

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Jessie Gladden

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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>	Gladden, Jessie, 1930-2016
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Gladden,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 25, 2004
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2004
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:50:18).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Social studies curriculum supervisor Jessie Gladden (1930 - 2016 ) has taught in Baltimore City Public Schools, taught for the show Newslab that aired on Maryland Public Television and is the former supervisor for Baltimore City Schools social studies curriculum. She later became a teacher supervisor at Johns Hopkins University until her retirement in 2001. Gladden was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 25, 2004, in Baltimore, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2004_146
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Jessie Benjamin Gladden was born on December 11, 1930 in New York City. Her mother was a domestic and later a business owner and her father was a laborer. During her adolescent years, Gladden's mother moved the family back to her native North Carolina where she operated a restaurant and a store. In 1948, Gladden earned her high school diploma from North Hampton County Training School in North Carolina. In 1953, she earned her bachelor's of science degree in

social science and English.

Gladden began her teaching career in 1956 at Charles Hamilton Houston elementary school in Baltimore, where she taught for the next five years. After taking time off to raise her family, Gladden returned to the classroom in 1969, teaching at Pimlico Middle School until 1971. From 1973 until 1974, Gladden traded in her chalk and eraser for a camera and studio audience when she taught for the show *Newslab* that aired on Maryland Public Television. In 1973, she earned her master's degree in American history from Morgan State University.

Gladden's master's thesis highlighted the medical accomplishments of Morgan State University medical scientist, Vivien Thomas. Thomas, with only a high school education, developed many surgical techniques and instruments used in treating and identifying diseases. Gladden's thesis was titled, *Vivien Thomas: Black Non-Doctor*. From 1977 until 1997, she worked as a supervisor for Baltimore City Schools social studies curriculum. She retired from the Baltimore City School system in 1992. The following year, she took a position as a teacher supervisor at Johns Hopkins University until her retirement in 2001.

Gladden was married to Elzee Gladden, a Baltimore City educator who served as principal of Baltimore's Dunbar High School and was the first person to receive a doctorate degree from Morgan State University.

Gladden passed away on August 18, 2016.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Jessie Gladden was conducted by Racine Tucker Hamilton on August 25, 2004, in Baltimore, Maryland, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Social studies curriculum supervisor Jessie Gladden (1930 - 2016 ) has taught in Baltimore City Public Schools, taught for the show *Newslab* that aired on Maryland Public Television and is the former supervisor for Baltimore City Schools social studies curriculum. She later became a teacher supervisor at Johns Hopkins University until her retirement in 2001.

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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:**

Gladden, Jessie, 1930-2016

Hamilton, Racine Tucker (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

Gladden, Jessie, 1930-2016--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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Baltimore City Public Schools

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## **Occupations:**

Social Studies Curriculum Supervisor

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

EducationMakers

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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 Jessie Gladden, August 25, 2004. 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 Jessie Gladden, Section  
A2004\_146\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:24 2004/08/25

Jessie Gladden was born on December 11, 1930 in New York City. Her mother, Louvalia Rawles, was from Jackson, North Carolina. Gladden's mother taught herself to read and write, moved to New York in the early 1930s and opened a restaurant. She saved enough money to move her family back to Jackson where she bought a farm and operated a grocery store. Gladden describes her maternal family history, which she is able to trace back to slavery due to her daughter's research for her M.A. thesis. One of her ancestors, Ned Rawls, was a member of the North Carolina General Assembly. Gladden's biological parents' separated when she was nine months old and she was raised by her stepfather. As a child, Gladden lived in an apartment building in Harlem, New York, where she attended P.S. 68 and aspired to be a teacher. Gladden's earliest childhood memories take place in Jackson, where she visited her maternal grandmother every summer. When Gladden was in sixth grade, her mother moved the family back to Jackson permanently.

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Gladden, Section  
A2004\_146\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:57 2004/08/25

Jessie Gladden attended Central Baptist Church and, occasionally, Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York, New York as a child. In junior high school, she moved to Jackson, North Carolina, where her mother owned a grocery store and was active in the NAACP. Gladden attended Ransome School where she had her first black teacher and enjoyed English, history and social sciences.

Gladden briefly moved back to New York during high school, but returned to Jackson after the ninth grade. She graduated from high school in 1948 and enrolled at North Carolina A&T as an education major. At A&T, she participated in a group which sought to form an alliance with students from the all-white women's college Guilford College. In 1956, Gladden moved to Baltimore, Maryland and taught at Charles Hamilton Houston Junior High School where she met her husband. After taking time off to raise her child, Gladden returned to teaching and was assigned to Pimlico Middle School, which had a majority white student population.

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Gladden, Section A2004\_146\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:13 2004/08/25

Jessie Gladden was hired as an on-air teacher for 'Newslab,' an educational program in Maryland, after she gave a creative response to an interview question. She worked there for one year. In 1972, she earned her M.A. degree in American history from Morgan State University. She wrote her thesis on Vivien Thomas, a black surgical technician who developed innovative procedures for treating blue baby syndrome. She encouraged Thomas to write a book about himself and was one of the few people to interview him on tape. She also attempted to film a television program about him, but he refused. After her thesis was finished, Johns Hopkins University requested a copy because it was awarding Thomas a horary doctorate. Gladden went on to work for the Baltimore City Public Schools as an administrator and became supervisor for the social studies curriculum around 1977. She retired in 1992. Gladden reflects upon educational trends in Maryland over the course of her career and remembers her husband, educator Elzee Gladden.

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Gladden, Section A2004\_146\_001\_004, TRT: 0:18:44 2004/08/25

Jessie Gladden's husband's fraternity established the Elzee Gladden Foundation Scholarship after his death, with the goal of providing support for middle-achieving students who planned to attend Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. At the time of the interview, Gladden hoped to establish school-church partnerships to

provide under-resourced students with community support. She reflects upon her gift for teaching and the ease with which she was able to work as an educator over the years. Gladden is proud of her children and remembers her marriage fondly. She offers advice on marriage and entering the world of education. Gladden describes her hopes and concerns for the African American community, reflects upon her legacy and describes how she would like to be remembered. She concludes by narrating her photographs.