

Violence Is A Classroom:

The 1972 Grambling and Southern Riots and the Trajectory of Black Southern Student Protest

by Thomas Aiello

Campus unrest proliferated all over the country in the 1960s and 70s. In 1972, it reached Grambling State University and Southern University. But the protests at Louisiana's black campuses were fundamentally different from that at, say, Kent State in May 1970, and the protests at most black universities, including Grambling and Southern, were fundamentally different from that at Jackson State two weeks after the violence in Ohio.

Historians generally classify such protest as being the product of a long history of black student activism, stemming from social inequities and moving into university administration and back relatively seamlessly¹, or as an outgrowth of the broader student movement, which saw all forms of bureaucracy as suspect.² But Southern and Grambling proved that neither of these assumptions hold. The student movement was necessarily influential, and the taint of segregation was clearly evident in the bitterness of black Louisiana collegians. But the protests in Louisiana were directed at black officials at the university, specifically dealing with issues they saw as influenced by race and class accommodationism. That isn't to say civil rights wasn't a factor in such events. The autocratic administrators were, in the eyes of students, tools of the white power structure in the state, who were in turn the authors of the segregationist policy against which their other track of anger resonated. And even when civil rights wasn't the impetus for such campus activism, it was still there, hovering over the proceedings.³ And so, student protests at Southern and Grambling—at black universities in general—were neither the result of a seamless transition from candlelight vigils for voting rights nor an inherent continuation of or dependency on white college radicalism. They were a combination of those realities, additionally feeding from a long history of the contradictory

nature of black colleges themselves and the historical frustration black students often expressed at those schools.

And the frustration was there at Grambling. On November 1, 1972, a campus group headed by Student Government Association president Louis Scott presented a list of demands to president Ralph Waldo Emerson Jones. The group wanted greater student participation in policymaking. They wanted a say in faculty hiring. They wanted a department of black studies, more comprehensive mail and phone service, the removal of the school dress code. Finally, they wanted 75 percent representation on university disciplinary committees.⁴

This wasn't a protest against the bombing of Cambodia. It wasn't a protest for civil rights. It was a protest by black collegians against the black college itself, and the nature of black colleges seemingly had such protest built into the system. Black colleges were founded in response to racism, but they weren't necessarily a militant protest against it. Public schools were almost always created by white legislatures to diffuse the potential for integration attempts at white universities. They thus sought to create a socially respectable middle class of their student bodies, one that would protect the reputation and existence of the school itself—allowing students to achieve some kind of financial security after graduation while making them largely unwilling to rock any of the racist boats that the universities depended upon for their survival. But education doesn't work that way. Students who learned more and more about the history, economics, and sociology of their country and their region became more and more frustrated with the status quo. Thus to keep the mechanism in place, southern black colleges developed extremely authoritarian administrations designed to keep such contradictory norms in place.⁵

Examples of student response to such authoritarianism date to the 1920s⁶, but Grambling had a less extensive history with student militancy. It was cloistered in a small black town, and though there was staunch segregation in the parish seat of Ruston, the city of Grambling itself proved a relative barrier to much of its harsher dictates. Still, Grambling wasn't immune from such realities. In 1967, approximately 800 students walked out of classes, ostensibly protesting Grambling's overemphasis on the football team and arguing that such aggrandizement hurt its academic mission. President Jones asked Governor John McKeithen for a national guard presence, and McKeithen responded with 800 men. It was a clumsy move. There was no violence in 1967. In addition, Jones expelled thirty-one of the dissidents.⁷

The following year, in 1968, a contingent of dissident students authored a more specific protest, chiding the administration for cowing to the white State Board of Education and seeking curriculum changes that more readily addressed the black experience. Again President Jones responded by requesting state aid and approving a national guard contingent on campus. Then he expelled twenty-nine more students and dismissed three faculty members.⁸

Such faculty collusion wasn't rare. As Joel Rosenthal has noted, faculty members tended to play a much more active role in the protest actions at black colleges and universities. White liberals played a role, but black professors, often made militant through their own collegiate experience, participated in even greater numbers. Howard, for example, released radical professor Nathan Hare, who had been critical of black colleges. In August 1967, Hare described the schools as "caricatures of the most conspicuous aspects of white college trivia....These colleges, in the minds of many of their students, represent in almost every way a total failure."⁹

