

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Bob Love

Overview of the Collection

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| Repository: | The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com |
| Creator: | Love, Bob, 1942- |
| Title: | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Bob Love, |
| Dates: | August 15, 2002 |
| Bulk Dates: | 2002 |
| Physical Description: | 5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:30:00). |
| Abstract: | Basketball player Bob Love (1942 -) was an all-star forward with the Chicago Bulls and is now a motivational speaker. Love was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 15, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| Identification: | A2002_155 |
| Language: | The interview and records are in English. |

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Born in Delhi, Louisiana in 1943, Love was one of thirteen children. Throughout his childhood and most of his adult life, he suffered from a debilitating stutter. This handicap forced him to turn inward and dream of becoming a professional basketball player. As a child, Love nailed wire hangers shaped as hoops onto his grandmother's house and pretended some his competitors were some of the nations best. Love graduated from Moorehouse High School in Bastrop, Louisiana in 1961. After high school, Love attended Southern University in Baton Rouge where he received his degree in Food and Nutrition.

Following college, Love began his professional basketball career with the Cincinnati Royals. He was later traded to the Bucks, and then traded once again to the Chicago Bulls in 1968. During his eight seasons with the Bulls, he led in team scoring for seven years and was a three-time NBA All Star. He also holds the second highest scoring record in Bulls history with 12,623 points.

Love's basketball career ended as a result of a back injury in 1977. After that, his opportunities seemed limited. He tried for seven years to find steady employment but his stutter made it impossible. In 1984, he was hired as a dishwasher for \$4.45 an hour. At the age of 45, in 1988, Love's life changed after meeting a speech therapist that helped him cure his stutter. In 1992, he returned to work with the Bulls as the Director of Community Affairs.

Bob Love, the man who once shied away from speaking in public, now gives motivational speeches to thousands of teens each year. His jersey was retired on January 14, 1994, but he is the proud recipient of the Individual Achievement Award from the National Council for Communicative Disorders and the Oscar Robertson Leadership Award, the NBA's highest award.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Bob Love was conducted by Adele Hodge on August 15, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Basketball player Bob Love (1942 -) was an all-star forward with the Chicago Bulls and is now a motivational speaker.

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®.

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.

Controlled Access Terms

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

Persons:

Love, Bob, 1942-

Hodge, Adele (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Love, Bob, 1942- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Chicago Bulls (Basketball team)

Occupations:

Basketball Player

HistoryMakers® Category:

SportsMakers

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 Love, August 15, 2002. 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).

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.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Bob Love, Section A2002_155_001_001, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Bob Love was born December 8, 1942, to Lula Belle Hunter and Benjamin Love in Delhi, Louisiana; he was the last person in his family born on the O'Neil plantation. His mother and her family came from Rayville, Louisiana. Love's mother was only fifteen when he was born, and she moved to Detroit, Michigan when he was one, so his grandmother, Ella Hunter, raised him in Bastrop, Louisiana. His mother had eleven more children with her husband, Lee Cleveland, and Benjamin Love had four additional children. Love was very close with his grandmother, who gave him support and encouragement as he struggled with a speech impediment during his childhood. Love did not develop a relationship with his father, Benjamin Love, until adulthood, where they

reacquainted in Michigan during Love's professional basketball career. His mother moved back to Bastrop, Louisiana to care for Love when he was young. Love grew up in rural Bastrop, in northern Louisiana, where he described the antagonism and discrimination he and his community faced by the Ku Klux Klan.

Video Oral History Interview with Bob Love, Section A2002_155_001_002, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Bob Love attended Morehouse Parish Elementary School in Bastrop, Louisiana, where he struggled with a speech impediment; he received support from his teachers and his grandmother. Love realized his athletic talents as a child, and since his family could not afford his sports equipment, he constructed a make shift basketball to practice with. Love excelled in basketball, football, and track throughout elementary school and at high school at Morehouse Parish High School in Bastrop, Louisiana. After graduating from there in 1961, he received a scholarship to play football at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, though when he went there, he won a scholarship to play basketball instead. Love's sophomore, junior, and senior years there, he was an All American, and in 1965, he received an offer from the NBA to play for the Cincinnati Royals. Love developed a friendship with Oscar Robertson during his first year with the NBA, and described traveling around the country for the first time.

Video Oral History Interview with Bob Love, Section A2002_155_001_003, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Bob Love was traded from the Cincinnati Royals in 1968 to the Chicago Bulls, who were initially not happy about the trade. However, Love went on to become their highest scorer eight years in a row, and held the team's record until Michael Jordan broke his record decades later. Love retired from the NBA in 1977 when he sustained a back injury. He was traded after the 1977 season to the Milwaukee Bucks and then the Seattle SuperSonics, before needing back surgery. Although he had a Bachelor's degree from Southern University in Louisiana, Love struggled to find employment, in part due to his speech impediment. He found work as a dishwasher in Nordstrom Restaurants in Seattle, Washington in 1984. The owners then paid for Love to receive treatment at the Speech and Hearing Center in 1988, which enabled him to pursue a career in motivational speaking, which was a dream of his.

Video Oral History Interview with Bob Love, Section A2002_155_001_004, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Bob Love retired from the NBA in 1977 after eight seasons with the Chicago Bulls, after first being traded to the Milwaukee Bucks and then the Seattle SuperSonics before sustaining a career-ending back injury in 1977. Love became a motivational speaker, speaking to young students and athletes around the country. He talks to young people about the value of an education, the challenges of relying on athletics as a career, and overcoming impediments and obstacles to reach their dreams. Love uses his personal experiences overcoming a poor childhood, a speech impediment, and the challenges of a professional athletic career to motivate and inspire young people. He then talks about his involvement with the Civil Rights Movement at Southern University in Louisiana as a student, describing a protest in Baton Rouge he attended. Then, Love reflects on the challenges NBA players face today in the different environment of professional sports.

Video Oral History Interview with Bob Love, Section A2002_155_001_005, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Bob Love moved back to Chicago, Illinois in 1992, after being asked by the Chicago Bulls organization to be their director of community relations. It was an exciting time as the Bulls had just won their first national championship in their string of championship titles through the 1990s. Love continued to motivationally speak, and he entered politics, campaigning for Alderman in

Chicago's 15th Ward in 2002. Love reflects on the role models he had growing up and how he now motivates young people in his career as a speaker. He then reflects on what values he considers important and how he wants to be remembered. Love then describes his hopes and concerns for the black community.