

President Robert D. Cross Collection
1967-1969

Finding Aid



Archives and Special Collections



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Accession Number: 99-03

Size: 2.261 cu. ft.

Provenance: Hunter College Office of the President

Restrictions: None.

Location: Range 4 Section 3 Shelves 14 - 15

Archivist: Prof. Julio L. Hernandez-Delgado

Assistant: Mr. Manuel Rimarachin

Date: February 2002

Revised: April 2014

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Robert D. Cross, the son of a congregational minister, was born in 1924, in Grinnell, Iowa, but was raised with his twin brother and sister in Richmond Hill, Queens. Robert attended public schools in Queens, New York, and graduated from Richmond Hill High School. Upon the death of his father Robert was sent to Exeter and from there to Harvard University. During his sophomore year he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and served as a bomber pilot during World War II from 1943 to 1946.

After the war Cross returned to Harvard University to complete his B.A. in 1947. He later received his M.A. in 1951 and his Ph. D in American Studies in 1955. Dr. Cross' thesis was on *Liberal Catholicism in America*. While attending Harvard University Cross met his future wife, Barbara Myers, professor of English at Barnard College, married in 1951 and had two children. After earning his Ph. D degree Dr. Cross taught at Swarthmore (1952 - 1959) and Bryn Mawr (1954) in Pennsylvania. In 1959, he joined the history faculty of Columbia University and shortly thereafter became the chair of the History Department.

Dr. Robert D. Cross became the president of Hunter College on August 1, 1967. He was an advocate for academic freedom and for a free and vigorous college press. President Cross believed that students and faculty should be ever vigilant and politically active. While at Columbia University he signed a petition denouncing the Vietnam War in June of 1967, and even partook in a Civil Rights march in Selma, Alabama.

Some of the major initiatives that were accomplished during President Cross' tenure include the establishment of the Institute of Health Sciences, the Department of Black and Puerto Rican Studies, and the SEEK Program. In addition, Hunter College was reorganized into four divisions: Science and Mathematics, Humanities and Arts, Social Sciences, and Programs in Education. The creation of the Department of Black and Puerto Rican Studies and the SEEK Program increased the presence of African-American and Puerto Rican students on campus and helped to further diversify the student body; it also was an impetus in the revamping of Hunter College' curriculum in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

President Cross is remembered as one of the first college presidents to have taught a freshman course on American history. He was also noted for starting a "paper bag lunch" program where students were encouraged to meet with him in his conference room for lunch once a week.

Dr. Cross served as president of Hunter College from August 1, 1967 to May 6, 1969. He next served as president of Swarthmore College from 1969 to 1972. Dr. Cross's last assignment was as dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia from 1972 to 1994. Dr. Cross died on Saturday, May 31, 2003, from a head injury suffered in a fall. He was survived by his second wife, Ruth Cunningham; his son Frederick; his daughter Pamela Guthrie; two stepdaughters Prudence Brown and Paula Tyack; a stepson William Brown; and 11 grandchildren and step grandchildren; and a brother Rowland.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The President Robert Cross Collection spans the years 1967 to 1969. The collection is rather small but it does include biographical information, inauguration materials, correspondence, memoranda, and addresses. There is also documentation on the Centennial Fund, the demands for the creation of a Black & Puerto Rican Studies Department, the Hunter College School of Social Work, and the Hunter College Student Social Community and Religious Clubs which operated out of the Roosevelt House on 65th Street and Madison Avenue through the 1980's.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

Series I – Biographical Information

Series I consists of articles, newsletters, and a vitae on Dr. Cross' private life, and professional accomplishments.

Series II – Inauguration

Series II consists of announcements, committee minutes, newspapers articles, two inauguration addresses and the corresponding program.

Series III – Correspondence

Series III is the largest series of the collection and consists of letters between President Cross and the Board of Higher Education, administrators, associates, deans, department chairs, faculty, alumni, student clubs, committees, and private citizens between 1967 and 1970. The letters are arranged chronologically.

Series IV – General Files

Series IV consists of materials which highlight President Cross' tenure at Hunter College. Key files in this series include the Centennial Fund, demands by African-American and Puerto Rican students for the establishment of a Black & Puerto Rican Studies Department, the Hunter College School of Social Work, and the Hunter College Student Social, Community and Religious Clubs which operated out of the Roosevelt Memorial House on 65th Street and Madison Avenue. The folders are arranged alphabetically by name of activity, club, committee, office, school, organization, or topic.

Series V – Photographs

Series V consists of candid and portrait photographs of Robert D. Cross and images of President Cross in several social events.

CONTAINER LIST

SERIES I – BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1	1	<p>The Board of Higher Education announces that Dr. Robert D. Cross has been named President of Hunter College. <i>Huntergram...News of Hunter College</i>, November 4, 1966</p> <p>Burks, Edward C. "Once a Week It's Beef for Lunch at Hunter." <i>The New York Times</i>, October 9, 1967, n.p.</p> <p>Faber, M.A. "Historian Named Hunter President." <i>The New York Times</i>, November 4, 1966, pp. 41, 77.</p> <p>"Hunter Has a New President." <i>Hunter Alumni News</i>, (December 1966), n.p.</p> <p>Ephron, Nora. "New Man at Hunter." <i>New York Post</i>, February 26, 1968, p. 31.</p> <p>Mahoney, Ursula. "Hunter's New President, Dr. Robert D. Cross." <i>Hunter Alumni Quarterly</i> (Winter 1968): 3 - 5.</p> <p>"Hunter President Resigns, Will Head Swarthmore." <i>News From Hunter College</i>, May 7, 1969, n.p.</p> <p>Dr. Robert D. Cross has been elected the tenth president of Swarthmore College. <i>News From Swarthmore College</i>, May 7, 1969, n.p.</p> <p>Baros, Irene. "President Cross Resigns, Will Head Swarthmore." <i>The Hunter Envoy</i>, May 9, 1969, p. 1.</p>
2		Vitae, 1966, 1968