The Grambling administration didn't do much to dissuade the students of that idea. The day

after Scott made the Student Government Association's demands on November 1, 1972, Jones left for Hawaii with the Grambling football team. There would be no capitulation when the Tigers had a game to play. While Grambling's security force would be in charge of maintaining order on campus, forces from the Ruston City Police, Lincoln Parish Sheriff's Department, Louisiana State Police, and Louisiana National Guard were on alert.¹⁰

Shortly after five o'clock, November 2, one of the student groups meeting in front of the administration building began removing tables and chairs from the dining hall, using them to form a barricade blocking the street. Still, there didn't seem to be any systematic plan in place. Around nine o'clock, the violence started when a frustrated student threw a garbage can lid through a plate glass window at the student union. Students teemed into the building, looting clothing and jewelry from the student bookstore.¹¹

Then the first shot was fired. A student blasted a glass door with a pistol, inciting students to begin destroying all of the glass windows and doors.¹² The frenzied group then moved to Adams Hall, the women's dormitory. "Wake your dead up!" they shouted. They threw rocks into the dorm's large glass windows before moving on. At some point in the evening, members of the group overturned a Volkswagen.¹³ There was no order to the violence. No system. Twelve units of the state police waiting on the edge of campus moved in and began making arrests. By midnight, twelve students had been arrested and sent to the Lincoln Parish prison camp. The number totaled twenty-five by morning.¹⁴ The brief revolution had failed. The problem was that the core group of approximately 150 student protesters couldn't marshal any sort of mass consciousness among a student body of more than 4,000.¹⁵ But the student unrest at Grambling seemed like an introduction, not a conclusion. The protest failed, but the protest wasn't over.

Student activism was nothing new at Southern. In Reverend T. J. Jemison's Baton Rouge

bus boycott of 1953, for example, Southern students actively declined to ride local busses. As the early fifties became the late fifties, Southern students began a series of lunch counter protests years before the popular birth of the sit-in movement at North Carolina A&T in February 1960.¹⁶

When the Greensboro sit-ins of 1960 became a national movement, Southern again became a state flashpoint for racial protest. At the same time, however, it became a glaring example of the disconnect between a radical student body and a conservative administration. The State Board of Education warned the presidents of all Louisiana colleges, white or black, to discourage such radicalism through “stern disciplinary action,” and Southern president Felton Clark obliged, issuing directives to stem the tide of protest before it even started. It didn’t work. In late March, Southern students sat in at local businesses. 3,000 students marched to the state capital. Clark expelled the sixteen students arrested in the sit-ins and the one who organized the march.¹⁷

At this point, the Southern administration had proved to the student body that racial equality was less important than order, discipline, and reputation. Hundreds of students filed paperwork to withdraw from the university, viewing their administration as a shill for the white Louisiana establishment. Of course, it was, in a way. But Clark was charged with maintaining the viability of a black college funded by a white legislature, and he knew that such protests would upset the already tenuous status of black higher education in a decidedly racist state. His actions came less from the innate Uncle Tomism with which he was charged than a pragmatism that sought to maintain Southern’s place in the system.

In 1968, Leon Netterville replaced Clark as Southern’s president, but he was cut from the same authoritarian cloth. And by that time, the Black Power movement had arrived on campus. Renewed protests in 1966 and 1967 had led to the dismissal of three white faculty members, seen as abetting the

activism.¹⁸ The following year, groups at both the Scotlandville and New Orleans branches of Southern demanded a Department of Black Studies. Netterville not only refused the request, he refused to acknowledge it existed. In 1969, students on the New Orleans campus replaced the American flag with a Black Liberation flag, leading to a police crackdown and twenty arrests. Another boycott of classes. More demonstrations. The national guard would occupy both campuses for weeks to keep order.¹⁹

In October 1972, disgruntled students provided a list of demands to the administration. Their demands were similar to those of the Grambling students, so much so that it was assumed in Lincoln Parish that the Grambling letter was based heavily on the influence of Southern’s. (Grambling denied this.) They wanted changes in the curriculum, changes in the administration, and Netterville’s resignation.²⁰ The university responded on October 24 by agreeing to make some changes and study others, but the concessions were not enough for most of the angry students.²¹

A group calling themselves “Students United” marched to the Louisiana Board of Education seeking restitution. Netterville, they argued, was out of touch and nonresponsive to student needs.²² The Board was surprisingly receptive, proposing a three-week study of the campus situation at Southern. State education superintendent Louis J. Michot addressed the 8,000-member student body at the Scotlandville campus and recommend to Netterville in private negotiations that he resign. “Students United” responded by issuing the investigatory board a list of twelve possible successors for university president, including the poet Amiri Baraka and radical professor Nathan Hare, who had launched his critique of black colleges in 1967.

