

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Gregory Jenkins

---

## 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>	Jenkins, Gregory
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Gregory Jenkins,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 29, 2012
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2012
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 MOV HD video files (3:43:34).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Atmospheric scientist Gregory Jenkins (1963 - ) , a leader in the study of tropical weather systems and hurricanes, served as the director of Howard University's Atmospheric Science Program and a committee member of United States African Monsoon Multidisciplinary Analysis (AMMA). Jenkins was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 29, 2012, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2012_150
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

---

## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Atmospheric scientist Gregory S. Jenkins was born on May 13, 1963 in West Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. As a child, Jenkins was fascinated by the weather. He received his B.S. degree in physics from Lincoln University in Lincoln, Pennsylvania in 1987. Jenkins went on to earn his M.S. and his Ph.D. degrees in atmospheric science from the University of Michigan in 1989 and 1991, respectively. His doctoral thesis was entitled, "An Investigation of Archean Climate using the NCAR CCM."

In 1991, Jenkins began a postdoctoral fellowship at the National Center for Atmospheric Science (NCAR) in Boulder, Colorado. Two years later, he became a research associate at the Earth Systems Science Center at Pennsylvania State University. In 1996, Jenkins served for a semester as an assistant professor of physics at Howard University before joining Pennsylvania State University as an assistant professor in the Department of Meteorology. He was promoted to associate professor at Pennsylvania State University in 2003. In the same year, he received the J. William Fulbright Research Award to go to Senegal and worked at Cheikh Anta Diop University on climate change research. Jenkins returned to Howard University in 2004 as an associate professor and director of Howard University's Atmospheric Science Program. In 2006, he served as a United States African Monsoon Multidisciplinary Analysis (AMMA) committee member and downstream Special Observing Period 3 (SOP3) member. From 2007 to 2010, he held the position of Department of Physics and Astronomy chair. Jenkins' research focused on tropical storm systems, monsoons and hurricanes. He has travelled all over the world to conduct his research including Senegal, Cape Verde and Barbados. Jenkins has published over forty peer-reviewed publications and was an editor and contributor to the text "The Extreme Proterozoic: Geology, Geochemistry and Climate".

Jenkins has held memberships in the American Meteorological Society, National Society of Black Physicists, American Physical Society, the American Geophysical Union (AGU) and served as an associated editor for

AGU-Journal of Geophysical Research. He was the recipient of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Career Award and the National Technical Association (NTA) Technical Achiever of the Year Award. Jenkins lives in Washington, D.C.

Gregory S. Jenkins was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on June 29, 2012.

---

## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Gregory Jenkins was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 29, 2012, in Washington, D.C., and was recorded on 8 MOV HD video files. Atmospheric scientist Gregory Jenkins (1963 - ), a leader in the study of tropical weather systems and hurricanes, served as the director of Howard University's Atmospheric Science Program and a committee member of United States African Monsoon Multidisciplinary Analysis (AMMA).

---

## 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®.

---

## 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.

---

## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

Jenkins, Gregory S.

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Jenkins, Gregory S.--Interviews

---

## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

---

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

---

## HistoryMakers® Category:

ScienceMakers

---

## 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 Gregory Jenkins, June 29, 2012. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 7/18/2013 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

---

## 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.

---

## Detailed Description of the Collection

### **Series I: Original Interview Footage, June 29, 2012**

Video Oral History Interview with Gregory Jenkins, Section A2012\_150\_001\_001, TRT: 1:29:06  
2012/06/29

Gregory Jenkins talks about his family. His mother, Senia Boney, was born in December of 1923 in Rose Hill, North Carolina. She was raised on a farm and was educated through high school in North Carolina before migrating to

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in the 1940s. She worked as a welder before having children and becoming a domestic. Jenkins's father, Kirby Fable Jenkins, was born in July of 1924 in South Carolina. After serving in World War II, he settled in Philadelphia where he worked as a welder in the Philadelphia Navy Shipyard. Jenkins's parents met in Philadelphia sometime after World War II and married in 1946. Jenkins and his twin brother, born in 1963, are the youngest of his four other siblings.

African American families--Southern States.

Women welders--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.

Welders (Persons)--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.

World War, 1939-1945--Participation, African American.

Twin brothers.

Video Oral History Interview with Gregory Jenkins, Section A2012\_150\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:46  
2012/06/29

Gregory Jenkins grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His earliest childhood memory is of other kids taking his his bologna sandwich away from him when he was five years old. Jenkins also has fond memories of playing basketball, going to the museum, and listening to the music of Earth Wind & Fire, Michael Jackson, Chaka Khan, and The Isley Brothers. From an early age, Jenkins possessed an innate curiosity towards the natural world, and particularly weather. He attended St. Agatha Elementary School. While he credits the nuns for keeping him disciplined, he attributes his interest and aptitude in science and math purely to his natural inquisitiveness. Jenkins talks about his experience attending a Catholic elementary school and his relationship with religion.

Childhood and youth--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.

Bullying.

African Americans--Music.

