

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Norma Adams-Wade

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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>	Adams-Wade, Norma, 1944-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Norma Adams-Wade,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 14, 2017 and March 6, 2014
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2014 and 2017
<b>Physical Description:</b>	9 uncompressed MOV digital video files (4:00:30).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Journalist Norma Adams-Wade (1944 - ) was the first African American full-time general reporter for The Dallas Morning News. She was a founding member of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), as well as the founding director of NABJ's Region VII. Adams-Wade was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 14, 2017 and March 6, 2014, in Dallas, Texas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2014_083
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Journalist Norma Adams-Wade was born in Dallas, Texas to Frank and Nettie Adams. She attended public schools and graduated from Lincoln High School in South Dallas, Texas. Adams-Wade went on to graduate from the University of Texas at Austin in 1966 with her B.S. degree in journalism. She also pursued graduate studies at Amber University in Garland, Texas and completed the Institute for Journalism Education's summer editor training program at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

In 1966, Adams-Wade was hired by Collins Radio Company as a copyeditor for technical equipment manuals in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Apollo Space Program. From 1968 to 1972, she worked for Bloom Advertising Agency as an advertising copywriter and production assistant. From 1972 until 1974, she served as a reporter and editor's assistant at *The Dallas Post Tribune*. Then, in 1974, Adams-Wade was hired as the first African American full-time general reporter for *The Dallas Morning News*, where she has served as a senior staff writer and columnist. As a senior staff writer, she covered general assignments, federal courts, consumer affairs, ethnic affairs, and neighborhood news. Adams-Wade created *The Dallas Morning News*' Black History Month series in 1985, and, in 1988, helped launch *The News*' Metro South Bureau. She retired from her position in 2002, but has continued to work as a contract columnist.

Adams-Wade was a founding member of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) in 1975. She was also the founding director of NABJ's Region VII, a founding coordinator of Blacks in Mass Media of Dallas and Fort Worth, and served as scholarship chair for the Dallas-Fort Worth Association of Black Communicators. Adams-Wade is a lifelong member of Mt. Horeb Missionary Baptist Church in South Dallas, where she has served as a chair soloist, Sunday School and Baptist Training Union pianist, Junior Church director, and member of the church Scholarship Committee. She also founded the church's Save the Children family organization that offers parent training seminars.

Adams-Wade's many awards and honors include the Dallas-Fort Worth Association of Black Communicators' Lifetime Achievement Award, the Bronze Heritage Award for preservation of African American history, Girls Inc. of Metropolitan Dallas' "She Knows Where She's Going" Award, the NAACP Dallas Chapter's Juanita Craft Award, the Dallas Urban League's Legacy Award, *The Dallas Morning News* Joe Dealey Publisher's Award, the Southeast Dallas Business and Professional Women's Club's "Dreammaker" Award, the Top Ladies of Distinction's Humanitarian Award, the St. Phillip's School and Community Center's Destiny Award, and the Maurine F. Bailey Cultural Foundation's first outstanding community service award.

Adams-Wade lives in Dallas, Texas.

Norma Adams-Wade was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 6, 2014 and March 14, 2017.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Norma Adams-Wade was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 14, 2017 and March 6, 2014, in Dallas, Texas, and was recorded on 9 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Journalist Norma Adams-Wade (1944 - ) was the first African American full-time general reporter for The Dallas Morning News. She was a founding member of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), as well as the founding director of NABJ's Region VII.

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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:

Adams-Wade, Norma, 1944-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

## Subjects:

Adams-Wade, Norma, 1944---Interviews  
African Americans--Interviews

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African American television journalists--Texas--Dallas--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:

Journalist

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakers

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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 Norma Adams-Wade, March 14, 2017 and March 6, 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 Norma Adams-Wade, Section A2014\_083\_001\_001, TRT: 1:28:55 ?

Norma Adams-Wade talks about her mother's family background. Her maternal grandfather, Sim Ivory, was a sharecropper and her maternal grandmother, Lucy Miller Ivory, was a housekeeper. Adams-Wade's mother, Nettie Ivory Adams, was born September 1921 in Naples, Texas. The Ivory family moved to Dallas, Texas in the mid 1930s. Nettie Adams graduated from Lincoln High School in Dallas in 1939. She met Adams-Wade's father, Frank McLeod Adams, in high school. Norma Adams-Wade was born in Dallas circa 1944. She talks about her mother's upbringing in rural East Texas, and about the traditions and pastimes of her mother's family including canning. She discusses the history and significance of Juneteenth and large Juneteenth celebrations that took place in Mexia, Texas until the 1980s. Adams-Wade also talks about the history and genealogy of blacks in Dallas, Texas.

African American families--Manners and customs.

Rural-urban migration--United States.

Holidays.

