

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with John H. Hall, Jr.

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hall, John H., 1946-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with John H. Hall, Jr.,
Dates:	April 14, 2011
Bulk Dates:	2011
Physical Description:	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:11:10).
Abstract:	Academic administrator and chemist John H. Hall, Jr. (1946 - 2021) was a leading researcher in atmospheric chemistry, particularly the reactions occurring to deplete the ozone layer. Hall is the chair of the chemistry department at Morehouse College. Hall was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 14, 2011, in Atlanta, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2011_015
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Chemist and academic administrator John H. Hall, Jr. was born on September 24, 1946 to Mary Emma Hall and John H. Hall, Sr. He attended Morehouse College to receive his B.S. degree in chemistry with honors in 1969. With a scholarship for continued studies in chemistry, Hall then began his graduate studies at Harvard University. Hall worked with his research advisor, William N. Lipscomb, to better understand the nature of chemical bonds in boranes through electron orbital calculations. Lipscomb’s work in borane structure earned him the 1976 Nobel Prize in chemistry. Hall graduated from Harvard University with his Ph.D. degree in theoretical computational chemistry in 1974.

Pursuing post-doctoral research work, Hall worked with Dr. William Guillory to develop models of mechanisms of the photolytic reactions occurring to deplete the ozone in the atmosphere during the 1970s. In 1979, Hall became an associate professor of chemistry at Morehouse College and senior research scientist at the School of Geophysical Sciences at the Georgia Institute of Technology, where he continued his research in atmospheric chemistry. Hall continued to study the chemical compounds and reactions of the stratosphere, including the chlorine and fluorine nitrate series, and the vibrational spectra of nitrate geometric isomers. His later work also focused on the effect that high concentrations of these highly-reactive compounds on human health, particularly low-income populations.

Hall served as a consultant for Innovations International, Inc., a company started by William Guillory that specialized in organizational development. He also served as the associate vice president for research at The Ohio State University for seven years before returning to Morehouse College in 2001 as chair of the department of chemistry. Hall was later named the Bruce Raneur Professor of Natural Sciences at Morehouse College, where he has published numerous academic papers on physical and atmospheric chemistry. Hall and his wife, Susan Hall, also started Transformational Consultants International, Inc., where they specialized in improving workplace productivity and diversity. Hall's wife, Susan, passed away in 2008.

John Hall was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on April 14, 2011.

Hall passed away on March 24, 2021.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with John H. Hall, Jr. was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 14, 2011, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Academic administrator and chemist John H. Hall, Jr. (1946 - 2021) was a leading researcher in atmospheric chemistry, particularly the reactions occurring to deplete the ozone layer. Hall is the chair of the chemistry department at Morehouse College.

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:

Hall, John H., 1946-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Hall, John H., 1946- --Interviews

African American scientists--Interviews.

African American educators--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Georgia Institute of Technology

Occupations:

Chemist

HistoryMakers® Category:

ScienceMakers

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 John H. Hall, Jr., April 14, 2011. 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 John H. Hall, Jr., Section A2011_015_001_001, TRT: 1:26:48 ?

John Hall slates his interview and shares his favorites. Hall's mother, Mary Emma Watson, was born in Eufala, Alabama, in 1915. Her family was from Italy and had a Sephardic Jewish background, although Hall's family did not practice religion. Hall's father, John Henry Hall, Sr., was born in 1909 in Georgia. He left home when he was only fourteen years old and moved to Lake City, Florida and then to Alabama, where he met Watson. Hall's father worked in a meat packaging plant where he later organized the labor union. Due to his union activity, Hall's family was advised to move away from Birmingham shortly after Hall was born in 1946. Hall's father was later inducted into the Georgia Labor Union Hall of Fame. Hall shares his earliest childhood memory: his dislike of attending elementary school at Rush Memorial Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia.

African American families--Southern States--20th century.

African Americans--Labor unions--Georgia.

African American fathers--Georgia.

Video Oral History Interview with John H. Hall, Jr., Section A2011_015_001_002, TRT: 2:29:17 ?

John Hall shares memories of his childhood and descriptions of his primary school experiences. Hall was the second of five children. He recalls his interest in both watching and playing baseball as a youth. He enjoyed seeing the Atlanta Crackers play during the summers. Hall and his younger brother were also talented musicians, performing in venues such as the Elk's Lodge in Atlanta, Georgia, by the time that Hall was twelve years old. Hall recalls that he did not enjoy primary school and that he performed poorly until he received some encouragement from his tenth grade biology teacher. Hall enjoyed reading science books from the library. Upon graduation from Henry McNeil Turner High School, Hall was a member of the National Honor Society and received a scholarship to attend Morehouse College.

African American families--United States.

African American children--Education (Primary).

African American children--Social life and customs--Georgia.

Morehouse College (Atlanta, Ga.)--Students.

Video Oral History Interview with John H. Hall, Jr., Section A2011_015_001_003, TRT: 3:28:46 ?

