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## History Makers Digital Archive

**H**istory Makers ([www.thehistorymakers.org](http://www.thehistorymakers.org)) is a video African American oral history video collection available online. History Makers started interviewing in 2000 to collect the personal stories of living well known and little-known African Americans. Currently housing over 3000 memoirs in 10,000 hours of recordings, History Makers is a great source for anyone interested in the African American experience. The video oral histories range in length from 90 minutes to 15 hours. The collection is on deposit at the U.S. Library of Congress, and builds on earlier efforts by the library to collect Works Progress Administration (WPA) African-American narratives and voices. Individuals interviewed include persons from many fields: sports, religion, politics, medicine, music, media, law and sports.

The History Makers opening web page has several drop down menus that lead the viewer deeper into the web site: biographies, about, digital archives, education, events and programs, get involved, media and store. Digital archives give instructions and price information for access to History Makers. Education has K-12 classroom support, Higher Education fellowships and a link to a digital humanities sandbox. Events and programs contain videos of History Makers sponsored events (some on YouTube) and is a great way to sample History Makers offerings. Media give things like press kits and “special collections” of related materials from non-History Makers videos (Negro Baseball League for example). The store includes DVDs, tote bags and t-shirts.

A typical entry is that of the opera singer Jessye Norman. History Makers conducted two interviews with Norman on November 21, 2016, and April 27, 2017. The interviews were very well-done professional video productions. Her History Makers information page include a photograph of Norman and a biography of her life (she died in September of 2019 and this fact is noted in the write up). Interesting facts about the person being interviewed are also provided as a sort of human-interest tidbit. For Norman History Makers lists: favorite color (yellow), favorite food (smoked salmon), favorite time of the year (Fall), favorite song (God will take care of you), favorite vacation (anywhere there is an ocean), and favorite quote (“When people show you who they are, believe them”). Each History Makers entry contains a professional photograph of the individual. In addition to the biographies, there are short videos on interesting persons such as the oldest living Black cowboy, Vernon Jordan and Angela Davis.

Individual subscriptions to History Makers are \$30 a month (or \$300 a year). Institutions must subscribe at the institutional rate for which they will provide a quote. There is a special subset of scientist biographies funded by the NSF which are free, but users must register as a member to obtain access. Overall History Makers provides access to an internationally recognized collection of African-American oral histories.