Overview of the Collection

Repository: The HistoryMakers® 1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com

Creator: Turner, Charles "Chuck", 1940-

Title: The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Charles "Chuck" Turner,

Dates: March 25, 2005

Bulk Dates: 2005

Physical Description: 6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:31:01).

Abstract: City council member Charles "Chuck" Turner (-) served as a member of the Boston City Council for over ten years. He has advocated for fair employment practices within the city of Boston, as well as the rights of those living in under-served and minority communities. Turner was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 25, 2005, in Boston, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.

Identification: A2005_080

Language: The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Boston, Massachusetts, civil rights activist Charles “Chuck” Turner was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1941. Turner was raised by his aunt, Mamie K. Faulkner, and his grandmother, Laura Troy Knight; his grandfather, Doctor Charles Henry Turner, was a pioneering animal behavior biologist, while his father, Darwin Turner, was a pharmacist.

Turner graduated from Harvard University in 1963 with his B.A. degree in
government; he then spent a year in Washington, DC, reporting for *The Afro-American Newspaper*. Turner then moved north, first to New York, then to Hartford, where he joined the influential civil rights group the Northern Student Movement.

In 1966 Turner returned to the Boston area, joining the South End Neighborhood Action Program (SNAP) where he worked to help the community and assisted families who were losing their homes to gentrification. Turner formed a community action group which pressured the local government to provide trash clean-up in black neighborhoods and led demonstrations which highlighted how inadequately city inspectors enforced building codes in public housing.

A former leader of the United Community Construction Workers and one-time chair of the Boston Jobs Coalition, Turner spent several years crusading against job discrimination in the city. Turner campaigned for increased hiring of blacks on city construction jobs; in 1991, unsatisfied with the mayor’s enforcement of fair employment practices, he led a four hour sit-in at the mayor’s office, which resulted in a number of key concessions being made.

Turner also used his activism strategies and leadership skills to spearhead other community efforts; he played a leading role in a successful campaign to prevent the city from building a highway through predominantly black neighborhoods. Turner also chaired the Southwest Corridor Land Development Corporation.

Referred to as one of the best-known agitators in the city, Turner was elected to the Boston City Council in 1999, a position he held for over ten years. As a city council member, Turner continued his defense of civil and human rights; he authored an ordinance protecting transgendered people from discrimination. Turner successfully led an effort to protect the affirmative action guidelines of Massachusetts when Governor Mitt Romney sought to change them. As chairman of the Education Committee, Turner rallied against educational inequality in the Boston public schools.

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**Scope and Content**

This life oral history interview with Charles "Chuck" Turner was conducted by Robert Hayden on March 25, 2005, in Boston, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. City council member Charles "Chuck" Turner (-) served as a member of the Boston City Council for over ten years. He has advocated for fair employment practices within the city of Boston, as well as the rights of those living in under-served and minority communities.
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:

- Turner, Charles "Chuck", 1940-
- Hayden, Robert (Interviewer)
- Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:
African Americans--Interviews
Turner, Charles "Chuck", 1940---Interviews

African American civic leaders--Massachusetts--Boston--Interviews

African American labor leaders--Massachusetts--Boston--Interviews

African American political activists--Massachusetts--Boston--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Boston (Mass.). City Council.

Occupations:

City Council Member

HistoryMakers® Category:

PoliticalMakers

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

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).

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 Charles "Chuck" Turner, Section A2005_080_001_001, TRT: 0:29:15 2005/03/25

African American civic leaders--Massachusetts--Boston--Interviews.
African American labor leaders--Massachusetts--Boston--Interviews.
African American political activists--Massachusetts--Boston--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles "Chuck" Turner, Section A2005_080_001_002, TRT: 0:29:26 2005/03/25

Video Oral History Interview with Charles "Chuck" Turner, Section A2005_080_001_003, TRT: 0:30:12 2005/03/25

Video Oral History Interview with Charles "Chuck" Turner, Section A2005_080_001_004, TRT: 0:29:27 2005/03/25