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# CIVIL RIGHTS AND HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

Hofstra University and its students, staff, and faculty first had an influence on the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960's. Students from Hofstra attended marches, faculty participated in rallies, and administrators elected impressive individuals for the Board of Trustees and encouraged well known speakers to come to campus.

This Hofstra University Library Special Collections Online Exhibit focuses on the time period from 1965-1971, and the individuals who were making news.

# MARCH ON SELMA, 1965



Hofstra students showed their support for those who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma, Alabama. They marched for equal voting rights in New York as additional student groups across the country marched to show their support under the “We Shall Overcome” banner.

# DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Civil rights leader, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was honored by Hofstra University in 1965, less than one year after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize and three years before his assassination.

Hofstra President Clifford Lord and the Board of Trustees invited Dr. King to receive an honorary degree and address the graduating class of 1965.

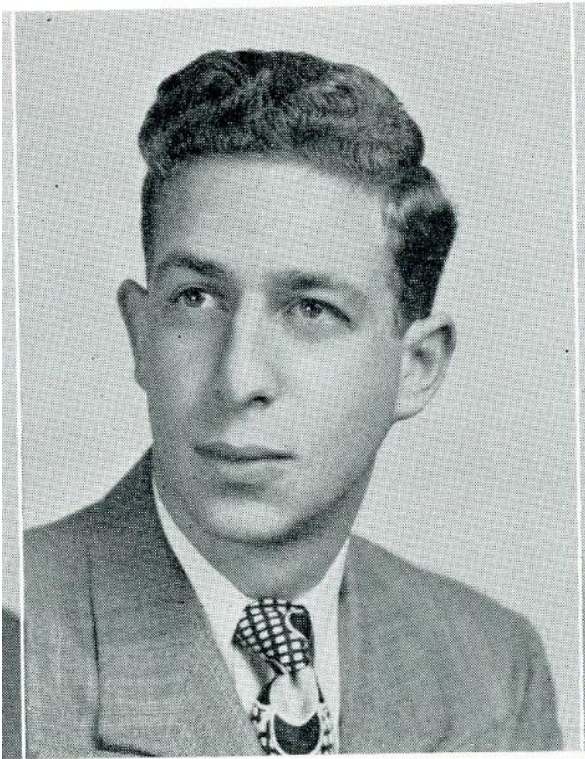
Dr. King's longtime attorney, Harry Wachtel (who subsequently taught political science at Hofstra, 1967-71) was a friend of Hofstra's Board of Trustees member Bernard Fixler. Mr. Fixler and Mr. Wachtel helped to make arrangements for Dr. King's Commencement appearance.



PHOTOGRAPH OF CLIFFORD LORD AND DR. KING RECEIVING HIS HONORARY DEGREE.



# TOBIAS SIMON



Tobias Simon graduated from Hofstra in 1949 and received his law degree from Harvard University in 1952. He was a tireless civil rights attorney and he is best known for defending activists including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

He provided legal counsel to activists in Florida and throughout the Deep South as early as 1960. He helped students involved in sit-in demonstrations at lunch counters who demanded service and were denied because they were black.

He often defended the rights of those who refused to take oaths of allegiance saying that they were not communists. He also defended the rights of students and protesters who peacefully demonstrated or picketed.

Simon died in 1982 at the age of 52. His memory is honored by the Supreme Court of Florida Chief Justice's Award bearing his name, and given to Florida lawyers who carry on his tradition of unselfish advocacy.

# 1968 HOMECOMING FLOATS

The Congress of Racial Equality, or CORE, was founded in 1942 in Chicago. It was started by students who were influenced by Mahatma Gandhi's teachings of nonviolent resistance. It advocated sit-ins and other peaceful demonstrations as a means to change.

