

Robert T. Tad Perry, Ph. D Collection (AC134)

Introduction:

The Robert T. Tad Perry, Ph. D Collection is a Ph.D. dissertation focused on 13 Black Members of the Missouri House of Representatives in 1969. The collection consists of Perry's dissertation, interview questions, an appendix, and 12 recording sessions with the Missouri House of Representatives in 1970.

Descriptive Summary:

Creator: Robert T. Tad Perry, Ph. D

Title: Robert T. Tad Perry, Ph. D Collection

Date Range: 1969-1970

Size: 0.417 Linear Feet

Collection Number: AC134

Donor Information: Robert T. Tad Perry, Ph. D., April 25th, 2013.

Citation Note:

Robert T. Tad Perry, Ph. D Collection (AC134), Black Archives of Mid-America, Kansas City, Missouri

Related Collections:

AC36: Orchid I. Jordan Scrapbook

AC81: Freedom, Inc. Collection

AC84: Phil and Melba Curls Collection

AC86: Allan Wheat Collection

Administrative Information:

Reproduction Restrictions: Unrestricted.

Access Restrictions: Unrestricted.

Original Language Statement:

The Black Archives of Mid-America follows the widespread practice of using the language provided by speakers and writers of historical documents. Using the speaker's or writer's language can be very informative and provide pivotal contextual information about cultural and societal customs of previous periods. As a result, researchers may encounter descriptive language, which often includes verbiage that contains obvious bias, or outdated and stereotypical terminology, and/ or content. Contemporary readers and researchers might find this language harmful or offensive.

Biographical Sketch:

Robert T. Tad Perry was born in Iowa City, Iowa on March 11, 1943. He is the son of Thomas Amherst Perry and Lora Margaret (Turner) Perry. Perry graduated from Fayette High School in 1961 and later earned degrees from Central Methodist University and the University of Missouri. His career in higher education spanned 40 years, concluding in 2021 when he retired as the Chair of the CMU Board of Curators in South Dakota. In June 2022, Perry was inducted into South Dakota's Hall of Fame in recognition of his extensive contributions as a professor of political science for nearly 23 years and his 15 years of service as a university administrator.

In 1965, Perry married Jane Lynn Martin, and they had 2 sons, Tod and Jay Perry. Perry and Jane divorced in 1983. In 1989, Perry remarried Carolyn Summer Cross. They continue to live in South Dakota.

Career Timeline:

- Program Director, Young Men's Christian Association, Kansas City, Missouri, 1965-1966
- Assistant Instructor, U. Missouri, Columbia, 1966-1970
- Member Fayette City Council, 1969-1971
- Assistant Professor, U. Missouri, Columbia, 1971-1976
- Department Chairman Political Science, U. Missouri, Columbia, 1973-1977
- Associate Professor, U. Missouri, Columbia, 1976-1981
- Professor, U. Missouri, Columbia, 1979-1980
- Executive Assistant: Fiscal Relations, Ball State University, Muncie, 1981-1994
- Indiana State Board, 1982-1984
- Member of Western Common for Higher Education, since 1994

- Council for Advancement and Support of Education (commission on government relations 1991-1994)
- Assistant Provost, Ball State University, Muncie, 1981-1987
- Associate Vice President, Ball State University, Muncie, 1987-1994
- Chief Operating Officer, Indiana Partnership for Statewide Education, 1992-1994
- Executive Director, South Dakota Board Regents, since 1994

Historical Sketch:

Black Legislators (Perry's Ph.D. dissertation) is focused on a study that Perry conducted on Black Members of the Missouri House of Representatives in 1969. At that time, the thirteen members constituted the largest group of Black legislative representatives in the United States. The study examines the role of Black legislators following a significant increase in participation, which rose more than seven-fold in 1969. It utilizes data collected from oral histories, government records, publications, and newspapers. Among those whose oral histories were collected, nine representatives were from St. Louis and four were from Kansas City. Unfortunately, the researcher, Perry, was unable to interview the thirteenth representative, Leon Jordan, before he was tragically murdered in 1970.

Scope and Content Note:

Series 1: Ph.D. Dissertation

This series includes the Ph. D dissertation of Mr. Robert T. Perry, titled "Black Legislators," which was published in 1976 by R and E Research Associates in San Francisco, CA, a publisher and distributor specializing in ethnic studies. Robert T. Perry holds the copyright. The dissertation is focused on a study that Perry conducted on Black Members of the Missouri House of Representatives in 1969. At that time, the thirteen members constituted the largest group of Black legislative representatives in the United States. The study examines the role of Black legislators following a significant increase in participation, which rose more than seven-fold in 1969.

Series 2: Interview Questions & Appendix B

This series provides a print-out of the interview questions and an appendix from the dissertation.

Series 3: Recording Tapes

This series consists of nine long-play magnetic recording tapes (polyester 900 ft). The recordings feature 12 interviews with Black Members of the Missouri House of Representatives interviewed in 1970.

Collection Inventory:**Series 1: Ph.D. Dissertation**

- f. 1 "Black Legislators", R & E Research Associates, San Francisco, CA, 1976.

Series 2: Interview Questions & Appendix B

- f. 2 Interview Questions & Appendix B

Series 3: Recording Tapes

- f. 3 Recording Tapes
- a. Tape #1, J.B. "Jet" Banks, November 25, 1970, St. Louis, MO
Henry Ross, November 25, 1970, Kansas City, MO
 - b. Tape #2, James Troupe, November 24, 1970, St. Louis, MO
Leroy Malcolm, November 24, 1970, St. Louis, MO
Nathaniel Rivers, November 24, 1970, St. Louis, MO
 - c. Tape #3, Russell Goward, September 9, 1970, St. Louis, MO
 - d. Tape #4, Johnie Aikens, September 9, 1970, St. Louis, MO
 - e. Tape #5, Herman Johnson, August 31, 1970, Kansas City, MO
 - f. Tape #6, Franklin Payne, November 23, 1970, Kansas City, MO
 - g. Tape #7, Fred Williams, September 11, 1970, St. Louis, MO
 - h. Tape #8, DeVerne Calloway, September 10, 1970, St. Louis, MO
 - i. Tape #9, Harold Holliday, August 24, 1970, Kansas City, MO

Processed by: Kat Miller, Assistant Archivist, Feb 2025

Sources:

Farnsworth, Robert M. (2013). *Leon Mercer Jordan, The Founder of Freedom, Inc. Following in the Footsteps of His Father and Grandfather* (PDF). *University of Missouri Press*.

The Fayette Advertiser. "Perry Inducted Into South Dakota Hall of Fame," June 14, 2022. <https://www.fayettenewspapers.com/stories/perry-inducted-into-south-dakota-hall-of-fame,18166>.

Perry, Robert T. 1976. Black Legislators. R & E Research Associates.