The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow documentary research collection
1995-2002
Sc MG 742

Processed by Janice Quinter, September 12, 2012.

Summary

**Title:** The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow documentary research collection

**Date:** 1995-2002

**Size:** 3.42 linear feet (4 boxes)

**Source:** Gift of Richard Wormser, September 2004.

**Abstract:** The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow documentary research collection documents some aspects of the production of the PBS television series, and most notably consists of over a hundred transcripts of interviews.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow documentary research collection, Sc MG 742, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Processed by Janice Quinter, September 12, 2012.

**Separated Materials:**
Transferred to the Moving Image and Recorded Sound Division: audio and moving image materials. For more information, please contact the division at schomburgaudiovisual@nypl.org or 212-491-2270.

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs

**Creator History**

The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow is a four-part television series that tells the story of the African American struggle for freedom during the period of segregation in the South, 1880-1954. The series aired on PBS in 2002. The programs were produced, directed, and written by the team of Richard Wormser, Bill Jersey, and Sam Pollard.

The four episodes are organized chronologically. The central theme of Episode 1 (1865-1896) illustrates...
the conflict between the efforts of African Americans to achieve the promises of emancipation of full civil and political rights and the demand by whites for segregation and political exclusion. Episode 2 (1896-1917) explores the dramatic rise of a successful Black middle class and the determination of white supremacists to destroy this fledging Black political power. The third episode (1918-1940) chronicles the years between World Wars I and II, a time of increased mob violence, lynchings, and massacres of Blacks. Episode 4 (1940-1954) examines the surge of Black activism that occurred after World War II.

Scope and Content Note

The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow documentary research collection documents some aspects of the production of the PBS television series, and most notably consists of over a hundred transcripts of interviews conducted with academicians and individuals, many of whom lived in the South during the era of Jim Crow.

For the online version, there are content outlines, narration, and an overview and a rough script for episode III. Of particular use is a detailed overview of each of the four episodes of the series. There are scripts for the first three episodes and limited production records. The most significant part of the collection is the 112 transcripts of interviews conducted primarily by Richard Wormser, with some conducted by Bill Jersey and Sam Pollard. Fourteen interview transcripts discuss the Elaine race riot in Elaine, Arkansas, in 1919, during which a large number of black sharecroppers were killed by whites following a union meeting. The interviewees had relatives who grew up in Arkansas (a few had been sharecroppers themselves) and some were able to talk about the racial and working conditions in the early to mid-twentieth century. The several historians who were interviewed provide a scholarly perspective on the race riot.

The five interviewees who focused on elections primarily discussed politics, their experiences in voting and family life, in addition to lynchings and education, primarily in Georgia. Thirteen people were interviewed concerning the lynching of two married couples near the Moore’s Ford Bridge in Georgia in 1946. This incident involved a white mob who grabbed the couples (both women were pregnant), tied them to a tree and shot them to death. The transcripts of two witnesses to the murders and a relative of one of the victims are included in the collection, as are those of former aides to President Truman, a former FBI agent, a Klansman, and Stetson Kennedy, who infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan in the 1940s. In the Georgia Veterans files, six men and women, veterans of World War II, discussed their experiences before and after military service. Two journalists (Evelyn Cunningham of the Pittsburgh Courier and George Stoney of the Survey Graphic) described what it was like reporting in various states in the South. Several of the ten Mississippi veterans described both positive and negative encounters they experienced overseas while former state senator of Mississippi, Henry J. Kirksey, spoke about his upbringing in a log cabin and incidents while stationed in Asia. Lewella Newsome discussed her training on bases in the North and South, and former Mississippi Governor William Winters touched upon social problems from the 1940s-1960s.

Two other Mississippi citizens spoke: Miburn Crowe explained the history of Mound Bayou, an independent African American town founded by former enslaved persons; and Charles Evers, brother of Medgar Evers, who related his childhood experiences, how he learned of his brother’s death, and the way he (Charles) became the field secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Mississippi.

There are sixteen interview transcripts discussing the students who organized a strike in 1951, for a better school than their own, the segregated Robert Russa Moton High School, in Farmville, Virginia.
Many former students and their parents, along with former teachers, described their childhood in the segregated small town of Farmville, the school building itself, and how ill-prepared the students were for college.

