

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Cecil Hale

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hale, Cecil
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Cecil Hale,
Dates:	February 22, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:13:49).
Abstract:	Corporate executive and radio personality Cecil Hale (1945 -) was a former WVON (Chicago, Illinois) radio personality who later worked in the record industry as vice president at Capitol Records/E.M.I. Hale left the record industry in 1981 to found Hale Media Communications Consultancy. In his capacity as a consultant, he advised the Federal Republic of Nigeria about network television. Hale was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 22, 2002, in Stone Mountain, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_008
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Born on August 3, 1945, in St. Louis, Missouri, Cecil Hale has distinguished himself in the world of communications. After graduating from Southern Illinois University in 1966, he began his career in radio by working as an announcer and assistant general manager at WMPP in Chicago Heights, Illinois. Beginning in 1970, Hale worked at WVON in Chicago as an announcer, assistant program director, and assistant music director. He also recorded a show for national and international syndication. From 1973 to 1975, Hale expanded opportunities for minorities in the radio business as the president for the National Association of Television and Radio Artists. In 1975, he earned an M.A. in communication from The International University of Communications.

In 1977, Hale left WVON for Phonogram/Mercury Records Polygram. There, he promoted rhythm and blues for a year while he completed work on his Ph.D. in philosophy from the Union Institute. In 1979, he accepted a job as vice president at Capitol Records/E.M.I. but left in 1981 to found Hale Media Communications Consultancy. In his capacity as a consultant, he advised the Federal Republic of Nigeria about network television.

Always looking for new, rewarding opportunities, Hale began teaching broadcasting at the City College of San Francisco in 1984 and was awarded tenure. He also taught summer classes at Stanford University and was granted a fellowship at the University of California, Berkeley. He spent eight years as General Manager for KCSF, a college radio station with a city-wide audience. Hale went back to being a student himself and completed a M.P.A. at Harvard University in 1995.

Hale's activities extend to a wide variety of civic organizations, including the American Bar Association, the Society for Values in Higher Education and the NAACP.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Cecil Hale was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on February 22, 2002, in Stone Mountain, Georgia, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Corporate executive and radio personality Cecil Hale (1945 -) was a former WVON (Chicago, Illinois) radio personality who later worked in the record industry as vice president at Capitol Records/E.M.I. Hale left the record industry in 1981 to found Hale Media Communications Consultancy. In his capacity as a consultant, he advised the Federal Republic of Nigeria about network television.

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:

Hale, Cecil

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Hale, Cecil--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Radio Personality

Corporate Executive

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 Cecil Hale, February 22, 2002. 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 Cecil Hale, Section A2002_008_001_001, TRT: 0:30:03 ?

Music industry executive and professor of broadcast communications Cecil Hale, Jr. remembers his childhood, mostly spent in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Subjects include his early interest in music and reading, his mentors in the local black community and participation in the Boy Scouts where he was the second

black Eagle Scout in the history of the state.

Video Oral History Interview with Cecil Hale, Section A2002_008_001_002, TRT: 0:29:43 ?

Music industry executive and professor of broadcast communications Cecil Hale, Jr. talks about his youth, the beginnings of his fascination with radio and decision to pursue a broadcasting career, his college years at Southern Illinois University, his membership in Alpha Phi Alpha, and early jobs in radio; this included a summer stint as a radio disc jockey in a small North Dakota town where the twenty-year-old Hale was the target of a cross-burning, an incident that he says still rankles today.

Video Oral History Interview with Cecil Hale, Section A2002_008_001_003, TRT: 0:29:17 ?

Music industry executive and professor of broadcast communications Cecil Hale, Jr. talks about his years in the late 1960s and 1970s during which he moved from a station in a Chicago suburb, to a new sister station that WVON was starting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and then to WVON itself, the top African American station in Chicago. Hale discusses WVON's owners until 1969, Leonard and Phil Chess, the family-like atmosphere among the station employees, the station's involvement with the Civil Rights Movement and support of Rev. Jesse Jackson, the major grand jury investigation into alleged payola in African American radio, and WVON's downfall in the late 1970s due to the rise of FM and to poor management by the station's new owners.

Video Oral History Interview with Cecil Hale, Section A2002_008_001_004, TRT: 0:30:01 ?

Music industry executive and professor of broadcast communications Cecil Hale, Jr. talks about his academic degrees, his work in the music recording industry for Polygram Records and Capitol Records, his work on a project assisting the government of Nigeria with its television system, and his move into a college teaching career.

Video Oral History Interview with Cecil Hale, Section A2002_008_001_005, TRT: 0:14:45 ?

Music industry executive and professor of broadcast communications Dr. Cecil Hale, Jr. talks about the history of black radio and expresses concern over the changes that have come since deregulation in the communications industry which he sees as responsible for the present day state black radio being concerned solely with profits, not with the function of broadcasting as a platform to promote positive social change. Dr. Hale shares his thoughts on both good and bad aspects he sees in the black community today, and urges the black middle class to be about more than "the next big car and the next big house." Finally, he briefly considers the opportunities and success he has had in his life so far, and says that he believed in his grandmother who told him that he could be anything he wanted to be.