

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Henry Lewis

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Lewis, Henry, 1950-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Henry Lewis,
Dates:	April 22, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:31:33).
Abstract:	Pharmacist Dr. Henry Lewis (1950 -) was the first African American elected to the Leon County, Florida Board of Commissioners. Lewis was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 22, 2002, in Tallahassee, Florida. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_058
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Born on January 22, 1950 in Tallahassee, Florida, Dr. Henry Lewis III received his B.S. degree in pharmacy from Florida A&M University; his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Mercer University; and completed his post-doctoral training at the Institute for Educational Management at Harvard University.

Lewis has served as a professor, dean and Interim President of the Florida A&M University College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Lewis has also served as president of the Minority Health Professions Foundation and its sister agency, the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools, which, under his

leadership, secured a combined sum of over \$100 million in support of programs, research and activities to improve the quality and availability of health care to minority and underserved communities. Lewis also played an instrumental role as president of the National Pharmaceutical Association and the Care-Net Health System for the uninsured in Leon County. Under his direction, FAMU has opened a pharmacy for medically deprived patients at the Bond Community Clinic.

Besides serving on numerous local and national boards, Lewis has testified before many Congressional subcommittees on health, research and educational funding, and has provided service to such organizations as the United Way, Habitat for Humanity, the National Urban League, Big Bend Hospice and the American Cancer Society. In 1986, he made history by becoming the first African American elected to the Leon County Board of County Commissioners. The Student National Pharmaceutical Association recognized Lewis as a Teacher of the Year. He married his wife, Dr. Marisa Lewis, also a pharmacist, in 1990.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dr. Henry Lewis was conducted by Samuel Adams on April 22, 2002, in Tallahassee, Florida, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Pharmacist Dr. Henry Lewis (1950 -) was the first African American elected to the Leon County, Florida Board of Commissioners.

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:

Lewis, Henry, 1950-

Adams, Samuel (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Lewis, Henry, 1950---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Pharmacist

HistoryMakers® Category:

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 Dr. Henry Lewis, April 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 2/5/2020 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 Dr. Henry Lewis, Section
A2002_058_001_001, TRT: 0:30:04 2002/04/22

Dr. Henry Lewis was born in 1950 in Tallahassee, Florida,

the oldest of six children. His mother, Evelyn Lewis', parents were domestics from Dothan, Alabama, who relocated the family to Tallahassee in 1945. His father, Henry Lewis, Sr.'s, parents were farmers in Jefferson County, Florida, and his father was a self-taught carpenter turned janitor at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in Tallahassee. Lewis grew up in Bond subdivision of Tallahassee, where he attended Bond Elementary School and Lincoln High School. He describes store-owner Mr. Joe, and teachers Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. Williams, who encouraged his academic career. Lewis was a strong student, and despite his involvement with violence in his neighborhood, he worked small jobs, and he began to plan for college. In high school, he worked for Howard Roberts at the Economy Drugstore, and Mr. Roberts recommended Lewis to the dean of the pharmacology school at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Henry Lewis, Section
A2002_058_001_002, TRT: 0:31:12 2002/04/22

Dr. Henry Lewis worked at Howard Roberts' Economy Drugstore during high school, which helped him enter the pharmacology department at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in Tallahassee, Florida. At Lincoln High School, Lewis excelled academically, played football, was a radio DJ, and was active in student government. He was raised in the Pentecostal faith, and his pastor, Elder Smith, was active in the Civil Rights Movement and the bus boycott in 1956-1957. Lewis participated in the boycott, was arrested with three hundred students at a sit-in at McCory's Department Store, and protested the segregated McDonald's in Tallahassee. In 1968, he entered the pharmacy school at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, where he was mentored by professors and the dean, Herbert Jones, and he worked at Olin Chemical Corporation's munitions factory. After Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination on April 4, 1968, the campus erupted, and the National Guard detained Lewis and many students that night.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Henry Lewis, Section
A2002_058_001_003, TRT: 0:30:16 2002/04/22

Dr. Henry Lewis attended the pharmacy school at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in Tallahassee from 1967 to 1972. He participated in ROTC, but he was dissatisfied with the treatment of black soldiers during and after the Vietnam War. During this time, he was also active in the Civil Rights Movement, protesting segregation around Tallahassee. Upon graduation in 1972, he moved to Tampa, Florida to pursue a pharmacology career, and experienced even more racism and segregation than in Tallahassee. Under the mentorship of a white pharmacist, Mr. White, he passed his licensure exam and moved to St. Petersburg, Florida as associate director of pharmacy at Bay Front Medical Center in 1973. He describes the difference in care black and white patients received, and he formed a group with other black employees to examine working conditions. In 1974, he returned to Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, accepting a position working in the internship program started by the new dean, Dr. Charles Walker.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Henry Lewis, Section A2002_058_001_004, TRT: 0:20:54 2002/04/22

Dr. Henry Lewis narrates his photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Henry Lewis, Section A2002_058_001_005, TRT: 0:28:46 2002/04/22

Dr. Henry Lewis returned to Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in 1974, to accept a position with the internship program at the pharmacy school. Lewis left to get his doctorate degree at Mercer University in Atlanta, Georgia, and returned to Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University as an assistant dean in 1978. He then became the Dean of Planning and Development between 1986 and 1989, where he helped expand the program statewide. In 1986, he became the first African American elected to the Leon County, Florida, Board of County Commissioners. On the board, he helped open new county health units to better serve the black community. In 1992, he was appointed President of the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools. Then, in 1994, he became the Dean for the College of Pharmacy at Texas Southern University in Houston. He reflects on how the black community is adversely affected

by diseases such as diabetes, sickle cell anemia, and AIDS.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Henry Lewis, Section
A2002_058_001_006, TRT: 0:10:21 2002/04/22

Dr. Henry Lewis held the position of Dean of the College of Pharmacy at Texas Southern University between 1990 and 1994, and returned to Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University as Dean of the College of Pharmacy in 1994. In January of 2002, when both the former president of the university, Dr. Frederick Humphries, and the provost, Dr. John Ammons left, Lewis became the interim president of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. He reflects on the role that Historically Black Colleges and Universities play for the community, and he describes what he hopes his legacy will be.