

# Rhodes College Digital Archives - DLynx

**Bobby Rush, 2011**

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*Zach Harpole:* On behalf of the Curb Institute, Crossroads to Freedom, and Rhodes College, I want to thank you for taking the time to share your story with us today.

*Bobby Rush:* Well, thank you very much for having me here.

*Zach Harpole:* I'm Zach Harpole and I'm a senior here at Rhodes College. This is LaKevia Perry, also a senior. And we're honored to meet you and learn from your inspirational story.

*Bobby Rush:* Thank you.

*Zach Harpole:* Today's interview will be archived online at the Crossroads to Freedom website. So let's get started talking about your biographical information. Can you tell us when you were born and what your full name is?

*Bobby Rush:* Well my full name is Emmett Ellis, Jr. and professionally Bobby Rush. Now let me tell you how this name came about. Because my daddy was a preacher, a Baptist preacher, and I'm a junior, I respect my father and what he did as a Biblical teacher so much. He was my father, but we were the best of friends.

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I didn't want to have this big record one day.

When I was a little kid I looked forward to this big record set. Bobby Rush – and I didn't want to be Emmett Ellis, which is my real name, and have it reflect to my father because as a kid if you see the big neon sign that said Emmett Ellis, then people in the neighborhood would think it was my dad. And he's a preacher, so I didn't want that to ever follow my father. That's the only reason that I changed my name.

But I did have a few names before I wound up with Bobby Rush. I first had – I was looking at names like President Eisenhower, Truman. You know, as a kid, as a country boy, I wanted a big name. But I had about 20 names before I got to Bobby Rush because I wanted to find a name that everybody - was one syllable. Everybody calls me Bobby Rush. Nobody calls me Bobby. Nobody calls me Rush. Everybody calls me Bobby Rush. There's

aplenty Bobby's. There's a plenty Rush's. But there ain't but one Bobby Rush.

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This is it. So that's where I got that name from.

I'm from a little place called Haynesville/Homer Louisiana. Haynesville and Homer is 11 miles apart. So, I was born in between the two of them which is Carquit, Louisiana, Louisiana. I never talk about that too much, but I was born in the country. So I wasn't born in Haynesville or Homer. I was born in between them, 11 miles from one and 5 miles from the other one, in the country. And I wanted the people to know that I was raised in the country, born in the country. I learned to play the blues as a little young boy.

I knew what I wanted to do when I was 5-years-old, just what I'm doing now. There weren't no ever guessing, in between, and what have you. I did a lot of things up to now trying to survive, but I always know what I wanted to do; sing the blues man. This is it.

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What you see if what you get.

I left there in 1947 and went to Pineville, Arkansas. I stayed in Pineville, Arkansas for a short while with my father. Then in the early '50's I moved to Chicago. I lived in Chicago for 46 years. I started recording in the early '50's. I have 249 records, a lot of records. That's not all. CD's now they call them, or album, or long play or 78's what have you, 8-tracks. But that's all in song fashion. There are about 76 CD's and LP's you call them.

During the time when I first started recording it wasn't so much the LP's but 45's, 78's, you know, and on and on. So now we've got the digital stuff coming in. It done came in and taken over. You guys don't know anything about the 78's or what have you, but that's where I come from.

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*Zach Harpole:* Okay, you said your dad was a preacher.

*Bobby Rush:* Preacher, uh-huh.

Zach Harpole: How did religion play into -?

Bobby Rush: Well, the funny thing. The age where I come from, my daddy was the kind of man who never told me to sing the blues, but he never told me not to. But in my era, where I came from, at the time that I came up, everybody around me – if you was a religious person, had a father as a preacher, most of the time they called it "the Devil's music." But my daddy never called it the Devil's music. Course my daddy never came to see me at work, but he always respect what I do and he respect what I stood for. And I suppose he prayed for me, from every angle.

I know he did from just as his son, but I'm quite sure he prayed for the success of me as a Blue's singer because otherwise I don't think I'd have been here.

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Because I knew as a Biblical study and a love for my father that a righteous man prayer avaieth much. So I think he blessed me.

**Begin Segment 2: [0:05:12]**

Zach Harpole: Were you involved a lot in music in the church as a child?

~~BobbyRush~~Bobby Rush: No, I was a Sunday School teacher. I was the Assistant Superintendent of the Biblical stuff in the church. I never sung in the choir. I never wanted to mix it. I had a chance to. They wanted me to. I never did it. I never crossed those two things together because I was a Blue's singer man. I was the guy who was gonna sing the Blue's.

