



# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Hon. James Clayborne

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## Overview of the Collection

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| <b>Repository:</b>           | The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616<br>info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com   |
| <b>Creator:</b>              | Clayborne, James  |
| <b>Title:</b>                | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Hon. James Clayborne,  |
| <b>Dates:</b>                | August 30, 2000   |
| <b>Bulk Dates:</b>           | 2000  |
| <b>Physical Description:</b> | 3 Betacam SP videocassettes (1:15:18).  |
| <b>Abstract:</b>             | Lawyer and state senator Hon. James Clayborne (1963 - ) Hon. James Clayborne was appointed to complete Senator Kenneth Hall's unexpired term when he died in 1995. Clayborn was then elected in 1997 and sat on the Committees of Appropriations, Commerce & Industry, and Revenue, for which he is the Minority Spokesperson. Clayborne was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 30, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| <b>Identification:</b>       | A2000_046   |
| <b>Language:</b>             | The interview and records are in English.   |

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

James Franklin Clayborne, Jr., was born in St. Louis, Missouri on December 29, 1963, to James and Janet Clayborne. He attended Paul Lawrence Dunbar Elementary School, Lansdowne Junior High School and East St. Louis High School, where he played football. After graduation, Clayborne enrolled at Tennessee State University before attending the University of Miami Law School. While at the University of Miami, he served as a law clerk for the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida. There, he interned with Janet Reno, then Dade County States Attorney and future U.S. Attorney General. While residing in Florida, he met and married his wife, Staci.

Clayborne returned to Belleville, Illinois where he found employment in the States Attorney's Office. Two years later, he joined the law firm of Hinshaw and Culbertson. When Illinois Senator Kenneth Hall died in 1995, Clayborne was appointed to complete Hall's unexpired term. The following year, Clayborne was elected to the Illinois Senate where he currently serves. Clayborne sits on the Committees of Appropriations, Commerce & Industry and Revenue, for which he is the Minority Spokesperson. A finalist for U.S. District Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, Clayborne was one of fifty attorneys selected nationwide to participate in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Law Institute.

In 1997, Clayborne received the "Friend of Education" Award from the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools, for his "outstanding commitment to education." In addition, he spearheaded a resolution to name a state office building in East St. Louis after his predecessor in the Senate, Kenneth Hall. A member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and Wesley Bethel Methodist Church, Clayborne and his wife are the parents of four children.

## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Hon. James Clayborne was conducted by Adele Hodge on August 30, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 3 Betacam SP videocassettes. Lawyer and state senator Hon. James Clayborne (1963 - ) Hon. James Clayborne was appointed to complete Senator Kenneth Hall's unexpired term when he died in 1995. Clayborn was then elected in 1997 and sat on the Committees of Appropriations, Commerce & Industry, and Revenue, for which he is the Minority Spokesperson.

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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:

Clayborne, James

Hodge, Adele (Interviewer)

(Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Hon. James Clayborne--Interviews

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State governments--Officials and employees--Interviews

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African American lawyers--Interviews

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African American legislators--Illinois.

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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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Illinois

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

LawMakers

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PoliticalMakers

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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 Hon. James Clayborne, August 30, 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 7/16/2012 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, August 30, 2000

Video Oral History Interview with Hon. James Clayborne, Section A2000\_046\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:05 2000/08/30

Illinois State Senator James Clayborne describes growing up in an integrated neighborhood in St. Louis, Missouri, in a single-family household. Clayborne attended primary school with Project Follow Through and was encouraged by Ms. Beard, his first to third grade teacher. At Lansdowne Junior High School, his teacher Mr. Migarian exposed him to cultural activities such as the opera and museums. Clayborne was active in football and baseball at East St. Louis High School and decided to become a lawyer in his junior year. He attended Tennessee State University and the University of Miami School of Law, where he met Staci, a childhood friend, who became his wife. After law school, he interned at the States Attorney's Office in Florida and later worked for the Hinshaw & Culbertson law firm. In 1995, Senator Kenneth Hall died and Clayborne was sought out and appointed to his position on April 17, 1995.

State governments--Officials and employees--Interviews.

African American lawyers--Interviews.

African American legislators--Illinois--Interviews.

Head Start Program (U.S.)--Missouri--St. Louis--1960-1970.

Follow Through Program (U.S.)--Missouri--St. Louis--1960-1970.

Education, Primary--Missouri--St. Louis.

Illinois – Politics and government.

Video Oral History Interview with Hon. James Clayborne, Section A2000\_046\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:59 2000/08/30

Soon after James Clayborne was appointed Illinois State Senator on April 17, 1995, he persuaded Republicans not to abolish the East St. Louis Board of Election due to allegations of voter fraud. In 1996, he ran for office to continue as senator and was sworn in on January 1997. Clayborne discusses his role models such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Mayor Carl Officer. He described the process of getting a bill passed and emphasized the importance of students and educators being active in government. As a Senator, Clayborne supported the "Illinois FIRST" bill to build new schools and roads and secured funds to construct a facility for the Jackie Joyner Kersee Foundation Youth Center. Clayborne also discusses the importance of health care and the patients' rights bill [Medical Patient's Rights Act]. He initiated a bill that gives tax credits to developers for building affordable housing.

Elections--Illinois--East Saint Louis.

Elections--Corrupt Practices--Illinois.

Health care policy in the United States--Illinois.

Bills, Legislative--Illinois FIRST (program)

Voting--Illinois.

Video Oral History Interview with Hon. James Clayborne, Section A2000\_046\_001\_003, TRT: 0:16:14 2000/08/30

Illinois State Senator James Clayborne described how he kept a small community college open by securing funds to upgrade it and move it to the campus of Southern Illinois University (SIU). His mother had obtained an associate's degree through a community college and improved her life. He believes that hearing the stories of others can inspire people to accomplish their goals. As the democratic lead on the revenue committee, Clayborne emphasizes

the importance of African Americans heading major committees where they can make significant contributions. He believes it is important for African Americans to understand the meaning of being treated equally while still supporting black businesses.

African American legislators--Illinois.

African American business enterprises.

Community colleges--Illinois.

African American business enterprises.

Southern Illinois University (System).