother taught in rural areas and was home only for the weekends. In addition to teaching, Jones's mother successfully organized rural communities, composed primarily of sharecroppers, to improve schoolhouse conditions. Because her mother wanted a better school environment for Jones, they moved to the Watts area in Los Angeles when she was fourteen. In 1953, she graduated from Los Angeles State College with a B.A. in education, and went on to graduate study in speech therapy at the University of Southern California.

When the Head Start program began in 1965, Jones was appointed to set up the first ten Head Start centers in Los Angeles. By 1968, increasingly aware of the special needs of their community, Jones and her husband, James L. Jones, a psychiatrist, founded the Kedren Community Mental Health Center in the Watts-Compton area of Los Angeles. This center was named after one of their daughters. Today, Kedren Community Center has grown exponentially. It provides a full range of psychological services, including group and individual therapy for children and adults and programs in community psychology.

Jones has a Doctorate in Psychology, is a licensed marriage and family therapist, and also has a Certification in Psycho-Drama.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Shirley H. Jones was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on July 24, 2001,

in Brentwood, California, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Marriage and family therapist Shirley H. Jones (1928 - 2019) is the co-founder of Kendren Community Mental Health Center, providing a full range of psychological services in the Watts-Compton area of Los Angeles. Previously, when the Head Start program began in 1965, Jones was appointed to set up the first ten Head Start centers in Los Angeles.

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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:

- Jones, Shirley H., 1928-
- Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)
- Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

- African Americans--Interviews
  - Jones, Shirley H., 1928---Interviews
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## Organizations:

- HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)
  - The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection
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## Occupations:

Marriage and Family Therapist

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## 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 Shirley H. Jones, July 24, 2001. 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).

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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 Shirley H. Jones, Section A2001\_042\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:51 ?  
Shirley Jones begins by showing and discussing some of her personal photos. She describes her family background and her early childhood, focusing particularly on her mother and her grandmother. Dr. Jones also briefly discusses being a biracial child.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley H. Jones, Section A2001\_042\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:31 ?  
Shirley Jones describes her youth, from her early childhood in Louisiana to her high school years in Los Angeles, California. She focuses on her lifelong love of theater, including both her childhood backyard plays and her later involvement in the Hollywood movie industry. Dr. Jones also talks about her courtship and marriage to her husband, Dr. James L. Jones. She concludes by discussing the

limited acting opportunities for African Americans in 1940s Hollywood.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley H. Jones, Section A2001\_042\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:59 ?

Shirley Jones continues discussing the limited acting opportunities available to African Americans in 1940s Hollywood. She then describes in detail the founding of the Kedren Mental Health Center, including how she and her husband secured funding and staffed the Center. She includes the difficulties they had finding support for mental health services. She goes on to talk about her involvement in the development of Head Start programs in California, and the positive effect they had on the community.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley H. Jones, Section A2001\_042\_001\_004, TRT: 0:31:05 ?

Dr. Shirley Jones talks about the many benefits of her Head Start centers for the community, in terms of training for the staff as well as developmental education for children. She discusses at length the problems with the current educational foundation that children are receiving, and how she believes the situation needs to be remedied. She also talks about how she was able to manage her career and raise three children after her husband's death, and why she was successful. Dr. Jones concludes by discussing her hopes for the African American community.