I remember my dad used to go to church Sunday morning – take us to church. We'd come back at 1:00 PM or 2:00 PM. He would go back in the afternoon to preach or what have you, sometimes a revival. And I would stay home. I had this guitar that I had made upside the wall.

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So when my daddy went back to church I would gather [all](#) the neighbors around. Some of them be drunk as fish. And I would be singing, "Wang Dang Doodle, How –." Come on. It's not good but that's what I did.

So when my daddy would go to church – on the dusty road I would see their car coming back. I could see this dust. They would say, "~~Hey, t~~There come your daddy. He comin' back." I'd be playing the Blue's, and my daddy get close to the house I go to singing, "Amen. Amen. Thank God almighty, Amen." [*sings*] We'd change the song by the time my daddy walked.

My daddy walk in there some of the little girls and some of the younger men would be ~~drunker than~~drunk as fish and we'd try to prop them so they be looking pretty cool before my daddy walk in as a preacher. Oh my, I was a juke joint. Back then we singing gospel. Five minutes before that man, we were juking, "Wang Dang Doodle" all night long. Hey man, you know. That's my life.

So I never sing in the church –

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because I know what I was gonna do the next day, and sometimes the same day when my daddy went back to church. I'm gonna sing the Blue's man. That's what I do. I eat it, sleep it, wallow in it. I'm a Blue's man. That's what I know. That's what I do.

*LaKevia Perry:* Did your church background have an influence on your Blue's singing?

***BobbyRushBobby Rush:*** I think so. I think so. I think, because inside the church you notice that story-wise, lyric-wise, I'm always talking about Biblical things because even though I talk about women's and men's ~~bein' in~~ love and makin' love, so that's Biblical. You know? ~~Well~~I know there's a scene in the Bible. He talks to Moses about supply~~ing~~ the earth as seeds like the grain of ~~the~~ sand on the sea. Well, to me, that's a lot of makin' love. You know? So I talk about those kind of things in a jokin' fashion, but it's true.

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Probably everything that I do ~~is~~ based around Biblical stuff because of my Biblical studies and I believe in that. And everything I do is around that. I never go ~~onto the~~ stage lessen I look up and say, "Thank you Jesus for this." And, "Thank you God for that." I'm not putting my religion on anyone, but it's something I believe in personally and it's what I stand for and I tell it everywhere I go.

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Zach Harpole: What was your earliest musical experience? What got you in -?

**BobbyRushBobby Rush:** Well, what got me started? Ah, what got me started – the love of it. What almost got me out of it, because I wasn't makin' any money. I remember the first time I went to Chicago, playing in Argyle, Illinois. I had a band together called **BobbyRushBobby Rush** and the Four Jivers. I had people like Elmore James had been playing with me and Freddie King, Luther Allison. Many other people had been playing in the band with me.

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We were making –

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See the Chitlin' Circuit was already in exist~~ence~~<sup>sence</sup>, but this wasn't called the Chitlin' Circuit. We were playin' for Chitlins, which you eat, the chitlin' hog chiltlin'. A plate of hog chitlin' was what we were playing for. But I was so good; the man would fix me four hamburgers for the four guys in the band. We got so good he would fix me eight hamburgers. I would give the guys one hamburger and I would sell the other four. We got so good he would fix me 12 hamburgers. We'd eat one a piece and I would sell the eight ~~for~~ \$ .25 apiece. That was our money.

'Cause the man was only paying us \$5.50 a week. I was making \$5.50 a week. We were making \$20.00 for the band. The band was makin' \$20.00. I mean for the whole week. So we had about \$1.50 apiece. As a band leader I was making \$3.00 a night.

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And then from before that I was making zero. Chitlin', a sandwich, I played for the food, a sandwich. I was so good I would sell the one I didn't eat. 'Cause that was my money for many, many years.

Those are the times that I can look back on the Chitlin' Circuit. I guess some of the sadder times. As men would know, so many good times overtake the bad times. That myself, the late Muddy Waters, and J.B. Lenoir, the gentleman who's gotten a job for me in the suburb of Chicago in the early '50's. We'd gotten this job at this white club that the ~~at~~ audience was an all-white audience. And we had a curtain that we had to play

behind every night because they wanted to hear our music but they didn't want to see our face.

