S0167 Dreer, Herman (1889-1981), Papers, 1933-1976
19 Folders, 1 Microfilm Roll

MICROFILM

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Herman Dreer was born in 1888 in Washington, D.C. he graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine in 1910. He taught at Virginia Theological Seminary in Lynchburg, Virginia and while there, received an M.A. in Latin Theology. In 1912 he married one of his students, Mary Thomas.

Dreer came to St. Louis in 1914 and taught History, English, Greek, German, chemistry and sociology at Sumner High School and the normal school. Concerned over the lack of higher education for blacks in St. Louis, he established Douglas University in 1935. Dreer stressed the study of Afro-American history and was a life member of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. He supported the establishment of Stowe Teachers' College for blacks in 1940 and worked for the integration of Washington University in 1948. He researched and helped finance the Shelley vs Kramer civil rights case as chair of the Citizens Committee--Shelley Restrictive Covenant Case in 1947.

In 1955 he received his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Chicago. He wrote his dissertation of "Negro Leadership in St. Louis: A Study in Race Relations." He interviewed white and black St. Louisans to ascertain the most influential black leaders and compiled questionnaires on over fifty St. Louis blacks for his dissertation.

As an educator and historian, Dreer published articles in the Journal of Negro History, Negro History Bulletin, Crisis, and Opportunity. He edited the Masonic Journal of St. Louis, the St. Louis Tribune, and The Oracle, the publication of Omega Psi Fraternity. At the request of McMillan Publishing Company, he compiled an anthology of Negro literature, American Literature by Negro Authors (1950). He wrote two novels, The Immediate Jewel of His Soul (1919), and The Tie That Binds (1958). He also wrote poems and plays and helped organize the first Black theater group in St. Louis. From 1967-1975 he wrote a weekly column on black history for the St. Louis Argus. He was the minister of King's Way Baptist Church from 1950-1970.

Dreer was a member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity, Knights of Pythias, Prince Hall Lodge, and the Booker T. Washington Trading Stamp Association. He was an assistant principal of Sumner High School for fourteen years and left administration to teach at Stowe Teachers' College and Harris-Stowe College. He retired from Harris-Stowe at the mandatory age of 70 and taught a university in Salinas, Kansas and at McMurray College in Jackson, Illinois. Dreer died in August 1981 at the age of 92.

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5. "The Education of the Negro with Respect to His Background," 1933
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Printed and on one roll of microfilm:

"Negro Leadership in St. Louis: A Study in Race Relations," Ph.D. Dissertation

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