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Deborah Johnson-Simon

1963-2009

(5 Linear feet)

Call no.: MS 1254

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Read collection overview

Background on Deborah Johnson-Simon

Dr. Deborah Johnson-Simon, PhD, is a museum anthropologist dedicated to advancing social justice and fostering community engagement through cultural heritage projects. She focuses on attracting and maintaining African American audiences and works extensively on museum outreach and development. Dr. Johnson-Simon is the co-editor of *The Second Generation of African American Pioneers in Anthropology*, a work that highlights significant contributions in the field. She is the founder and CEO of the African Diaspora Museology Institute (ADMI), formerly known as the Center for the Study of African and African Diaspora Museums and Communities (CFSAADMC). The institute is committed to conducting and distributing research on the history and culture of African and African Diaspora museums and communities, furthering the understanding of their impact and significance. Dr. Johnson-Simon's research interests center on these communities' cultural and historical narratives, emphasizing their role in museum studies and broader cultural heritage. Dr. Johnson-Simon received her BA from Rollins College in 1997 and her MA from Arizona State University with a certification in Museum Studies. She earned her PhD in 2007 from the University of Florida in 2007. The Deborah Johnson-Simon Papers document Dr. Johnson-Simon's research, travels, and professional engagements. The collection includes photographs from her research in Arizona, culminating in *Culture Keepers Arizona*, as well as ephemera from her time at Rollins College in Florida and her research and teaching at Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville, Florida. It also highlights her extensive work with and on Rev. Dr. C.T. Vivian and the C.T. Vivian Leadership Institute. Additionally, the collection contains an extensive collection of cards from individuals she met at conferences, during research, and while traveling. Notably, it includes her work with industrial designer Charles "Chuck" Harrison, who revolutionized the View-Master, along with a View-Master and more than 80 accompanying slides.

Scope of collection

The Deborah Johnson-Simon Collection exemplifies her work as an African and African American museum consultant, including collaborations with organizations like the C.T. Vivian Leadership Institute. The collection highlights her contributions as an anthropologist, featuring research notes, correspondence, ephemera, photographs, and materials from projects such as Cultural Keepers. It underscores Dr. Johnson-Simon's dedication to preserving and disseminating African and African American cultural heritage through her research on Black pioneers, activists, and social justice leaders such as C.T. and Octavia Vivian and Charles "Chuck" Harrison. The collection also documents her educational background, with ephemera relating to her college experiences, her career in higher education, and her professional engagements, including presentations and conferences. It reflects her time living and working in Arizona, Florida, and Georgia and insights into her national and international research trips and personal travels. The Deborah Johnson-Simon Collection comprises a variety of materials—visual media, photographs, correspondence, ephemera, administrative records, and artifacts—and provides a comprehensive view of her impactful career, professional engagements, and dedication to cultural preservation.

Series descriptions

[Series 1. Culture Keepers](#)

1993-2009

3 boxes

This series documents Dr. Johnson-Simon's Culture Keepers project, a major initiative highlighting African American cultural preservation. The materials consist of photographs, correspondence, cards, interviews, and related ephemera from over 30 African American individuals and cultural leaders, as well as institutions across Arizona. This series offers insight into the cultural landscapes and oral histories of Black communities and showcases Dr. Johnson-Simon's methodological approach to fieldwork, cultural outreach, and community documentation.

[Series 2. Charles 'Chuck' Harrison](#)

1993-2009

3 boxes

This series focuses on Dr. Johnson-Simon's professional relationship and research on industrial designer Charles "Chuck" Harrison. It includes correspondence, cards, ephemera, resumes, photographs, a View-Master with over 80 slides, and a copy of Harrison's book *A Life's Design*. The series reflects Harrison's contributions as an African American innovator in design and Dr. Johnson-Simon's efforts to document and highlight underrepresented figures in design history.

[Series 3. Subject Files and Correspondence](#)

1959-2015

3 boxes

Comprising a diverse array of materials, this series includes personal correspondence, educational memorabilia, graduation announcements, awards, ephemera, and photographs. It also documents Dr. Johnson-Simon's academic milestones and professional engagements, including her studies at Rollins College, Arizona State University, and the University of Florida, as well as her participation in conferences and cultural organizations. The series paints a comprehensive portrait of her educational background and evolving career in anthropology and museology.

