

Mason, Vivian Carter

Vivian Carter Mason Interviews

1978

Title Statement

Mason, Vivian Carter A Guide to the Vivian Carter Mason Interviews MG 53

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Publication Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

MG 53

Unit ID

/repositories/5/resources/239

Unit Date

1978

Unit Date

Date acquired: 07/19/1982

Language

English

Abstract

Founding member of the Women's Council for Interracial Cooperation and an active participant in the Civil Rights movement. Contains transcripts and audiotapes of an interview that documents her life and the Civil Rights movement in Norfolk.

Creator

Mason, Vivian Carter (1900-1982)

Extent

0.20 Linear Feet

Extent

One Hollinger document case boxes

Repository

ODU Community Collections

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open to researchers without restrictions.

Conditions Governing Use

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Source of Acquisition

Mrs. H. M. Silverman

Method of Acquisition

Gift. Accession #A82-12

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Box [insert number], Folder [insert number and title], Vivian Carter Mason Interviews, Special Collections and University Archives, Old Dominion University Libraries.

Biographical or Historical Information

Vivian Carter Mason was born February 10, 1900. Her father was a Methodist minister and her mother a music teacher. She grew up in a mostly white neighborhood in Auburn, New York, where she experienced discrimination first hand. She was also greatly affected by the stories her father told of her grandmother's life as a slave. Carter Mason credits her parents with encouraging her and her siblings to work hard in school and insisting that they go on to college. She succeeded in school and graduated from the University of Chicago in 1925. After college she was a social worker in New York where she worked her way up to the position of Director of Social Services from 1940-1942. After being injured in a train wreck in 1942 she went to Norfolk, her husband's home town, to recuperate. During this time she began thinking about ways to reconcile the differences between the races. She began by calling women that she knew or were recommended to her, both black and white, who were concerned about racial injustice. These concerned women formed the Women's Council on Interracial Cooperation in 1945. This was the first group in the area to hold integrated public meetings. Mason served as the Council's first president from 1945-47. Mason was involved in many other civil rights organizations. In 1953 she was elected the third president of the National Council of Negro Women. During her tenure as president she helped the organization devise strategies to work toward implementation of the Brown vs. Board of Education supreme court decision. In Norfolk, when schools were closed during the massive resistance she helped educate the "Norfolk 17" by administering the school opened for them in the First Baptist Church. She became the first black woman to serve on the Norfolk city school board in 1971. She served on the school board until 1978 when she resigned to start the Urban League of Hampton Roads. Vivian Carter Mason died on May 10, 1982 in Norfolk. She is survived by her son William T. Mason, an attorney in Norfolk.

Note written by Special Collections Staff

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of cassette tapes and transcripts of four interviews with Vivian Carter Mason, one of the founders of the Women's Council for Interracial Cooperation. Each interview was conducted by Zelda Silverman, and were recorded between March and October of 1978. The interviews primarily cover the early 1900s to the 1950s, and largely concern Carter Mason's family history and civil rights issues.

The March 24, 1978 interview tape was damaged. Although it was restored, some of it is still inaudible. Topics covered in this interview include: Carter Mason's experiences trying to find employment, her home town in upstate New York, police in Norfolk in the 1940s, and taking her son to New York to go to school.

The March 29, 1978 interview includes discussion of her childhood in Auburn New York, Carter family history, slavery, civil rights issues, social work, and a train accident.

The May 8, 1978 interview includes discussion of her civil rights experiences, job discrimination, black colleges, Adam Powell, the NAACP.

The October 19, 1978 interview covers civil rights issues, Norfolk politics, the Women's Council on Interracial Cooperation, segregation, Massive Resistance in Norfolk.

Related Materials

Women's Council for Interracial Cooperation Papers (MG 54)

Keywords

Race relations--History--20th century
School integration--Massive resistance movement
Public schools--Virginia--Norfolk
African Americans--Education--Virginia--Norfolk
African Americans--Civil rights
African Americans--Segregation
School integration--Virginia--Norfolk--History--20th century
Segregation in education--Virginia--Norfolk
Discrimination against African Americans
Norfolk (Va.)--Politics and government--20th century
Norfolk (Va.)--History--20th century
Women's Council for Interracial Cooperation (Norfolk, Va.)
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
Powell, Adam Clayton (1908-1972)
Mason, Vivian Carter (1900-1982)

Description of Subordinate Components

Box 1

Unit ID Box 1

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/62577

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Folder 1: Transcripts of interviews with Vivian Carter Mason

Unit ID Folder 1

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/62578

Unit Date 1978

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item and date], Box 1, Folder 1, Transcripts of interviews with Vivian Carter Mason, 1978, Vivian Carter Mason Interviews, Special Collections and University Archives, Old Dominion University Libraries.

Interview Cassette Tape

Unit ID Item 1

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/62579

Unit Date 1978 March 24

Preferred Citation

Interview Cassette Tape, 1978 March 24, Box 1, Vivian Carter Mason Interviews, Special Collections and University Archives, Old Dominion University Libraries.

Interview Cassette Tape

Unit ID Item 2

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/62580

Unit Date 1978 March 29

Preferred Citation

Interview Cassette Tape, 1978 March 29, Box 1, Vivian Carter Mason Interviews, Special Collections and University Archives, Old Dominion University Libraries.

Interview Cassette Tape

Unit ID Item 3

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/62581

Unit Date 1978 May 8

Preferred Citation

Interview Cassette Tape, 1978 May 8, Box 1, Vivian Carter Mason Interviews, Special Collections and University Archives, Old Dominion University Libraries.

Interview Cassette Tape (I)

Unit ID Item 4

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/62582

Unit Date 1978 October 19

Preferred Citation

Interview Cassette Tape (I), 1978 October 19, Box 1, Vivian Carter Mason Interviews, Special Collections and University Archives, Old Dominion University Libraries.

Interview Cassette Tape (II)

Unit ID Item 5

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/62583

Unit Date 1978 October 19

Preferred Citation

Interview Cassette Tape (II), 1978 October 19, Box 1, Vivian Carter Mason Interviews, Special Collections and University Archives, Old Dominion University Libraries.