

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Princell Hair

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hair, Princell, 1967-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Princell Hair,
Dates:	May 21, 2012
Bulk Dates:	2012
Physical Description:	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:02:54).
Abstract:	Broadcast executive Princell Hair (1967 -) is an Emmy Award winning journalist and senior vice president for NBC Sports Group. Hair was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 21, 2012, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2012_130
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Broadcast executive Princell Hair was born on February 2, 1967 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Hair attended Fort Lauderdale High School and graduated in 1985. That same year, he enrolled in the U.S. Naval Academy, where he spent the next four years. Hair was then admitted to Florida International University in Miami, graduating two years later with his B.S. degree in broadcast journalism. He entered the world of journalism soon after, working as a writer and producer for WPLG-TV and WSVN-TV, ABC and Fox-affiliated stations, respectively. In 1993, Hair was hired as an executive producer for Chicago's WSVN-TV. After two years, he was hired as an assistant news director for the CBS station WKMG-TV in Orlando, Florida. Hair was then named news director for Hearst television station WBAL-TV in Baltimore, Maryland, where he served from 1998 to 2001.

In 2001, Hair was hired by Viacom to oversee thirty nine CBS television stations. After two years with Viacom, he was appointed general manager for the Cable News Network (CNN) and later promoted to senior vice president at Turner Broadcasting, Inc. After enrolling at Emory University's Goizueta Business School in Atlanta, Georgia, Hair obtained his M.B.A. degree in 2006. He was then named senior vice president of news operations for Comcast SportsNet, two years later; and, in 2012, was promoted to senior vice president of news and talent for NBC Sports Group, overseeing talent recruitment, negotiation and development.

Hair has served on the board of directors of the Radio and Television News Directors Association/Foundation (RTNDA/F), and the board of visitors at Florida A&M University's School of Journalism and Graphic Communication. He won a 1994 Emmy Award in Chicago as Executive Producer of "Our Future Crisis," a broadcast special about inner-city violence. He is a former member of the National Association of Black Journalists, the National Black MBA Association and the National Association of Broadcasters. He and his wife have five children.

Princell Hair was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on May 21, 2012.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Princell Hair was conducted by Larry Crowe on May 21, 2012, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Broadcast executive Princell Hair (1967 -) is an Emmy Award winning journalist and senior vice president for NBC Sports Group.

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:

Hair, Princell, 1967-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Hair, Princell, 1967- --Interviews

African American journalists--Interviews.

African American television producers and directors--Interviews.

African American executives--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

NBC Sports

Occupations:

Broadcast Executive

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 Princell Hair, May 21, 2012. 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 Princell Hair, Section A2012_130_001_001, TRT: 1:30:59 ?

Princell Hair was born on February 2nd, 1967, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. His father, Roosevelt Jones was born around 1935 and left his mother, Bessie Hair, born April 8, 1945, in Monticello, Florida when Hair was two years old. His parents were never married. Hair's father worked odd jobs and was not around in his childhood. His mother was born into a family of fourteen and did not finish high school as a youth, but later earned her GED. Hair spent his childhood in the projects, and has memories of taking the bus to school. He talks about his likeness to his mother, and how he his drive and stubbornness come from her. He also describes the sights, sounds, and smells of growing up, and his involvement in a Pentecostal church, the National Church of God in Christ. Early on, Hair's mother recognized his academic potential and acquired permission to send him to North Side Elementary School, which was predominantly white and out of their district.

African American mothers--Florida--Fort Lauderdale.

African American fathers--Florida--Fort Lauderdale.

Childhood and youth--Florida--Fort Lauderdale.

Public housing--Florida--Fort Lauderdale.

African American churches--Florida--Fort Lauderdale.

African Americans--Education, Elementary--Florida--Fort Lauderdale.

Video Oral History Interview with Princell Hair, Section A2012_130_001_002, TRT: 2:29:55 ?

Princell Hair describes the impact that his mentors at North Side Elementary School and Fort Lauderdale High School (1985) had upon his leadership development. As a boy, Hair found it hard to fit in with other children in his neighborhood because he attended a predominantly white school outside his home in the projects. While in high school, Hair was student council president as well as a standout member of the track team. In addition to early interests in music and television, Hair also had an affinity for writing classes and he wanted to be a journalist. When Hair was growing up, Fort Lauderdale was primarily a resort town for spring breakers from the North. He remembers a negative encounter with the Fort Lauderdale Police, in which he was racially profiled, and his high school journalism heroes including Max Robinson, Ralph Renick, and Dwight Lauderdale, the first African American anchor in his market.

Mentoring in education--Florida--Fort Lauderdale.

