



Virginia B. Gourdin Papers, 1959-1970
SCHS #536.00

Description: 1.75 Linear Feet (8 boxes)

Biog./Historical Note: Born in Kingstree, South Carolina, Virginia Brockington Gourdin (1920-2009) was the daughter of Peter Gaillard Gourdin (1877-1947) and Ada Belle Brockington Gourdin (1892-1975). She was a graduate of Winthrop College, Columbia University, and the University of South Carolina. In 1959 she was elected to the South Carolina General Assembly. She was the first woman to represent Charleston County, and the fifth woman to serve in the state legislature. At the time of her election she was employed by the mortgage banking firm of Stevenson, Zimmerman & Company of Charleston and also listed herself as a Williamsburg County farmer. Previously, Gourdin worked as a librarian at the Harvard Graduate Business School and also taught in South Carolina high schools and at the University of South Carolina. In the state legislature, Gourdin served from 1959 to 1962 and was on the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee. Virginia Gourdin was notable for her efforts to investigate communist infiltration and activity in the state. She was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Huguenot Society, and other organizations, and was interested in history and genealogy. She is buried in Charleston at the French Huguenot Church graveyard.

Scope and content: Papers consist of correspondence, scrapbooks, and printed material relating to communist influence and activity in American government and education, and Virginia B. Gourdin's research about and efforts against it. Correspondence (1959-1968) includes letters between Gourdin and Strom Thurmond, Olin D. Johnston, Mary Lee Calhoun (Mrs. Allston Calhoun), and many others. A series of scrapbooks contain newspaper clippings, correspondence, and printed material such as brochures and booklets. Some of them relate to a controversial publication by the American Bar Association concerning communism. Additional printed material includes documents published by the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Un-American Activities (U.S. House of Representatives); a government booklet entitled "The Communist Party of the United States of America" (1955); a pamphlet, "Blasting the Historical Blackout," concerning A. J. P. Taylor's revisionist book about the origins of World War II; and bound issues (1961-1965) of "The Dan Smoot Report."

Preferred citation: Gourdin, Virginia B. (Virginia Brockington), 1920-2009. Virginia B. Gourdin papers, 1959-1970. (0536) South Carolina Historical Society.

Container Listing:

BOX 1

Correspondence:

- 1 Correspondence, 1959-1962. Includes a letter, Oct. 27, 1962, from Paul Stevens of Myrtle Beach, S.C., responding to Gourdin's inquiry about problems in the Episcopal Church.
- 2 Correspondence, 1963-1968. Correspondents include Strom Thurmond, Olin D. Johnston, Mary Lee Calhoun (Mrs. Allston Calhoun) of Greenwood, S.C., and many others.

Scrapbooks: a series of binders containing newspaper clippings, correspondence, and printed material such as brochures and booklets. Many are marked: "ABA" or "ABA Syllabus." This refers to a controversial publication by the American Bar Association concerning communism.

- 3 Scrapbook: "ABA 1962" (part one). Includes a booklet, *Teaching About Communism*, published by the NEA and the American Legion; and correspondence and other material relating to the South Carolina Alert, Inc.
- 4 Scrapbook: "ABA 1962" (part two). Mostly material concerning the teaching of communism in South Carolina schools. Includes a binder with the label: "Alert Group Work Kit, Organization, Mission, Programs, Projects."
- 5 Scrapbook: "ABA 1962" (part one). Includes two comic books about John F. Kennedy in English and Spanish, with related correspondence; page 13 of the comic book notes that Kennedy "came out firmly in favor of a continued stiff fight against communism."
- 6 Scrapbook: "ABA 1962" (part two). Mostly correspondence and clippings.

BOX 2

- 1 Scrapbook: includes clippings, brochures, and other material dating from 1962-1963 relating to communism in South Carolina and elsewhere. Includes a booklet entitled *Report of Committee to Investigate Communist Activities in South Carolina* (1962).

- 2 Scrapbook: "ABA Syllabus, August 1963" (part one). Includes correspondence, clippings, and other material.
- 3 Scrapbook: "ABA Syllabus, August 1963" (part two). Mostly correspondence and clippings.
- 4 Scrapbook: "ABA Syllabus, Sept. 1963." Mostly correspondence and clippings.
- 5 Scrapbook. Contains mostly clippings and correspondence dating from 1963-1964.

BOX 3

- 1 Scrapbook, 1963. Correspondence, clippings, and other material relating to communism.
- 2 Material, 1963 and undated, relating to an organization called "The Conservatives." Includes newsletters and stationary.
- 3 Miscellaneous notes and writings.

Printed material:

- 4 Miscellaneous items, including government documents.
- 5 Stationery of Virginia Gourdin, SC House of Representatives.
- 6 Booklet: "Letters to a United States Senator." Contains material relating to the Council on Foreign Relations, including a list of its members, 1961-62.
- 7 Booklet: "The Communist Party of the United States of America: What It Is, How It Works—A Handbook for Americans." Reprint of a 1955 government publication.
- 8 Pamphlets, including "An Investigation of the Black Muslims," and "Ford and Other Foundations in Public Affairs." A pamphlet entitled "Blasting the Historical Blackout" concerns A. P. Taylor's revisionist book *The Origins of the Second World War*.
- 9 Paperback book: *Good and Evil Figs: An Expose of a Well-Laid Plot by the Synagogue of Satan to Subjugate the Peoples of the World and to Destroy Their Inalienable Rights of Life, Liberty (Freedom) and the Pursuit of Happiness Under God* by John G. Canfield.

BOX 4

- 1 Hardback binding of *The Dan Smoot Report*, 1961. A weekly syndicated newsletter, published from 1957 to 1971, dealing with communist infiltration in American government and society.
- 2 Hardback binding of *The Dan Smoot Report*, 1962.

BOX 5

- 1 Hardback binding of *The Dan Smoot Report*, 1963.
- 2 Hardback binding of *The Dan Smoot Report*, 1964.

BOX 6

- 1 Hardback binding of *The Dan Smoot Report*, 1965.
- 2 South Carolina government documents, including a pamphlet, "Report of Committee to Investigate Communist Activities in South Carolina" (1964).
- 3 U.S. government documents, including the "Thirteenth Annual Report, Subversive Activities Control Board" (1963), and "Permit Communist-Conspirators to Be Teachers?" (1953).

BOX 7

- 1 U.S. government documents: publications of and relating to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 1965-1966.
- 2 U.S. government documents: publications of the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, 1957-1969. Includes reports and hearing transcripts.
- 3 U.S. government documents: publications of the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, 1953-1963.

BOX 8

- 1 U.S. government documents: publications of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 1952-1959, including "The Communist Party of the United States of America, What It Is, How It Works: A Handbook for Americans" (1956).

- 2 U.S. government documents: publications of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 1961.
- 3 U.S. government documents: publications of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 1962-1963.
- 4 U.S. government documents: publications of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 1964-1965.
- 5 U.S. government documents: publications of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 1966.
- 6 U.S. government documents: publications of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 1967.
- 7 U.S. government documents: publications of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 1969-1970.
- 8 U.S. government documents: “Military Cold War Education and Speech Review Policies: Hearings Before the Special Preparedness Committee of the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate” (1962).