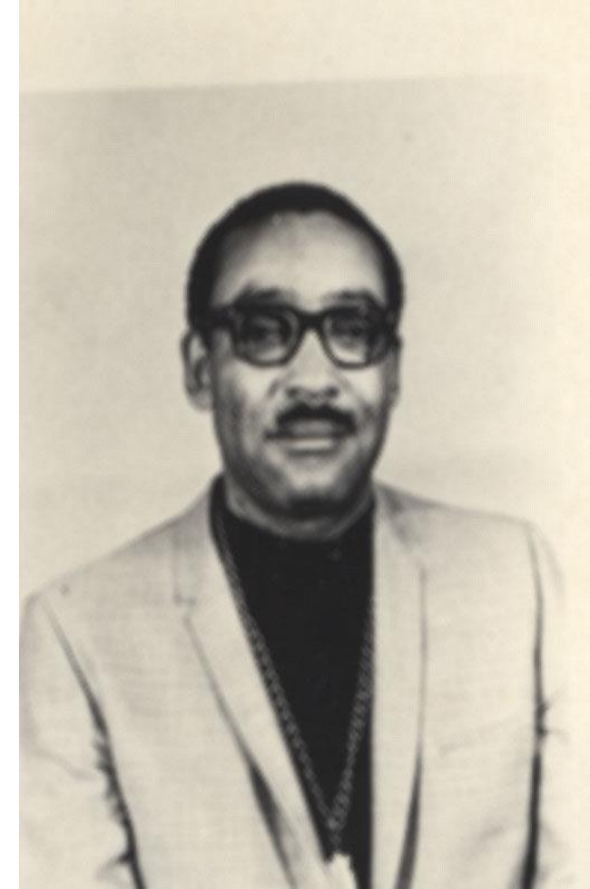
By 1968 the chair of the organization had changed several times and the current ideology embraced the phrase "Black Power" and looked to economic development and community self-determination as a means of change. In 1968 Hofstra's Homecoming Parade included this float that was sponsored by CORE.



# LOUIS LOMAX

Louis Lomax was born on August 16, 1922, in Valdosta, Georgia. He graduated in 1942 from Paine College in Augusta, where he was editor of the student newspaper. He then went on to receive an M.A. from American University and a Ph.D. from Yale University.

Lomax began his journalism career at the Afro-American and the Chicago Defender. He became the first African-American television journalist on WNTA-TV in NY in 1958. Along with Mike Wallace, Lomax produced a five-part documentary series about the Nation of Islam in 1959. His first book, *The Reluctant African*, was published in 1960. He debated Malcolm X in Madison Square Garden in 1963.



## LOUIS LOMAX CONTINUED

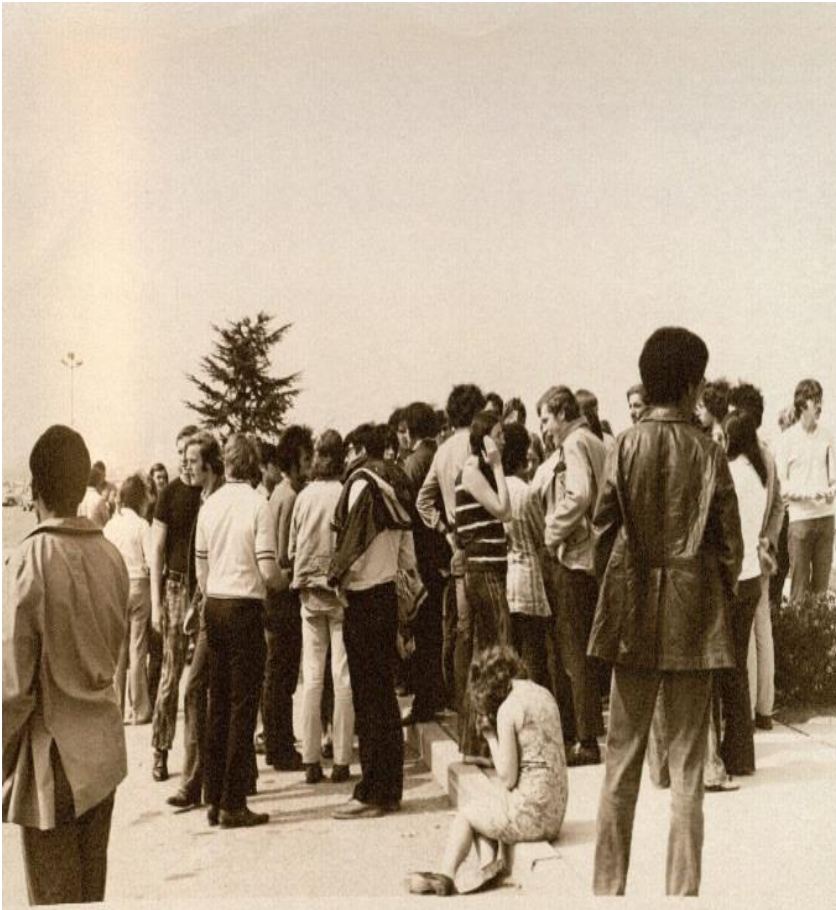
Throughout the 1960s, Lomax gave lectures on college campuses. He came to Hofstra in 1969 to talk to both faculty and students about race relations and civil rights. He held “rap sessions,” getting people to speak their mind and trying to inform them about organizations such as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