Progress was slow, and there was no way the state Board of Education was going to approve Baraka or Hare as president. On Halloween night, twenty-four hours before Grambling’s own stunted

protest, 2,000 students stormed the administration building and warned that if officials didn't vacate the building, they would "suffer bodily harm." Governor Edwin Edwards ordered the national guard to report for duty, and with East Baton Rouge Parish sheriffs and state police, law enforcement helped evacuate faculty and administrators from the campus.²³

Southern's New Orleans campus would be closed for the remainder of the semester, but at Scotlandville, peace seemed to return.²⁴ But not for long. On November 16, students occupied the Southern administration building for a second time. Administrators again called in sheriff's deputies and state police. The governor called out the national guard. This time, however, the protest wouldn't end quietly.²⁵

There were approximately 2,000 students in and around the administration building when the police arrived. Almost immediately, the area was inundated with tear gas. Confusion. Screaming. With their eyes red and burning, students began running from the administration building. There were loud explosions amidst the haze, and when the smoke began to clear, two students lay dead in the street. "The students had small military bombs," announced Sheriff Al Amiss. "The two students were killed by the bombs thrown right by them from a building window." Governor Edwards acknowledged that no weapons were found in the administration building, but clearly sided with Amiss's version of events. It was the protest that killed the students, not the police.²⁶

"At least 2,000 charged us," Amiss told reporters. The students had "overpowered a campus security guard, and that's where they got their tear gas." He had also seen the bombs. But in another statement, Amiss said, "We retreated back. The victims were shot as we were retreating to get our gas masks on." When pressed on the contradictory statements, Amiss suggested that perhaps the bombs had been filled with buckshot.

"The governor is a liar," said one student, speaking on condition of anonymity. "They were raiding the administration building. I saw them throw double canisters and I saw the students throw them back. We did not have tear gas and we did not have bombs. No one in the administration building was armed. No one."²⁷ This seemed a far more plausible explanation. Student unrest had been fomenting since October, but no attacks had been reported. The notion that students would conclude that now was somehow the time for violence seemed implausible. The police had the resources to incite the violence. The constant frustration of white officers having to continually quell campus disturbances gave them motive. But in a war of words, the authority of the police (to say nothing of their whiteness) would clearly ensure that any and all officers would be protected.

The following week, attorney general William J. Guste, Jr., opened a special investigation into the deaths of the two students, Denver Smith and Leonard Brown, headed dually by a white and black assistant attorney general. The FBI, too, would investigate to determine whether any federal laws were broken. By that time, however, the jaded students were openly accusing Netterville of premeditated murder. "They [the Sheriff's deputies] fired once, picked up the cartridge release, put them in their pockets and fired again," said Fred Prejean, spokesman for "Students United." Another member of the group, Charlene Hardnett, charged, "We are aware of the fact that Dr. Netterville set the students up for mass slaughter."²⁸

Nelson Johnson, president of the national Youth Organization for Black Unity (YOBU), declared that there was another, more insidious force maneuvering the student protesters. "White, radical, left-wing groups" had swooped in to bolster their own agendas. "As soon as the smoke cleared, white left-wing groups started parachuting in here trying to maneuver the students, among other things, to declare a massive mobilization on Washington, DC." All this sort of action did, argued Johnson,

was refocus students' anger away from their own interests. Nevermind that YOBU, too, was a national organization that swooped in to the campus. That it, too, was making a name for itself on the back of a tragedy. But for Johnson, such concerns about YOBU were unfounded. It was a black group. And, ultimately, it was "working to clarify the issues and the basic objectives of the students' struggle which is around the question of black education."²⁹ For Johnson, the broader example of student activism on American campuses was hijacking the message and meaning of black campus protest. The students were situating themselves against the traditionally understood evolution of university unrest. Black education had been problematic long before America's incursion into Vietnam, long before the post-Brown Civil Rights Movement had begun in earnest. This was student activism, and it was, at its base, a fight against racism, but it was also a unique coupling of those elements with a long history of black frustration with black higher education.

