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Southern Exposure

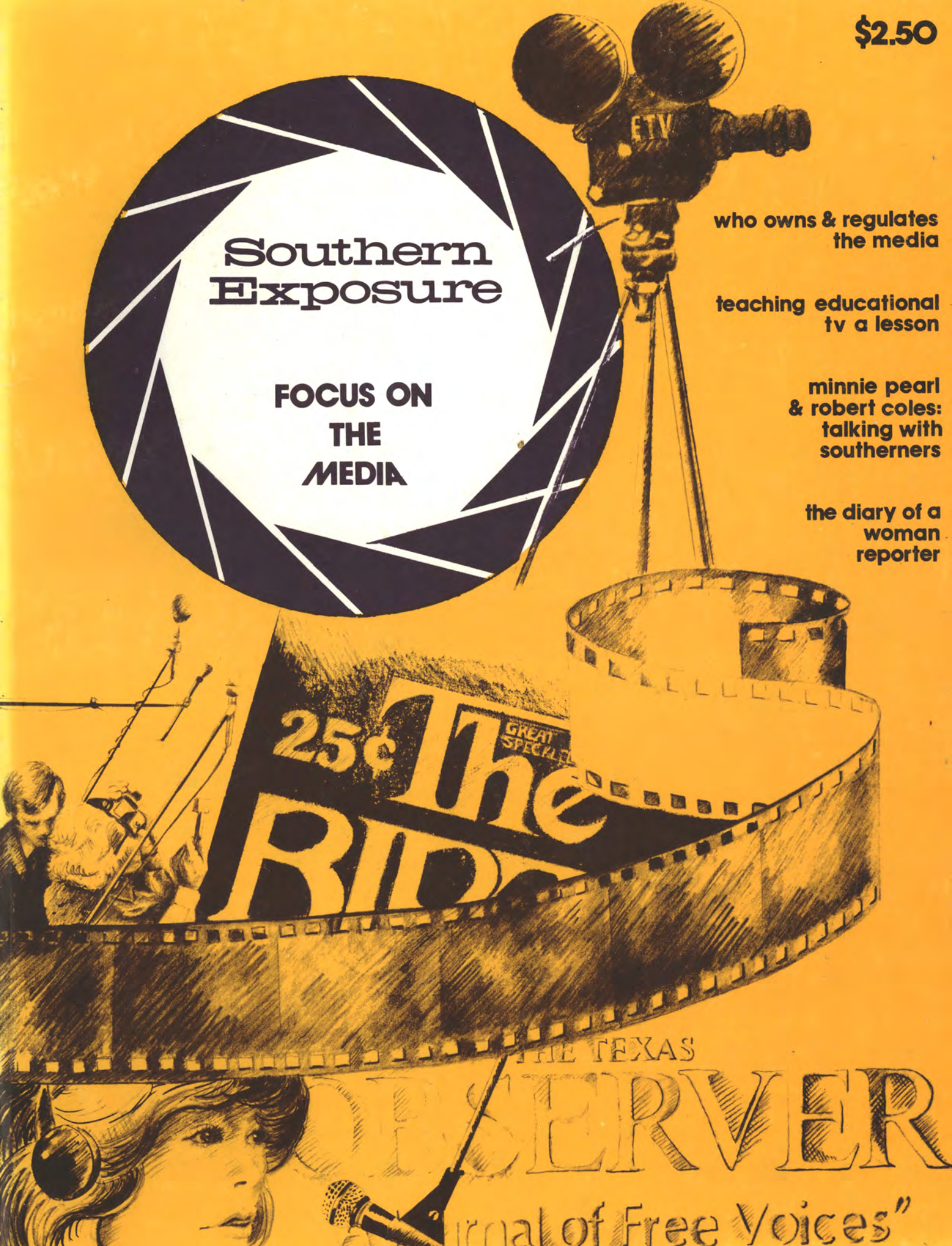
FOCUS ON THE MEDIA

who owns & regulates the media

teaching educational tv a lesson

minnie pearl & robert coles: talking with southerners

the diary of a woman reporter



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THE TEXAS

OBSERVER

Journal of Free Voices"

The South has a remarkable record of producing more than its share of talented writers. Names like Faulkner, O'Connor, Wolfe, Warren, Welty, readily come to mind. Less noticed, however, is the region's equally distinguished contribution in the field of journalism. Among national broadcasters, editors and writers who started in the South are Tom Wicker, Walter Cronkite, David Brinkley, Clifton Daniel, Willie Morris, Robert Sherrill, Nelson Benton, Charles Kuralt, Larry King, Marshall Frady, Frank McGee.

Why has the South produced so many creative journalists — and why would so many go North? We can't be sure. But a couple of thoughts come to mind. First, Southerners do seem to have a certain romance with the written and spoken word. There is a relish for sounds, unique expressions, and the embellished story. Reporting-like conversation — has always demanded more than the exchange of a few facts, and many of our brethren have been only too willing to turn their preoccupation with language and penchant for irrelevant detail into successful careers.

The paucity of career options for such clever characters must also be recognized. Which brings us to a second point. For beyond their interest in aesthetics, these writers invariably promoted a message which asserted their guilt for being white in the racist South. Where else could such secular moralists go except into journalism. We lack a tradition of unions, civic associations, socially-active churches, foundations, or universities which give voice to dissidents in the community. Instead, for years, the family-owned (or occasionally, outside-controlled) newspapers has been about the only institution independent enough to offer even a modicum of critical reflection on a town's life. When this generation grew up, editors like Ralph McGill, Virginius Dabney, Jonathan Daniels, Julian Harris and Barry Bingham typified the tradition, so many a young turk entered the newspapersbusiness — and eventually got chased out of it or the region.

Such a view of journalism highlights the positive and negative aspects of southern culture. And that, in case you haven't guessed by now, is one of the purposes of *Southern Exposure*. This region has its share of problems, but rather than moralize about them, we'd like to identify them and help people engineer their removal. On the other hand, there is much in our culture that could be expanded, refined, deepened — and we'd like to illuminate these features, whether historical or current, so they can be celebrated, enjoyed, and used. To put it plainly, we appreciate and boast about our culture insofar as it is based on community, on personal relations, and we despise it insofar as it is defined and manipulated by the power of money.

Our interest in reordering the South and the nation pushes us beyond traditional liberal journalism to a more activist role. In the time not consumed by *Southern Exposure*, we work on two other programs of the Institute of Southern Studies. First, since our beginning in 1970, we have provided what we call "strategic research" to

organizations attempting to change the economic institutions that affect their lives. Last year, for example, we spent considerable energies investigating the weaknesses of the Duke Power Company so miners in Harlan County, Kentucky, and rate-payers in the Carolinas could mount an effective campaign for better working conditions and lower light bills. Secondly, through the use of oral history, we are reviving earlier traditions of resistance that may provide guidance and encouragement to today's generation of Southerners. One result of this project was the book-length collection of interviews on progressive struggles during the Depression which was published as an issue of *Southern Exposure* under the title of "No More Moanin'."

Like the journal, these two programs aim to give roots to those who seek more freedom in our region, to strengthen their abilities to formulate strategies for change and understand the larger historical and cultural framework of their frustrations, desires and efforts. The two poles of this work are detailed research and personalized interviews, and that's why you will continue to find both in our journal. We don't expect you to agree with everything in *Southern Exposure*. None of us do either. But we would rather preserve some flexibility, allowing for new insights and interpretations, rather than confine ourselves to narrow perspectives. That's one reason we focus in this issue less on *the* definitive analysis of media's unique role in society than on the plurality of ways people are talking and listening and entertaining one another, including such non-journalists as Minnie Pearl and Robert Coles.

In the coming months, we plan an issue on the southern black writer and artist, with poetry, fiction, graphics and criticism; next, a photographic review of the region in cooperation with Atlanta's Nexus Gallery (see notice on page 22); and finally, a double issue like the recent "Our Promised Land" devoted to the southern worker.

Needless to say, a great number of people in and out of the Institute help produce each issue of *Southern Exposure*, from contributing articles and photographs, to helping with proof-reading and distribution. What we lack in money, we make up for through reliance on a community of supporters — and that after all is the basis upon which we like to do things. You are invited to be among that group, to give us feedback, to send us reviews and articles, to share the journal with others, to help shape future issues. In fact, *Southern Exposure* is organized to depend on a network of loyal and interested readers who tell others about things they like. You know the people who should be getting *Southern Exposure*. So the first concrete thing you can do to help us is turn to the clip-out at the end of this issue and send us the names of six people who we can contact directly. You can also spread the word yourself. If you want to help with placing *Southern Exposure* in book stores in your area, or with writing articles, just drop us a line. We always like to hear what readers are up to and what they like or dislike about the journal. Join us in a new style of southern journalism.

Southern Exposure

Volume II, Number 4

FROM OUR READERS

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Jim Draper, executive director of the Center for Rural Studies: The magnificent new issue of *Southern Exposure* ("Our Promised Land") serves to underline many of the evils which beset the region with which you are concerned. And in the beginnings of success in dealing with the parts of those evils which touch little people directly, there are hints of solutions to some of mankind's most pressing problems. For example, Jim Pierce and the National Sharecroppers Fund which he heads are demonstrating that American agriculture need not expend 10 to 20 calories of fossil fuel energy to produce a single calorie of food. One can't help reflecting that the forces which have accumulated vast wealth and millions of acres of land at the expense of Southern poor people now face economic problems which, with the fuel crisis, do not lend themselves to technological solutions.

Fred Cooper of the Delta Foundation, Jackson, Mississippi: Congratulations on "Our Promised Land." It is not often when there is so much useful and worthwhile information and analysis packed into a single volume.

Although it is often said that a picture is worth a thousand words, let me offer some written comments on the cover photo of "Our Promised Land" by Pat Goudvis. The site of the photo is in Bolton, Mississippi, a small town twenty miles west of Jackson. Needless to say the photo depicts the obvious contradiction of wealth and poverty, in this case, literally on top of each other. Enclosed is a photocopy of the check statement received by the family who lives in the photographed house. Three dollars and eighty-one cents is the royalty fee they

receive once a year, for having an oil well practically in their backyard. This oil field was sold in 1967 for a reported \$30 million by the family company of Fred LaRue (of Watergate fame). Now many of the wells are owned by another family company, Gaddis Farms, Inc., who also own 60,000 acres of land in Hinds County alone, which includes most of the vacant land surrounding Bolton. This situation makes it extremely difficult for the all black city administration, headed by Mayor Bennie Thompson, to purchase land for some very needed housing or pursue its other plans for development.

The black people of Bolton thought it was a struggle to elect a responsive local government, but now it is being discovered that the really hard work is just beginning. There is a limited amount that political power can achieve when economic power remains concentrated and unchanging.



Our Promised Land

"I spent most the day when the storm and the hills and all the wealth thereof shall be the people's own and the trees shall not be the property of man but the earth."

A quotation by the author.

(A 20"-by-26" poster reproduction of the cover is now available for \$1.50. Editor.)

(continued on inside back cover)



photo by Carter Tomassi

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photo by Boyd Lewis

Teaching Educational TV a lesson!

by John Northrop, Jr.

Scott Carpenter perches atop the director's stool in the control room of the Birmingham public schools educational television studio, his eyes darting across an array of monitors overhead. "Bring up the music," says Carpenter, and a funky, syncopated concoction of brass and piano floods the room. "Roll credits, Chuck. That's it. Give me a two-take, One."

It's the regular Tuesday afternoon taping session for the Alabama Educational Television Network program, "Youth Speaks Out." Through a massive plate glass window to his left, Carpenter can see *Birmingham News* assistant managing editor Jim Jacobson enthroned at the center of a studio set, four well-scrubbed high school students surrounding him like attendant vassals.

The music — which sounds like the background for an early Sixties police show — fades out, and onto the main monitor pops the image of the one black student on this week's program. "Today I'd like to discuss the recession in the United States," she says, and disappears.

Another student flashes onto the tube. "I'd like to discuss the possibility of Alabama losing its ETV rights," says the boy. A laugh ripples across the control room. "You tell 'em buddy!" says the video man. "You know," he says to another worker, "I think I'm going to like that kid."

Later in the program, the boy wins more control room applause when he launches into the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for "exercising a little too much power" by threatening "to completely do away with the state's right to broadcast."

In fact, there is virtually no chance of the FCC doing away with educational broadcasting in Alabama, although the current licensee, Alabama Educational Television Commission, may lose its privilege to hold the ETV frequency. Unfortunately, the young Birmingham lad is not alone in his misapprehension of an ongoing broadcast license controversy which already has led to some changes in Alabama ETV.

The hullabaloo erupted last September 19 when an FCC source leaked word to the *New York Times* that the Commission had just voted 4-2, with one abstention, to revoke the Alabama Educational Television Commission's nine station licenses because of racial discrimination in hiring and programming during the AETC's 1967-69 license period. As the story trickled south via wire services and a few telephone calls from fancy Washington law offices, AETC officials and other concerned individuals tailspinned into panic that after 20 years the jig might be up for the nation's first state ETV network.

As publicity gathered momentum, newspapers printed letters from educators and other citizens denouncing the FCC action. In Washington, a dinner for the state's congressional delegations, hosted by Alabama's junior U.S. Senator Jim Allen, led to an announcement of unanimous support for the AETC. Despite the pressure from such distinguished individuals, the FCC released on January 8, 1975, its formal opinion and an official 4-2 vote denying the license renewal of AETC based on a series of license challenges and complaints stretching back five years.

I.

A central character in the still unfolding ETV melodrama is Raymond Hurlbert, the first AETC chairman and general manager of the ETV network for nearly 20 years. Hurlbert is a tough, "good ole boy," with connections and a wall-full of plaques and messages of appreciation from governors and other government and civic leaders. It is Hurlbert, many believe, who is directly responsible for the network's survival — and some of its problems — since its humble birth in the 1953 Alabama legislature.

John Northrop, Jr., formerly of the *Birmingham News*, and the *Birmingham Reporter*, now works in American Samoa. The final section of this article was written by Allen Tullos after the FCC January 8th announcement (since John had left the country).

all photos by John Northrop



Alabama Educational TV's "Youth Speaks Out"

"Ray was hard-headed and strong, *very* strong," said a former AETC member. "We had run-ins when it came to programming, but in the area of management there wasn't anything he didn't know about. He was a genius at getting free equipment and supplies. He'd go to a supplier and say, 'Look, we buy a lot of things: if you hear of somebody throwing away a junk transmitter, let me know.'" In Hurlbert's words, all you need when raising cattle are "a few scrubs and one thoroughbred bull."

Now 72 years old, the "thoroughbred bull" has retired from his AETC post and chuckles about the early days of Alabama Educational broadcasting.

"We put the system together with chewing gum, bailing wire, and spit," says Hurlbert, lounging on a plush sofa in his suburban home

near Birmingham. "It began with one or two hours of programming per week; now there are 16-18 hours every day. We have eight broadcast stations, another under construction, and 2,000 miles of microwave relay equipment; it's one of the largest ETV systems in the country."

Gov. Gordon Persons, a former radio broadcaster, appointed Hurlbert to the AETC, which is ultimately responsible for state ETV activities; at that time—summer, 1953—Hurlbert was a Birmingham school principal. Persons stretched long fingers into state dock board funds to pull out \$500,000 for the fledgling network's first two years' operations, initiating minor friction between Hurlbert and docks officials which continued for several years.

According to Hurlbert, the AETC decided early to maintain separate broadcast facilities and pro-

AETC General Manager
Raymond Hurlbert and
his wall of plaques.



duction centers; transmitters would be located to reach as many viewers as possible, while the production studios would be placed in educational institutions or other areas where resources could be gathered easily. It was decided most production centers would operate autonomously as independent contractors with the AETC. A state school board coordinator would determine certain in-school instructional policies while the AETC and its staff would coordinate production and set general programming policies. Hurlbert neglects to say, however, that the development of AETC's coverage areas in Alabama typified discrimination through neglect. The one portion of the state where educational broadcasting could not be received contained seven of the nine counties where blacks outnumbered whites.

The first broadcast tower was erected atop Mt. Cheha, near Talladega, and the state's first ETV broadcast came in early 1955. Rudy Bretz, a former CBS production man imported to teach inexperienced Alabamians something about television, plucked a guitar and sang folk songs. As broadcast stations were built, production centers opened in the Birmingham and Huntsville public schools and at the University of Alabama, Auburn University and the University of Montevallo. The only production center not affiliated with an educational institution was to be in Montgomery, in Hurlbert's words, "to be a voice out of state government."

"Representatives from Japan, Scandinavia, Germany – all over – came to look at the system,"

says Hurlbert. Even the ETV system in the islands of American Samoa felt the Alabama touch when an Auburn studio engineer traveled to the South Pacific to share his expertise. It would be simplistic to suggest that mankind can trace its ETV roots to the Alabama blackbelt, but the state system certainly had an important impact.

II.

Hurlbert bristles under charges of racial discrimination, claiming a long interest in making things better for Alabama blacks. But change comes slowly, Hurlbert argues, and people "who bang their heads on the wall can undo 20 years' hard work."

According to FCC records, the current dispute began in 1969, when the AETC transferred its National Educational Network (NET) affiliation from the University of Alabama production center in Tuscaloosa to AETC offices in Birmingham: this meant that national broadcasting – previously channeled through UA for later state network broadcasting – now would come under direct AETC control. AETC claims that the re-routing was performed for purely technical reasons proved unconvincing to the University. UA officials fired letters to the FCC complaining that the AETC had censored such black NET programs as "Black Journal," "Soul," and "On Being Black." A petition was filed, signed by 60 people, including the Civil Liberties Union's director Steve Suitts, then an American Studies student at the University. AETC contended, in part, that the programs

had been kept off the air because of "obscene language"; AETC officials claimed such words as "screw," "bullshit" and "black ass" were unacceptable for public consumption, though AETC documents show that such words as "bastard" and "frigging" were considered in a "decent context" in the BBC production, "The Battle of Culloden."

Other letters complaining of AETC censorship arrived at the FCC. Rev. Eugene Farrell, a Birmingham Catholic priest who also helped force the integration of a formerly white-only Birmingham cemetery with the burial of a black Vietnam war veteran, wrote to a well-known friend of the media, then Vice President Spiro Agnew. (When Farrell's bishop learned that AETC officials had discussed the priest's critical letter, he challenged Farrell's right to question AETC programming practices. Farrell subsequently was transferred to a New Jersey diocese.)

In June, 1970, complaints notwithstanding, the FCC voted to renew AETC broadcast licenses, apparently leaving questions of "taste" to AETC discretion. Within a month Suitts, Farrell and a black UA student named Linda Edwards filed a request for reconsideration and called for a license hearing. They said that less than three percent of AETC programming involved black adults and that out of a commission staff of approximately 50 there were only two blacks—a janitor and a part-time clerical worker.

Not until early 1972, after gathering information from both sides in the dispute, did the FCC decide to schedule a hearing for later that year in, of all places, Birmingham Bankruptcy Court. An FCC judge flew out of the Washington snow to host the chilly confrontation; after hearing the evidence, he packed north again, having initially decided there had been discrimination, but without malice.

Last September, in Washington, the FCC heard oral arguments in the case and at that time voted not to take the staff judge's advice to renew the licenses; the *Times* story appeared the day after the hearing, reporting that "experienced communications lawyers" claimed "this was the first time that complaints from citizens about the performance of a television station had led the commission to decline to renew a station's license." The irony of it all—that the case involved the first state ETV network in the nation—went unnoted.

III.

With Farrell now gone north and Linda Edwards practicing speech therapy in South America, Steve Suitts is the last of the original plaintiffs left in

Alabama. A lanky Winston County country boy, the state's first CLU executive director peers out with shy, blinking eyes and speaks gently with a nasal twang. One CLU member remarks that Suitts is "a good guy" and "smart," but "he doesn't come off well on television."

As Suitts himself admits, he doesn't do well in court rooms either. In 1972, for example, he was thrown out of Alabama's Supreme Court for refusing to rise when the venerable Justices entered the Court.

"I was sitting there waiting for a particular case to come up," says Suitts, "when I overheard a discussion between opposing lawyers on another case. 'I thought you'd stopped taking niggah clients,' said the prosecutor. 'Yeah,' said the defense attorney, 'but they pay pretty well when you get their welfare checks.' This was a serious discussion, right there in the open, in the Supreme Court of Alabama. I decided it would be ridiculous to rise if this were the dignity of court."

Obviously, such dramatics can be of questionable value in many circumstances, but the implication is clear: within Steve Suitts' soft, mild-mannered exterior lurks the bane of many a well-lubricated organization—a Man of Principle.

"I'm pretty morally certain that if we were given the choice of having ETV not fully integrated, or no ETV at all, I'd choose the latter," says Suitts.



Alabama CLU Director, Steve Suitts

who owns Alabama's media

In Alabama, local and statewide cross ownership or the common ownership of different media, such as newspapers and television stations, or radio and television stations, results in the control of the media by a relative few:

— More than 80% of all FM stations that exist in Alabama are owned by AM broadcasters in the same community.

— Of some 70 cable companies in the state, more than half are owned by families or corporations.

— Almost half of the television stations in the state also have radio stations in the same community.

In addition to these local patterns of ownership across the state, there are some owners who have the most conspicuous, largest control: 1) the Newhouse family; 2) the Ayers family; 3) the Faulkner family, 4) Teleprompter Corporation.

1) **The Newhouse family:** The Newhouse family of Syracuse, New York, owns several closely interlocked corporations throughout the country. In Alabama their ownership is as follows:

A. Broadcast stations: WAPI-TV, WAPI-AM-FM, Birmingham, Alabama. The television station has the second largest audience in the state, and the radio stations, each with 50,000 watts of power, cover a large part of the state.

B. Cable Television: Newhouse Broadcasting owns New Channels Corporation, which, in turn, owns 100% of Cablevision Company of Anniston, Alabama. Anniston is located within the service area of WAPI-TV-AM-FM radio.

C. Newspapers: S. I. Newhouse is president and owner of 100% of class A common stock of Advance Publications, Inc., which owns 100% of the *Birmingham News* in Birmingham and the *Huntsville Times* in Huntsville. The *Birmingham News* also acts as an agent for the *Birmingham Post Herald* in printing, circulation, and advertising. Newhouse also owns almost 100% of the *Mobile Press Register*, publisher of the *Mobile Register*, the *Mobile Press* and *Mobile Press Register*, the daily newspapers in Mobile, Alabama. This ownership gives Newhouse control of the largest newspaper in the state (the *Birmingham News*), in part, the second largest newspaper in the state (the *Birmingham Post Herald*), the third and fourth largest newspapers in the state (the *Mobile Press* and the *Mobile Register*), and the sixth largest newspaper in the state (*Huntsville Times*). In Birmingham, Alabama's largest city, Newhouse owns one of the three TV stations and has substantial control of the only two daily newspapers.

D. Magazines: Advance Publications, Inc., owns

100% of *Vogue*, *Glamour*, *Mademoiselle*, *Bride*, and *House and Garden* magazines, all distributed in Alabama. Newhouse also owns 100% of Advance News Service, Inc., a Washington, D.C., news agency to which the *Birmingham News* and the *Huntsville Times* subscribe.

2) **The Ayers family:** This Anniston, Alabama, family has been in the newspaper business for several decades. Their entire ownership of media is located in the east-central Alabama area.

A. Broadcast stations: The Ayers own WHMA-TV and WHMA-AM-FM radio which are located in Anniston. This ownership constitutes the only television station in the market and two of the four radio stations.

B. Newspapers: The Ayers own the only daily newspaper in Anniston, the *Anniston Star* and have a controlling interest in the *Talladega Home* in Talladega, Alabama, some twenty miles away. The FCC decisions on January 28, 1975, against common ownership of a town's newspaper and television station requires the Ayers to sell one of their Anniston media unless they can establish overwhelming evidence that their control is in the public interest.

3) **The Faulkner family:** Jimmy Faulkner, the most prominent member of this old Alabama family, is a long time associate of Governor George Wallace.

A. Broadcast stations: The Faulkners own WBCA-AM and WWSM-FM radio stations in Bay Minette, Alabama, and WAOA-AM and WFRI-FM radio stations in Auburn-Opelika, Alabama.

B. Newspapers: In Baldwin County, where the Bay Minette radio stations are located, the Faulkners owned the county's three newspapers until last year when ownership was turned over to another family outside of Alabama. Yet, a Faulkner family member remains editor and publisher of the newspapers, the *Baldwin Times*, the *Foley Onlooker* and the *Fairhope Courier*.

4) **Teleprompter Corporation:** This New York corporation owns all the existing cable systems in the larger towns and cities in Alabama. While it holds no other cross ownership with newspapers or broadcast stations, its ownership of cable companies is extensive:

A. Cable companies: Teleprompter owns the cable systems in Florence, Huntsville, Gadsden, Tuscaloosa, Dothan, and Mobile, Alabama. These towns along with Birmingham and Montgomery constitute the eight largest cities in the state. Birmingham and Montgomery presently do not have cable television systems and Teleprompter owns the cable companies in the others.

Suits' involvement within the Civil Liberties Union began at the University of Alabama, which he left without a diploma because he believed he "could learn more elsewhere." He got hooked on legal work in the summer of 1970, following campus disturbances that spring which led to the arrest of 26 students. As a CLU investigator, Suits helped uncover evidence that the FBI had installed an *agent provocateur* on campus to help stir up trouble. While assisting defense attorneys during court proceedings later that year in Tuscaloosa, Suits was thrown out of court the *first* time.

Suits eventually politicked with state CLU board members and managed to create the executive director post for himself in 1972. At first the pay was \$75 per month, with an old Dodge for an office. Now the Alabama Civil Liberties Union has more than 700 members, with two law firms on retainer and 30 attorneys across the state volunteering their services. Suits, of course, is not an attorney, though some in the press for one reason or another *insist* on referring to him as such.

Suits dismisses some of his critics in the ETV situation as hardly being concerned with equitable broadcasting. "A lot of them are worried they won't have 'Sesame Street' on Saturday mornings to keep the kids quiet," he says. Other critics say that before the FCC was pulled into the case Suits should have tried to bargain with AETC officials, or, failing that, with Gov. George Wallace. ("Whatever George wants, George gets," claims one former AETC member.) Suits answers simply that there were attempts to negotiate with the AETC, but "we were looked upon with not much respect. You would have thought we were asking them to negotiate with terrorists."

Now, Suits figures, the high cards have changed hands. "With the FCC announcement that the AETC's licenses have been revoked, the AETC of course still has the opportunity to apply for new licenses," says Suits. "But the burden will be with the potential licensee to prove that he will meet public interest requirements; that means that the AETC will have to bear responsibility for its past acts."

Suits smiles. "The question is," he says, "how much will the AETC be willing to do to make sure those license applications are not contested by the CLU of Alabama?"

Suits acknowledges there have been improvements in programming and hiring in recent years but points to needed improvements—like an increase in AETC black employment from today's 9 percent to 20 percent.

Suits has found little support in some quarters

of the media. Raymond Hurlbert says *Birmingham News* managing editor John Bloomer told him Suits is "one man against 3 million citizens." Suits seems undisturbed. "If John Bloomer were writing editorials in 1789," he says, "we never would have had the First Amendment."

The largest and perhaps most influential paper in the state, the *News* has long supported ETV through the "Youth Speaks Out" program and in other ways, Hurlbert says. In fact, according to Hurlbert, even the state's commercial broadcast media support the AETC—perhaps because ETV provides a training ground for engineers and technicians who then are ready to accept higher-paying positions in the commercial sector. At least one large Birmingham broadcast station no doubt has been interested in the outcome of the AETC license dispute; WAPI, once an educational station but now, like the *News*, part of the Newhouse commercial media chain, is itself the subject of a discrimination complaint before the FCC.



Robert Dod and his Rotary plaque

IV.

Robert Dod, the man who became ETV general manager when Hurlbert retired, has the look of someone a trifle disturbed by an uncertain world. Like Hurlbert, Dod is a Rotarian, and the wall behind his desk is adorned with a solitary fixture—

a framed reproduction of the Rotary "Four-way Test of the Things We Think, Say or Do." The first test reads, *Is it the TRUTH?*

"Yes, I'd say there have been transgressions in the past," says Dod, knitting his fingers, "and I guess the license challenge helped bring change. But there has been change. The AETC has 53 employees: there is a black part-time secretary and six full-time blacks: a traffic engineer, the director of the AETC tape delay center, the chief engineer in the Montgomery studio, a transmitter engineer, a tape playback engineer and a janitor."

In addition, Dod says, since the challenge was filed there has been a survey to determine the black community's ETV needs. The state network's seventh production center has been organized at the predominantly black Alabama A&M University in Normal, and Dod says the center gets AETC funds "in proportion to other production centers." The Alabama Center for Higher Education (ACHE), a coalition of black colleges, is producing a series of black-oriented programs in various production centers. Dr. Harold Stinson, the black president of Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, has been appointed by Gov. Wallace to the AETC.

Since the AETC has never seen fit to indulge in extensive audience surveys, no one has any firm idea about who feels what or how strongly about ETV. Some individuals, however, are taking surprising stands in the present license situation. Birmingham newsman Bob Harper—a former AETC member who remembers dropping in on broadcast facilities in ETV's earlier days to discover that workers were out fishing—did his

BLACKS IN RADIO AND TV BROADCASTING

State	Blacks as % of State's Population	Blacks as % of Broadcasting Workers *
Alabama	26.2%	7.6%
Arkansas	18.3	3.7
Florida	20.6	9.3
Georgia	25.9	4.6
Kentucky	7.2	3.3
Louisiana	29.8	8.8
Mississippi	36.8	8.3
North Carolina	22.2	4.8
South Carolina	30.5	8.8
Tennessee	15.8	7.1
Texas	12.5	13.1
Virginia	18.5	5.4
West Virginia	3.9	1.7

**includes Spanish-surnamed persons (especially important in Florida and Texas). All data from the 1970 Census. Prepared by staff of Southern Exposure.*



Dr. Harold Stinson, a Wallace-appointed to the AETC Board

best to roast Suitts during a CLU press conference following the September FCC vote, but later came out with what Suitts interpreted as editorials supporting the CLU position. On the other hand, long-time civil rights attorney and former FCC member Clifford J. Durr finds himself in disagreement with Suitts on some points. "If programming is any indication, some good people have found a way into the AETC organization," says Durr. "It would be a great tragedy to lose ETV in this state."

