

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Joyce Hughes

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## 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>	Hughes, Joyce A., 1940-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Hughes,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 30, 2001
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2001
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:42:54).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Law professor Joyce Hughes (1940 - ) became a law professor at the University of Minnesota in 1971, making her the first African American female to be hired as a tenure track professor at any majority white institution. Hughes also taught on the faculty at the Northwestern University Law School and was the first woman and the first African American General Counsel of the Chicago Transit Authority. Hughes was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 30, 2001, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2001_027
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Northwestern University law professor Joyce Hughes' life has been a series of important "firsts." Hughes was born in Gadsden, Alabama, on February 7, 1940. Her parents, determined not to have their children limited by a segregated South, made the decision to move their family north to Minnesota.

After graduating from Carleton College magna cum laude, Hughes was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship where she spent a year at the University of Madrid in Spain. Upon returning to the United States, she attended the University of Minnesota Law School. When Hughes received her J.D. degree in 1965, she was the first African American female to do so.

Following law school, Hughes was awarded a clerkship with a federal district court judge in Minnesota. This was also a first. She practiced law with a small Minneapolis firm after her clerkship, and in 1971, joined the faculty of the University of Minnesota Law School. Hughes was the first woman and the first African American to teach there, as well as the first African American female to be hired as a tenure track professor at any majority white institution. During this time, she also served on the Board of Directors of the National Urban League.

In 1975, Hughes became a member of the Northwestern University Law School faculty and in 1979, she was first African American female tenured full professor in any department at Northwestern University. Hughes also became politically active, serving on the Chicago Board of Education, where she was influential in school desegregation policy; in the legal department of Continental Illinois National Bank; and as the first woman and the first African American General Counsel of the Chicago Transit Authority.

Hughes continues to teach at Northwestern University. Currently, she sits on the Board of Directors of Chicago's Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities and the Board of Visitors of Bennett College,

Greensboro, North Carolina.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Joyce Hughes was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on August 30, 2001, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 8 Betacame SP videocassettes. Law professor Joyce Hughes (1940 - ) became a law professor at the University of Minnesota in 1971, making her the first African American female to be hired as a tenure track professor at any majority white institution. Hughes also taught on the faculty at the Northwestern University Law School and was the first woman and the first African American General Counsel of the Chicago Transit Authority.

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## 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®.

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## 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.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

Hughes, Joyce A., 1940-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Hughes, Joyce A., 1940---Interviews

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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Northwestern University (Evanston, Ill.). School of Law.

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## Occupations:

Law Professor

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

LawMakers

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## 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 Joyce Hughes, August 30, 2001. 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).

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## 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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Hughes, Section A2001\_027\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:48 ?

Law professor Joyce Hughes discusses her family background, describing her father, mother, and siblings, and also recounts her family's move from Alabama to Minnesota. Hughes describes the racial demographics of Minnesota and explains why she enjoyed growing up there.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Hughes, Section A2001\_027\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:52 ?

Law professor Joyce Hughes continues to discuss her upbringing and then describes her education. Hughes explains her decision to attend Carleton College, discusses her experience there, and also talks about her time spent in Spain on a Fulbright scholarship. Hughes then talks about her decision to attend law school.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Hughes, Section A2001\_027\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:39 ?

Law professor Joyce Hughes describes her time as a law student at the University of Minnesota Law School, detailing the many obstacles she confronted while working her way on to the law review and graduating cum laude. Hughes also details her experiences as a summer associate at a prestigious New York law firm, and her two-year clerkship for a Minnesota federal district court judge. Hughes explains how these extracurricular opportunities helped to shape her view of the law and influence her career.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Hughes, Section A2001\_027\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:40 ?

Law professor Joyce Hughes continues to discuss her experience as a clerk for a federal judge in Minneapolis, explaining how she used that experience in her first work at a law firm. Hughes details her time as a practicing lawyer, talking about many cases and incidents in which she faced racism and sexism. Hughes then explains how she became a professor at the University of Minnesota Law School, where she faced a faculty and student body rife with racism and sexism as well.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Hughes, Section A2001\_027\_001\_005, TRT: 0:30:24 ?

Law professor Joyce Hughes discusses the historical impact of her becoming the first black woman hired as a tenure track law professor at a majority law school, the University of Minnesota Law School. Hughes describes the circumstances of her conflict with students and faculty over a grievance filed, an action that eventually led to her leaving the school to teach at Northwestern University School of Law. Hughes explains the different atmosphere she found at Northwestern and in Chicago. Hughes also begins to talk about her role at the first conference of the Helsinki Accord in 1977.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Hughes, Section A2001\_027\_001\_006, TRT: 0:29:20 ?

Law professor Joyce Hughes discusses her political work as a member of Harold Washington's lawyer's committee during his mayoral campaign. Hughes explains how her connection with Washington led her to being appointed as general counsel of the Chicago Transit Authority. Hughes details her role at the CTA, and tells of how the stress that came with that job may have led to her three strokes. Hughes then discusses the issue of race, skin color, and diversity, particularly in the realm of academic hiring and promotion practices.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Hughes, Section A2001\_027\_001\_007, TRT: 0:31:13 ?

Law professor Joyce Hughes reflects on her career and talks about how the increasing diversity in legal academia feels rewarding to her and is a part of her legacy. Hughes speaks of the importance of her family, considers her legacy, and debates whether she has any mentors or role models. Hughes also shares her opinions on famous 20th century legal cases, including 'Brown v. Board of Education', the O. J. Simpson trial, and 'Bush v. Gore'.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Hughes, Section A2001\_027\_001\_008, TRT: 0:10:58 ?

Joyce Hughes narrates her photographs.