But none of that solved the debate about motive and guilt.³⁰ Guste's investigatory committee included six whites and six blacks, who held interviews behind closed doors. In the heated, mistrustful climate of the Southern campus, however, it was unlikely that the jaded students would be very cooperative. Reports began to leak out almost immediately after the investigation got underway that requested interviewees were failing to appear.³¹

Meanwhile, a separate, unofficial investigation by the makeshift Black People's Committee of Inquiry held public hearings with witnesses who were far more cooperative. The group wasn't local. Led by Berkeley, California councilman D'army Bailey and Georgia representative and Civil Rights veteran Julian Bond, the Committee was designed to use the fame of its members to bring pressure on Louisiana to act. Even Governor Edwards appeared before the Committee, hoping to salve the wounds of the

Baton Rouge black community. He was unsuccessful. "I think you're going to find in the long run that this is just one of those things that happens when people flaunt authority," he told them.³²

Unsurprisingly, the Black People's Committee of Inquiry exonerated the students of any role in the deaths. The police officers incited the violence, and there was ample evidence for prosecution. But they weren't the only offenders. Members of the university administration refused to bring medical assistance to the slain students, one of whom most likely could have been saved with emergency care.³³ The report of the biracial Guste committee, however, was surprising. The group found that the students were killed by a shotgun, not by a bomb—that the sheriff's deputies had incited the violence by lobbing tear gas at the protesters. It wasn't the students' fault.³⁴

Edwards took a hard line. He had seen the same evidence as had the Guste committee and he was unconvinced. He disputed the findings at every turn. Owusu Sadaukai, member of the Black Peoples' Committee of Inquiry, warned that a "judgment" needed to be made soon, that "Black people be informed before the whole thing is quickly forgotten, which is what usually happens in these cases."³⁵ He was right. Edwards' obstinacy assured that a judgment wouldn't be made anytime soon, and though Southern would never forget the incident, law enforcement quickly did. Neither Amiss nor his deputies were ever prosecuted for the murder of the two students. For professional misconduct. For dereliction of duty. For anything.

The violence that occurred at Grambling and Southern wasn't rare at southern black campuses. Not only did black colleges experience more campus protests per capita than did their white counterparts during the Black Power era, but more off-campus authorities were used to police the resulting problems.³⁶ Of course, southern black colleges were already situated in a tense racial climate, and the scores of white police who

appeared on campus demonstrated white southern mistrust of black students and increased the potential for violence. The dynamic of white officers policing black protests not specifically targeted at integration and similar civil rights goals also had a significant history prior to the Grambling and Southern protests of 1972. From the inception of Black Power to the fall semester of 1972, this combination of black students and white police proved dramatically combustible, at Alcorn A&M, Texas Southern, South Carolina State, and Jackson State.³⁷

The legacy of violence at Grambling and Southern resonated in the years to come. In the spring following the 1972 protests, E.C. Harrison, Southern's vice president for academic affairs, published a remarkably enlightened study of student unrest at black colleges, which many of the activist students would have found either gratifying or disingenuous, depending on the level of residual frustration they experienced after the events. To be sure, Harrison's conclusions didn't jibe with Netterville's (or, for that matter, Jones's) actions. He argued for "modernization of organizational structure and administrative practices and policies," and defended "an organization in which the faculty and student are involved in the formulation of policies and decisions." Administration officials needed to demonstrate patience. In addition, the community surrounding the university needed to "make a re-examination of their institutions, social customs and laws for their imperfections and inconsistencies."³⁸ But in the years following the protests, Harrison's optimism to cooperation didn't solve the problems.³⁹ And the federal investigation into the deaths of Denver Smith and Leonard Brown ended without indictments.⁴⁰

In the vast panoply of sociological and historical treatments of the nature and evolution of student protest, it is sometimes easy to forget what they died for—easy to forget the place of the Grambling and Southern protests in the broader trajectory of student activism at black southern

universities. The national student movement and the strain of living in the racist South certainly had their place in student frustration, but the protests were directed at administrations deemed unresponsive to student needs. And so, the long history of criticism against the administration and curriculum of black colleges was given impetus by the Black Power movement, the broader culture of student protest, and the inherent mistrust of white authorities to create a crucible of discontent during the Fall 1972 semester at Louisiana's two principal black public institutions. The broken buildings, the injured and arrested, and the legacy of two dead students would cast a pall over the universities that would linger.