[Series 4. Arizona](#)

2000-2009

2 boxes

This series captures Dr. Johnson-Simon's time living and working in Arizona. Materials include photographs, postcards, cards, and memorabilia related to community members, cultural events, festivals, and professional engagements. Highlights include materials from the George Washington Carver Museum, interactions with local artists, and educational initiatives, reflecting her deep community involvement and regional impact.

[Series 5. C.T. Vivian Leadership Institute](#)

2008-2013

3 boxes

This series consists of administrative records, visual materials, printed ephemera, and correspondence related to Dr. Johnson-Simon's work with the C.T. Vivian Leadership Institute (CTVLI). It includes meeting agendas, reports, promotional materials, tax forms, and project documentation. The series highlights her contributions to shaping the Institute's mission in promoting education, leadership, and civil rights advocacy.

[Series 6. C.T. Vivian](#)

1993-2021

3 boxes

Focusing on the life and legacy of Civil Rights activist Rev. Dr. C.T. Vivian and his wife Octavia Vivian, this series includes printed materials, correspondence, ephemera, news articles, and research binders. It reflects Dr. Johnson-Simon's dedication to preserving and promoting the historical narrative of the Vivians' contributions to the Civil Rights Movement and their lasting influence on African American history and leadership development.

Inventory

Series 1. Culture Keepers

1993-2009

Photographs

n.d.

Box 2: 33

Photograph of Abdule, Hamze, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Card and photographs

n.d.

Box 2: 34

photographs and cards from Ashegbeyeri, Dr. Sonny, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photographs

2000-2003

Box 2: 35

Photographs of Benson, Linda, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photograph

n.d.

Box 2: 36

photographs of Burroughs, Margaret Taylor, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photographs

n.d.

Box 2: 37

Photographs of Campbell, Cloves, Sr., who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photograph, card, and membership card

ca. 2002

Box 2: 38

Photographs and cards from Cannon, Milton, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers. Dr. Johnson-Simon member cards for the Prescott Jazz Society.

Cards, postcards, photographs, and news articles

ca. 2002-2007

Box 2: 39

Photographs, cards and postcards, and news articles from Copeland, Juanita Guidry, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photograph

ca. 2016

Box 2: 40

Photograph of Dean, Dr. Eula, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photograph

ca. 2001

Box 2: 41

Photograph of Dickerson, Deborah, who an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photographs

n.d.
Box 2: 42

Photographs of Dix, Clay, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photographs
2000-2001
Box 2: 43

Photographs of Franklin, Ruth Payne, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photograph
2001
Box 2: 44

Photograph of Gray, Carol A., who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

photographs
n.d.
Box 2: 45

Photographs of Grigsbury, Dr. J. Eugene, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photograph
2001
Box 2: 46

Photograph of Harrison, Ralph, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photograph
n.d.
Box 2: 47

Photographs of Hasker, Ozia, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photograph
2001
Box 2: 48

Photograph of Hightower, Elmira who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photograph and CD's
2001
Box 2: 49

Photograph of Holder, Wardell, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers. Include Culture Keepers CD or DVD.

Photographs
n.d.
Box 2: 50

Photographs of Johnson, Morris F. III, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photograph
2001
Box 2: 51

Photograph of Jones, Dr. Noland, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photographs
n.d.
Box 2: 52

Photographs of Landrum-Taylor Leah, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photographs
n.d.
Box 2: 53

Photographs of Mack, George, Jr., who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photograph
n.d.
Box 2: 54

Photograph of Montes, Peggy, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photographs
n.d.
Box 2: 55

Photographs of Newman, Lorraine G, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photograph
n.d.
Box 2: 56

Photograph of Pasha, Miasia with Dr. Johnson-Simon, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photographs and Cards
ca. 2000-2002
Box 2: 57

Photographs and Christmas cards from Robbins, Don and Phyllis, who were interviewees for Culture Keepers.