*[0:11:00]*

We played day in and day out, night out,

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— and ~~the~~ night after that. That's what we played. And we had a ring on the floor that I got to the place where the man liked me so well that I could stand in this ring on ~~this~~ floor and he would open the ~~curtain up~~ ~~rent~~ once a night and say, "Ladies and Gentlemen, you're entertained by the famous *BobbyRushBobby Rush*." They would open the ~~curtain~~ ~~rent~~ up for a couple minutes and then close it back up. I would take a bow but I dare not to get out ~~of~~ that ring.

He drew a ring on the floor. I would stand in that ring. They'd open it up, take a bow, and close the curtain back up. We played like that for many times as black entertainers. They liked our music, but they didn't want to see our face.

**Begin Segment 3: [0:11:41:08]**

*LaKevia Perry:* So between the Chitlin' Circuit, playing on the Chitlin ' Circuit, and playing for the white clubs like that, which one did you prefer playing for?

*BobbyRushBobby Rush:* It didn't make a difference with me at the time because I didn't know anything about –

*[0:12:00]*

See the Chitlin' Circuit was all I knew. When you talk about the Chitlin' Circuit,

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— to me people have to be careful of me talking about the Chitlin' Circuit 'cause that's all I knew. It's almost talking about my right arm. It belongs to me too. The left arm belongs to me to. So when you talk about either one of your arms, they belong to me.

When you talk about the Chitlin' Circuit, the Chitlin Circuit's all I knew. And I didn't know anything else. So the Chitlin' Circuit was my way of having fun. Later I found out the separation in the

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Chitlin' Circuit because a lot of times when we played as black entertainers for the Chitlin' Circuit, that's all we knew and that's the only place we had to play.

Then later on in life we got to the place where we could play for some of the white clubs and some of the white fans and artists would come and play for different places. They would invite me over there. It was the same thing to me because all I was doing was playing the Blue's. So I respect the Chitlin' Circuit –

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because that's all we knew. You've got to understand that every black man I know, especially my age back, really come from the Chitlin' Circuit. They've just upgraded. You've got the Chitlin' Circuit today, even in New York City, even the B.B. King Club. It's a form of the Chitlin' Circuit.

So if you look in it, you've got different people coming at different times. It's almost like toilets. Almost like – today you've got the fabulous toilet. When I came up as a child, we had outside toilets. And we didn't have inside toilets. Now you've got inside toilets. Now you've got the toilets fabulous and they've got all kind of good smelling things inside the toilet. But guess what? They haven't changed what you do in the toilet. That remains the same. That will never change.

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It's just the outer appearances change. So that's what happened with the Chitlin' Circuit. The Chitlin' Circuit just moved from one phase to the next. And that's all. We still have the Chitlin' Circuit. We still have the Chitlin' Circuit. We still have people who want to see us as Blue's players. You have some people who still don't see us as Blue's people, who disrespect us as Blue's singers. And ~~there are who~~ some people who respect the Blue's singer.

I guess the hardest part to me is I'm looking at some of the black entertainers now who don't want to be a part of Blue's singing, of Blue's singers. They don't want to do it because they've been told by someone inside of the promotion business that Blue's is something less than something else. And most of the time when you talk about Blue's singing being less than something else, it came from black people doing it. And what black people did was suffered less than what white people did.

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You follow what I'm saying? Because if I play the Blue's, it's less than what Elton John plays. ~~Y~~Do you follow what I'm saying now? So that's what happened. And it's not the entertainer themselves or the musician. Sometimes it's the people who write about it because if the writers write about what I do is the best thing in the world, people perceive ~~that~~ to be the best thing in the world to ~~do~~. I've seen it.

What the Sixty Minutes say about me, it means a lot to the public. If they say ~~BobbyRush~~Bobby Rush is the greatest thing that ever happened, then I'm the greatest thing that ever happened. If they say I'm not, the public perceives me to be not the greatest thing that ever happened.

LaKevia Perry: You've been talking about the Chitlin' Circuit a lot. Here in Memphis I know there was a club, Club Handy. Did you ever play in it?

~~BobbyRush~~Bobby Rush: No, but I know about it though. I used to play the Paradise. I knew about it. I knew about it. I came up in those areas where I knew about it.

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I just didn't play in that particular club. I played in some just as worth whatever you want to call it. But at the time, when I played them, it was a good thing to do. There wasn't ~~no~~anything wrong with it. See what I do, as an entertainer, I've got the ladies around me. I've got the band around me.