His most well-known book, *To Kill a Black Man*, about the lives of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X, was published in 1969. In that same year, he was hired by Hofstra University, first as a visiting professor teaching humanities courses, social sciences, and American studies, and then in 1970 as a member of the newly formed Black Studies Department. He moved to Baldwin Harbor and began work on a three-volume history as a writer-in-residence at Hofstra.

Lomax was killed on July 30, 1970, in a car accident near Santa Rosa, New Mexico, when his brakes failed. He was working on a new documentary about the role of the FBI in Malcolm X’s death. Some believe Lomax’s crash was not accidental.



# STUDENT UNREST



After the start of the Vietnam War, student protestors began to question what they labelled “the establishment.” This included their university professors and administrators, as well as any military, political, or media outlet.

Students at Hofstra began to protest and demand expansion of student rights, as well as the abolishment of mandatory physical education, the abolishment of mandatory ROTC participation, more student input into curriculum, and the formation of an African-American Studies department.

Sit-ins were held and a takeover of the administrative offices then housed in Weller Hall occurred on April 29, 1969.



# BLACK PANTHERS SPEAK AT HOFSTRA

Speaking to a packed auditorium of over 700, Afeni Shakur told the student audience that “The revolution is here.” Shakur, born Alice Faye Williams, was part of the Black Panthers, who in 1970 were on trial for participating in many bombings.

She was her own criminal defense attorney and was acquitted on all 156 counts against her. In 1971 she gave birth to her baby, Tupac Shakur, and raised her son in the Bronx.

## SMC Holds Black Panther Rally

**Black Panthers Espouse Prompt Revolution Have Nothing to Lose, Everything to Gain**

by CRAIG DREILINGER

The power structure's showing you that they're your enemy. But you can't show that you know that by talk, talk, talk. It's at a point where we in the Black community know what's happening. And if you don't know what's happening then you're going to have to be dealt with too when the revolution comes,” stated Artie Seale, wife of imprisoned Bobby Seale as she and other Black Panthers addressed students at last night's rally.

Surrounded by bodyguards, Mrs. Seale, the first speaker, addressed the audience of over 700 people. She spoke of dope and capitalism in the black ghettos, saying, “That's why the Black Panther Party has to organize these people—to give them direction to take their frustrations.”

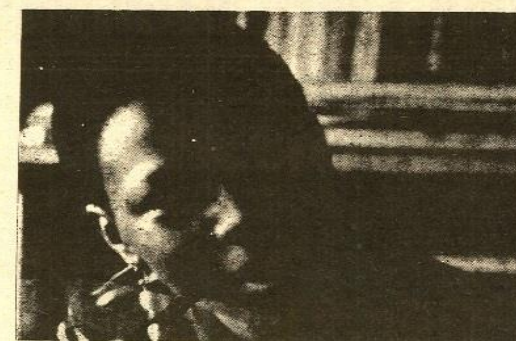
### Afeni Shakur

Afeni Shakur, one of the Panthers on trial in New York, answered the question of how to solve the frustrations. “There's nothing hip about shooting dope,” she shouted. “So we're not going to be hip no more. We're going to create a revolution. We're going to create a revolution so Eldridge Cleaver can come to John Kennedy Airport and say, ‘It's ours.’”

“The revolution is not coming. The revolution is here,” she told white students. “And I hope like hell that you've got your shit together—your grace period is over. Because when the revolution begins, and Babylon is burning, if you're not doing anything about it, then you're going to burn with Babylon.”

“But,” she added, “I don't want to prove to anybody that I'm a tough guy. I'm interested in proving to the aggressor that I'll do anything to obtain my freedom — and I mean, anything.”

“I hope that when you told us last year that you was to be



**YEAR OF THE REVOLUTION . . . is 1970** vowed Afeni Shakur before an audience of more than 700 in the Multi-Purpose Room.

revolutionaries that you were serious,” she concluded, “because the test is due. Nineteen-seventy is the year of the revolution.”

### Dave Hillard

David Hillard, the Chief of Staff for the Black Panther Party, approached the stage as the last Panther speaker of the evening. He was also surrounded by four silent bodyguards.

