

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr.

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Epps, Charles H. (Charles Harry), 1930-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr.,
Dates:	March 17, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	8 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:32:41).
Abstract:	Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. (1930 -) was chief of the Division of Orthopedic Surgery at Howard University. During his tenure as chief and professor, Epps trained more African American men and women in orthopedic surgery than anyone in the world. Epps was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 17, 2003, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_049
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Medical pioneer and educator Dr. Charles Harry Epps, Jr., was born on July 24, 1930, in Baltimore, Maryland. Epps attended Baltimore's Frederick Douglass High School; during his senior year, he was class president and valedictorian. While still in high school, Epps was also selected to be a delegate of the Maryland State Boys Senate, where he introduced legislation calling for the elimination of segregation of the state's public transportation, which the State Boys Senate passed.

Epps graduated from high school in 1947 and enrolled at Howard University in Washington, D.C. Epps graduated magna cum laude with his B.S. degree in chemistry in 1947 from Howard, and received his M.D. degree with honors in 1955. After medical school, Epps completed his internship and residency in orthopedic surgery at Freedmen's (now Howard University) Hospital, in Washington, D.C. Following the completion of his residency, Epps served as a captain in the United States Army Medical Corps.

After his honorable discharge from the Army in 1962, Epps returned to Howard University to become a member of the College of Medicine faculty, and began a successful private practice.

At the age of thirty-three, Epps was appointed chief of the Division of Orthopedic Surgery at Howard. During his tenure as chief and professor, Epps trained more African American men and women in orthopedic surgery than anyone in the world. Epps also served Howard in various other capacities, including dean of the College of Medicine; vice president for health affairs; acting CEO of Howard Hospital; and special assistant to the president for health affairs.

Epps retired from Howard University in 2001. Throughout the course of his career, Epps contributed more than seventy publications and thirty book chapters, in addition to giving numerous lectures and scientific presentations. Epps also served in a variety of professional organizations, including the American Orthopedic Association, where

he was its first African American member, and later its president. Epps and his wife, renowned doctor Roselyn Payne Epps, raised four children.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on March 17, 2003, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 8 Betacame SP videocassettes. Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. (1930 -) was chief of the Division of Orthopedic Surgery at Howard University. During his tenure as chief and professor, Epps trained more African American men and women in orthopedic surgery than anyone in the world.

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:

Epps, Charles H. (Charles Harry), 1930-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Epps, Charles H. (Charles Harry), 1930- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Orthopedic Surgeon

HistoryMakers® Category:

MedicalMakers

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 Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr., March 17, 2003. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 6/7/2022 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 Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr., Section A2003_049_001_001, TRT: 0:29:20 2003/03/16

Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. narrates his photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr., Section A2003_049_001_002, TRT:

0:30:47 2003/03/16

Orthopedic surgeon, medical administrator and medical educator Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. shares memories of growing up in the Pimlico neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland, during the 1930s and early 1940s. He talks about his parents and the values they taught him, about his siblings and childhood pasttimes. He remembers his early education, first in a private home, then in a small elementary school for black children. Dr. Epps also recalls his shock at age six upon seeing the big, well-equipped white school and learning the realities of segregation and separate but unequal school facilities.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr., Section A2003_049_001_003, TRT: 0:30:30 2003/03/16

Orthopedic surgeon, medical administrator and medical educator Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. recalls experiences during his youth in Baltimore Maryland, including scholastic and extra-curricular activities in junior high and high school, attending Boys' State Senate, a model legislature event at which he proposed and passed an anti-discrimination bill. Dr. Epps discusses the death of his father in his teens, and his mother a few years later, and he tells about working his way through college and medical school at Howard University.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr., Section A2003_049_001_004, TRT: 0:30:58 2003/03/16

Orthopedic surgeon, medical administrator and medical educator Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. talks about his favorite teachers from all his levels of schooling, focusing in most detail on his teachers at Howard University both in undergraduate courses and in the College of Medicine, from which he graduated in 1955. He also discusses his family's apparent predisposition for tuberculosis, recalls Dr. E. Franklin Frazier for whom he did housework and odd-jobs during college, and talks about his courtship and marriage to Roselyn Payne Epps.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr., Section A2003_049_001_005, TRT: 0:29:10 2003/03/16

Orthopedic surgeon, medical administrator and medical educator Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. recalls his studies at Howard University College of Medicine, Washington, D.C., his internship and residency in orthopedic surgery at Freedmen's Hospital, being hired to teach at Howard and at age 33 becoming chief of orthopedic surgery. Dr. Epps discusses the transition to black faculty at Howard's medical school and the history of its orthopedics department. He also tells about his service as a captain in a reserve hospital unit of the U.S. Army.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr., Section A2003_049_001_006, TRT: 0:30:33 2003/03/16

Orthopedic surgeon, medical administrator and medical educator Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. talks about his career, including teaching at Howard University College of Medicine, Washington, D.C., supervising residents, treating patients, and participating in professional organizations. He describes relations with white colleagues that have run the gamut from friendship to racism, and recounts incidents when white patients were reluctant to have a black doctor treat them.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr., Section A2003_049_001_007, TRT: 0:31:23 2003/03/16

Orthopedic surgeon, medical administrator and medical educator Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. talks about his work as an educational and medical administrator, first as Dean of Howard University College of Medicine, then as Vice President of Health Affairs at Howard, a position overseeing five colleges and Howard University Hospital. Dr. Epps also discusses advances in prosthetics and other

medical technology over the course of his career, and shares his ideas on health care policy and the role of historically black medical schools.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr., Section A2003_049_001_008, TRT: 2003/03/17

Orthopedic surgeon, medical administrator and medical educator Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. talks about his current activities as a Professor Emeritus at Howard University College of Medicine, guest lecturer at other institutions and a board member of organizations. He shares memories of his courtship and marriage to Dr. Roselyn Payne-Epps and of raising their four children, and looks back on the self-sufficiency and frugality he needed to support himself and pay for his education. At the end of this tape Dr. Epps shows three photos.