And some say sometimes kind of put the ladies down because they're up on the stage shakin' and what have you. But you've got to understand, we as black people, that's what we do. You can't keep me down because I play ball, I run, I jump. That's what we do. I'm a black man. That's what I do. I'm a black man who sings the Blue's. Now it was okay when I was doing it for myself and it's okay to display what I do because people accept me to play the Blue's.

They accept me more when white guys started playing the Blue's. They accepted more. You follow me?

~~Now all of that is good, but the part that bothered me—~~

Begin Segment 4: [0:16:56-17:00]

Now all of that is good, but the part that bothered me is about 25 or 30 years ago they invented a wah wah where the white guys could sound like the black guy who's playing the Blue's. Now you've got the black guy buying a wah wah trying to sound like a white guy who's trying to sound black. Do you follow me? Those are the things that disturbed me most.

And there's nothing wrong with that because if it weren't for the white guys who were singing the Blue's and the Blue's lovers and the fans and the Blue's society, I don't know what we would've done as Blue's men because the guys kept it alive. The white fans kept it alive, where the black fans didn't support it. Maybe because people who wrote about it wrote so dim about it, wrote so down about it that they didn't want to be part of something that was so down.

But it ain't so down because the Blue's is the root of all music. Blues and gospel ~~are is~~ the root of all music.

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Rock and roll came here because the Blue's had a baby, came Rock and roll.

LaKevia Perry: And what was the club that you said ~~that~~ you played here ~~in~~ Memphis?

~~BobbyRush~~Bobby Rush: Paradise.

LaKevia Perry: Paradise?

~~BobbyRush~~Bobby Rush: There was a club called Paradise. There was a guy ~~by the~~ named ~~of~~ Sunbeam Mitchell. I played many clubs, many holes in the wall, but this was one of the bigger clubs. Sunbeam was the Chitlin' Circuit but he was upper echelon ~~the~~ Chitlin' Circuit. So I remember I played for Chitlin' Circuit myself. B.B. King, ~~Albert~~ King, Big ~~A~~Ella. When I worked there the first time I worked for Sunbeam. I believe he hired me for \$300.00 or \$400.00 band and all.

And that night apparently the show didn't come off as well as he wanted it to come off. He paid the rest of the guys off I suppose.

And when he got to me he told me, "**BobbyRushBobby Rush**, I got \$300.00 here.

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You, Little Milton, and Ike Turner, ~~ya'ou~~ all can split it up and do whatever you want to do with it, because it ain't worth nothing to me. In fact, it weren't no impact to me." He said, "Whatever you want to do."

So I went on the stage and I played anyway. And I gained friends with him. About ten years later I got a hit record. *Chicken Heads* came out. It was a Number 1 record. I had the Number 1 record now in the country. I believe James ~~Ryan-Brown~~ had the Number 2 record. I had the Number 1 record. Bill Withers had the Number 3 record. So now I'm on top of the chart now. Now Sunbeam wants to come back to me and book me now.

This time I want \$1500.00. ~~\$1500.00 in those-them~~ days ~~\$1500.00~~ was a lot of money. So he came to Detroit, ~~s~~—See myself and Solomon Burke ~~wasere~~ playing Detroit. So I saw ~~thea~~ guy sitting out front. Solomon Burke told me, "Listen, there's a guy from Memphis that wants to see you." I said, "From Memphis? ~~He wants~~ want to see me?"

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Yeah, tell him to come on back to my dressing room."

He came back and introduced himself to me. This is Sunbeam who owned the Paradise, this guy that did not pay me. He said, "**BobbyRushBobby Rush** I want to apologize to you because I didn't pay you." And I get awful crazy." Now I've got something he wants. I've got a hit record. In my mind I'm thinking, "He don't love me. I've just got a hit record." He said, "How much do I owe you for that?" I said, "Well I'll tell you what you do. You owe me \$1500.00." He said, "I'm going to pay you. We've got a date."

I said, "I'll tell you what we'll do. I'll play the date for you. In fact, I'll-and-if-I've-gotta play three nights for you, ~~#H befor~~ \$2000.00." He said, "Three nights?" I said, "Yeah, give me three nights." I said, "But here's the click. You've got to pay me now." Now he should've known something was funny about that. I'm going to play three nights for him for \$2000.00, band and everything. He went for it. He paid me. And I got back home –

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and the next day he said, "~~BobbyRushBobby Rush~~, when are you going to send me the contract?"

