

BATON ROUGE COUNCIL ON HUMAN RELATIONS RECORDS

Mss. 4813

Inventory

Compiled by

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Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

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CONTENTS OF INVENTORY

SUMMARY 3
BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE 4
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE 4
LIST OF SERIES 5
SERIES DESCRIPTIONS 6
INDEX TERMS 7
CONTAINER LIST 8

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SUMMARY

Size	2 linear feet (approximately 950 items).
Geographic Locations	Greater Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
Inclusive Dates	1965-2000
Bulk Dates	1975-1999
Languages	English.
Summary	Minutes, newsletters, newspaper clippings, correspondence, and committee records document the activities and concerns of the Baton Rouge Council on Human Relations (BRCHR), a non-profit civic organization created in 1965 that promoted racial desegregation and better race relations by counteracting prejudice and discrimination based on religion, nationality or ethnicity.
Access Restrictions	No restrictions.
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Citation	Baton Rouge Council on Human Relations Records, Mss. 4813, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack Location(s)	W:123-124

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

During the summer of 1965, six months after the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Baton Rouge Council on Human Relations (BRCHR) was established to foster community awareness of racial discriminatory practices and policies. To ensure compliance with the Act, the Council monitored local restaurants, public parks, doctors' offices, and other community facilities. It worked toward integrating the existing segregated school system, leading to the 1985 "adoption" of Istrouma Sr. High School where the Council's sponsorship of numerous educational programs and events took place. The Council continued by investigating employment grievances and creating educational programs to increase awareness of fair employment practices. Its influence in government was evident in its support of a fair housing bill in the Legislature and an Open Housing Ordinance in the City-Parish. It also worked for fair racial representation on governmental boards and agencies. The organization was founded by John G. Lewis, an African-American, and Ralph M. Dreger, a white professor of psychology at Louisiana State University.

The 1965 bylaws state the purpose of the organization: "To promote economic, civic and cultural improvement for all persons residing in the area; to foster understanding among people of difference [sic] racial, religious, national, and ethnic origins; to counteract prejudice and discrimination based on racial, religious, nationality, or ethnic group membership; and to cooperate with appropriate local, state, regional, and national agencies in the attainment of these objectives."

Source: Paul Y. Burns. History of the Baton Rouge Council on Human Relations (series III, box 1, folder 13), March 27, 1998

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Contains minutes of meetings, newsletters, committee reports, correspondence, newspaper clippings, flyers, photographs, issue files, and other printed materials related to the work of the Baton Rouge Council on Human Relations. Early correspondence (1966-1975) covers local race discrimination issues, such as closing of segregated swimming pools and recreational facilities, employment, education, and housing; committee records further corroborate the Council's involvement with these issues. Emphasis is placed on the Council's interest regarding the East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority and local public housing. Hiring practices, education, and relations between the police and the community comprise the primary focus of the records from the later 1970s through 2000. The Council also followed specific, much-publicized incidents involving local minorities and criminal charges brought against them.

LIST OF SERIES

Series I. Correspondence, 1966-1999, undated

Series II. Minutes, 1966-1999, undated

Series III. Printed Items and Graphic Materials, 1966-2000, undated

Series IV. Committee Records, 1966-1999, undated

Series V. Issue or Event Records, 1966-1999, undated

Series VI. Legal and Financial Papers, 1966-1999, undated

Series VII. Membership Records, 1966-1999

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. Correspondence, 1966-1999, undated (.25 linear feet)

Includes letters to the editor of the Baton Rouge Advocate newspaper, government authorities (state and local), individuals, and other groups. Issues discussed include the closing of swimming pools and public recreational facilities, minority hiring practices, racism in education, housing conditions in the Public Housing Projects, welfare reform, economic development in poverty stricken communities, and minority relations with law enforcement.

Series II. Minutes, 1966-1999, undated (.25 linear feet)

Includes minutes of board meetings and other related records.

Series III. Printed Items and Graphic Materials, 1966-2000, undated (.5 linear feet)

Consists of newspaper clippings, flyers, programs, newsletters, awards granted by the Council, history of the Council, and photographs (color snapshots and Polaroids) of Council events and individuals. Miscellaneous documents included.

Series IV. Committee Records, 1966-1999, undated (.25 linear feet)

Includes committee-meeting reports, investigations, checklists, notes, and related items on committees for fair employment, churches, welfare, public facilities and transportation, and schools.

