

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Kenneth Crooks

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Crooks, Kenneth, Jr., 1931-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Kenneth Crooks,
Dates:	March 16, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	3 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:23:41).
Abstract:	Nonprofit chief executive Kenneth Crooks (1931 -) was the president of the Columbus, Georgia Urban League. Crooks was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 16, 2002, in Columbus, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_016
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Georgian civic leader Kenneth Crooks, Jr. was born in Boston, Massachusetts on September 12, 1931. He attended elementary school in Hampton, Virginia and secondary school in Jamaica, West Indies. Crooks graduated in 1957 from the University of Massachusetts with a Bachelors Degree of Business Administration and received a Masters of Business Administration from Atlanta University in 1962.

Crooks went to work for the National Urban League in its Regional Office in Atlanta, Georgia, covering twelve southern states in 1962. His responsibilities there included providing technical support for local Urban Leagues and developing new affiliates in the South. Crooks remained at the Urban League until 1991, taking time off in 1972 to assist Maynard Jackson's first campaign for Mayor of Atlanta. During his tenure at the Urban League, he worked in Economic Development and Employment, Education, Housing, Counseling and Community Awareness programs. He also developed programs for youth in fine arts, creating the Summer Youth Academy, the "Do the Right Thing" Rallies and brought the Chattahoochee Court-Appointed Special Advocates program for deprived and neglected children to the community.

In 1993, Crooks moved to Columbus, Georgia to serve as President of the Urban League of Greater Columbus. He had previously held the position of Community Service Specialist and Assistant Director of Development at the Fort Valley State College. Crooks also serves as Special Assistant to the pastor at Fourth Street Missionary Baptist Church. He has received several awards recognizing his service to the community, including "Man of the Year" for 2001, given by the Men's Progressive Club of Columbus.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Kenneth Crooks was conducted by Samuel Adams on March 16, 2002, in Columbus, Georgia, and was recorded on 3 Betacame SP videocassettes. Nonprofit chief executive Kenneth Crooks

(1931 -) was the president of the Columbus, Georgia Urban League.

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:

- Crooks, Kenneth, Jr., 1931-
- Adams, Samuel (Interviewer)
- Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

- African Americans--Interviews
 - Crooks, Kenneth, Jr., 1931---Interviews
-

African American civic leaders.

Organizations:

- HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)
 - The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection
 - Urban League of Greater Columbus
-

Occupations:

Nonprofit Chief Executive

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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 Kenneth Crooks, March 16, 2002. 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.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Kenneth Crooks, Section A2002_016_001_001, TRT: 0:30:10 ? Kenneth Crooks describes his family's background. He was born on September 12, 1931 in Boston, Massachusetts. Crooks' parents, both born in Jamaica, met in the United States in the 1920s. His father, Kenneth B.M. Crooks, was a Harvard University graduate who taught biology at the Hampton Institute in Virginia. His mother, Nella Edgar Crooks, worked as a maid before she had four children. Crooks spent his early childhood in Hampton, Virginia until 1941, when his father moved the family to Jamaica. In Jamaica, the elder Crooks assumed dual posts as headmaster of Happy Grove High School and pastor of

Seaside Friends Church. Although Crooks was ostracized as the headmaster's son, he also had many fond memories of growing up in Jamaica. In 1952, Crooks returned to the States to attend the University of Massachusetts Amherst where he experienced racial segregation. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration in 1957, and then he was drafted into the U.S. Army as a medic.

Harvard University--20th century.

Hampton Institute.

Hampton (Va.).

Draft--United States.

African Americans--Education.

African Americans--Social life and customs—Virginia.

World War, 1939-1945--African Americans.

Happy Grove School (Hectors River, Jamaica)

University of Massachusetts (Amherst campus)

Society of Friends--Education--Jamaica.

Crooks, Kenneth Bronstorph M., 1905-1959

Video Oral History Interview with Kenneth Crooks, Section A2002_016_001_002, TRT: 0:29:45 ?

Kenneth Crooks struggled to find a job in New England after his discharge from the U.S. Army. Upon his father's death, Crooks moved to Grambling, Louisiana to take care of his mother. In 1962, Crooks graduated from Atlanta University with an M.B.A. degree. During his time there, Crooks had participated in the Atlanta Student Movement and coordinated student sit-ins. He also excelled academically. After graduation, Crooks assembled the first job placement office at Atlanta University under Rufus Clement. His work was recognized by Clarence Coleman who recruited Crooks to the National Urban League in 1963 as its Assistant Director for Education. At the Urban League, Crooks continued to work as a liaison between black colleges and the business industry. Crooks talks about the significance of the Urban League, his role in the organization, and the influence of Lester Granger, Whitney Young, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on the organization. He also talks about other black civil rights organizations and his work on Maynard Jackson's mayoral campaign.

Atlanta University Center (Ga.) —History—20th century.

Atlanta University—History—20th century.

Student movements--United States--History--20th century.

National Urban League. Southern Regional Office.

Young, Whitney M.

Video Oral History Interview with Kenneth Crooks, Section A2002_016_001_003, TRT: 0:23:46 ?

Kenneth Crooks has worked with the National Urban League since 1963, witnessing the development of the organization under the respective presidencies of Whitney Young, Vernon Jordan, and Hugh Price. Crooks reflects on his time with the Urban League, and his leadership of the regional office in Columbus, Georgia from 1993 to 2001. He also talks about the future of the Urban League, the place of the black church in America, and his legacy.

African American churches--Georgia.

Young, Whitney M.

Jordan, Vernon E. (Vernon Eulion), 1935-

Price, Hugh B.

National Urban League--Administration.
African Americans--Education.