At 75, Durr is now retired, living near the tiny Elmore County town of Wetumpka. His home, overrun with stray dogs who have "taken up" with the Durrs over the years, is a rambling ranch house built with weekend labor on land bought in the 1870's by Durr's paternal grandfather, a captain in the first Confederate regiment from Montgomery. "Grandpa was against secession," says Durr, "but when the war came he joined up right away to keep from being called a coward."

"What bothers me about the ETV situation," says Durr, "is that the FCC is loaded now with Nixon appointees: I'm afraid they might take advantage of a 'civil rights' position to do away with something the Nixon crowd has never cared for — public broadcasting.

"Also, I've heard that George Wallace might try to break up the network." Wallace spokespeople seem genuinely surprised by that piece of information. Wallace, they insist, has supported the AETC for years and definitely does not want the system to end.

Besides, Wallace and other state politicians regularly receive valuable publicity through AETC coverage of official government events across the state. On balance, Wallace is expected to stay clear of the ETV controversy, so as not to complicate other involvements.

As for the FCC's intentions, the Wallace people have their own ideas. "I think it's politics," offers one spokesman. "The FCC decision seems to have come from a desire to embarrass the State of Alabama and the Governor." Yes, says the spokesman, the decision could have something to do with the Governor's presidential aspirations.

V.

In its decision to deny the AETC license the FCC wrote, "We have found that AETC excluded blacks from the decision-making process, that it did not take the trouble to inform itself of the needs and interests of a minority group consisting of 30 percent of the population of the State of Alabama, and that, as a result, it virtually ignored the programming needs and interests of that minority group. A finding that

it made reasonable efforts to ascertain and to deal with the problems of the black minority in Alabama cannot reasonably be made. We find that AETC failed to sustain its burden of showing that it served the needs of all of Alabama's citizens."

Alabama Senator Jim Allen, adroit tactician of divisive swill, was quick to label the ruling as a "slap in the face" and "proof of a malicious intent on the part of that small vengeful group who demanded that the FCC punish the AETV system despite the fact that the faults they had pointed to have been corrected." What many Alabamians have never understood throughout the entire FCC proceeding is that the license period involved was for the years 1967-1969 and that the improvements made in AETC programming and hiring practices in the years since 1969 were mainly due to the persistent presence of petitioner Suitts.

What happens now? The January 8, 1975, FCC decision recognized that "improvements undertaken by AETC demonstrate that it has the capacity to change its ways and therefore that, despite its past misconduct, AETC possesses the requisite character qualifications to be a Commission licensee." Though it is conceivable that the AETC might appeal the FCC ruling in a federal court, the expense, delay, and uncertainty of outcome seem to make such a course unlikely. General manager Dod has said he feels sure the AETC will reapply for a license. No one realistically expects ETV to end in Alabama. "Folks might pick up their pitch forks and grubbing hoes if anybody tried to pull that," says one ETV employee. For now, the FCC has granted the AETC interim authority to continue operating the system's eight stations. There is little likelihood that any other organization will seek the ETV license, or that the FCC will ultimately deny a new application from the AETC. But some additional concessions, such as the appointment of a black assistant manager, may be demanded by Suitts before the matter is laid to rest.

Steve Suitts' involvement with Alabama media has grown from the original ETV petition to include coordinating challenges of more than 20 radio and television stations, participating in rulemaking proceedings before the FCC and Congressional committees, and creating the Alabama Media Project — a non-profit group which is working to develop public radio, cable TV access, and more participation by citizens in all the state's media. Testifying before the Senate Subcommittee on Communications, Suitts commented upon the AETC dispute but spoke as well of larger issues of broadcast responsibility: "What

results have occurred in this case at present and may occur in the future can be credited not to the FCC as a regulatory agency and not even to the individuals who initiated the petitions to deny. Instead, the credit for what good has been

done lies with a system of citizen participation which allows local people to address local situations based upon standards which all broadcasters should be expected to meet."

how to challenge your tv station

Radio and television stations are governed by the requirement that they operate "in the public interest, convenience and necessity." This phrase in the Communications Act of 1934, the law that established the framework of regulation for broadcasting, is based on the simple proposition that the airways belong to the public and that the limited number of frequencies available for radio and television should not be used for private interests.

Most television and radio stations sell time on the air for profit, although a spectrum of the airways is reserved for the non-commercial stations. By the Communications Act and the regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, every station must broadcast programming which is intended to fulfill the needs, interests and problems of its communities. Every three years, the FCC reviews the station's performance to decide if the broadcasters have met their obligations to serve the public. In addition, the Commission establishes regulations concerning employment, fairness in broadcasting, false and misleading advertisement, and diversification of control of media as well as other regulations which serve the interest of the public.

Like most federal bureaucracies, the FCC must be pressured by public interest groups and citizens if it is to function in any way for the public interest. Citizens who use the procedures of the FCC will many times find that they fight the regulator as well as the regulated. Yet, the power and influence of broadcasting stations is too great to be left to despair and the broadcasting industry. Several FCC regulations are particularly useful in challenging the power or behavior of your local station:

1) *General Policy on Programming:* The FCC does not require stations to have a particular percentage of programming for any purpose, but stations must present programming that meets the needs and interests of all substantial groups in its audience. Public service programming cannot be limited simply because a station cannot find sponsors to handle its costs. At the same time, a broadcaster has discretion over the format, presentation and style of its programming.

2) *Employment Standards:* The FCC requires all broadcast stations to establish "affirmative action" to eliminate discrimination in employment, and it monitors their compliance through annual reports (Form 390) which require information on the

stations' employment of blacks, American Indians, women and other minorities. A station with less than five employees is not required to report.

3) *The Fairness Doctrine:* The fairness doctrine is a body of regulatory law established by the FCC which states, in effect, that whenever a controversial issue of public importance is presented by a broadcast station, the station has an obligation to present the contrasting viewpoints on the issue. Issues can be controversial and not of public importance, or *vice versa*; they may be important on a national, state or local basis. If an issue affects a large part of the community and has produced some controversy that can be documented, it most likely would require fairness. The fairness doctrine does not require equal time (one minute to one minute) nor contrasting views for every sentence expressed on the air. Similarly, the fairness doctrine does not require contrasting viewpoints in the same program. If a broadcaster has contrasting viewpoints somewhere in its overall programming, the fairness doctrine will be satisfied.

(The fairness doctrine may be said to be analogous to a heap of manure. It's hard to handle but if you spread it around enough it'll do what nothing else will.)

4) *Advertising Responsibilities:* Over commercialization of broadcasting is a frequent complaint which the FCC has seldom addressed. The broadcaster has discretion over the style and kind of advertising unless the advertising is false, misleading or deceptive, or presents a controversial issue of public importance.

The FCC has no limit on the number of commercials which are allowed by broadcasters. However, the industry standard which has been self-imposed is eighteen minutes per hour for radio stations and sixteen minutes per hour for television stations.

Another federal agency, the Federal Trade Commission, has responsibility for identifying and investigating complaints about misleading, false or deceptive claims in advertising.

5) *Diversification of Control of Media:* Based upon the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the courts and the FCC have concluded that the public interest is served when as many sources as possible provide news and information through broadcasting. The ownership of broadcast stations, however, is not a completely decided area of the law. For instance, at the present time, the FCC has regulations which

prohibit any one individual or corporation from acquiring or operating radio and television stations in the same community. *This does not, however, apply to presently owned stations*, except the few examples where a town's only TV station and only newspaper are under common ownership.

Taking Action

To decide if any broadcaster is meeting the standards of the public interest, begin by looking in the "public inspection file" of the broadcast station. Most of the information about what the broadcaster has promised to do can be found in the renewal application form filed with the Commission every three years and kept in the public inspection file. This application contains information about programs which have been promised to be broadcast for a three year period and information about advertising practices. Other documents, including Form 390, are also in the public file. The best way to find out what you can know from the public file is to go to the station and ask to see it.

1) *Fairness Doctrine Complaints:* If you or your group believes that a station has presented only one side of a controversial issue, a letter can be sent first to the broadcaster and then to the FCC if the broadcaster fails to provide a satisfactory response. A letter to the broadcaster and the FCC should contain specific information about the particular station and the issues. State your answer to these questions for the broadcaster and the FCC: a) what are the issues? b) are the issues controversial? 3) are the issues of public importance? d) has the broadcaster presented in the same program or in other programs contrasting viewpoints? State your facts, the standard of performance required, and ask for specific relief in programming.

2) *Community Negotiations with Stations:* If a representative community group believes that broadcast stations are not meeting its needs or the needs of others similarly situated, it's possible that negotiations can take place between the stations and the group.

To do so, these guidelines may help:

- a) Be sure to have organized or to represent a substantial citizen's group.
- b) Know what you're talking about. Formulate your plans in advance.
- c) Be specific and comprehensive if you wish time to be provided for certain needs or problems in the community.
- d) The more convenient you make it for a broadcaster to meet your group's needs, the more receptive he will be.
- e) Know what the broadcaster has done and not done on the air by researching the public file and observing programming.
- f) Give broadcasters credit for doing a good job on specific programs.
- g) Enlist legal support.

3) *Challenge to a Broadcast Station:* A challenge to the license of a radio or television station requires the same preparation and detail which negotiations

might require, if not more. You may need to monitor the station's programming on a systematic basis. Legal assistance is usually required for a successful challenge. The following agencies may offer resources or information for this or other actions:

Alabama Media Project
P.O. Box 1984
University, Alabama 35486

Citizens Communications Center
1914 Sunderland Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Citizens Committee for
Broadcasting (NCCB)
1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Media Access Project
1910 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Office of Communication
United Church of Christ
289 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10010

Action for Children's Television (ACT)
33 Hancock Avenue
Newton Centre, Massachusetts 02159

NAACP Legal Defense and Educational
Fund (LDF)
10 Columbus Circle
New York, New York 10019

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational
Fund (MALDEF)
145 Ninth Street
San Francisco, California 94103

Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Broadcast Station Renewal Dates

Broadcast stations are licensed for a three-year period. Ninety days prior to the expiration of their license, stations must submit their application for renewal. All licenses in a given state expire at the same time. Objections may be filed any time prior to the renewal date. A formal "petition to deny" must be submitted 30 days prior to expiration of license (or 60 days after application is filed). All station licenses expire by state on the following chronological schedule and at three-year intervals thereafter:

Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia and West Virginia	October 1, 1975
North Carolina and South Carolina	December 1, 1975
Florida	February 1, 1976
Alabama and Georgia	April 1, 1976
Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi	June 1, 1976

—prepared by Steve Suits

Clifford Durr

The FCC Years, 1941-48

by Allen Tullos and Candace Waid

"There are some reasons I have for being proud of being a Southerner, and Clifford Durr is one of them."

— C. Vann Woodward

Clifford and Virginia Durr who have worked for decades in the causes of civil liberties and human rights now live near Wetumpka, Alabama, in a low, rambling farmhouse set at the edge of the woods where, in the early 1900's, Clifford and his grandfather hunted and fished. Clifford attended the University of Alabama, he read law at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, and returned to Alabama in 1922 to be an attorney with a Montgomery firm. For the next few years he practiced law and worked in a political campaign.

In 1933, Clifford accepted a job with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. "I came to Washington for one year and stayed seventeen," he remembers. At the RFC he first helped to organize the bank recapitalization plan which saved more than half of the banks in the United States. He also established and directed the RFC's work for the negotiation of billions of dollars in war production contracts.

Durr characterizes his appointment to the Federal Communications Commission in 1941 as a "political accident" involving the southern strategy of Franklin Roosevelt and the wishes of Alabama Sen. Lister Hill, a former school mate. Although he had no experience in broadcasting, he recognized the enormous power of the electronic media to influence and propagandize. During his seven year term on the FCC, he advocated a strict interpretation of the First Amendment right of free speech (similar to that of his brother-in-law Hugo Black), fought against corporate domination of broadcasting, and insisted that frequencies be reserved for non-commercial uses.

In the last years of his appointment, he battled the spirit of McCarthyism in the person of J. Edgar Hoover. Once, when asked what sort of person would be qualified to serve on a regulatory commission, Clifford Durr suggested that they might best be chosen from that group of people described by his father-in-law as, "Men that don't scare easy and women that don't rape easy."

The following interview was recorded at the Durr home, December 29, 1974.



When I went on the Federal Communications Commission, the only thing you had in the way of broadcasting was AM radio; that was the standard system of broadcasting, and there were only about 900 stations on the air when the war broke out. Well, everything was brought to a standstill because all the communications equipment being manufactured was turned over to the Army and Navy.

"My God! This Is A Terrific Medium!"

In the 1940's, the FCC was monitoring all the Axis broadcasts because we had the facilities to do it; we had linguists, propaganda analysts, quite a staff. So I began to read their daily reports. I wasn't interested in broadcasting. I was more or less a refugee from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. But I began to read these daily reports of these Axis broadcasts and then all at once I said, "My God! This is a terrific medium here. It can be magnificent or it can completely ruin you if you get this thing in the wrong hands." So then I began to take a more closer look at American broadcasting. Well, I got pretty dis-

Like Cliff Durr, Allen Tullos and Candace Waid are native Alabamians; both are pursuing their interests in the South as graduate students—Allen in folklore at the University of North Carolina and Candace in women studies at George Washington University.



couraged about the commercialization, not that every hour was filled with commercial broadcasts, but the dominant theme was making money. Just by chance I read about some educational stations. You see, our educational institutions, our universities and colleges, were really among the pioneers in broadcasting. But so many saw it as only something for their electrical engineering and physics students to play with, and didn't fully appreciate the potential.

I was invited to come out to a meeting of the Institute for Education by Radio at Columbus, Ohio, to meet some of the people that had held on to their stations—generally a group around the Midwest. WHA (University of Wisconsin) was one of the leading ones, also the stations at the University of Minnesota and the University of Illinois—but they had been shoved back to inadequate frequencies, many of them daytime only because they didn't have the money to operate on.

I got pretty excited about the potentialities of this thing, and then I began to discover that in the areas served by these educational stations, the level of commercial broadcasting was considerably higher, the people began to demand something

better, a little better music, a little more discussion in-depth of news. So I began to think that if we could really get some educational stations on the air, they would not only have value in themselves, but would serve as a yardstick and could contribute greatly to broadcasting throughout the country.

But there was no possibility. There was no possibility of taking the frequencies away from the commercial broadcasters. As I said, many educational stations were among the pioneers. WAPI, the big station at Birmingham, was at one time jointly owned by the University of Alabama and Auburn. Georgia Tech had a station which is now completely commercial. What happened, as the commercial advertising potential began to develop, was that the commercial broadcasters would go to these university stations and say, "Look here, you're not using but three hours a day sitting here on this frequency. You step aside at renewal time and let us come in and apply for that frequency and let us pay all the expenses for operating the transmitter, and we'll give you free time—as much as you have now." A lot of them fell for the deal and began to step aside and let the commercial stations get their licenses.

Well, what actually happened was this. Maybe a university would have a program at eight o'clock at night aimed at an adult audience that had been built up over several years. So now the station in commercial hands would come and say, "We're awfully sorry, but the network says they have got to have that eight o'clock hour. Now we can give you seven o'clock." So they would nicely go along and take the seven o'clock hour. Of course they would lose their audience until people found it again, then the audience would be rebuilt until the station would say, "We're awfully sorry, but the network wants the seven o'clock hour. How about four o'clock in the afternoon?" Well, you don't get any kind of audience at four in the afternoon. So that process continued until the universities were pretty well broken down, except a handful.

"The Biggest Thing For Education Since Gutenberg"

After I went to the meeting at Columbus, I began to work very closely with the fellows in these colleges. That seemed to me about the only hope we had to avoid complete commercial domination. Now, as the War seemed to be coming to an end, some hearings were set at the FCC to see what we would be doing with FM. FM had been started just before World War II, and it had shown its potentialities. I think there were about 40 stations on the air; they were small stations, but there were so few sets out, only about 300,000 FM sets in the entire country. These FM stations were generally run by people with licenses for standard broadcasting (AM), thus there was lots of duplication of programming which could be done very inexpensively. Great developments in the field of electronics came during the war. The British were pioneers in the development of new kinds of "valves" as they called them, rather than tubes, and they began to get way up in the higher spectrums, very-high frequencies, ultra-high, and so on. FM was changed to another range in the spectrum where you could get more stations, and they thought it would operate more effectively.

I told these educational people about the hearings at the FCC. "Look here," I said, "you haven't got a chance of ever getting frequencies taken away from commercial stations and given to you, but here is a new area of the spectrum opened up. Come in with a petition for the Commission to set aside x per cent of those frequencies for non-profit educational broadcasting." So we got up a pretty good head of

steam on that. I sort of carried the ball for the Commission. Some of my colleagues were reasonably enthusiastic, but most were in the position that being against education was like being against God and Mother and Country and so on. I got them sold on the idea, and the time came when we had to have the hearings to justify the setting aside of these frequencies.

But who was going to come in and make the claim—to testify? Well, the fellows that had been doing the job around the universities were generally at the associate professor level and the average salary of a full professor in those days—except around Harvard, Yale and Princeton—was around \$6000, so these guys hardly had railroad fare to Washington, and they had no prestige at all. And you couldn't get the administrators interested. They were just completely apathetic. So here was a hearing coming on, and nobody of any standing in the educational field to come in and testify to the use they could make of it and the importance. I was feeling pretty discouraged. But we went to the hearings and here were a group of presidents of land grant colleges, and, you know, they were the ones that had the political power. They took the stand one after the other and read very excellent statements about the importance of this thing to education. And the long and short of it was we set aside I think it was 15% of all the FM frequencies.

I discovered the next day what had happened. (And this is the way government operates that you don't get in your government administrations classes.) There was a guy named Ed Brecher, who is now a free lance writer, who was working for the Commission. Interestingly, his background was in philosophy. He was the kind that could put things together when you needed a report in a hurry—he was a genius for going through records and pulling out information. So I used to take Ed with me to a lot of these meetings of educational broadcasters, and he got pretty much interested in it. I found out a day after the hearing when these land grant college presidents had appeared that Ed had got on a private telephone outside of the Commission and had called all these presidents a week before, saying to them, "You're about to miss out on the biggest thing for education since Gutenberg and his printing press."

And they would say, "What do you mean?" Then Brecher would explain educational radio to them and tell them they had better be at the hearings. They would say, "It sounds good, but we'll have to think it over." "Well, don't think long because the hearings are in five days," Ed told them. "But what would we say?" "You don't worry about that; I'll have something ready

for you to say when you get to Washington." So Ed spent the next few days writing the statements that these presidents read when they came to testify.

"Free Speech, For Whom?"

When I first went on the Commission, the chain broadcasting regulations had already been adopted in order to try and maintain a degree of independence for the local stations, protection from the networks. You know a network contract was the most valuable asset a station could have economically because the network was providing the revenue; they were the ones that had access to the big advertisers and provided the programs. So more and more time was network time, and less and less time went to the development of local programs, whether news discussions or art and music. The three big networks were NBC, CBS, and Mutual. Of these, NBC was the largest. (It finally became so large that it was made to divest itself of a lot of its stations, forming a new network, ABC.) There were limitations to the amount of prime time the networks could contract for. They had a way of getting what they called "option time" for which they would say to a station, "Well this nine to ten o'clock hour, you've got to give us an option on that, so if we do have a program we want to put in, we can demand that time." This meant that the local stations which had built up a program of their own would have to cancel that whenever the network wanted it.

The National Association of Broadcasters and the networks moved in Congress to get legislation to nullify the chain broadcasting regulations. Meanwhile they had challenged the constitutionality of the regulations in the court. But James Fly, the FCC chairman, was a pretty tough character. Again, an illustration of how government works: so much power is vested in men on the key Congressional committees – Appropriations Committee or the Interstate Commerce Committee which then had jurisdiction over the FCC. The networks would get to these key guys and then win them over or buy them over. But Fly was tough enough; he continued to fight this thing. We had our appropriations cut several times as the battle went on for about two years. And then we found we had more support in Congress than we ever thought. Some of the members of Congress that were not on the key committees began to understand what was going on. So not only was the case won in the Supreme Court, but Congress ultimately defeated all the legislation to nullify the chain broadcasting regulations. I don't think that turned out to be too

effective, but it helped some on the monopoly standpoint.

About this time I got interested in trying to show where the economic controls in broadcasting really lay. We had a very good guy as head of the economics section named Dallas Smythe, who turned up the data. And I wrote an article which was carried in the *Public Opinion Quarterly* at Princeton, entitled "Freedom of Speech, For Whom?" I said, "Well, we talk about government control but let's just see who's really running the show." Here were 900 stations on the air – you'd think that you would have enough diversification



in programming and in ideas. But you take a look at it, and 85% of the coverage of these stations was by stations that had a network affiliation contract. And the networks not only controlled the time they used for network programs, but they could bring a lot of pressure to bear on the stations as to other programs they carried. For example, a station might have a local program that did not have too large a listening rating, but did have an enthusiastic audience. The networks would say, "We don't want all the sets off when our network program comes on, you've got to put a more popular program in that time period." So they were doing a lot of dictating of programming.

When you took a look at the networks, you found that they were not such free agents themselves. Network advertising is *per se* national advertising. You take a local newspaper of that time and the advertising revenue was about 85% local and about 15% national or regional. You had the reverse situation in the case of the stations and the networks. I found that something like 20% of the revenues of each network came from one national advertiser. And something like six national advertisers provided more than 50% of the revenues. Well, you follow that through into advertising agencies and you find even more concentration because an agency might handle quite a number of accounts.

"Not The Best Applicant But The Biggest Liar"

I suppose program-wise, the most significant development came with the so-called "Blue Book," the report on the public service responsibility of broadcast licensees, which was issued in a blue cover. It created quite a bit of consternation. This happened after Fly had left the Commission and Paul Porter had become chairman, a very likeable guy, but quite a politician. Ordinarily, renewals of licenses were brought up by the engineering department in batches of anywhere from ten to twenty at a time: "We have no interference problems, no technical problems at this station, we recommend that their license be renewed." And the Commission would just say, "Renewed." That was all there was to it.

Well, I had gone along with this — this was the way they had done things, for quite a while. Then I just happened to take a look at the Communications Act one day and it said, "All renewals shall be governed by the same considerations as original grants." In making original grants, the Commission traditionally, going back to the days of the old Radio Commission, considered *proposed* program service as a very important element. And very often you might have several applicants for one station, and the grant had turned on the proposed program service. So, after I took a look at the provisions of the Act, when the next batch of renewals were presented by the engineering department, I said, "Well, wait just a minute here. We haven't got enough information. We're acting entirely on engineering reports." The response was, "This is the way we've always done it." "But," I said, "that's not what the Act says. And I want the record to show that I am refraining from voting because of lack of information."

The Commission also had required every station

once a year to present a composite program log. But these composite logs had gone right into the files, nobody had even taken a look at them. So from then on, when a group of renewals appeared on the agenda, I would get a member of the staff to go down and get the original programming proposals and compare that with the latest program log. And I found out that there was no relationship between promise and performance. There were all these promises about the agricultural programs, and the music programs, and how they were going to develop the community, and discussion programs, when actually 85% of their time was going to network programs or "platters" (disc jockey shows). So I laid the promise and the performance beside each other and I said, "Look here, here's what this guy's doing. We're granting it not to the best applicant, but the biggest liar. This is not fair to the public nor the competing applicants."

So this thing began to build up for months. Every time I would be ready with the dossiers. Finally — you know in government, when the evidence builds up to the point where you've got to do something, you have a study. So I said, "Well, I think we ought to have a study." I was appointed to head up the study and given a little money to hire two or three people from the outside, including Charles Siepman, who was quite knowledgeable about broadcasting. I put Dallas Smythe and Ed Brecher of our staff to work on it, too, with the result that instead of this study dragging on for a couple of years, in a month it was completed. That really baffled them; there was nothing to do about it but go along. Now everybody thought that there was going to be hell to pay, but the public's reaction was just remarkable: "God, this is great! Now if the Commission will just make the stations live up to this, we'll have good broadcasting."

We said that the stations which did not live up to their promises were going to be set for a hearing, but I think I am the only member of the Commission during those years that ever voted not to renew a license. Charles Denny was now Chairman. He'd go around all over the country making these speeches, "The Blue Book will not be bleached." But whenever a station came up for renewal, they'd give them a lecture, instead of taking away their license; and so, gradually the process began to drift back into the old pattern.

The Avco case was another dispute that attracted a great deal of attention. My position was that broadcasting ought to be run by broadcasters and should not be permitted to become a mere adjunct of large business concerns. Not only would it be unfair from the business point of

view, competitively, but I thought that you had to have people devoting their full time to considering the effect of broadcasting on the minds and emotions of people. Well, one of the biggest stations in the country, a 50 kilowatt station, WLW, operating out of Cincinnati and blanketing the whole Mississippi Valley was owned by the Crosley family. They came to the Commission with an application to approve the sale of the station to the Aviation Corporation of America. I insisted that it be set down for a hearing — it was one of the most important stations in the U.S. Paul Porter, who was still Chairman at the time, and the other members agreed to go along with the hearing.

The high officials of Avco said, "We're buying the broadcasting properties as part of a package. We're more interested in the Crosley manufacturing facilities." They hadn't the slightest idea what the responsibility of a broadcast licensee was, or even what broadcasting was all about. But they had on the board of directors a fellow named George Allen, a lobbyist around Washington, a funny guy who told good stories and, as a result, had access to most anywhere. So they put him on to testify, and he made some wisecracks. I knew right then what was going to happen — Paul Porter was going to go along with him. The sale was approved, but I wrote a dissenting memorandum (Commission members Wakefield and Walker also dissented). The Avco case became one of the key policy decisions.

"Balance Between God and Free Speech"

Besides the Blue Book, the ruling that attracted the most attention — and got me in the most trouble — was the Scott case. You know, nobody can be more devout than a devout atheist. Scott was a retired court reporter out of San Francisco. He was an atheist who made it his lifetime cause to see to it that the atheist point of view was broadcast. So after the Blue Book came out and we had talked about the responsibilities of stations to present all points of view, Scott had approached the three leading stations in San Francisco asking for time and they had all turned him down. Then he proceeded to draw up a formal complaint, asking that the licenses of the stations be set down for hearing on renewal. And it was a pretty intelligently done job. He said in it, "I'm not the kind of fellow who goes around throwing bricks in church windows or scoffing at people kneeling in prayer. I respect a person's right to have the religious views he wants, but where I part company with them is when they say I can't present the atheist point of view. I don't

want to berate anybody; I just want to make a rational presentation of the atheist argument. As far as balance is concerned, these stations are giving free time to religious broadcasters and they are letting a lot of these preachers get on who devote themselves to attacks on atheists, saying we are irresponsible and criminally inclined because we don't have the sanction of a belief in God, and I think we are entitled to be heard."

So the Commission did what it normally did — sent the complaint to the stations and asked them what they had to say about it. Well, one of the stations came back with a very intelligent response. They said, "It's all a question of the degree of interest in an issue. Unlike a newspaper that can add another page, we can't add another hour to the day. If every single point of view is presented, we'd have to be giving time to people to prove the earth is flat, and all of that. But with a showing of enough interest and assurance there would be a responsible presentation, we think it ought to be considered." The other two stations got very righteous about it: "It would be contrary to the public interest to ever permit the cause of atheism to be heard on the air. We will not permit that."

So the Commission was on a spot. They said, "Let's just dismiss that with a simple order of dismissal." I said, "Now if we just dismiss this with an order, in the public mind it will be taken as a confirmation of the position that these two righteous stations took. I'm not going to vote for revocation of license or even a hearing, but I want my views to go out as a notice to the broadcasters and the public generally. Then we can be specific about it and next time take more drastic action."

I wrote a memorandum relying upon the first amendment and going back to Lincoln and Jefferson, neither of whom would have been allowed on the air because he was accused of being an atheist. And I must have hit a right balance because the Commission didn't want to be against God and they didn't want to be against freedom of speech either. So, much to my surprise, they agreed to adopt my memorandum as a unanimous statement of the Commission's position. Well, ordinarily the Commission's decisions are issued over the name of the secretary unless there is a dissent, then the dissenter's name is listed. Though I didn't care, it got out that I had written the decision and Sol Taischoff of *Broadcasting* magazine came out with an editorial strongly for God. And from then until I left the Commission he would attack me about every other week in his magazine. Also, I began to hear from the good religious folks. Some were telling me how hot hell was, and others were saying they were going to see to it that I got there quick.

“J. Edgar Hoover and I Had A Slugging Match”

Running through the 1940's was the Red hysteria. We came through the War with civil liberties pretty well intact, except for the horrible Japanese internment thing out in California. We didn't get worked up as much as we did during World War I when anybody that had a German



name was in danger of his life. But I did get involved (I won't go into that in detail), soon after I was appointed to the Commission. Martin Dies of the Dies Committee made an attack on a Commission employee, a man by the name of Goodwin Watson who was a social-psychologist who had come down from Columbia to head up the propaganda analysis section. I had had nothing to do with hiring him; he had been on the job several months and was doing excellent work when Martin Dies writes the Commission and says, "This man is socialistic and belongs to the following communist front organizations and I demand that he be fired forthwith."

This was about December, 1941, right after Pearl Harbor. He didn't call us quietly and say, "I've got some information you had better check

into," but he hands his letter to the press before he puts it into the mailbox. So we hear about it first in the *Washington Post*. Because I had nothing to do with hiring the man, the other members of the Commission ask me to check into the charges. I didn't even know this man, so first I sent for his personnel folder and he had some pretty strong recommendations from some solid people in the academic field. He had also been commended a number of times even by the military because he had called several of the German military moves from some of their propaganda. So next I asked Watson to come over and questioned him quite seriously for about five minutes and then I began to scratch my head and say, "There's something funny going on here. Maybe I had better know about some of these communist front organizations. This fellow impresses me as being of pretty substantial character."