Hillard denied the accusations that the Black Panthers were responsible for the recent series of bombings in New York City. “If we did set up explosions we wouldn't bomb the Electric Circus . . . We'd blow up police cars — with the pigs in them.”

“We're not here to indiscriminately unleash terror on whites,” he explained, “but we want our rights. We want good housing, better schools. And we want to be able to smoke a good joint, if that's what we want to do. You see, we have nothing to lose and everything to gain. And there's nothing you can do to give us what we deserve.”

**Conspiracy Member Decries Middle Class**

By BOB MONZEGLIO

“This was really an incredible evening because everyone seemed stunned,” said Jerry Rubin, White Panther leader and a member of the ‘Chicago 7’ when referring to the Black Panther speakers before him. “For the first time ever in this prison some real people were fighting for a cause with no intellectual bullshit.”

He began his address to a packed house at last night's SMC sponsored rally. The audience responded with an enthusiastic ovation. Rubin then began his condemnation of middle class society.

### Advocates Killing Parents

“The first part of the program is to kill your parents,” he stated. “The first thing we have to do is burn down the suburbs and quit school. School is nothing more than turning into vegetables.”

An angry student in the audience demanded, “After you quit school, then what?”

“Then what, then what, then what — that's all the American school system teaches you,” answered Rubin. The average age of the Viet Cong guerilla is 15. They don't need school and yet they know more about life than you ever will.”

Rubin brought his experiences from the Chicago conspiracy trial into sharp focus. “I learned more about the American judicial sys-

THE HOFSTRA  
CHRONICLE  
UNIVERSITY

## LAMAR COX BECOMES A TRUSTEE AT HOFSTRA



Lamar Cox was born in Buford, Georgia, in 1933. He moved to Hempstead in 1959 after going to the University of Cincinnati for electrical engineering and receiving a Master's in applied mathematics from Adelphi in 1951.

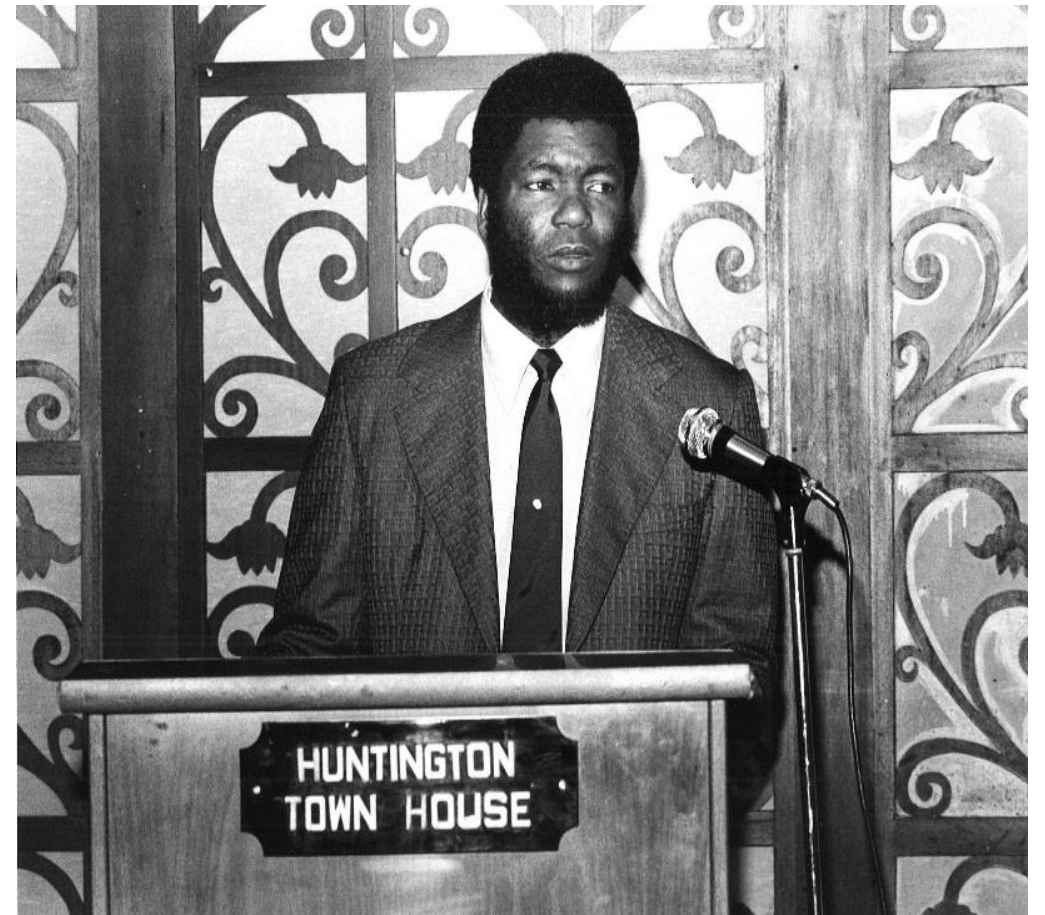
Cox became interested in the problem of integrated housing in 1959 and worked with engineers from Sperry Gyroscope Co. in establishing the Long Island Council for Integrated Housing. He eventually became the chairman of CORE and worked for the rights of minorities on Long Island. He was asked to be on Hofstra's Board of Trustees in 1970 and remained on the Board until 1976.



