

Huey Newton Murdered in Oakland

Written by Staff ID581

Wednesday, 15 December 2004 14:02 -

Huey Newton

Huey Newton, Black Panther Party Founder, Murdered in Oakland Shooting August 22, 1989

by: Dr. Clint Wilson

Huey Newton, who earned a Ph.D. from the University of California, yet lived the life of a charismatic street-level organizer, was gunned down in an Oakland, Calif. alley ending his role as a leader of the Black Power movement.

Newton, who co-founded the Black Panther Party for Self Defense in 1966 with Bobby Seale, was an advocate of Black Americans bearing arms in self-defense against community repression by police. Among the tactics he employed was the institution of ""justice patrols"" by armed Black men whose purpose was to monitor police actions and inform community residents of their rights when confronted by law nforcement.

In 1967 Newton was arrested and charged in the shooting of one policeman and the killing of another. His trial and subsequent conviction focused attention on the issue of police brutality and Newton was considered a political prisoner. A national movement using the catch phrase ""Free Huey"" rallied people across the nation to the cause of civil rights.

The Los Angeles Sentinel carried news of Newton's death in a drug related incident to its readers more than a decade after the Black Panther party's decline in influence.

HUEY NEWTON SHOT AND KILLED IN ALLEY

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Huey P. Newton, a co-founder of the Black Panther Party was found early Tuesday morning shot to death on a blood covered Oakland street.

Police said the body of the 47-year-old Newton was found outside a housing project in a west Oakland neighborhood that is known to be infested by drug dealers. They say he was shot three times in the head. Police cornered off an automobile, apparently as evidence, but would not say if the car was Newton's or a suspect's.

The scene of the killing was still described as ""grisly"" with large blood stains covering the street several hours after the shooting. Newton's body was found in a pool of blood said to be ten feet in circumference.

Newton and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panther Party in 1966. The organization achieved notoriety for its avocation of violence and the armed self-defense of Black Americans. The party disbanded in 1982.

Newton's lifestyle brought him into frequent and serious clashes with the law.

In 1967, he was convicted of manslaughter in connection with the death of an Oakland policeman and sentenced to 15 years in prison. After he served 22 months, Newton's conviction was overturned due to a prosecution error in the trial.

In 1970, he was called to appear before the State Senate Un-American Activities committee to answer charges that the Black Panther Party was a communist-run organization.

In 1974, Newton spent time as a fugitive in Cuba after being accused in the murder of a 14-year-old prostitute and of pistol-whipping his tailor. He returned to Oakland and faced two trials on the charges, both of which ended in hung juries.

Earlier this year Newton was sentenced to six months in jail after pleading no contest to charges of misappropriation of \$15,000 in public funds earmarked for the school system.

Newton earned a Ph.D. from the University of California – Santa Barbara in 1982.

-- *Los Angeles Sentinel*, Aug. 24, 1989