

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Raphael C. Lee

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Lee, R. C. (Raphael Carl), 1949-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Raphael C. Lee,
Dates:	May 23, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:34:00).
Abstract:	Plastic surgeon Dr. Raphael C. Lee (1949 -) specializes in the repair of scars and burns and is a professor of surgery at the University of Chicago. Lee was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 23, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_108
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Dr. Raphael C. Lee was born in Sumter, South Carolina, on October 29, 1949. Graduating from high school in 1967, Lee went to the University of South Carolina, where he earned his B.A. degree in electrical engineering in 1971. Lee enrolled in Temple University School of Medicine and Drexel University College of Engineering; in 1975, earning both his M.D. and his M.A. degrees.

Lee began his career in surgery at the University of Chicago Hospitals as an assistant resident in surgery in 1975. In 1979, Lee received his Sc.D. degree in biomedical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and in 1981 he left the University of Chicago for Boston to do further teaching, research, and surgery. Lee held dual faculty appointments at Harvard University and M.I.T. in 1983, teaching electrical engineering, bioengineering, and surgery. In 1989, Lee returned to the University of Chicago, where within two years he had become a full professor, and eventually, professor of surgery, dermatology, organismal biology and anatomy, and molecular medicine. Lee also served as the director of molecular cell repair research at the University of Chicago.

Lee's resume includes a list of awards, recognitions, professional memberships, and publications. Lee was awarded a 1981 MacArthur Prize Fellowship, and a 1985 Searle Scholar Award, as well as being named by the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago as one of the sixteen outstanding scientists in African American history. In 2018, Lee received the Pierre Galletti Award from the American Institute of Medical and Biological Engineering, generally considered America's highest award in the field of biomedical engineering and technology, for his contributions to understanding the molecular biomechanics of traumatic injuries. Lee held a membership in the New York Academy of Science; was awarded a fellowship by the American College of Surgeons; and was a member of the Biomedical Engineering Society. Lee was also listed in *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in the World*, *Notable 20th Century Scientists*, and was named as one of America's 100 Brightest Young Scientists by *Science Digest*.

Lee specialized in the repair of scars and burns, and developed a number of treatments in the course of his

research.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dr. Raphael C. Lee was conducted by Larry Crowe on May 23, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Plastic surgeon Dr. Raphael C. Lee (1949 -) specializes in the repair of scars and burns and is a professor of surgery at the University of Chicago.

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:

Lee, R. C. (Raphael Carl), 1949-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Lee, R. C. (Raphael Carl), 1949---Interviews

African American scientists--Interviews

African American surgeons--Interviews

Universities and colleges--Faculty--Interviews

Biomedical engineers--Interviews

African American families

African Americans--Genealogy

African Americans--Social life and customs

Civil rights demonstrations

Segregation in education

University of South Carolina

Temple University

Drexel University

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Scholarships

Skin

Scars

Electrical injuries

Burns and scalds--Research

Skin--Surgery

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Plastic Surgeon

HistoryMakers® Category:

MedicalMakers

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. Raphael C. Lee, May 23, 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 Dr. Raphael C. Lee, Section A2003_108_001_001, TRT: 0:29:10 ?

Surgeon and professor Raphael Lee begins by describing his family history and his parents' backgrounds. He shares memories of growing up in South Carolina, first in Sumter, and then in Charleston. Lee explains that practicing medicine is a tradition in his family that goes back five generations. After discussing his high school years in Charleston, Lee details his undergraduate years at the University of South Carolina. He describes the atmosphere at the recently desegregated campus as the student body became involved in civil rights demonstrations.

African American scientists--Interviews.

African American surgeons--Interviews.

Universities and colleges--Faculty--Interviews.

Biomedical engineers--Interviews.

African American families.
African Americans--Genealogy.
African Americans--Social life and customs.
Civil rights demonstrations.
Segregation in education.
University of South Carolina.
Drexel University.
Temple University.
Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
Scholarships.
Skin.
Scars.
Electrical injuries.
Burns and scalds--Research.
Skin--Surgery.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Raphael C. Lee, Section A2003_108_001_002, TRT:
0:30:40 ?

Raphael Lee continues to discuss his undergraduate years at the University of South Carolina, focusing on his social life. He then explains his dual-degree graduate study program at Temple University and Drexel University, where he earned his M.D. and his master's degree in engineering. Lee then discusses his residency in Chicago and his time at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he earned his Sc.D. engineering degree. After discussing his MacArthur Prize Fellowship in 1981, Lee details his medical research interests, including his work on skin tissues, scarring, and electrical trauma victims.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Raphael C. Lee, Section A2003_108_001_003, TRT:
0:29:40 ?

Raphael Lee continues to discuss his research interests, which include skin tissue, burn victims, scarring, and electrical trauma victims. He also discusses his current responsibilities as a dermatological and plastic surgeon and comments on public perception of plastic surgery. Lee then comments on humanity's evolution and gives career advice to aspiring doctors.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Raphael C. Lee, Section A2003_108_001_004, TRT:
0:04:30 ?

Raphael Lee considers his legacy, which he hopes will live on in the continued improvements of scar and burn treatment.