

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

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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>	Smith, Jessie Carney, 1930-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith,
<b>Dates:</b>	April 22, 2014
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2014
<b>Physical Description:</b>	12 uncompressed MOV digital video files (5:43:19).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Librarian, author, and educator Jessie Carney Smith (1930 - ) is the dean of Fisk University's library and the William and Camille Cosby Professor in the Humanities. She has worked at Fisk University since 1965, and has published numerous research guides and reference books, including the award-winning Notable Black American Women. In addition, Smith was the first African American to earn a Ph.D. degree in library science from the University of Illinois. Smith was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 22, 2014, in Nashville, Tennessee. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2014_011
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Librarian, author and educator Jessie Carney Smith was born on September 24, 1930 in Greensboro, North Carolina to James Ampler and Vesona Bigelow Carney. Smith attended Mount Zion Elementary School and James B. Dudley High School in Greensboro. She graduated from North Carolina A&T State University with her B.S. degree in home economics in 1950. Smith pursued graduate studies at Cornell University and then received her M.A. degree in child development from Michigan State University in 1956, and her M.A.L.S. degree from the George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University in 1957.

In 1957, Smith was hired as an instructor and head library cataloger at Tennessee State University. In 1960, she enrolled in a Ph.D. program at the University of Illinois, and worked as a teaching assistant from 1961 to 1963. Smith then returned to Tennessee State University, where she was hired as an assistant professor and coordinator of library services. In 1964, she became the first African American to earn a Ph.D. degree in library science from the University of Illinois; and, in 1965, she was hired as a professor of library science and the university librarian of Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. She was named the William and Camille Cosby Professor in the Humanities at Fisk University in 1992, and appointed dean of the library in 2010. Smith has also lectured part-time at Alabama A&M University, the University of Tennessee and the George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University.

Smith served as consultant to the U.S. Office for Civil Rights, the U.S. Office of Education, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), and the American Library Association. She directed three institutional self-studies at Fisk University, resulting in the institution's reaffirmation of accreditation by SACS. In addition, Smith has directed multiple projects funded by

NEH and the Andrew Mellon Foundation, and served on several Fisk University campus committees.

Smith has published numerous research guides and reference books. In 1991, she released the award winning, *Notable Black American Women*, and went on to publish *Notable African American Men* in 1999. Her other books include *Black Heroes of the Twentieth Century*, *Freedom Facts and Firsts: 400 Years of the African American Civil Rights Experience*, and *Black Firsts: 4000 Groundbreaking and Pioneering Historical Events*, among others.

Smith received the Martin Luther King Black Authors Award in 1982 and the National Women's Book Association Award in 1992. She received the Candace Award for excellence in education, *Sage* magazine's Ann J. Cooper Award, and distinguished alumni awards from both the Peabody College of Vanderbilt University and the University of Illinois. She was named the Academic/Research Librarian of the Year from the Association of College and Research Libraries in 1985; and, in 1997, received the key to the city of Oak Ridge, Tennessee. In 2011, Smith was awarded the Global Heritage Award from the Global Education Center and the Outstanding Achievement in Higher Education Award from the Greater Nashville Alliance of Black School Educators.

Jessie Carney Smith was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on April 22, 2014.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Jessie Carney Smith was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 22, 2014, in Nashville, Tennessee, and was recorded on 12 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Librarian, author, and educator Jessie Carney Smith (1930 - ) is the dean of Fisk University's library and the William and Camille Cosby Professor in the Humanities. She has worked at Fisk University since 1965, and has published numerous research guides and reference books, including the award-winning *Notable Black American Women*. In addition, Smith was the first African American to earn a Ph.D. degree in library science from the University of Illinois.

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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:

Smith, Jessie Carney, 1930-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Smith, Jessie Carney, 1930---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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Author

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Educator

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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 Jessie Carney Smith, April 22, 2014. 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 Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_001, TRT: 1:28:26 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:43 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_003, TRT: 3:30:19 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_004, TRT: 4:28:15 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_005, TRT: 5:28:46 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_006, TRT: 6:28:14 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_007, TRT: 7:29:44 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_008, TRT: 8:30:06 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_009, TRT: 9:29:12 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_010, TRT: 10:28:27 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_011, TRT: 11:28:58 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Jessie Carney Smith, Section A2014\_011\_001\_012, TRT: 12:24:09 ?