Overview of the Collection

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

Creator: Henry, Charles

Title: The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Charles Henry

Dates: April 5, 2006, March 30, 2005

Bulk Dates: 2006, 2005

Physical Description: 6 Betacam SP videocassettes (2:35:55).

Abstract: African American Studies professor Charles Henry (1947 - ) is the author of the prolific biography "Ralph J. Bunche: Model Negro or American Other?" Henry was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 30, 2005 and April 5, 2006 in Oakland, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.

Identification: A2006_062

Language: The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

African American Studies professor Charles Patrick Henry III was born on August 17, 1947 in Newark, Ohio to Charles Patrick Henry II and Ruth Holbert Henry. Henry attended Central School for elementary and junior high school. As a member of the National Junior Honor Society, he received honors for his studies in business. In 1965, Henry was accepted to Denison University in Granville, Ohio. As a student at Denison University, Henry co-founded the Black Student Union and the Experimental College. As a college student, he also participated in anti-war rallies and programs to improve race relations. After receiving his B.A. degree in political science in 1969, he attended graduate school at the University of Chicago.

As a graduate student, Henry was awarded an American Political Science Congressional Fellowship during which he worked for six months in the office of Hubert Humphrey, and then for six months with the Congressional Black Caucus. While Henry continued his studies, he obtained a teaching position in the political science department at Howard University. In 1974, Henry earned his Ph.D. degree in political science from the University of Chicago. He then left Howard University to teach Black Studies at his alma mater, Denison University. In 1979, Henry received a NEH post-doctoral Fellowship at Atlanta University where he began his research for the biography on Nobel laureate Ralph J. Bunche. After completing his fellowship in 1981, Henry taught at the University of California, Berkeley in the African American Studies department. Henry has since written over seventy articles, and authored six books including "Ralph Bunche: Model Negro or American Other?"

From 1986 to 1988, Henry served as Chair of Amnesty International, U.S.A. Board of Directors. In 1994, Henry was appointed by President Bill Clinton for a six year term to the National Council on the Humanities. He also served as a Fulbright Chair in American History and Politics at the University of Bologna, Italy in 2003. Henry lives in Berkeley, California with his wife, Loretta and their three children.
Charles Patrick Henry III was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 5, 2006.

**Scope and Content**

This life oral history interview with Charles Henry was conducted by Loretta Henry on March 30, 2005, and April 5, 2006, in Oakland, California, and was recorded on 6 Betacam SP videocassettes. African American Studies professor Charles Henry (1947 - ) is the author of the prolific biography "Ralph J. Bunche: Model Negro or American Other?"

**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:**

Henry, Charles P., -1947

Henry, Loretta (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

**Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

Henry, Charles P., -1947 --Interviews

African American college teachers--Interviews
Organizations:

HistoryMakers (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

University of California, Berkeley.

HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers

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 10/3/2011 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, April 5, 2006, March 30, 2005

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Henry, Section A2006_062_002_001, TRT: 0:29:20 2006/04/05

Charles Henry begins the interview by discussing his family history. His mother, Ruth Holbert, was born in Zanesville, Ohio on July 15, 1915. Her family moved to Newark, Ohio during the Great Depression for work
opportunities. His father, Charles Patrick Henry II, was born in Newark, Ohio on February 26, 1890. Charles was a member of the Tenth Cavalry Regiment fighting with the Rough Riders and Theodore Roosevelt at The Battle of San Juan Hill. Henry’s great-great grandfather was a free man who worked on Thomas Jefferson’s plantation. His great-uncles Oren Henry and Charles Henry I, fought in the Civil War as members of the Ohio Colored Troops. One of his great-uncles was shot in the head at the Battle of Lookout Mountain. After detailing his family history, Henry describes his childhood neighborhood of Newark, Ohio.

African American families--Ohio--Newark.
African American parents--Ohio.
San Juan Hill, Battle of, Cuba, 1898.
United States. Army. Volunteer Cavalry, 1st.
African American soldiers.
United States. Colored Troops.
Lookout Mountain, Battle of, Tenn., 1863
African American children--Ohio--Newark.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Henry, Section A2006_062_002_002, TRT: 0:28:20 2006/04/05

Charles Henry recalls his conservative town of Newark, Ohio where most of the residents were members of the Republican Party. He describes the sights, sounds and smells of his childhood neighborhood. His first day of elementary school was traumatic because this was the first time he left the house alone. As a student at Newark High School, Henry and a group of other African Americans integrated the local roller skating rink by skating on Saturday, a whites-only night. During his teenage years, Henry was inspired to earn his Ph.D. in political science after witnessing civil rights demonstrations. Despite the fact that Henry's family did not regularly attend church, his father regularly donated money to the local African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Neighborhoods--Ohio--Newark.
African American school children--Ohio.
African American high school students--Ohio--Newark.
Segregation in education—Ohio--Newark.
Civil rights demonstrations--Ohio.
Political science--Study and teaching.
African Methodist Episcopal Church--Ohio

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Henry, Section A2006_062_002_003, TRT: 0:28:50 2006/04/05

Charles Henry discusses the social importance of the church in the African American community. After being accepted into Denison University, Henry was invited to spend an evening with the members of the American Association of Commons Club where most of the Black and international students at Denison University were members. As a college student, Henry co-founded the Black Student Union. After college, Henry remembers attending graduate school at The University of Chicago where his first black professor was John Hope Franklin. Henry was classmates with Lorenzo Morris who would go on to co-author Henry’s book “The Chit'lin Controversy: Race and Public Policy in America.” After graduate school, Henry became an American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow working in the offices of Senator Hubert
Charles Henry describes his marriage to Loretta Jean Crenshaw as the most important event of his life. Early in their marriage, Henry began working at Howard University as a professor. After teaching at Howard University, Henry taught at the newly formed Black Studies department at Denison University. He recalls becoming the assistant dean of the Black Studies program at Denison University. During the mid-1980s, Henry began to teach at University of California, Berkeley. His research at the university eventually led to the writing of his book “Culture and African American Politics (Blacks in the Diaspora).” While working at the University of California Berkley, Henry became involved in Amnesty International. In 1986, he was elected the head chair of the board of directors of Amnesty International. Henry recalls becoming president of The National Council for Black Studies at the University of California, Berkeley in 1993.

Charles Henry discusses his reasons for writing Ralph Bunche’s biography. He believes Bunche was an important historical figure because he was the first African American to receive a Nobel Peace Prize and the first African American political scientist. Henry recalls being appointed by President Bill Clinton to a six year term to the National Council on the Humanities. In 2003, Henry received a distinguished Fulbright Chair at the University of Bologna. While in Bologna, he taught human relations and foreign politics. Looking back on his life, Henry is satisfied with his interdisciplinary work in political science. He believes that African American involvement in higher education peaked in the 1970s, an issue that is often discussed amongst his colleagues. He cherishes the value of honesty and emphasizes the importance of giving back to the African American community. In closing, Henry narrates a collection of photographs.
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