Notes

¹See, for example, Joel Rosenthal, "Southern Black Student Activism: Assimilation vs. Nationalism," *The Journal of Negro Education* 44 (Spring 1975): 113-129.

²See note 47.

³Frederic Solomon and J.R. Fishman, "The Psychosocial Meaning of Nonviolence in Student Civil Rights Activities," *Psychiatry* 28 (May 1964): 99.

⁴*The Gramblinite*, 3 November 1972, 1; and *Ruston Daily Leader*, 3 November 1972, 1, 3.

⁵The case of Louisiana's black colleges seemed to validate such notions. Prior to LSU's 1950 integration and the Supreme Court's 1954 Brown decision, the Louisiana legislature desperately hoped to stem the tide of integrationist sentiment by giving the appearance of equality at black schools. Black primary and secondary enrollment was up in the late 1940s, as was the length of the black school year, which had traditionally been far shorter than that of white students. Funding for Grambling and Southern increased heavily in the postwar years, an effort to keep black students happy in their black colleges, lest they attempt to enroll at white ones. In 1947, the state legislature established a law school at Southern, again hoping to protect the white purity

of the LSU law school across town. Joel Rosenthal, "Southern Black Student Activism: Assimilation vs. Nationalism," *The Journal of Negro Education* 44 (Spring 1975): 114; Robert P. Stuckert, "The Negro College—A Pawn of White Domination," *The Wisconsin Sociologist* 3 (January 1964): 1; Christopher Jencks and David Reisman, "The American Negro College," *Harvard Educational Review* 37 (Winter 1967): 29; Michael Miles, *The Radical Probe: The Logic of Student Rebellion* (New York: Atheneum, 1971): 194-197; and Adam Fairclough, *Race and Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915-1972* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), 109.

⁶As early as the 1920s, student protests against the administration of black colleges occurred at Howard, Hampton, and Fisk. Importantly, these were the country's elite black schools, each located in an urban setting that put students in frequent contact with white society. They could, in a way, see what they were missing. In the 1930s, white radical activism in the face of the Depression, led most forcefully by the National Student League, provided new fuel for such critiques, as did revelatory, sensationalistic cases like the Scottsboro trial in Alabama. Students at Virginia State protested against the "Victorian atmosphere and the convent-like restrictions" placed upon them. When students at Fisk protested a local lynching and picketed the local segregated theater, president Thomas E. Jones expelled the leader of the protests for actions that were "detrimental to the best interests of the University." Similarly, when the student council president of South Carolina College for Negroes helped organize a post-Brown desegregation petition, he was expelled, touching off campus-wide protests that culminated in the expulsion of more students and the dismissal of several members of the faculty and staff. Rosenthal, "Southern Black Student Activism," 126-127.

⁷Robert Deitz, "Grambling? A 'Football Factory' Is in an Educational Uproar," *The National Observer*, 6 November 1967, 4.

⁸"Grambling College (Louisiana)," *AAUP Bulletin* 57 (Spring 1971): 50-52.

⁹Hare's criticisms seemed to be validated at Southern the following term. In 1968, John J. Hedgemon, the university registrar, was indicted for income tax evasion early in the semester, and evidence in the trial demonstrated that he fixed grades, gave credit for courses not taken, and allowed illegal late registrations, all for a price. Nathan Hare, "Behind the Black College Student Revolt," *Ebony* 22 (August 1967), 58-61; and *Louisiana Weekly*, 12 August 1967, 2-6, 2-7, 16 November 1968, 1, 6.

¹⁰*Ruston Daily Leader*, 3 November 1972, 1, 3

¹¹*Ruston Daily Leader*, 3 November 1972, 3.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴*The Gramblinite*, 10 November 1972, 1, 9; and *Ruston Daily Leader*, 3 November 1972, 1, 3.

