

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Gail Berry West

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	West, Gail Berry, 1942-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Gail Berry West,
<b>Dates:</b>	January 17, 2019
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2019
<b>Physical Description:</b>	9 uncompressed MOV digital video files (4:19:59).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Lawyer Gail Berry West (1942 - ) served as executive director of government affairs for Bell Communications before serving as director of government relations for Armstrong World Industries. Berry West was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 17, 2019, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2019_001
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Lawyer Gail Berry West was born on September 29, 1942 in Cincinnati, Ohio to Johnnie Mae Newton and Theodore Berry. She received her B.A. degree in history from Fisk University in 1964, graduating magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. West went on to receive her M.A. degree in history from the University of Cincinnati in 1965 and her J.D. degree from Howard University School of Law in 1968.

In 1969, West began her career in the New York office of the general counsel for the International Business Machine Corporation (IBM). Upon moving to Washington, D.C., she transferred to the data processing division and also served as an attorney in litigation analysis, where she assisted in the litigation between IBM and the federal government. In 1977, West joined the Carter administration as special assistant to Patricia Roberts Harris, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. She went on to work for Sarah Weddington, assistant to President Jimmy Carter, and served on the White House Task Force on Sex Discrimination. In 1980, West became deputy assistant secretary for the U.S. Department of the Air Force in Reserve Affairs and Installations. She was responsible for policy, program guidance and executive direction for equal employment laws and regulations. She then worked as an attorney and consultant for several companies seeking contracts with the federal government. In 1983, she became executive director of government affairs for Bell Communications (Bellcore), where she served for twelve years until 1995, when she became director of government relations for Armstrong World Industries (AWI). From 2003 to 2007, West served as a consultant for AWI until her retirement.

West served on the board of trustees for the Corcoran Gallery of Art, WETA, Meridian International Center, the Fisher House Foundation, the Arena Stage, the Decatur House Council, the D.C. Commission on Fine Arts, and the National Museum of American History. She served as the vice regent for the District of Columbia to the Mount Vernon Ladies Association, on the board of the White House Historical Association, the Hillwood Estate Museum & Gardens, and as a member of the dean's council for the Washington National Cathedral.

West is the recipient of numerous awards including; IBM Regional Manager's Merit Award for Outstanding Contribution, Air Force Medal for Exceptional Civilian Service, Bellcore President's Recognition Award and the Armstrong General Manager's Award for Team Excellence.

West and her husband, the late Togo D. West, Jr., have two daughters: Tiffany West Smink and Hilary Carter West.

Gail Berry West was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on January 17, 2019

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Gail Berry West was conducted by Larry Crowe on January 17, 2019, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 9 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Lawyer Gail Berry West (1942 - ) served as executive director of government affairs for Bell Communications before serving as director of government relations for Armstrong World Industries.

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## 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®.

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## 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.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

West, Gail Berry, 1942-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
West, Gail Berry, 1942- --Interviews

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## Occupations:

Lawyer

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

LawMakers

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## 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 Gail Berry West, January 17, 2019. 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).

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## 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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

## **Series I: Original Interview Footage**

- Video Oral History Interview with Gail Berry West, Section A2019\_001\_001\_001, TRT: 1:28:42 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Gail Berry West, Section A2019\_001\_001\_002, TRT: 2:30:46 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Gail Berry West, Section A2019\_001\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:24 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Gail Berry West, Section A2019\_001\_001\_004, TRT: 4:28:35 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Gail Berry West, Section A2019\_001\_001\_005, TRT: 5:30:10 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Gail Berry West, Section A2019\_001\_001\_006, TRT: 6:29:49 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Gail Berry West, Section A2019\_001\_001\_007, TRT: 7:31:41 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Gail Berry West, Section A2019\_001\_001\_008, TRT: 8:28:17 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Gail Berry West, Section A2019\_001\_001\_009, TRT: 9:22:35 ?