

Julian Bond – Co Founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center

Initiator of the DSA

<https://www.discoverthenetworks.org/individuals/julian-bond>

- Co-founder of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in the 1960s
- Co-founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center
- Helped establish the Campaign for America's Future
- Longtime admirer of Fidel Castro
- Served as chairman of the NAACP
- Had many ties to socialist and communist causes
- Viewed America as an irremediably racist nation
- Died on August 15, 2015

Horace Julian Bond was [born](#) in Nashville, Tennessee on January 14, 1940. His father, Horace Mann Bond, was president of Lincoln University (in Oxford, Pennsylvania), America's oldest black college.

Shortly after [Fidel Castro](#)'s rise to power in Cuba, Julian Bond visited that country to witness, first-hand, the effects of Castro's revolution. Decades later, in a 2006 interview, Bond would [recall](#): "I first visited Cuba in the spring of 1959 ... with three college friends.... The truth was we were enchanted by the revolution. Our newspapers had carried stories about President Castro's triumphant entry into Havana. He and his colleagues were all young, as were we—I was 19—and we found something appealing in their story and their victory. This last trip [in November 2006] simply reinforced my admiration for the Cuban people and the society they are building."

Bond attended Morehouse College in Atlanta, where he co-founded the Committee on Appeal for Human Rights (a student civil-rights organization that fought for racial integration in Atlanta's public facilities) and the [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee](#) (SNCC). (Among his fellow

SNCC [founding members](#) were such notables as [John Lewis](#), [Harry Belafonte](#), [Bernice Johnson Reagon](#), and [James Lawson](#).) He went on to [become](#) SNCC's communications director, and editor of its newsletter, *The Student Voice*. Bond and fellow SNCC members [participated](#) in voter-registration drives across the rural South. Years later, Bond would [say](#), proudly, of SNCC: "Unlike mainstream civil-rights groups, which merely sought integration of blacks into the existing order, SNCC sought structural changes in American society itself."

In 1961 Bond, just one semester short of graduation, [left](#) Morehouse to join the staff of a new protest newspaper, *The Atlanta Inquirer*, where he eventually became managing editor.

In 1962 Bond [attended](#) a [World Federation of Democratic Youth](#) (WFDY) festival in Helsinki, Finland. This Soviet-dominated front worked to promote Soviet foreign-policy goals. Its U.S. section, the Young Workers Liberation League, served as the youth arm of the [Communist Party USA](#) (CPUSA).

In 1965 Bond was a [vice-chair](#) of the [National Committee Against Repressive Legislation](#), a CPUSA-controlled entity that previously had been known as the National Committee to Abolish HUAC (House Un-American Activities Committee).

Also in 1965, Bond was elected to the Georgia State Assembly. But in January 1966, the Assembly [refused to seat](#) him, citing Bond's endorsement of an SNCC directive that urged young black men to illegally avoid the military draft. A second election, and then a third, yielded the same result. In 1967, however, the U.S. Supreme Court [ruled](#) that the Georgia House had violated Bond's free-speech rights in refusing him his seat. Thus Bond joined the State Assembly, where he served four terms (from 1967-74) and organized the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus.

In 1966 Bond was a [sponsor](#) of the Radical Education Project, a Michigan-based endeavor describing itself as "an independent education, research and publication program, initiated by [Students for a Democratic Society](#), devoted to the cause of democratic radicalism and aspiring to the creation of a new left in America."

As the 1960s progressed, Bond emerged as a rising star of the American left. He was endorsed by the Communist Party, participated in Communist

political forums, and campaigned for Communist and leftwing politicians. In 1967 Bond [served](#) as co-chair of the National Conference for New Politics (NCNP), described by Senator James Eastland as a group “working hand-in-glove with the Communist Party” to foment “revolution in the United States.” Notably, NCNP’s national council included the Marxist theoretician [Herbert Marcuse](#) and the notorious black racist [Stokely Carmichael](#).

Bond also participated in the increasingly radicalized anti-war movement of the late 1960s, at one point endorsing Dick Gregory and Benjamin Spock as presidential candidates. He led a move to unseat the legitimately selected Georgia delegation at the 1968 [Democratic](#) National Convention in Chicago. And he testified on behalf of the infamous [Chicago Seven](#), five of whom were convicted of crossing state lines to incite a riot at that convention.

In the late Sixties, Bond voiced his concern that police might start napalming blacks in America’s inner cities, and openly suggested that the poor might legitimately seize property by force in order to achieve their goals.

During the same period, Bond also began discussing the possibility of financial reparations for slavery, suggesting that churches as well as the federal government should give money to African Americans.

In 1968 Bond [campaigned](#) for the failed U.S. Senate campaign of radical lawyer Paul O’Dwyer, who had served as president of the [National Lawyers Guild](#)’s New York chapter.

