

Civil Rights and Race Relations at UNCG and Greensboro: An Archival Research Guide

“The movement began Monday when Negro college students began protesting the fact that they can buy all they want standing up in the store but are refused food service when they sit down at the lunch counter. The students maintain they will continue to sit daily at the counter until served.”

Greensboro Daily News, February 5, 1960

OVERVIEW

The University Archives and Manuscripts department at UNCG contains a multitude of resources documenting the history of civil rights and race relations on the campus from the 1940s until present. Much of the valuable information is contained in letters and oral histories from those who experienced it firsthand. Some of the major topics covered include: the Greensboro Sit-In Movement of 1960; the desegregation of Tate Street in 1962/1963; the UNCG cafeteria workers strike of 1969; and the Neo-Black Society protests of 1973. The following is an attempt to aid in understanding the struggle for racial equality at UNCG by providing a selected list of resources available to researchers about civil rights and race relations.

ARCHIVAL RESOURCES

Individual Collections

Chancellors Papers: Blackwell, Gordon Williams University Archives, 1957-1960 UA 2.6

The records of Chancellor Gordon Williams Blackwell contain several references to the Civil Rights movement and race relations on the UNCG campus. This includes correspondence related to the Greensboro Sit-In movement of February 1960. During the Sit-In movement, Chancellor Blackwell called it the “Dime-Store Crisis” (Box 19). The records also contain correspondence from Chancellor Blackwell about Ann Dearsley (Box 19) and Jeannie Seaman (Box 21), two UNCG white women students who participated in the Sit-In movement.

Vice Chancellors Office of Student Affairs: Dean of Students Services University Archives, 1946-1971 UA 27.1

This record group contains letters and petitions from students to the UNCG administration about a variety of topics including integration of races, racial equality, racial unrest and desegregation. The Corner protests are mentioned. (Correspondence-Miscellaneous, 1954-1967) [Mss 6a-4]

Chancellors Papers: Ferguson, James Sharbrough
University Archives, 1965-1979
UA 2.8

These records contain materials related to the UNCG Cafeteria Workers Strike of 1969 and the Neo-Black Society Protest of 1973. Included are correspondence from the Student Government Association, UNCG students, parents and other organization to Chancellor Ferguson related to the Cafeteria Workers Strike of 1969 (Box 22). The records also contain an extensive amount of correspondence and other materials related to the Neo-Black Society protests of 1973 (Box 46).

Records of the Student Government Association
University Archives, 1941-1981
UA 42

These records contain correspondence related to race relations at UNCG. This includes letters from students to SGA president Carol Furey, in March 1962 suggesting the use of an economic boycott to help force the Cinema Theatre and Corner establishments to desegregate. There is also a letter from a local business man urging the SGA to not become involved with boycotts on the Corner.

Edward F. Burrows Papers 1948-1982
Manuscripts
Mss 091

The Edward F. Burrows Papers include correspondence, committee minutes, flyers, broadsides, publications and newspaper clippings relating to his work as a member of many civil rights organizations in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Clarence Lee Harris Papers 1916-1997
Manuscripts
Mss 141

The Clarence Lee Harris Papers include correspondence, clippings, scrapbooks, memorabilia, manuscripts and printed materials related to his experiences of and opinions about the 1960 Woolworth Sit-ins and his close tracking of civil rights and race-related topics in the United States for the next three decades.

Carolinian- December 9, 1955
University Archives

The UNCG newspaper, the *Carolinian*, in December 1955 covered the Student Legislative bodies decision to support the integration of the school for the following year in 1956. It also chronicled students' and faculty members' reactions to the decision.

Oral History Interviews

Ann-Dearsley-Vernon

May 21, 2007

This interview was conducted by University Archivist Betty Carter as part of the UNCG Institutional Memory Collection Oral History Project. Ann Dearsley-Vernon was one of three white UNCG female students who participated in the 1960 Greensboro sit-in movement. This interview covers a variety of topics including: her early childhood, campus life at UNCG, and the Sit-In movement.

Eugenia Seaman Marks

June 17, 2007

This interview was conducted by Assistant University Archivist Hermann Trojanowski as part of the UNCG Institutional Memory Collection Oral History Project. Eugenia Seaman Marks was one of several white UNCG female students who participated in the 1960 Greensboro Sit-In movement. This interview covers a variety of topics including: her early childhood, college life on the UNCG Campus during the 1960s, her involvement with the Sit-In movement, and her thoughts on the larger Civil Rights movement.

JoAnne Smart Drane

June 5, 2008

This interview was conducted by Assistant University Archivist Hermann Trojanowski as part of the UNCG Institutional Memory Collection Oral History Project. JoAnne Smart Drane was one of the first two African-Americans admitted to UNCG in 1956. This interview covers a variety of topics including: her early background, her decision about attending college, her experience on the UNCG campus, and her life after graduating from UNCG.

Chancellor James Ferguson

September 24, 1969

This oral history is not a formal question and answer interview session. Rather it is Chancellor James Ferguson giving his own person recollection of the events that occurred on the UNCG campus in the late 1960's including the cafeteria strike of 1969. It is part of a larger collection of "Institutional Memory" interviews.

Claudette Graves Burroughs-White

Class 1961

February 25, 1991

Burroughs-White primarily discusses her experiences as one of the first African-Americans to attend Woman's College, including her decision to apply as part of a class project to integrate NC colleges, experience as a day student, and acceptance and inclusion by students and faculty. She briefly discusses her participation in the Woolworth's Sit-Ins, traditions at UNCG, choice of career in children's services, and awards she's received.

