

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Philip Hart

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: | Hart, Philip, 1944- |
| Title: | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Philip Hart, |
| Dates: | August 19, 2017 |
| Bulk Dates: | 2017 |
| Physical Description: | 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:16:03). |
| Abstract: | Civil leader and professor Philip Hart (1944 -) taught at the University of Massachusetts, Boston College of Public and Community Service and authored fourteen books. Hart was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 19, 2017, in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| Identification: | A2017_159 |
| Language: | The interview and records are in English. |

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Civic leader and professor Philip Hart was born on June 12, 1944 in Denver, Colorado to Murlee Shaw Hart and Judson Hart. He received an athletic scholarship to attend Colorado College and transferred to the University of Colorado Boulder where he received his B.A. degree and graduated with honors as a student athlete in 1966, and was later inducted into the University's Distinguished Alumni Gallery in 1995. He received his M.A. degree in social psychology and his Ph.D. degree in sociology from Michigan State University in 1974. There, Hart worked for the Greater Lansing Urban League and the Center for Urban Affairs.

In 1966, Hart joined the staff of the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington, D.C. In 1971, he was recruited to lead the Joint Center for Inner City Change located in Boston's Roxbury neighborhood. Hart then served as superintendent of the Federation of Boston Community Schools. In 1974, Hart cofounded the College of Public and Community Service at the University of Massachusetts Boston. From 1974 to 2002, Hart served as a professor of sociology, department chairman and director of the William Monroe Trotter Institute for the Study of Black Culture.

In 1980, Hart along with business partner Marvin Gilmore, Jr. developed CrossTown Industrial Park in Roxbury with Fortune 500 technology company Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC) as anchor tenant. In 1989, they repurposed an industrial building across from the DEC plant into a biotechnology facility with Boston University School of Medicine as anchor tenant and partner. This partnership led to the creation of BioSquare, Boston's premiere biotechnology business park. In 2016, Hart as a member of the Los Angeles Biosciences Coalition developed a plan to expand the biotechnology industry cluster in LA County similar to Hart's work in inner city Boston.

In addition, Hart wrote and produced children's books and documentary films including the 1987 PBS documentary film *Flyers: In Search of a Dream* based on the history of his maternal great uncle, James Banning,

who was one of the nation's first African American aviators. His children's book *Flying Free: America's First Black Aviators* was named a 1992 Notable Children's Trade Book in Social Studies. He also appeared in documentaries about early African American aviators *Black Aviators: Flying Free* and *Black Wings*. He authored, *Early African American Aviators*, and along with his wife, created and produced *Dark Passages* a documentary about the Atlantic slave trade. The Harts also wrote, produced and directed the three-hour nationally syndicated radio documentary *Ray Charles: The Music Lives On*.

In 1990, Hart and his wife moved to Los Angeles and joined West Angeles Church of God in Christ. In 1995, Hart joined the West Angeles Church building committee whose charge was to plan and construct the 5,000-seat West Angeles Cathedral in South Los Angeles. In 1996, he was named project manager for the Cathedral project which was dedicated in April 2001.

Hart and his wife, Tanya Hart, have one daughter, Ayanna Hart Beebe

Philip Hart was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 19, 2017.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Philip Hart was conducted by Randall Pinkston on August 19, 2017, in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Civil leader and professor Philip Hart (1944 -) taught at the University of Massachusetts, Boston College of Public and Community Service and authored fourteen books.

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:

Hart, Philip, 1944-

Pinkston, Randall (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Hart, Philip, 1944- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Civic Leader

Professor

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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 Philip Hart, August 19, 2017. 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 Philip Hart, Section A2017_159_001_001, TRT: 1:26:47 ?

Philip Hart was born in 1944 in Denver, Colorado to Murlee Shaw Hart and Judson Hart. His paternal great-grandfather, Joe Hart, was the son of a slave owner in Wildersville, Tennessee, where he received a large portion of land after emancipation. Hart's paternal grandparents, Alvin Hart and Agnes Hart, left Wildersville to find work in the West, and settled in Salina, Kansas. They opened a restaurant called Al Hart's Barbeque, which became a popular stopping point for African American musicians during cross country tours. Hart's maternal great-grandparents, Cora Banning and Riley Banning, settled in Oklahoma after obtaining a large parcel of land through the Homestead Act of 1862. His maternal grandmother, Virginia Banning Shaw, lived on the farm until the 1920s, when she left to join her brother, James Banning, who lived in Iowa and was one of the first licensed African American pilots. She later settled in St. Louis, Missouri, where Hart's mother was born.

Video Oral History Interview with Philip Hart, Section A2017_159_001_002, TRT: 2:28:52 ?