African Americans--Education, Secondary--Activities--Florida--Fort Lauderdale.

Tourism--Florida--Fort Lauderdale.

Racial discrimination.

Journalism--Role models.

Video Oral History Interview with Princell Hair, Section A2012_130_001_003, TRT: 3:30:13 ?

Princell Hair was voted Mr. Fort Lauderdale High School in 1958. After graduation, Hair decided to join the Navy, but was medically discharged for flat feet after only twenty eight days. He took courses at Florida Community College in Gainesville, Florida, but left after his girlfriend became pregnant at eighteen. Their relationship eventually disintegrated, and in 1990, Hair enrolled at Florida International University in Miami, Florida where he met his wife, Stephanie Hair. While at Florida International University, Hair interned at a Post-Newsweek station. At the end of the internship, the station offered him a full time job. After weighing this job against another offer from WSVN, Hair decided to quit college and work for WSVN. Hair also talks about Joel Cheatwood, one of his mentors who is credited as saying, "If it bleeds, it leads,"

his own journalistic philosophy, and WSVN's coverage of Hurricane Andrew.
United States--Armed Forces--African Americans.
Florida Community College System.
Florida International University.
WSVN (Television station : Miami, Fla.).
Mentoring.
Hurricane Andrew, 1992.

Video Oral History Interview with Princell Hair, Section A2012_130_001_004, TRT: 4:28:18 ?

Princell Hair talks about vision, leadership, and writing, skills needed to be a good news producer; producing news in crises, such as Hurricane Andrew; and news production for WDIV, an NBC affiliate in Detroit, Michigan where he and his wife saw snow for the first time after moving there in 1991. In 1993, WBBM Chicago offered Hair a management position, and he moved to Chicago, Illinois. While in Chicago, Hair covered many news stories including a series of young gang-related killings, for which he produced an Emmy award-winning broadcast special, "Our Future in Crisis." After the departure of a mentor, John Lansing, from WBBM, Hair decided to leave Chicago for Orlando, Florida to become the assistant news director at WKMG in 1995, where he brought the station number one ratings. Hair moved back to Chicago for his first news director job at WMAQ in 1997, the same year the station decided to hire Jerry Springer.

WDIV-TV (Television station : Detroit, Mich.).

WBBM-TV (Television station : Chicago, Ill.).

Emmy Awards.

WMAQ-TV (Television station : Chicago, Ill.).

Mentoring.

Video Oral History Interview with Princell Hair, Section A2012_130_001_005, TRT: 5:28:46 ?

Princell Hair talks about WMAQ Chicago's controversial hire of Jerry Springer, the consequent backlash from station staff, and his decision to leave Chicago, Illinois for the Hurst Group's WBAL in Baltimore, Maryland. While Hair was at WBAL Baltimore, the station covered major stories such as Hurricane Floyd, a hostage situation, and Baltimore's 2000 mayoral election. As a news director, Hair made hard decisions during live coverage and implemented newsroom policies, such as requiring producers to go out in the field with reporters to understand their role. Some of Hair's favorite reporters include Vickie Frazier Williams and Jane Miller. Hair also talks about working for Viacom from 2001 to 2003, being recruited as CNN's Domestic News Director in 2003, the difficult political atmosphere at CNN in Atlanta, Georgia, working full time while earning his MBA at Emory University, and his decision to take time off to consider his future, which influenced his move into sports news.

Springer, Jerry, 1944-

WBAL-TV (Television station : Baltimore, Md.).

Cable News Network.

Viacom Inc.

Emory University.

Video Oral History Interview with Princell Hair, Section A2012_130_001_006, TRT: 6:29:43 ?

Princell Hair describes his decision to go into sports news with the Comcast Sports Group in 2008, how regional coverage differs from national sports news, and Philadelphia's sports fans. While at Comcast Sports Group from 2008 to 2012, Hair's role was to develop sports news strategy and to oversee all hiring,

giving him insight into what it is like to hire former sports players. Hair also talks about Comcast's regional stations, the reasons for their successes, how to develop sports news based on regional preferences, his new role with NBC Sports Group in 2012, and his goal in broadcasting to run a network. In 2006, Hair received an M.B.A. from Emory University. Hair also talks about what he would do differently, about his children, and about his legacy.

Comcast Corporation.

Television broadcasting of sports.

NBC Sports.

Emory University.

Video Oral History Interview with Princell Hair, Section A2012_130_001_007, TRT: 7:05:00 ?

Princell Hair talks about his hopes and concerns for the African American community, the importance of growing up with a present father, his favorite phrase, what it takes to be a leader, and how he would like to be remembered.

Fathers.

Leadership.