John Hall discusses his college experiences at Morehouse College from 1964 to 1969. Hall recalls some of his mentors, including Henry McBay, Jeanette Hume, Sam Williams, Benjamin Mays, and James Mayo. During college, Hall continued to perform in a band and played on a semi-professional baseball team in Atlanta, Georgia. He then reflects on the Civil Rights Movement in Atlanta, Georgia, and discusses some of the figures that came out of Henry McNeal Turner High School, including Charlene Hunter Gault and Hamilton Holmes. Hall then talks about his application and studies at Harvard University. Hall's graduate advisor was William Lipscomb. Lipscomb later received the Nobel Prize in chemistry for his work in borane chemistry. Hall notes the difference between the atmosphere in Boston, Massachusetts, and Atlanta, Georgia, also pointing out that he was one of two black members of the chemistry department at Harvard University during that time.

Morehouse College (Atlanta, Ga.).

African Americans--Harvard University.

African American men--Education (Higher).

Civil rights movements--Atlanta (Ga.)--20th century.

McBay, Henry C.

Mays, Benjamin E. (Benjamin Elijah), 1894-1984.

Mentoring in education--Georgia--Atlanta.

Henry McNeal Turner High School.

Chemistry--Study and teaching--Massachusetts--Cambridge.

Video Oral History Interview with John H. Hall, Jr., Section A2011_015_001_004, TRT: 4:30:17 ?

John Hall recalls his smooth transition from Morehouse College to Harvard University for his graduate studies as well as several of his teachers including Roy Gordon, Bill Reinhart, Frank Westheimer and Robert Woodward. The primary focus of Hall's graduate research in theoretical computational chemistry focused on boron hydrides and other molecules that illuminated the properties of the electron in the chemical bond. Hall's advisor, William Lipscomb, went on to win the 1976 Nobel Prize in chemistry. While Hall was not a founding member of the National Organization for the Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers in 1972, he was close to some of the founders, including Charles Meredith, William Jackson, Thomas Cole and William Guillory. After receiving a Danforth Fellowship, Hall was hired by Morehouse College, where he collaborated with William Guillory to study the reactions of chlorine with ozone. Chemistry, Theoretical.

African American chemists--United States.

Lipscomb, William N.

Morehouse College (Atlanta, Ga.)--Employees.

National Organization for Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers.

Video Oral History Interview with John H. Hall, Jr., Section A2011_015_001_005, TRT: 5:29:45 ?

John Hall describes his work with stratospheric chemistry. Hall worked at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory where James King served as director. Hall isolated the ClO dimer, a molecule that was considered an intermediate in the reaction between chlorine and ozone. After a visiting professorship at the University of Utah, Hall returned to Atlanta to serve as a senior research scientist in the newly formed graduate program for earth and atmospheric sciences at Georgia Institute of Technology. He also continued to serve as an associate professor at Morehouse College. Hall then talks about his three marriages as well as his family members. In 1982, Hall was part of the first delegation of black scientists to visit China. The following year, Hall was named director of research computing at Atlanta University Center, and in 1984, Hall worked with Paul Crutzen in determining if ClO could be isolated in chlorine nitrate.

Chemistry, stratospheric--Study and teaching.

African American chemists--United States.

African American scientists--United States.

African American families--United States.

African Americans--Marriage.

Morehouse College (Atlanta, Ga.)--Faculty.

Crutzen, Paul J., 1933-.

Video Oral History Interview with John H. Hall, Jr., Section A2011_015_001_006, TRT: 6:29:56 ?

John Hall continued his work with Atlanta University Center, becoming the

director of academic and research computing for the Center in 1985. During the same year, Hall became the principal research scientist in the School of Geophysical Sciences at Georgia Institute of Technology where the Dolphus E. Milligan Science Research Institute was founded. Hall outlines his career path from a visiting professorship of computer science at Rice University to a consulting position at Innovations International, and then to associate vice president for research at the Ohio State University. Hall returned to Morehouse College in 2001, where he assisted in the creation of the Atlanta Undergraduate Research Alliance and served on the Advisory Committee for Clean Water in Atlanta, Georgia.

Atlanta University Center--Faculty.

Computer Science--Research.

African American scientists--Computer science--Research.

Morehouse College (Atlanta, Ga.)--Faculty.

Video Oral History Interview with John H. Hall, Jr., Section A2011_015_001_007, TRT: 7:16:21 ?

John Hall discusses his research in the area of understanding communication styles and how describes how types of behaviors can be used to create better working relationships. Looking to the future, Hall shares his hopes for research in photochemistry of the stratosphere and his studies in understanding personalities. He also discusses his hope that the African American community will continue to find success. Hall shares the status of his family members and notes that he is to be wed three weeks following the interview. In closing the interview, Hall wants to be remembered as someone who did encouraged people to work and live together successfully.

Chemistry, stratospheric--Research.

African Americans--Marriage.

Success.