

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Paul Brock

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Brock, Paul, 1932-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Paul Brock,
Dates:	June 8, 2003 and May 14, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	9 Betacame SP videocassettes (4:15:21).
Abstract:	Photojournalist Paul Brock (1932 - 2021) specializes in celebrity, commercial, fashion and public relations photography. His photos have been published in Ebony, Essence, Vibe and other magazines and publications. Brock was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 8, 2003 and May 14, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_106
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Distinguished journalist Paul Brock was an only child born in Washington, D.C., on February 10, 1932. After attending Howard University in Washington, D.C., Brock set out on his career path.

Brock spent eighteen years as a radio journalist before moving into television producing and reporting, starting at WBNB in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. From there, Brock went on to become news director at WETA and later WHUR in Washington, D.C. While with WETA, he was credited with bringing the first live coverage of a congressional committee hearing ever aired. Brock was also the originator, producer and chief fundraiser of the *NAACP Nightly Convention Highlights* program that aired on PBS from 1978 to 1983. Later, Brock served as producer, writer, editor and national distributor of the NAACP Voter Education public service announcements. The success of this was a launching point for him to move into a position as fundraiser, assistant producer, and vice president of the company that produced *American Playhouse*. In 1994, Brock became media coordinator of the Village Foundation, an organization working to "repair the breach" between African American males and the rest of society.

Brock left the Village Foundation in 2002, but he remains active with the NAACP, having been with the organization since 1948. He has also served as the deputy director of communications for the Democratic National Committee, vice president for news and operations at American Urban Radio Network, and is a senior fellow for public affairs at Howard University's Institute for the Study of Educational Policy. He has also been a member of the National Association of Black Journalists since 1974. In 1975, *Jet* and *Ebony* both recognized him as Man of the Year, and in 1983, Brock received the Black Filmmakers Award for Producer of the Year. Brock has four children and a wife, Virginia.

Brock passed away on March 15, 2021.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Paul Brock was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 8, 2003 and May 14, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 9 Betacame SP videocassettes. Photojournalist Paul Brock (1932 - 2021) specializes in celebrity, commercial, fashion and public relations photography. His photos have been published in Ebony, Essence, Vibe and other magazines and publications.

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:

Brock, Paul, 1932-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Brock, Paul, 1932---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Journalist

HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakers

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 Paul Brock, June 8, 2003 and May 14, 2003. 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 Paul Brock, Section A2003_106_001_001, TRT: 0:29:25 ?

Paul Brock was born on February 10, 1932 in Washington, D.C. to Virginia Estelle Gray Budd and William Brock. One of Brock's maternal relatives, West Ford, was a slave to John Augustine Washington and Hannah Bushrod Washington on the Bushfield Plantation. After her death in 1802, he was freed and lived at Mount Vernon. In 1833, he founded the community of Gum Springs, Virginia. Brock speculates that Ford may have been the son of President George Washington rather than the son of his brother John Augustine Washington. Brock's mother was born in Alexandria, Virginia, but moved to

Washington, D.C. to attend high school. In 1939, she began working for the J.R. Watkins Company and later married Edward Donald Budd. During World War II, Brock and his parents lived on 140th Street near Lenox Avenue in Harlem, New York, where Brock regularly saw W.E.B. DuBois and Lucky Millinder and where his windows overlooked the Savoy Ballroom. Brock remembers the atmosphere of growing up in Harlem in the 1940s.

Video Oral History Interview with Paul Brock, Section A2003_106_001_002, TRT: 0:29:30 ?

Paul Brock grew up in the small town of Brandywine, Maryland with his aunt's friends, Mr. and Mrs. Brown. Around 1937, He and his family moved to the Georgetown neighborhood of Washington, D.C., where Brock started attending school at Briggs Elementary School and met prominent African Americans like Bishop Stephen Gill Spottswood and Reverend Earl Harrison. After living in Harlem, New York during World War II, Brock and his family moved back to Washington, D.C., where he attended Shore Junior High School and Armstrong Manual Training School, where he excelled in chemistry. When he was thirteen, Brock met his biological father, William Brock, for the only time in his life in order to ask for some money for a toy. Brock enjoyed reading and writing, and was a member of the Yadrutas Club, which held their first dance at the Colonnade at Lincoln Theater. Upon graduating from high school, Brock decided that he wanted to become a pharmacist.

Video Oral History Interview with Paul Brock, Section A2003_106_001_003, TRT: 0:29:30 ?

Paul Brock enrolled at the Howard University College of Pharmacy in Washington, D.C. in 1950. In 1952, Brock enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and was sent first to radar school in Biloxi, Mississippi and later sent to Fort Drum in Watertown, New York. After his stepfather died, Brock left the Air Force and moved back to Washington, D.C., where he joined the National Security Agency. In 1960, Brock moved to St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands with his children and worked at IBM. There, Brock began his career in broadcasting. After hearing his children's reaction to a news report on the Selma to Montgomery march in 1965, Brock moved back to the U.S. He worked at WINS in New York and KYW in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. When it was clear he was not going to be hired to host ABC's "Wide World of Sports," Brock moved back to Washington, D.C. to become a salesman for Smith-Corona. Around 1970, Brock became news director at WETA-FM and was also considered for the position of news director at National Public Radio.

