

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Taylor Pensoneau

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Illinois Statecraft – Journalist’s View* Oral History project

Interview # ISJ-A-L-2018-044

Taylor Pensoneau, the Illinois state political journalist for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch during the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library’s *Illinois Statecraft-Journalist’s View* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Jul 24, 2018      Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_      Total Time: 1:04 / 1.07 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on August 21, 2018.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

**Transcript  
being processed**

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# Abstract

## Taylor Pensoneau, *Illinois Statecraft*, ISJ-A-L-2018-044

**Biographical Information/Overview of Interview:** Taylor Pensoneau was born on October 20th, 1940 in Belleville, Illinois. He decided early on to go into journalism, earning his college degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1962. Pensoneau covered the Illinois Statehouse beat for the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* from October 1965 through January 1978.

In late August 1968 the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* sent Pensoneau to Chicago to report on the 1968 Democratic Convention, which occurred from August 26 through August 29. He arrived several days early and was on hand when the Yippies (Youth International Party), including Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, nominated a pig they named Pigasus for president. Pensoneau stayed at the Sherman House Hotel during the convention, but used the Hilton Hotel, across the street from Chicago's Grant Park, as his base of operations. He reported on what transpired inside the convention center (the International Amphitheater), including the convention's most notorious event when Senator Abraham Ribicoff accused Mayor Richard J. Daley's police of using "gestapo tactics" when dealing with the thousands of protesters.

Pensoneau also observed the protests in and around Grant Park during the convention. He personally observed the taunting and physical attacks some of protesters directed toward the police, as well as the police's violent backlash against the protesters as well as some innocent bystanders on the night of August 28. The official report on the convention violence, known as the Walker Report after lawyer Dan Walker (who later served as Illinois's governor from 1973 to 1977) labeled the event a "police riot." Pensoneau discusses all of this and much more from his unique vantage point, the most important event he ever reported on during his many years as a journalist.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago; protests in Grant Park during 1968 Democratic Convention; Mayor Richard J. Daley at 1968 Democratic Convention; Yippies Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin; Pigasus for president; Senator Abraham Ribicoff at 1968 Democratic Convention; the Walker Report; Gov. Dan Walker; Hilton Hotel during Democratic Convention; Hubert Humphrey; President Lyndon Johnson; Eugene McCarthy

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