

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Samantha Thompson  
Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Illinois Statecraft – Jim Thompson* Oral History project  
Interview # IST-A-L-2014-012

Samantha Thompson, daughter of Gov. Jim Thompson, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – Jim Thompson* oral history project.

Interview date & location:

Date: April 4, 2014.

Location: Thompson family home, Chicago, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mike Czaplicki, ALPLM project historian

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Mike Czaplicki & Rozanne Flatt, ALPL volunteer

Total Pages: 40 pgs. Total Time: 1:29:30 / 1.5 hrs

Session 1: Life as the First Daughter of Illinois

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on September 23, 2014.

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

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# Abstract

Samantha Thompson, *Illinois Statecraft*, ISG-A-L-2014-012

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Samantha Jayne Thompson was born to Jayne and Jim Thompson at Springfield Memorial Hospital in Springfield, Illinois, on August 3, 1978. Although spending her early years at the Executive Mansion in Springfield, the Thompsons relocated to Chicago when Sam reached school age. She attended public schools until high school, when she enrolled at the Latin School of Chicago. She attended Georgetown University for college. After college, Sam embarked on a career in the fashion industry, working for Fausto Sarli, Gucci, and Theory before operating her own consulting firm for five years. At the time of this interview, she was the president and creative director of LoungeLux.

As the first child born to a sitting Illinois governor in seventy-two years, Sam's birth and childhood drew sustained media attention. In this interview, she reflects on this attention and her experience growing up in the public eye. She also discusses controversy over her appearance on the campaign trail in the 1978; life in the Executive Mansion; her parents' decision to enroll her in Chicago public schools; living with a protective detail; protests outside the family home; and meeting John Mellencamp, Willie Nelson, Ronald Reagan, and George H.W. Bush. She reflects on her relationships with fellow students; memories of campaigning and other public events; her parents personal qualities; how social media has intensified pressure on public officials; the 1992 Republican Convention in Houston; her sympathy for Gov. Rod Blagojevich's family; Gov. Thompson's artistic sensibility, presidential ambitions and his decision to leave the governorship, and her family's love of Hayes House in Du Quoin. Samantha married Tom Tomazos in November 2014, after this interview.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** 1978 Illinois gubernatorial campaign; 1992 Republican National Convention; Artie the Elephant (childhood doll); artistic eye of James R. Thompson; bag boys (traveling aids); Rod Blagoevich; George H.W. Bush; Chelsea Clinton; collecting habits of James R. Thompson; Du Quoin Fair; first families; gubernatorial protective detail; Hayes House; Illinois Executive Mansion; presidential ambitions of James R. Thompson; Ronald Reagan; James R. Thompson; Jayne Carr Thompson; Samantha Thompson.

**Note to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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