

A Guide to Integration: The African American Experience in Harrisonburg, Virginia Oral Histories SdArch 0015

Integration: The African American experience in Harrisonburg, Virginia oral histories

1997



Title Statement

A Guide to Integration: The African American Experience in Harrisonburg, Virginia Oral Histories SdArch 0015

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Publication Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SdArch 0015

Unit ID

/repositories/4/resources/603

Unit Date

1997

Language

English

Abstract

Integration: the African American Experience in Harrisonburg, Virginia, Oral Histories, 1997, is comprised of audio recordings, transcripts and a background paper associated with interviews conducted with Harrisonburg residents Elon Rhodes and Barbara Blakey, regarding their experiences living in Virginia from the 1920s-1990s.

Extent

0.25 cubic feet 3 folders, 3 audiocassettes, 2 cds

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Access to oral histories is governed by agreements with the narrators. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection. Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the James Madison University Special Collections Library to use this collection.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have been transferred to the James Madison University Special Collections Library. For more information, contact the Special Collections Library Reference Desk (library-special@jmu.edu).

Acquisition Information

Donated by Todd Fisher on April 29, 1997.

Processing Information

Audiocassettes were transferred to MAMA-R 700MB gold cd-r using Tascam cc-222 mkII; 270mb in 2006.

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], Integration: the African American Experience in Harrisonburg, Virginia, Oral Histories, 1997, SdArch 0015, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Bio/Historical Note

Todd Fisher, an undergraduate student at James Madison University, conducted this interview as part of the coursework for Anthropology 284, in the Fall of 1991.

Scope and Content

Integration: the African American Experience in Harrisonburg, Virginia, Oral Histories, 1997, is comprised of audio recordings, transcripts and a background paper associated with interviews conducted with Harrisonburg residents, Elon Rhodes and Barbara Blakey, regarding their experiences living in Virginia from the 1920s-1990s.

Keywords

United States -- Race relations -- 20th century
Harrisonburg (Va.) -- Race relations
Rockingham County (Va.) -- Race relations -- 20th century
Voting -- Virginia -- Rockingham County
Segregation in education -- United States
African Americans -- Education -- Southern States
African Americans -- Civil rights -- History
Race discrimination -- United States -- History
Social justice
Social justice -- Virginia -- Harrisonburg
Social change
Racism -- Political aspects -- United States
Segregation in education -- Virginia -- History

School integration -- Law and legislation
Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)
School integration
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

Arrangement

Items are arranged in no particular order.

Description of Subordinate Components

Background Paper

Unit ID 15-1

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/18546

Unit Date January 30, 1997

Mixed Materials [1000898333] 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Scope and Contents

This monograph provides a short history of Afro-American segregation and desegregation issues from a national and state (Virginia) perspective, beginning with the Reconstruction period following the Civil War. Mentions various issues on a national level: social, political, economic, and educational perspectives, with a review of various individuals and organizations supporting equality issues and black rights: W.E.B. Dubois and the NAACP; Thurgood Marshall; Dr. Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Reviews the concept of sit-ins as a form of protest; differing white responses, including the Ku Klux Klan. Reviews the same issues from the state level, with an emphasis on Virginia's resistive response: pro-segregationist views of Armistead L. Boothe, the Byrd Organization, and the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties versus viewpoints of organizations led by church ministers, college professors and social workers. Also included is information on voter rights and demographic issues. The background paper ends with a brief review of local (Rockingham County and Harrisonburg, Va.) responses to integration efforts, and speculates on reasons why they were mostly favorable.

Elon Rhodes interviewed by Todd Fisher

Unit ID 15-2

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/18547

Unit Date March 18, 1997

Mixed Materials SA0015-SET-001 (network storage)

Creator Rhodes, Elon W. (Elon Walter), 1922-2006

Access Restrictions

Audio and transcript are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Copyright interests have been transferred to Carrier Library.

Scope and Contents

Records Mr. Rhodes' recollections of growing up in Harrisonburg, Va. during the segregation and integration era following World War I (from 1920's) to the present. Talks about local changes over the years in educational, vocational/job, economic, cultural, recreational, and social opportunities for blacks. In particular, comments on relations between whites and blacks prior to, during and following the Civil Rights movement and school integration era. Talks about changes over the years in trade versus professional opportunities, closed job markets, and GI training to open his barbershop business; also integrated sports opportunities and neighborhoods. Talks about his 25 years of public service as the first black city official; campaigning, etc. (six years on School Board, two as Chair; sixteen years on the City Council, membership on the City annexation committee). Comments on state-wide organizations and individuals created to impede black advancement (Byrd Organization, J. Lindsay Almond) and his own relations with whites, based on business, public and social friendships and contacts. In general, shares his opinions of and philosophy about race relations within the Harrisonburg, Va. community over the years. Recorded at the home of Mr. Elon Rhodes, Harrisonburg, Va. on March 18, 1997.

Transcript**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/18548**Unit Date** March 18, 1997**Mixed Materials [1000898333]** 1 (box)**Container** 2 (folder)**Barbara Blakey interviewed by Todd Fisher****Unit ID** 15-3**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/18552**Unit Date** April 2, 1997**Mixed Materials** SA0015-SET-001 (network storage)**Creator** Blakey, Barbara Williams, 1934-2020**Access Restrictions**

Audio and transcript are open for research.

Use Restrictions

Copyright interests have been transferred to Carrier Library.

Scope and Contents

Records Mrs. Blakey's recollections of growing up and working in Virginia during the segregation and integration era following World War II. In particular, talks about the influence of her parents; college education; teaching career (1955-1996); family; and community life in Harrisonburg, Va. Mentions her experiences as a business teacher, first at the all black elementary-high school, Lucy Simms High School, and then at Harrisonburg High School as the first black teacher following integration. Compares and contrasts curricula and other opportunities at the two schools; the Brown vs Education decision and resulting impact on school integration. Mentions local changes over the years especially in the areas of educational, vocational/job, economic, cultural, recreational, and social opportunities for blacks. Talks about her family and sons, the importance of education; travel to other countries; and church membership. Comments on state-wide organizations and individuals created to impede black advancement (Byrd Organization, J. Lindsay Almond) and her own relations with whites, based on social friendships and contacts. In general, shares her opinions of and philosophy about race relations within the Harrisonburg, Va. community over the years. Recorded at the home of Mrs. Barbara Blakey, Harrisonburg, Va. on April 2, 1997.

Transcript**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/18553**Unit Date** April 2, 1997**Mixed Materials [1000898333]** 1 (box)**Container** 3 (folder)