I got the staff to bring in some of the literature of these organizations; let's see who else are members and what their cause purports to be. Well, the next day they were back with their first "communist front" organization, The League for Non-Participation in Japanese Aggression, the chairman was Henry L. Stimson and the vice-chairman was Admiral Yarnell. It was set up right after Japan had invaded China, and the general idea was, "For God's sake let's put an embargo on oil and scrap iron going to Japan, because if we don't she's going to be throwing it back at us" — which, of course, she did. The next was the Council Against Intolerance in America. On its national board was Alfred E. Smith, who had run for President; Tom Dewey; William Green of the A.F.L.; Senator Carter Glass of Virginia, who was a little to the right of Senator Taft; and about every religious leader that had any national reputation, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish. The best I could figure out, their function was to sponsor Brotherhood Week.

The long and short of it is that I got this whole list of organizations and among the members were twelve senators, every member of the cabinet, thirty-six members of the House including Jerry Voorhis who was a member of the Dies Committee (and by their standards a communist on three counts), five members of the U.S. Supreme Court, led by Charles Evans Hughes who was on the Marian Anderson Concert Committee — you remember that the Daughters of the American Revolution wouldn't let Marian Anderson, the great singer, hold a concert in Constitution Hall because she was black. Chief Justice Hughes got busy and helped stage her concert on the steps of Lincoln Memorial where she had an audience

twenty times the capacity of Constitution Hall.

Anyway, the Commission refuses to fire Watson by a 4 to 3 vote. We issue a public statement saying that we couldn't fire a man on charges such as these. The other three's attitude was, "Well this is all absurd; this man is doing a good job and we'll have a hard time finding anybody that can take his place, but what does *one* man matter anyway? We've got to consider our relations with Congress, let's fire him."

After we refused to fire him, the next thing we knew a rider was on our appropriations bill, "No part of this appropriation shall be used to pay any compensation to Goodwin Watson." So I got busy doing a little lobbying in the Senate, including Harry Truman whom I knew well and had done some favors for, and Alben Barkley the majority leader, young Bob LaFollette, George Norris, and a few of that type. When this bill hit the Senate it was rejected unanimously with Senators saying such things as, "When the Congress of the United States begins to concern itself with a man's politics and what he thinks, we're going down the road to Nazi Germany."

The next thing I knew I was being investigated by the F.B.I. I have read my F.B.I. file, which was quite amusing. I was "respectable," but my wife, according to the communist *Daily Worker*, had appeared before a committee of Congress and made a statement in opposition to the poll tax as a pre-requisite for voting in a national election. It was also "according to the *Washington Post*, the *Star*, the *Baltimore Sun*, the *New York Times*," but it was "according to the *Daily Worker*" and what F.B.I. man worthy of his badge would pay any attention to what the capitalistic press had to say? The thing finally went to the Supreme Court in the *U.S. vs. Lovitt, Watson and Dodd*, where the Court unanimously ruled in our favor.

We relaxed during the rest of the War, but when Roosevelt died, and the atom bomb came on, hysteria began to build up. J. Edgar Hoover started sending us gossip he got on applicants for radio stations or news commentators. Congress was scared of him, and he had his key men on Congressional committees. We had been in a constant battle ever since I came to the Commission over wire-tapping legislation. Every year almost, Hoover would try to get some legislation through authorizing him to wiretap under the Communications Act. He put in "national security" considerations and all of that. But FCC Chairman Fly was a good, tough civil libertarian, if nothing else, and we would beat them in Congress every time on that issue.

Finally, these pressures began to build up on the good newsmen and the commentators, and in

time it went on to some of the actors, performers, and musicians. But it came to a head with the application of the Hollywood Radio Corporation, a group in Los Angeles who were drawn from U.C.L.A., University of Southern California, and quite a number of people in the movie and radio field. They wanted to begin a commercial station that was program oriented, for people primarily interested in good broadcasting. Well, a letter comes to the Commission addressed to the Chairman from Mr. J. Edgar Hoover saying that it has been brought to his attention that the majority of stockholders in this corporation were communists or actively engaged in communistic activities. So we write him back asking for his evidence. And a letter comes back, "Of course I can't give you that for it would disclose my confidential sources. But here is some relevant information." One I thought was a classic was, "This individual in 1944 was in contact with another individual who was suspected of possible pro-Russian activities." (In 1944, Russia was our ally and Russian relief was the thing.) And then another university professor had made a Phi Beta Kappa address urging that we try to set up a cultural exchange with the Russians.

The Commission then sent a couple of lawyers out to Los Angeles to see what they could find about these communist activities and they came back to report that most of the Hollywood group were members of the Democratic Club and had been very active for Roosevelt in '40 and '44. In spite of this, the Commission didn't act at all. They had visions of going before the Appropriations Committee and some Congressman saying, "Didn't you grant a radio license to the Hollywood Radio Corporation after having received derogatory information from J. Edgar Hoover? Well, off goes \$500,000 of your appropriations just to show you."

So they just sat on this thing until I decided that it had to be brought out into the open. I was invited to make a speech to an education group out in Chicago. About this time Tom Clark was Attorney General, and we sent the Freedom Train around the country, cars painted red, white, and blue, with the original Declaration of Independence and the Constitution so the school kids could see it. Also at this time Parnell Thomas was chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, and he began to move into Hollywood. So I decided I had to blast this thing out some way because we were really in violation of the law, denying an application by non-action. I took this occasion to sound off by digressing from the main thrust of my speech to say, in effect, "While the Freedom Train is going around



photo by John Northrop

the country carrying all these documents, things are going on in Washington that refute every document on that train. Don't get the idea that this well-lighted affair of Parnell Thomas' is just a one-time Hollywood show, because what happened there is going to permeate the broadcasting industry. It's going to be in our schools and universities and going to wreck the country. Moreover, as bad as it is, I think these kleig-lighted lynching bees are not as dangerous as the secret dossiers that go into government files which the applicant doesn't even know are there, but which can haunt him the rest of his life. If you could see some of these F.B.I. reports, as I have done, I think you'd have to agree with me that much of it is little more than baseless gossip."

Columnist Mark Childs heard about my speech and in a couple of days came out with an article saying he thought I was a responsible public official and, if this kind of thing was going on, it was Nazi stuff. He wrote a very powerful article. The next thing that came about was Mr. Hoover's writing the Commission: "Unless all the other members of the Commission repudiate Commissioner Durr, I will assume it is no longer interested in any further information from me." Well they were all just scared to death. My relations, with one exception, were always good ones on a personal basis, so I said, "You know I have a reputation of being something of a dissenter, and was not purporting to speak for the entire Commission. But if you feel like you have to repudiate me, I realize there will be nothing personal in it." So they sweat over this thing and, though they couldn't bring themselves to repudiate me, they came out with a letter saying that they had the utmost confidence in the F.B.I. and wanted to continue getting this information.

I took this occasion to get some things out publicly. So I wrote a memorandum to go out with the Commission's letter. In this I said that the Commission should welcome, from any source, information pertinent to the performance of its duties. But when it comes to act, that information must be under oath and subject to cross-examination. Then I proceeded to paraphrase all the crap that was in the F.B.I. report. Well, the fat was in the pan and Hoover and I had a slugging match the rest of the time I was on the Commission.

"I Admire What You Are Doing, But . . ."

I opposed Truman's loyalty order and I wrote a dissenting opinion on that, But Truman, nevertheless, offered me reappointment. I turned him

down because, as I told him, I couldn't be part of having to administer this loyalty program. His response was, "I got to take the ball away from Parnell Thomas. If he has his way, he'll get some legislation through and we'll have the damnedest gestapo any country ever had, and I don't want J. Edgar Hoover running this country. All I want is to protect these people."

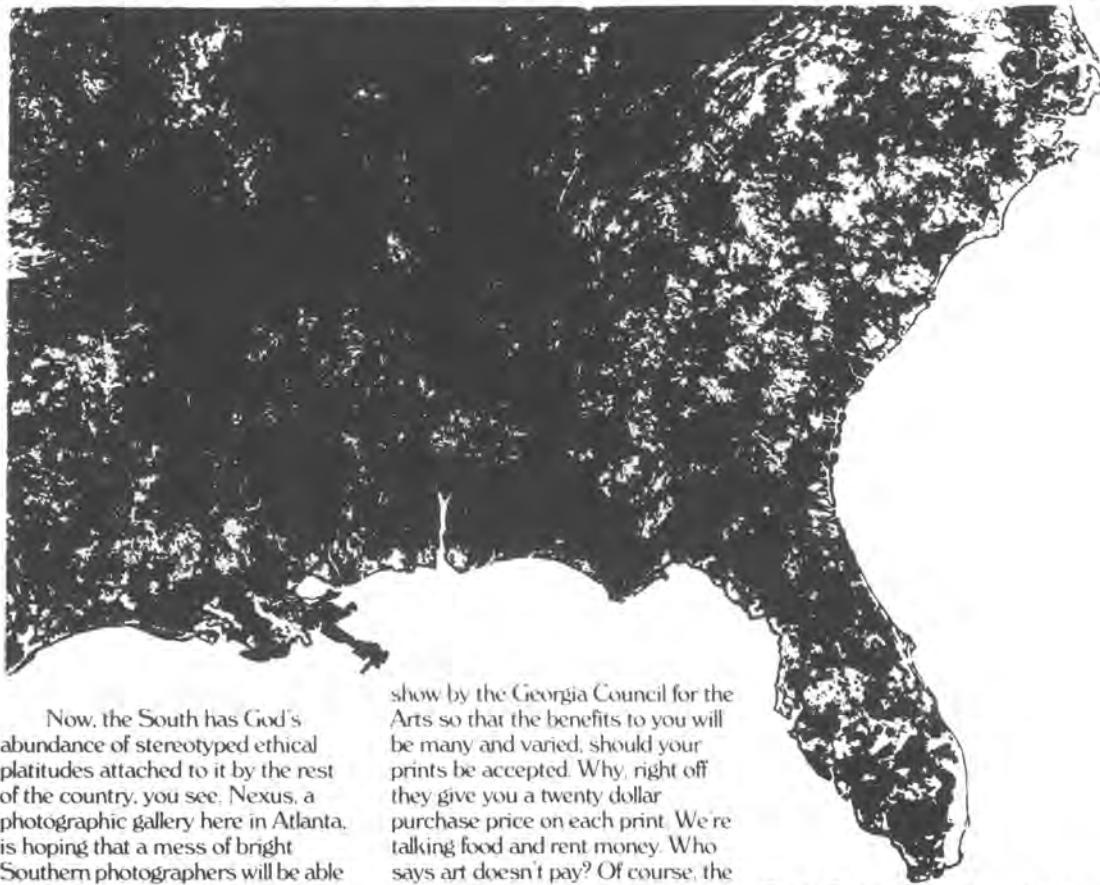
I said, "Mr. President, I don't think you realize the effect this is having on the morale of government employees whose loyalty has been demonstrated in war and peace. You sit there and accuse us in F.B.I. reports with anonymous informers. The mere charge against a man can ruin him. You don't realize how the morale is going to pieces and moreover, more seriously to my way of thinking, is not Parnell Thomas, who most people see as a political demagogue capitalizing on this red hysteria, but you coming along with this loyalty order. People look at that and say, 'My God, Parnell Thomas is right. Here's the Government, according to the President himself, so infiltrated with dangerous subversives that every federal employee, no matter how insignificant his job might be or how far it might be removed from any considerations of national security, has got to be checked by our secret police.' That's going to destroy confidence in government."

"Well," Truman says, "this is all a bunch of crap. The Government employees are as loyal as any people ever were. All I want is to protect these employees. I'll amend this order if necessary, I'll repeal it."

He issued a very nice statement expressing regret that I wouldn't take re-appointment. He was about to enter the '48 campaign and had enough problems so I just let him issue the statement. He had been magnificent in the Goodwin Watson case in the Senate, but he got caught up in the '48 campaign—go back and read the Truman-Dewey speeches. "I'm a bigger anti-communist than you are, so there." The hysteria just grew and grew.

I stayed in Washington and thought I was going to have a pretty good law practice. At first I wanted to teach. I had received a number of feelers, including the Yale Law School, but after I got in this last battle with J. Edgar Hoover, all these things just died out. My clients would meet me on the street corners and tell me "I admire what you are doing, but I've got to get a more conservative lawyer." So the first thing I know I was representing nobody but the victims of these loyalty cases, particularly before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. That ended my possibilities of making a living practicing law in Washington.

The Southern Ethic



Now, the South has God's abundance of stereotyped ethical platitudes attached to it by the rest of the country, you see. Nexus, a photographic gallery here in Atlanta, is hoping that a mess of bright Southern photographers will be able to capture the essence of that ethic in their cameras, the real ethic, across the expanses of the region, up from the marshes of Glynn, that sort of thing. Images that help to clarify the ideals and values of the lower right hand corner of the nation.

All right, just relax and listen to me carefully. If you have images that expose this ethic, or you can make them, you may submit up to five of them to Nexus. Make slides of your work (or 4 x 5 inch prints) with your name and the actual real life size of the unmounted print (not to exceed 16 x 20 inches) written on them. You also need to send three bucks. This is an entrance and handling fee. It does not mean that the people at Nexus are going on a three week vacation in Hawaii. Third and lastly, you need to send along a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return or acceptance of your work.

Nexus is being helped with this

show by the Georgia Council for the Arts so that the benefits to you will be many and varied, should your prints be accepted. Why, right off they give you a twenty dollar purchase price on each print. We're talking food and rent money. Who says art doesn't pay? Of course, the show will hang in Nexus from October 1, 1975, and will travel all around Georgia for the year following that. Finally, the show, including your very prints, will end up in a great regional journal called **Southern Exposure** in the Fall of 1975.

Anyone... I mean anyone... can enter this contest. Just get your work in before June First, 1975. That's the deadline. You will be notified by July 1, 1975, which is swift and kindly judgement in any contest.

Now, that brings up a question you've probably been asking yourself all along: Just who **is** going to judge these prints? Well, here's who, chief:

Michael Blumensaadt, who has his AAS and BFA from Rochester Institute of Technology, has taught at Clark College and the Atlanta School of Art and has exhibited at the Georgia Artists show in the High Museum here in Atlanta.

Greg Day is an anthropologist born and bred in the South, who is working on his Ph.D. at Rutgers.

Charles Hobson is Director of Mass Communications at Clark College and received a television Emmy Award for **Like It Is** in 1969. He is on the Public Media Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts.

John Morgan is a staff archaeologist for the State of Georgia. He received his B.A. from Georgia State University and his M.A. from Southern Illinois.

Deirdre Murphy studied photography and art at Georgia State University and is Vice President and on the Board of Directors for Nexus, Inc.

Carter Tomassi is a self-taught photographer and has exhibited in the Georgia Artists Show at the High Museum.

Send:

1. Slides of up to five prints with your name and the size of the unmounted print on them.
2. Three dollars entry and handling fee.
3. A stamped, self-addressed envelope

To:

The Southern Ethic
P.O. Box 76230
Atlanta, Georgia 30328

What you get:

1. Twenty dollars a print.
2. A show in Nexus Gallery.
3. A Georgia tour.
4. Publication in Southern Exposure Magazine.

OBSERVER

"A Journal of Free Voices"

by Larry Goodwyn

On November 6, 1974, Larry Goodwyn delivered this paper at a session of the Southern Historical Association and it was originally published in the twentieth anniversary issue of the Observer. Goodwyn is a former associate editor of the Observer, and now directs the Oral History Program at Duke University. His forthcoming book on American Populism will be published this fall.

To be candid, I suspect the planners of this forum invited me to participate because of their awareness that sometime in that past that now seems so remarkably distant—the era before John Kennedy's Camelot—I was one of a species that Lyndon Johnson was known to describe, not always with love and affection, as "those Texas Observer boys." I suspect, in short, that some sort of *roman à clef* is expected from me, a bit of "inside folklore" about some of the lonely dissidents of the "silent generation" of the Fifties. I will endeavor to oblige, at least in the highly personal and idiosyncratic way that has over the years become characteristic of the *Observer* itself.

I recommend *The Texas Observer* if not invariably to potential subscribers, then certainly to young writers, to students of power in America, and to those aspiring literary types willing to discover the range of their own weaknesses. The *Observer* is a remarkable training school—intellectually on a par with graduate school and emotionally quite beyond it. Willie Morris, Robert Sherrill, Chandler Davidson, Bill Brammer, among others, all attended the *Observer* school, variously afflicting their readers with the results, and then moving on to other work



with an observably altered perspective. I mean this quite literally. Their writings, before and after their *Observer* experience, are readily available and reflect rather clearly, I would argue, the extent to which certain lessons were absorbed and made a part of what is self-evidently a post-*Observer* perspective. But before I can attempt to characterize what we became, I must pause to describe what I think we were, the raw material that the *Observer* experience reshaped.

Beyond the Cowboy Culture

Growing up in Texas in the 1940s and 1950s, one read a kind of literature that, in retrospect, can be seen to have addressed a question that we, the provincial young, had not quite found a way to ask. We read, first and most importantly to us, William Faulkner. We also discovered the sad cafes of Carson McCullers. We read *Lie Down in Darkness* by William Styron—and heard a decent, ruined, drink-sodden father tell his son to "be a good

Democrat and, if you can, be a good man, too." We read Southerners.

We also read Norman Mailer, Bernard Malamud, and Saul Bellow—that is to say, we read Jews. They seemed to speak to us with every bit of the power conveyed by the saga of Faulkner's delta.

And, finally, we read Melville and Henry James and disagreed mightily as to the tolerance we could bestow upon the education of Henry Adams. We read the children of the congregationalists, the transcendentalists, and the abolitionists. The old New Englanders. In their own curious way, they were revolutionaries all.

Unconsciously, perhaps, we were imbibing the fruits of powerful cultural traditions—Southern, Jewish, and patrician Yankee—traditions that dealt with the deepest range of human emotions. But when we turned to our own roots, to the heritage of our own land, here on the Southern frontier, we did not learn very much about hope and despair, striving and tragedy. We found instead a thin, celebratory literature of western triumph. We found hardy frontiersmen, tall in the saddle, riding up the Chisholm Trail, overcoming sundry hazards and, like Charlie Goodnight, carving baronial domains in the plains wilderness. The centerpiece of this gigantic western drama—the cowboy (and his governmental counterpart, the Texas Ranger)—was to be taken seriously. Southwestern writers—the ones who were white and male—tried to make us understand this, by the very way they wrote about their archetypal figure. He was a very special kind of frontiersman, with a Colt revolver rather than Hawthorne's Long Rifle. We were told that Barbed Wire and Windmills, when coupled with the

Colt six-gun and grouped together on the Great Plains, produced an important kind of democratic culture. Walter Webb told us this and, in his own way, so did Frank Dobie.

It was our lot, in the Forties and Fifties, to grow up in Texas and not to believe. If there is any intellectual justification in having Larry McMurtry grouped with *The Texas Observer* writers as a subject of academic attention, it is in this solitary fact — that we were all approximately the same age and we shared a generalized disbelief in the alleged virtues of the received regional culture, as well as in the larger national ethos that drew so heavily from the mystique of the western frontier.

McMurtry has been discussed by Warren Susman and I will not intrude upon his domain, other than to say that, to me, McMurtry's early works, like the pages of *The Texas Observer* of that era, can profitably be read as exercises in the loss of innocence. As literary criticism, I think it is imprudent to venture much beyond this: the "end of innocence" — while rather essential — is not coterminous in time with the beginning of profundity. Indeed, one misses the essence of the youthful probing and disarray of the Fifties (what there was of it), if one fails to focus upon what was clearly, to those of us in Texas at least, the paramount concern: finding a usable past out of the thin shelter of the frontier South.

We had great respect for Walter Webb as a man and as a venturesome historian, but when, in the climate of the McCarthy era, we read Webb's eulogy to *The Texas Rangers*, it seemed not only to be a singularly unsatisfactory exercise in racial and cultural aggrandizement, but, much worse, a profoundly innocent book. As for Dobie, we only wished he had as keen an eye for the narrowness of vision of the actors in his western saga as he did for similar defects he found in contemporary American society.

In sum, though we disagreed among ourselves as to the extent of the failure, we found the regional heritage to be thin, romantic, and not to be compared to the intellectual legacy bequeathed to the young of New England, or of the Old South, or to those of the Jewish cultural tradition. These three disparate groups, of course, have long shared a common anxiety

about the prospects of man generally, as well as the prospects of man in American democratic society. In contrast, the saga of the cowboy somehow did not stir such creative introspection: it encouraged a generalized Texan and American complacency. Eisenhower in a Stetson: America at mid-century.

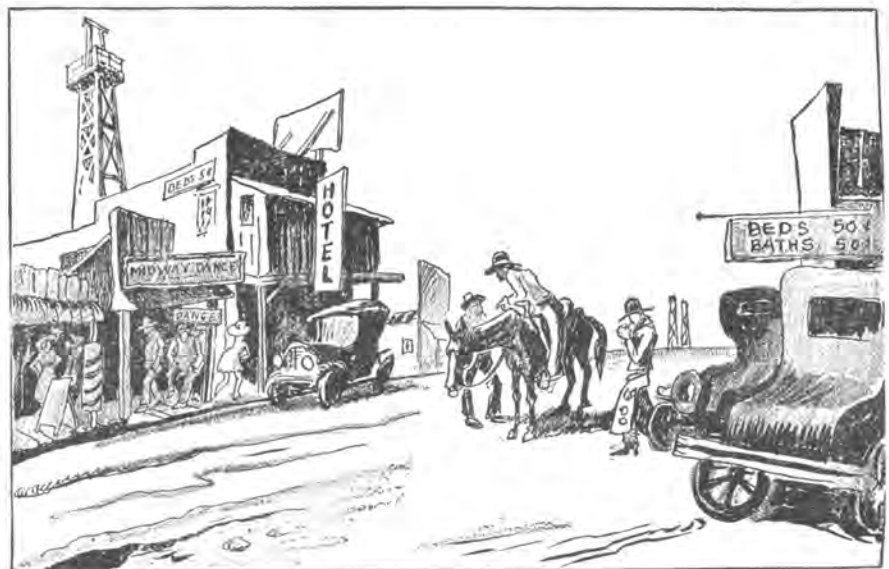
The numbing tragedies that suffuse American life, including the monumental tragedy growing out of the American caste system, but including also the structural failures that periodically surface within the American democratic system itself, are thrust upon *Observer* writers with a sobering power. This has been going on for quite a number of years now and enough evidence is in to provide an interesting perspective both on the *Observer* itself and on the surrounding culture which its journalists have experienced and attempted to describe.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s — while other young people were reading history texts that proclaimed "the genius of American politics," the *Observer* thrust its reporters into the very maw of the on-going political world. The press releases of administrators, the public committee meetings of legislators, the personal techniques of governors, senators, presidential aspirants, and presidents — all the public paraphernalia that contributed to the surface sheen of politics — were part of the experience of a young *Observer* writer, as it was for other journalists. But the nature of the Austin journal,

as pioneered and set in place by its founder and guiding spirit, Ronnie Dugger, thrust his young minions quite beyond the visible epidermis of democratic appearances into a tangled interior of bone and marrow that proved fascinating, if not unfailingly appealing. This interior world of *realpolitik* is not easily described, though one of its principal features seems beyond dispute: in this nether world, frenzied arteries and errant capillaries pumped the blood of politics — money — into all manner of receptacles largely unknown to the founding fathers. After sustained contact, *Observer* diagnosticians tended to conclude that the patient, attractive and heralded though he was, seemed in reality quite sick. I think it can be proved, from the pages of the *Observer* itself, that this discovery was conveyed with some sense of shock and considerable outrage. For most young *Observer* writers, the end of innocence was not a pleasant moment.

The form of the *Observer's* literary response to the world of democratic corruption varied in interesting ways. Lyman Jones had a kind of earthy anger that conjured up the image of a trail land whose steers have suddenly and perversely begun to stampe out of control. If Jones did not invariably locate the cause, he had few rivals in cussing the results. Bill Brammer was captured by the transcendent power of the lobbying process itself, one that seemed to him to render reform utterly

Illustration by Thomas H. Benton/Wc. the People



MINIATURE TOWNS

futile and left the reformers vulnerable to ridicule. Bill turned his deepest attention to the politicians who brokered the demands of lobbyists. He became a student of Lyndon Johnson and, one surmises, an admirer as well.

Willie Morris never ceased to be offended by the gracelessness of it all. Few of the plunderers seemed to him to possess a redeeming style and none seemed to have more than fleeting intuition about the human costs involved in "the game." Willie attempted to extract humor from the more grotesque examples of corporate regime in Austin, but the laughter often was hollow and, at such times, the underlying despair in Willie became visible. Bob Sherrill married hyperbole to satire and walked through the daily mine fields of his political beat with the fatalistic poise of a combat infantryman. If he was seldom surprised by the periodic explosions of scandal, he rarely lost his capacity for indignation either. He wrote as if his revelations could make a difference, even though he felt they would not.

To the underlying ethos of the *Observer*, Ronnie Dugger brought an ethical constancy that was impressive to know. He knew the merits of skepticism and the pitfalls of cynicism and rather effortlessly and consistently distinguished the two. He assumed all public men were honorable, and based his personal relations on that premise, meanwhile reporting his disappointments with unrelenting detail. Though the sheer buffeting of experience on his journey wore out any number of energetic young writers in the prime of youthful resiliency, Dugger has continued year after year to expose himself to the fissures and crevasses that define so much of the democratic landscape in Austin. He is now a middle-aged I. F. Stone, which makes him a mere apprentice in that rather lonely and splendid craft of personal journalism that Stone best epitomizes. I, for one, anticipate that some 20 or 30 years hence, Dugger, in full iconoclastic maturity, might well resemble his illustrious and uniquely useful predecessor.

However, Dugger cannot be characterized quite so quickly. I don't think one can make much sense out of *The Texas Observer*, or its writers, without pausing first to mark the defining impact on both of the founding editor.

The circumstances of those early years, when Dugger toiled away in isolation as editor, writer, copyreader, and layout man, shaped the *Observer* in fundamental ways and imparted the special independent character that has since identified it.

The *Observer* dates from 1954 — those grim days that marked the foreboding twilight of the McCarthy era. In Texas, Governor Shivers, as spokesman of what Dugger would soon label the "Tory Democrats," had led most of the official Democratic hierarchy into public support of the 1952 Republican presidential candidate, General Eisenhower. This event disrupted the Texas Democratic Party and precipitated a tumultuous struggle for the soul of the party that matched Shivers against a Populistically-inclined judge who subsequently became rather well-known in these parts — Ralph Yarborough.

Big Beginnings

That 1954 campaign had a transforming emotional impact on Texas politics that visibly persists to this day. In terms of money spent, chicanery, corruption, demagoguery, and rhetorical violence, it was the nearest thing to a class struggle that the state has endured since Populism and Reconstruction. The legends it inspired became part of the received culture of each new *Observer* writer through the Fifties and Sixties. The central one concerned the filming and distribution by the Shivers forces of what came to be known as the Port Arthur Story. It merits a brief review here for it was the centerpiece of a maturing partisanship that *The Texas Observer*, under Dugger, both heightened and — in telling ways — ignored.

It seems that during the 1954 campaign a strike of retail clerks was in progress in the little southeast Texas city of Port Arthur. The crew arose before dawn in order to be in place in downtown Port Arthur literally at the first sign of light. The purpose was to photograph a silent, faceless city, one deadened by the nefarious agitators of the labor movement. According to the legend, passing bread trucks and other early morning intruders forced the cameramen to stay on the job for three or four consecutive mornings before they were able to amass the required footage of empty streets. At the climax of the Yarborough-Shivers campaign,

the television screens across the state issued forth a dramatic documentary that began in utter silence, with long seconds of panoramic sweeps of what seemed to be a deserted city. Then, after a minute or so of eerie silence, a narrator suddenly intoned: "This is Port Arthur, Texas. This is what happens when the CIO comes to a Texas city." The 30-minute documentary that followed had other novel elements, such as footage of pickets, notably black pickets, bedeviling the serenity of little Port Arthur. The "Port Arthur Story" became the central campaign document of 1954 and was shown repeatedly in prime time throughout the state.

The extremely narrow Shivers victory that concluded that wild summer of campaigning set in motion the dynamics that created *The Texas Observer*. In a post-mortem illuminated with outrage and indignation, the "Loyal Democrats" of Ralph Yarborough decided the political process had been purchased by the Tories, who had "manipulated the media, deceived the voters, and sabotaged" the democratic idea. A number of them, including a group of prominent Democratic women, got together and decided to underwrite a newspaper organ that would spread "the truth."

Late in 1954, their dream became a reality, though not precisely the way they intended. They selected as editor a young man newly home from Oxford. His return route to his native hearth in Texas had included a brief sojourn in Washington that had apparently stirred some latent reform instincts. In any case, Mr. Dugger assured the underwriters that though he was a "good Democrat" (in the parlance of the times), he really didn't believe in newspapers as "organs." He promised instead what he called "a journal of free voices."

Within a month, young Dugger had the loyal Democrats of Texas in an uproar. The first controversy developed out of the subtitle Dugger selected for his paper: "An Independent Liberal Weekly." In the high tide of the McCarthy-Shivers era, the word "liberal" did not have galvanizing appeal to Southern voters. Old partisans of the Jefferson-Jackson-Franklin Roosevelt tradition in Texas identified themselves as "loyal Democrats" or as "good Democrats," never as "liberals." The latter word

identified people who were too pre-occupied with the civil rights of black Southerners, and Dugger's quixotic adoption of the term did not augur well for the propagandizing techniques of the new "organ." The issue was scarcely a merely theoretical one. The subscription list of the new *Observer* was largely composed of some 2,000 white East Texans who had earlier subscribed to a paper known as the *East Texas Democrat*. These subscribers were thought to be particularly sensitive to matters of race. Dugger seemed to be flirting rather dangerously with the very foundations of the shaky new journalistic enterprise.

Dugger's response was characteristic – and defined for all time that the operative portion of the *Observer's* sub-title was the word "independent." Seeing a little one-paragraph AP item in a newspaper about the shooting of a small Negro boy in East Texas, Dugger packed his camping gear in his car for the first of many forays into the Texas hinterlands. The next issue of the *Observer* featured a grim story of joy-riding white youths who fired wantonly into buildings occupied by blacks. One of the bullets had killed the boy. Dugger's account, filled with startling answers from law enforcement officials in East Texas, was dramatically punctuated with a front-page picture of the victim that Dugger had taken in the morgue.

