

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Bob Petty

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## Overview of the Collection

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| <b>Repository:</b>           | The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616<br>info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com   |
| <b>Creator:</b>              | Petty, Bob, 1940-   |
| <b>Title:</b>                | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Bob Petty,   |
| <b>Dates:</b>                | July 20, 2001   |
| <b>Bulk Dates:</b>           | 2001  |
| <b>Physical Description:</b> | 4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:00:44).   |
| <b>Abstract:</b>             | Television reporter Bob Petty (1940 - 2020) began his career at Chicago ABC affiliate WLS-TV in 1971, when he joined the station as a general assignment reporter. In 1975, he became a member of the station's "Action 7" news team, which would later develop into the popular "Seven on Your Side" special problem-solving unit. Petty then moved to the anchor desk on ABC 7's "Saturday Weekend News." From 1978 to 1983 he also produced and hosted "Weekend Edition." Petty was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 20, 2001, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| <b>Identification:</b>       | A2001_057   |
| <b>Language:</b>             | The interview and records are in English.   |

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Born November 26, 1940, in Memphis, Tennessee, Bob Petty began his broadcasting career while enrolled at Arizona State University. He learned about various aspects of the industry while serving as news cameraman, soundman, film editor, lighting director and studio cameraman for the university's television broadcast station, KAET TV. In 1970, Petty graduated with honors and was recognized by the university for his outstanding contributions to the radio and television department.

Petty's career at Chicago ABC affiliate WLS-TV began in 1971, when he joined the station as a general assignment reporter. In 1975, he became a member of the station's "Action 7" news team, which would later develop into the popular "Seven on Your Side" special problem-solving unit. He then moved to the anchor desk on ABC 7's "Saturday Weekend News." From 1978 to 1983 he also produced and hosted "Weekend Edition." Prior to joining ABC 7, Petty was a news writer, reporter and producer at KOOL-TV and Radio, the CBS affiliate in Phoenix, Arizona. The previous year, Petty worked for KPHO-TV in several aspects of the production process, in addition to his role as news and sports reporter.

Petty has received several prestigious academic degrees and honors. He was awarded an Urban Journalism Fellowship at the University of Chicago shortly after graduating from Arizona State, and a William Benton Fellow in Broadcast Journalism from the University of Chicago in 1987. In January 1979, he received his Master's Degree in Communications from Governor's State University.

Petty passed away on February 18, 2020.

Petty resides in Chicago with his wife, Cora, and their two children, Bobby and Cory.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Bob Petty was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on July 20, 2001, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Television reporter Bob Petty (1940 - 2020) began his career at Chicago ABC affiliate WLS-TV in 1971, when he joined the station as a general assignment reporter. In 1975, he became a member of the station's "Action 7" news team, which would later develop into the popular "Seven on Your Side" special problem-solving unit. Petty then moved to the anchor desk on ABC 7's "Saturday Weekend News." From 1978 to 1983 he also produced and hosted "Weekend Edition."

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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:

Petty, Bob, 1940-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Bieschke, Paul (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Petty, Bob, 1940---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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WLS-TV (Television station : Chicago, Ill.)

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## Occupations:

Television Reporter

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakers

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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 Bob Petty, July 20, 2001. 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 Bob Petty, Section A2001\_057\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:33 ?

Journalist Robert "Bob" Petty narrates his personal photographs as they are recorded on videotape. Next, he remembers his parents' backgrounds and

discusses memorable moments with them. Petty then gives the names of his three brothers.

Video Oral History Interview with Bob Petty, Section A2001\_057\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:22 ?

Journalist Robert "Bob" Petty shares some of his earliest memories of growing up in the small town of Caruthersville, Missouri. He discusses his family life, describes his childhood personality, and recalls his father's death, explaining how it affected the family. Next, Petty names influential people who formed him during his childhood. Petty also describes his high school experience, and explains his choice to attend college upon graduation.

Video Oral History Interview with Bob Petty, Section A2001\_057\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:35 ?

Journalist Robert "Bob" Petty talks about leaving Lincoln University in Missouri, and his experiences in Los Angeles, California. Next, Petty discusses his decision to study communications at Arizona State University and then describes his early exposure to the world of television broadcasting. He remembers his first job after college and how he was drawn away from the production aspect to broadcasting and into the news gathering realm. Petty then recalls his first experiences in the newsroom.

Video Oral History Interview with Bob Petty, Section A2001\_057\_001\_004, TRT: 0:31:14 ?

Journalist Robert "Bob" Petty talks about various television stations he's worked for and his ambitions to teach college-level communications. Then, Petty remembers memorable stories he's covered during his career. Petty goes into detail about how the news broadcasting industry has changed over the years and gives his ideas on how he thinks the future of the business may play out. Robert Petty then considers his future plans.