

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/25/us/tom-hayden-dead.html>

Tom Hayden, Civil Rights and Antiwar Activist Turned Lawmaker, Dies at 76

By [ROBERT D. McFADDEN](#) OCT. 24, 2016

Tom Hayden, who burst out of the 1960s counterculture as a radical leader of America's civil rights and antiwar movements, but rocked the boat more gently later in life with a progressive political agenda as an author and California state legislator, died on Sunday in Santa Monica, Calif. He was 76.

His wife, Barbara Williams, said he died in a hospital. He had been treated for heart problems and fell ill in July while attending the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. He lived in Los Angeles.

During the racial unrest and antiwar protests of the 1960s and early '70s, Mr. Hayden was one of the nation's most visible radicals. He was a founder of Students for a Democratic Society, a defendant in the Chicago Seven trial after riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention, and a peace activist who married Jane Fonda, went to Hanoi and escorted American prisoners of war home from Vietnam.

As a civil rights worker, he was beaten in Mississippi and jailed in Georgia. In his cell he began writing what became the Port Huron Statement, the political manifesto of S.D.S. and the New Left that envisioned an alliance of college students in a peaceful crusade to overcome what it called repressive government, corporate greed and racism. Its aim was to create a multiracial, egalitarian society.

Like his allies the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, who were assassinated in 1968, Mr. Hayden opposed violent protests but backed militant demonstrations, like the occupation of Columbia University campus buildings by students and the burning of draft cards. He also helped plan protests that, as it happened, turned into clashes with the Chicago police outside the Democratic convention.

In 1974, with the Vietnam War in its final stages after American military involvement had all but ended, Mr. Hayden and Ms. Fonda, who were married by then, traveled across Vietnam, talking to people about their lives after years of war, and produced a documentary film, "Introduction to the Enemy." Detractors labeled it Communist propaganda, but Nora Sayre, reviewing it for The New York Times, called it a "pensive and moving film."



Tom Hayden speaking in Lincoln Park in Chicago during the Democratic National Convention in August 1968. Credit Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images

Later, with the war over and the idealisms of the '60s fading, Mr. Hayden settled into a new life as a family man, writer and mainstream politician. In 1976, he ran for the Democratic nomination for the United States Senate from California, declaring, "The radicalism of the 1960s is fast becoming the common sense of the 1970s." He lost to the incumbent, Senator John V. Tunney.

But focusing on state and local issues like solar energy and rent control, he won a seat in the California Legislature in Sacramento in 1982. He was an assemblyman for a decade and a state senator from 1993 to 2000, sponsoring bills on the environment, education, public safety and civil rights. He lost a Democratic primary for California governor in 1994, a race for mayor of Los Angeles in 1997 and a bid for a seat on the Los Angeles City Council in 2001.

He was often the target of protests by leftists who called him an outlaw hypocrite, and by Vietnamese refugees and American military veterans who called him a traitor. Conservative

news media kept alive the memories of his radical days. In a memoir, “Reunion” (1988), he described himself as a “born-again Middle American” and expressed regret for “romanticizing the Vietnamese” and allowing his antiwar zeal to turn into anti-Americanism.

“His soul-searching and explanations make fascinating reading,” The Boston Globe said, “but do not, he concedes, pacify critics on the left who accuse him of selling out to personal ambition or on the right ‘who tell me to go back to Russia.’ He says he doesn’t care.”

“I get re-elected,” Mr. Hayden told The Globe. “To me, that’s the bottom line. The issues persons like myself are working on are modern, workplace, neighborhood issues.”

Thomas Emmet Hayden was born in Royal Oak, Mich., on Dec. 11, 1939, the only child of John Hayden, an accountant, and the former Genevieve Garity, both Irish Catholics. His parents divorced, and Tom was raised by his mother, a film librarian.

He attended a parish school. The pastor was the Rev. Charles Coughlin, the anti-Semitic radio priest of the 1930s and a right-wing foe of the New Deal.



A federal marshal escorts Mr. Hayden in San Francisco after he was indicted in connection with antiwar protests at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Credit Associated Press

At Dondero High School in Royal Oak, Mr. Hayden was editor of the student newspaper. His final editorial before graduation in 1957 almost cost him his diploma. In his exhortation to old-fashioned patriotism, he encrypted, in the first letter of each paragraph, an acrostic for “Go to hell.”

His turn to radical politics began at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, where he was inspired by student protests against the anti-Communist witch hunts of the House Un-American Activities Committee and by lunch counter sit-ins by black students in Greensboro, N.C. He met Dr. King in California in the summer of 1960 and soon joined sit-in protests and voter registration drives in the South.

Perceiving a need for a national student organization to coordinate civil rights projects around the country, he and 35 like-minded activists formed Students for a Democratic Society at Ann Arbor in 1960. He also became editor of the campus newspaper, The Michigan Daily. He earned a bachelor’s degree in sociology at Michigan in 1961 and did graduate work there in 1962 and 1963.

His marriage in 1961 to Sandra Cason, a civil rights worker, ended after two years. He met Ms. Fonda at an antiwar rally, and they were married in 1973. They had a son, Troy Garity. Ms. Fonda had a daughter, Vanessa, by a previous marriage, to the film director Roger Vadim. Mr. Hayden and Ms. Fonda divorced in 1990.

Mr. Hayden married Ms. Williams, a Canadian actress, in 1993. They adopted a son, Liam. Along with his wife, Mr. Hayden is survived by the three children as well as two grandchildren and a sister, Mary Frey.