¹⁵Kenneth Newman, the school's business manager, estimated the damage to campus at \$52,563. *The Gramblinite*, 1 December 1972, 1; and *Ruston Daily Leader*, 3 November 1972, 1, 3, 6 November 1972, 1.

¹⁶Aldon Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 17-25; and Dean Sinclair, "Equal in All Places: The Civil Rights Struggle in Baton Rouge, 1953-1963," *Louisiana History* 39 (Summer 1998): 358.

¹⁷*Baton Rouge Morning Advocate*, 16 March 1960, 1A, 8A; "1960's Sit-In's, They Refused to Be Refused: Historical Statement," 1960 Sit-Ins, Archive, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA; "Group Recalls 1960 Sit-In During Reunion Here," 1960 Sit-Ins, Archive, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA; and Fairclough, *Race and Democracy*, 266-267. For more on the distinctively black collegiate nature

of the sit-in movement, see Ruth Searles and J. Allen Williams, Jr., "Negro College Students' Participation in Sit-Ins," *Social Forces* 40 (March 1962): 215-220.

¹⁸The dismissed faulty members were Woodrow Wilson Teaching Interns, participants in a program that brought young, northern (and usually white) academics to black southern universities. Similar instances occurred at Bishop College and South Carolina State. "Academic Freedom and Tenure: Southern University and Agricultural and Mechanical College," *AAUP Bulletin* 54 (Spring 1968): 14-24.

¹⁹Raphael Cassimere, "Crisis in Public Higher Education in Louisiana," *Integrated Education* 13 (September 1975): 10-14; and *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 3 April 1969, 22, 7 April 1969, 12, 10 April 1969, 1, 19, 10 May 1969, 1, 25, 13 May 1969, 5, 15 May 1969, 16, 20 May 1969, 4, 21 May 1969, 9.

²⁰Netterville was a Southern alum, with a masters degree from Columbia University. By the time of his 1969 appointment as president, he had also received an honorary doctorate from Wiley College. "George Leon Netterville, Jr.," Presidents-Netterville G. Leon, Archives, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA.

²¹The University's Response to Student Grievances As Approved By the University Senate, October 24, 1972," Smith, Denver and Brown, Leonard Shooting Tragedy, 16 November 1972, Box 1, Archives, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA.

²²"Students United List of Grievances," Smith, Denver and Brown, Leonard Shooting Tragedy, 16 November 1972, Box 1, Archives, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA.

²³*Louisiana Weekly*, 4 November 1972, 1, 6.

²⁴*Louisiana Weekly*, 11 November 1972, 1, 8.

²⁵*Ruston Daily Leader*, 17 November 1972, 1, 3; "Denver Smith and Leonard Brown," Smith,

Denver and Brown, Leonard Shooting Tragedy, 16 November 1972, Box 1, Archives, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA; and "Chronology of Events That Led to Death of Students," Smith, Denver and Brown, Leonard Shooting Tragedy, 16 November 1972, Box 1, Archives, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA (hereinafter cited as "Chronology of Events").

²⁶"Chronology of Events"; and *Ruston Daily Leader*, 17 November 1972, 1, 3.

²⁷*Ruston Daily Leader*, 17 November 1972, 1, 3.

²⁸*Louisiana Weekly*, 25 November 1972, 1, 8, 9.

²⁹*Louisiana Weekly*, 2 December 1972, 1, 10. The events at Southern in fall 1972 were documented by the University in painstaking detail and printed on December 9, 1972. For a description of all of the events at Southern in fall 1972, see "A Chronology of a Crisis at Southern University," Smith, Denver and Brown, Leonard Shooting Tragedy, 16 November 1972, Box 1, Archives, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA.

³⁰*Louisiana Weekly*, 2 December 1972, 1, 10.

³¹*Louisiana Weekly*, 25 November 1972, 1, 8, 9.

³²*Louisiana Weekly*, 25 November 1972, 1, 8, 9, 2 December 1972, 1, 10.

³³*Louisiana Weekly*, 9 December 1972, 1, 9.