Genealogy.

Video Oral History Interview with Norma Adams-Wade, Section A2014\_083\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:38 ?

Norma Adams-Wade talks about her family background. Her father, Frank McLeod Adams, was born in Fort Worth, Texas in 1921, and was raised by his aunt in Dallas, Texas. He was drafted into the United States Army during World War II and served on the Pacific front. Frank Adams married Nettie Ivory in the early 1940s, prior to serving in the Army. Upon returning to Dallas after the war, Frank Adams attended Willey College Extension. He was hired by the United States Postal Service in the early 1950s, where he worked for thirty-three years. Nettie Ivory Adams attended beauty school and worked as a "shampoo girl" in a white beauty salon in North Dallas during Adams-Wade's childhood. The Adams family lived with Adams-Wade's maternal grandparents, Sim and Lucy Ivory, until 1957. Adams-Wade talks about her father's opportunity to play baseball in the Negro League, her parents' personalities and features, and her sister, Doris Adams Serrell. Adams-Wade concludes the tape by describing her earliest childhood memory.

African American fathers--Texas.

United States--Armed Forces--African Americans.

Wiley College (Marshall, Tex.).

African American grandparents--Texas.

United States Postal Service--Texas.

African American mothers--Education--Beauty schools.

Negro leagues.

Childhood and youth--Texas--Dallas.

Video Oral History Interview with Norma Adams-Wade, Section A2014\_083\_001\_003, TRT: 3:28:10 ?

Norma Adams-Wade and her family moved from her maternal grandparents' home into a single-family home in Dallas, Texas in 1957. Adams-Wade attended H.S. Thompson Elementary School and Lincoln High School in Dallas, where she graduated in 1962. Adams-Wade describes the sights, smells, and sounds of her childhood, and talks about the central role of Mt. Horeb Baptist Church in her community. Adams-Wade also talks about those who influenced her to become a reporter, like her elementary school librarian and Julia Scott Reed, a reporter with the Black Press. Reed spoke at Adams-Wade's high school in the early 1960s, and later became an inspiration and professional mentor to her.

Childhood and youth--Texas--Dallas.

African American churches--Texas--Dallas.

African Americans--Mentoring.

National Newspaper Publishers Association (U.S.).

Video Oral History Interview with Norma Adams-Wade, Section A2014\_083\_001\_004, TRT: 4:28:35 ?

Norma Adams-Wade graduated with honors from Lincoln High School in Dallas, Texas in 1962. She enrolled at the University of Texas at Austin and lived on campus in a voluntarily integrated housing cooperative, and graduated in 1966. Adams-Wade reflects upon the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and talks about race relations in Dallas, the Dallas black press, and the arrest of civil rights leader Ernest McMillan. She briefly discusses her impressions of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963. She also speaks at length about her experiences at the University of Texas, race relations at the university, and attending a performance by contralto Marian Anderson.

University of Texas at Austin.

King, Martin Luther Jr., 1929-1968--Assassination.

Race relations--Texas--Dallas.

Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963--Assassination.

Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962.

Anderson, Marian, 1897-1993.

Video Oral History Interview with Norma Adams-Wade, Section A2014\_083\_001\_005, TRT: 5:29:22 ?

Norma Adams-Wade graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 1966, after which she returned to Dallas, Texas. She married Henry Adolphus Wade on April 6, 1968. She worked as a copy editor for the Collins Radio Company from 1966 to 1968, and then as a production assistant and copywriter at the Bloom Advertising Agency until 1972. Adams-Wade served as a reporter and editor's assistant at the 'The Dallas Post Tribune,' a black newspaper, from 1972 to 1974. In 1974, Adams-Wade was hired as a reporter at 'The Dallas Morning News.' She talks about influential professors and memorable courses at the University of Texas, the Charles Whitman shooting in 1966, and having President Lyndon Johnson speak at her graduation ceremony. Adams-Wade discusses interning at the 'The Dallas Post Tribune,' her duties at each job, and her personal philosophy as a reporter. Adams-Wade also describes the news story which garnered the attention of the editor at 'The Dallas Morning News' and led to a full time job.

Collins Radio Company.

African American press--Texas--Dallas.

University of Texas at Austin.

Dallas morning news.

Whitman, Charles Joseph, 1941-1966.

Johnson, Lyndon B. (Lyndon Baines), 1908-1973.

Career development.

Video Oral History Interview with Norma Adams-Wade, Section A2014\_083\_002\_006, TRT: 6:34:18 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Norma Adams-Wade, Section A2014\_083\_002\_007, TRT: 7:21:11 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Norma Adams-Wade, Section A2014\_083\_002\_008, TRT: 8:29:57 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Norma Adams-Wade, Section A2014\_083\_002\_009, TRT: 9:11:24 ?