

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Shirley Anne Massey

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers® 1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Massey, Shirley Anne
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Anne Massey,
Dates:	August 24, 2013
Bulk Dates:	2013
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:59:36).
Abstract:	Civic leader Shirley Anne Massey (1942 -) served as the First Lady of Morehouse College from 1995 to 2007. Massey was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 24, 2013, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2013_239
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Civic leader Shirley Anne Massey was born on August 14, 1942 in Chicago, Illinois. She was the younger of two children born to parents, Anne Johnson, a laundress, and William Streeter, a janitor. Massey attended St. Anslem Grammar School and Holy Cross Grammar School before graduating from Chicago Loretto Academy, which was an all-girls Roman Catholic high school, in 1960. She then enrolled in Chicago Teachers College where she studied education.

In 1962, Massey was hired to work as an accountant at the *Playboy* club. Then, from 1964 to 1969, she served as a reservationist for Trans World Airlines (TWA). Since then, Massey has committed much of her life to causes for youth and culture. From 1995, Shirley Massey served as First Lady of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. Committed to the college, Massey worked alongside her husband, Walter Massey, who served as the ninth president of Morehouse from 1995 to 2007 and also as the president of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago from 2010.

President of the Morehouse Auxiliary, Massey spearheaded the Morehouse College Beautification Committee. She also served on the board of Salzburg Seminar, ARCS Foundation, and the University of Chicago Women's Board. Her previous affiliations include serving as a board member of the Atlanta Ballet, founding member of the Chicago Foundation for Education, board member of the Great Books Foundation, member of the Women's Board of the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art, member of the Women's board of the Chicago Symphony and founding member of the Museum of Science and Industry President's Council.

In 2012, the Executive Conference Center building on the campus of Morehouse was renamed as the Shirley A. Massey Executive Conference Center in her honor.

Massey and her husband have two sons, Keith and Eric, and three grandchildren. They remain active in cultural and civic organizations in Chicago and beyond.

Shirley Anne Massey was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 24, 2013.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Shirley Anne Massey was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on August 24, 2013, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Civic leader Shirley Anne Massey (1942 -) served as the First Lady of Morehouse College from 1995 to 2007.

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:

Massey, Shirley Anne

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Massey, Shirley Anne--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Civic Leader

HistoryMakers® Category:

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 Shirley Anne Massey, August 24, 2013. 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 Shirley Anne Massey, Section A2013_239_001_001, TRT: 1:32:22 ?

Shirley Anne Massey was born on August 14, 1942 in Chicago, Illinois to Anne Johnson and William Streeter. Massey's maternal grandmother was born in Louisiana, and gave Massey's light-complexioned mother up for adoption to a white family. Her mother was raised as white until she was seven years old, when Massey's great-grandmother brought her back to live in the black

community. After Massey's great-grandmother died, her mother moved to Chicago. She was raped at sixteen years old, and gave birth to Massey's older brother. Massey's father was born in Rome, Georgia to a Native American mother, and moved to Chicago with his father when he was young. Massey's parents later met and married, and raised Massey in the integrated Woodlawn neighborhood. Her father worked as a custodian at the nearby University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, and occasionally catered parties for the professors. Massey attended St. Anselm's School until the second grade, when the nearby Holy Cross School began admitting African Americans.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Anne Massey, Section A2013_239_001_002, TRT: 2:34:14 ?

Shirley Anne Massey moved with her family to the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois after graduating from the eighth grade. She enrolled at the Loretto Academy, where she excelled in math. Massey became pregnant shortly after entering the Chicago Teacher's College in 1960. She was forced to marry her child's father, but continued living with her parents and divorced her first husband in 1962. Her family's apartment burned down later that year, prompting her parents' separation. Massey moved in with a friend, and secured an accounting position at Playboy Enterprises, Inc., which was one of the few equal opportunity employers in the city. After being denied a raise due to her race, Massey quit and began working as a reservationist at Trans World Airlines. There, she was sexually harassed by her manager, who assigned Massey to the night shift in retaliation for rebuffing his advances. After threatening to report him, Massey was transferred to the day shift.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Anne Massey, Section A2013_239_001_003, TRT: 3:33:15 ?

Shirley Anne Massey met her husband, Walter E. Massey, in 1968, when he was a post-doctoral researcher at the Argonne National Laboratory. They married in 1969, and he secured a position teaching physics at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Shortly afterwards, he was hired at Brown University. Massey's family moved to Providence, Rhode Island, where her husband formally adopted her son, Keith Massey. Massey became a mentor to several African American students, and was embraced by the black community on campus. In 1974, her family moved to the West Coast, where Massey's husband spent his sabbatical at the University of California Santa Cruz. Upon returning to Brown University in 1975, he was appointed dean of the college, and Massey took on additional duties as the dean's wife. In 1979, they moved back to Chicago, Illinois, where Massey's husband became the director of the Argonne National Laboratory. They moved into the Powhatan Apartments, and were introduced to the city's elite society.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Anne Massey, Section A2013_239_001_004, TRT: 4:28:40 ?

Shirley Anne Massey moved to Washington D.C. in 1989, when her husband, Walter E. Massey, became the director of the National Science Foundation. They returned to Chicago, Illinois shortly afterwards, and lived in Paris, France during her husband's sabbatical in 1991. Around that time, Massey's younger son enrolled at a boarding school, and she devoted her efforts to assisting with her husband's administrative duties. In 1993, Massey's husband was hired as the provost of the University of California system, and she coordinated their move to Oakland, California. Soon after, Morehouse College began recruiting her husband to become its president. He accepted the position in 1995, and Massey oversaw the construction of the president's house and several campus

beautification projects. While serving as the college first lady, she also befriended campus staff and hosted events. Massey was instrumental in fundraising for Morehouse College, and secured donations from Oprah Winfrey, Ray Charles and Quincy Jones.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Anne Massey, Section A2013_239_001_005, TRT: 5:34:08 ?

Shirley Anne Massey served as the first lady of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia for twelve years. She instructed the students on social etiquette, and advocated for young black men throughout the city. In 2007, Massey and her husband, Walter E. Massey, decided to retire from the college presidency. They returned to Chicago, Illinois, where her husband continued his involvement with the University of Chicago and numerous corporate boards. He was named chairman of the board of the Bank of America Corporation in 2009; and, the following year, he was asked to serve as president of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). As the institution's first lady, Massey represented SAIC at events, and mentored the students. She reflects upon the changes in Chicago, and her hopes and concerns for the city. She also shares her advice for young women, and describes her hopes for the African American community. Massey concludes this part of interview by reflecting upon her life and legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Anne Massey, Section A2013_239_001_006, TRT: 6:16:57 ?

Shirley Anne Massey narrates her photographs.