Guide to the Washington, James Melvin: Papers

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Overview of the Collection

Collection Title: Washington, James Melvin: Papers
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Access Terms
This Collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Corporate Name:
Harvard Divinity School
Union Theological Seminary (New York, N.Y.)

Topical Term:
African Americans -- Civil rights
African Americans -- Religion
Baptists, Black

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Scope and Contents
James Washington (1948-1997) received his B.A. from the University of Tennessee, Master of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School and his M.Phil. and Ph.D. from Yale University (1979). The title of his dissertation is The Origins and Emergence of Black Baptist Separatism, 1863-1897. An ordained Baptist minister, he served as Associate Professor of History at Union Theological Seminary, New York. He is the author of Frustrated fellowship: the Black Baptist quest for social power (1986), A testament of hope: the essential writings of Martin Luther King, Jr. (1986), I have a dream: writings and speeches that changed the world / Martin Luther King, Jr. (1992), Conversations with God: two centuries of prayers by African Americans (1994). His colleagues honored him with a Festschrift edited by Quinton Hosford Dixie and Cornell West, The courage to hope: from black suffering to human redemption: essays in honor of James Melvin Washington (1999). As part of his effort to document and interpret the role of African Americans in the contexts of American culture, Washington amassed an extensive library. This collection came to Fuller Theological Seminary in 2003. It contains about 4,000 items, catalogued as the James Washington Special Collection.

The small archival collection of just one box contains papers found among the 4,000 volume book collection. These papers are organized into 6 folders containing 1. Personal papers; 2. Correspondence; 3. Reviews of Washington’s books, photocopied; 4. Union Theological Seminary catalog, handbook, directory and memo; 5. Collected articles, bibliographies, notes; and 6. Event announcements and Church bulletins.