Photograph and Card
ca. 2003
Box 2: 58

Photograph and card from Robinson, Jeanette, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photographs
ca. 2001
Box 2: 59

Photographs of Saulsberry, Oscar, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers

Photograph
ca. 2001
Box 2: 60

Photograph of Shelton, Jewel, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photograph and Cards
ca. 2001; ca. 2004-2011
Box 2: 61

Photograph and correspondence from Tate, Irvin, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photograph and Letter
ca. 2001
Box 2: 62

Photographs and correspondence from Thomas, Rev. Benjamin, Sr., who was a pastor at Tanner Chapel AME. Rev. Thomas was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photographs
ca. 2001
Box 2: 63

Photographs of Williams, Cody, who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photograph and Cards
ca. 2002
Box 2: 64

Photograph and correspondence from Dorsey, Dona R., who was an interviewee for Culture Keepers.

Photograph
n.d.
Box 2: 65

Photographs Tanner Chapel AME, Pilgrim Rest, and the George Washington Carver Museum and Culture

Center. Interviews for Culture Keepers were conducted at these places—photographs of Eastlake Park, the place for cultural activities for Black Phoenicians.

Literary Work

n.d.

Box 1: 38

Copies of Culture Keepers.

Audio Visual Materials

n.d.

Box 3:

24 Floppy Disk

Series 2. Charles 'Chuck' Harrison

1993-2009

Correspondence & Ephemera

ca. 1993-2009

Box 2: 19

Eugene Winslow's obituary, emails, and Dr. Johnson-Simon's interactions with Charles 'Chuck' Harrison, along with a trip to New Orleans, the Grand Canyon, and the DuSable Museum.

Correspondence & Ephemera

ca. 1993-2009

Box 2: 20

Cards and correspondence from Chuck, along with his resume and photographs.

Correspondence & Ephemera

ca. 1993-2009

Box 2: 21

Cards from Chuck

Printed Materials/Ephemera

ca. 1993-2009

Box 2: 22

History Makers

Printed Materials & photographs

ca. 1993-2009

Box 2: 23

History Makers

Printed Materials & photographs

ca. 1993-2009

Box 2: 24

History Makers

ViewMaster

n.d.

Box 4:

Physical Object

ViewMaster Tapes

n.d.

Box 5:

Stereo Pictures/ Visual Materials

Book

ca. 2005

Box 3:

A Life's Design: The Life and Work of Industrial Designer by Charles Harrison

Series 3. Subject Files and Correspondence
1959-2015
Abstract
ca. 2012-2014
Box 2: 1

Materials and course information from the University of South Florida Institute on Black Life (IBL) and Department of Africana Studies.

Printed Materials & Ephemera
ca. 2014
Box 2: 2

Emails and conference programs for the University of South Florida – Institute of Black Life Conference 2014.

Newspaper & Ephemera
ca. 2001
Box 2: 3

Dr. Johnson-Simon's MA graduation cap and newspaper on 2001 Fall commencement at ASU.

Photographs & Ephemera
ca. 1993-2009
Box 2: 25

Letters, cards, and photos from various individuals

Ephemera
2001 Dec.
Box 3:

Dr. Johnson-Simon's MA degree diploma and certificate in Museum Studies from Arizona State University and photographs

Ephemera
ca. 2008
Box 1: 19

Cards from her time at Morgan State University

Ephemera & Photographs
1997 May 31
Box 3: 28

Graduation announcement and photographs from Rollins College

Publication
ca. 1990
Box 1: 22

Florida Black Heritage Trail Magazine, which credits Dr. Johnson-Simon

Ephemera
n.d.
Box 3: 32

Name tag, notepad, and certificate

Photographs
ca. 2007
Box 3: 36

Graduation Photographs from the University of Florida

Ephemera & Photographs
1967 Jun. 11 -- 1959 Apr. 26
Box 1: 13

Graduation programs and photographs of Deborah Ann Williams

Ephemera & Photographs
1976 Jul. 26 -- 1975 Sept. 17

Box 1: 14

A Diploma, certification, and photographs of Deborah Ann King

Ephemera
ca. 1977-1979
Box 1: 15

Precious Jewels article, awards, and certifications to Deborah Ann Simms

Ephemera, Photographs & Printed Materials
n.d.
Box 1: 16

Photographs, news articles, magazines, letters, and certificates from Deborah Ann Murphy

Printed Materials
n.d.
Box 1: 17

A Letter and Mail to Deborah Johnson

Ephemera
n.d.
Box 1: 18

Deborah Ann Johnson-Simon's business Cards, commencement programs, certificates, and more

