

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Clarence Page

PERSON

Page, Clarence, 1947-

**Alternative Names:** Clarence Page;

**Life Dates:** June 2, 1947-

**Place of Birth:** Dayton, Ohio, USA

**Residence:** Takoma Park, MD

**Work:** Washington, D.C.

**Occupations:** Newspaper Columnist

## Biographical Note

Pulitzer Prize-winning news columnist Clarence Page was born in Dayton, Ohio on June 2, 1947, to Clarence Hannibal Page, a factory worker, and Maggie Page, the owner of a catering service. During his senior year of high school, Page served as feature editor at the school's biweekly newspaper. In 1965, he won his first award from the Southeast Ohio High School Newspaper Association for the year's best feature article. It was at this point that Page, under the guidance of Mrs. Mary Kendall, his high school newspaper instructor, became very interested in journalism. He graduated from Middletown High School in 1965, and that summer, he earned his first pay as a journalist by selling freelance photos and stories to the Middletown Journal and Cincinnati Enquirer. In 1969, he received his B.S. degree in journalism from Ohio University, where he worked on the student newspaper while at college.

That same year, Page joined the Chicago Tribune as one of its few African American reporters. Six months later, he was drafted into the military, where he served in the press office at the 212th Artillery Group, Fort Lewis, Washington. In 1971, Page returned to the Chicago Tribune, where he covered a variety of topics, including police, religion, and neighborhood news, with freelance assignments as a rock music critic for the Tempo section at night. In 1976, he became a foreign correspondent in Africa, and in 1980, after eleven years at the Chicago Tribune, he joined WBBM-TV, a CBS-owned station, in August 1980, and while working there, was assigned the Harold Washington mayoral campaign. In 1984, Page returned to the Chicago Tribune as a columnist and a member of the editorial board. Three years later, his column became syndicated nationally, and in May 1987, he married Lisa Johnson. Their first and only son, Grady Jonathan, was born on June 3, 1989, and in 1991, they moved to

Washington, DC.

The recipient of honorary doctorates from Columbia College in Chicago, Chicago Theological Seminary, and Ohio University, Page is a regular contributor of essays to "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" and an occasional commentator on National Public Radio's "Weekend Edition Sunday." In 1972, he participated in a Chicago Tribune Task Force series on voter fraud that won him a Pulitzer Prize. Four years later, he won the Edward Scott Beck Award for overseas reporting on the changing politics of Southern Africa. An investigative series written by Page, "The Black Tax," was awarded the 1980 Illinois UPI award for Community Service. In 1989, Page's column won the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary, and in 1992, he was inducted into the Chicago Journalism Hall of Fame. In 1996, Page published his first book, *Showing My Color: Impolite Essays on Race and Identity*.

Clarence Page was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on June 28, 2010 and March 6, 2012.

## Related Entries

**Garfield Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**McKinley Junior High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Middletown High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

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

**Dayton Journal Herald** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Chicago Tribune** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1969 to 1987]

**Reporter**

**Chicago Tribune** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1976 to 1976]

**Foreign Correspondent**

**Chicago Tribune** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1987 to ?]

**Columnist**

