

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Arthur Turner

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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>	Turner, Arthur L., 1950-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Arthur Turner,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 9, 2000
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2000
<b>Physical Description:</b>	3 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:30:26).
<b>Abstract:</b>	State representative The Honorable Arthur Turner (1950 - ) has been an Illinois State Representative since 1981. Turner was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 9, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2000_060
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Arthur L. Turner was born on December 2, 1950 in Chicago, Illinois to Catherine and Joe Turner. He attended St. Mel High School. Upon graduation, Turner received a scholarship to West Point, but instead attended St. Joseph's College for one year. Turner transferred to Illinois State University, where he received his B.A. degree in business administration. After graduation, Turner found a position as an investigator with the Cook County States Attorney's office. In the eight years he worked there, he handled cases involving consumer fraud, gradually expanding to include vice (gambling, prostitution and narcotics). By 1980, Turner was looking for a career change.

When State Representative Jesse Madison retired in 1978, Turner ran for his seat, losing by 800 votes. He was successful two years later, and, at age thirty, Turner became the youngest member of the Illinois General Assembly. Turner ran for a second term in 1982, but was defeated. However, he remained active in politics during this period by working on the Chicago mayoral campaign of Harold Washington. After three months away from Springfield, Turner was appointed to fill a vacancy in the 10th Legislative District.

Since his return to the Illinois General Assembly, Turner has served in several capacities, including Chairman of the Housing Committee and the Vice-Chairman of the Higher Education Committee. He is known as the “Father of the Affordable Housing Trust Funds Law,” a bill that he sponsored and helped pass. He continues to serve as the Deputy Democratic Leader of the Illinois House of Representatives.

Turner and his wife, Rosalyn, are the parents of two sons, Arthur Jr. and Aaron. He is affiliated with the Lawndale Christian Development Corporation, the Boy Scouts of America and other organizations. In addition, he found the time to return to college, earning his Masters degree from Lewis University.

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## **Scope and Content**

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Arthur Turner was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on June 9, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 3 Betacame SP videocassettes. State representative The Honorable Arthur Turner (1950 - ) has been an Illinois State Representative since 1981.

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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

## 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:

Turner, Arthur L., 1950-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Hayes, Frank (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Turner, Arthur L., 1950---Interviews

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African American legislators--Illinois--Chicago--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:**

State Representative

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

PoliticalMakers

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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 The Honorable Arthur Turner, June 9, 2000. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### **Processing Information**

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 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 The Honorable Arthur Turner,  
Section A2000\_060\_001\_001, TRT: 0:31:04 2000/06/09

Politician Arthur Turner begins by remembering his mother and father and describing his family history. Turner recalls memories from his childhood, including visiting family in Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas. He recalls his stable home environment and explains why having a strong family is important in childhood development. Turner then shares memories of his childhood neighborhood of Lawndale in Chicago and then describes his high school experience at Providence St. Mel High School.

African American families--History.

Childhood and youth--Illinois--Chicago.

North Lawndale (Chicago, Ill.)

St. Mel High School (Chicago, Ill.)

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Arthur Turner,  
Section A2000\_060\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:25 2000/06/09

Politician Arthur Turner recalls his church activities and how the church contributed to his close-knit family life. He also describes his siblings. Turner then talks about his aspiration to become a doctor, and his enrollment at the U.S. Military Academy. He explains why he changed his mind about the medical field and dropped out of West Point, recounting his transition to Illinois State University, where he earned a business administration degree and became involved in civil rights activism. Turner describes his work at the Illinois State's Attorney Office as a fraud investigator, and then explains how he became involved in politics, detailing his campaigns for Illinois state representative.

African American churches--Illinois--Chicago.

United States Military Academy.

Illinois State University.

African Americans--Political activism.

Cook County (Ill.). State's Attorney's Office.

African Americans--Political campaigns.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Arthur Turner,  
Section A2000\_060\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:57 2000/06/09

Politician Arthur Turner reflects on his nearly twenty years in the Illinois General Assembly, explaining the legislative process and describing the political climate in Springfield. He discusses the contributions of African American legislators to Illinois politics, including the man he replaced, Jesse Madison, and Chicago mayor Harold Washington. Finally, Turner considers his own legacy as a State Representative and discusses the importance of education.

African American legislators--Illinois.

Illinois. General Assembly.

Washington, Harold, 1922-1987.

African Americans--Education.