Ephemera & Printed Materials
ca. 2008
Box 1: 20

Emails and programs

Printed Materials
n.d.
Box 3: 25

Emails, Press release, and Program

Ephemera & Photographs
1997 May 31
Box 1: 21

Graduation announcement and Photographs

Ephemera & Photographs & Printed Materials
n.d.
Box 3: 30

Cards, Photographs, and Guide

Ephemera & administrative materials
2015 Aug. 20
Box 1: 23

Cards and a meeting agenda

Ephemera
n.d.
Box 1: 24

Name tag, notepad, and certificate

Ephemera & administrative materials
n.d.
Box 1: 25

Handbook, and letter

Photographs
ca. 2004

Box 1: 26

Photographs from Belize Luba Garifuna Culture Museum

Photographs

ca. 2003

Box 1: 27

Photographs of Zee Edgell at Santa Fe Community College

Photographs

ca. 2007

Box 1: 28

Graduation Photographs from the University of Florida

Photographs

ca. 2005

Box 1: 29

Photographs from the AAAM Conference 2005 and Anacostia Museum

Audio Visual Materials, Ephemera & Artifacts

ca. 2003

Box 1: 31

Photo CD, Cards, Necklace

Ephemera, Photographs & Printed Materials

ca. 1996-1998

Box 1: 30

Photographs, Hampton University Catalog

Pamphlet

n.d.

Box 2: 16

N'Cobra (National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America) pamphlet

Manuscript

ca. Fall/Winter 1996-1998

Box 2: 17

"A Concept Paper on The Gandhi-Hamer-King Center for the Study of Religion and Democratic Renewal at the ILIFF School of Theology

Visual Materials

n.d.

Box 2: 18

Center for Civil and Human Rights that Among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness

Newspaper

1993 Feb. 2

Box 2: 15

"Witness to the Light"

Artifact

n.d.

Box 1:

Doll "Untitled"

Newspaper

2004 Jan. 22

Box 1:

"Real-Life Dolls"

Ephemera

n.d.
Box 1:

Ceremonial Outfits

Physical Object
2004 Jun.
Box 1:

Jewelry and Pin

Ephemera
1997 May 31
Box 3:

B.A. Degree

Ephemera
2004 Feb. 25
Box 3:

Harry B. Shaw Travel Grant Award

Manuscript
2001 Nov.
Box 3:

Dr. Johnson-Simon's Masters Thesis

Ephemera
1975-76
Box 3:

Recognition award from Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges

Ephemera
2000
Box 3:

Dr. Johnson-Simon's MCBA Award for being the keynote speaker

Written Materials
n.d.
Box 3:

Bound notecards with handwritten research notes

Series 4. Arizona
2000-2009
Cards, postcards, and photos
2000-2009
Box 2: 26

Photographs from an event for Danny Glover. Cards from various individuals for various holidays, as well as congratulations for completing her Ph.D. Cards from James F. Franklin, member of the Phoenix Monarch Association and the George Washington Carver Museum Board of Directors. Photographs and cards from Calvin Good. Photographs and cards from Dottie L. Battiest, an alumna of George Washington Carver High School and a member of the Alumni Association.

Cards, invitations, and photos
2000-2009
Box 2: 27

Cards and photographs of Cristy Cannon. Cards from Veronica Velasquez. Cards from Hellene McGriff. Photographs of Dr. Johnson-Simon with Hellene taking classes on education at ASU. An invitation to the 12th Annual Black Recognition Gala hosted by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc.

Photographs
2000-2009
Box 2: 28

Photographs of Dr. Johnson-Simon with anthropologist Sandra Jefferson. Photographs from the AAM

Conference for the Youth

Photographs

2000-2009

Box 2: 29

Photographs from a Las Vegas Festival attended with Tim and Brenda Moore—photographs from the Grand Canyon and a jazz festival at Red Rocks of Sedona.

Art print, business cards, and card

2000-2009

Box 2: 30

An art Print, business cards, and a card from Mary Shacklett Gray, a Black artist from Arizona.

Art prints, a card, and Obituary

2000-2009

Box 2: 31

Cards that include art prints from Roosevelt "Rip" Woods Jr., a Black artist from Arizona, and his obituary.