The young editor's first experiment in investigative journalism nearly wrecked his paper. Something on the order of half the East Texas subscribers promptly cancelled. The deficit leaped dramatically and the backers called for an accounting from their young editor. What they got in the next issue was another article entitled "The Devastating Dames" in which Dugger made it rather clear that though the editor was only 24 years old, he did not feel in the need of ideological counseling from his elders. The backers thereupon fell by the wayside until there was only one, a quiet, steel-willed Houston woman named Mrs. Frankie Randolph. She liked the idea of a "journal of free voices."

In 1955-56, Dugger played a key role in breaking the land scandals in Texas and his struggling journal received its first national attention. As circulation rose, the *Observer* edged toward the financial break-even point. This was successfully avoided by dou-

bling the staff to two. Dugger paid himself \$110 a week. The other editor, William Brammer, received \$100. By the time I arrived in 1958, the *Observer* was again threatening to break even. Dugger raised himself to \$120 and I received \$110. Mrs. Randolph's aid now became more of a gesture of solidarity than an absolute necessity.



Dugger's journal had become a fixture in political Texas. In the 1960s the *Observer* balance sheets ceased to show red ink and, I gather, expenses have subsequently risen to meet income. I would not be surprised to learn that the current incumbents, Molly Ivins and Kaye Northcott, receive \$130 a week.

The New Journalism

As *Observer* editors came, learned, exhausted themselves, and left, Dugger's presence sharpened the definition of his journal. In my judgment, the real story of the paper, and of its writers, lies in the relationship each of them had with the founding editor. Dugger may not have John Updike's gift for metaphor, but in a quiet and unobtrusive way that only his colleagues understood and appreciated, he played an absolutely crucial role in fashioning the ground rules for a new kind of expanded American journalism. It was one that went quite beyond the "who-what-when-where-and-why" of the old school to provide the essential background information necessary to coherent interpretation. Long before Norman Mailer wrote his celebrated account of the 1960 Democratic national convention, long before Tom Wolfe and Hunter Thompson became the beneficiaries and proponents of "the new journalism," Dugger developed and taught his editors the stylistic and conceptual basis of authentic, fair, but remorselessly interpretive journalism. It is time the story be told.

I cannot speak for the other *Observer* editors, of course (though the evidence of their gradual mastery of the new form on the *Observer* is easily discernible), but I can illustrate the process through an event that occurred to me in 1958. The very first news assignment I had on the *Observer* concerned a meeting in Austin of the highly publicized and eventually productive "Hale-Aikin Committee" to revamp the public schools of Texas. The heralded "Committee of Twenty-Four" was laced with men who possessed the political clout to get their own recommendations enacted into law.

But I discovered, from the otherwise empty press section, that the Hale-Aikin Committee was dominated by oil lobbyists whose chief intention, it



photo by Quinney Howe, Jr.

became abundantly evident, was to argue with educators on the committee who wanted a wholesale revamping of the schools – one that would cost real money and put the ramshackle state school system on a genuinely professional basis. This cleavage on the com-

mittee, transcendently clear though it was, had gone unreported in the state press. I took down pages of revealing quotes and strode happily back to the *Observer* office. As I walked in, I summarized the meaning of the story for Dugger and then sat down to write

it. I wrote like a journalist – and though I was in my twenties, I wrote like an old journalist. I based the story on quotes, until, paragraph by paragraph, the pieces of the mosaic were slowly pushed into place. It was a long story and when it was finished, I was

pleased. Dugger, however, was not. A frown appeared as he read the lead and deepened as he moved laboriously through the succeeding sentences. Finally, he looked up and said quietly, "Larry, this is not what you told me — The Oilmen vs. The Teachers — it doesn't come through. It is not here." Defensively, I said, "Well, there are rules, Ronnie." Hurriedly I found a key quote in the ninth paragraph and another one in the fifteenth. "The inference is pretty clear, don't you think?" I asked. "What more can I do?" I asserted. "No oilman actually said that he was outflanking the teachers. No one was carrying a placard, you know."

Dugger leaned forward earnestly and for the first time I heard the new philosophy of what is now widely acknowledged as the new journalism. "What you do," said Dugger, "is write a story that *explains* — a kind of dope story. In the lead you just explain what is going on. Include whatever background on the oil connections of these men that you need to make yourself comprehensible to the reader. Don't worry about attributing anything to anybody. That comes later in the story. Just tell the reader what really is going on and tell him right away. The rest of the story provides the structure of support you need. You've got the evidence, God knows. Just explain the real meaning right off the bat. Visualize that you're writing an interpretative essay, with evidence."

This was a strange new world, indeed. I struggled. Dugger edited. I rewrote. Dugger re-edited. After two hours, we were done and adjourned to Scholz beergarten for a celebratory beer. The right-hand side of the front page of the next *Observer* carried the story, with Dugger's succinct headline: "Oilmen vs. Teachers." The story made quite a few waves, as public demand for better schools was a genuine political reality in Texas and one in which a number of metropolitan editors participated fully. The Hale-Aikin committee began to function before a growing press gallery and, eventually — though the teachers did not win all their battles by any means — the new structure of state aid to the public schools was fundamentally sound, lasting and significant.

The story was not mine, however,

it was Dugger's. In some despair, I learned that it took months of hard work to learn how to write an interpretive essay that was both penetrating and fair, that both summarized clearly the inherent meaning of political events and contained adequate evidence to support the underlying interpretation. By the time I became reasonably competent, I was emotionally and physically drained by the 70-hour weeks, and by the constant life in the swamp of corruption that inundated political Austin. Like Brammer before me and Morris and Sherrill after, I quit when I had learned to write. Dugger had to find someone else to teach.

It is not my intention to diminish the achievement of that bizarre group of fellows called the "*Texas Observer* boys" or, as would follow later, the "*Texas Observer* girls."

But I think all these writers would attest, in their own private ways, to the impact of Dugger's ethical tenacity on our own little provincial literary world. Dugger inherited a cultural environment in which Speaker Sam Rayburn was teaching Lyndon Johnson that, in Mr. Rayburn's famous words, "you have to go along to get along." Dugger decided that too many people had been "going along" for too many generations. It was not the corruption of individual politicians that worried him — he did not celebrate when the land commissioner of Texas, Bascomb Giles, went to jail. Rather, he worried, and still worries, I gather, about the erosion of the culture itself, of the very fabric of shared values that alone can sustain a democratic society.

The electoral needs of embattled Southern liberals received his due respect, but not when those needs intruded upon more central needs of black Americans. Yet, even on this most seminal issue — one on which the *Observer* for years and years stood absolutely alone among Southern journals — Dugger's specific posture was but a part of a larger purpose: to seek out the essence of political democracy, and locate the sources and modes of its corruption. In historical terms, his ethics are traceable to John Stuart Mill, his political vision to Jefferson, and his economics to the literature of European and American social democrats. But the environment he created — in the cavernous, disorderly

office on 24th Street in Austin — was his own. There, near his fragile and beloved university, he became a pariah in his homeland, cussed and ostracized by the Tories, cussed and courted by Lyndon Johnson, cussed and befriended by Ralph Yarborough and the liberals.

I have known him most of my adult life and I am not the one to pass detached historical judgment on his journal or literary judgment on its writers, all of whom I have known for the better part of 20 years. They would be the first to concede that the sheer physical demands of getting out the paper left no time for polishing prose. The *Observer* has intermittently been strident, righteous, and badly written. It has also been wrong. It has — thank God — never developed what could be called a finished style — in the sense that the *New Yorker* or *Time* magazine have — for it has contented itself with Dugger's original purpose: to be "a journal of free voices."

One knows, intuitively, that the *Observer* belongs to the young. It should never have a wise and urbane staff, but rather an aggressive gathering of indignant muckrakers. Muckraking — especially cultural muckraking — is hard work, work for the young. The *Observer* ought to get in trouble and stay there. And when its writers get sophisticated in interpretation and graceful in style, they ought to get out: they are too old.

I think it would be proper in this kind of piece to close with a story. In the early 1960s Willie Morris called me and asked me to meet him at Scholz, the *Observer's* ex-officio conference room. Over the second pitcher, Willie divulged that he was leaving the *Observer*. "Why?" I asked.

"I'm worn out. 'Plumb wore out, as they say."

"That's the reason," I replied. "I wore out, too."

As we were leaving, Willie asked, "How old were you when you wore out?"

"Thirty-one," I said.

"I must have worked harder," said Willie. "I'm twenty-nine."

On the steps in front of Scholz, Willie said, with a touch of wonder: "I don't know how Dugger does it."

I still don't.

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The history of The NATION, founded in 1863, is closely tied to the problems of the South. Before then, the great abolitionist weekly had been William Lloyd Garrison's LIBERATOR. With emancipation realized, Garrison put his last issue to bed, leaving the rest of the battle to younger men.

First among them was Edwin L. Godkin, editor and founder of The NATION. In 1856, this Anglo-Irish journalist had become famous for his fiery dispatches to the LONDON DAILY NEWS, describing his tour of the Southern states.

Garrison's son, Wendell Phillips Garrison, became The NATION's first literary editor. Wendell's father-in-law, James Miller McKim, a Philadelphia abolitionist, provided the money to launch the new weekly.

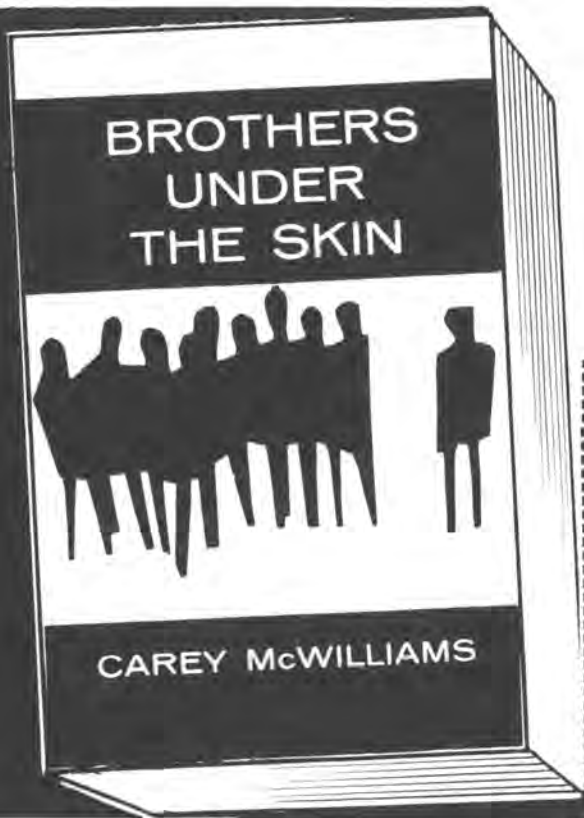
Frederick Law Olmsted was also part of the original group. A Harvard scholar and architect of New York's Central Park, he had written a series of classic reports on the ante-bellum South.

The moment the South was reopened, Godkin dispatched John R. Dennett, another Harvard scholar, to write a series of articles on "The South As It Is," a series which reads equally well today. Another young NATION writer was William Francis Allen. Also a Harvard man, he interrupted his classical studies to work in South Carolina for the education of the new freedmen. With Helen Garrison, Wendell's sister, he brought out the highly acclaimed "Slave Songs of the United States."

Years later, when Wendell died, Helen's husband, Henry Villard, became the publisher of The NATION. Their son, Oswald Garrison Villard, was editor from 1918 to 1932. Continuing his family tradition, he wrote a biography of John Brown and became a founder of the N.A.A.C.P., whose first offices were in The NATION's old quarters on Vesey St., in New York City.

The NATION continues in this freedom-loving spirit today. Its present editor, Carey McWilliams, says, "The NATION exposes racism, war, imperialism, abuse of power, political machines, demagoguery, and super-patriotism. It is constantly looking for trouble. It steps on many toes."

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NOTES ON THE

Early Black Press

by Gloria Blackwell

Near the close of the nineteenth century, Victoria Earle Matthews joined T. Thomas Fortune as co-editor of the *Southern Age*, a black newspaper in Atlanta. The auspicious union promised a combination of militant, highly professional journalism and independent political aggressiveness for the black press of the region. But like many black-owned papers of the period, *Southern Age* lasted barely a decade. Curiously, the economic pressures which forced many papers out of business, also encouraged editors to use women writers, and in the end, provided the opportunity for black women to play a crucial role in the development of the black press.



Victoria Earle Matthews, already a successful journalist, social worker, and author, had returned to the South to study the conditions of black women for the Federation of Afro-American Women. Born to poor parents in Fort Valley, Georgia, in 1861, "Victoria Earle" (as she became popularly known) was familiar with the region and its poverty. Only when she went to New York, did she find the education she wanted and a chance to begin her career as a "sub" for the large New York dailies, including the *Times* and the *Herald*. By the late 1800's, she received the respect of her peers, and leading white and black newspapers anxiously sought her writings. But her success and position as co-editor of the *Southern Age* were not unparalleled in black journalism.

To a number of women in the South, black-controlled journals offered a welcome alternative to the peculiar indignities of work in the domestic services. Talented, creative women who strayed from the narrow confines of conventional vocations to seek professional careers were generally ridiculed – especially in the South where women

were slower to organize and assert their rights. In this context, the black press was atypical, for black women professionals received encouragement and honors in the field of journalism. Many women who began by helping their husbands run an under-financed newspaper learned the necessary skills to launch independent careers. Others endured the low wages, long hours, and uncertainty of continued employment so they could use this unique vehicle to address issues they felt strongly about. And in the instances where she gained control as editor, the black woman gained a degree of influence and power in her community that no other position open to women rivaled.

In 1891, I. Garland Penn, an early southern historian of the black press, devoted a full chapter in his volume *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors* to black women in journalism. Along with a lengthy profile of Victoria Earle Matthews, Penn included sketches of nineteen southern women who had distinguished themselves as contributors to the black press in the South. Some, like Alice McEwen, associate editor of the *Baptist Leader*, entered journalism through the church. Others moved into the secular press. For example, Mary V. Cook, using the *nom de plume* "Grace Ermine," edited a column for the *American Baptist* and for the *South Carolina Tribune*, and advanced to the editorship of the education department of *Our Women and Children*, an influential publication of the era.

Significantly, these women were pioneers in developing the southern black press as a force for shaping a *black community*.

After all, the South's first black newspaper, the New Orleans *L'Union*, had only begun in 1862, a mere thirty years before Penn wrote his book. Other journals sprang up and took their lead from the earlier northern papers whose very names asserted their dedication to the emancipation of all "persons of colour": *Rights of All*, *The Elevator*, *Genius of Freedom*, *The North Star*, *Herald of Freedom*, and, the nation's first black-controlled paper, New York's *Freedom's Journal*. The early southern papers, like their northern counterparts, occasionally lapsed into preten-

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tious or pedantic writing; but they consistently addressed racial issues which white papers would not treat. Pushing the black cause in a hostile environment made journalism a risky business,* and while some support came from the Republican Party, the lack of advertising revenues or bank loans hastened the death of many black-owned papers. This marginal economic position combined with the lack of professionally-trained staff to offer a unique opportunity for black women writers and publicists.

Perhaps the most renowned of southern black women journalists is Ida B. Wells, editor of the *Memphis Free Speech*. Born in Holly Springs, Mississippi, in 1862, Wells remained in the South until a white mob destroyed her newspaper office and threatened her life in 1892. Her only offense had been to editorially challenge an upsurge of lynching in Memphis:

Eight Negroes lynched since the last issue of the *Free Speech*. Three were charged with killing white men and five with raping white women. Nobody in this section believes the old threadbare lie that Negro men assault white women. If Southern white men are not careful, they will over-reach themselves and a conclusion will be reached which will be very damaging to the moral reputation of their women.



IDA B. WELLS.

An unwilling immigrant to New York, Wells received immediate moral support from T. Thomas Fortune of the *New York Age*, whose fame, notoriety, and sufferings for his militant journalism find few equals in the history of the black press. As Ida B. Wells wrote in her autobiography:

The Negro race should ever be grateful to T. Thomas Fortune . . . [He] helped me give to the world the first inside story of Negro lynching . . . [and] printed ten thousand copies of that issue of the *Age* and broadcast them throughout the country and the South. One thousand copies were sold in the streets of Memphis alone.



T. THOMAS FORTUNE.

Fortune had only recently returned to the *New York Age* from his tenure at Atlanta's *Southern Age*. Shortly thereafter, in 1898, his colleague, Victoria Earle Matthews died. In later years, Fortune began writing for the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, and in 1923, he became editor of Marcus Garvey's New York paper, the *Negro World*. Meanwhile, the courageous and indomitable Ida B. Wells moved to Chicago where she raised a family, edited a newspaper, and almost single-handedly launched an international crusade against lynching. She remained active until her death in 1931, three years after Fortune died.

These three southern-born crusaders joined an impressive number of lesser known, though not necessarily less talented, journalists to inspire a tradition of black journalism that extends into the present day.

Suggestions for Further Reading

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photo by Grease Brothers, Nashville

THE WOMAN BEHIND MINNIE PEARL:

Mrs. Henry Cannon is finally living the life that has been denied her for over thirty years. There are no deadlines to meet, no planes to catch or miss, no early morning radio shows, and no one-night stands at the fairgrounds. She plays tennis and bridge, has friends over for dinner on Saturday night, and does her church work. She likes this kind of life, but sometimes she gets restless. So, occasionally Sarah Ophelia Colley Cannon pulls out a pair of scuffed-up Mary Jane shoes, a frumpy old ruffled dress, and a straw hat with a dangling price tag, and slips away to find her best friend, Minnie Pearl.

Sometimes she'll head out to the new Grand Ole Opry House or catch a plane for an out-of-town appearance, but it's just as likely to be a local hospital or church to entertain some patients or regale the Senior Citizens. As long as Sarah Cannon doesn't get too sure of herself, Minnie Pearl stays with her, doing what she does best — making people laugh.

Minnie Pearl is a trouper. She has been at it for almost 37 years. She stands there all dressed up in her finest organdy dress, spinning tales about Grinders Switch and poking gentle fun at herself, or her brother, or that other important person in her life, her "feller." She's a comfortable sort, a country girl who looks like she came in by mistake, so "proud to be here" that she forgot to

remove the price tag from her new hat. Her naiveté and innocent blunders often remind us of our own human frailties and lack of sophistication, yet there's reassurance in the fact that Minnie doesn't seem to be embarrassed in the least. As Sarah Cannon would say, "She doesn't mean any harm."

Comedy has always been an integral part of country music. Early touring bands had a medicine show quality about them, often using humor as a wedge to introduce their music. The Grand Ole Opry, in addition to featuring stand-up comics like Whitey Ford (The Duke of Peducah), Rod Brasfield, Archie Campbell and others, has traditionally featured artists that combine comedy and music, such as Uncle Dave Macon, Bashful Brother Oswald Kirby, Stringbean (David Akeman) and Grandpa Jones. The influence is still evident today in Speck Rhodes, the comedian/musician who appears with the Porter Waggoner band.

In the early 30's, Sarah Colley was only vaguely aware of the Opry and her peers in comedy. Her goal was to break into serious show business; she dreamed of her name in lights on Broadway. But the Depression was no time to make it big, and lack of funds forced her to return to her hometown of Centerville, Tennessee, after graduation from Ward-Belmont College rather than pursuing her studies in dramatics.

“She’s my best friend.”

Her itch for the theatre persisted though, and two years later she joined the Wayne P. Sewell Company in Atlanta to travel throughout the region directing and coaching amateur productions. One of her productions took her to north Alabama where she stayed with “one of the funniest women I ever met.” She was so influenced by the woman that she began collecting country stories and songs to advertise her plays by giving an imitation of “the mountain girl.” In 1938, at an appearance before the Pilots Club in Akin, South Carolina, the mountain girl was outfitted and named:

I went down to a salvage store and bought a sleazy, cheap, old yellow organdy dress, a pair of old white shoes, and a pair of white cotton stockings and an old hat and put some flowers on it . . . I walked down through the crowd and they didn’t know any more than a jackrabbit who I was or what I was doing . . . I was just speaking like an old country girl that had come in by mistake.

Minnie Pearl was well received that night in Akin, but two years later Sarah Colley was back home in Centerville again – broke, no job, and a widowed mother to support. She got a job with the Works Projects Administration (WPA) running a recreation room and occasionally would be asked to “do that old silly thing” at social functions. It was an unhappy, miserable time. Finally things began to fall in place. A chance perform-



WSM Photo

ance at a Bankers Convention led to an audition with WSM and a subsequent invitation to join the Opry in 1940. One year later she was touring with Pee Wee King and his Golden West Cowboys as a part of the Camel Caravan, which covered 50,000 miles in 19 states to bring country music to hill-billy servicemen scattered across the country. Her “Howdy, I’m just so proud to be here” quickly endeared her to WSM’s vast listening audience, and she soon established herself as the first lady of country comedy.

In 1947, she married Henry Cannon, a private airline pilot. For the next twenty years they worked closely together, taking Minnie Pearl on a relentless tour of one night stands, always arriving back in Nashville in time for the Opry on Saturday night. It is obvious that Henry Cannon has been an important person in her life. She speaks of him often and feels that he has been of particular importance to her work because of his own sense of humor. It was at his suggestion that she agreed to semi-retirement five years ago.

The following interview was taped at their home in Nashville in late November of 1974. Mostly it is the story of Sarah Ophelia Colley Cannon and her persistent search for the golden ring; it’s also the story of her best friend, Minnie Pearl, and how together they settled for “second best.”

—Sue Thrasher

"I Was Just Insufferable!"

When I was a little girl, Daddy always had the Grand Ole Opry on – starting in the late 20's, that's my earliest recollection of it – but I don't remember actually caring about the Grand Ole Opry. When I would hear it on Saturday night, it was an accompaniment to a lot of other things. I don't ever remember stopping and listening to country music. I knew that people went to square dances and things like that, but I wasn't particularly interested because I knew it so well.

I rejected the idea of country music, you know, because I was born and raised in it, and I was looking for farer fields. I wanted to be in the pop end of the music business. I played a little, sang and danced, and had talents in several directions. I didn't want country music at all. I wanted to be an actress. 'Course I wasn't supposed to be one, but I thought I was.

My parents didn't really want me to, but they didn't oppose my being in the "legitimate" field as we called it. Mama would have thrown up both hands in horror if she had known I was heading in this direction as far as being a comic was concerned. Mama frowned on my tendencies toward comedy – and they were always there, even when I was going to be in serious show business. I guess even at that age I had admitted inwardly to myself I would take it anywhere I could get it, anytime, just to be on the stage.

I was the youngest of five children. My four sisters were much older than I, and they put me up to show-off all the time, even when I was a kid. I was in my first recital when I was eighteen months old, sang in a music recital. I was just insufferable! And was all my life as far as wanting to show off was concerned. I just finally got to channel it and harness it and put it into a vehicle.

When I finished high school in 1930, Mama and Daddy offered me four years at some state university or two years at Ward-Belmont, a fashionable school in Nashville, where I could get what I wanted in dramatics. I took the two years at Ward-Belmont which I have never regretted. I think it was the beginning, really, of Minnie Pearl. To begin with, it was during the Depression, and everybody had money, I thought. I mean it was a lot of money to me. Where I came from everybody was broke, and where most of these girls came from everybody was broke, but these girls were rich. The place was elegant and I felt ill at ease. Our old house was just marvelous – gingerbread and gables on the side of the hill above the river where Daddy had his sawmill. It was full of laughter and fun and foolishness. All the furniture was worn out; we couldn't keep it any other way

with five children. But at Ward-Belmont, I quickly realized that I couldn't compete with the other girls. I just couldn't compete with their clothes, their spending accounts, and their know-how. I was so much from the country, and so country. It was just the greatest place in the world once I established the fact that I would have a place. But I didn't have a place. So I had to find a place, and in doing so I resorted more and more to comedy.

I had an excellent teacher, Miss Townsend. She spent two years trying to convince me that I didn't have a sense of humor. She didn't think I was funny, and she goes along with thousands of others. You see, she didn't care for my sense of humor! She was more inclined to like a subtle sense of humor. She was under the impression from having talked at length with my teacher at Centerville – my expression teacher as we called it through high school – that I seriously wanted to be an actress. Miss Townsend's job was to bring out whatever latent talent I had – which she couldn't seem to find – but she thought it was there because Miss Inez Shipp, my teacher from Centerville, had told her I had it. Well, what Miss Inez was probably telling her was that I probably had as much talent as any child in that little town of 500.

Looking back on it now, I'm sure there were lots of talented children, but I was the only one that had the brass, the whatever, to get up and do it. I would get up and do anything, it didn't matter. All the plays that came through, I would be in them. I didn't care whether I could do what I was supposed to or not. I would just say I'll do it. Any chance I ever got to perform, I performed. It didn't make any difference whether it was singing, dancing, or reading, I would do it because I loved to go on stage. I just loved the audience. I still do!

"I can tell when she doesn't like me.

She won't come around."

Really, I was a born mimic. When I was a little girl if they had a singing recital or something, I would come home and the next day or night I would entertain my family by imitating the people—how they would walk out on the stage, how they would sit, how they would take their bows, you know. I was just a clown!

So at Ward-Belmont I established a certain—oh, what you might say—a beginning for Minnie Pearl. I realized I was not going to be able to play it straight. I knew I was going to have to do something. Then Miss Townsend more or less assured me of the fact that I didn't have all that talent. She died before I became Minnie Pearl, but looking back on it and knowing her as I did, she would have sooner or later steered me over to one side. She would have told me I didn't have the talent. I am not a disciplined actress, and I could never have become a Helen Hayes, or a Katharine Cornell, or any of the people that I adored at that time.

"They Laughed Pretty Good That Night"

After graduating from Ward-Belmont, I went back home to Centerville and taught for two years. Worst time in my life. I didn't want to go back; I wanted to go to the American Academy, but we didn't have any money. I didn't want to teach; I wanted to get out. I was still fretting against this business. I knew I had something, but I didn't know what to do with it. There was a company down in Atlanta that had been sending coaches around putting on amateur plays and stuff, and I saw that as a way out for awhile. I worked there for six years. I went around all over the country, and that is how I got involved with Minnie Pearl.

I went to a place in north Alabama and stayed with a lady and her husband and son. It was in the winter of 1936, and I was down on my luck. I thought she was one of the funniest women—I still do—I ever met in my life. And I came away talking about her and imitating her and telling her jokes. They weren't jokes; the things she told were just funny, they weren't things she would make up. I had to advertise my play at the different towns that I went, so I would do an imitation of her.

But, you know, I still never listened to the Opry or any country music. I didn't have time. Even in 1936 when I was going to come on the Opry in 1940, it was completely unknown to me. I don't think I have ever told that to anybody before, but it's true. I never thought of it really. You would think that my interest in old country songs and stories would have made me listen to the Opry on Saturday night, but I was always

working on Saturday night, or traveling. So, I never did.

I traveled mostly in the country; these shows that I put on were country musical comedies. I had put on a play in Akin, South Carolina, for the Pilots Club, and they asked me to come back for their convention in a couple of months and do this "silly thing that you do." They said they would give me \$25 and my expenses. That was just enormous, so I said, "Why certainly, I will do it." I had an old boyfriend over in that area, and I thought I could kill two birds with one stone. So I came back, and that was the first time I appeared professionally as Minnie Pearl, the first time I put her in costume. It was 1938. I went down to a salvage store and bought a sleazy, old cheap yellow organdy dress and a pair of old white shoes and a pair of white cotton stockings and an old hat and put some flowers on it—no price tag, that didn't come till later. I appeared that night in the ballroom of the Highland Park Hotel, which was a very swank hotel. I walked down through the crowd and they didn't know anymore than a jackrabbit who I was or what I was doing, but the rapport was there. I walked down through the crowd, and I was speaking just like an old country girl that had come in by mistake. They were just... you know... they didn't have any idea what I was doing.

But anyway, they laughed pretty good that night. I used a few stories about Grinders Switch. I told them about brother, and I used several jokes about my feller. My feller has always been tantamount. He is very important to establish the gag of my unattractiveness. I came away from there that night with a prescience... I'm not saying that a light shone and a voice said this is where you are going or anything like that, but it was being borne in on me gradually...

Daddy had died in '37 and Mama had some vicissitudes, so I came back home in 1940. Back to my hometown where I had started—a failure at 28, not married, no money. I got a job with the WPA setting up a recreation room in an old building upstairs over some stores. I was alone and frustrated, and dabbling with Minnie Pearl just wherever she could be used—but never for any money. And that bugged me, because of all things I wanted money so I could get away. But I couldn't put her out: I couldn't merchandize her. I thought then that I would develop her and use her as a springboard to get money to do the other act. And it's a wonder the Lord let me have her, because that's a misuse. That's a betrayal. But He was good to me. I looked around me at the people in Centerville, and I just thought my life was over. Pretty depressed. I look back now and

think how different my life would have been if I had married some nice fellow and settled down and had children in the normal way that people are supposed to.

It was a funny thing, I sort of had the feeling . . . I couldn't see where I was going, and I see people like that now and my heart goes out to them. I know why they drink a little or they take a little something, because everybody in the back of their head has a certain way they want to go, and if they don't get there, they think they have failed. If they could just see that the second best is sometimes better than the best, which mine was. I still had that idea of having my name in lights on Broadway and all that jazz which is just hallow. It's still great, but it's hallow. The lights go out and the grease paint comes off, and you have to have somebody to go home to, which I was fortunate enough to find, but it was late.

"You Are Just Not Grand Ole Opry Material"

Anyway, one afternoon, I was sitting up there in that old place, and it was dirty – the place not me – and this man, this banker that had lived in Centerville for years, came up and said, "There's going to be a Bankers Convention, 'Phelia. Haven't you got some children that you've been teaching to sing and dance?" Well, that was against the

rules, and I didn't know anybody knew it. You weren't supposed to do that, but I was picking up a little extra money and cheating on the WPA. I had a bunch of children whose parents paid me \$20-25 a month because they thought I was talented and there was nobody else in town that taught dramatics and dancing. I said, "Yeah, I'll let them do it." And he said, "By the way, that thing you do" – he didn't even know the name of it – "that you did at the Lions Club. You know, that old silly thing." I said, "Minnie Pearl." He said, "Would you mind doing that if the speaker doesn't get there on time?" And I said, "No, I don't mind." "Just kill a little time with it," he said.