Forty-seven transcripts of academicians, primarily historians, provide an intellectual and historical background for the Jim Crow era. Among the individuals interviewed are: Ralph Cassimere, Margaret Clifford (granddaughter of Booker T. Washington), Paula Giddings (discussing Ida B. Wells), Glenda Gilmore (discussing Charlotte Hawkins Brown), Kenneth Goings, Jacqueline Dowd Hall, Charles Houston, Jr. and Charles Houston, III (discussing Charles Hamilton Houston), David Levering Lewis, and Leon Litwack.

Key Terms

Subjects
African American civil rights workers
African American historians
African American intellectuals
African American students -- Virginia -- Farmville
African Americans -- Civil rights
African Americans -- Education (Secondary)
African Americans -- History -- 1877-1964
African Americans -- Segregation
African Americans -- Segregation -- Southern States
African Americans -- Social conditions
Journalists -- United States
Lynching -- Georgia
Lynching -- Southern States
Lynching -- United States -- 1940-1950
Race relations
Television -- Production and direction -- United States

Genre/Physical Characteristic
Interviews
Scripts

Geographic Names
Mound Bayou (Miss.)
United States -- Race relations

Names
Cunningham, Evelyn, 1916-2010
Dobbs, John Wesley, 1882-1961
Evers, Charles, 1922-
Evers, Medgar Wiley, 1925-1963
Houston, Charles Hamilton, 1895-1950
Kennedy, Stetson
Kirksey, Henry J., 1915-2005
Stoney, George C.
Washington, Booker T., 1856-1915
Wells-Barnett, Ida B., 1862-1931
Ku Klux Klan (1915-)
Robert Russa Moton High School (Farmville (Va.))
Container List

Financial records 1995-1998
b. 1 f. 1 Carnegie Corporation of America proposal draft
b. 1 f. 2 Grants 1995-1998
b. 1 f. 3 National Endowment for the Humanities 1995-1998
   Includes proposal evaluations, interim performance reports, etc.
Correspondence 1996-2002
b. 1 f. 4 On research 2001-2002
   Includes notes.
b. 1 f. 5 On production 1996-2002
b. 1 f. 6 Franklin, John Hope 2000
b. 1 f. 7 Overview of series
b. 1 f. 8 Staff
b. 1 f. 9 Permissions 1996-2002
   Includes photographs and letters.
b. 1 f. 10 Interviewees and research contacts
b. 1 f. 11 Research and correspondence on stills, stock, and footage 1997-2001
Production 2001-2002
b. 1 f. 12 Shoot itinerary for Atlanta and Dallas 2001 October 5-8
b. 1 f. 13 Shooting schedule and contacts for Pennsylvania 2001 November
b. 1 f. 14-15 Shooting schedule for Edisto Island, South Carolina and North Carolina 2001
   November-December
   Also includes props and finances.
Shoot and crew, Episode II: "Promises Betrayed" 2001 December-2002
b. 1 f. 16-18 Narration 2002
b. 1 f. 19 Notes
b. 1 f. 20 Music 1997-2002
b. 1 f. 21 Appearance releases 2002 January
b. 1 f. 22 Use of archival photographs and quotes 2002 March
b. 1 f. 23 Narration 2002 March
b. 1 f. 24 Financial 1998-2000
b. 1 f. 25 Notes
Publicity
b. 1 f. 26 Overview
b. 1 f. 27 Post production, intergenerational guide
Web video production 2002
b. 1 f. 28 Content outline
b. 1 f. 29 Narration and general outline
b. 1 f. 30 Episode I, "Promises Betrayed", narration
b. 1 f. 31 Episode II, "Fighting Back", outline
b. 1 f. 32 Episode III, "Don't Shout too Soon", overview
b. 1 f. 33 Episode III rough script (typescript) 2002 May 3
Scripts 1993-2002

b. 1 f. 34-35  Episode I
   Includes first draft.

b. 1 f. 36-40  Episode II 2002
   Includes draft dated June 12 (no year) and another draft dated June 29, 2002, among others.

b. 1 f. 41-43  Episode III
   Includes first draft, among others.

