

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Bonita Gooch

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Gooch, Bonita, 1955-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Bonita Gooch,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 31, 2002
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2002
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:44:26).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Newspaper publishing chief executive Bonita Gooch (1955 - ) publishes Wichita's Community Voice newspaper. Gooch was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 31, 2002, in Wichita, Kansas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2002_169
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Bonita Gooch, publisher of *The Community Voice* of Wichita, Kansas was born on August 15, 1955, in Wichita. Her parents Dora, a schoolteacher, and U. L. "Rip" Gooch, an employee in the aviation business, migrated to Wichita from Tennessee seeking opportunities afforded by the aircraft industry. Gooch has exciting memories of flying with her father. As a teenager, she took a journalism class and volunteered for the North High School newspaper. Gooch also served as layout stripper for *The Wichita Times*, the local black paper.

She graduated from North High School in 1973 and earned a B.A. in Journalism from the Kansas State University and after a brief attempt at a career in journalism, Gooch went back to school for a Masters degree in Public Administration. After school, Gooch moved to Florida. In her absence her father, "Rip" Gooch ran for and won a seat in the Wichita City Council. He would become a Kansas State Senator in 1992.

Bonita Gooch returned to Wichita after the death of her brother and was persuaded by her father to purchase *The Community Voice*, Wichita's black weekly newspaper in 1995. In a few short years, Gooch has made *The Community Voice* an active participant in its community, which she believes is vital to its success. The paper includes local and national news that focuses on black political and social issues with commentary from Wichita's own Dr. Ronald Walters, Aaron McGruder's nationally syndicated, thought-provoking comic strip, *The Boondocks*, and insightful articles about black life.

*The Community Voice* received the U. S. Small Business Administration's Media Advocate Award in 1997. In 1998, it garnered two awards from the Kansas Press Association, one for overall excellence and the other to Bonita Gooch for in-depth writing. She also received the Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing's Minority Advocate Award in 1999.

Gooch is also co-host of weekly *Community Voice Radio Show* on Wichita's KDGS Radio. Gooch has pioneered cause-related marketing programs that allow organizations to raise funds through subscription sales. Gooch, who serves on the boards of the American Red Cross and the Kansas African American Affairs Commission, among

many others, lives in Wichita with her daughter.

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# Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Bonita Gooch was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 31, 2002, in Wichita, Kansas, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Newspaper publishing chief executive Bonita Gooch (1955 - ) publishes Wichita's Community Voice newspaper.

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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:

Gooch, Bonita, 1955-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Gooch, Bonita, 1955---Interviews

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African American businesswomen--Interviews.

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African American newspapers--Kansas.

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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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# Occupations:

Newspaper Publishing Chief Executive

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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 Bonita Gooch, August 31, 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).

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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 Bonita Gooch, Section A2002\_169\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:05 ?  
Bonita Gooch was born on August 15, 1955, in Wichita, Kansas, to Dora

Augusta Fields and Ulysses Lee “Rip” Gooch. Gooch’s father, born September 13, 1923, was the oldest of his generation. Her paternal grandmother was part Native American and both paternal grandparents died while her father was young. Gooch’s father left Ripley, Tennessee when he was fifteen years-old so that he could complete high school. Gooch’s father entered the military before attending Tennessee State University. Gooch’s mother was born on July 9, 1927 and was raised by her grandmother, Duvella Fields. Gooch’s mother was a teacher and a member of nearly every club in Wichita, Kansas. The Gooches moved to Wichita, Kansas, around 1952, where her father opened his own business, Aeroservices in the 1960s. Gooch discusses neighborhood segregation in Wichita, happy memories of growing up in a neighborhood full of children, and taking dance lessons. Gooch also discusses how the school board tried to prevent integration of the schools.

Depressions--1929--Tennessee.

African American families--Tennessee.

African American families--Kansas--Wichita--social life and customs.

Boeing Aerospace Company--Kansas--Wichita.

African American air pilots.

African Americans--Segregation--History--20th century.

Gooch, U. L., 1923-

Video Oral History Interview with Bonita Gooch, Section A2002\_169\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:55 ?

Bonita Gooch discusses her father, her education, and how she acquired Wichita’s “Community Voice”. Gooch’s father ran Aeroservices for many years, had a state appointment in the Kansas Office of Minority Business Enterprise Board and was on the state civil rights board. In the early 1970s, Gooch began her journalism career under Jack Hudson at the Wichita Times while in high school. Active on the school newspaper and yearbook, Gooch was also instrumental in establishing the first group of pompom girls in Wichita, Kansas at North High School where she graduated in 1973. At the University of Kansas, she received her B.A. degree in journalism and returned soon after for a Master’s of Public Administration. After returning to Wichita from Florida in 1996 to live near her parents, Gooch’s father convinced her to buy the Community Voice newspaper from Billy McCray. Gooch’s first issue was published in November 1996, and now publishes national, state, and local news for Wichita’s black community.

African American newspapers--Kansas.

African American air pilots.

Segregation in education--Kansas--History.

Gooch, U. L., 1923-

University of Kansas.

Video Oral History Interview with Bonita Gooch, Section A2002\_169\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:20 ?

Bonita Gooch talks about the black community. Gooch uses her newspaper, the “Community Voice,” and her weekly “Community Voice” Radio Show to shed light on the black perspective. She acknowledges that some readers may feel that she is sometimes biased especially given rising divisiveness on issues within the black community. Her newspaper has “face-offs” on topics such as ebonics, reparations, and school vouchers. Her project, NEW Wichita, presented “best of” awards programs intended to promote the black community’s accomplishments. Gooch talks about fluctuations in her staffing and her government-contracted Contrails newspaper for McConnell Air Force Base.

Aside from focusing on education and health, Gooch's hopes and concerns for the black community involve the need to change the core values and for the black community to focus on issues of education, health, and savings instead of cars, clothes, and spending then the issues can be properly addresses and changed.

African American newspapers--Kansas.

African Americans--Social conditions--21st century.

McConnell Air Force Base (Kan.)

African Americans in radio broadcasting.

National Newspaper Publishers Association (U.S.).

Wichita Eagle and Beacon Publishing Co.

Video Oral History Interview with Bonita Gooch, Section A2002\_169\_001\_004, TRT: 0:15:06 ?

Bonita Gooch discusses her legacy, how she wants to be remembered, and her future plans. Bonita Gooch wants her legacy to be the "Community Voice" newspaper, and she hopes that the newspaper has been able to make a difference in the local black community. Gooch describes the difficulty in getting the black community to mobilize, although she has been able to influence change such as when the school board hired a black assistant superintendent following her editorial on the matter. She realizes that she will probably be remembered for trying hard to publish a good newspaper that made a difference in the black community but she also hopes that the community realizes she is more than that. Gooch hopes to retire by the time her nine-year-old daughter reaches college, and does not have a desire to enter politics.

African American newspapers--Kansas.

African Americans--Social conditions--21st century.