

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Virgil Roberts

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Roberts, Virgil, 1947-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts,
Dates:	February 6, 2019
Bulk Dates:	2019
Physical Description:	13 uncompressed MOV digital video files (5:57:16).
Abstract:	Lawyer Virgil Roberts (1947 -) worked as an entertainment lawyer for over forty years, served as president and general counsel of SOLAR Records, and founded the entertainment law firm Bobbitt & Roberts. Roberts was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 6, 2019, in Los Angeles, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2019_011
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Lawyer Virgil Roberts was born on January 4, 1947 in Ventura, California. He attended Ventura College in Ventura, California and transferred to the University of California, Los Angeles, where he received his B.A. degree in 1968. After doing graduate studies for a year, Roberts earned his J.D. degree from Harvard Law School in 1972.

In 1968, Roberts helped found the first African American studies program at the University of California, Los Angeles, and established the Center for Afro-American Studies, later known as the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies. In 1972, Roberts joined the Los Angeles law firm of Pacht, Ross, Warne, Bernhard and Sears as an associate and civil litigator. There, he handled business litigation and did pro-bono work for civil rights organizations. In 1976, Roberts left the firm to found his own practice, known as, Manning, Reynolds & Roberts, where his clients included Associated Booking Corporation, Norman Whitfield and the Whispers. He also continued his pro-bono work and represented the NAACP from 1978 to 1981 in the Los Angeles school desegregation case, *Crawford v. Board of Education*. In 1981, Roberts served as executive vice president and general counsel of SOLAR Records, the company known as “the Motown of the 80’s.” Roberts was named president and general counsel of SOLAR Records in 1990, where he was instrumental in creating Death Row Records. In 1996, Roberts founded the law firm of Bobbitt & Roberts along with Leroy Bobbitt, where their clients included SOLAR Records, Gospocentric Records, Slip ‘n’ Slide Records, Blackground Records, Usher, Chaka Khan, NATPE International, Paramount Pictures, Black Entertainment Television and Barbara Taylor Bradford.

Roberts served as a founder and director of Community Build, he also served as chairman of Broadway Financial Corporation and Broadway Federal Bank FSB. In 2005, he founded and served as co-chair of Alliance for College Ready Public Schools; and, the following year, Roberts joined the Claremont Graduate University Board of Trustees. He joined the board of directors of The James Irvine Foundation. He founded and served as chair of the African-American Board Leadership Institute and as director of Great Public Schools NOW. In 2018, a middle school, the Alliance Virgil Roberts Leadership Academy, was named in his honor.

Roberts and his wife, Brenda, have two adult married children: Gisele Simone (Roberts) Wilson and Hayley Tasha Roberts.

Virgil Roberts was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on February 6, 2019.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Virgil Roberts was conducted by Harriette Cole on February 6, 2019, in Los Angeles, California, and was recorded on 13 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Lawyer Virgil Roberts (1947 -) worked as an entertainment lawyer for over forty years, served as president and general counsel of SOLAR Records, and founded the entertainment law firm Bobbitt & Roberts.

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:

Roberts, Virgil, 1947-

Cole, Harriette (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Roberts, Virgil, 1947- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Lawyer

HistoryMakers® Category:

LawMakers

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 Virgil Roberts, February 6, 2019. 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 Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_001, TRT: 1:30:22 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_002, TRT: 2:29:01 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_003, TRT: 3:30:02 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_004, TRT: 4:28:22 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_005, TRT: 5:31:52 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_006, TRT: 6:30:42 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_007, TRT: 7:29:46 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_008, TRT: 8:29:03 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_009, TRT: 9:28:44 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_010, TRT: 10:29:07 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_011, TRT: 11:29:01 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_012, TRT: 12:20:38 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Virgil Roberts, Section A2019_011_001_013, TRT: 13:10:36 ?