**BHM 2024 Theme: Arts & Entertainment (A&E)**

**Gloria Reuben: Canadian-American actress, producer, singer and committed social activist**

**Gloria Elizabeth Reuben** (born:June 9, 1964) is a Canadian-American actress, producer, and singer. She is well-known for her role as [Jeanie Boulet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeanie_Boulet) on the [medical drama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medical_drama) [*ER*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ER_%28TV_series%29) (1995–1999, 2008), for which she was twice nominated for an [Emmy Award](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emmy_Award), and for portraying [Elizabeth Keckley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Keckley) in the 2012 [Steven Spielberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Spielberg)–directed film [*Lincoln*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lincoln_%28film%29).

**Early life**

Gloria Reuben was born in [Toronto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toronto), Ontario, to Pearl Avis (Mills), a [classical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_music) singer, and Cyril George Reuben, an engineer. Her parents are both [Jamaican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jamaican_Canadian)-born. Her father was mostly [Jewish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish) (with [Ashkenazi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashkenazi) and [Sephardi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sephardi%22%20%5Co%20%22Sephardi) roots), though he also had some African ancestry; her mother is of mostly African descent.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-pbs1-1)[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-4) Her father died when she was young.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-5)[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-Chatelaine-6)[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-interview-7)[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-8) Reuben was the subject of a segment of [Henry Louis Gates Jr.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Louis_Gates_Jr.)'s television genealogy series [*Finding Your Roots*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finding_Your_Roots).

Reuben grew up one of six children.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-:0-9) Her older half-brother, [Denis Simpson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denis_Simpson), was an actor and children's television host and died in 2010.[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-Chatelaine-6) Her younger brother David died in 1988.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-10) Reuben details her relationship and experience with the deaths of her brothers in her 2019 memoir *My Brothers' Keeper.*[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-:1-11)

Reuben began learning [piano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piano) as a child and later studied music technique and theory, [ballet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ballet) and [jazz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jazz) at [the Royal Conservatory of Music](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Royal_Conservatory_of_Music).[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-interview-7)

## Career

### Screen acting

Reuben began her career as an actress after having a few jobs as a model and in television advertisements.

Reuben came to prominence on the American television series [*ER*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ER_%28TV_series%29) as [Jeanie Boulet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeanie_Boulet), an HIV-positive [physician assistant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physician_assistant) on the hospital's staff. She was a guest star throughout the first season and was promoted to full-time cast member at the beginning of the second. She continued that role until early in the sixth season. In 2008, Reuben returned to *ER* for one episode during its 14th season. She has stated that this role led to her HIV/AIDS activism.[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-12) In 1996, she was chosen by [*People*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People_%28magazine%29)*magazine* as one of the 50 Most Beautiful People in the World.[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben#cite_note-13)

Reuben again held a major role in a television series when she starred as FBI agent Brooke Haslett in [*1-800-Missing*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missing_%28Canadian_TV_series%29) (2003–2004). She later starred as Rosalind Whitman in the [TNT](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turner_Network_Television) series [*Raising the Bar*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raising_the_Bar_%282008_TV_series%29). **(read more):**

[**https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria\_Reuben**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Reuben)