In a February 1970 interview taped for Dutch radio, Bond was asked if he regarded President Richard Nixon as a friend of blacks. He [replied](#), “If you could call Adolf Hitler a friend of the Jews, you could call President Nixon a friend of the blacks.” Bond added that Nixon’s extermination methods were “much more subtle” than Hitler’s.

That same year, Bond [stated](#) angrily: “There seems to me to be a conscious conspiracy on the part of local police forces and state police forces and the federal police force, the Federal Bureau of Investigation. I think it comes from President Nixon and Attorney General Mitchell making a serious attempt to destroy the [Black Panthers](#). They do it in two ways—

one by political assassination and by political trials, the kind they have in the Soviet Union.”

In 1971 Bond [returned](#) to Morehouse College to complete his undergraduate studies, earning a bachelor’s degree in English.

Also in 1971, Bond collaborated with [Morris Dees](#) to co-found the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#). Bond served as the organization’s first [president](#) until 1979, and he continued to sit on its board of directors for the rest of his life.

In 1973 Bond was an “[initiator](#)” of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, forerunner of [Democratic Socialists of America](#) (DSA). Other notable initiators included [Heather Booth](#), [John Conyers](#), and Ron Dellums. Bond went on to become a member of DSA.

Shortly after a 1974 pro-communist military coup in Portugal, Bond and more than eighty fellow American leftists sent a cablegram to to the Portugese Armed Forces Movement, Portugese President Francisco da Costa Gomes, and Portugese socialist leader Mario Soares, [expressing](#) the hope that “democratic freedoms ... will continue to grow in Portugal.” Other signers of that letter included [Noam Chomsky](#), [Barbara Ehrenreich](#), Daniel Ellsberg, [Michael Harrington](#), [Herbert Marcuse](#), and [Paul Sweezy](#).

Also in 1974, Bond was elected to the Georgia Senate. He would retire from that body in order to run for Congress in 1986, an election he lost to [John Lewis](#).

In 1978 Bond became [president](#) of the Atlanta [NAACP](#), a post he would hold until 1989.

In 1979 Bond was a [co-founder](#) of the Citizens Party, an entity affiliated with the [Institute for Policy Studies](#) (where Bond himself has [lectured](#) on occasion). Other founders included [Richard Barnet](#), Chicago [activist](#) Don Rose, and [Quentin Young](#).

In 1980 Bond began hosting *America’s Black Forum*, the oldest black-owned program in television syndication. He continued to [host](#) the show until 1997, and occasionally appears as a commentator on the program to this day. Bond also has narrated a number of documentaries (including *Eyes on the Prize*, [PBS](#)’s award-winning production about the civil-rights movement).

In 1982 Bond [endorsed](#) the [National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression](#), a Communist Party USA front headed by [Angela Davis](#) and other leading CPUSA members.

In 1989 Bond was a [founding member](#) of the Institute for Southern Studies, a non-profit media and research center that advocates for progressive political and social causes in the Southern United States. Among the Institute's other founding members were such notables as [John Lewis](#) and [Marcus Raskin](#).

In 1990 Bond [wrote](#) a tribute in honor of Debbie Bell, a [Black Radical Congress](#) treasurer and a local Communist Party chairwoman, on the occasion of a banquet that was being held in her honor. Organized by the Communist Party of Eastern Pennsylvania & Delaware, this banquet was named for the *Peoples Weekly World*, official newspaper of the Communist Party. In his tribute, Bond described Ms. Bell as “part of a band of brothers and sisters who dared risk life and limb to make American democracy live up to its promise.”

In 1993 the [Democratic Socialists of America](#)'s Eugene V. Debs/Norman Thomas/[Michael Harrington](#) Dinner Committee, named in honor of three prominent American socialists, [presented](#) Bond with an award at its annual dinner banquet. The award specifically cited Bond's “lifetime as a leader in the movement for social justice.”

In 1996 Bond was one of approximately 130 people who played a role in founding the [Campaign for America's Future](#) (CAF). For a list of other key CAF founders, click [here](#).

After having served four terms on the [NAACP](#)'s national board, Bond in 1998 was elected [chairman](#) of the organization, a post he held for the rest of his life.

Viewing America as an irremediably racist nation, Bond in 1999 [said](#): “Everywhere we see clear racial fault lines, which divide American society as much now as at any time in our past.” That same year, he [declared](#): “Republicans remade themselves as the white people's party.”

In [2000](#), Bond tried to link Republican Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott to the Ku Klux Klan and characterized opponents of affirmative action as “neo-fascists.”

In 2001 Bond [asserted](#) that President George W. Bush's cabinet appointees "are from the Taliban wing of American politics." The selection of John Ashcroft as Attorney General and Gale Norton as Interior Secretary, Bond added, were designed to "appease the wretched appetites of the extreme right wing" whose "devotion to the Confederacy is nearly canine in its uncritical affection."

