

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. John Clark, Jr.

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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>	Clark, John F. J., 1922-2008
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. John Clark, Jr.,
<b>Dates:</b>	September 11, 2003
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2003
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:59:10).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Medical professor and obstetrician Dr. John Clark, Jr. (1922 - 2008 ) taught for fifty years at Howard University College of Medicine, which endowed the John F. J. Clark, M.D. Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology on his behalf in 1994. Clark held the distinction of training more qualified black physicians in obstetrics and gynecology than anyone in the world. Clark was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 11, 2003, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2003_240
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Dr. John F. J. Clark, Jr. was born in West Virginia on December 8, 1922. After attending Charleston public schools, he enrolled in West Virginia State College in 1939, but left for Ohio State University in 1941 and earned his A.B. degree in 1943. Clark then entered Howard University School of Medicine, earning his M.D. degree in 1946. He continued his training at Howard University Hospital as a resident in obstetrics and gynecology, finishing in 1951.

Upon the completion of his residency, Clark began working at Howard as a clinical assistant, and by 1955, he was an instructor in obstetrics and gynecology. A year later, he was named assistant professor, and in 1957, he began consulting at the District of Columbia Hospital, as well. That same year, he became chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, a position he retained until 1976. Clark was named a full professor in 1964, and continued consulting at area hospitals, including Norfolk Community and Sibley Memorial. In 1972, Clark wrote "The Weekly Health Column," which was distributed to thirty-five African American newspapers across the country on the health concerns of women and children. Clark worked at Howard University until 1996 as a professor, and remained there as a consultant until his death.

Active in a variety of other areas, both civic and professional, Clark served as a consultant to the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Defense and the Medical Society of the District of Columbia. He also headed up a March of Dimes campaign and was an activist in the integration of hospitals.

Clark held the distinction of training more qualified black physicians in obstetrics and gynecology than anyone in the world and was honored numerous times. In 1978, both the College of Medicine and the Hospital (Howard University) honored him with the Kaiser-Permanente Award for Excellence in Teaching, and the National Medical Association presented him with an award for being a Distinguished Physician, Teacher and Scholar. The Howard University College of Medicine endowed the John F.J. Clark, M.D. Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology on his behalf in 1994, and President Bill Clinton praised him for the work he did through the generations.

Clark passed away on September 8, 2008 at the age of 85.

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## **Scope and Content**

This life oral history interview with Dr. John Clark, Jr. was conducted by Larry Crowe on September 11, 2003, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Medical professor and obstetrician Dr. John Clark, Jr. (1922 - 2008 ) taught for fifty years at Howard University College of Medicine, which endowed the John F. J. Clark, M.D. Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology on his behalf in 1994. Clark held the distinction of training more qualified black physicians in obstetrics and gynecology than anyone in the world.

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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:

Clark, John F. J., 1922-2008

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Clark, John F. J., 1922-2008--Interviews

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Obstetricians--Interviews

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Howard University--Faculty--Interviews

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African American physicians--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews

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African American families--West Virginia

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Slavery--United States--History

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Freedmen--United States

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Ohio State University

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Howard University. School of Medicine

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Discrimination in medical care--United States

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Segregation--Washington (D.C.)

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African Americans--Hospital care

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Hospitals--Washington (D.C.)

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Discrimination in medical care--United States

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Discrimination in medical education--United States

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Crime and race--United States

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African American women--Health and hygiene

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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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Howard University. College of Medicine

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## **Occupations:**

Medical Professor

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Obstetrician

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

EducationMakers|MedicalMakers

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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 Dr. John Clark, Jr., September 11, 2003. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### **Processing Information**

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 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 Dr. John Clark, Jr., Section A2003\_240\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:40 2003/09/11

Noted physician and professor, Dr. John Clark details his parents backgrounds as the children of slaves, and talks about the lives of his grandparents, explaining how they made a living after being freed from slavery. Clark also discusses his childhood in West Virginia, describing his family life and his relationships with his siblings. Dr. Clark's stroke does affect his speech, making it a bit difficult to understand him at times.

Obstetricians--Interviews.

Howard University--Faculty--Interviews.

African American physicians--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

African American families--West Virginia.

Slavery--United States--History.

Freedmen--United States.

Ohio State University.

Howard University. School of Medicine.

Discrimination in medical care--United States.

Segregation--Washington (D.C.).

African Americans--Hospital care.

Hospitals--Washington (D.C.).

Discrimination in medical care--United States.

Discrimination in medical education--United States.

Crime and race--United States.

African American women--Health and hygiene.

Human experimentation in medicine--United States--  
History.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. John Clark, Jr., Section  
A2003\_240\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:45 2003/09/11

Pioneering physician Dr John Clark recalls his undergraduate years at Ohio State University, telling stories about his athletic participation and his academic success. He also discusses his parents college education at Oberlin, University of Chicago and Harvard University. Clark then details his training at Howard University Medical School, his residency at Freedman's Hospital, and his desire to become an OB/GYN physician.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. John Clark, Jr., Section  
A2003\_240\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:15 2003/09/11

Dr. John Clark details his life as the head of OB/GYN at Howard University Medical School, listing the changes he implemented to improve the department. He recalls the difficulties of securing enough black American residents for his program because of international medical graduates. Clark discusses various ways he advocated for his residency program at Howard. He describes his efforts during the Civil Rights Movement to integrate Washington, D.C. hospitals. Finally Clark shares his concerns for the black community, particularly those who are under-served by the healthcare industry.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. John Clark, Jr., Section  
A2003\_240\_001\_004, TRT: 0:28:30 2003/09/11

Dr. John Clark ruminates on the effect of the high rate of incarceration in the black community. He also discusses the high rate of hysterectomies in black women, and the practice of medical experimentation on poor blacks.