It was just that accidental. That's the reason when people say they don't believe in God . . . so much stronger than we that leads us. If the man had gotten there, I would have . . . But he never was supposed to get there. So, I sent the children off, and got up in front of all those bankers – they were from all over the area – and I said, "I would like to do my impression of the mountain girl, Minnie Pearl. Howdy! I'm just so proud to be here." And they just fell out.

I was dressed in regular clothes. I had the costume at home, but I didn't know for sure I was going to do it. Actually, I hadn't used a costume



Rod Brasfield, Minnie Pearl, Carl Smith, and Jordanaire Neal Mathews and Gordon Stoker

but twice at that time. I wasn't sure that I wanted to get tied to a costume; I had gotten that far. Still, and I have never gone into this in all these years that I have been doing interviews, it's incredible that sometime during that summer I didn't become addicted to the Opry, isn't it? But I didn't. I was aware of it, but nobody said, "Why don't you put that thing on the Opry?" when they would see me do it. I guess they thought I wasn't good enough.

So, I went on back home that night and didn't think anything particular about it. I just knew it had gone well, and I wasn't conscious of the fact that it was any kaleidoscopic, fantastic night in my life. The following week I got a call from WSM, and they said that a man by the name of Bob Turner who was vice-president of the First American National Bank in Nashville and who knew my family and knew my situation had just gone to bat for me — told them I ought to be on the Opry. So, they called and asked me to come up, and I did. I thought the audition went terribly. I had never been before a microphone except these little old bitty things. I didn't feel at home. I didn't like performing in a dead studio with a bunch of strange men looking at me through a control room window, not cracking a smile and talking about me while I was working. But I staggered on through.

I finished on up and this nice man, Mr. Ford Rush, said, "Come to my office." I thought he was going to say, "Hon, why don't we forget this? You just ain't got it." When I went into his office, he said, "We don't think they will take you, but we are going to give you a trial. You can come Saturday night at 11:05. We only have fifty-five minutes of the Opry left, and most people are tuned out by then and we are not running a big risk, but we don't think they will take you because you are a little too slick for them. We know your background; Mr. Turner gave us your background. You've had two years in a very exclusive college; you've had two years of teaching dramatics, and you've had six years of coaching and directing amateur plays. You are just not Grand Ole Opry material." I said, "But you don't realize I came from Hickman County. Have you ever been down there? That's the country."

So, I went on the Opry that night and Judge Hay was so sweet to me; he was such a lovely man. He said that night when he saw me I was so scared. See, I was entirely sure of myself so far as a live audience was concerned, and we had it at the old War Memorial Building. But there weren't that many people there on that November night. They had sort of drifted out, and they were about half-asleep. You know, most of them were



photo by Les Leverett/WSM Photo

seasoned Grand Ole Opry listeners, and they weren't ready for me. That first night I went on, I was never on such uncharted seas. To begin with, radio was a new medium.

I was so dumb I didn't know what I was doing, and that is what saved me. I didn't know how big the Opry was; I didn't know how big the audience was. I didn't know anything about it. I just knew I was going up there and say what I had to say, and I was saved by ignorance.

"She Has All the Qualities I Wish I Had"

You know, after things got pretty good for me, I talked to those men who had auditioned me and said, "What in the world did you see?" *Where could you find Minnie Pearl?* Was she covered up by my uncertainty and frustration, my insecurity at not having any money or position, not having a name and never having been in show business of this kind? Where did you find the girl—the delightful, sweet, lovely person she is? She is. Minnie Pearl is one of the cutest people I ever knew. She is funny and she's nice.

We were talking about her. I speak of her in the third person. I had some interviews when I was at Disney World recently, and this boy from Orlando, a pretty clever boy, said, "You speak of her in the third person." I said, "Yeah, I have been for many years. She is so much nicer than I am; I like to talk about her because she is warm and friendly, and she has all the qualities I wish I had—no prejudice, she never gossips, she never bears false witness, she never does any of the things that you are not supposed to do. She is pretty near perfect, you know, and I like her." This young boy looked me straight in the eye and said, "Does she like you?" It scared me so bad I haven't been able to get over it since. I don't know whether she likes me or not. Reckon?

She likes parts of me, but she dislikes parts of me. I can tell when she doesn't like me. She won't come around. I get up to perform and she is not there. She just drifts away like a little wisp. She goes on about her business and I call her and try to get her back but she won't come. Then sometimes I get up to work and she's clamoring just like my poodle. She's so eager, she just can't wait. And she is so funny, she knocks me out.

I made an appearance the other day . . . where was it? Some free appearance—that is when she is usually her best, when I am performing for a hospital, or a nursing home, or for somewhere she feels at home. Oh, it was the Senior Citizens the other night. I went out to the Waverly Methodist Church for a friend of mine. And she was so funny. It was like I turned her on, and she ran



photo by Les Leverett/WSM Photo

like that tape machine. I wasn't even conscious of it, you know, I thought of old gags I haven't thought of in a hundred years. And people just fell on the floor! I got up to read from this little book I have called Christmas at Grinders Switch and I got to quoting her, and she was just so in front of me I couldn't get around her. She didn't want me there at all; she was just telling me to go on and get away. She was just so silly! I thought, my goodness gracious alive, I wish I were working Carnegie Hall tonight. But she doesn't care for that; she wouldn't have been as funny. She felt at home at that church because, you see, Minnie Pearl does most of her performing at Grinders Switch at the church social.

I've played Carnegie Hall twice, and I've played Madison Square Garden and I've played some of the big places, and I have played a lot of little ones. On nights when I am going to have a big, big deal, I court her. Oh, Lord, please let her come around tonight. I need her, Lord, help us, I need her! I don't ever know if she is going to be there or not. She sometimes is; sometimes isn't. I worked Carnegie Hall for the first time and it was real fine, because I was frightened, and when I am frightened, she comes around. She tries to help me, but let me be a little too smooth and a little too sure of myself and she says, "Well, take it, you've got it. You are too big for me. I don't want to have anything to do with it!" And she is gone. I have to just get up there and struggle around. My timing just goes haywire, and I can't do anything about it. I can't find her. She's not there.

"Sometimes I Feel Like I'm Not At The Opry"

I did twenty-seven years of one-nighters. Twenty of it with Henry and seven of it before I met him. I was doing package shows mostly, and then part of that time I had my own show for the fair circuit. I did 55 fairs in the Midwest one summer – The Minnie Pearl Show. But I prefer working as a single with a package show.

Now I go to the Opry when I want to. They are kind enough to say I can come anytime I want to. They don't care whether I come or go. When I got off the road, I had just imposed on Henry so much he just got tired of it. It was more for him than anything else; he asked would I mind taking a sabbatical. So, I go or I don't go. They call me every week to ask if I'm coming, and I say yes or no. I don't feel exactly the same, and when Acuff is gone, it is going to be increasingly hard for me to go, although he will probably outlive me. He is a very remarkable man. Roy is 70, ten years older than I am.

But I don't know. Sometimes I go down there,

and I feel like I'm not at the Opry, depending on who is there. There are so many young ones that I don't know. And they are kind to me, but it is not the same. I don't want people to be kind to me, although I appreciate it. It has to do with the comradery that has existed all these years between all of us that have kidded each other so. Like when I first came on the Opry I thought I was so good, and they knew it. So, they decided they would take me down, and they can do it. I came off stage one night and I had taken two encores and was waiting to see if I was going back, and one of the old-timers, Robert Lunn, came up to me and said, "Minnie Pearl, have you been on yet?" And everybody just died laughing. That was thirty years ago.

I became accustomed to the excitement and the glamour and to the fun and everything. In the old days I used to go down there and stay all night. I just couldn't wait for time to go down there. Then, I got tired – not of being on stage, but of meeting the deadlines. I was tired; I wanted rest. I took up tennis, and I began to want to stay at home. I had neglected my family and my friends, and I just wanted to settle back into a sort of return-to-the-womb type thing. I wanted to have some of the life that I had never had. See, I left home when I was 21, when I went on the road with Mr. Sewell and here I was 56 or 57 – never had had any of this kind of life, and I kind of like it.

"The Most Relaxed Section of Town"

We've talked a lot about the changes from the old days, about the new Opry House and the



photo by Grease Brothers

music. When I listen to the radio on Saturday night, there is a presence that is different. There is a technical difference in the echo of it. They now have one set of engineers who handle what is going on inside the building and another set of engineers who handle what is going out across the country. Well, when I came here they had a control booth back there and they had two men in it, and whatever came out went on the air. They didn't have anything to lower the decibility of this, that, or the other. It was just there and they put it out. And it was just great! But now you can't do that; you've got to have all this different stuff.

When I listen I have the feeling that the people are a little more dignified. They feel a little more constricted. In the old building they were eating popcorn and pulling their shoes off and the place was conducive to an awful lot of informality. Mothers nursed their babies; girls and boys courted and kissed and cuddled; drunks staggered in off the street and hollered if they liked something. One night during World War II, a boy from Fort Campbell decided that he wanted to tell his folks in someplace like Iowa or Kansas that he was at the Opry and he just jumped on stage right in front and said, "I want to say hello to my parents." They said, "We're on the air." He said, "I know you're on the air; that's why I want to do it." They had to get the security to take him off and he still was saying it all the way along. He said, "I don't mean any harm, I just want to tell them I'm here."

There was a feeling of informality that was different. Now the people come in from away off and they go in out there and go through that stile and all the way into the other and into that building, and by the time they get in there, they have been more or less screened. There is no place down the corner where they can get a beer. They can get food and soft drinks and everything like that, but it's an entirely different atmosphere. The old Opry was down there on Fifth Avenue and it was just in the very . . . what we might call just the most relaxed section of town.

But the change was inevitable. The old house as much as we loved it, had lived out its expectancy. It had done all it could do for us and it couldn't be air conditioned. It was dirty — ingrained dirty — there was no way you could paint and clean, and do all you wanted to do. The place had outlived its time, so it was time to move. I cried a little when we left, but I just got sentimental thinking about the different people I had known there. The ghosts seemed to be sort of sticking their heads out around the curtains.

Now we are getting nothing but compliments

about the new building and it is beautiful. It's fun to have plenty of room to dress and have a comfortable place for people to sit. It was primarily for the fans that I was happy. When they come to stand in line for the second show they are under cover. The whole thing is on a very, very pleasant, nice level.

The music . . . there is an awful lot of talk here in town now about the change in the music. Well, I have been listening to this all along, and Roy and I were talking the other night about these people saying, "They are not keeping it country. They've got to keep it down close to the ground." Old Judge Hay used to say, "Keep it close to the ground, fellows." Well, there is never going to be a time when there won't be change. We have change in everything. Our country is changing now; it is in a period of change that has never been comparable. I don't know of anytime in the whole history of the United States where we have had as much change, but then I wasn't living back during the War Between the States. That was a big time of change; certainly nobody ever thought brother would fight brother. We had great change at the time of the Depression in 1930. I remember when people said that was the biggest change the United States has ever had — people shooting themselves and jumping out of windows; wealthy men standing in bread lines with a cup in their hands just begging soup. Well, that was a big change. Now we go into this where we have Watergate and the President is disgraced. A man is put up for Vice-President and they wait and wait and wonder if they are going to put him in. It's just all different.

Country music is written by people who are aware of this change. They are being influenced by this change and you can't expect people to sit like the old timers did that wrote "Great Speckled Bird," "Wabash Cannon Ball," and "I'm Walking the Floor Over You," and all those old-time songs. You can't expect people to sit in a vacuum and write songs like that when the world is crashing around them. It is inevitable that we should have this change, and I am not worried because country music has withstood all these other changes. We started our Opry in 1925 when things were going great. The crash didn't come till '29 and it weathered that. It weathered World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War — it has weathered everything and it is still going to weather everything.

It will change. And you say, "Well, do you like it?" Well, what difference does it make? I can't change it, and I don't want to change it. There will always be a part of it that will be like the old time to me.



photo by Frank Empson/The Nashville Tennessean

CAPTIVE VOICES: prisoners of learning

by Leonard Conway

Investigative journalism and the role of a free press were widely discussed topics in 1974. While Watergate and impeachment news headlined the country's news media, an important struggle for a free and substantive press was taking place in many high schools across the country.

Stories of student journalists, their advisors, school authorities and the student press are contained in *Captive Voices* (available from Schocken Books, New York for \$1.45), the

report of the Commission of Inquiry into High School Journalism. The Commission was convened by the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial, a Washington, D.C., organization concerned with the problems of disadvantaged young people. Comprised of twenty-three members including such journalists as Jules Witcover of

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the *Washington Post* and John Seigenthaler of *The Tennessean*, the Commission conducted an eighteen month investigation highlighted by public hearings, two of which took place in Charlotte, North Carolina and San Antonio, Texas.

Captive Voices contains sections on censorship, minority participation, the quality of journalism education, the role of the established media, a legal guide for student journalists and recommendations for needed change. One recommendation called for local conferences to discuss with students and teachers the findings of *Captive Voices*, the importance of more in-depth reporting and to stimulate an awareness of First Amendment free press rights.

To study the potential for such a conference in North Carolina, Lloyd DeFrance, a nineteen-year-old graduate of Guilford High School in Greensboro, has been working in several North Carolina counties as a Robert F. Kennedy Fellow. He describes his work and the impressions which North Carolina students have of their newspapers.

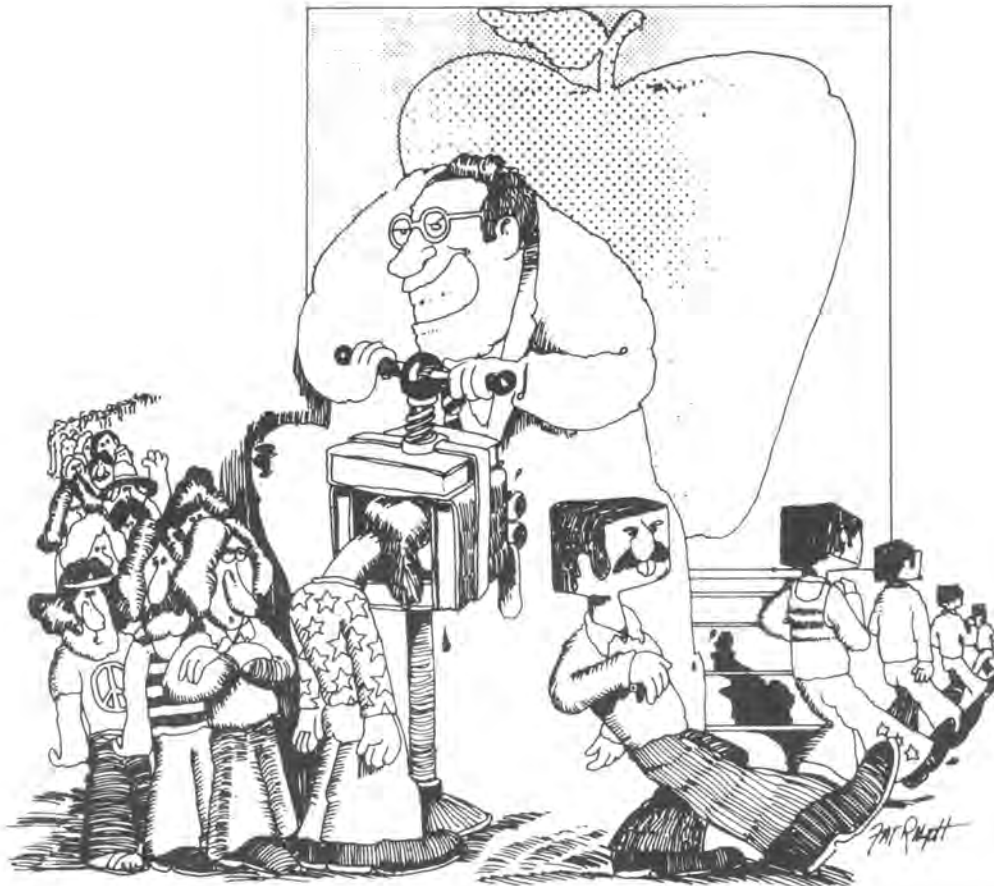
"Most high school journalists emphasize the layout of their newspapers rather than the content. The way it looks is more impor-

tant than what it says. This is understandable. If their paper looks nice, the students receive praise from the administration and their adviser, even if the content is superficial. If on the other hand, the newspaper says something important, the students get hassled continually.

"Students know this, and the result is that the most common form of censorship in North Carolina originates from the students themselves. Knowing what can or can not be printed leads to a conscious avoidance of many topics.

"Censorship also comes from teachers and administrators, especially when an article touches on a controversial issue such as student rights, minority affairs or criticism of school officials. The threat of a cutback in school funding or a lowered grade may 'censor' an article. At other times an administrator will simply ban the publication of a story.

"In order for censorship to end in the schools, newspaper staffs must realize that they have the right and duty to publish substantive and informative stories. The courts have held that students may publish and distribute any literature, subject to the limitation that it not



be (1) libelous, (2) obscene, or (3) disruptive of the educational process.

"How can the content of a student newspaper be improved? Close the communication gap between the newspaper staffs and the student body. Staffs should ask students what types of articles they are interested in. Experience has shown one that careers, jobs, politics and social problems are often the answers one receives. The key is not so much what issue one writes about, but rather the depth of analysis and investigation which is done.

"Content might also be improved by an examination of the types of people on the staff itself. If the staff is comprised entirely of white, college-bound students, then the content will probably reflect that makeup. The problem lies partly with the methods of choosing newspaper staffs and partly with the conditions under which minority groups and poor people live and attend school. Sometimes a student must have a certain grade average (B or better) in order to 'qualify' to be on the staff. This method of choosing staffs makes for a one-sided paper. One year's staff selecting next year's staff often leads to 'clique' control.

"Many minority students and poor whites have grown to accept as fact their history of non-participation on newspaper staffs. They consider themselves apart from their school

newspapers because they never read anything about their culture or lifestyle. Poor whites and the minority students need to be encouraged to become involved. A well-rounded staff usually insures a well-rounded paper.

"What can an individual student do to make his/her school newspaper better? The first thing is to get involved. This will allow the individual to discover a paper's problems. If the problem is a lack of investigative reporting, then the individual should select a topic, investigate it thoroughly and then push for the story's publication.

"If the problem is a legal one, contact an attorney, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), or one of the community organizations concerned with student rights. The answer may be a court suit or an independent paper. Sometimes a call from a lawyer or the editor of a local newspaper will help to set things straight. The worst thing a student can do, though, is nothing.

"The final reason why high school is in poor condition in North Carolina is the prison-like atmosphere in which students are forced to 'learn.' Teachers must become friends and schools places where students are happy to learn and grow. Until these things are accomplished, students will continue to be turned off and continue to write about the senior mascot and maypole dancing."



photo by Frank Empson/The Nashville Tennessean

St. Petersburg Times Reporting for the Consumer

by John W. English

Rare, odd moments can tell a lot. I was interviewing Buddy Martin, news-features editor of the *St. Petersburg Times*, when Nelson Poynter, chairman of the board of the Times Publishing Co., wandered through the newsroom and asked Buddy to check with the weather bureau and find out what the chill factor was today and publish it in tomorrow's paper. It was a cold, windy day for Florida, but it seemed almost heretical to suggest that the Sunshine State might even have a chill factor, much less print it for the public and tourists to read. Yet, when I think about it, it was the perfect symbolic act . . . a flash of honesty that would impress readers and give them a bit of unusual information about their environment. It is this candid attitude that distinguishes the *St. Petersburg Times* from other newspapers and the reason I had come to Florida to write about their special brand of consumer-ori-

ented journalism and the philosophy that underpins it.

The *Times* began its consumer journalism a decade ago, I had learned from former editor Donald K. Baldwin, now a professor of communications at the University of South Florida. He attributed the inspiration to consumer advocate Ralph Nader, after their meeting in Washington in 1965. "I thought it was embarrassing that Nader had to put out a *book* on car safety and that newspapers weren't reporting that kind of story," Baldwin recalled in his campus office.

At the time, the *Times* was planning to remake its women's page just as the *Washington Post* brought out its Style section. Baldwin, impressed with the freedom of the *Post's* model, instituted a similar Day section—devoted to the Home, Lifestyles, Food, Family, Leisure, and Real Estate—and consumer journalism was one of its staples.

In the early Days, Baldwin said, no one was assigned to a consumer beat. Instead, different reporters were recruited to do specific stories and then returned to their regular assignment. "We also had lots of reporters volunteering to do stories," the veteran wire service reporter and editor went on. "I created an idea clinic to get participation from the staff in sparking story ideas and they brought in anyone who had an idea, often including outsiders. Most of the consumer stories then came from the idea clinic. We weighed products on carefully adjusted scales and found lots of shortweighting and wrote about it.

"It took a brave man like Poynter to print the kinds of stories that were certain to annoy his friends in business," he added. Baldwin retired to teach three years ago when current editor Eugene C. Patterson arrived, yet remains close to Poynter and others at the paper.

Patterson, the Pulitzer Prize-winning editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*, who edited the *Washington Post* and taught at Duke University before coming to the *Times*, takes no credit for the *Times'* tough consumer approach. "Don Baldwin and Bob Haiman had it rolling before I got here," he says for openers. "We put a high premium on it, though. Consumer reporting is the most important thing we can do for our readers, many of whom are retired and living on fixed incomes and need to be careful buyers."

"We ride herd for the public—not play giant killer," says Patterson, a stocky man with wispy blond duck-tails. "Our food price comparison charts, for example, often draw com-

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Nelson Poynter and Gene Patterson

photo by Bob Hannah/
St. Petersburg Times

plaints and so each time we run them (monthly in Thursday's food section) we try to put a little more information in to explain the list to readers.

"We got one reader who called to tell us you can't compare apples to apples," he grinned, "so we invited him to come in because we figured we might learn something from him."

Since he became the editor and publisher of the *Times*, Patterson has earned the admiration of his new staff and lived up to his reputation for toughness. Former *Times* consumer reporter Joy Hart Hunter relates her favorite Patterson story:

"I once did a price comparison story with a chart showing the prices of 23 non-prescription drugs and cosmetics. Included in the survey were grocery stores, drug stores, dime stores and discount stores. The managers of the discount stores were upset and decided to complain to Patterson. The result was a conference. One manager told Patterson that he did not think newspapers should do *that* kind of reporting. He had had problems with other papers before, the manager added, but editors always understood his viewpoint after he talked to them. Not too long ago he had talked to the editor of a weekly in Bradenton and the editor had agreed not to do any more consumer reporting, he said.

"With that, Patterson stood up and declared that the *St. Petersburg Times* is *not* a weekly in Bradenton, that its editors have different ideas about responsible journalism and asked the managers of the discount stores to leave his office."

Ms. Hunter, now a reporter for the *Tulsa Tribune*, says she never felt *any* pressure to go easy on advertisers. Another story typifies her experience on the *Times*: "One of the *Times*' biggest advertisers is Webb's City, 'the world's largest drug store.' For years Doc Webb has had several full-page ads in almost every edition of the paper. Whenever I did a price comparison, I always included Webb's City and they certainly didn't always have the lowest prices. But I was never told to cool it—even though I think the advertising department usually got a call from someone at Webb's after one of my stories ran."

Victor Livingston and Michael Marzella, the two *Times* reporters currently covering the consumer beat, are enthusiastic about the *Times* and their

mission. "This paper has run the gamut of topics, more than any other newspaper in the country," Livingston began. "We're now coming back to re-do major stories that have been done before. And we're moving away from strictly factual or dry how-to pieces into a more people-oriented reporting. Our approach has hardened: consumerism is now part of the daily philosophy and content. Consumer stories now appear any time, not just in the Tuesday section."

"I think the expansion of our coverage has sharpened our outlook and made us more discerning," Marzella adds. "Consumer journalism must serve as a shopper's guide and fulfill a watchdog capacity. We have to inform readers on the quality and price of goods and services *and* the state of the art. Newspapers need to keep an eye on our watchdog agencies. I was shocked to learn several years ago that there are no bacterial standards for ground meat in this country. We need to tell people what they can do about standards . . . who to write. We should take a stand on issues."

"We act as reviewers and review the work of local agencies in the field of consumer protection," Livingston goes on. "The agency, combined with newspaper coverage, does put businesses on alert that their performance is being watched. We monitor local agencies

and give them plaudits when they function effectively and thumbs down when they don't."

"Readers have to realize that any group with 'consumer' in the title doesn't necessarily mean they're functioning in their behalf," Marzella adds. "It may just be serving the ends of business."

"The net effect of our consumer coverage is to make our readers better buyers," says Livingston.

"Watch This Space" is a column Marzella began three years ago as a Tuesday feature. To evaluate the accuracy of advertising claims for readers, Marzella conducts a series of tests to examine the claims the product makes. He then writes up the tests and his findings in a short column. For example, in a test of Super-glue, Marzella glued two one-inch square metal surfaces together, one attached to a lifting hook and the other to a load of lead weights. The glue, claiming to support 2000 pounds, gave way under an 800-pound load and Marzella wrote his story.

When Sunoco service stations began their "I can be very friendly" campaign, Marzella visited local Sunoco stations to buy a dollar's worth of gas and see how much friendly service he got. He found: "No window washings or cleaned mirrors, no battery checks or oil inquiries." In short, dealers weren't delivering the service promised



Victor Livingston, Karen DeYoung, and Mike Marzella

photo by Jackie Greene/
St. Petersburg Times

Perhaps the best testament to the idea is its imitators. Four other newspapers – The *Lakeland* (Fla.) *Ledger*, *Miami News*, *Louisville Times*, and *Vernon* (Conn.) *Journal-Inquirer* – are running similar columns. Of the others, Marzella says modestly, “I’m flattered with the imitations but think much more needs to be done in this area.”

So does former editor Baldwin, who thinks a group of newspapers ought to get together and set up a modest laboratory to do their own product testing, in the manner of Consumers Union. “If a half dozen newspapers each put in \$10,000 a year – the cost of one cheap reporter – you could run such a lab. It would work. It could be done. One serving the Southeast, for example, located in Atlanta, would be ideal. The newspapers would get lots of stories out of it for its investment and it would serve the readers and help credibility,” Baldwin concluded.

Despite the fears of losing advertising from such aggressive reporting, Livingston says the *Times* has lost only one local account and no national advertising from “Watch This Space” reports. “I tested the claims of Audi – that they’d get 24 miles per gallon – and when the model we tested didn’t and we said so, the local dealer withdrew his advertising.”

It was a “Watch This Space” column

that led to the *Times*’ exposé of a local advertiser’s illegal practices and an open test of the newspaper’s policy. The story of the exposé and its fallout is a landmark in journalism.

In January, 1973, Marzella was checking into one local appliance company’s advertisement when the dealer complained that he was at least selling the merchandise advertised, which is more than his competitor – the Porter Appliance Co. – could claim.

So, Marzella checked the Porter ads and repeatedly tried to buy a TV set for \$58 as advertised. Each time, he found it impossible to buy the advertised set and the sales personnel steered him toward higher-priced merchandise. It was a classic bait-and-switch operation which violated Florida consumer protection laws.

After Marzella’s article exposing the firm’s practices appeared, store owner Edwin “Po’ Boy” Porter said the violations were unintentional and caused by overzealous salesmen he planned to fire.

Several months later, a former assistant manager of Porter’s store in Lakeland called the newspaper to reveal more of the Porter sales technique. He told the *Times* about Porter’s 14-page sales course which instructed new salesmen on how to sell to different types of buyers – the Redneck, the Black

Boy, the Jewish Buyer and the Sharp Young Buyer. (See selling tips in enclosed box.) The ex-employee drew up an affidavit affirming his story and even submitted a memo written by Porter that began: “Bate [sic] and switch is the American way.”

When reporter Joy Hart Hunter confronted Porter with the story, he admitted that the sales techniques were his.

With that, the story was shown to publisher John B. Lake who announced that the *Times* and its sister paper, the *Evening Independent*, would no longer accept advertising from Porter. That decision cost the newspapers nearly \$237,000 in lost revenues.

Not long after the exposé and cancellation of the advertising, the Porter Appliance Company was nabbed by the Internal Revenue Service for failing to file withholding tax for its employees. The compounded troubles forced Porter to go out of business.

“We decided we could probably expose several other big advertisers and cancel their advertising, too,” recalled Ms. Hunter. “But we wondered how far we could go without defeating our purpose. It wasn’t really our job to enforce the state’s bait-and-switch law. We felt the Porter story had been an effective way of informing the public about the problem.”

Editor Patterson was terse about the episode: “We bruised our nose with lost revenue, but we had to do it.”

“Our name has been used by others to get people to reform their practices,” Livingston says of the paper’s reputation. “Businesses are told if they don’t change they will be reported to the *Times*.”

“We have to be careful not to tell people that we’re from the *Times* so we don’t get special favors and get into conflict of interest situations,” Marzella added. “Our staff gets no discounts or freebies, which probably helps improve our credibility.”

“I try to do all my business as an average consumer,” Livingston continues. “I use these experiences as part of my work.”

Marzella is quick to admit. “We’re no more immune to being ripped off than anyone.”

“But we know the steps to take and should be more effective,” counters Livingston. “Generally, when laymen are up against professionals, consumers are the ones that are out to lunch.”

Some Selling Tips from Mr. Porter’s Sales Manual

“**The Redneck:** Easy to sell. What are the payments? Ask what he does for a living. Get away from the product. Pitch yourself, the service, and then the product for about five or ten minutes. Then get on common ground with him. He’ll buy every time.”

“**The Black Boy:** He can be white, too. They’ll buy anything. PAK* him, but make sure you’re right. Don’t let him down. If you promise him, keep it. Go down to his level. Sell him with payments.”

“**The Jewish Buyer:** Make a friend out of him . . . Kid him. PAK the devil out of the product . . . Be prepared to cut. He’s the hardest to sell. After you’re friends with him, insult him . . . You can’t hurt his feelings. High pressure him. He’s not interested in service, only prices.”

“**The Sharp Young Buyer:** Say hello . . . Call him by his first name, give him your name. This man is interested in service. Pitch service, but make a friend out of him . . . If it’s a wife and husband, appeal to the lively one, the one who has the opinions. If she says, “Honey, I like this,” don’t talk to her any more . . . She’s sold. Don’t waste your time. Pitch him, or vice-versa.”