SERIES II – INAUGURATION

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
		Articles
1	3	“Hunter Installs Eighth President.” <i>The New York Times</i> , February 15, 1968, p. 33.
		Moskiwitz, Lisa and Geraldine Malera. “Cross Words: Humanity Not a Chameleon.” <i>The Hunter Envoy</i> , February 16, 1968, p. 1.
		“Robert Cross New Hunter President---He “Hints” at His Direction.” <i>Manhattan East</i> , February 22, 1968.
	4	Inauguration Committee, 1967-1968
		Inauguration Addresses
	5	Cross, Robert D. “Inauguration Address.” Shuster, George N. “Founder’s Day Address.”
	6	Inauguration Program, February 14, 1968

SERIES III – CORRESPONDENCE

		Incoming
1	7	December 13, 1967 - August 8, 1968
	8	August 9, 1968 - July 16, 1971
		Outgoing
	9	August 2, 1967 - November 30, 1967
	10	December 1, 1967 - January 17, 1968
	11	January 19, 1968 - February 14, 1968
	12	February 15, 1968 - February 27, 1968
	13	March 1, 1968 - March 21, 1968
	14	April 9, 1968 - April 30, 1968
2	1	May 6, 1968 - July 24, 1968
	2	August 2, 1968 - October 25, 1968
	3	November 1, 1968 - November 30, 1968
	4	December 3, 1968 - May 12, 1970

SERIES III – CORRESPONDENCE

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
		Correspondence and Memoranda
2	5	February, 1969
	6	March, 1969
	7	April, 1969
	8	May, 1969
	9	June, 1969
	10	July, 1969
	11	August, 1969
	12	September, 1969
	13	October, 1969

SERIES IV – GENERAL FILES

		Addresses
3	1	Cross, Robert D. Opening Convocation Talk, September 29, 1967. ---. Talk to Pan-Hellenic (Hunter College), November 21, 1967. Excerpts from WMCA Radio, in studio Dr. Robert D. Cross, President of Hunter College and Mr. Bill Scott, Vice President for News, WMCA, discussing what actions he would have taken, had the disturbances at Columbia University occurred at Hunter College, May 13, 1968. Remarks made by President Robert D. Cross at the Barnard College Graduation Ceremony, June 4, 1968. Address by President Robert D. Cross at Hunter College Commencement, June 2, 1969
	2	Administration Education Committee, May - November, 1968
	3	Administrative Flow Charts, 1965 - 1967
	4	Administrative Officers, March - November 1968
	5	Admissions, July - November 1968
	6	Alumni Association of Hunter College, 1968 - 1969
	7	Applicants for Instructional Position, July 1967 - November. 1968
	8	Articles, 1966, 1968
	9	Candidates for Degrees, June 1969
	10	Centennial Fund, April - November 1968
	11	Chancellor's Reports, 1966 -1968
	12	College Entrance Examination Board, 1968

SERIES IV – GENERAL FILES

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
3	13	Contracts, 1967-1969
	14	Demands by African-American and Puerto Rican Students for the Establishment of a Black & Puerto Rican Studies Department, May 8 -11, 1969
	15	Department Elections, April 8 - 26, 1968
	16	Distribution of B.H.E. Minutes, 1942 - 1943, 1959 - 1968
4	1	Faculty Council Committee, ca. 1968
	2	Graduate Studies at Hunter College, May - November 1968
	3	Hunter College Commencement Activities, 1967 - 1969
	4	Hunter College Concert Bureau Series, 1967 - 1969
	5	Hunter College Foundation – Incorporation, August - December, 1968
	6	Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, May 1968 - November 1968
	7	Hunter College School of Social Work, September - December, 1968
	8	Hunter College Student Social, Community and Religious Clubs, September 1966 - January 1968
	9	Memoranda, 1967 - 1969
	10	Miscellaneous Materials
	11	New Tenure Law, 1968
	12	“A Report from President Cross.” <i>Hunter College Envoy</i> , February 21, 1969, Recommendations of the P&B Committee for Various Academic Departments, 1968
	13	Referral and Personal Matters, 1968
	14	Wonderful World of New York, January - March 1969

SERIES V – PHOTOGRAPHS

5	1	Hunter College Commencement Exercises Bronx Campus, n.d.
	2	Park Avenue, February 1969
	3	Portraits, n.d.

SERIES V – PHOTOGRAPHS

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
5	4	Samuel Silberman Presents Key to Hunter College School of Social Work, March 9, 1969
	5	Unidentified photographs, n.d.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Articles:

- Cross, Robert D. "The Changing Image of Catholicism in America." *Yale Review* (Summer, 1959): n.p.
- . "The Philanthropic Contribution of Louisa Lee Schuyler." *Social Science Review* (September, 1961): n.p.
- . "The Changing Image of the City among American Catholics." *American Catholic Historical Review* (April, 1962): n.p.
- . "Catholic Charities." *Atlantic* (August, 1962): n.p.
- . "What Religion Has Meant in American History." *Catholic World* (August, 1963): n.p.
- . "Religion and the Schools." *Columbia College Today* (Summer, 1963): n.p.
- . "Origins of the Catholic Parochial Schools in America." *American Benedictine Review* (June, 1965): n.p.

Books:

- Cross, Robert D. *The Emergence of Liberal Catholicism in America*. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958
- . "Introduction" of *Christianity and the Social Crisis* by Walter Rauschenbusch. New York: Harper and Row, 1964
- . *The Churches and the City, 1865-1910*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1967