In December 2001, Bond [praised](#) longtime Communist Party USA leader James E. Jackson, Jr., an individual described by CPUSA executive vice-chair Jarvis Tyner as "[a consummate teacher of Marxism-Leninism.](#)"

In 2002 Bond [told](#) an NAACP convention that black conservatives were participants in "an interlocking network of funders, groups and activists [who] are the money, the motivation and the movement behind vouchers, the legal assault on affirmative action and other remedies for discrimination, attempts to reapportion us out of office, and attacks on equity everywhere." These conservatives, Bond [said](#), are "black hustlers and hucksters ... [who], like ventriloquists' dummies, speak in their puppet master's voice." Bond further called anti-affirmative action campaigner Ward Connerly a "fraud" and a "con man."

In 2002 the Indiana-based Eugene V. Debs Foundation [honored](#) Bond at its annual Award Banquet.

In a 2004 [address](#) to the NAACP, Bond likened Republicans to Confederate leaders from the Civil War era. Accusing the GOP of "appealing to the dark underside of American culture, to that minority of Americans who reject democracy and equality," Bond [said](#): "they embrace Confederate leaders as patriots"; "their idea of war reparations is to give war criminal Jefferson Davis a pardon"; and "their idea of equal rights is the American flag and Confederate swastika flying side by side."

In a 2005 speech to an NAACP gathering, Bond [spoke](#) about a then-recent U.S. Senate resolution apologizing for the American government's failure to have passed anti-lynching legislation a century earlier. Not satisfied with the near-unanimous support that the Senate measure received, Bond thundered: "If a United States Senator, in the year 2005, can't apologize for that, what outrage is deserving of an apology?" Likening the bill's eight Senate opponents to Klansmen, Bond approvingly quoted a resolution supporter who had said, of those opponents, "They're hiding out, and it's

reminiscent of a pattern of hiding out under a hood in the night, riding past, scaring people.”

In February 2006, at Fayetteville State University in Arkansas, Bond repeated his previous charge that Republicans’ “idea of equal rights is the American flag and the Confederate swastika flying side by side.” When his comments subsequently sparked a firestorm of criticism, Bond accused “right-wing blogs” of having mischaracterized his statement: “I didn’t say these things I’m alleged to have said. There is no one in the audience who can say I said them.” But shortly thereafter, the *Fayetteville Observer* [posted](#), online, a 45-minute recording of Bond’s speech, proving that he had indeed made the comments. Moreover, in the same speech, Bond had implied that Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice were token black appointees whom the Bush Administration was exploiting as “human shields against any criticism of [its] record on civil rights.”

At the NAACP’s 97th convention in July 2006, Bond [lamented](#) that “the quest for meaningful equality—political and economic equity—remains unfulfilled today.... The history of racial struggle in America is a hymn to self-help and an acknowledgment that white Americans will not and cannot voluntarily end discrimination.”

In 2006 Bond [served](#) on the national advisory board of the [Apollo Alliance](#), an organization founded by the revolutionary communist [Van Jones](#). Other notable advisory board members were [Carl Pope](#), [Leo Gerard](#), and [Jesse Jackson, Jr.](#)

In 2008 Bond [served](#) on the board of directors for American Rights at Work, an organization that [promotes](#) the unionization of employees.

In a May 2013 interview on MSNBC, Bond spoke about a recently uncovered scandal wherein the IRS had specifically—and illegally—sought to make it difficult for conservative organizations—particularly those affiliated with the Tea Party movement—to be approved for tax-exempt status in 2010 and 2011. [Said](#) Bond: “I think it’s entirely legitimate to look at the Tea Party. I mean, here are a group of people who are admittedly racist, who are overtly political, who tried as best they can to harm President Obama ... They are the Taliban wing of American politics and we all ought to be a little worried about them.”

In an August 2013 speech in Washington, DC, Bond made the following [remarks](#) about the motives animating the modern-day civil-rights movement:

“We march because Trayvon Martin has joined Emmett Till in the pantheon of young black martyrs.¹ We march because a United States Supreme Court has eviscerated the Voting Rights Act, for which we fought and died.² We march because every economic indicator shows gaping white-black disparities. We march for freedom from white supremacy.”

Despite possessing only a B.S. degree from Morehouse College, Bond was, [at various times](#), a Pappas Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania and a Visiting Professor at Drexel University, Harvard University, and Williams College. In his later years, he was a Distinguished Scholar in Residence at the American University in Washington, DC, and a Professor in the University of Virginia’s Department of History.

