

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Riley K. Temple

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Temple, Riley Keene
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Riley K. Temple,
Dates:	May 24, 2004
Bulk Dates:	2004
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:03:05).
Abstract:	Telecommunications lawyer Riley K. Temple (1949 -) has served as was senior counsel to RCA Global Communications in New York, and as communications counsel to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. Temple was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 24, 2004, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2004_056
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Prominent, Washington, D.C. attorney and activist Riley Temple was born July 9, 1949 in Richmond, Virginia. He grew up in the same neighborhood as Douglas Wilder, former Governor of Virginia. He attended George Mason elementary school and earned his high school diploma from Armstrong High School in 1967. Other noteworthy Armstrong graduates include, Max and Randall Robinson, Oliver Hill and Paul Freeman. While in high school Temple participated in the drama club, marching and orchestra band and graduated number two in his class.

In 1971, Temple earned his AB degree from Lafayette College in Pennsylvania where he was president of the predominately Jewish fraternity, Pi Lambda Pi. He graduated from Georgetown University Law School in 1974. Temple accepted the position of assistant general counsel at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and served in that post from 1974-1977. He then went on to work as a legislative aide to Senator Charles Mathias, a Republican from Maryland. From 1978-1980 he was senior counsel to RCA Global Communications in New York. From 1980-1983 he went back to work on Capitol Hill as communications counsel to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. Temple entered private practice in 1985.

Temple has been recognized for his community activism in raising awareness about HIV/AIDS. He is a supporter of the arts and has served as the president and vice president of Washington, D.C.'s Arena Stage. He also serves as board president for *True Colors*, a national black theatre company based in Atlanta, Georgia. He has also underwritten several of the *True Colors* productions, including Langston Hughes' *Tambourines to Glory* scheduled to open in September of 2004. Temple has also endowed Lafayette College's *David and Helen Temple Scholarship*, named in honor of his parents, for study abroad and visiting lecture series in Africana studies.

Temple is currently a partner at Halprin Temple, a telecommunications law firm in Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Riley K. Temple was conducted by Racine Tucker Hamilton on May 24, 2004, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Telecommunications lawyer Riley K. Temple (1949 -) has served as senior counsel to RCA Global Communications in New York, and as communications counsel to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.

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:

Temple, Riley Keene

Hamilton, Racine Tucker (Interviewer)

Lane, Edgar Carey (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Temple, Riley Keene--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Telecommunications Lawyer

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 Riley K. Temple, May 24, 2004. 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 Riley K. Temple, Section A2004_056_001_001, TRT: 0:31:03 ?

Riley K. Temple was born on July 9, 1949 in Richmond, Virginia. His mother, Helen Burnette Jones Temple, was raised on a farm in Charles City County, Virginia as one of nine children. Educated in Richmond Public Schools, she would go on to break the color barrier on Richmond's Broad Street, where she was the first African American salesperson at Harper's Department Store. Temple's father, David L. Temple, Sr. was also raised in Richmond and became an insurance broker at North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. Temple describes his parents' personalities and his family history. He also talks about

the sights, sounds, and smells of his childhood and his earliest memories of growing up in Richmond. Former Governor of Virginia and HistoryMaker L. Douglas Wilder was one of Temple's childhood friends. Temple remembers struggling with his sexual orientation at an early age and the birth of his younger brother, David L. Temple, Jr.

Video Oral History Interview with Riley K. Temple, Section A2004_056_001_002, TRT: 0:31:07 ?

Riley K. Temple talks about his childhood in Richmond, Virginia. From a young age, it was evident that he was homosexual; although his mother did not approve of his sexuality, many family members were supportive of his self-expression. Temple remembers his surprise when his brother, David L. Temple, Jr., revealed that he was also homosexual. In Richmond, Temple attended George Mason Elementary School and Armstrong High School, as well as Mount Olivet Baptist Church. His parents, Helen Burnette Jones Temple and David L. Temple, Sr. were active in the PTA. As one of Richmond's two black high schools in the 1960s, Armstrong had several prominent alumni, including HistoryMakers L. Douglas Wilder and Paul Douglas Freeman. At Armstrong High School Temple became involved in drama, student government, and music, and upon graduating in 1967, decided to attend Lafayette College in Pennsylvania. Temple also talks about why he did not pursue the medical field.

Video Oral History Interview with Riley K. Temple, Section A2004_056_001_003, TRT: 0:29:43 ?

Riley K. Temple entered Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania in 1967, where he majored in American Studies and also found an environment more accepting of his race and sexual orientation. He also became the president of Pi Lambda Phi, a predominantly Jewish fraternity. After graduating in 1971, Temple went on to receive his J.D. degree from Georgetown University Law School in Washington, D.C. in 1974. He then worked at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting from 1974 to 1977, before serving as counsel to U.S. Senator Charles Mathias. In 1978, Temple began working at RCA Global Communications in New York City, but left in 1980 due to struggles with racism, homophobia, and alcoholism. He served as a guest lecturer at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government from 1980 to 1983. In 1985, Temple entered private practice, later becoming a partner at Verner, Liipfert, Bernhard, McPherson and Hand. Temple opened his own law firm in 1993, after a falling-out with one of the firm's partners, Lloyd Hand.

Video Oral History Interview with Riley K. Temple, Section A2004_056_001_004, TRT: 0:31:12 ?

Riley K. Temple describes his community service, which began in 1983 when he joined Alcoholics Anonymous in Washington, D.C. under the sponsorship of D.C. politician Jim Graham, then the executive director of the HIV/AIDS-focused Whitman-Walker Clinic. Temple became the clinic's treasurer, and later, its president until 1992. He was recognized for his service by his alma mater, Lafayette College in Easton Pennsylvania, where he endowed scholarships in his parents' honor. In addition, Temple worked with HistoryMaker Peggy Cooper Cafritz's Duke Ellington School for the Arts and the Arena Stage Theater in Washington, D.C.. He also served on the advisory board of HistoryMaker Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia. Temple reflects on the rites of passage in his life: his graduation from Armstrong High School in Richmond, Virginia, the day he passed his bar exam, and his parents' deaths. He wants to be remembered for his generosity, but regrets never having children. Temple narrates his photographs.