

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Fran Harth

PERSON

Harth, Frances, 1940-

**Alternative Names:** Fran Harth;

**Life Dates:** December 28, 1940-

**Place of Birth:** Demopolis, Alabama, USA

**Residence:** Chicago, IL

**Occupations:** Television Executive

## Biographical Note

Television executive Frances Harth graduated with her B.A. degree in English literature from DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois. While there, she studied for one semester at the University of Mexico in Mexico City. She earned her B.A. degree in radio and television journalism from Columbia College of Communications and completed graduate coursework at the State University of New York. In addition, Harth attended a certificate in executive management from the Wisconsin School of Business School at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Harth began her career as an editor for IBM in Endicott, New York. She also acted in a feature film and on stage with the Susquehanna Players. After moving to Chicago, Illinois, Harth was hired as a secondary English teacher for the Chicago Board of Education and worked as a freelance editor for the University of Chicago Press. Harth served as associate producer for the nationally syndicated "It's Academic" television quiz show produced by Channel 5 (NBC) in Chicago. When the series was picked up by Channel 2 (CBS), she continued with the series and also worked on various specials at WBBM Channel 2.

Harth went on to become vice president of program development and syndication for national productions at Window To The World Communications, Inc. (WTTW/Chicago). While there, she worked to develop programming for national public television and served as the executive producer of the show "David Broza at Masada;" the documentary series, "Retirement Revolution;" and the reality show "Retirement Revolution: The New Reality." Harth also created and served as the executive producer of two national PBS shows: "The Americas' Family Kitchen with Vertamae Grosvenor," and "MindBody Connection with Les Brown." She authored the book, *The Americas' Family Kitchen with Vertamae Grosvenor* (1996); wrote opinion

articles for ELANCYL magazine. In addition, Harth has been invited to lecture on topics including feminism and women's rights at the Colorado Black Women for Political Action, as well as other civic groups in Chicago.

Harth has served on the board of directors of the Midwest Women's Center (1984-1986) and the Newhouse Architectural Foundation. She has been involved with the Milan Committee of the Chicago International Sister Cities Committee and the Film Center Committee of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Harth's professional affiliations include the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, American Women in Radio and Television, and the National Association of Black Journalists.

Frances J. Harth was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on August 23, 2013.

## Related Entries

**University of Wisconsin-Madison** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Certificate**

**State University of New York at Binghamton** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Graduate Courses**

**Columbia College Chicago** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.A.**

**DePaul University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

**University of Mexico** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Semester Study**

**NBC** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1994 to ?]

**Executive Producer**

**CBS** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1991 to 1994]

**Associate Producer**

**Chicago Board of Education** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1967 to ?]

**Secondary English Teacher**

**Chicago University Press** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1986 to ?]

**Feelance Editor**

**International Business Machines (IBM)** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1984 to ?]

**Editor**

**Window to the World Communications, Inc.** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1973 to 1998]

**Vice President, Program Development and National Syndication**

**Midwest Women's Center** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member, Board of Directors**

**Newhouse Architectural Foundation** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member, Board of Directors**

**Chicago International Sister Cities Committee** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member, Milan Committee**

**National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**American Women in Radio and Television** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)** [MEMBEROf]  
[from 2000 to 2002]

**Member**

**Film Center Committee/SAIC** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]