

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Peter Bynoe

---

## 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>	Bynoe, Peter, 1951-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Peter Bynoe,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 28, 2000
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2000
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:45:46).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Business consulting entrepreneur Peter Bynoe (1951 - ) became the first African American owner of a professional sports team in 1989, when he gained part ownership of the Denver Nuggets. He he has facilitated in the construction of professional sports stadiums for the Milwaukee Brewers, the San Francisco 49ers, and the Washington Redskins. Bynoe was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 28, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2000_013
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

---

## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Peter Bynoe was born in Boston, Massachusetts on March 20, 1951, to a West Indian father and an American mother, whom he credits with instilling in him the exemplary work ethic that has made him a leading entrepreneur. He received his bachelors, masters, and law degrees from Harvard University before entering the business world in 1976 as a Citibank executive intern. The following year, Bynoe became vice president of James Lowry and Associates, a position he held until 1982, when he founded Telemat Ltd., a business consulting firm.

In 1989, Peter Bynoe broke ground as the first minority owner of an NBA franchise, a goal he accomplished through a partnership with fellow Chicago entrepreneur Bertram Lee, tennis legend Arthur Ashe and Democratic National Committee Chairman Ron Brown. This collective, headed by Bynoe, purchased the Denver Nuggets for \$65 million. As the first African American owner, he set a precedent that has opened the doors of sports management for all minorities. In 1992, after designing and supervising the complete reorganization of the team, he sold his interest in the franchise.

After his involvement with the NBA, Bynoe joined the prestigious law firm of Rudnick & Wolfe, where he has served on the firm's Management Committee since 1995. For Bynoe, sports have served as a staging ground for race relations and African-American advancement. He uses his position as a lawyer to facilitate the construction of professional sports stadiums, including arenas for the Milwaukee Brewers, the San Francisco 49ers, and the Washington Redskins. Bynoe also manages some of Rudnick & Wolfe's most important clients, including Bank of America and the City of Chicago.

At the time of the interview, Peter Bynoe was heavily involved in the Chicago civic community as director of the Chicago Economic Club, Chair of the Chicago Planning Commission, and director of the Illinois Sports Facilities

Authority. Bynoe also served as a director of the UniRoyal Technology Corporation.

---

## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Peter Bynoe was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on March 28, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Business consulting entrepreneur Peter Bynoe (1951 - ) became the first African American owner of a professional sports team in 1989, when he gained part ownership of the Denver Nuggets. He he has facilitated in the construction of professional sports stadiums for the Milwaukee Brewers, the San Francisco 49ers, and the Washington Redskins.

---

## 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:

Bynoe, Peter, 1951-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Bieschke, Paul (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Bynoe, Peter, 1951---Interviews

---

African American businesspeople--Interviews.

---

African American sports team owners--Interviews.

---

## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

---

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

---

## Occupations:

Real Estate Executive

---

## HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

---

## 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 Peter Bynoe, March 28, 2000. 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 Peter Bynoe, Section A2000\_013\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:13 ?

Peter Bynoe's interview begins with several photographs of him with notable figures as well as older photos of his father with well known black athletes and politicians. Bynoe shares some anecdotes of his early childhood with extended family in Boston. He continues with background information on his parents as immigrants and migrants to New England. Bynoe delves into the question of whether or not having a West Indian parent gave him a West Indian view on life. This segment concludes with recollections of his mischievous childhood.

Photographs.

Childhood and youth--Massachusetts--Boston.

African American families.

Immigrant families.

West Indian diaspora.

Video Oral History Interview with Peter Bynoe, Section A2000\_013\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:51 ?

Boston was a place of great social upheaval during Bynoe's youth. Segregation and racism were a fact of life in one of America's first cities. He talks about his father's legal practice and political/social involvement with some major players on the political stage. Bynoe then reminisces about the impact the Vietnam War had on his life and friends' lives. Attending Harvard College shaped Bynoe's life and career choices, particularly his ability to recognize great opportunities. This segment closes with Bynoe's account of the battle to create an Afro-American Studies Department at Harvard.

Segregation--Massachusetts--Boston.

Lawyers--Massachusetts--Boston.

Vietnam War, 1961-1975--Influence.

Harvard University.

African Americans--Study and teaching.

Video Oral History Interview with Peter Bynoe, Section A2000\_013\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:04 ?

Peter Bynoe discusses just how he came to be an entrepreneur. He attributes his success to being at the right place at the right time and knowing a great opportunity when it presents itself. Bynoe attributes a great part of his achievement to the mentorship of Mayor Harold Washington and the opportunities his tenure presented a young black real estate developer. Bynoe laments the lack of black mentorship he received in Chicago and notes that white businessmen backed him instead. He details how many of these same businessmen backed him when he decided to purchase the Denver Nuggets, making him the first black general managing partner of a major NBA franchise. Finally, Bynoe ponders the state of black ownership of professional sports teams.

African American entrepreneurs.

Washington, Harold, 1922-1987.

Real estate business.

Denver Nuggets (Basketball team).

Sports team owners.

Video Oral History Interview with Peter Bynoe, Section A2000\_013\_001\_004, TRT: 0:18:38 ?

In reflecting on his legacy as a black entrepreneur, Peter Bynoe weaves the threads of his life into a complete work. He sees his life as a continuation of what his father began, not merely a reflection of it. Bynoe ponders the future of black America and the impact of the "digital divide" on black achievement. He wraps up the interview with his assessment of his legacy, who the most

influential businesspeople are in his life and conjectures about what advice his father would offer to him now.

African American entrepreneurs.

African American fathers.

Digital divide--Economic aspects--United States.

Businesspeople.