Series V. Issue or Event Records, 1966-1999, undated (.25 linear feet)

Records address organizational ties with other groups, projects, and specific issues or events with which the Council was concerned, including the Affiliation for Human Rights, Society for Opportunity, Unity, and Leadership (SOUL), and the Baton Rouge police. Documents follow the case of SOUL organizer Frank Stewart and Alphonse Snedecor (undated), who were accused of plotting to kill Mayor-President Dumas of Baton Rouge in 1970. Also includes papers following the 1973 shooting of Baton Rouge resident Milton Leon Scott (1952-1973), a Muslim man accused of desertion from the military.

Series VI. Legal and Financial Papers, 1966-1999, undated (.25 linear feet)

Includes by-laws, treasurer's reports, membership lists, and related items.

Series VII. Membership Records, 1966-1999 (.25 linear feet)

Includes lists of board of directors, membership lists, lifetime member certificates, and other related items.

INDEX TERMS

Materials relating to these people, places, and things can be found in the series indicated, as represented by their numbers.

African-Americans--Civil rights--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	I-VII
Baton Rouge Council on Human Relations.	I-VII
Capital Transportation Corporation (Parish of East Baton Rouge and the City of Baton Rouge, La.)	IV
Civil rights movements--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	I-VII
Discrimination in employment--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	I, III-VI
East Baton Rouge Parish (La.). Housing Authority.	I
Istrouma High School (Baton Rouge, La.)	IV
Louisiana--Race Relations.	I-VII
Public Housing--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	I
Public Welfare--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	I
Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge.	I
Scott, Milton Leon, 1952-1973	V
Segregation in Education--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	I, III-V
Stewart, Frank D., 1946-	V

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>	
W:123-124	1	1	Series I. Correspondence, 1966-1999, undated Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC), 1966-1969	
		2	City-Parish government, "Going the Second Mile" Committee, 1968-1999	
		3	Public housing, Housing Authority, 1976-1987	
		4	Housing Authority, welfare reform, SOUL, general correspondence, 1967-1969	
		5	Welfare reform, voter registration, employment equality, school segregation/integration, general correspondence, 1970-1975	
		6	Economic development in poor communities, abduction of Dorothy McClain, police and fire hiring practices, general correspondence, 1976-1985	
		7	Police/community relations, education, general correspondence, 1986-1999	
	8-12			Series II. Minutes, 1966-1999, undated Minutes of Board of Directors meetings, 1965-1999
				Series III. Printed Items and Graphic Materials, 1966-2000, undated
		13-16		Newsletters, 1965-1998
		17		Awards meetings materials, 1982-2000 Photographs (color snapshots) of 1992 BRCHR Humanitarian Awards Dinner, 1992
		18		Awards received by Coalition, 1984-1986
		19		Newspaper clippings, correspondence, 1986-1998
2	1	20	Written and oral histories, 1983-1998	
		21	Photograph of Ralph M. Dreger and Hilda C.M. Arndt, March 1990 Photograph of Ralph M. Dreger, March 1991	
		22	Brochures, 1965-1997	
		2-6	Miscellaneous, 1963-1995	
		2-6	Newspaper clippings, 1965-2000, undated	
7	8		Series IV. Committee Records, 1966-1999, undated Employment committee, 1969-1970	
			Churches and Religion committee, 1986-1987	
			Hazardous waste, 1989	
			Welfare worker award, welfare and poverty committee, 1979-1994	

Stack

<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
W:123-124	2	11	Community Facilities committee, 1968-1994
		12	CTC (bus company) committee, 1990-1995
		13	Schools or Education Committee, 1983-1993
		14	Istrouma Adoption materials, 1985-1996
		15	Committee responsibilities 1986, 1996
			Series V. Issue or Event Records, 1966-1999, undated
	3	1	Affiliation of Human Rights organizations, 1980-1981
		2	Society for Opportunity, SOUL and organizer Frank Stewart, 1969-1975
		3	Baton Rouge Police (summer), 1969
		4	Milton Scott killing, 1973
		5	Teaching Tolerance educational kit correspondence, 1997
		6	At-risk students committee and Algebra project, 1993-1995
			Series VI. Legal and Financial Papers, 1966-1999, undated
		7	Treasurer's materials, 1965-1999
		8	By-laws and nominating committee work materials, 1976-1992
			Series VII. Membership Records, 1966-1999
		9	Membership and mailing list, 1968-1999
		10	Board of Directors list, 1967-1997
		11	Life members and their certificates, 1985-1991