

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Glenn T. Johnson

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Johnson, Glenn T., 1917-2010
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Glenn T. Johnson,
Dates:	January 13, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:02:25).
Abstract:	Appellate court judge and state assistant attorney general The Honorable Glenn T. Johnson (1917 - 2010) was only the second African American to serve on the Illinois Appellate Court. He was a past president of the Cook County Bar Association and was inducted into their Hall of Fame in 1997. Johnson was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 13, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_002
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Illinois Appellate Court Judge Glenn T. Johnson was born on July 19, 1917, in Washington, Arkansas, to Reola Thompson and Floyd Johnson. He earned his B.S. in education from Wilberforce University in Xenia, Ohio, and his J.D. and S.J.D. from John Marshall Law School in Chicago. During World War II, Johnson served in the U.S. Army. He later served as a member of the Illinois National Guard and the U.S. Army Reserve.

Johnson worked as assistant attorney general of Illinois for seven years and as a senior attorney for the Metropolitan Sanitary District of Greater Chicago for three years. In 1966, he was elected associate judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County and in 1968 was elected full Circuit Court judge, a position he held until 1973. That year, Johnson was sworn in as justice of the Appellate Court of Illinois. He served in this capacity until his retirement in 1994.

Johnson is a member of the National, American, Illinois, Cook County, Chicago and Women's Bar associations. He is past president of the Cook County Bar Association and past chairman of the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association and the Bench and Bar Section of the Illinois Bar Association. He holds memberships in various organizations and boards and is an active member of Woodlawn A.M.E. Church, where he serves as trustee emeritus and was a member of the Judicial Council for twenty-four years. Johnson is also an emeritus member of the Board of Trustees of the John Marshall Law School, where he served as a trustee for twenty-five years. He has received various awards and honors for his dedication and hard work. Johnson was married to the late Judge Evelyn F. Johnson, with whom he had two children, Evelyn and Glenn Jr. He later married Elaine Bailey Johnson and has three grandchildren and one great-grandson. He died on November 30, 2010.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Glenn T. Johnson was conducted by Larry Crowe on January 13, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Appellate court judge and state assistant attorney general The Honorable Glenn T. Johnson (1917 - 2010) was only the second African American to serve on the Illinois Appellate Court. He was a past president of the Cook County Bar Association and was inducted into their Hall of Fame in 1997.

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:

Johnson, Glenn T., 1917-2010

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Johnson, Glenn T., 1917-2010--Interviews

Appellate courts--United States--Officials and employees--Interviews

African American lawyers--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Illinois. Appellate Court.

Occupations:

Appellate Court Judge

State Assistant Attorney General

HistoryMakers® Category:

LawMakers

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 Glenn T. Johnson, January 13, 2003. 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 Glenn T. Johnson, Section A2003_002_001_001, TRT: 0:29:10 ?

Glenn Johnson was born on July 19, 1917 in Washington, Arkansas to Reola Johnson and Floyd Thompson. From a line of farmers, Johnson can trace his family history back to his paternal grandfather, Richard Johnson, who was born on the Stewart Plantation outside of Columbus, Arkansas in 1850, and owned a farm. Johnson's maternal grandmother was named Mary Carpenter. Johnson's mother inherited a 100-acre farm from her father after an estate battle with her brother. She was a housewife until her death when Johnson was two years old. Johnson's father was a farmer and a cattle raiser. After Johnson's mother died, he was raised by his father's sister, Gertrude Johnson France. Johnson describes his childhood home in Washington, Arkansas which was restored by James Pilkinton and is now part of the Historic Washington State Park in Arkansas. He also remembers his grade school years and learning to type as a student at Langston High School in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Johnson also played tackle on Langston's football team.

Appellate courts--United States--Officials and employees--Interviews.

African American lawyers--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Glenn T. Johnson, Section A2003_002_001_002, TRT: 0:28:40 ?

Glenn Johnson describes those who influenced him during his high school years including, French Hicks, the principal of Langston High School in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and A.M.E. pastor, Thomas Primm. Primm secured a scholarship for Johnson to attend Wilberforce University in Wilberforce, Ohio. At Wilberforce, Johnson worked in the men's dormitory heating water, earning himself the nickname "Hot Water" Johnson. He became good friends with James McGee, who later the Mayor of Dayton, Ohio. Both men joined the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. Johnson also served in the ROTC at Wilberforce and received instruction from Benjamin O. Davis. After graduating in 1940, Johnson moved to New Jersey where he worked as a dishwasher before he was drafted by the U.S. Army and sent to North Africa despite his best efforts to avoid military service. During the war, Johnson worked as a warrant officer.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Glenn T. Johnson, Section A2003_002_001_003, TRT: 0:29:10 ?

Glenn Johnson served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1946 during World War II. He talks about his experience being stationed as a warrant officer in Oran, Algiers; Casablanca, Morocco; and Naples, Florence, and Milan in Italy. After the war, Johnson enrolled at John Marshall Law School in Chicago, Illinois in 1946 where he met and married his wife, Judge Evelyn Johnson. Upon graduating from law school in 1949, Johnson went on to work at the Illinois Attorney General's Office for seven years. Before Johnson's election as an associate judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County, he spent three years at the Metropolitan Sanitary District of Greater Chicago. Johnson talks about his mentor, Claude Holman who was a member of the "Silent Six" during the tenure of Mayor Richard J. Daley. Johnson attributes the promotions during his legal career to his alignment with Holman and Daley. He reflects on his career as an appellate judge and shares his impression of Mayor Harold Washington and the Washington administration.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Glenn T. Johnson, Section A2003_002_001_004, TRT: 0:31:07 ?

Glenn Johnson talks about members of the "Silent Six" on the Chicago City Council in 1966 including Claude Holman, Bob Miller, Ralph Metcalfe, and William Campbell. As a member of the World Association of Judges, he recalls attending the 1973 World Conference on World Peace through Law and World Assembly in Abidjan, Ivory Coast where Justices Earl Warren and Thurgood Marshall were also in attendance. Johnson talks about Mayor Harold Washington's Administration and black politicians in Chicago including John Stroger, Darcy Brown, and HistoryMakers Jesse White, Bobby Rush, Jesse Jackson, and Danny Davis. Johnson reflects on his hopes and concerns for the African American community, his legacy, and how he would like to be remembered. He ends the interview by narrating his photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Glenn T. Johnson, Section A2003_002_001_005, TRT: 0:04:18 ?

Glenn Johnson narrates his photographs.