I said, "What contract." He said, "You know, I gave you some money." I said, "You didn't give me any money." He said, "Were you in Detroit?" I said, "No I've never been to Detroit before." So now I've got him going. He said, "Well, ~~are~~-you ~~BobbyRushBobby Rush~~?" I said, "Yes, I'm ~~BobbyRushBobby Rush~~." He said, "Well I gave you some money." I said, "You didn't give me any money, nah." He said, "I'm Sunbeam." I said, "Well I know who you are but you didn't talk to me. You didn't give me any money."

So I kind of kid with him now. I said, "Sunbeam, thanks a lot," and hung up. Now he got the message. I played the role on him. So he called me back four or five times. "~~BobbyRushBobby Rush~~, you know what? You got me." He said, "But will you please play the date?" So we came to be good friends because now I had him. I've got his money. It took me a year now to do this now. I held his money. So finally I played a date and we got [\[inaudible\]](#) ~~one. \_\_\_\_\_ one.~~

Before he passed I played many dates for Sunbeam and many other people.

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That's just one of the guys [who](#) I kind of took advantage of because he owed me the money and I let it play like he didn't give it to me, you know.

**Begin Segment 5: [0:22:08:23]**

LaKevia Perry: So what is your favorite CD to [play](#)\_\_\_\_\_?

~~BobbyRushBobby Rush~~: Oh, my favorite CD is the one that sold the most honey. Well I think ~~the most~~ *Chicken Head* probably and *Making a Decision*. I write everything I do and I'm always trying to educate people about what I do and the reason why I'm doing and try to write a joke inside of the song, something to laugh about. But I try to have something that's true about life. This song I had, making a

decision, about a juvenile crying ~~is-It's~~ different when it's your own child crying.

Making a Decision is about an old woman crying is different than when it's your mama crying.

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~~Making a decision about a Mayor or-~~

~~[0:23:00]~~

~~Making a decision about a Mayor or~~ a President is two different things. And both of them ~~are-ajs~~ decision. Making a decision when you're hungry is different when you're belly's full. And those kind of things I like. Those are the kind of things I like. Of course now quite naturally, you go with the record that sells.

'Cause I had this big record-~~Suesue~~. "What's good for the goose is good for the gander." I had five gold records so quite naturally I'm in love with the gold record because that means I'm making money. I'm selling records. But even at that some of the records didn't sell as much. I'll be honest with you. I like some of those things that didn't even - Some people ain't even heard~~t~~ it but me. Some of the things, you know. So that's what I take on.

LaKevia Perry: ~~And~~, I read somewhere, ~~- a~~And I don't know if this is true or not so I'll get your comments on this. But I read somewhere that you produce, write your own music. You do everything for yourself basically. Is that true?

~~BobbyRush~~~~Bobby Rush:~~ ~~Yeah that's true. But I didn't do this-~~

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Bobby Rush: Yeah, that's true. But I didn't do this, I didn't write to be this artist-~~writer~~. What it started from, because I was gonna write until I found me a writer. I was going to produce my records until I found me a producer. I was going to book myself until I found an agent. I was going to manage myself until I found me a good manager. I'm going to do all these things just temporarily until I find me someone to do this for me.

And after 25 or 30 years ~~later~~, I'm still doing this for myself. So finally, I believe it was B.B. King ~~co~~ame to me one time down to

Charles Everett in Jackson, Mississippi. He said, "BobbyRushBobby Rush, why don't you write a song for me and produce it for me." "Me? The little guy?" You know. It's all of a sudden and now people are calling me asking me to produce and write for them. And this was – I was so flattered by that. I went to Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff –

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in 1979 I believe it was, 1975.

They respected what I did so we and enjoy what I have done and respected my head level as a writer. I went to them to try to write and get with them as writers to learn what they were doing as writers because I respect what they do so much. They respect what I do so much, when I walked in they said, "Well BobbyRushBobby Rush, here's the studio. Do what you want to do." To me, I couldn't learn from that because I'd come there to pick their heads you know?

And they pickin' ~~at~~ my head. So, I'm this guy to write all these things for myself, not knowing that I will do was going to be all this writing for myself and produce for myself. 'Cause I did give a few guys some credits for some things that they did with me because – James Bennett is one of them, but he really didn't produce it for me.

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He just executive produced because he spent some money on the tape in the studio. But I'm really producing my own self. And I've pretty much done this all the time. Even the one that I didn't get the credit for, I still produced it and wrote it too, you know?