Catholic schools--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia

Scientific ability in children.

Video Oral History Interview with Gregory Jenkins, Section A2012\_150\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:18  
2012/06/29

Gregory Jenkins lost both of his parents during his adolescence. His middle sister, Renee, then became a guiding figure for him and his family. He talks about coping with his mother's illness and his family struggles while growing up and going to school. Jenkins attended West Catholic High School for Boys in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Although he enjoyed math and science, his appreciation for English did not happen until later. Also, despite his intellectual capacity in math, Jenkins was forced to take low level math courses, which delayed his taking calculus and physics. Jenkins, however, continued to advocate for himself and continued to pursue his passion in science. After graduating from high school, Jenkins got a job feeding lab animals at Monell Chemical Senses.

Parents--Death--Family relationships.

Children of sick parents.

Mathematics--Study and teaching (Secondary)--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.

Laboratory animals--Handling.

Monell Chemical Senses Center.

Video Oral History Interview with Gregory Jenkins, Section A2012\_150\_001\_004, TRT: 4:29:05

2012/06/29

Gregory Jenkins graduated from West Catholic High School for Boys in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1981. He then enrolled at Drexel University, where his studies were concentrated in physics and atmospheric sciences. After struggling with his academics, the unsupportive academic environment at Drexel, and the demands on his personal life, Jenkins left Drexel in 1983 and took courses at Philadelphia Community College for a year. There, he took his first course in African American studies, which he considered to be an enlightening learning experience that helped him contextualize his earlier experiences and challenges. In 1985, Jenkins transferred to Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and found the academic environment to be better suited to his needs. After receiving his B.S. degree in Physics in 1987, Jenkins and his family moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he attended the University of Michigan. He talks about his experiences and his college mentors.

Drexel University.

College student orientation.

African American universities and colleges.

Lincoln University (Pa.).

Physics--Study and teaching (Higher).

Video Oral History Interview with Gregory Jenkins, Section A2012\_150\_001\_005, TRT: 5:28:36  
2012/06/29

Gregory Jenkins received his B.S. degree in physics from Lincoln University in 1987. He then went on to pursue his Ph.D. degree in atmospheric sciences from the University of Michigan. His dissertation research, guided by his advisor, Bill Kuhn and mentor, Warren Washington, was an exploration of the Archean climate. After receiving his Ph.D. degree in 1991, Jenkins served as a postdoctoral fellow at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in the Advanced Studies Program in Boulder, Colorado. There, his research progressed into investigating the climate of West Africa. In 1993, Jenkins returned to Pennsylvania where he was appointed as a research associate in Pennsylvania State University's Earth System Science Center. In 1996, he served as an assistant professor of physics at Howard University for a semester before returning to Pennsylvania State University as an assistant professor of meteorology.

Atmospheric physics.

Kuhn, W. R. (William R.), 1938-

Washington, Warren M.

National Center for Atmospheric Research (U.S.). Advanced Study Program.

Pennsylvania State University. Earth System Science Center.

Video Oral History Interview with Gregory Jenkins, Section A2012\_150\_001\_006, TRT: 6:29:47  
2012/06/29

Gregory Jenkins talks about his passion for his research on climate change in West Africa. In 2003, he received a J. William Fulbright Research Award and spent eight months in Senegal working on climate change research on the African Monsoon Multidisciplinary Analysis (AMMA) campaign at Cheikh Anta Diop University. In 2004, Jenkins returned to Howard University as an associate professor and director of the atmospheric science program. He was appointed as chair of the physics department in 2007. Jenkins describes how his passion for humanity has fueled his desire to work towards solutions to climate change and to understand Africa's role in weather events.

Climate change in Africa.

Fulbright scholarships.

Cheikh Anta Diop University. African Monsoon Multidisciplinary Analysis.

Howard University. Department of Physics.

Climate change solutions.

Video Oral History Interview with Gregory Jenkins, Section A2012\_150\_001\_007, TRT: 7:28:38  
2012/06/29

Gregory Jenkins' research has largely focused on environmental conditions in Africa and their effects on global climate change, as well as Africa's influence on weather events throughout the world. Jenkins has an unyielding passion for humanity and works persistently so that his science contributes to solutions that society desperately needs. He is also concerned with the disconnectedness amongst the scientific community and the lack of infrastructure and resources available for underprivileged, vulnerable communities. Jenkins talks about his students and how he includes them in his research and field study activities.

Africa--Environmental conditions.

Climate change.

Infrastructure--Developing countries.

Fieldwork (Educational method).

Video Oral History Interview with Gregory Jenkins, Section A2012\_150\_001\_008, TRT: 8:20:18  
2012/06/29

Gregory Jenkins shares his hopes and concerns for the African American community, as well as society as a whole, and discusses his hopes for developments in the area of climate change as well as climate change policy. Jenkins also talks about the importance of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), reflects upon his life and career, his family, and how he would like to be remembered.

Climate change--Political aspects.

African American universities and colleges--Alumni and alumnae.