* *Public Acceptance of Kicked-up prices, a practice by which the salesman quotes a fictitiously high selling price for an item, then reduces it in hopes of making customer think he’s getting a good deal.*

"You never stop being a consumer reporter," Marzella says. "When I go grocery shopping, I find myself reading the temperatures in the refrigeration cases and noting that it's 40 degrees."

Supermarket sanitary conditions are another of Marzella's reporting interests. He began writing about supermarkets in October, 1972, when he accompanied a health inspector on his regular rounds and reported every nitty gritty violation: decaying meat scraps on a machine in the meat cutting room, filthy floors, dirty food cases, thawed and refrozen juice that should have been condemned. He also told readers to check up on their supermarket and report violations. In that first survey, Marzella found 13 of 14 Pinellas County supermarkets surveyed to have sanitation violations.

In July, 1974, Marzella did a follow-up survey and reported: "We found more supermarkets and more people, but fewer inspectors. Conditions hadn't improved. Many violations were the same; most were in meat departments and in refrigeration and were caused by gross neglect."

The *Times* ran Marzella's reports for five consecutive days on the front page of the Day sections. The inspector's complete reports for each store were printed in full and in the case of the 28-store Publix chain, the report covered 65 column inches of space. Although the cold, descriptive language of the inspectors was used, the report made for exciting if upsetting reading. Such horrors as moldy sausage on display and rat droppings in the meat room were recounted. Of the 83 stores inspected, only five got a clean bill of health.

Interest in clean supermarkets prompted the *Times* to join in a national meat test conducted in seven cities in November, 1973, by *Media & Consumer*, an independent publication that monitors consumer affairs in the press. The project involved visiting 20 different St. Petersburg supermarkets of the six major chains and buying hamburger on display and whisking it to a laboratory for extensive tests.

All 20 hamburger samples were shown to have high bacteria content, including *E. Coli* or fecal bacteria, a known disease-causing organism. One sample, from Kash and Karry, contained more than 3,000,000 bacteria per gram. The Publix stores were singled out for their overall high counts.

In all, only four of the samples—all from A & P—were considered acceptable and seven were considered putrifying.

For their participation in the meat test, *Media & Consumer* commended the *Times* and the others for their commitment "to putting their readers' interests above everything else."

Victor Livingston, who has been at the *Times* for nearly a year after graduating from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, also exhibits a personalized, every-reader quality in his writing. Recently, for example, he wrote about how to decode a General Telephone Co. bill and compared the consumer information on sample local bills with those of Southern Bell (and found them better) and with those of New Jersey Bell (and found them deficient).

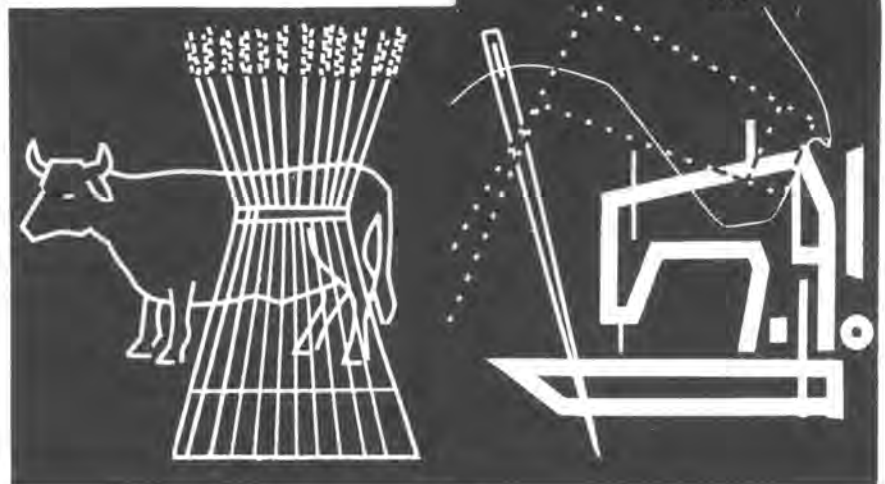
Just before Christmas, he conducted "The Great Interstate Parcel Package Derby" and sent six identical one-pound packages to Wilmington, Del., his hometown, to measure the efficiency and economy of service. His findings were graphically illustrated with Mr. Zip of the U.S. Post Office in first place with a three-day elapsed time from mailing to delivery. Cost: \$1.16. REA Surface Express brought up the rear, arriving after seven days. Cost: \$23.71.

"Part of the Day section philosophy is to react to the news," Livingston says. "Newspapers can't be encyclopedic or tell everything about everything. For example, the *Times* is weak in its environmental coverage because no one is assigned to this important area."

Managing editor Haiman delights in describing how consumer journalism

has permeated the entire staff and their writing. "After the Betty Ford and Happy Rockefeller operations, we were interested in telling our female readers how to check themselves for breast cancer. So we hired a model and a female gynecologist and took a series of photographs—showing full breasts and nipples—demonstrating the examination. The pictures appeared in color on the front page of the *Sunday Family* section and we had lots of positive response and no complaints. We didn't want to use the diagrams the A.P. moved and thought the public was ready for this kind of coverage."

Food editor Ruth Gray earns Haiman's respect with her full-fledged professionalism. Ms. Gray writes zingy restaurant reviews, carries Dr. Jean Mayer's nutrition column, assembles the food price comparison charts, and writes features on such timely subjects as sugar substitutes and economy meals. Unlike other food editors across the country, she refuses to publish the public relations handouts and recipes that food companies send out and politely sends back all gifts from food manufacturers.



"We have the toughest conflict of interest policy of any newspaper in the country," boasts Haiman. "We don't accept anything from anyone!" The *Times* even refuses to accept review copies for books, preferring to buy the books they have a special interest in reviewing.

Haiman gives his staff full credit for their accomplishments. After the *Times* gave reporter Jane Daugherty a leave of absence and a scholarship to study gerontology, she returned to begin an investigation of local nursing homes. Not only did her series help readers with their selection of homes, but it also contributed to a shake-up in the state Department of Aging. Later, a blue-ribbon investigating committee authenticated most of her conclusions about the appalling conditions: filthy rooms and kitchens, rats, roaches and

other pests, lack of proper medical care, shortage of skilled staff, high patient maintenance costs, unjust legal procedures, and lack of alternative services which could help an aged person continue living in his own home.

Real estate editor Mrs. Elizabeth Whitney has written some remarkable articles about Florida's swamp peddlers and real estate swindles. She also uncovered traces of Mafia links to land sales operations here.

But Mrs. Whitney's most widely heralded story dealt with the International Telephone & Telegraph Co.'s new Palm Coast development, billed as "the world's largest subdivision." When ITT slated a press junket to announce its new northeast Florida "city" the *Times* sent Mrs. Whitney at the newspaper's expense. Several hundred other invited journalists freeloaded. Skeptical of the serious ecological and economic problems that were about to be spawned by a new community of 650,000 in an area that now has a population of less than 5,000, she wrote:

"Thousands and thousands of little investors will spend hundreds of millions of dollars on overpriced, poorly drained Palm Coast land because they have been convinced they will make a 'killing' in Florida real estate. A 'killing' will be made, but it will be by ITT, not the little people who go to dinner parties and buy lots priced from \$3,600 to \$26,000 for land bought for about \$300 an acre."

All of the junketing journalists, except Mrs. Whitney, cranked out obsequious stories and commentaries on the splendors of Palm Coast, many of them quoting extensively from the ITT-prepared press releases. Mrs. Whitney also took the press to task with a

story headlined: "Junkets Lure Media to Sing For Supper." In that story, she described the elaborate weekend of wining, dining and recreation which cost ITT some \$20,000, and the other tactics the ITT press relations people used attempting to get press coverage. "Her stories were honest assessments of Palm Coast and at the same time raised questions about press performance and attempted to raise standards by reporting excesses," Haiman reflected.

"Consumer reporting is a survival kit," he said. "We have to provide information that will help people make it through."

The best example of this philosophy in practice is the two-part Sunday section published in late September called "Focus on Inflation." The stories centered on coping with a changing economy with features on the Depression years, safeguards to prevent the recurrences of the 1930s deprivations, parallels between 1929 and 1974, how the poor cope with limited budgets, plus inflation-fighting tips and budget management.

Marzella also did a series on lifestyles of family budgets, which included, in the event of a depression, the area's priorities for WPA projects.

Critics of the arts also write critically. One film critic recently reported how a film that was X-rated in their newspaper ad had cut all the segments showing explicit sex and turned it into an "R" film without informing customers. Hard-core fans were being duped, the critic wrote.

Film reviews also carry a summary at the end to alert the reader about its content. A sample mini-review read: "*The Groove Tube* does indeed contain sex, nudity, profanity and violence, and each for its own unadulterated sake." Appropriate symbols denote each characteristic.

Music critic Mary Nic Shenk went to a local nightclub to hear pianist Jan August, who was billed there. When she heard the wretched performance, she suspected the pianist was an impostor and threatened to expose him. The nightclub owner changed the name of the performer in the following day's ad.

Newsfeatures editor Martin says of the *Times* reviewing policy, "Our reviews should tell our readers whether they should or shouldn't go. We have no no-no's here. Our only guideline is 'be fair.'"

Even the sports staff has been





slightly infected with consumerism and has taste-tested the food and complained about the price of drinks (Cokes are 75 cents) at the local stadium.

Investigative reporting is the other related area of journalism in which the *Times* flexes its independence in the name of public service. Patterson is proud of the newspaper's 1974 record: reporting that led to indictments of three state cabinet officers and that found two State Supreme Court justices guilty of impropriety. "For volume, we're ahead of the *Miami Herald* in good investigative reporting, though their work on Senator [Edward J.] Gurney was impressive," Patterson says. (During its 90 years, the *Times* has garnered an impressive number of state and national awards—some 900 in all—including a Pulitzer Prize in 1964.)

Aggressive reporting occasionally results in legal hassles, which the paper is prepared for. Currently they are appealing an 8-month jail sentence handed down to reporter Lucy Ware Morgar for refusing to reveal her confidential sources in a leaked story about a secret grand jury presentment concerning police improprieties.

Never knuckle under or settle is the *Times*' policy. "Be fair. Apologize in print. Make corrections as prominent as the original. But if sued, we fight. We don't settle and this stance gives us a reputation," Patterson said. He insists lawyers should only give advice or a word of caution to editors, not make policy. "You want the lawyers to tell you what they think about what you're going to do and then you have to make that lonesome decision, just as Katherine Graham of the *Washington Post* did on running the Pentagon Papers against all advice of counsel."

Patterson and Haiman cite Mr. Poynter's four point priority list, when it comes to making decisions or resolving conflicts. His order of priority of consideration puts the reader first, then advertisers and staff, and, finally, the

stockholders (Poynter and his family who own both papers outright).

Haiman is eloquent about the newspaper's editorial posture. "People must not give up on the system. They must fight city hall. They aren't impotent. The press is part of participatory democracy.

"We never fail to endorse candidates for election as some newspapers do. Newspapers do have special expertise after interviewing each candidate with the same questions. We have an obligation to choose one candidate over the other because one of them will win.

"Putting out a liberal democratic newspaper in a conservative Republican city is an interesting exercise," he says with a grin. "We run a pro-con editorial page that helps disarm those who are against us—that know-nothing opposition. We run all arguments in favor of an issue down one side of the page, all those against the issue down the other, our editorial position in the middle and a coupon at the bottom of the page asking readers to send us their views. We also allow staff members to express dissenting opinions on the editorial page and occasionally have a taker. In all, it's an attempt to get readers to participate. I think it's also made our editorial page more persuasive and that's what the page is supposed to do."

Like other businessmen, Patterson is currently concerned with rising costs. The cost of newsprint, obviously a major item, has nearly doubled in a year. One small economy measure that most readers won't even notice, but that will save nearly \$250,000 annually is reducing the page size by one-fourth of an inch. Advertising rates are expected to go up, shrinking the number of pages, though increasing revenue. "Most readers already think our monster papers on Thursday and Sunday are too big," Patterson says. "You make a bad mistake, though, if you take all the economy steps by just shrinking the news hole.

"Costs will reduce the size of all American newspapers and overall that will be good. It will be more of a challenge to write news briefly and be more direct. Better editing is the key. We'll have to boil some stories down to get space for significant stories."

Another austerity move that Patterson authorized in September was a "streamlining" of the staff or laying off of 120 employees in all departments—most were production people

who were "double staffing" in the changeover to offset printing from letterpress. About 20 editorial employees were dismissed, leaving the staff at 205.

"Our profit picture was sliding and 1975 looked uncertain," Patterson explained. "So we cut staff and tightened our belts but didn't give up anything. We plan to bring in cathode ray tube outlets into the newsroom that will be on-line with typesetting computers and this technology will represent a tremendous saving in production as well as give the news department more control."

The layoffs have affected employee morale and renewed some talk of organizing a union (the Newspaper Guild), a move opposed by management. Haiman dismisses the action by citing only 21 signatures to an exploratory letter and stating, "We're a pro-labor paper with a tradition of dealing humanistically with the staff on a one-to-one basis and that relationship would suffer if we introduced a third party."

Grumbles about low salaries recently led to a new pay scale, which Patterson made a priority. "We make no apologies to anyone for our salaries and other employee benefits such as the profit-sharing plan and cost of living supplements over merit raises," Haiman notes.

In addition to local news staff, the paper has a one-man bureau in Washington, two in Tallahassee and several dozen reporters in surrounding counties covered by four regional supplements. The paper also uses a judicious selection of national and world news from the Associated Press and United Press International and a host of news-features from *The New York Times* News Service and the *Washington Post-Los Angeles Times* News Service.

The *Times* maintains a nearly "ideal" advertising to news ratio—60 to 40 per cent—for both profitability and service. Circulation, which fluctuates with the tourist season, is about 186,000. The paper's total revenue for 1974 is expected to be \$45 million, up some \$4.5 million from the year before.

No doubt Patterson could wring out larger profits if he would be satisfied with less quality. "The owner is committed to making this the model American newspaper, so we innovate. I consider it an experimental newspaper," he says with satisfaction.

IN A FEW HANDS:

"The American people should be made aware of the trend toward monopolization of the great public informational vehicles."¹

— Spiro Agnew

WHO OWNS THE MEDIA

by Bruce MacMurdo

Raiding the South for lucrative newspaper and broadcast stations has become commonplace in the last decade. Lured into the nation's fastest growing region by statistics which reveal expanding newspaper circulation and advertising revenues, outside corporations are falling over each other in search of willing sellers. Media has become a growth industry, and the biggest companies in the field want to grow with it. They're taking the profits from their chain of newspapers or television stations and buying up any and all available media outlets. As a result, ownership of the South's media is becoming more and more concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. Alas, it is as Spiro warned.

I. The Takeover

Back in the 1930s, outsiders buying up newspapers were an oddity. Col. Frank B. Shutts, owner of the *Miami Herald*, thought he made a killing when he sold his paper for \$3 million to John S. Knight and associates of Akron, Ohio. But Knight turned out to be the smarter capitalist. His *Miami Herald*, valued in excess of \$75 million, now anchors a media empire containing sixteen newspapers (11 in the South), plus partial ownership of a television station in Ohio and eight radio stations.² Another Ohio investor, James M. Cox, began expanding into the South in the late 1930s with his purchase of the *Atlanta Journal*. The well-respected Cox acquired the nickname "governor"



photo by Bill Fibben

after his term in Ohio's mansion, but he was not above employing a common practice to increase his control of an area's media: he bought out his competitor, the Hearst chain's *Atlanta Georgian*, and simply shut down their presses. Then in 1952 he bought the *Atlanta Constitution*, and through the affiliated Cox Broadcasting Company, now owns an Atlanta television and AM-FM radio combination. From its Atlanta headquarters, the intricate Cox conglomerate (see box in map) now controls twelve newspapers (ten in the South), five television and nine radio stations, plus a sprawling cable TV interest, a technical book publishing company, and a movie production outfit (makers of *Willard* and *Walking Tall*).³

The media buying spree escalated during the 1960s with the aging, yet feisty Samuel I. Newhouse leading the way. As the decade opened, Senator Wayne Morse told Congress, "The American people need to be warned before it is too late about the threat that is arising as a result of the monopolistic practices of the Newhouse interests." Two years later, *Time* magazine reported, "With insatiable appetite, newspaper publisher Samuel I. Newhouse—who has already bolted down 14 dailies—is in the process of swallowing three more. And Sam is still hungry. Last week, he began to spread the table for the biggest feast yet. On the menu, the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* and its evening companion, the *States-Item*." The price for the New Orleans papers was a record \$42 million, but that did not stop Sam. Today, at age 85, the five-foot, three-inch whirlwind boasts: "I am not a chain publisher. I want to be a creative custodian of newspaper tradition and newspaper effectiveness."⁴

Big chain ownership has indeed become the tradition of newspaper publishing. By 1967, groups owned 49% of the nation's dailies, accounting for 62% of the total circulation. In 1970, only 4% of the nation's cities had two or more separately owned newspapers, while the figure was 21.5% in 1930 and 57% in 1910.⁵ In the South, the number of group-owned papers leaped 36% alone in the five years from 1965 to 1970. By 1974, 248 of the 430 dailies in the 13-state South were controlled by chains or companies owning more than one newspaper. In the same year, companies with interests in two or more television stations owned 126 of the region's 225 stations.⁶

The statistics for the top ten metropolitan areas in the South dramatize this pattern of concentration: in eight of the ten cities, a newspaper and television are jointly owned; groups control 29 of the 43 TV stations and 13 of the 18 papers in the areas; only two dailies—the *St. Petersburg*

Times and *Houston Chronicle*—have no other newspaper or television interests, and the *Chronicle* hardly qualifies as a small outfit. It's owned by the Houston Endowment, described by one investigator as a "tightly held corporate force" with "a majority interest in twenty-five [corporations], including a half-dozen banks, three hotels, several downtown office buildings, real estate, and the Mayfair House Hotel on Park Avenue, New York."⁷

The chains owning the metropolitan South's media vary in size from subsidiaries of multinational corporations, like RKO General (a division of General Tire & Rubber), owners of Memphis' WHBQ-TV and other stations in New York, Boston, and Los Angeles; to the national chains, ranging from Newhouse and Scripps-Howard to the Outlet Company (owners of KSAT-TV in San Antonio, WDBO-TV in Orlando and others) and Hubbard Broadcasting (WTOG-TV in St. Petersburg/Tampa, etc.); to the regional chains like Bahakel Broadcasting Stations (Charlotte's WCCB-TV, Montgomery's WKAB-TV, Greenville, Mississippi's WABG-TV-AM, Jackson, Tennessee's WBBJ-TV, and radio stations in several southern cities); to state chains like A. H. Belo Corp. (*Dallas News*, six smaller Texas papers, WFAA-TV in Dallas and KFDM-TV in Beaumont); to the city-based combination, like the *Louisville Courier Journal* and *Times* and its WHAS-TV or the *Houston Post* and its KPRG-TV. Whatever the form of ownership, or size of corporation, all of these companies have one thing in common: they restrict the number of sources of news and information available to the public. To many critics, including former FCC commissioner Nicholas Johnson, multiple ownership of so many media outlets "is greater than a democracy should unknowingly repose in one man or corporation."⁸

II. Why Concentration?

If diversity of news sources appeal to your patriotic instincts, it is considered anathema to the established interests. From their perspective, the introduction of new forms of communication means competition, i.e. a threat; consequently, newspapers moved into radio, radio into TV, television moved into cable TV, and the groups moved all over the map, attempting to corner the development of new technologies. Profits could only be protected by expanding control over new

Bruce MacMurdo was raised in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and contributed regularly to that city's underground paper, *Gris-Gris*. He now lives in Chapel Hill, N.C.—and is the crusading captain of the *Southern Exposure* basketball team.

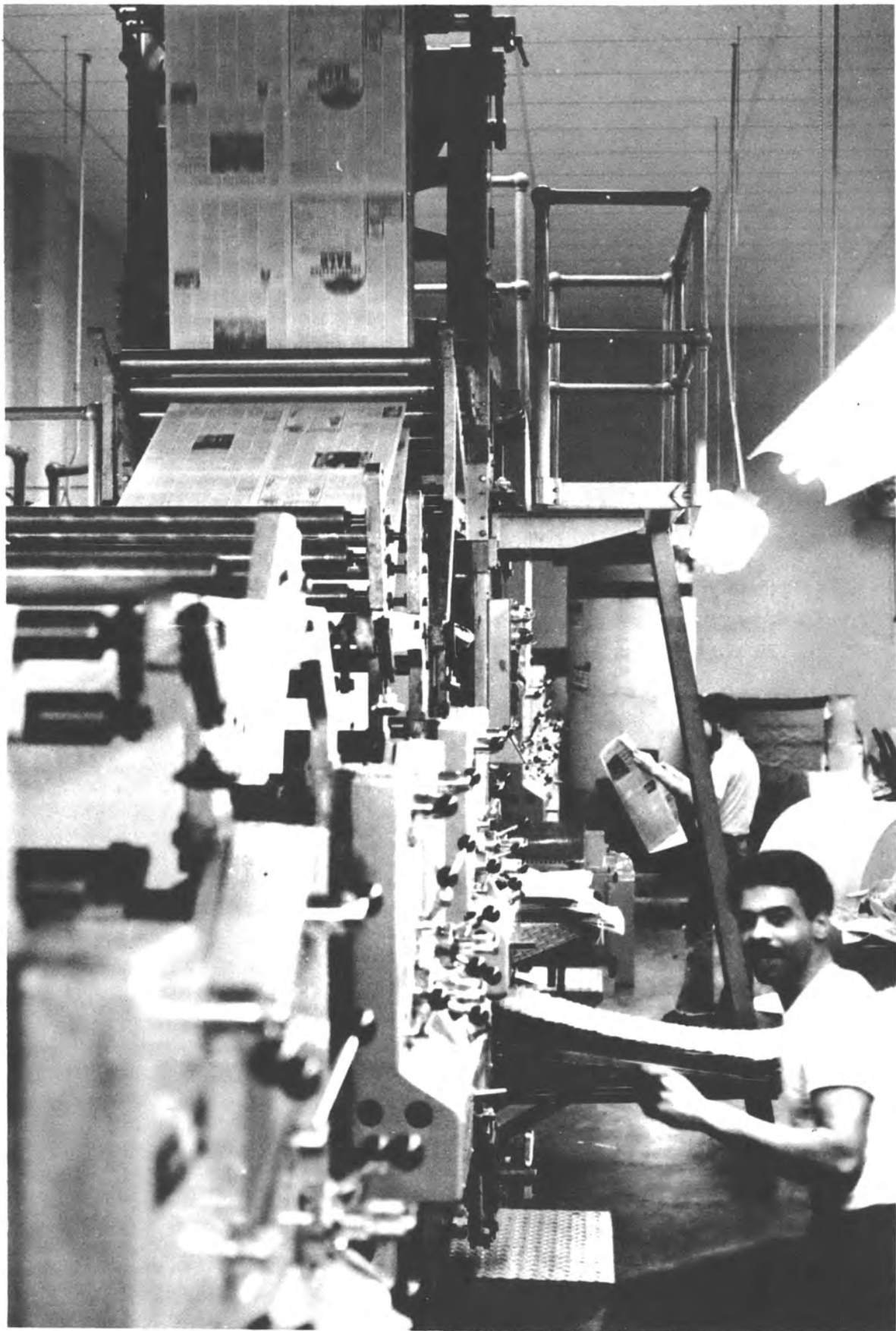


photo by Fred Peace/Chapel Hill Newspaper

media. In fact, an expanding company can boost the market value of its stock through its acquisition program, use the higher price stock as capital for purchasing another paper or broadcast station, and pay no taxes on the transaction.

In addition to these general principles of corporate economics, two important tax laws have fueled the proliferation of chain ownership and the disappearance of the independent newspaper. The inheritance tax has proved an insurmountable stumbling block to many local, family-owned newspapers, forcing many heirs to sell out to the highest bidder rather than face a walloping tax bill. On the other hand, a court ruling shortly after World War II provided a tax advantage to newspaper chains using their profits to purchase more papers, thus increasing the number of buyers in the market. The result, as one group executive says, is that "buying a newspaper is like an auction." Agents for the chains converge on a willing seller, prices are bid up, and the whole thing is written off as a "reasonable need of business" to avoid the 38½% accumulated-earnings tax.

Media chains defend their bigness by claiming that the local broadcast station or paper benefit from access to a Washington bureau, syndicated columnists, high-salaried reporters, and the latest in equipment. Veteran media critic Ben Bagdikian counters that such mass production tends to "Howard Johnsonize" news coverage, for the goal is to standardize operations to attain level profits, rather than locally-responsive news reporting.⁹ Furthermore, the "eccentricities in the individual" editor which provide the paper's unique approach are lost under group ownership, charges Frank A. Daniels, Jr., third generation publisher of the family-owned *Raleigh News & Observer*. And says Daniels, groups "may or may not improve the operation" of the paper, for quite often profits are not reinvested locally, but are used for the stock pricing and acquisitional needs of the chain.¹⁰ In these ways, the so-called independent publishers, whose editorial views were well-known and whose lives revolved around the communities' newspaper, have steadily disappeared. Replacing these local barons are distant kings, not in as direct control perhaps, but still in a position to influence what vast numbers of people read and hear.

Nelson Poynter, publisher of the independent *St. Petersburg Times*, links this critique of outside group control with "the loss of local ownership — banks and department stores — . . . that was the heart of the city. Now the editors and people running [newspapers] are simply employees, unless they own 51 percent of the stock. They

are subject to move. Therefore, our cities lack roots . . . we are losing that glue. A responsible newspaper should be the soul of the city. The chains say they give absolute autonomy to their editor. But he is on a leash."

Of course, local ownership does not necessarily insure that the newspaper will be responsive to the community's interests, as the case of the Bluefield, West Virginia, *Daily Telegram* discussed later illustrates. Nevertheless, concentration of media in a few hands clearly runs counter to the most elementary provisions of constitutional democracy. As Justice Hugo Black wrote in a landmark decision, the first amendment "rests on the assumption that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public, that a free press is a condition of a free society . . ."¹²

III. The Regulators Fail

But the first amendment cuts two ways. Newspapers have used it to block any attempt to regulate their activities, mobilizing their powerful lobby around the precept that any regulation of their growth or day-to-day operations would violate the restriction against laws governing the "free press." In the name of the first amendment newspapers have even avoided filing routine profit reports required from other industries. A few years ago, Paul Rand Dixon of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) was asked by a Senate hearing why no newspaper data had been included in the reports of major industry profits issued by the FTC. Dixon replied, "I kind of suspect nobody wanted the newspapers mad at them."¹³ On another occasion, the newspapers withheld data requested by a Congressional committee attempting to develop legislation which the press opposed. As Morton Mintz and Jerry Cohen say in their chapter of *America, Inc.*, titled "Hear No Evil, See No Evil, Speak No Evil," the "advocates of the people's right to know and enemies of secrecy in government were unwilling to provide Congress with the information it would need if it were not to legislate in the dark."¹⁴

And when the constitutional restraints run out, the print media does not hesitate to call forth its considerable lobbying muscle. Thus, when the courts found anti-trust violations in the typical price-fixing and profit-pooling agreement between competing newspapers who jointly own production facilities (as in the case of the *Nashville Banner* and *Tennessean*, the *Miami News* and *Herald*, *Birmingham News* and *Post Herald*) the newspaper lobby intimidated Congress into passing a special exemption bill for them.



photo by Fred Peace/Chapel Hill Newspaper

Compared with the print media, regulators have more leverage when they tackle the broadcast industry, but concentration of ownership in a few hands has nonetheless occurred. Because airways are considered public, and the number of frequencies are limited, the Federal Communications Commission was established in 1934 to regulate and license broadcasters in accordance with the "public convenience, interest or necessity." For decades, a handful of FCC Commissioners and outsiders have attempted to use this power of regulation to block or even break-up the multiple ownership of broadcast stations by one company. As early as 1941, the FCC held hearings on the move by newspapers to buy up radio and television licenses in their areas, but the Commission steadfastly refused to rule against such cross-ownership of media outlets. Only after considerable pressure did it finally limit, in 1953, the number of broadcast units any one company could own to seven TV stations, seven AM and seven FM radio stations. Needless to say, substantial media empires are still possible under the ruling, particularly among the licensee in major population areas. WKY Systems, for example, has TV stations in Dallas, Houston, St. Petersburg-Tampa, and Milwaukee, plus indirect ownership of the *Daily Oklahoman* and the *Oklahoma City Times*. Storer Broadcasting owns WAGA-TV in Atlanta, several radio license and cable franchises, plus television stations in Boston, Detroit, Cleveland, Milwaukee, and Toledo. Today, not a single VHF television station in the country's eleven largest cities is outside the direct control of a network, a newspaper or chain, a broadcasting group, or an industrial or financial conglomerate.