*LaKevia Perry:* Do you think that was a good career choice in the end?

BobbyRushBobby Rush: I didn't hear the question.

*LaKevia Perry:* Do you think that that was a good career choice in the end?

BobbyRushBobby Rush: Yes, I think it was now because it taught me that I could do what I needed to do for myself. And it taught me to learn the business because when these guys walked out with me and said, "Listen, here's the studio. We trust you. You are a good writer. You can produce yourself. This is your studio." I swear I'm going

LaKevia Perry, Zach Harpole, **BobbyRushBobby Rush**

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~~to drownswim or drown.~~ So the guys turned me loose and when they walked out of the studio I said, "Oh my God, what a chance I have. These guys trust me and I've got to come up with this material." You know?

~~Thank God that I came up with the material—~~

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~~Thank God that I came up with the material~~ that they loved and it went over and came to be big records and you know so on and so on. It's history.

**Begin Segment 6:[0:27:13:01]**

LaKevia Perry: What do you think the future for Blue's music will be? How do you think that will -?

**BobbyRushBobby Rush:** I think that the future for Blue's is great. I think that what I'm doing is going to influence a lot of guys. I'm hoping. I'm hoping that I will influence someone because I'm hoping that I will open a door for some Blue's writer, some Blue's singers, some young guy to come in and say, "Listen, if **BobbyRushBobby Rush** can do it, so can I." I'm hoping that will happen because I'm hurt about – There's not enough guys in my position doing what I'm doing and seem to love what they're doing.

~~Because I'm looking at guys around—~~

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~~Because I'm looking at guys around -~~ I don't want to get into name calling – who don't want to be Blue's singers. I'm talking about black guys, don't want no part of the Blue's, don't want to be called Blue's singers. They thing Blue's is something less than something else.

That part hurts. So with that in mind, if a guy like me don't stand tall in what I'm doing and make people believe in what I do or what B.B. King does or what Bobby Bland does (guys in our age bracket). If someone ~~doesn't~~ come quickly and stand firm and let these people know this door that we have open here was an important door, I'm afraid the door ~~is~~ going to close up. Not just now, but forever. That bothers me.

*LaKevia Perry:* Is there anything that we haven't covered that you wanted to talk about?

~~*BobbyRushBobby Rush:* Well - There are so many good things—~~

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There are so many good things you can talk about but there are so many bad things you can talk about. But even as a Blue's singer, ~~if~~ what I've done – Out of all the things that went wrong, the things that went right overtakes the things that went wrong. It~~s~~ overshadowed the bad because you can always find negative things. You can always find things where you say to yourself, "What I should've or could've." Or, "What I would do if I had to do it over again."

But I think in my situation, I don't think I would do anything over different. I think I would probably learn more about what I was doing, publishing-wise, writing-wise, and promotion-wise. But I would do it the same way. I'd just learn more about it because I'm one of the few guys who have crossed over – and I'm a blessed man – with this white audience. ~~But yet I crossed over with the white audience.~~

[0:30:00]

But yet I crossed over with the white audience. but I never crossed out of this black audience.

And now, I hear guys talk about, "I'm going to record this because I think this is what white people like. I'm going to record this because I think this is what black people like." I'm a blessed man. I think every man should record what he feels and hope everybody likes it because to me it's not a black and white issue, it's about the music. And that's what I take on it.

And I would say to any young man, any young woman doing the Blue's or doing music. Whatever kind of music you're doing, look in the mirror, and face the fact with yourself. You either have it or you don't have it. I get so many guys send me records. So many guys are good. So many guys are bad. Some of them are terrible. Some of them are whatever. But I try to be kind to people who send me records –

[0:31:010]

that really don't have it. But then again, sometimes that can be hurtful too because you must tell the truth.

It's hard. It's hard to look at a man's face and say, "Hey you've got an ugly baby." That's hard. And that's what it's like sometimes when guys are so into their own records and their own direction. But I think if I had to do this all over again I would learn more about what I'm going, where I'm going, what I'm doing. I learned – I would probably learn more about the computer. I know the computer is the way ~~it's~~ going, but I know as a Biblical study, the computer also is a hinder. Because computers have you doing things that you need to do, but it also takes you away from the things that got you where you are.

