

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Fred Hunter

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hunter, Fred, 1936-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Fred Hunter,
Dates:	April 24, 2007
Bulk Dates:	2007
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:25:40).
Abstract:	Newspaper manager Fred Hunter (1936 -) was the former director of diversity management for the Tribune Company. Hunter was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 24, 2007, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2007_157
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Newspaper manager Frederick Fenton Hunter was born on June 15, 1936 in Asheville, North Carolina to Marjorie and Ray Hunter. Hunter's parents divorced, and the family moved to Evanston, Illinois when he was eight. Hunter was an outstanding athlete at Evanston Township High School, where he graduated in 1954. He then enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps, where he spent three years, mostly stationed in Southern California. After his discharge, he enrolled in Illinois State University, a teaching college in Normal, Illinois. He earned his B.A. degree in social science with a minor in Spanish in 1962.

Hunter took a job teaching in the Chicago Public School System until he began work as a sales representative for the American Oil Company (Amoco) in 1965. In 1969, Hunter was able to secure his own Amoco filling station, which became very successful.

Looking for a new career path, Hunter earned his M.A. degree in public administration at Roosevelt University in Chicago. Because government jobs during the Reagan Administration of the 1980s were slim, he began working part-time as a newspaper deliveryman for *The Chicago Tribune*. Hunter's ethic for hard work was noticed by his superiors, and he was offered a full-time position as a district manager for Evanston and Skokie, Illinois. Over the next few years, Hunter climbed up the managerial ladder, reaching the level of department head in 1990. Eventually, Hunter was promoted to Tribune Corporate Headquarters as the first Director of Diversity Management in 1996, a position he retired from four years later. Hunter mentored dozens of minority employees at *The Chicago Tribune* and now lives with his wife in South Carolina.

Frederick Hunter was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on April 24, 2007.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Fred Hunter was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 24, 2007, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Newspaper manager Fred Hunter (1936 -) was the former director of diversity management for the Tribune Company.

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:

Hunter, Fred, 1936-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Hunter, Fred, 1936- --Interviews

African American newspaper editors--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Chicago tribune.

Occupations:

Newspaper Manager

HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakers

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 Fred Hunter, April 24, 2007. 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 Fred Hunter, Section A2007_157_001_001, TRT: 0:29:16 ?

Fred Hunter was born on June 15, 1936 in Asheville, North Carolina to Marjorie Rosemond Hunter and Ray Hunter. His paternal family originated in Abbeville, South Carolina, and his father was born and raised in Asheville. Hunter's mother was born in Liberty, South Carolina, and moved to Asheville as a teenager. After the deaths of Hunter's maternal grandparents, who were farmers, his mother quit school to care for her younger siblings. Hunter's parents met and married in Asheville, and raised Hunter and his brother in the small, all-black Stumptown

neighborhood, which was economically and racially segregated from the city's wealthy, white tourist population. Hunter's mother worked as a waitress at the Biltmore Estate, a public attraction in Asheville; and his father was an itinerant worker until being drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II. After his deployment to Germany, Hunter's father remained in the U.S. military, and served as a logistics teacher at Fort Eustis in Virginia.

African American families--Southern States.

African American couples--North Carolina.

African Americans--Migrations--United States.

Divorce.

United States. Army--Recruiting, enlistment, etc.

Evanston (Ill.).

Video Oral History Interview with Fred Hunter, Section A2007_157_001_002, TRT: 0:29:19 ?

Fred Hunter spent his early childhood in Asheville, North Carolina. His parents, Marjorie Rosemond Hunter and Ray Hunter, divorced when he was young, and he saw his father only during his leave from Fort Eustis in Virginia. In 1941, Hunter's mother moved to Evanston, Illinois to look for work, and left Hunter and his brother with their paternal aunt in Asheville. When his mother returned in 1943, their aunt refused to give them up, and a legal battle ensued. Knowing she would not win in court, Hunter's mother absconded to the North with her sons. In Evanston, Hunter enrolled at St. Mary's School, a majority-white, Catholic institution. He had difficulty adjusting to integrated life; but came to enjoy ice skating, which he had never experienced in the South, and watching Jackie Robinson play baseball in the major leagues. Hunter also describes the African American community in Evanston, which included several prominent families and notable high school athletes at the time.

African American families--Illinois--Evanston.

African American fathers.

Fathers and sons.

African Americans--Migrations--United States.

Abbeville (S.C.).

Video Oral History Interview with Fred Hunter, Section A2007_157_001_003, TRT: 0:29:31 ?

Fred Hunter briefly attended the Hill Street School in Asheville, North Carolina before moving to Evanston, Illinois. There, Hunter enrolled at St. Mary's School, and took piano lessons at the Evanston Conservatory of Music. At school, he struggled academically and socially, as he was unaccustomed to the white Catholic environment. Hunter went on to attend the integrated Nichols Junior High School and Evanston Township High School, where he joined the football and wrestling teams. At this point in the interview, Hunter describes the influence of Evanston's middle class African American community, which included many successful property owners, ministers, physicians and other professionals; and the black entertainers of the time, including jazz musicians and athletes like boxer Sugar Ray Robinson. Hunter graduated from high school in 1954; and, three months later, enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in the hopes of attending college through the Servicemen's Readjustment Act.

African American children--Education--Illinois.

African American high school students--Illinois--Evanston.

High school athletes.

Nichols Middle School (Evanston, Ill.).

Video Oral History Interview with Fred Hunter, Section A2007_157_001_004, TRT: 0:29:31 ?

Fred Hunter served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1954 to 1957. He was stationed at a number of locations in Southern California, including the Mountain Warfare Training Center, Marine Corps Training Center Twentynine Palms and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. Following his U.S. military service, Hunter attended Wilbur Wright Junior College in Chicago, Illinois and the Illinois State Normal University in Normal, Illinois. After graduating with a degree in social science and Spanish, Hunter taught at Chicago's Robert A. Waller High School and William McKinley Upper Grade Center. Wanting to enter into business, Hunter secured a position as a territory manager for Standard Oil of Indiana. He supervised several service stations on the West Side of Chicago, and was in the area during the riots of 1968. One year later, Hunter acquired his own service station from Standard Oil of Indiana. He owned the station until 1977, when he developed a gasoline fume allergy and sold the business.

American Oil Company.

United States. Marine Corps--African Americans.

African Americans--Education (Higher)--Illinois.

African American business enterprises.

United States. Veteran's Readjustment Benefits Act of 1966.

Video Oral History Interview with Fred Hunter, Section A2007_157_001_005, TRT: 0:28:03 ?

Fred Hunter owned a service station in Chicago, Illinois until 1977, when he sold the business and began delivering the Chicago Tribune newspaper to support his family. Soon after, Hunter's supervisor invited him to apply for a full time position at the Tribune Company as the district manager of Evanston, Illinois and Skokie, Illinois. Hunter went on to manage districts throughout northeast Illinois, including Waukegan, Schaumburg and the North Shore of Chicago; and, in 1996, secured a role as the Tribune Company's director of diversity management. In this capacity, he mentored numerous African American employees who went on to successful business careers, including Latrell Peterson-Dykes and Bennett B. Williams. Hunter retired from the Tribune Company at sixty-four years old. He reflects upon his life and legacy, as well as his hopes and concerns for the African American community; and then concludes the interview by describing how he would like to be remembered.

African Americans--Newspapers--Illinois--Chicago.

Tribune Company--Management.

African American fathers.

Diversity in the workplace.