³⁴"Report of the Attorney General's Special Commission of Inquiry on the Southern University Tragedy of November 16, 1972," July 1973, Smith, Denver and Brown, Leonard Shooting Tragedy, 16 November 1972, Box 1, Archives, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA. Southern responded with a follow up report responding to the Commission's findings and proposing to make suggested changes outlined in the report. "A Response to the Attorney General's Special Commission of Inquiry On the Southern University Tragedy of November 16, 1972," Smith,

Denver and Brown, Leonard Shooting Tragedy, 16 November 1972, Box 1, Archives, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA.

³⁵*Louisiana Weekly*, 9 December 1972, 1, 9.

³⁶Durward Long, "Black Protest," in *Protest: Student Activism in America*, ed. Julian Foster and Durward Long (New York: William Morrow, 1970), 467. The massive spate of student activism was documented and commented upon ad nauseum by sociologists, psychologists, educational theorists, and historians. For edifying and exemplary treatment of the nature of campus protests, see Alexander W. Astin, Helen S. Astin, Alan E. Bayer, and Ann S. Bisconti, *The Power of Protest: A National Study of Student and Faculty Disruptions with Implications for the Future* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1975); Michael W. Miles, *The Radical Probe: The Logic of Student Rebellion* (New York: Atheneum, 1971); John R. Searle, **The Campus War: A Sympathetic Look at the University in Agony** (New York: World Publishing Co., 1971); and Roger Rapoport and Laurence J. Kirshbaum, *Is the Library Burning?* (New York: Random House, 1969). The American Council on Education created the Special Committee on Campus Tensions in 1969, and that group commissioned a series of papers analyzing campus protests in the late 1960s. See David c. Nichols, ed., *Perspectives on Campus Tensions* (Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 1970). Finally, for specific analysis of Black Power's relationship to the student protest movement—black and white—see James McEvoy and Abraham Miller, ed., *Black Power and Student Rebellion* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1969).

³⁷Mississippi State Police tear gassed and clubbed Alcorn A&M students in 1966, then shot and wounded three students in 1969. A 1967 shootout at Texas Southern left a policeman dead and several protesters wounded. In the infamous Orangeburg Massacre of 1968, police killed three students at South Carolina State. A North Carolina

A&T student died the following year in yet another shootout. Rosenthal, "Black Student Activism," 128. See also, Bernard Friedberg, "Houston and the TSU Riot," in *Life Styles in the Black Ghetto*, ed. William McCord, John Howard, Bernard Friedberg, and Edwin Harwood (New York: WW Norton and Co., 1969), 36-51; Jack Nelson and Jack Bass, *The Orangeburg Massacre* (Cleveland, OH: World Publishing Co., 1970); "The Siege of Greensboro," *Newsweek*, 2 June 1969, 38; and Robert L. Terrell, "Up From Uncle Tomism: Protest on the Negro Campuses," *Commonweal* 92 (3 April 1970), 87-93. Finally, and most famously, Mississippi police killed two protesters at Jackson State College in 1970. Protests at Jackson State, like many others in May 1970, began in reaction to the shootings at Kent State. White Jackson's angry response to the protests, however, caused the protests to escalate. So Jackson State clearly belongs with Kent State, as it also does with black student interaction with the white culture surrounding it. Unlike the protests at Southern and its antecedents stretching back to the 1920s, the violence at Jackson State did not have its genesis in student frustration with the administration or core curriculum of the university. The most comprehensive account of the Jackson State shootings is Tom Spofford, *Lynch Street: The May 1970 Slayings at Jackson State College* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1988). See also, "The Shootings at Jackson State University: Thirty Years Later," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 28 (Summer 2000): 42-43. For more on the immediate reactive historiography of Kent State and the ensuing campus violence at Jackson State and other universities, see Jerry M. Lewis, "Review Essay: The Telling of Kent State," *Social Problems* 19 (Autumn 1971): 267-279.

³⁸For all its liberal conclusions, however, signs of disconnect were still present. Harrison argued that "the administrators [surveyed] manifested little concern for reorganization of the educational program. One possible explanation for this is that changing the educational program was

not a great issue among the students.” Harrison’s own experience at Southern belied this “possible explanation.” E.C. Harrison, “Student Unrest on the Black College Campus,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 41 (Spring 1972): 118, 120.

³⁹*Shreveport Times*, 8 November 1973, 3B.

⁴⁰*New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 25 February 1975, 5, 27 February 1975, 6.