# CANUTE PARRIS

Canute Parris started at Hofstra as a professor in the Political Science Department in 1968. He was also the director of Hofstra's African Studies Institute which was funded by Hofstra, Nassau Community College, and the Nassau County Youth Board. In the summer, the Institute held a six week program for children from 6-16 who lived in the Town of Hempstead. The courses were geared towards black culture and history.

Parris became the first faculty director of the Africana Studies Department at Hofstra in 1971. He became politically active in Long Island politics and tried to show how blacks could have influence in the political sphere, but they had to get involved.



# BLACK WEEKEND OR BLACK FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

In 1970, Hofstra held its first Black Festival of the Arts. Films and fashion shows were held and students attended lectures by Hofstra professors speaking about current topics.

In 1971, the Weekend was sponsored by the Organization of Black Collegians and among the invited speakers were poet LeRoi Jones (later known as Amiri Baraka) and boxing heavy weight Muhammad Ali (who was once known as Cassius Clay).

THE CHRONICLE  
HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

Vol. 36—No. 24 Friday, April 2, 1971 Hempstead, N. Y.

## Black Weekend Hosts Ali, Jones

### Poet Declares Blacks Lack Nervous System

By RICHARD KAUFMAN

"We Blacks have not yet developed a nervous system. You could burn off one of our toes and no other part would know about it," Leroy Jones told an audience of 500 at the University on Friday. The noted Black poet was speaking on behalf of the Organization of Black Collegians' Black Weekend.

He was referring to the fact that Blacks around the world, especially in this country, are not united in a Pan-African movement. "Jews in New York are fighting for Jews in Russia. That's a nervous system," he said.

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Leroi Jones  
Black playwright



Muhammad Ali  
Ex-champ

### Dethroned Champion Seeks True Objective

By ALTON KINSEY

One thousand people were on hand Saturday afternoon as Muhammad Ali spoke at the Physical Fitness Center. Ali was one of the main attractions of Black Weekend, sponsored by the Organization of Black Collegians.

Ali opened the speech by stating that when he is not boxing he spends a good deal of his time reading and thinking. The object of this is to find what he called his true objective. Once he finds this, he feels he will have determined most of his "purpose in life," a theme which he repeated throughout his speech.

(Continued on Page Four)

May 15 but this sense of urgency suggested we make an exception this spring. Now it is the students who want a postponement. That bites of irony." Student Representative Hearne explained that despite constant front page coverage in the Chronicle, "the students were not informed enough to be motivated (to run for the Senate). We have to hit them with ditto sheets until they drown in them. I admit that is a job for the Student Senate . . . All we were asking for was the benefit of the doubt.

(Continued on Page Three)



# BLACK WEEKEND OR BLACK FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS CONTINUED

Ali was not only regarded for his prowess in the boxing ring, but also because he held strict to his beliefs. In 1967 after changing his name and joining the Nation of Islam, Ali refused to be conscripted into the Vietnam War. After his conviction on draft evasion charges he was stripped of his boxing title and didn't fight for almost four years. He was outspoken about his beliefs and spoke out at college campuses against the war and for racial justice. Ali appealed his conviction and in 1971 it was overturned by the US Supreme Court. In 2008, Hofstra held a conference entitled, "The Greatest: From Cassius Clay to Muhammad Ali."



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For more information about any of these topics or individuals, please visit the Department of Special Collections located in the Joan & Donald E. Axinn Library,