In recent years, the controversy over newspaper ownership of broadcast licenses in their respective cities has been revived, largely by the pressure from the Justice Department and FCC Commissioners Nicholas Johnson and Kenneth Cox. More than 250 papers are involved in such crossowner-

ship; many of them have the gall to defend their control by warning that outside conglomerates would buy up the licenses if they didn't own them. Of course, many of the 250 are part of conglomerates, like the Times Mirror Company's ownership of the *Dallas Times-Herald* and KDFH-TV. Johnson and Cox had little concrete evidence of the impact of crossownership on news coverage, but they brought the issue to center stage during the 1969 renewal hearing of *San Francisco Chronicle's* KRON-TV license. Star witness Albert Kihn, an eight-year veteran with KRON-TV, produced a memo urging the station's newsmen to give South San Francisco and its mayor favorable coverage at the time the *San Francisco Chronicle* was seeking cable television rights to the area. Kihn also documented KRON's intentional failure to report the revelation of a secret deal in which William Hearst would drop his *News-Call Bulletin* in exchange for a profit-sharing plan between his *Examiner* and the *Chronicle*. Finally, a reporter for the *Chronicle* testified that his column condemning TV violence was censored. Despite the rising clamor against the collusion resulting from such common ownership, the FCC approved KRON's license.¹⁵

With pressure mounting, the FCC proposed a new rule which would bar any new acquisition that would result in common ownership of two broadcast stations — TV, AM, or FM — in the same urban market. The Justice Department, which had pressed anti-trust suits against media concentration in the same market in the 1950s and 1960s, petitioned the FCC to expand the rule to include newspaper-broadcast combinations and to require divestiture of existing combinations. Before it acted on this suggestion, the FCC shocked the broadcast industry by refusing to renew the license of Boston's WHDH-TV, partially because it determined that the station's ownership by the *Boston Herald Traveler* contradicted the "criteria of diversification of communications media control." With the media conglomerate still reeling,

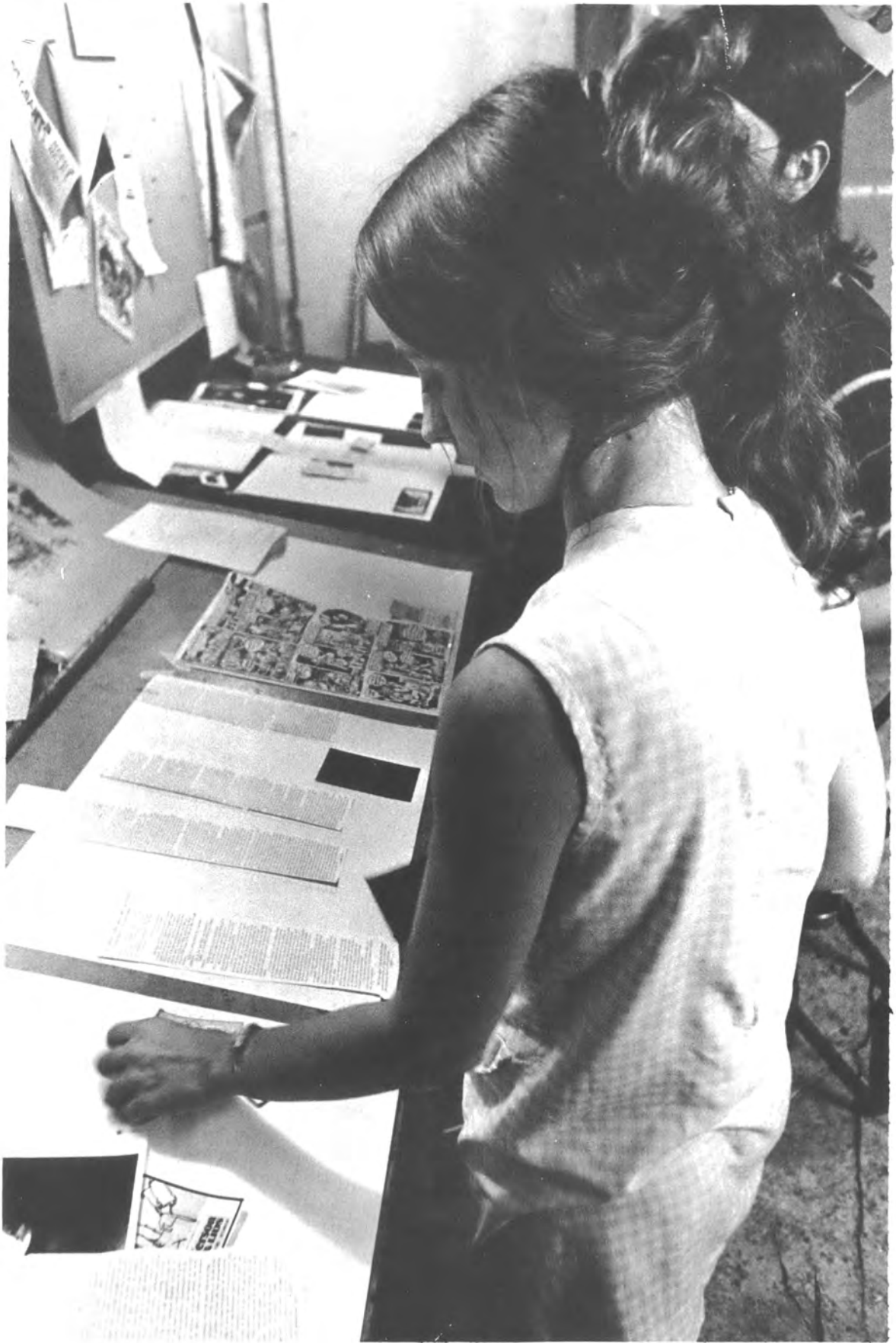


photo by Tom Coffin

the FCC next adopted its proposed rule blocking multimedia ownership in the same market, and recommended that the Justice Department's suggestion of including newspapers and ordering divestiture of existing combinations also be implemented.¹⁶

For awhile it looked like Johnson and Cox were making headway inside the Commission. But by 1970, the newspaper and broadcast industries had fully mobilized their powerful lobbies to circumvent FCC regulations through special Congressional legislation. Senator John Pastore, chairman of the Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Communications, introduced a bill that would clip the FCC's wings by preventing them from considering competing applications at the regular triennial radio and TV license renewal hearings – in other words, the original function of the FCC to monitor broadcasters' performance every three years would be gutted. Fortunately,

the bill never passed. Nevertheless, the pro-industry influence of the Nixon appointees on the Commission began gaining the upper hand. In late 1970, the new FCC chairman Dean Burch announced that the decision against WHDH-TV was unique and that "as a general matter, the renewal process is not an appropriate way to restructure the broadcasting industry."¹⁷

The Justice Department, however, did not abandon the issue of crossownership. On January 2, 1974, it filed petitions with the FCC against the renewal of the broadcasting licenses of three major publishers – the Pulitzer Publishing Company and the Newhouse chain in St. Louis, and Cowles Communications in Des Moines – on the grounds that their multimedia ownership represented illegal control of the advertising market in the two cities. Other suits began piling up at the FCC involving crossownership, including one filed by the Citizens Communications Center against

NEWSPAPERS AND TV STATIONS UNDER COMMON OWNERSHIP IN SAME CITY

STATE	CITY	NEWSPAPER	% of		RADIO		GROUP OWNER	
			Market †	TV	Market †	AM		FM
ALABAMA	Anniston*	Star	100	WHMA	100	WHMA	WHMA	Anniston Star
	Birmingham	News	100	WAPI	32			
ARKANSAS	Little Rock	Arkansas Democrat	41	KTHV	33			
FLORIDA	Tampa	Tribune & Times	100	WFLA	36	WFLA	WFLA	Media General
GEORGIA	Albany*	Herald	100	WALB	100			Gray Communications
	Atlanta	Journal & Constitution	100	WSB	37	WSB	WSB	J.M. Cox
KENTUCKY	Louisville	Courier Journal & Times	100	WHAS	33	WHAS	WHAS	
	Paducah	Sun Democrat	100	WPSD	67			
LOUISIANA	Baton Rouge	Advocate & Star Times	100	WBRZ	41	WJBO	WJBO	
	Shreveport	Journal	100	KSLA	55			
MISSISSIPPI	Columbus	Commercial Dispatch	100	WCBI	100	WCBI		
	Jackson	Clarion-Ledger & News	100	WJTV	38	WSLI	WSLI	
	Meridian*	Star	100	WTOK	99	WMOX		
NORTH CAROLINA	Greensboro	Daily News & Record	100	WFMY	100			Landmark Communications
	Hickory	Record	100	WHKY	n.a.			
SOUTH CAROLINA	Greenville	News Piedmont	100	WFBC	41	WFBC	WFBC	Multimedia News
TENNESSEE	Memphis	Commercial Appeal & Press Scimitar	100	WMC	32	WMC	WMC	Scripps-Howard
TEXAS	Dallas	Times-Herald	52	KDFW	43			Times Mirror
	Dallas	Morning News	48	WFAA	51	WFAA	KZEW	A. H. Belo
	Houston	Post	48	KPRC	33	KPRC		
	Temple	Telegram	100	KCEN	100			
	San Antonio	Express News	100	KENS	n.a.	KCMC	KTAL	Harte-Hanks
VIRGINIA	Norfolk-Portsmouth	Virginian Pilot & Ledger Star	100	WTAR	100			Landmark Communications
WEST VIRGINIA	Bluefield*	Telegraph & Sunset News	100	WHIS	100	WHIS	WHIS	Daily Telegraph

* cities where multimedia owners were recently ordered by the FCC to end their control of both a newspaper and television station.

† share of market in the city.

Prepared by Southern Exposure. Data from Rand Corp. study of Cross-Ownership.

the Bluefield, West Virginia, WHIS-TV and its partner the Bluefield *Daily Telegram*, both controlled by the Shott family. Poor blacks and miners represented by CCC charged that the Shotts discriminated against blacks in employment and programming and used their monopoly control over a good portion of West Virginia's coal fields to block any objective coverage of the Miners for Democracy campaign to reform the United Mine Workers.¹⁸

Finally, under pressure from the courts and the Justice Department to develop some rule on cross-ownership, the FCC reopened hearings in 1974. On January 28, 1975, it issued a rule "to prohibit newspapers in the future from acquiring radio or television broadcast stations located in their markets" and voted "to require newspapers to divest television or radio stations in sixteen cities" by 1980, where the only daily owned the only city-wide radio or TV station. Five of the seven newspaper-TV combinations affected were in southern cities, including Bluefield, West Virginia; the others are Anniston, Alabama; Albany, Georgia; Meridian, Mississippi; and Texarkana, Texas. Only one of the nine newspaper-radio combinations is in the South, in Hope, Arkansas.¹⁹

Critics of media concentration are not satisfied with the Commission's new rule and plan to press for further divestiture of existing combinations. The Justice Department, which had hoped the FCC would rule to break up all existing cross-ownership, may now have to begin the lengthy process of filing anti-trust suits on a case-by-case basis. An FCC ruling could have broken up all combinations in three years. The court approach will take much longer. But the media combinations are clearly alarmed, for even with the departure of Nick Johnson and Kenneth Cox, the public interest forces are gaining in sophistication and have more clout with the FCC. As a typical call-to-arms editorial in the industry's *Broadcasting* magazine admitted, "A majority of the commissioners are philosophically tuned to the prevailing wavelengths of the broadcasting business, but events are not altogether under their control. However they may personally dislike repressive regulation, they are beset by pressures from the outside that cannot be ignored."²⁰ To avert a final showdown, newspaper and broadcast lobbyists are busily reminding politicians of media's crucial role during elections while asking for special legislation to protect their holdings, or at least weaken the power of the FCC. How well they will succeed is unknown.

Meanwhile, the right of a man or corporation to control media outlet chains in markets around the country remains virtually unchallenged. Other

governments, most notably Great Britain, have already chosen to regulate all media transactions to guard against concentration of power. The Canadian Commission on Mass Media suggested that a monopolies board be set up to apply a single guideline: "All transactions that increase ownership in mass media are undesirable to the public interest unless shown otherwise."²¹ New legislation is clearly needed if the U.S. is to break the stranglehold corporate syndicates now have on information sources. Such a restructuring of media ownership will not come easily, for empires are not given up without a struggle.

FOOTNOTES

1. Spiro Agnew, 1969 speech, as quoted by M.L. Stein in *Shaping The News* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1974), p. 68.

2. "Southern Newspapers—Groups Plunge To Buy Them Up," *The South Magazine*, Spring 1974, pp. 14-19.

3. Promotional Material, Atlanta Newspapers Inc., Cox Broadcasting Corp.

4. Richard Dodds, "Media Ownership in New Orleans," *New Orleans Courier*, October 3-9, 1974, pp. 4-8.

5. Morton Mintz and Jerry S. Cohen, *America, Inc.* (New York: The Dial Press, 1971), p. 96.

6. *Editor and Publisher Yearbook, 1974*, and *Television Factbook, 1974*.

7. Ben Bagdikian, "Houston's Shackled Press," *Atlantic*, August 1966, pp. 87ff.

8. Nicholas Johnson, "Media Barons and The Public Interest," *Atlantic*, June 28, 1968, pp. 43-51.

9. Ben Bagdikian, "The Myth of Newspaper Poverty," *Columbia Journalism Review*, March/April 1973, pp. 19-25.

10. *The South Magazine*, *op. cit.*

11. *Ibid.*

12. Justice Hugo Black, *AP v. US*, 326 US 20 (1945).

13. Ben Bagdikian, "The Myth of Newspaper Poverty," *Columbia Journalism Review*, March/April 1973, pp. 19-25.

14. Morton Mintz and Jerry S. Cohen, *op. cit.*

15. Stephen R. Barnett, "The FCC's Non-Battle vs. Media Monopoly," *Journalism Review*, January/February 1973, pp. 43-50.

16. "Congress, FCC Consider Newspaper Control of Local TV," *Congressional Quarterly*, March 16, 1974, pp. 659-663.

17. Dean Burch as quoted in Pam Eversole, "Concentration of Ownership in the Communications Industry," *Journalism Quarterly*, Summer 1971, pp. 251-268.

18. Interview with Ed James, United Mine Workers of America, February 3, 1975.

19. "Newspaper-Broadcast Cross Ownership Rules Amended by FCC (Docket 18110)," January 28, 1975.

20. Editorial, *Broadcasting Magazine*, December 23, 1974, p. 58.

21. "The Uncertain Mirror," Volume I of the Report of the Special Canadian Senate Committee on Mass Media, as quoted in "Canada's Media Report, Mirror of the U.S.?", *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June 1971, pp. 21-28.

SCRIPPS-HOWARD BROADCASTING

(Also E.W. Scripps Newspapers, which is tightly held co.)

Southern Media Holdings: Memphis Press-Scimitar & Comm. Appeal, and WMG-TV-AM-FM; Knoxville News-Sentinel, and WNOX-AM; Birmingham Post-Herald; Covington (Ky.) Post & Times-Star; El Paso Herald-Post; Ft. Worth Press; Stuart (Fla.) News; Hollywood Sun-Tattler; W. Palm Beach WPTV. Owns three other television stations and 18 major dailies.

Director Interlocks and Ownership: directors and owners dominated by Scripps and Howard families interests.

COX BROADCASTING

(Also Cox Newspapers) 1973 Revenues: \$90,615,000 * Employees: 2,375 *

* Broadcasting operations only

Southern Media Holdings: Miami News and WIOD-AM and WAVA-FM; Atlanta Journal-Constitution and WSB-TV-AM-FM; Palm Beach News; West Palm Beach Post; Times; Daytona Beach News-Journal; Charlotte WSOE-TV-AM-FM. Operates CATV system in 15 states including South. Other interests include three movie TVs, two more radios, movie and TV production, car auctioning, trade magazine publishing.

Director Interlocks with: University of Miami; Abitibi Paper Co.; 1st Natl. Bank of Atlanta; Venture Carpets; Scientific-Atlanta; Rich's, Inc.; Mead Corp.; Equitable Life Assurance Society; Southern Airways; Southern Bell Tel.; Ivan Allen Co.; Hawaiian Airlines; Lazard, Freres & Co. (NY underwriters); Boise Cascade; Fulton Natl. Bank, Atlanta; Oxford Industries.

Ownership: Cox family members directly control some 54% of outstanding shares, individually or in trusts. (The colorful James Cox died in October, 1974). Bankers Trust owns 2% and Bank of New York owns 3.7% of outstanding shares.

MULTIMEDIA, INC.

Greenville, SC 1973 Revenues: \$50,667,000 employees: 1937

Southern Media Holdings: Greenville News and News-Piedmont, WFBC-TV-AM-FM; Montgomery Advertiser; Asheville Citizen & Times; WWNC-AM; Clarksville (Tn.) Legal Chronicle; Macon WMAZ-TV-AM-FM; Knoxville WBIR-TV-AM-FM; Winston-Salem WXII-TV. Waiting for FCC approval for purchase from Lin Broadcasting for \$9,300,000 of radios in Shreveport, Louisiana, and Little Rock. Also storing, shipping and repairing services for motion pictures in theatres.

Director Interlocks with: Duke Endowment; S.C. Natl. Bank; Liberty Life Ins. Co.; Associate Press; Peoples Bank (Greenville); Dan River Mills; Star Amusements; Shriners Hospital (Greenville); Restaurants, Inc. (Howard Johnsons).

Ownership: Bunnelle family members own 24.5% at least; Gertrude Leske owns 18.4%; S.C. Natl. Bank, 6.1%; Peoples Natl. Bank, 13.5%; Roger C. Peace Trust holds 9.5%.

MEDIA GENERAL, INC.

Richmond, Va. 1973 Revenues: \$125,729,000 Employees: 3,100

Southern Media Holdings: Richmond Times-Dispatch & News Leader; Tampa Tribune & Times, and WFLA-TV-AM-FM; Winston-Salem Journal; Twin City Sentinel & Journal; owns Piedmont Publishing Co.; has a newspaper; paper-making operation serving over 150 newspapers in 21 states (and contributing 34% of Media General's revenues); has a cable system in Fredericksburg, Va.; publishes the Media General Financial Weekly, a stock investors' guide; opened a newspaper recycling plant in Mexico City, Mexico, in Feb., 1974.

Director Interlocks with: Southern Ry.; Associated Press; United Va. Bank; Richmond Meml. Hospital; Wachovia Bank & Trust; AT&T; Royal Cotton Mills; Dillon, Read & Co. (NY underwriters); Puroitor; Ga. Intl. Doubleday; Lehman Bros. Reynolds; Amer. Security Trust (D.C.); Cuban Sugar Plantations; Brascan, Ltd.

Ownership: O. Bryan, 12.5%; Scovilder family, 14.6%; United Va. Bank, 6.4%; Wachovia Bank & Trust, 5.4%; Gordon Gray, 5.8%.

KEY

- radio only
- ◆ newspaper only
- △ TV only
- newspaper and radio
- ▲ TV and radio
- newspaper, TV, radio

KNIGHT NEWSPAPERS

(Also Summit Radio Corp.) 1973 Revenues: \$356,567,000 Miami, Florida Employees: 6,640

Southern Media Holdings: Miami Herald, Bradenton Herald; Boca-Raton News; Tallahassee Democrat; Macon News and Telegraph; Columbus (Ga.) Enquirer-Ledger; Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Ledger; Charlotte News & Observer; Milledgeville (Ga.) Union Recorder; Dallas KBOX-AM-FM. Also owns TV-AM-FM complex in Akron, Ohio, where John S. Knight began his chain with the Akron Beacon-Journal; owns four more radios.

Director Interlocks with: East Gadsden Bank (Ala.); Observer Transportation; Akron S&L Assn.; 1st Natl. Bank of Akron; Great Lakes Paper Co.; W.E. Wright Co.; The Southern Co.; Goldman, Sachs, & Co.; B.F. Goodrich; Kraftco Corp.; Cowles Communications.

Ownership: founder John Knight owns 32%; Bankers Trust, 0.8%; Bank of New York, 1.8%; 1st Natl. City Bank, 1.4%; Natl. Shawmut Bank of Boston, 1.2%; Carothers & Clark, 1.5%; 1.5%.

GANNETT NEWSPAPERS

Rochester, NY 1973 Revenues: \$300,120,000 employees: 13,100

Southern Media Holdings: El Paso Times; Ft. Myers News-Press; Nashville Banner; Cocoa Beach Today; Triusville Star-Advocate; Melbourne Times; Pensacola Journal & News; Huntington (W.Va.) Herald-Dispatch and Advertiser. From its beginning in 1923 in upstate NY, Gannett has expanded to own 51 dailies in 15 states, a TV and CATV in upstate New York; it acquired most southern papers in 1970-1971.

Director Interlocks: Lincoln 1st Bank (Rochester, NY), Marine Midland Bank; Fla. Natl. Banks; Security Trust Co., Univ. of Rochester; Rochester Gas & Electric; Bank of Camden, NJ; Mutual Ins. Co.; Bowery Savings Bank, NY; American Motors; Sperry-Rand; McGraw-Hill; Kerr, McGee Corp.

Ownership: United States Trust owns 5.3% of shares.

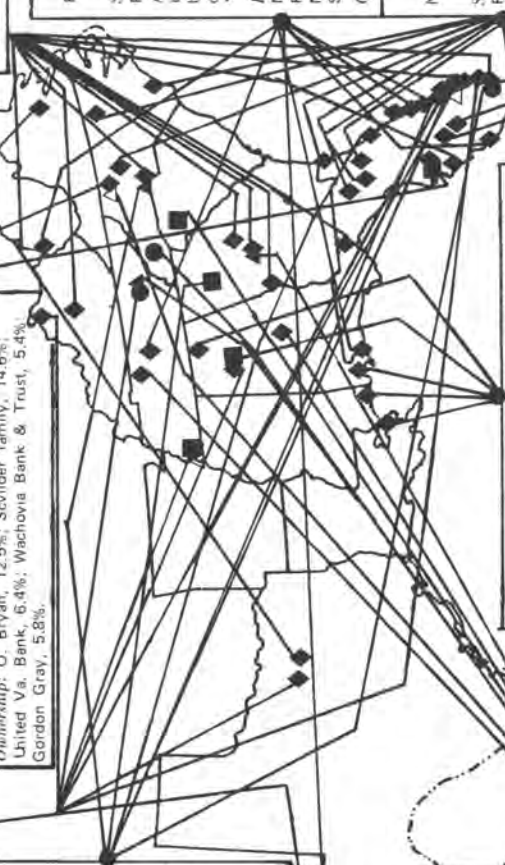
NEW YORK TIMES CO.

New York, NY 1973 Revenues: \$356,567,000 employees: 6,640

Southern Media Holdings: Florida papers: Avon Park Sun; Fernandina Bch. News-Leader; Gainesville Sun; Lake City Reporter; Lakeland Ledger; Leesburg Daily Commercial; Marco Isl. Eagle; Sebring News; Palatka Daily News. Also, Lexington (NC) Dispatch; and papers in Henderson and Wilmington, NC; and Memphis WREC-TV. Began acquiring papers in 1971 in Florida, then bought several from Cowles Communications and recently expanded into NC. Also owns Golf Digest Magazine and Family Circle.

Director Interlocks with: Cowles Comm.; Univ. of Miami; Bankers Life; United Airlines; Drake Univ.; Macy's; American Can; Morgan Guaranty Trust; General Devel. Corp.; Con. Ed.; Kemper; Merck & Co.; Bankers Trust; Univ. of Rochester; Johns-Manville; Dartmouth College; Teaching Resources Corp.

Ownership: Adolph Ochs Estate, 5%; Chase Manhattan Bank, 2.6%; Bank of NY, 2.4%; Pittsburg Natl. Bank, 2.6%; Prudential Life Ins., 2.6%; Dreyfus Fund, 2.4%; Morgan Guaranty, 1%.



NEWHOUSE BROADCASTING & NEWSPAPERS

Syracuse, NY Tightly-held private co., and Newark, NJ estimate revenues \$300,000,000

Southern Media Holdings: Birmingham News, WAPI-TV-AM-FM; Huntsville Times; New Orleans Times-Picayune & States-Item; Mobile Press Register; Pascagoula Miss. Press & Chronicle. Newhouse now owns 14 broadcasting outlets, five monthly magazines, and 23 dailies. In 11 cities where his daily appears, his is the only newspaper; and in six he owns the television station, too.

THE SOUTH'S TOP CHAINS

GROUP-OWNED NEWSPAPERS



▲ city with chain-owned daily newspaper

ALABAMA

Florida continued

Anniston	Star	Anniston Star Newspapers
Athens	News Courier	Robt. Bryan Newspapers
Cullman	Times	Robt. Bryan Newspapers
Birmingham	News	Newhouse Newspapers
Birmingham	Post-Herald	Scripps-Howard Newspapers
Dothan	Eagle	Thomson Newspapers
Florence	Times Daily	Worrell Newspapers
Gadsden	Times	Gadsden Times Publ. Corp.
Huntsville	Times & News	Newhouse Newspapers
Mobile	Press & Register	Newhouse Newspapers
Montgomery	Advertiser & Jour.	Multimedia Newspapers
Selma	Times-Journal	J.B. Boone, Jr., Newspapers
Talladega	Home	Anniston Star Newspapers
Troy	Messenger	Gadsden Times Publ. Corp.
Tuscaloosa	News	J.B. Boone, Jr., Newspapers

Ft. Lauderdale	News	Tribune Co.
Ft. Myers	News-Press	Gannett Newspapers
Ft. Pierce	News Tribune	Freedom Newspapers
Ft. Walton Bch.	Playgrd. Daily News	Freedom Newspapers
Gainesville	Sun	New York Times Co.
Hollywood	Sun-Tattler	Scripps-Howard Newspapers
Homestead	News Leader	S.W. Calkins Newspapers
Jacksonville	Times Union & Jour.	Florida Publishing Co.
Key West	Citizen	Morris Newspaper Corp.
Kissimmee	Osceola Sun	Tribune Co.
Lake City	Reporter	New York Times Co.
Lakeland	Ledger	New York Times Co.
Leesburg	Commercial	New York Times Co.
Melbourne	Times	Gannett Newspapers
Miami	Herald	Knight Newspapers
Miami	News	J.M. Cox Newspapers
Ocala	Star-Banner	New York Times Co.
Orlando	Sentinel-Star	Tribune Co.
Palatka	News	New York Times Co.
Palm Beach	News	J.M. Cox Newspapers
Panama City	News-Herald	Freedom Newspapers
Pensacola	News-Journal	Gannett Newspapers
Pompano Beach	Sun-Sentinel	Tribune Co.
Punta Gorda	Herald News	Thomson Newspapers
St. Augustine	Record	Florida Publishing Co.
Sanford	Herald	Haskell Newspapers
Stuart	News	Scripps-Howard Newspapers
Tallahassee	Democrat	Knight Newspapers
Tampa	Tribune-Times	Media General, Inc.
Titusville	Star-Advocate	Gannett Newspapers
West Palm Bch.	Post-Times	J.M. Cox Newspapers

ARKANSAS

Arkadelphia	Siftings Herald	E.W. Freeman Newspapers
Camden	News	Palmer Newspapers
DeQueen	Citizen	Ray Kimball Newspapers
Eldorado	Times & News	Palmer Newspapers
Fayetteville	NW Arkansas Times	Thomson Newspapers
Fort Smith	SW Times Record	Donrey Media Group
Hope	Star	Palmer Newspapers
Hot Springs	New Era & Sent.Rec.	Palmer Newspapers
Magnolia	Banner News	Palmer Newspapers
Malvern	Daily Record	Ray Kimball Newspapers
Pine Bluff	Commercial	E.W. Freeman Newspapers
Rogers	Daily News	Donrey Media Group
Springdale	News	Donrey Media Group
Stuttgart	Daily Leader	Ray Kimball Newspapers
Texarkana	Gazette & News	Palmer Newspapers

FLORIDA

GEORGIA

Boca Raton	News	Knight Newspapers
Bradenton	Herald	Knight Newspapers
Clearwater	Sun	Jefferson-Pilot Publ.*
Cocoa	Today	Gannett Newspapers
Dade City	Pasco News	Dix Newspapers
Daytona Beach	News-Journal	J.M. Cox Newspapers**
Deland	Sun News	Morris Newspaper Corp.

Athens	Banner-Hrd & News	Morris Communications
Atlanta	Journal & Constitt.	J.M. Cox Newspapers
Augusta	Chronicle-Herald	Morris Communications
Cartersville	Tribune News	Carmage Walls Newsp.
Columbus	Ledger-Enquirer	Knight Newspapers
Cordele	Dispatch	Dix Newspapers
Dalton	Citizen-News	Thomson Newspapers
LaGrange	News	Buchheit Newspapers

SOUTH CAROLINA

Georgia continued

Macon	Telegraph & News Journal	Knight Newspapers
Marietta	Journal	Neighbor Newspapers
Roswell	N. Fulton Journal	Neighbor Newspapers
Savannah	Morning News & News-Press	Morris Communications
Statesboro	Herald	Morris Newspaper Corp.
Valdosta	Daily Times	Thomson Newspapers
Warner Robins	Sun	Park Newspapers

Aiken	Standard	Evening Post Publishing Co.
Anderson	Independent-Mail	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
Beaufort	Gazette	Evening Post Publishing Co.
Charleston	Evening Post & The News & Courier	Evening Post Publishing Co.
Columbia	State & Record	State-Record Co.
Greenville	News & Piedmont	Multimedia Newspapers
Myrtle Beach	Sun-News	State-Record Co.
Rock Hill	Evening Herald	Patrick's & Associates
Spartanburg	Herald-Journal	Buchheit Newspapers

KENTUCKY

Covington	Post & Times-Star	Scripps-Howard Newspapers
Frankfort	Star-Journal	Dix Newspapers
Harlan	Daily Enterprise	Worrell Newspapers
Henderson	Gleaner & Journal	Dear Newspapers
Lexington	Herald-Leader	Knight Newspapers
Madisonville	Messenger	Worrell Newspapers
Mayfield	Messenger	Buchheit Newspapers & Haskell Newspapers
Maysville	Ledger Independ.	Gadsden Times Publ. Corp.
Middlesboro	Daily News	Worrell Newspapers
Richmond	Register	Gadsden Times Publ. Corp.

TENNESSEE

Athens	Post-Athenian	J.M. Jones Newspapers
Clarksville	Leaf Chronicle	Multimedia Newspapers
Cleveland	Banner	Carmage Walls Newspapers
Dyersburg	State Gazette	Worrell Newspapers
Greeville	Sun	J.M. Jones Newspapers
Jackson	Sun	Cowles Newspapers
Johnson City	Press-Chronicle	C.A. Jones Newspapers
Kingsport	Times-News	Sandusky-Norwalk Newsp.
Lebanon	Democrat	C.A. Jones Newspapers
Memphis	Press-Scimitar & Comml. Appeal	Scripps-Howard Newspapers
Murfreesboro	Daily News-Journal	Morris Newspaper Corp.
Nashville	Banner	Gannett Newspapers

LOUISIANA

Bogalusa	News	Wick Newspapers
Crowley	Signal	R.H. Faekelman Newsp.
Franklin	Banner	Carmage Walls Newsp.
Hammond	Star	Nixon Newspapers
Houma	Daily Courier	Carmage Walls Newsp.
Minden	Press-Herald	R.M. Faekelman Newsp.
Monroe	World & News-Star	Ewing Newspapers
New Iberia	Iberian	Wick Newspapers
New Orleans	Times-Picayune & States-Item	Newhouse Newspapers
Opelousas	World	Worrell Newspapers
Ruston	Leader	R.M. Faekelman Newsp.
Shreveport	Journal	Attaway Newspapers
Shreveport	Times	Ewing Newspapers
Sudell	Daily Times	R.H. Faekelman Newsp.

