

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Em Claire Knowles

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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>	Knowles, Em Claire, 1952-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Em Claire Knowles,
<b>Dates:</b>	November 16, 2018
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2018
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:55:03).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Librarian Em Claire Knowles (1952- ) became the first African American assistant dean of student affairs at the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences in 1988. Knowles was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 16, 2018, in Boston, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2018_210
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Librarian Em Claire Knowles was born on June 6, 1952 in Sacramento, California to Sydney Stanley Knowles and Almeana Freddie Early Knowles. Knowles received her B.A. degree in international relations in 1973 from the University of California, Davis and her M.L.S. degree in 1975 from University of California, Berkeley. She later obtained her M.P.A. degree in public administration in 1986 from California State University, Sacramento, and her Ph.D. degree in library and information science in 1988 from Simmons College.

In 1975, Knowles joined the University of California, Davis as coordinator of bibliographic instruction, social sciences and humanities, and as a faculty member, teaching courses in library science until 1988. In 1988, Knowles became the first African American assistant dean of student affairs at the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences. In 2001, Knowles was appointed to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, as only the second African American to be appointed to the board; and, in 2006, Knowles became the first African American to serve as chair. In 2018, when Simmons College became a university, Knowles was promoted to assistant dean for academic support at Simmons University's College of Organizational, Computational and Information Sciences.

In 2016, Knowles was elected to the board of directors of Beta Phi Mu. She served as chair of the Awards and Scholarships committee and member of the Steering Committee of the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color in 2018. Knowles has served on numerous boards, including the boards of the Massachusetts Library Association, the New England Library Association, and the Design Team of the National Association of Black MBA Association. She is a lifetime member of the American Library Association (ALA), and an active member of its Black Caucus, where she served as executive board member and secretary. Knowles also served as board liaison to the Simmons Library and Information Science Alumni Association Board for over twenty years. Knowles was elected trustee of the Freedom to Read Foundation, and served as an active member the Massachusetts Black Librarians Network, Inc.

Knowles received the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA) Distinguished Service Award in 2011 and the BCALA Professional Development Award in 2013. She has also received the Sojourner Truth Award from the Boston & Vicinity Club in 2015, and the Beta Phi Mu Award in 2017.

Em Claire Knowles was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on November 16 and 24, 2018.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Em Claire Knowles was conducted by Harriette Cole on November 16, 2018, in Boston, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Librarian Em Claire Knowles (1952- ) became the first African American assistant dean of student affairs at the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences in 1988.

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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:

Knowles, Em Claire, 1952-

Cole, Harriette (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Knowles, Em Claire, 1952- --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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## Occupations:

Librarian

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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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 Em Claire Knowles, November 16, 2018. 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 Em Claire Knowles, Section A2018\_210\_001\_001, TRT: 1:29:05 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Em Claire Knowles, Section A2018\_210\_001\_002, TRT:  
2:29:09 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Em Claire Knowles, Section A2018\_210\_001\_003, TRT:  
3:30:55 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Em Claire Knowles, Section A2018\_210\_001\_004, TRT:  
4:29:17 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Em Claire Knowles, Section A2018\_210\_001\_005, TRT:  
5:28:55 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Em Claire Knowles, Section A2018\_210\_001\_006, TRT:  
6:27:42 ?