

Interview with **James Hoffman**

1979

Production Team: N/A

Camera Rolls: N/A

Sound Rolls: 5

Interview gathered as part of *America, They Loved You Madly*, a precursor to *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Produced by Blackside, Inc. Housed at the Washington University Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.

Preferred Citation

Interview with James Hoffman, conducted by Blackside, Inc. in 1979, for *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.

Note: These transcripts contain material that did not appear in the final program. Only text appearing in *bold italics* was used in the final version of *Eyes on the Prize*.

00:00:02:00

[sound roll 5]

Hoffman: James Hoffman.

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: THANK YOU.

INTERVIEWER: OK—

[sync tone]

INTERVIEWER: I GUESS MY FIRST QUESTION IS, WHAT WAS IT LIKE, YOU KNOW, THE KIND OF INDIGNITY AND ANGER YOU MIGHT'VE FELT GOING ON THE BUSES BEFORE THE BOYCOTT?

Hoffman: Supposed to mean the—

INTERVIEWER: WELL HAVING TO GET IN THE FRONT AND COME BACK OUT AND GO ON THE SIDE. WHAT DID YOU FEEL LIKE HAVING TO GO THROUGH THAT?

Hoffman: Well, it's, it's been the custom so long there wasn't much to feel. You now, cause, I mean that's what you expected to do. And you just went on knowing that's where you supposed to go. You just put your money in there and then go on the back and get on.

INTERVIEWER: WAS THERE ANYTIME YOU PARTICULARLY FELT ANGRY?

Hoffman: Well, no. I've never been too much of a bus rider. No way. I've always walked or either had my own transportation. And I didn't have the occasion to think about it that much [coughs]. But see a lot of people did. I mean, there's a lot of complaints. Why you— constantly complaining about it. The way they'd be treated. The way the, the operator would talk to 'em and the bus driver, rather, would talk to him. Get on in the back, such as that. Had the—I, I didn't—because, I mean, just like I said I had my own transportation. That I didn't have I always walked.

00:01:34:00

INTERVIEWER: DID YOU THINK THE BUS COR—THAT THE BOYCOTT WOULD SUCCEED?

Hoffman: I did, because the way it started is that it—we never had that kind of a cooperation between us before whereby everybody taken part, instantly. And we—I had come to that they were, were gonna stay off.

INTERVIEWER: AND HOW'D YOU FEEL WHEN YOU WON? THAT DAY THAT THE SUPREME COURT RULING CAME DOWN?

Hoffman: Well, I, I just, I just felt that we had made another mile. And I knew that it was gonna be a lot of problems. At least, I felt that way anyway. That in order to change traditions, you know, it's going—well, we would expect that. Course some—we had a lot of us challenge that. They, they knew—in other words they knew it's gonna happen so they would challenge it. See, they didn't care anything about the reaction. I swear they just wanna let her know that they were—that he one of they were [sic]. So they, they—a lot of 'em just—it's like I said they didn't want to charge it.

INTERVIEWER: YEAH. OK. I THINK THAT SHOULD JUST ABOUT—

Hoffman: [cough]

INTERVIEWER: OK, CUT. YEAH.

[cut]

[end of interview]

00:03:01:00

© Copyright Washington University Libraries 2016