

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Michael Scott, Sr.

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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>	Scott, Michael, Sr., 1949-2009
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Michael Scott, Sr.,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 12, 2004 and March 21, 2006
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2004 and 2006
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:04:36).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Education chief executive Michael Scott, Sr. (1949 - 2009 ) was president of the Chicago Park District, the Chicago Board of Education, and the chief cable administrator for the Chicago Office of Cable Communications. Scott was also a member of former Chicago Mayor Harold Washington's administration and an executive with Comcast. Scott was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 12, 2004 and March 21, 2006, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2004_021
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Cable industry executive and president of the Chicago Board of Education, Michael Scott, Sr. was born September 4, 1949, and raised on Chicago's West Side. Following his graduation from Hales Franciscan High School, Scott attended Fordham University, where he earned a bachelor's in urban planning. While still in high school, Scott also considered a career as a professional athlete, having drawn attention from coaches for the St. Louis Cardinals and the Pittsburgh Pirates, though an injury prevented him from following through with this.

After earning his B.A. from Fordham, Scott began working for the Pyramid West Development Corporation, where he served as vice-president and became highly involved in the North Lawndale community of Chicago. In this position, Scott was instrumental in the rehabilitation of 1,500 housing units, building a senior center and establishing the Community Bank of Lawndale. In 1978, Scott became director of community development of the Lawndale People's Planning & Action Council, where he remained for four years. During that same time, he was elected to the Chicago Board of Education.

His involvement in the community was recognized by then-Chicago Mayor Harold Washington, and Scott was appointed deputy director and later director of the Department of Special Events. He also served as special assistant to the mayor in charge of communications. Following Washington's untimely death, Scott remained active in city politics, and during Richard Daley's first year in office, he was named chief cable administrator for the City of Chicago's Office of Cable Communications.

Leaving the government, Scott remained in the cable industry, taking a position with AT&T Broadband and continuing on in his current position as vice-president of regulatory affairs for Comcast.

Scott would again return to public service in Chicago, serving as president of the Chicago Park District, and in

2001, he was named president of the Chicago Board of Education. During his tenure there, Scott worked to actively involve parents in the education process, and the Chicago Public Schools rapidly increased attendance, funding and overall rating nationwide as a school district.

Scott passed away in Chicago on November 16, 2009.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Michael Scott, Sr. was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on March 12, 2004 and March 21, 2006, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Education chief executive Michael Scott, Sr. (1949 - 2009 ) was president of the Chicago Park District, the Chicago Board of Education, and the chief cable administrator for the Chicago Office of Cable Communications. Scott was also a member of former Chicago Mayor Harold Washington's administration and an executive with Comcast.

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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:

Scott, Michael, Sr., 1949-2009

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Scott, Michael, Sr., 1949-2009 --Interviews

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African American executives--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews

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African American politicians--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews

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African American families--Illinois--Chicago

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Rural-urban migration--United States

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African Americans--Housing--Illinois--Chicago

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Gangs--Illinois--Chicago

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Great Fire, Chicago, Ill., 1871

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Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963--Assassination

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Civil rights movement

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Chicago (Ill.)--Social conditions--20th Century

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Daley, Richard M.

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Saunders, Warner

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Xavier University of Louisiana

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Fordham University

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College students--Drug use--United States

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New York (N.Y.)--Social life and customs

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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:**

Civic Leader

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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 Michael Scott, Sr., March 12, 2004 and March 21, 2006. 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).

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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 Michael Scott, Sr., Section A2004\_021\_001\_001, TRT: 0:31:17  
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Michael Scott goes in depth about his mother's and father's backgrounds, as well as his family's overall history. He speaks about his blue eyes and where he may have inherited them. Then, he tells the story of how his parents met. Scott describes how his parents migrated to the North with hopes of employment on Chicago's West Side. He tells some of the other reasons why his parents decided to move to Chicago and what his parents were like as a young married couple living in the city. Scott then gives the names of his brother and sister. He begins to talk about his childhood and his network of family and friends. He talks about the houses in which he grew up and about his family dynamic. He tells some stories about specific instances and relationships he had during his youth. Michael Scott describes his personality during elementary school and how he first dealt with local gangs.

African American executives--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.  
African American politicians--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.  
African American families--Illinois--Chicago.  
Rural-urban migration--United States.  
African Americans--Housing--Illinois--Chicago.  
Gangs--Illinois--Chicago.  
Great Fire, Chicago, Ill., 1871.  
Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963--Assassination.  
Civil rights movements.  
Chicago (Ill.)--Social conditions--20th Century.  
Daley, Richard M.  
Saunders, Warner.  
Xavier University of Louisiana.  
Fordham University.  
College students--Drug use--United States.  
New York (N.Y.)--Social life and customs.

Video Oral History Interview with Michael Scott, Sr., Section A2004\_021\_001\_002, TRT: 0:31:16  
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Michael Scott gives an overview of gang activity on Chicago's West Side during his high school years. He also tells stories about specific run-ins he had with gang members and how he dealt with these situations. Scott talks about the Great Chicago Fire and another fire that happened three years after, which led to Chicago's first urban renewal problem. Michael Scott then lists the elementary and middle schools he attended. Then he talks about his religious affiliations. Scott describes specific memories from his childhood and makes reference to John F. Kennedy's assassination, the Civil Rights Movement and the social climate of the West Side of Chicago. Scott speaks about his involvement in athletics during high school and his competitive nature. He explains himself as 'metered and measured' as he describes his decision making process. He tells of Mayor Richard M. Daley's presence in Chicago and about a time when Scott introduced Daley at a ceremony. Michael Scott talks about his peers coming back from Vietnam and wanting to get into the law enforcement profession. He explains how he, too, was motivated to become a policeman and the initial steps he took in order to do so.

Video Oral History Interview with Michael Scott, Sr., Section A2004\_021\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:12  
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Michael Scott talks about his experiences in attempting to start a career with the Chicago Police Department. He then explains the influence Warner Saunders had on him in his decision to attend Xavier University of Louisiana. Then, Michael Scott talks about the differences between the West Side of Chicago and the campus scene at Xavier University in New Orleans. He talks about why he chose to transfer to Fordham University. Scott goes in depth about his experiences in New York, New York, while at Fordham. He speaks about the drug use he saw among students and how he dealt with the situation. He also describes the positive side of his Fordham experience and mentions some prominent people he met and who influenced him. Next, Michael Scott talks about coming back to Chicago after graduating from Fordham and his employment opportunities. He explains his employment with various Chicago community organizations, including St. Agatha's, the North Lawndale Economic

Development Corporation and the Pyramid West Development Corporation.  
Michael Scott briefly talks about the social scene of Chicago upon his return  
from college.

Video Oral History Interview with Michael Scott, Sr., Section A2004\_021\_002\_004, TRT: 0:29:53  
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Video Oral History Interview with Michael Scott, Sr., Section A2004\_021\_002\_005, TRT: 0:31:04  
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Video Oral History Interview with Michael Scott, Sr., Section A2004\_021\_002\_006, TRT: 0:29:54  
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