Mr. Hayden joined the Freedom Riders on interstate buses in the South in 1961, challenging the authorities who had refused to enforce the Supreme Court’s rulings banning segregation on public buses. His jailhouse draft of what became the 25,000-word S.D.S. manifesto was debated, revised and formally adopted at the organization’s first convention, in Port Huron, Mich., in 1962.

“We are people of this generation,” it began, “bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit.”



Tom Hayden after announcing he would run for the Democratic nomination for the United States Senate from California in 1976. Credit Walter Zeboski/Associated Press

It did not recommend specific programs but attacked the arms race, racial discrimination, bureaucracy and apathy in the face of poverty, and it called for “participatory democracy” and a society based on “fraternity,” “honesty” and “brotherhood.”

Mr. Hayden was elected president of S.D.S. for 1962-63.

He made the first of several trips to Vietnam in 1965, accompanying Herbert Aptheker, a Communist Party theoretician, and Staughton Lynd, a radical professor at Yale. While the visit was technically illegal, it was apparently ignored by the State Department to allow the American peace movement and Hanoi to establish informal contacts. The group went to Hanoi and toured villages and factories in North Vietnam. Mr. Hayden wrote a book, “The Other Side” (1966), about the experience.

At Hanoi’s invitation, he attended a 1967 conference in Bratislava, in what was then Czechoslovakia, and met North Vietnamese leaders, who agreed to release some captured American prisoners as a gesture of “solidarity” with the American peace movement. Mr. Hayden

then made a second journey to Hanoi to discuss the details. Soon afterward he picked up three American P.O.W.s at a rendezvous in Cambodia and escorted them home.

Directing an S.D.S. antipoverty project in Newark from 1964 to 1967, Mr. Hayden, in his last year there, witnessed days of rioting, looting and destruction that left 26 people dead and hundreds injured. The experience led to “Rebellion in Newark” (1967), in which he wrote, “Americans have to turn their attention from the lawbreaking violence of the rioters to the original and greater violence of racism.”

In 1968, Mr. Hayden helped plan antiwar protests in Chicago to coincide with the Democratic National Convention. Club-swinging police officers clashed with thousands of demonstrators, injuring hundreds in a televised spectacle that a national commission later called a police riot.

But federal officials charged Mr. Hayden and others with inciting to riot and conspiracy. The Chicago Seven trial became a classic confrontation between radicals and Judge Julius Hoffman, marked by insults, angry judicial outbursts and contempt citations.

In 1970, all seven defendants were acquitted of conspiracy, but Mr. Hayden and four others — Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, David Dellinger and Rennie Davis — were convicted of inciting to riot and sentenced to five years in prison. The verdicts were overturned on appeal, as were various contempt citations, on the basis of judicial bias. Mr. Hayden’s book “Trial” (1970) recounted the events.



Mr. Hayden at his Los Angeles home in 2014. Credit Emily Berl for The New York Times

(The Chicago Seven trial was originally the Chicago Eight trial, with the Black Panther leader Bobby Seale included as a defendant. After his repeated outbursts in court, calling Judge Hoffman “a pig” and “a fascist,” the judge ordered him bound and gagged in his chair — the image of a black man chained in court shocked many Americans — and later severed his case for a separate trial that was never adjudicated. Judge Hoffman sentenced Mr. Seale to four years in prison on 16 counts of contempt of court, but he served only 21 months before the citations were overturned on appeal.)

Although Ms. Fonda was a wealthy movie star and financially supported Mr. Hayden’s early political career, she and Mr. Hayden lived for years in a modest home in Santa Monica, near the ocean but not on it. They did their own shopping and laundry, cooked meals in a tiny kitchen with an old stove and shared child-care duties for Troy and Vanessa.

Mr. Hayden was Gov. Jerry Brown’s appointed chairman of the SolarCal Council, which encourages solar energy development, from 1978 to 1982. He lost a Democratic primary for governor in 1994 to Kathleen Brown, the governor’s sister, who lost the general election to the Republican governor, Pete Wilson. In 1997, as the Democratic candidate for mayor of Los Angeles, Mr. Hayden lost to the Republican incumbent, Richard J. Riordan.

After his legislative career, he directed the Peace and Justice Resource Center in Culver City, Calif., a platform for his opposition to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. He taught at California colleges and at Harvard, and wrote articles for The Times, The Washington Post and The Nation.

Mr. Hayden wrote more than 20 books, including several memoirs, re-examinations of the civil rights and antiwar movements, and volumes on street gangs, Vietnam, his own Irish heritage, the environment and the future of the United States. In 2015, he explored American relations with Cuba in "Listen, Yankee!: Why Cuba Matters." His last book, "Hell No: The Forgotten Power of the Vietnam Movement," is to be published early next year by Yale University Press.

His personal papers, 120 boxes covering his life since the 1960s, were given in 2014 to the University of Michigan. Besides troves on civil rights and antiwar activities, they included 22,000 pages of F.B.I. files amassed in a 16-year surveillance of Mr. Hayden.

"One of your prime objectives," J. Edgar Hoover, the longtime F.B.I. director, said in one memo, "should be to neutralize him in the New Left movement."

Daniel E. Slotnik contributed reporting.

A version of this article appears in print on October 25, 2016, on Page B14 of the New York edition with the headline: Tom Hayden, Civil Rights and Peace Activist Turned Lawmaker, Dies at 76.