

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Sandra Marian Ann Grymes

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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>	Grymes, Sandra
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Sandra Marian Ann Grymes,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 23, 2005
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2005
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:27:01).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Foundation executive Sandra Marian Ann Grymes ( - ) was the managing director of Guided Solutions, which consulted with agencies such as the Puerto Rican Family Institute in New York and the Tuskegee Institute's National Center for Bioethics on issues related to health care and education on the community level. Grymes was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 23, 2005, in Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2005_150
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Born in 1938 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Grymes was the daughter of Jeanette and Leon Grymes. On her mother's side of the family, Grymes was a cousin to the famed and legendary singer Marian Anderson; Grymes and Anderson's nephew, James DePriest, have been involved with legacy work for the singer for over thirty years.

Grymes graduated from Philadelphia High School for Girls in 1956; she earned her A.B. degree in sociology from Temple University; her master's degree in social services from Bryn Mawr in 1962; and her master's degree in business administration from Baruch College in 1984.

From 1973 to 1976, Grymes was employed in the New York City Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation – first as a senior consultant and later as acting director of the department's Office of Standards and Review. From 1977 to 1988, Grymes held five top level positions at the Planned Parenthood Federation of America in New York City, moving finally to the positions of director of long range planning, director of special projects, and, finally, marketing director. Grymes's next position, held from 1988 to 1993, was as the manager of health services for the American Red Cross of Greater New York. From 1993 to 1995, Grymes was the senior deputy commissioner at the New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Alcoholism Services. In 1996, Grymes became an adjunct professor in the Graduate School of Management and Urban Policy at the New School for Social Research in New York City.

Grymes devoted many years of service as a director of the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Chamber Music Society of the Lincoln Center, and the Marian Anderson Award in Philadelphia. With DePriest, Grymes helped to establish the Marian Anderson Memorial Center at the University of Pennsylvania Library. Throughout her career, Grymes worked extensively in high level management positions in the non-profit and government sectors in New York City throughout the period between 1973 and 1995; her volunteer work and contributions to arts organizations,

visual and musical, are notable.

In a state of semi-retirement, dividing her time between Martha's Vineyard and New York City, Grymes remained the managing director of Guided Solutions, which consulted with agencies such as the Puerto Rican Family Institute in New York and the Tuskegee Institute's National Center for Bioethics on issues related to health care and education on the community level.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Sandra Marian Ann Grymes was conducted by Robert Hayden on June 23, 2005, in Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Foundation executive Sandra Marian Ann Grymes ( - ) was the managing director of Guided Solutions, which consulted with agencies such as the Puerto Rican Family Institute in New York and the Tuskegee Institute's National Center for Bioethics on issues related to health care and education on the community level.

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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:

Grymes, Sandra

Hayden, Robert (Interviewer)

Burghelea, Neculai (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Grymes, Sandra--Interviews

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Nonprofit organizations--Employees--United States--Interviews

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African American women civic leaders--Interviews

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Government consultants--Interviews

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African American social workers--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:

Civic Leader

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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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 Sandra Marian Ann Grymes, June 23, 2005. 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 Sandra Marian Ann Grymes, Section A2005\_150\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:41 ?

Sandra Marian Ann Grymes was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1938. Her maternal great-great grandfather, Benjamin Anderson, was born in Virginia in 1848, and married Mary Holmes, a Native American, in 1869. A freedman and a Jew, Anderson moved his family to Philadelphia. Grymes' maternal great-grandmother was born in Virginia, before moving to Philadelphia. Her maternal grandmother, Grace Anderson Hughes, was born in Philadelphia in 1900. Singer Marian Anderson was her first cousin. Grymes' mother, Jeanette Hughes Grymes, was born in Philadelphia in 1917. Her father, Leon Grymes, was born in 1915 in Washington, D.C. to Anna and Louis Grymes. She recalls her parents' elopement and her father's entrepreneurial career. After his death, her mother took over his share of a beer distributing business, and worked as a secretary for Philadelphia's Board of Education. Grymes' sister Marcia contracted polio as a child. Grymes and her cousin, conductor James DePreist, work to preserve Marian Anderson's legacy.