b. 1 f. 44  Comments from academicians 1993-2000

Interviews
Arkansas, Elaine Race Riot
b. 1 f. 45  Branton, Wiley, Jr. (federal judge)
b. 1 f. 46  Dillard, Tom (archivist, University of Arkansas)
b. 1 f. 47  Dougan, Michael (historian, Arkansas State University)
b. 1 f. 48  Fairley, Dr. (physician in Arkansas Delta)
b. 1 f. 49  Fendler, Oscar (attorney in Arkansas Delta)
b. 1 f. 50  Gill, Dezzie (former resident of Marvel, Arkansas)
b. 1 f. 51  Gordon, Fon Louise (historian)
b. 1 f. 52  Howe, Otis (lumber baron of Phillips County, Arkansas)

Jacksons
b. 1 f. 53  Jackson, Hattie
   Arkansas sharecropper and Mose Jackson's wife.
b. 1 f. 54  Jackson, Mose
   Arkansas sharecropper.
b. 1 f. 55  Jackson, Mose and Ruth
   Ruth was Mose Jackson's aunt.
b. 1 f. 56  Miller, Robert (Arkansas physician)
b. 1 f. 57  Scott, Elmo (former resident of Elaine, Arkansas)
b. 1 f. 58  Skyes, Curtis (local historian in Arkansas)

Elections
b. 2 f. 1  Cook, Samuel DuBois (former President of Dillard University)
b. 2 f. 2  Dobbs-Butts, June, Dr. (resident of Atlanta, Georgia)
b. 2 f. 3  Dobbs, Mattiwillda (John Wesley Dobbs's daughter)
b. 2 f. 4  Law, W. W. (civil rights leader, Savannah, Georgia)
b. 2 f. 5  Mackey, James (former political worker, Atlanta, Georgia)

Georgia, Moore's Ford
b. 2 f. 6  Adams, Clinton 1998
   White sharecropper and witness to murder.
b. 2 f. 7  Boss, Bobby and Wendell
   Residents of Walton County, Georgia. Interviewed by Bill Jersey.
b. 2 f. 8  Dorsey, Ruby
   Relative of murdered soldier.
b. 2 f. 9  Elsey, George
   Former aide to President Harry Truman.
Interviews (cont.)
Georgia, Moore's Ford (cont.)

b. 2 f. 10  Garrett, Don
Campaign worker for Eugene Talmadge.

b. 2 f. 11  Heckler, Ken
Former aide to President Harry Truman.

b. 2 f. 12  Howard, Bobby
Witness to murder and civil rights activist.

b. 2 f. 13  Howard, Lamar
Witness to murder.

b. 2 f. 14  Hutchinson, Lou
Former FBI agent.

b. 2 f. 15  Kennedy, Stetson
Infiltrator of Ku Klux Klan, Atlanta, Georgia.

b. 2 f. 16  Parks, Gordon
Klan member and white supremacist in Georgia. Interviewed by William Jersey.

b. 2 f. 17  Wayman, Martin
Farmer's son, Georgia.

b. 2 f. 18  Wellborn, Annie
Sharecropper, Walton County, Georgia.

Georgia veterans

b. 2 f. 19  Butler, Frank

b. 2 f. 20  Cunningham, Evelyn
Former journalist at Pittsburgh Courier.

b. 2 f. 21  Landers, Willie

b. 2 f. 22  Mapp, Annie and Clarence
Residents of Walton County, Georgia.

b. 2 f. 23  Stoney, George
Former journalist and filmmaker.

b. 2 f. 24  Williams, Reverend

Mississippi, war veterans
All of the interviewees were veterans of World War II, except for James Nix, who was a veteran of the Korean War.

b. 2 f. 25  Burks, Matthew

b. 2 f. 26  Hopkins, Elbert

b. 2 f. 27  Jackson, Sam

b. 2 f. 28  Jackson, Yernell

b. 2 f. 29  Jones, James

b. 2 f. 30  Kirksey, Henry J
Former state Senator.

b. 2 f. 31  Newsome, Lewella
Former WAC.

b. 2 f. 32  Nix, James

b. 2 f. 33  Pickett, Roscoe

b. 2 f. 34  Winters, William
Former governor of Mississippi.

Mississippi

b. 2 f. 35  Crowe, Milburn and Mound Bayou
Evers, Charles
Civil rights activist and brother of Medgar Evers.

Mississippi (cont.)

All interviewees are former students at Robert Russa Moton High School unless otherwise noted.

Allen, Carl
Parent of former student at Robert Russa Moton High School.

