

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Maudine Cooper

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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>	Cooper, Maudine Rice
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Maudine Cooper,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 22, 2001
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2001
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:39:24).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Nonprofit chief executive and city government official Maudine Cooper (1941 - ) was the president and CEO of the Greater Washington Urban League. Before that, Cooper joined the Washington, D.C., government as Director of the Office of Human Rights under Mayor Marion Barry, Jr., and later became his chief of staff. Cooper was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 22, 2001, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2001_019
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Maudine Cooper was born on September 30, 1941, in Benoit, Mississippi. Her family soon moved north to St. Paul, Minnesota, in search of a better life. Cooper received both her undergraduate degree in Business Administration (1964) and her J. D. degree (1971) from Howard University. She joined the National Urban League in 1973 as an Assistant Director for Federal Programs and became their Vice President for Washington Operations Legislative Office in 1980. In 1983, Cooper left her post at the National Urban League to join the Washington, D.C., government as Director of the Office of Human Rights under Mayor Marion Barry, Jr. The post excited Cooper, because it provided her the opportunity to put her legal training and her commitment to social justice to action. Within the next several years, Cooper took on several high profile cases and in 1987 she was appointed to head the Minority Business Opportunity Commission. Mayor Barry approached Cooper in 1989 to become his Chief of Staff. She served in this position for the last two years of his third term.

Since 1990, Cooper has served as President and CEO of the Greater Washington Urban League, an affiliate of the National Urban League and an organization devoted to education and training, housing and community development, services for the aging and the environment. Cooper is a member of numerous organizations and boards, such as the District of Columbia Bar Association, the NAACP, the D.C. Agenda Project, and Leadership Washington. In 1992, Cooper received the prestigious Isaiah Award for the Pursuit of Justice, presented by the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the American Jewish Committee and in 1998, she was named McDonald's Black History Maker of Today in the Washington, D.C., area.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Maudine Cooper was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on June 22, 2001,

in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Nonprofit chief executive and city government official Maudine Cooper (1941 - ) was the president and CEO of the Greater Washington Urban League. Before that, Cooper joined the Washington, D.C., government as Director of the Office of Human Rights under Mayor Marion Barry, Jr., and later became his chief of staff.

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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:

Cooper, Maudine Rice

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Cooper, Maudine Rice--Interviews

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African American women executives--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

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African American government executives--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

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Mississippi--Social life and customs.

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Rural-urban migration--United States.

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Howard University.

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National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes (U.S.).

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Barry, Marion, 1936-.

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Washington (D.C.)--Politics and government.

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Political corruption--United States.

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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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Washington Urban League

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## Occupations:

Nonprofit Chief Executive

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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 Maudine Cooper, June 22, 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).

## 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 Maudine Cooper, Section A2001\_019\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Urban League executive Maudine Cooper discusses her family background and her childhood growing up in Mississippi. Cooper describes both her mother and father, explaining that while they were not formally educated, she grew up in an environment emphasizing refined speech and education. Cooper also recounts a major transition in her life, when she moved from Mississippi to Minnesota.

African american women executives--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

African American government executives--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

Mississippi--Social life and customs.

Rural-urban migration--United States.

Howard University.

National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes (U.S.).

Barry, Marion, 1936-.

Washington (D.C.)--Politics and government.

Political corruption--United States.

Video Oral History Interview with Maudine Cooper, Section A2001\_019\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:11 ?

Urban League executive Maudine Cooper discusses her time at Howard University, citing her experiences there as having a profound influence on her life. Cooper recounts her application process, her difficult first semester, and Howard's social and academic climates. Cooper also shares her general concerns about Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and remembers the decision-making process that led her to law school at Howard.

Video Oral History Interview with Maudine Cooper, Section A2001\_019\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:14 ?

Urban League executive Maudine Cooper discusses her law school experience and details her time working for the National Urban League and in the administration of Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry. Cooper describes her major accomplishments working at the Urban League, and talks about the positive influences of Ron Brown and Vernon Jordan on the organization. Cooper then explains why she left the Urban League to work for Mayor Barry.

Video Oral History Interview with Maudine Cooper, Section A2001\_019\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:37 ?

Urban League executive Maudine Cooper discusses her time working for the city of Washington, D.C. under Mayor Marion Barry. Cooper describes her duties and accomplishments as the head Washington's Office of Human Rights and Minority Business Opportunity Commission, positions she held simultaneously. After this, Cooper describes her experience as the Chief of Staff for Barry during his tumultuous third term, when he was arrested and incarcerated.

Video Oral History Interview with Maudine Cooper, Section A2001\_019\_001\_005, TRT: 0:31:08 ?

Urban League executive Maudine Cooper discusses her transition from the Marion Barry administration back to the Urban League, becoming president and CEO of the Greater Washington branch. Cooper explains how she helped the Urban League adapt to a new climate of civil rights and discusses the skills needed to prevent bad publicity from infecting the League. Cooper then reflects on her life and career, and describes a series of photos depicting her life, family, and career.

Video Oral History Interview with Maudine Cooper, Section A2001\_019\_001\_006, TRT: 0:07:14 ?

Urban League executive Maudine Cooper describes a series of photos depicting her life, family, and career.