See if I spend all of this time with a computer doing what I need to ~~do~~ for promotions, ~~then I neglect the things I'm doing~~—

[0:32:00]

~~then I neglect the things I'm doing~~ as a writer to get me where I am now. The reason I need a computer is because I've got records to sell and go on the computer with. If I didn't spend time doing this other thing to get here, I wouldn't need a computer. It's almost like a guy who cut a record. He goes and gets himself a manager.

There's nothing wrong with managing. There's nothing wrong with a manager, but what you need with a manager when you don't have anything to manage? Or ~~something~~ some more like going to the bank and you don't have no money. You've first got to get some money to take to the bank. You can't deposit air. You've got to have some money to deposit. So you've gotta have something to hold on to and to have to do this.

And there nothing wrong with any of that, but I think all the artists, any artist – if you need a manager you need a manager. But if you don't need a manager, you've gotta know when to fold it.

[0:33:020]

There's a time and place for everything.

Begin Segment 7: [0:33:05:06]

LaKevia Perry: ~~Those Well, that's are~~ all the questions I have. Zach do you have any more questions.

Zach Harpole: I don't think so. I think I'm good.

~~BobbyRush~~Bobby Rush: Well this is the first interview that I've done that I guess I talk a lot so you don't have to ask me too much. I kind of tell it all. That makes it real easy don't it? That makes it pretty easy. Let me say before we close this interview. Let me thank you for what you have done. Let me thank you for what you're doing and what you plan to do because what you ~~say~~ about me is what people perceive me to be.

So thank you for digging into something that may be good for someone else to listen to and learn from. ~~Hope and I say I'm hoping I said it's~~ something that you learn from. We're talking about the good side. ~~There are~~Because they're so many things that we can talk about that's not good. Sometimes it's good to know that everything ain't good.

[0:34:010]

But it's also good to know there's some good in some things.

There's some good in some things. Everything hadn't been bad with me. Everything hadn't been good but everything hadn't been bad. I'm hoping and praying that I leave this land by saying to you all my motto is: I want to do everything that I can while I can. I know there will come a time that I cannot do, that I won't regret what I did not do.

I'm a Blue's man. I love it. My ups and downs – I learned from it. As a Blue's singer I had three beers in my lifetime. I had a beer in 1957. I hadn't had one before or since.

[0:35:00]

I don't drink, smoke, get high, no form, or fashion. Never had. Not so good. I do a whole lot of things that I shouldn't do, but drinking, getting high, whatever ain't one of them. I'm independent.

It's been hard for me trying to be independent because there's ~~are~~ many artists that many managers of many people who probably would do me real good or put me ~~as~~ big as bubble gum. But then

again, would I be free? I'm sitting here telling you now, I'm a 78-year-old man, but I'm a free man. November 10th I'm 78, but I'm free. Don't nobody own me. I own myself. ~~I'm not as big as I'd like to be—~~

[0:35:586:00]

~~I'm not as big as I'd like to be,~~ but I'm free as I want to be.

Thank God for that. I have a jail ministry. I'm a Biblical study. What bothers me is what I know. But I'm smart enough to know I don't know anything. 'Cause if a man tells what he knows, he won't talk long because ~~a-~~man don't know nothing. I go to the jail ministry and I talk about mistakes. When a man or woman makes a mistake you can correct yourself, he or her. But when you make a mistake and don't know it, that's a problem.

Because the Bible teaches us a man can do wrong so long, he'll think he's right. You've even got people doing things against you, about you, and thinking they're right doing them. I'll never forget the September 11th, someone said, ~~that was~~ "was that right". ~~And I believe—~~

[0:37:020]

~~And I believe~~ someone thought they were right doing what they were doing. When you think you're right, and you're wrong, you're in trouble.

So I'm in trouble knowing what I know because what I know as a Biblical study, woe onto a man who knows better and don't do ~~it~~. He'll get whipped with ~~———~~ ~~[inaudible]~~ that's right. But He didn't say the man who did not know. But He said you'll perish from lack of knowledge. So thank God for all of you. You guys are great. And bless you in your career. You can take it places I could never take it. You're gonna take it places where people thought it wouldn't go. But you're there already. So thanks for listening to me and thank you for interviewing me.

That's just a little – *[snaps fingers]* about that much of my life. It's just about *[snaps fingers]* that much of it. The other things haven't been told.

[0:37:58]

~~BobbyRush~~Bobby Rush

LaKevia Perry, Zach Harpole, ~~BobbyRush~~Bobby Rush

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[End of Audio]