Bledsoe, Edna Allen

Brown, Hodges

Jackson, Kennell

Lancaster, John
Resident and concerned parent.

McVay, Irene Taylor
Student at Robert Russa Moton High School.

Rawlins, Connie
Former teacher at Farmville High School.

Shirley, Dean
Ned Cobb's granddaughter.

Shepperson, Willie

Smith, R. C
Historian of Farmville.

Stokes, John
Student leader at Robert Russa Moton High School.

Watson, John

Williams, J. Samuel, Jr

Williams, J. Samuel, Jr. and Joan Cobb

Transcript notes and excerpts

Intellectual background

Anderson, James D
Professor of History of Education.

Bauerlein, Mark
Historian, Emory University; focus on Atlanta's history.

Blackman, Charles
North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company.

Borders, Florence
Local historian from New Orleans.

Burns, Tracy

Cassimere, Ralph
Historian, University of New Orleans.

Clifford, Margaret
Booker T. Washington's granddaughter.

Cripps, Thomas
Historian of African Americans in Motion Picture Industry.
b. 2 f. 62  Daniels, Pete
       Historian of Southern history.

b. 2 f. 63  Davis, Ken
       Resident of Wilmington, North Carolina.

b. 2 f. 64  Davis, Leroy
       Historian of Atlanta history.

b. 2 f. 65  Gatewood, Willard
       Historian of Spanish-American War.

b. 2 f. 66  Giddings, Paula
       Historian, Smith College; discusses Ida B. Wells.

b. 2 f. 67  Gilmore, Glenda
       Historian, Yale University.

b. 2 f. 68  Goings, Kenneth
       Historian, Ohio State University.

b. 2 f. 69  Goodwill, Marquetta
       Discusses Edisto Island, South Carolina.

b. 2 f. 70  Goodwin, Jeanne
       Fisk University, Class of 1927.

b. 2 f. 71  Goodwin, James
       Jeanne Goodwin's son.

b. 2 f. 72  Hale, Grace
       Historian, University of Virginia.

b. 3 f. 1   Haley, John
       Historian, University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

b. 3 f. 2   Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd
       Historian, Southern Women Against Lynching, 1930s.

b. 3 f. 3   Hamilton, Kenneth M
       Historian, Southern Methodist University; discusses Isaiah Montgomery.

b. 3 f. 4   Heckler, Ken
       Aide to Harry Truman in the 1940s.

b. 3 f. 5   Holtzclaw-Lee, Hershel
       William Holtzclaw's grandson.

b. 3 f. 6   Houston, Charles H., Jr
       Son of Charles Hamilton Houston, NAACP Chief Counsel, 1930s.

b. 3 f. 7   Houston, Charles Hamilton, III
       Grandson of Charles Hamilton Houston, NAACP Chief Counsel, 1930s.

b. 3 f. 8   Janken, Kenneth Robert
       Biographer of Walter White.

b. 3 f. 9   Jarrett, Vernon
       Journalist.

b. 3 f. 10  Kelley, Robin D. G
       Historian, Columbia University.

b. 3 f. 11  Lewis, David Levering
       Historian, biographer of W.E.B. DuBois.

b. 3 f. 12  Litwack, Leon
       Professor of History, University of California, Berkeley.
Interviews (cont.)

McLaurin, Melton
Historian, University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

McNeil, Genna Rae
Historian and biographer of Charles Hamilton Houston.

Manley, Ida
Alex Manley's daughter-in-law.

May, Emma L
Ned Cobb's daughter.

Meade, Elizabeth
Former student at Palmer Memorial Institute.

Painter, Nell
Discusses Jonathan Solomon Lewis.

Palmer, Rose
Walter White's niece.

Raeburn, Bruce
Curator at Hogan Jazz Archives.

Rosengarten, Dale (historian)

Rosengarten, Theodore
Author of *All God's Dangers* about Ned Cobb.

Sitkoff, Harvard
Historian of New Deal.

Stevenson, Bryon

Sullivan, Patricia
Historian of New Deal.

Todd, Bertha
Resident of Wilmington, North Carolina.

Totten, Ruth
Former teacher at Palmer Memorial Institute.

Wooley, Robert H
Historian, Mansfield College, Pennsylvania.

Resumes for individuals not interviewed

Diskettes and zip discs