Charles Cole
Class of 1969
February 5, 1991

This interview is part of the UNCG Centennial Oral history project. Charles Cole discussing being one of the first men on campus, living off campus because there were no men's dorms, the atmosphere he encountered on campus as a male and minority student, breaking into the "old girl" network, joining the Black Student Union, and the cafeteria workers' strike.

Janet Harper Gordon,
Class of 1964
March 28, 1991

This interview is part of the UNCG Centennial Oral history project. Janet Gordon discusses attending an all-black high school, choosing UNCG rather than NC A&T because she wanted to go into medical technology, taking the entrance exam, the black girls being segregated in Coit Residence Hall, feeling isolated on campus, reaction from white girls to her and other black students, the social and political events of the 1960s.

Doris McKinney
Faculty 1960-1987
November 30, 1989

This interview is part of the UNCG Centennial Oral history project. Doris McKinney talks about being a minority of the faculty, minority students, racism on campus in the 1980s and showing *Birth of a Nation* on campus.

Robert Miller
Faculty, 1968-present
January 23, 1990

This interview is part of the UNCG Centennial Oral history project. Robert Miller discusses the Woolworth's Sit-Ins, Warren Ashby, and minority issues.

Franklin Parker
Faculty, 1951-1983
February 21, 1990

This interview is part of the UNCG Centennial Oral history project. Franklin Parker discusses students in the 1950s and 1960s, co-education, integration, and UNCG students being "campused" for taking part in Woolworth's Sit-Ins.

Carol Bryden Passmore
Class of 1965
February 2, 1991

This interview is part of the UNCG Centennial Oral history project. Carol Passmore talks about black students on campus, the "against-men group," first men students on campus, Congress of Racial Equality meetings, Operation Crossroads Africa, Jesse Jackson, sit-ins, and Tate Street.

Astrid Terry
Class of 1988
May 20, 1991

This interview is part of the UNCG Centennial Oral history project. Astrid Terry discusses the Tate Street atmosphere, fraternities and sororities and race relations on campus.

Edith Wiggins
Class of 1962
May 8, 1991

This interview is part of the UNCG Centennial Oral history project. Edith Wiggins was one of the five black students admitted in the Fall of 1958. She discusses the early years of campus integration including living arrangements and general treatment on campus as well as the Woolworth's Sit-Ins.

Video Recordings

“To Be Rather Than to Seem” **1990**

Video Cassette 90-2 c.1

This DVD was produced as part of a class project developed by UNCG faculty member Dr. Emily Edwards. It gives an account of the participation of four UNCG students at the 1960 sit-in at the Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, NC. The events are detailed through interviews with three former students, voiceovers, WFMY-TV file footage, still photographs, and reenactments of the events. Subjects include Ann Dearsley-Vernon, Joanne Drane, Claudia Burroughs-White, Marilyn Lott, Eugenia Seaman-Marks, and UNCG Chancellor Gordon Williams Blackwell.

Vertical Files

“Black Power Forum”

This file contains information about the Black Power Forum that was held on the UNCG campus in November 1967 as a way to discuss racism. It contains newspaper clippings, schedules, and articles.

“Black Students at UNCG”

This file contains a large amount of information about the history of black students on the UNCG campus. It contains reports, newspaper clippings, memorandums, articles, pamphlets, and correspondence.

“Political Activities and Protests”

This file contains material related to political protest. It includes items related to the 1963 Corner protest and the cafeteria workers strike of 1969. Materials include letters, memorandums, pamphlets, news paper clippings and various articles.

“Sit-Ins”

This file contains a variety of materials related to the Greensboro Sit-Ins. It includes newspaper clippings, correspondence, memorandums, articles, reports, and pamphlets.

Articles

“The WC Three” UNCG Magazine Summer 2000

This article provides a history of the three white female UNCG students who participated in the Woolworth Sit-Ins in February 1960. It also provides a summary of the Greensboro Sit-In movement and its continuing legacy.

“Reactivism” UNCG Magazine Summer 2003

This article, written by staff writer Dan Nonte, discusses the current trend of protest on the UNCG campus. It also follows the history of protests on campus and mentions such events as the Woolworth’s Sit-Ins in 1960.

“Changing Worlds” UNCG Magazine Fall 2003

This is an article written by Yvonne Cheek, who was one of ten black women in her freshman class in 1963. It reflects her time and experience on the UNCG campus during the 1960s.

Books

Trelease, Allen W. *Making North Carolina Literate: The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, from Normal School to Metropolitan University*. Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2004.

This book provides an extensive history of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro from its founding in 1891 up through 1994. It covers topics such as the 1960 Woolworth’s Sit-Ins and the 1969 Cafeteria workers’ strike.

Photographs

The UNCG University Archives does not contain photographs related to the Greensboro Sit-Ins or other related racial protests.

For photographs, please contact the *News and Record*, a local Greensboro area newspaper.

Online Exhibits and Resources

Greensboro Voices: Voicing Observations in Civil Rights and Equality Struggles

<<http://library.uncg.edu/depts/archives/civrights/index.asp>>

Greensboro Voices provides access to a collection of 125 oral interviews housed in the Greensboro Public Library and in the University Archives of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The recordings, collected over the past thirty years, provide a rich resource for historical research concerning the Civil Rights Movement in the Greensboro area.

Sean Mulligan
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