Nonprofit organizations--Employees--United States--Interviews.

African American women civic leaders--Interviews.

Government consultants--Interviews.

African American social workers--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Sandra Marian Ann Grymes, Section A2005\_150\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:56 ?

Sandra Marian Ann Grymes was born and raised in South Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where she lived on the historic St. Albans Place. The neighborhood consisted mostly of African Americans and Eastern European immigrants. Hughes recalls her childhood dog, learning to read at age four, and her sister's hospitalization with polio when Grymes was five years old. Living with her maternal grandmother, Grace Anderson Hughes, Grymes often spoke to cousin Marian Anderson, who called from abroad while on tour. Hughes attended Thaddeus Stevens School of Practice, where her fourth grade social studies teacher, Mrs. Voorhees, introduced her to diverse cultures. Hughes went on to attend Jay Cooke Junior High School and Philadelphia High School for Girls, where she became interested in writing. After her father's death when Grymes was eleven years old, her mother remained single. She did not remarry until Grymes and her sister were adults. Hughes describes her step-father, Reuben Brooks.

Video Oral History Interview with Sandra Marian Ann Grymes, Section A2005\_150\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:00 ?

Sandra Marian Ann Grymes attended Philadelphia High School for Girls, where her rigorous education prepared her for college. Influenced by a close family friend, Robert Gloving, Grymes became interested in a career in psychology. After graduating from high school in 1956, she earned an A.B. degree in

sociology from Philadelphia's Temple University. She worked on weekends as a stock clerk at a factory to pay for guitar lessons, and in the city parks during the summers. She recalls the absence of African American studies at Temple University in the late 1950s. Grymes earned her master's degree in social services from Bryn Mawr College in 1962, then began her career at a children's psychiatric hospital. She recalls her family's diverse religious affiliations, holiday gatherings, and her cousin Marian Anderson's homecomings to Philadelphia and marriage to Orpheus Fisher in 1943. As an adult, Grymes grew close to Anderson, helping her to move into the country home where she retired in Danbury, Connecticut.

Video Oral History Interview with Sandra Marian Ann Grymes, Section A2005\_150\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:04 ?

Sandra Marian Ann Grymes earned her master's degree in social services from Bryn Mawr College in 1962. After a brief stint at the Bryn Mawr College's child study center, she relocated to Berkeley, California, where she worked at an adoption agency and the Bay Area Urban League. She then moved to New York City to conduct primary research at the New York University Child Study Center, for what became the Head Start program. Grymes worked at a Planned Parenthood clinic when abortion was newly legalized in New York State. She served at top level positions at the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the American Red Cross of Greater New York, and the New York Department of Mental Health. In 1984, she earned her M.B.A. degree from New York City's Baruch College. Grymes founded a consulting firm, Guided Solutions, taught at The New School for Social Research, volunteered for The Studio Museum of Harlem, and worked with her cousin James DePreist to preserve their cousin Mariam Anderson's legacy and estate.

Video Oral History Interview with Sandra Marian Ann Grymes, Section A2005\_150\_001\_005, TRT: 0:28:20 ?

Sandra Marian Ann Grymes visited China in 1977 in affiliation with the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. She remembers observing surgical use of acupuncture anaesthesia, differences between American and Chinese healthcare delivery systems, and the rarity of African Americans in China. Grymes and her maternal cousin, conductor James DePreist, collaborated to preserve the legacy of their cousin singer Marian Anderson. She recalls accepting the National Medal of Arts on Anderson's behalf at the White House in 1986; Eleanor Roosevelt's granddaughter's praise of Anderson; and helping to establish the Marian Anderson Award in Philadelphia. The U.S. Postal Service issued a stamp in Anderson's honor in 2005. Grymes reflects upon her life, her desire to travel and to write, and her hopes and concerns for the African American community. She would like to be remembered as kind and decent, and as someone who kept an open mind and explored her horizons. Grymes concludes her interview by narrating her photographs.