Photographs

2000-2009

Box 2: 32

An invitation to Into My World: The Art of Belinda Wilson. Photographs from the restoration of the gallery that housed Into My World.

Membership cards, brochure, and CD

n.d.

Box 1: 39

Dr. Johnson-Simon's NAACP Membership card. Materials from ASU, an untitled CD.

Cards and Letters

ca. 2000-2007

Box 1: 33

Cards and Letters from individuals from Sahuaro Ranch, Glendale, AZ. Dr. Johnson-Simon worked there as the Volunteer Coordinator.

Business Cards, Brochures, Name tags, and Photographs

2000-2009

Box 1: 34

Dr. Johnson-Simon's name tag and the Visitor Studies Association 2001 Annual Conference photographs. Journal article from Visitor Behavior.

Notecards, Photographs, Business Cards

2000-2009

Box 1: 35

Notes, planning, and exhibit on Black Schools in Phoenix.

Photographs

ca. 2002

Box 1: 36

Photographs from VFW, a jazz venue in Phoenix.

Series 5. C.T. Vivian Leadership Institute

2008-2013

Administrative Records

ca. 2011-2013

Box 2: 4

Meeting minutes and agendas from the CTLI Board of Directors 2011-2013.

Administrative Records

n.d.

Box 2: 5

"Money for College Student" Program and CTLI Learning Community

"Money for College Students" Program and CIVLI company overview.

Administrative Records

n.d.

Box 2: 9

Background for Seminary Without Walls.

Administrative Records

2008-2013

Box 2: 10

By-Laws, Conflict of Interest Policy, Certification of Incorporation, and Executive Board for CTVLI.

Visual Materials

2008-2013

Box 2: 12

Sketches/draw up's for the CTVLI

Printed materials

n.d.

Box 1: 37

Background information on the C.T. & Octavia Vivian Museum and Archives.

Printed Materials

2008 Apr. 30

Box 1: 1

State of Georgia Certification of Incorporation

Printed Materials & Ephemera

2008-2013

Box 1: 2

Program and Business Cards

Printed Materials

2012 Dec.

Box 1: 3

Project Report

Printed Materials

n.d.

Box 1: 4

Tax Forms

Printed Materials

ca. 2013

Box 1: 5

Consultant agreement

Printed Materials

2008-2013

Box 1: 6

HBCU Library Alliance

Printed Materials

ca. 2009

Box 1: 7

ITC Bylaws

Printed Materials

2012 Mar. 23

Box 1: 8

Walker Rodney Symposium program

Printed Material
2008-2013
Box 1: 9

Moorehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection magazine

Correspondence, Ephemera & Newspapers
2008-2013
Box 2: 14

Correspondence, Newspapers, and programs

Printed Materials
2008-2013
Box 2: 11

The African-American Leadership Portrait Gallery

Cassettes
n.d.
Box 3:

Seminary Without Walls

Written Materials
n.d.
Box 3:

Notebook

Series 6. C.T. Vivian
1993-2021
Book
ca. 1993
Box 1: 10

Challenge and Change: The Story of Civil Rights Activist C.T. Vivian

Newspapers
2008-2014
Box 1: 11

Newspaper

Newspapers & Printed Materials
ca. 2021
Box 3: 16

Newspapers and magazines

Newspapers & Ephemera
2008-2014
Box 1: 32

Program and newspapers on C.T. Vivian

Ephemera
2011 May 13
Box 2: 6

Octavia Vivian's Obituary.

Ephemera

Box 2: 7

Program from C.T. Vivian's 85th Birthday Celebration

Newspapers/Printed Materials
1993-2014

Box 2: 8

Print off's and news articles on C.T. Vivian.

Correspondence

2003 Aug. 15

Box 2: 13

Letter from National Voting Rights Museum & Institute to C.T. Vivian.

Ephemera/Administrative Materials/Correspondences

n.d.

Box 4: 13

Materials on C.T. Vivian's evolvment in the movement and research.

Printed Materials

2013

Box 3:

Binder of research for the Octavia Vivan Collection

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Gift of Deborah Johnson-Simon, 2024.

Processing Information

Processed by Taelore Marsh.

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Search terms

Subjects

- African American anthropologist African Americans--Museums Anthropology--United States--History Ethnology--United States--History

Genres and formats

- Maps

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