

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Julia Harden

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Harden, Julia, 1909-2006
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Julia Harden,
Dates:	March 4, 2004
Bulk Dates:	2004
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:06:01).
Abstract:	University librarian Julia Harden (1909 - 2006) attended New York University from 1926 to 1930, and earned her M.S. degree in library sciences from Columbia University in New York. She was a former librarian at Howard University, and worked under university presidents Mordecai Johnson and James Nabrit. Harden was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 4, 2004, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2004_014
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Julia Woodhouse Harden was born on July 6, 1909 in Baltimore, Maryland. She was the only child of Mary Locks Woodhouse and John Wesley Woodhouse. She was raised on Pressman Street in Baltimore and attended elementary school at the Division Street School. Some of her classmates included former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, entertainer Cab Calloway and Ann Brown. She graduated from Douglas High School in Baltimore in 1925. After graduation, she attended The Ethical Cultural School, a private school in New York for one year. She was one of two African Americans at the school.

From 1926 to 1930, she attended New York University where she earned a B.A. degree. In 1931, Harden received her M.S. degree in library sciences from Columbia University in New York. Upon graduation from Columbia, she accepted a position as a librarian at Howard University in Washington, D.C. where she met her husband Dr. K. Albert Hardin. The couple was married in 1933, and had one child, a daughter, Katherine, five years later.

After her marriage, Harden resigned from her job at Howard University, but later returned to a similar position in 1940. While at Howard University, she worked under the leaderships of presidents Mordicai Johnson and James Nabrit. Her husband later went on to become the dean of Howard's Medical School.

Harden was a proud grandmother and great-grandmother. She resided in Washington, D.C. and was active in her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta and several other civic associations.

Harden passed away on February 11, 2006.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Julia Harden was conducted by Racine Tucker Hamilton on March 4, 2004, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. University librarian Julia Harden (1909 - 2006) attended New York University from 1926 to 1930, and earned her M.S. degree in library sciences from Columbia University in New York. She was a former librarian at Howard University, and worked under university presidents Mordecai Johnson and James Nabrit.

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:

Harden, Julia, 1909-2006

Hamilton, Racine Tucker (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Harden, Julia, 1909-2006--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Howard University

Occupations:

University Librarian

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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 Julia Harden, March 4, 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 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).

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

Video Oral History Interview with Julia Harden, Section A2004_014_001_001, TRT: 0:31:12 ?

Julia Woodhouse Harden was born on July 6, 1909 in Baltimore, Maryland. Harden's mother, Mary Locks Woodhouse, was born in Baltimore to a long-established family in the city. Her great-grandfather had been friends with Frederick Douglass. Harden's mother was a committeewoman and active in the local YWCA. Harden's father, John Wesley Woodhouse, was born in Sparks, Maryland where his father was an A.M.E. minister. He moved to Baltimore to attend high school, and became one of the first African American principals in

the city. Harden remembers visits from her mother's father, who lived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and recalls visiting a photographer's shop to get her picture taken when she was five years old. As a child, Harden was a member of the Girl Reserves of the YWCA and took dance lessons. She lived on Presstman Street in Baltimore across the street from an Episcopal church. On the weekends, the community often congregated to wash the neighborhood's white marble steps. Harden narrates her photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Julia Harden, Section A2004_014_001_002, TRT: 0:29:50 ?

Julia Harden was raised in the A.M.E. church and attended Division Street School in Baltimore, Maryland, where she was a classmate of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. She recalls that Marshall was a mischievous child but a genius debater. Harden was a quiet, obedient girl, but a mediocre student and resisted her father's efforts to persuade her to be a teacher. She attended Frederick Douglass High School in Baltimore where she made a few lifelong friends and her classmates included "Cab" Calloway and HistoryMaker Anne Brown. Harden watched Calloway and Brown perform at Douglass' annual spring festival. Harden's father believed that she needed more preparation before starting college, so she attended the Ethical Culture Fieldston School in New York City. At Fieldston, Harden was one of only two African American students, and had few friends. While taking a physical education class at Fieldston, Harden was barred from using the swimming pool at the Heckscher Foundation because of her race.

Video Oral History Interview with Julia Harden, Section A2004_014_001_003, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Julia Harden gained perspective on different people and different cultures at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School in New York, New York. She then earned her B.A. degree at New York University and her M.A. degree in library science at Columbia University in 1931. Harden went to Howard University in Washington, D.C. to work as a librarian. When she arrived at Howard, the Carnegie Library building was dilapidated and the students used the library primarily to socialize. Harden met her husband, Dr. K. Albert Harden, an instructor at the medical school, at Howard; and left her job to raise their daughter, Katharine. The Harden family lived in New York for a year while Dr. Harden worked with the Rockefeller Foundation. Harden describes her relationships with Dorothy Burnett Porter and John Maurice Thomas, two longstanding librarians at Howard. Harden returned to work at the Howard University library in the 1940s; she talks about the improvements to the staff and facilities at Howard's libraries during the 1940s.

Video Oral History Interview with Julia Harden, Section A2004_014_001_004, TRT: 0:31:12 ?

Julia Harden's daughter, Katherine Harden, graduated from Paul Laurence Dunbar High School in Washington, D.C. in 1955 and earned her B.A. degree from Elmira College in Elmira, New York. Harden watched the March on Washington on T.V., while her husband, K. Albert Harden, volunteered to provide medical services at the event. Harden heard Stokely Carmichael speak on the campus of Howard University and recalls the student protests that occurred there in 1968, when students barricaded buildings and demonstrated outside the administrators' homes. Harden compares the leadership styles of Mordecai Johnson and James Nabrit, Jr., two presidents she worked under at Howard. Since her retirement, she has traveled internationally including trips to New Delhi, India and South Korea. Harden describes her concerns for the African American community and how she would like to be remembered. She explains why she believes history is important and concludes by narrating her photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Julia Harden, Section A2004_014_001_005, TRT: 0:03:47 ?
Julia Harden narrates her photographs.