

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Rickey Hendon

Overview of the Collection

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| Repository: | The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com |
| Creator: | Hendon, Rickey, 1953- |
| Title: | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Rickey Hendon, |
| Dates: | January 24, 2001 |
| Bulk Dates: | 2001 |
| Physical Description: | 4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:04:19). |
| Abstract: | State senator The Honorable Rickey Hendon (1953 -) was elected to the Illinois State Senate, where he served as the Senate Minority Spokesperson of the State Government Operations Committee as well as a member of the Committees on Appropriations and Insurance & Pensions. Hendon was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 24, 2001, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| Identification: | A2001_081 |
| Language: | The interview and records are in English. |

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Rickey Hendon was born on December 8, 1953 in Cleveland, Ohio. At a young age, he moved with his family to Chicago, Illinois, where he attended grade school. While in high school, Hendon and his family moved again to Detroit, Michigan, where he graduated from Northwestern High School. With an interest in theatre and broadcasting, Hendon enrolled in the Omega School of Communications where he earned a FCC license, leading to an eight-year career in radio broadcasting.

In 1987, Hendon was appointed by Mayor Harold Washington to serve as a Committeeman for the 27th Ward and was elected to that position the following year. Meanwhile, he was also appointed by Cook County Board President George Dunne to Secretary-Treasurer of the Cook County Forest Preserves.

Shortly after being elected Alderman of the 27th Ward, Hendon was elected to the Illinois Senate, where he served as the Senate Minority Spokesperson of the State Government Operations Committee as well as a member of the Committees on Appropriations and Insurance & Pensions. In January 1997, he was elected Senate Chairperson of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus.

Hendon and his wife, Dawn, are the parents of five children. He is a member of Operation PUSH and the NAACP.

Hendon was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on January 24, 2001.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Rickey Hendon was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on

January 24, 2001, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. State senator The Honorable Rickey Hendon (1953 -) was elected to the Illinois State Senate, where he served as the Senate Minority Spokesperson of the State Government Operations Committee as well as a member of the Committees on Appropriations and Insurance & Pensions.

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:

Hendon, Rickey, 1953-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Haynes, Frank (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Hendon, Rickey, 1953---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Illinois

Occupations:

State Senator

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

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Rickey Hendon, January 24, 2001. 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 The Honorable Rickey Hendon, Section A2001_081_001_001, TRT: 0:31:07 ?

Rickey Hendon talks about his family background and childhood experiences. His mother, Olivia Hendon was a hairdresser; his father, Jimmy Hendon worked as a brick mason. In 1953, Hendon's family moved from Bellamy, Alabama to Cleveland, Ohio, where Hendon was born on December 8, 1953. Upon his father's death in 1957, Hendon and his three siblings were sent to live with different family members in Alabama. After two years in the South, Hendon returned to Cleveland where he experienced racism for the first time. After

Hendon got in trouble in school, his family returned to Alabama where his mother met and married Robert Larkin. After her remarriage, the family moved to Chicago, Illinois, settling in Chicago's violent North Lawndale neighborhood. Hendon talks about his childhood personality, and his grade school years at Bryant Elementary School and Mason Upper Grades School in Chicago.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Rickey Hendon, Section A2001_081_001_002, TRT: 0:31:08 ?

Rickey Hendon grew up on Chicago's West Side where he attended Mason Upper Grade School and Farragut High School. Hendon was an honor roll student who resisted pressure to join a gang, although he did fight with gang members in self-defense. In high school, Hendon attended a Black Panther Party meeting, but chose instead to join the Black Nationalist Movement, as he was drawn towards the movement's cultural components. When Hendon was a junior in high school, his older brother was targeted by the gangs, so his family moved to Detroit, Michigan, where Hendon eventually graduated from Northwest High School. Hendon talks about his discovery of girls in grade school, influential mentors in his life like Brother Hannibal Afrik, and her gift of intuition.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Rickey Hendon, Section A2001_081_001_003, TRT: 0:30:43 ?

Rickey Hendon attended Northwestern High School in Detroit, Michigan where he joined the Black Student Alliance, which was aligned with the Black Panther Party. Hendon describes division within the Black Panthers, his thoughts on Huey P. Newton, and why he joined the faction led by Eldridge Cleaver. His involvement in the arts and theatre in high school was influenced by his militancy, and he embraced the progressive works of artists like Gil Scott Heron, Marvin Gaye, James Brown, and The Last Guys. After high school, Hendon worked in a metal factory before studying broadcasting at the Omega School of Communications in Chicago, Illinois. Hendon talks about his career in radio and television, which took him to Los Angeles, California, before returning to Chicago. In Chicago, Hendon began his political career in 1987 after he was nominated by Nancy Jefferson, Ed Smith, Harold Washington, and History Maker Danny Davis to substitute for Wallace Davis' ward committeeman position upon the latter's incarceration.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Rickey Hendon, Section A2001_081_001_004, TRT: 0:31:21 ?

Rickey Hendon was appointed to serve as a ward committeeman by Mayor Harold Washington in 1987. Hendon served as an alderman for the 27th Ward on Chicago's West Side. In 1991, Hendon ran for the Illinois General Assembly and was elected to the Illinois State Senate in 1992. Hendon talks about his early days in the Illinois State Senate, influential African American state senators like Fred Smith and Kenneth Hall, the role of legislators, and lessons he learned during his political career. He is critical of abuses of political power and the misappropriation of taxes in the General Assembly. Hendon also shares his advice for young African Americans and what he hopes to accomplish during senate appointment as a change agent. He reflects upon his legacy.