Video Oral History Interview with Paul Brock, Section A2003_106_001_004, TRT: 0:29:30 ?

Paul Brock was hired as a radio news director in the early 1970s, first at WETA and later for Howard University's WHUR station, where he could broadcast a full hour of news. In 1975, Brock was a founding member of both the Washington Association of Black Journalists and the National Association of Black Journalists along with Max Robinson and HistoryMaker Maureen Bunyan. He describes the stigma that those organizations had at news agencies. Brock left WHUR and became deputy director of communications for the Democratic National Committee, where his interns included HistoryMaker Barry Mayo and Maurice Williams, a journalist who was killed by the Hanafi Muslims who took over the Washington, D.C. City Hall in 1977 and also shot HistoryMaker Marion Barry. In the mid-1970s, Brock became vice president for news and operations of Mutual Black Network, where he stayed for three years. He reflects on the difficulty in gaining support for news on black radio stations and on the 1972 Democratic National Convention.

Video Oral History Interview with Paul Brock, Section A2003_106_002_005, TRT: 0:29:46 ?

Paul Brock attended the 1972 Democratic National Convention in Miami Beach,

Florida as the news director for Howard University's WHUR-FM. Brock describes the prominence of African American politicians at the convention, including Shirley Chisholm, Maynard Jackson, Charles Evers, and HistoryMakers Julian Bond and Basil Paterson. He reflects on Democratic nominee George McGovern, how Basil Paterson became vice chair of the Democratic Party, and the momentum that the African American delegates had going into the 1976 national convention in New York City. Brock also describes Hamilton Jordan's success in building a coalition of minority voters to elect President Jimmy Carter. In 1972, Brock also produced a radio show called "Black Voices" for the Democratic National Committee, and his office at the Watergate Hotel was where the burglars entered. Brock describes the guard who caught them, Frank Wills, and how the Democratic National Committee attempted to help Wills get an education.

Video Oral History Interview with Paul Brock, Section A2003_106_002_006, TRT: 0:29:55 ?

Paul Brock originated and produced NAACP Nightly Convention highlights for PBS from 1978 until 1983 under NAACP executive director and HistoryMaker Benjamin Hooks. He reflects on his disappointment in President Jimmy Carter's term as president and the way Carter alienated his constituents by firing HistoryMaker Ambassador Andrew Young in 1979 and moving towards the right before the 1980 election, where he was challenged for the Democratic nomination by Edward "Ted" Kennedy. Brock was in charge of communications and public relations for HistoryMaker Reverend Jesse Jackson's 1984 presidential campaign, where he worked with HistoryMakers Maxine Waters and Alexis Herman. He recalls HistoryMaker Milton Coleman's interview with Jackson that led to charges of Jackson's anti-Semitism and Jackson's speech at the 1984 Democratic National Convention. Brock also describes Jackson's issues-based campaign strategy and how it attracted voters' attention.

Video Oral History Interview with Paul Brock, Section A2003_106_002_007, TRT: 0:29:15 ?

Paul Brock produced NAACP National Convention highlights from 1978 until 1983 for PBS. During that time, Brock was approached along with George Stanford Brown and HistoryMakers Bernie Casey, Robert Hooks, and Vernon Jarrett to make the TV film "Beulah Land" for NBC. When they objected to the film's subject matter, the producer told them to make their own films, which led to them setting up the company, First America, to produce a series of films for American Playhouse. With a group of historians including Eric Foner, John Wesley Blassingame, and HistoryMaker John Hope Franklin, Brock planned a series of eight historical films. Brock produced three of those films based on historic African Americans, "Denmark Vesey's Rebellion" in 1982, "Solomon Northrup's Odyssey" in 1984, and "Charlotte Forten's Mission" in 1985. Brock reflects on the reception of these films and the difficulty of securing funding and a wide audience for historical films about African Americans.

Video Oral History Interview with Paul Brock, Section A2003_106_002_008, TRT: 0:29:46 ?

Paul Brock produced the film "Solomon Northrup's Odyssey," which screened in Santa Monica, California in 1984. He remembers how the screening affected actor Woody Strode. Brock also reflects on the importance that history has on present-day race relations in the United States. He covered the U.S. Supreme Court case of the Regents of the University of California v. Bakke with a Ford Foundation grant in 1977. He reflects on the details of that case and how it informed his understanding of both white journalists and their reaction to the Supreme Court's Gratz v. Bollinger affirmative action case with the University of Michigan in 2003. Brock served as media coordinator for the Village Foundation from 1994 until 2002, and describes working with the Prince

George's County NAACP and the Institute for Democracy Studies to support affirmative action programs. Brock describes his concern that African Americans have chosen leisure over political involvement, and ends the interview by reflecting upon his legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Paul Brock, Section A2003_106_002_009, TRT: 0:18:44 ?

Paul Brock narrates his photographs.