Philip Hart's parents, Murlee Shaw Hart and Judson Hart, met while they were students at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas. After marrying, the couple moved to Denver, Colorado, where Hart's mother became one of the first African American teachers in the Denver Public Schools. His father initially worked as a janitor, and then became the manager of the Platte Valley Homes and the assistant to George L. Brown at the Denver Housing Authority. Hart grew up in Denver's predominantly African American Five Points neighborhood. He attended integrated schools, including Columbine Elementary School, William H. Smiley Junior High School and East High School, where he excelled both academically and athletically on the baseball, basketball and football teams. During the summers, he delivered mail for the U.S. Post Office Department. His route included the homes of many of Denver's notable African American residents, like politician George L. Brown and boxer Sonny Liston.

Video Oral History Interview with Philip Hart, Section A2017_159_001_003, TRT: 3:28:52 ?

Philip Hart grew up in Denver, Colorado with his parents, Murlee Shaw Hart and Judson Hart, and brothers, Mondo Jud Hart and Christopher A. Hart. He attended Denver's East High School, where he was a star athlete and a member of both the baseball and basketball teams. Aspiring to play professionally, Hart accepted an athletic scholarship to Colorado College in Colorado Springs; and, after his freshman year, transferred to the University of Colorado Boulder. While there, Hart switched his focus from sports achievement to activism on behalf of college athletes. He advocated against the school's athletic quota system, and the stereotyping of black athletes as unintelligent. After graduating in 1966, Hart joined the staff of the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington, D.C., where he worked under Julius B. Richmond and R. Sargent Shriver. During this time, Hart became acquainted with Marion Barry, who was the head of the Pride, Incorporated community action program.

Video Oral History Interview with Philip Hart, Section A2017_159_001_004, TRT: 4:31:27 ?

Philip Hart attended the University of Colorado Boulder, where he played basketball and studied sociology. After graduating in 1966, Hart worked at the Office of Economic Opportunity, and then enrolled at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. There, he earned a master's degree in social psychology and a Ph.D. degree in sociology. During this time, Hart helped to found Michigan State University's Black Student Alliance, and served on the search committee that named Clifton R. Wharton as the school's first African American president in 1970. Outside of school, Hart worked for the Greater Lansing Urban League and the Center for Urban Affairs, and met his wife, Tanya Hart. In 1971, Hart accepted a position at the Joint Community University Center for Inner City Change in Boston, Massachusetts. After one year, he was recruited to serve as the superintendent of the Federation of Boston Community Schools, which was formed by African American parents at the start of the busing crisis.

Video Oral History Interview with Philip Hart, Section A2017_159_001_005, TRT: 5:28:02 ?

Philip Hart was recruited in 1974 to help found the College of Public and Community Service at the University of Massachusetts Boston. He then joined the university faculty as a professor of sociology, department chairman and director of the William Monroe Trotter Institute for the Study of Black Culture, and taught until his early retirement in 2002. Outside of academia, Hart was involved in a number of real estate ventures with his business partner, Marvin E. Gilmore, Jr. Together, they purchased property in Boston's predominantly black communities, and developed a facility for the Digital Equipment Corporation as well as the Boston University School of Medicine's BioSquare center, which provided biotechnology training to minority students. In addition, Hart produced documentary films like 'Flyers: In Search of a Dream' based on the history of his maternal great uncle, James Banning, who was one of the nation's first African American aviators.

Video Oral History Interview with Philip Hart, Section A2017_159_001_006, TRT: 6:27:46 ?

Philip Hart's maternal great uncle, James Banning, became one of the first African Americans to receive a pilot's license in the United States in 1926. Three years later, Banning was invited to Los Angeles, California by pilot William J. Powell to help found the Bessie Coleman Aero Club. Powell went on to write 'Black Wings,' and created a documentary film called 'Unemployment, The Negro and Aviation.' After learning about his great uncle's accomplishments, Hart wrote and produced several children's books and documentaries about early African American aviators. He also developed the 'Black Wings' exhibit, which opened in 1982 at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. At the time of the interview, Hart and his daughter, Ayanna Hart Beebe, were working on a documentary film about Banning's cross country flight, and another film about Bessie Coleman. Additionally, Hart talks about his activities at the West Angeles Church of God in Christ in Los Angeles, California.

Video Oral History Interview with Philip Hart, Section A2017_159_001_007, TRT: 7:24:17 ?

Philip Hart reflects upon his legacy, as well as the legacies of his parents, Murlee Shaw Hart and Judson Hart. His mother was one of the first African American teachers to work in the Denver Public Schools. In this role, she created a number of educational computer games to help her students learn reading and math. In addition, Hart's mother performed as the piano accompanist for Hart and his brothers' singing trio, and was a proficient songwriter. Several of her compositions were performed by jazz musician Purnell Steen. Hart's father played an important role in the City of Denver as a

manager of the Denver Housing Authority. At the time of the interview, Hart lived in Los Angeles, California, where he was instrumental in the expansion of the West Angeles Church of God in Christ. As the project manager, he oversaw the construction and fundraising for a new cathedral, parking garage and the West Angeles Family Life Center. Hart concludes the interview by reflecting upon his life.