In addition to his aforementioned academic and civil-rights endeavors, Bond [served](#) as:

- an advisory board member of the [American Civil Liberties Union](#), [the People for the American Way](#), [the Council for a Livable World](#), the Corporation for Maintaining Editorial Diversity in America, the Nicaragua/Honduras Education Project, the Earth Communications Office, the National Federation for Neighborhood Diversity, the Southern Africa Media Center, the Joan Shorenstein Barone Center (of the John F. Kennedy School of Government), the Center for Visionary Thought Advisory Team, the Harvard Business School Initiative on Social Enterprise, the Oliver White Hill Foundation, the Center for Civil Rights (at the University of North Carolina School of Law), the [National Council of Churches](#)’ Delta Ministry Project, the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Fund, the [Center for Community Change](#), the Highlander Research and Education Center, the Center for Democratic Renewal, the National Sharecropper’s Fund, the Southern Regional Council, Southerners for Economic Justice, the New Democratic Coalition, the Village Foundation, and Single Stop USA (which [helps](#) low-income people take advantage of a host of government programs such as health

insurance, food stamps, federal and state subsidies for childcare, housing assistance, welfare-to-work initiatives, and tax credits)

- a board member of the NAACP's magazine, *The Crisis*
- chairman of the Premier Auto Group Diversity Council
- a board of selectors member with the American Institute for Public Service
- an [editorial board](#) member of the [Black Commentator

](<https://www.discoverthenetworks.org/groupProfile.asp?grpId=7019>)

- an advisory committee member of the American Committee on Africa; the Human Rights Defense Fund; [and](#) Wellstone Action, a [self-described](#) “national center for training and leadership development for the progressive movement.”

Bond [died](#) on August 15, 2015 in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, as a result of complications from vascular disease.

NOTES:

[1](#) This was a reference to a high-profile 2012 altercation in which a “white Hispanic” neighborhood-watch captain named George Zimmerman had shot and killed a black Florida teenager named Trayvon Martin. Emmett Till, meanwhile, was a 14-year-old black boy who in 1955 was kidnapped by two white men in Mississippi who beat him, gouged out one of his eyes, shot him in the head, and dumped his body into the Tallahatchie River. Till's death helped galvanize the early civil-rights movement.

[2](#) Bond's characterization of the Supreme Court's decision on the Voting Rights Act was highly misleading, as is explained [here](#).

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Known Connections(59)



INDIVIDUALS (40)

- [Noam Chomsky](#)
- [Fidel Castro](#)
- [Mark Ritchie](#)
- [Julianne Malveaux](#)
- [Morris Dees](#)
- [Van Jones](#)
- [Harry Belafonte](#)
- [Robert Borosage](#)
- [Leo Gerard](#)
- [Herbert Marcuse](#)
- [Michael Harrington](#)
- [Carl Pope](#)
- [Andrew Stern](#)
- [Barbara Ehrenreich](#)
- [Russell Feingold](#)
- [Kweisi Mfume](#)
- [Tom Harkin](#)
- [Frances Fox Piven](#)
- [Marcus Raskin](#)
- [Rev. James Lawson](#)
- [Roger Hickey](#)
- [Manning Marable](#)
- [Robert Reich](#)
- [Keith Ellison](#)
- [Jesse Jackson Jr.](#)
- [Antonio Villaraigosa](#)
- [Paul Sweezy](#)
- [Steven Kest](#)
- [Bernice Johnson Reagon](#)

- [John Lewis](#)
- [Peter B. Edelman](#)
- [Heather Booth](#)
- [Denis Hayes](#)
- [Stokely Carmichael \(a.k.a. Kwame Ture\)](#)
- [Al Franken](#)
- [Richard Barnet](#)
- [John Conyers, Jr.](#)
- [Quentin Young](#)
- [Angela Davis](#)
- [Susan Shaer](#)

SHOW ALL

ORGANIZATIONS (19)

- [Black Commentator \(BC\)](#)
- [Campaign for America's Future \(CAF\)](#)
- [Southern Poverty Law Center \(SPLC\)](#)
- [National Council of Churches \(NCC\)](#)
- [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee \(SNCC\)](#)
- [Black Radical Congress \(BRC\)](#)
- [National Lawyers Guild \(NLG\)](#)
- [People for the American Way \(PFAW\)](#)
- [Public Broadcasting Service \(PBS\)](#)
- [Center for Community Change \(CCC\)](#)
- [Council for a Livable World \(CLW\)](#)
- [Institute for Policy Studies \(IPS\)](#)
- [Communist Party USA \(CPUSA\)](#)
- [Black Panther Party \(BPP\)](#)
- [Apollo Alliance \(AA\)](#)
- [Democratic Socialists of America \(DSA\)](#)

- [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People \(NAACP\)](#)
- [Students for a Democratic Society \(SDS, founded 1959\)](#)
- [Center for Responsible Lending \(CRL\)](#)

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