

Guest Post: Ithaca Diaries author Anita Harris interviewed on NPR's "Here and Now"

✖ In an interview with Lisa Mullins on "Here and Now" a daily program of National Public Radio, author Anita Harris reflected on how her college years shaped her career path. The interview, which aired June 11, focused on Harris's book, *Ithaca Diaries*, a memoir and social history of her years at Cornell University in the 1960s.

Those years "gave me courage to start a newspaper and become a journalist," said Harris about her time at Cornell. "They gave me the courage to fight for social change through my work and my writing. They have me the courage to work with students and help them understand better their own place in the world."

Harris attended Cornell University during a time of racism and world turmoil. In *Ithaca Diaries*, she writes about heavy topics such as the tearing up and burning of draft cards by students opposed to the Vietnam war and demonstrations for civil rights.

"There were all kinds of demonstrations and eventually all hell broke loose," said Harris. "At the university, nationally, and internationally students were demonstrating and even rioting all over the world."

While Harris tried to focus on her studies and stay "sane," she also explored and wrote about Cornell's dating scene, which was filled with "boys, and frats and football games," she told Mullins.

Harris used her journals, letters to her parents, and Cornell's independent student newspaper, the *Daily Sun*, to help tell her story, which takes readers on a coming-of-age journey from Harris' arrival on campus in 1966 with her pink suitcase to her graduation day, when she led a demonstration against the military.

"One reason I wanted to write the book was to understand what had happened and how it still affects me today," said Harris. "To this day, I think back to the events of that time."

"Ithaca Diaries" can be purchased on Amazon at <http://www.amazon.com/Ithaca-Diaries-Coming-Age-1960s/dp/0692294988>.

Harris' "Here and Now" interview is available at <http://hereandnow.wbur.org/2015/06/11/ithaca-diaries-anita-harris>.

– Morgan Brittney Austin

Morgan Brittney Austin is a 2015 graduate of LaSalle College, near Boston.

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