TEXAS

Abilene	Reporter-News	Harte-Hnaks Newspapers
Amarillo	Daily News & Globe-Times	Morris Communications
Arlington	Daily News	A.H. Belo Corp.
Athens	Review	R.E. Dwelle Newspapers
Austin	American-Statesman	Fentress Newspapers
Bay City	Tribune	Carmage Walls Newspapers
Baytown	Sun	Carmage Walls Newspapers
Beaumont	Enterprise & Joun.	Jefferson-Pilot Publ.*
Big Spring	Herald	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
Brownsville	Herald	Freedom Newspapers
Brownwood	Bulletin	Woodson Group
Bryan	Eagle	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
Carrollton	Chronicle	Times-Chronicle Newsp.
Conroe	Courier	Attaway Newspapers
Corpus Christi	Caller-Times	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
Corsicana	Sun	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
Dallas	News	A.H. Belo Corp.
Denison	Herald	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
El Paso	Herald-Post	Scripps-Howard Newspapers
El Paso	Times	Gannett Newspapers
Farmer's Branch	Times	Times-Chronicle Newsp.
Fort Worth	Press	Scripps-Howard Newspapers
Fort Worth	Star-Telegram	Capital Cities Communicatn.
Freeport	Brazosport Facts	Carmage Walls Newspapers
Gainesville	Register-Messenger	Donrey Media Group
Galveston	News	Carmage Walls Newspapers
Garland	Daily News	A.H. Belo Corp.
Grand Prairie	Daily News	A.H. Belo Crop.
Greenville	Herald-Banner	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
Harlingen	Valley Star	Freedom Newspapers
Hurst	MidCities Daily News	A.H. Belo Corp.
Irving	Daily News	A.H. Belo Corp.
Jacksonville	Tex. Daily Progress	Palmer Newspapers***
Killeen	Daily Herald	F.W. Mayborn Newspapers
Laredo	Times	Jefferson-Pilot Publ.*
Levelland	Daily Sun News	Donrey Media Group
Lewisville	Times	Times-Chronicle Newsp.
Lubbock	Avalanche-Journal	Morris Communications
Lufkin	News	Fentress Newspapers
Marlin	Democrat	R.E. Dwelle Newspapers
Marshall	News-Messenger	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
McAllen	Monitor	Freedom Newspapers
Midland	Reporter-Telegram	Allison Newspapers
Odessa	American	Freedom Newspapers
Palestine	Herald Press	Patrick & Associates
Pampa	News	Freedom Newspapers

MISSISSIPPI

Biloxi	S. Mississippi Sun	State-Record Co.
Corinth	Daily Corinthian	Worrell Newspapers
Greenwood	News	Emmerich Enterprises
Gulfport	Daily Herald	State-Record Co.
Hattiesburg	American	Hederman Newspapers
Jackson	Clarion-Ledger News	Hederman Newspapers
Laurel	Leader-Call	Thomson Newspapers
McComb	Enterprise-Journal	Emmerich Enterprises
Natchez	Democrat	J.B. Boone, Jr., Newspapers
Pascagoula	Miss. Press Register & Chronicle	Newhouse Newspapers
Starkville	Daily News	W. H. Harris Newspapers
West Point	Daily Times Leader	W. H. Harris Newspapers

NORTH CAROLINA

Asheville	Citizen-Times	Multimedia Newspapers
Burlington	Times-News	Terry & Rawley, Publ.
Charlotte	News & Observer	Knight Newspapers
Elizabeth City	Advance	Dear Newspapers
Gastonia	Gazette	Freedom Newspapers
Goldsboro	News Argus	Buchheit Newspapers
Greensboro	News & Record	Landmark Communications
High Point	Enterprise	Terry & Rawley, Publ.
Kinston	Free Press	Freedom Newspapers
Lenoir	News-Topic	Worrell Newspapers
Lexington	Dispatch	New York Times Co.
Reidsville	Record	Carmage Walls Newspapers
Roanoke Rapids	Herald	Wick Newspapers
Rocky Mount	Telegram	Thomson Newspapers
Thomasville	Times	Terry & Rawley, Publ.
Wilmington	News	New York Times Co.
Winston-Salem	Journal-Sentinel	Media General, Inc.

Texas continued

Paris	News	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
Pecos	Enterprise	Buckner News Alliance
Plainview	Herald	Allison Newspapers
Plano	Star-Courier	Taylor Communications
Port Arthur	News	Fentress Newspapers
Richardson	Daily News	A.H. Belo Corp.
San Angelo	Standard-Times	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
San Antonio	Express & News	Harte-Hanks Newspapers
San Antonio	Light	Hearst Newspapers
Sherman	Democrat	F.W. Mayborn Newspapers
Stephensville	Daily Empire	Woodson Group
Sweetwater	Reporter	Donrey Media Group
Taylor	Press	F.W. Mayborn Newspapers
Temple	Daily Telegram	F.W. Mayborn Newspapers
Terrell	Tribune	Carmage Walls Newspapers
Texas City	Sun	Jefferson-Pilot Publ.*
Waco	Tribune-Herald	Fentress Newspapers
Waxahachie	Daily Light	Woodson Group
Weatherford	Democrat	Donrey Media Group

VIRGINIA

Arlington	Alexander Gazette	State-Record Co.
Bristol	Herald Courier & Virginia-Tennessean	Worrell Newspapers
Charlottesville	Daily Progress	Worrell Newspapers
Culpeper	Star-Exponent	W.B. Porter Newspapers

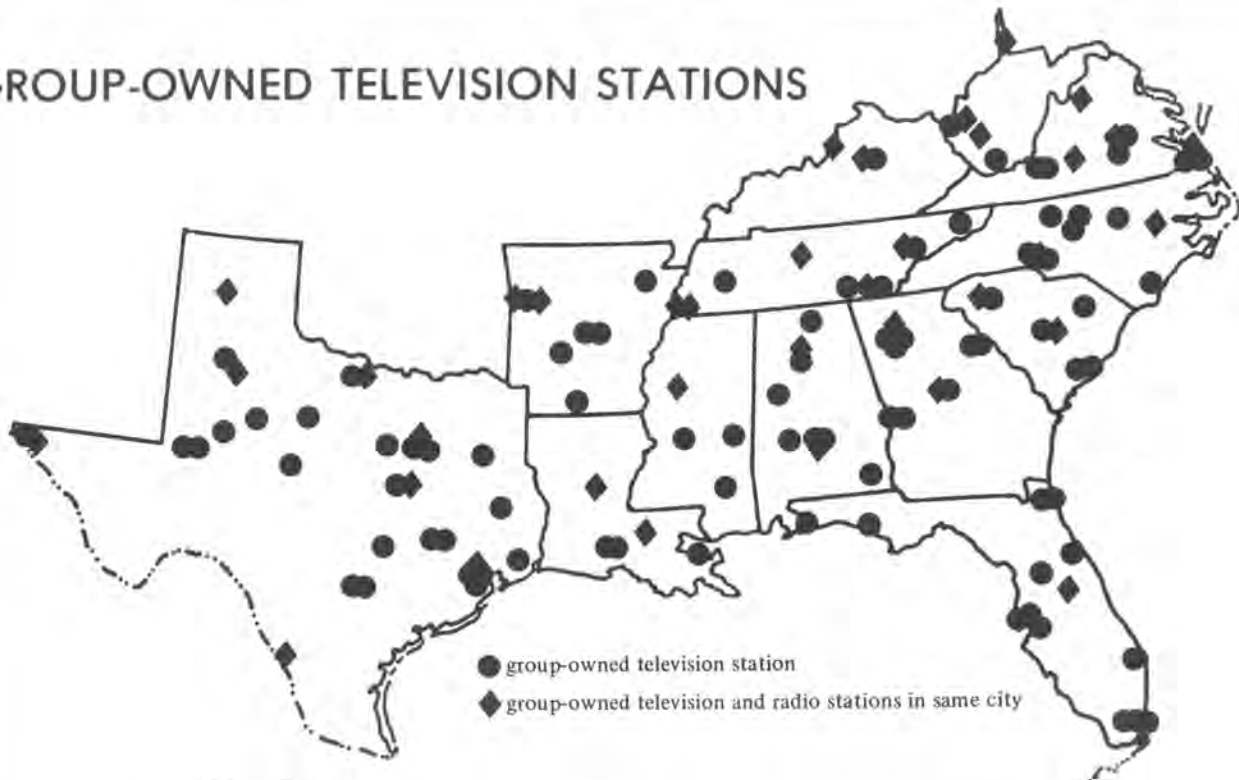
Harrisonburg	Daily News Record	Harry Byrd Newspapers
Manassas	Journal Messenger	Park Newspapers
Martinsville	Bulletin	Haskell Newspapers
Norfolk	Virginian-Pilot & Ledger-Star	Landmark Communications
Petersburg	Progress-Index	Thomson Newspapers
Pulaski	Southwest Times	Worrell Newspapers
Radford	News Journal	Worrell Newspapers
Roanoke	Times & World-News	Landmark Communications
Suffolk	Star	Worrell Newspapers
Winchester	Star	Harry Byrd Newspapers

WEST VIRGINIA

Elkins	Inter-Mountain	The Ogden Newspapers
Fairmont	Times-W. Virginian	Thomson Newspapers
Huntington	Herald-Dispatch & Advertiser	Gannett Newspapers
Parkersburg	Sentinel & News	The Ogden Newspapers
Pt. Pleasant	Register	Ohio Valley Newspapers
Weirton	Daily Times	Thomson Newspapers
Welch	News	Buchheit Newspapers
Williamson	News	Buchheit Newspapers
Wheeling	Intelligencer & News-Register	The Ogden Newspapers

† 12½% interest in ownership. ** 47% interest. ***25% interest
 * in association with Carmage Walls Newspapers.
 Data: Editor & Publisher Yearbook, 1974.
 Prepared by *Southern Exposure*, 1975.

GROUP-OWNED TELEVISION STATIONS



● group-owned television station
 ◆ group-owned television and radio stations in same city

ALABAMA

Birmingham	WAPI	S. I. Newhouse Stations
Birmingham	WBMG	Park Broadcasting Inc.*
Dothan	WTVY	WTVY Inc.
Huntsville	WHNT	Charles F. Grisham Group
Mobile-Pensacola	WEAR	Rollins, Inc.
Montgomery	WCOV	WLEX-TV
Montgomery	WSFA	Cosmos Broadcasting Corp.
Montgomery	WKAB	Cy N. Bahakel Broadcasting
Selma	WSLA	Charles F. Grisham Group†
Tuscaloosa	WCFT	Chapman TV of Tuscaloosa

ARKANSAS

El Dorado	KTVE	Gray Communications Systems
Fort Smith	KFSA	Buford Television **
Fort Smith	KFPW	George T. Herrreich
Fort Smith	KFSA	Donald W. Reynolds
Hot Springs	KZNG	George T. Herrreich
Jonesboro	KAIT	George T. Herrreich
Little Rock	KARK	Combined Communications
Little Rock	KATV	Leake TV, INC.

FLORIDA

Daytona-Orlando	WESH	Cowles Communications Inc.
Jacksonville	WJXT	Post-Newsweek Stations
Leesburg	WZST	T. B. Lanford††
Jacksonville	WJKS	Rust Craft Broadcasting Co.
Miami	WLTV	Spanish Intnt. Communicatns.
Miami	WTVJ	Wometco Enterprises, Inc.
Miami	WPLG	Post-Newsweek Stations
Orlando	WDBO	The Outlet Co.
Palm Beach	WPTV	Scripps-Howard Bcstg. Co.
Panama City	WJHG	Gray Communications Sysms.
Pensacola-Mobile	WEAR	Rollins, Inc.
St. Petersburg	WTOG	Hubbard Broadcasting Inc.
Tampa	WYOU	T. B. Lanford ††
Tampa	WTVT	WKY Television System Inc.

GEORGIA

Albany	WALB	Gray Communications System.
Atlanta	WHAE	Christian Bcstg. Network Inc.
Atlanta	WSB-TV	Cox Broadcasting Corp.
Atlanta	WAGA	Storer Broadcasting Co.
Atlanta	WTCG	Turner Communications Corp.
Augusta	WJBF	J.B. Fuqua (Fuqua Ind.)
Augusta	WRDW	Rust Craft Bcstg. Co.
Augusta	WYEA	Charles F. Grisham Group***
Columbus	WTVM	Fuqua Industries
Macon	WCWB	WTVY, Inc.
Macon	WMAZ	Multimedia Broadcasting Co.

KENTUCKY

Lexington	WBLG	Reeves Telecom Corp. ***
Lexington	WLEX	WLEX-TV, Inc.
Louisville	WAVE	Orion Broadcasting Corp.

LOUISIANA

Alexandria	KALB	T.B. Lanford†††
Baton Rouge	WBRZ	Manship Stations
Lafayette	KLFY	Stockhlds. of KWTX Bcstg. Co
Monroe	KTVE	Gray Communications System
New Orleans	WDSU	Cosmos Broadcasting Corp

MISSISSIPPI

Greenwood	WABG	Cy N. Bahakel Broadcasting
Hattiesburg-Laurel	WDAM	Chapman TV of Tuscaloosa
Jackson	WJTV	Capitol Broadcasting Co.†††
Meridian	WTOK	Chapman TV of Tusc...****

NORTH CAROLINA

Charlotte	WCCB	Cy N. Bahakel Broadcasting
Charlotte	WRET	R. E. Turner
Charlotte	WBTV	Jefferson-Pilot Bcstg.
Durham	WTVD	Capitol Cities Comm. Inc.
Greensboro	WFMY	Landmark Communications
Greenville	WNCT	Park Broadcasting Inc.
High Point	WGHP	Southern Bcstg. Co.
Wilmington	WWAY	Clay Broadcasting Corp.
Winston-Salem	WXII	Multimedia Brcgst. Co.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston	WCBD	State Telecasting Co., Inc
Charleston	WCIV	Washington Star Stat. Group
Columbia	WOLO	Cy N. Bahakel Broadcasting
Columbia	WIS-TV	Cosmos Broadcasting Corp.
Florence	WBTW	Daily Telegraph Printing Co.
Greenville	WFBC	Multimedia Broadcasting
Greenville-Spartbg.	WLOS	Wometco Enterprises Inc.

TENNESSEE

Chattanooga	WTVC	Fuqua Industries, Inc.
Chattanooga	WDEF	Park Broadcasting Inc.
Chattanooga	WRCB	Rust Craft Broadcasting Co.
Jackson	WBBJ	Cy N. Bahakel Broadcasting
Johnson City	WJHL	Park Broadcasting
Knoxville	WBIR	Multimedia Broadcasting Co.
Knoxville	WATE	Nationwide Communication
Memphis	WMC-TV	Scripps-Howard Bcstg. Co.
Memphis	WHBQ	RKO General Inc.
Nashville	WSIX	General Electric Bcstg.

TEXAS

Amarillo	KGNC	Stauffer Publications Inc.
Austin	KTBC	Texas Broadcasting Corp.
Beaumont	KFDM	A. H. Belo Corp.
Big Spring	KWAB	Grayson Enterprises Inc.
Bryan	KBTX	Stockholders of KWTX
Dallas	WFAA	A. H. Belo Corp.
Dallas	KXTX	Christian Broadcast. Network
Dallas	KDTV	Doubleday Broadcasting Co.
El Paso	KROD	Doubleday Broadcasting Co.
El Paso	KELP	John B. Walton Stations
Fort Worth	KTVT	WKY Television System Inc.
Houston	KHTV	WKY Television System Inc.
Houston	KHOU	Corinthian Bcstg. Corp.
Houston	KTRK	Capital Cities Communications
Laredo	KGNS	Donald W. Reynolds
Lubbock	KCBD	State Telecasting Co. Inc.
Lubbock	KLBK	Grayson Enterprises Inc.
Lufkin	KTRE	Buford Television
Midland	KMID	R. H. Drewry Group
Odessa	KOSA	Doubleday Broadcasting Co.
Odessa-Monahans	KMOM	Grayson Enterprises Inc.
San Antonio	KWEX	Spanish Intnt. Communications
San Antonio	KSAT	The Outlet Com.
San Antonio	WOAI	AVCO Broadcasting
San Angello	KCTV	T. B. Lanford
Sherman-Denison	KXII	M.N. Bostick (30%)
Sweetwater-Abilene	KTXS	Grayson Enterprises Inc.
Tyler	KLTV	Buford Television
Waco	KWTX	KWTX Broadcasting
Weslaco	KRGV	Manship Stations
Wichita Falls	KAUZ	Bass Broadcasting Co.
Wichita Falls	KFDX	Clay Bcstg. of Texas

VIRGINIA

Harrisonburg	WSVA	James S. Gilmore, Jr.
Lynchburg	WLVA	Washington Star Station Group
Norfolk	WTAR	WTAR Radio-TV Corp.
Norfolk-Portsmouth	WAVY	Lin Broadcasting Corp.
Portsmouth	WYAH	Christian Bcstg. Network Inc.
Richmond	WWBT	Jefferson-Pilot Bcstg.
Richmond-Petersbg.	WXEX	Nationwide Communications
Richmond	WTVR	Park Broadcasting Inc.
Roanoke	WDBJ	South Bend Tribune
Roanoke	WSLS	Park Broadcasting Inc.

WEST VIRGINIA

Bluefield	WHIS	Daily Telegraph Printing Co.
Charleston	WCHS	Rollins Inc.
Huntington	WHTN	Reeves Telecom Corp.
Huntington	WSAZ	Lee Enterprises Inc.
Wheeling	WTRF	Forward Communications

*Subject to FCC approval; Southern Broadcasting owns 1/3 interest.
 †WSLA currently is off the air. **Buford is currently buying KFSB.
 ††Lanford owns 74% of WZST and WYOU. ***Owns 50% interest.
 ††† Lanford owns 68% of KALB and 14% of Capital Broadcasting.
 ****S.A. Rosenbaum, who owns 44% of Chapman, also owns 11.5% of WTOK

Data: TV Factbook, 1973-74. Prepared by Southern Exposure.

TALKING STRAIGHT WITH

ROBERT COLES

The following remarks are excerpted from Robert Coles' discussion with an oral history seminar at the University of North Carolina on October 24, 1974. Dr. Coles, a child psychiatrist, has been communicating with Southerners since the early 1960s and has written a great deal about his experiences. His widely-acclaimed series, Children of Crisis (A Study of Courage and Fear; Migrants, Sharecroppers, Mountaineers; The South Goes North), best reflects his work in the South and illustrates his capacities as a compassionate listener and skillful writer. In the following interview, Coles discusses methods of oral history, his own technique, and the broader questions of conveying the "unheard voices of the poor."

Question: How would you describe the traditions that have influenced your style of work?

Robert Coles: I never thought of my work as tied up in a "method." I just look upon myself as



photo by Mark Handler

someone who was interested in meeting some people and, in some way getting to know their lives. Now, the people that I look up to are not Sigmund Freud and other psychiatrists, but people like James Agee and George Orwell, and Walker Percy and Flannery O'Connor, although she was certainly not a field worker—she would think better of herself than that—and Simone Weil, if any of you know some of her efforts as a "sinner" on this planet.

So I'm not very strong on methodology as it is called. I would be in favor of the return of the social essay. I mean the tradition of a novelist like Charles Dickens in the nineteenth century, the essays of those writers who have been concerned with others. What would the "methodology" of an Orwell or Dickens be? They had eyes, ears, could look, listen, think, write down, come to terms with, understand, go into, try to set forth . . . we can go on and on.

Of course, this tradition antedates the existence of the tape recorder. But it seems to me that if social science has come to the point that it is a function of a machine that has batteries in it, then we are in a sorry state. It has been a source of confusion and dismay to me that when I talk about my tape recorder to social scientists, I am immediately granted attentive ears and focused eyes and a great deal of respect. If I talk about people whom I have met and am saying something about, then the question comes up, "Well, what is this? Is this impressionistic? Is this literary observation or mere journalism?" These characters with their interview forms, going around asking people to check things off! *They* talk about "mere" journalism . . . Well, I suppose if we could get journalism of the *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* caliber, then we would certainly be able to do away with this building.

Q: I think we all feel uncomfortable using this curious machine, but how do you handle the problem of reporting with some accuracy and integrity the people you interview? How do you achieve some objectivity in your work?

Coles: I would put in a strong plea for the capacity of the human mind, heart and soul to respond to others and to make sense of that, and I would hope that we not become captives of tape recorders and all of that stuff. And I would hope that we have the courage of ourselves so that we don't feel necessarily objective, whatever that means—objectivity being a form of subjectivity. Psychiatrists and other pain-in-the-neck phenomena of American life have fostered on us a secular religion of neutrality, objectivity, impartiality, value free this and that, numbers, forms, questionnaires. Let's have a study of those people

who have the courage to tell those other people waving around these questionnaires where to get off. That is a form of liberation, I assure you, that has not yet emerged on the American political scene. But there is always hope, believe me, even in the darkest of times . . .

I started using the tape recorder because I thought that if I didn't use it, it wouldn't be scientific. But I was never a great enthusiast of the tape recorder per se. I have tape recorded, I know it, because there are certain people whom I've grown to know and like, and I thought it would be nice to be able to listen to them sometimes. I don't think that I have ever learned anything from the use of a tape recorder that I haven't learned much earlier from just being with people. I am certainly willing to talk about tape recorded interviews, knowing that many of the interviews are not tape recorded, in order to persuade anyone that I might be worried about that I am a scientist. But I am getting increasingly fed up with it. You can read in between those lines whatever you wish. I haven't really used the tape recorder as a constant part of my life. What I have done is gotten to know these people. And what they are therefore impressed with is me—a pain-in-the-neck doctor who they can't quite figure out and who, believe me, at times can't quite figure himself out, notwithstanding all the apparent coherence some would find in those books.

Now, Faulkner, how did he get it all on paper without a tape recorder? And believe me, with word for word accuracy. Word for word. He is someone that kept what came in, and it came out through the hand holding a pen, or maybe the typewriter, another gadget. Word for word—it doesn't make any difference if there is a tape recorder or there isn't a tape recorder. I'd much rather be Faulkner pouring out the words, but you know not everyone is gifted that way. Now, look, I'm not going to say that I haven't carried a tape recorder and put things down, but never, never as a primary source of being with some people. And I urge upon you Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and Orwell's *Down and Out in London and Paris*, pre-tape recorder documents in the history of western civilization.

Agee, even with bourbon in his mind, or maybe because of bourbon in his mind and head, was able to go there into that little county located between Birmingham and Montgomery and he picked it all up. It's all there, what goes on between the people. Now, you say, "I want the literal word." O.K., no one is saying that you shouldn't have that, but I would think that the last thing that any of us would want to do in

going to visit people is to behave in a crude and uncivilized way.

I am urging civility in my pompous, smug way. The whole damn profession of psychiatry has been based on unmasking and tearing down civility, tearing down those day-to-day adjustments that we all have to have with one another, in the interest of those group therapy-sensitivity training things where people strip themselves in order to lose all these so-called inhibitions, so then a kind of truth will come out. Well, what truth? The banal truth that we are all a bunch of murderers and cut-throats, rapists and God knows what? What we find out from that and therefore what distinguishes us, it seems to me, ought to be some willingness to behave one's self. And therefore, when one goes up a mountain hollow or goes into a migrant camp or goes to visit some people in a log cabin, I think they are entitled not to be suddenly confronted with this machine and someone pressing that Sony thing and "Wait a minute, testing . . . would you mind saying something?" For what?

If I spend a number of months with a person and say to the person out of friendship and camaraderie, "Look, I would like to have something. Would you just mind? Would you put up with me, having put up with me all this time, put up with me in one more way?" I think that people are entitled to have you not know something until the moment comes for you to know it. And then when that moment comes, you won't forget it. This sounds a little mystical — I hope it does — because I believe that what we need is a little fogginess in the world. All these precisions, you know, that's artificial, too. Life is not precise. Life, as Flannery O'Connor said, is a matter of mysteries and manners. It is a matter of ambiguity, confusion, contradiction, inconsistency. Consistency is not a virtue; it is an impossibility in this world. This is an ambiguous and confused life. All mental processes are confusing and should be. And therefore you and they are coming to something through one another.

O.K., I know that I am going overboard and am being a bit cranky and a bit difficult. But this field is going to become as institutionalized as all those dull, pain-in-the-neck pedants that we all can't stand. It's already happened in psychiatry, and it will happen with this oral history field, too. People will say, "We've got to be careful; we've got to correct against madmen and anarchists and kooks and everything else. We've got to get discipline, rigor, have a Ph.D. program." And all sorts of organizations and accreditations will spring up. But what does all that have to do with human existence?

Q: From reading your books, it seems to me that despite your criticism of social scientists, you have a very deep commitment to your profession, to child psychiatry. You seem to be arguing with them, or with yourself, to affirm your right to be a child psychiatrist, and to be intuitive in your method, and to expose the larger social or political implications of your conversations with children, all at the same time. I'm interested in how these functions or preoccupations or missions have become naturally compatible for you.

Coles: Well, I'll tell you my feelings about psychiatry. I think it's an interesting phenomenon of the twentieth century, and I'm all for anyone talking with anyone where it will work and help. There are some very fine people who call themselves psychiatrists, who in turn talk to other people who call themselves patients — there would be quotes around all these words, you know. Of course, as you can tell, I do have a quarrel with a lot of the junk, not only in psychiatry, but in all the social sciences, about the jargon, the abstractions, the arrogance that we are all capable of. Maybe my worries about this are based on my own arrogance; maybe not.

Now, there is no doubt that when I write about the children and their drawings and all, that I am a child psychiatrist. There is that element of my life, and it is part of my being. I am genuinely interested in children. It's not a question only of getting them to show me something; I sit down on the floor and draw with them. I draw and they draw, and I show them what I've done and they show me what they have done, and we go through this thing and then we play with games, and I enjoy that.

Now, since I'm also an "intellectual," trying to make sense of this, I draw conclusions and make observations, generalizations, formulations, write-ups, analyses, commentary, all that stuff. You can't avoid noticing things. For example, upper-middle-class children do have a sense of destiny. When an eight-year-old boy tells me that he is going to be a lawyer and free the blacks, I may say to myself, "If I were black, I'd run." (laughter) But eight-year-old children who are migrants or Appalachian kids, up the hollow, do not talk like that. I don't think my mind is especially political, but you have to notice that this sense of destiny is a class thing. It comes across as the children speak.

I am writing now about a boy who is eleven years old, from the Rio Grande Valley in Texas, a Chicano family. I'm weaving in his relationship with a foreman of this large company, owned by Senator Lloyd Bentsen, by the way. The boy goes around with this foreman in the truck, and the

foreman talks to him as a friend, telling him all about his wife and his kids. Then, there is the daughter of the grower. She is a year older than the boy. She has what we would call "fantasies." She is interested in freeing all the poor "Mexicans," as she calls them. And she tells the foreman and the boy, who sit around, "I want to get a magic wand some day and I'm going to free everyone in the Rio Grande Valley." The boy is amazed by this. The boy has a much older cousin who was driven out of the Rio Grande Valley for political activity and is now up in Chicago. And the contrast of the foreman's child, the grower's child, and the Chicano fieldhand's child has to do with social class. The upper-class child has a notion of power, privilege, of the relationship of history, of what *can* be done. The foreman's child is troubled by the imperatives of his father. "Stay in school," when the child wants to get out. Then there is the boy, the child of the fieldhand. And what are his preoccupations? Should he become like his cousin? No, because his father wouldn't like it.

Incidentally, I'm developing something different in this new book. I weave in my own descriptions and summaries of behavior in the third person, I speak in the third person, and I work it so that I never mention myself in this narrative description. It's all impersonal, so that I remove myself and talk about the foreman the way the boy does. He never mentions the foreman's name; he always talks about "the foreman." So the foreman has no name. Mr. Long, who is the grower, has the name, "Mr. Long." And what I'm trying to do is to evoke the way that this Chicano child sees these people, through his eyes, but also bring in some contrast with the other

people from different classes.

Now, a lot of people probably say, "Well, why should you remove yourself?" I feel that I will be myself in the first chapter, which is a description of the scene, so to speak, and the second chapter in which I describe the "method." It's different from the other volumes, where I am always talking about, "I saw this and I saw that . . ." I just decided to get rid of myself. Not because I want to be anonymous—anyone who writes as much as I do is not concerned with anonymity—but because I think it brings the reader closer to what I would conceptualize, if I may, as the "mind of the child" and the way that mind gets along with others, which is more important than the way the mind gets along with me.

As far as why I do this, why I write these books, I do it not only to make other people, hopefully, understand a little, to help them understand, but also to advance my person. I do have the need, if you want to call it a need, to write. I've always wanted to do that. I suppose it can be said I do it to feather my cap—egoism, narcissism, drive, need, all those words. But I would also hope that there is a political dimension to this. It isn't only a matter of understanding; it is a matter of seeing social change. But many of us who worry about such things are not the kinds of people that lead the Long Marches or maybe even start the American Revolution. We're not the ones that go dumping tea in the Boston harbor. We are the ones who write pamphlets at best.

My work on *Still Hungry in America* was directly the product of a political campaign, an effort on the part of Robert Kennedy and others to deal with the problem of hunger in the rural areas of this country. You can call it a tract, a



photo by Bill Fibben



photo by Mark Handler

"I would put in a strong plea for the capacity of the human mind, heart, and soul to respond to others and to make sense of that"

polemical tract. So, my work varies, I guess. I did a book on Dorothy Day and the Catholic Workers Movement because I love her and love what she stands for. These are books that were a little more self-consciously attached to social and political problems.

Again, I think that part of the reason I'm doing this is because I want to write and I want to write these books. Part of it is because I'm doing a research project and I have a foundation grant from the Ford Foundation and they are paying for me not only to do the work, but to write the books. And believe me, if I didn't write the books, then I probably wouldn't get any further support, and understandably so. But who reads these books — you and I and all the others like us.

Q: That brings up the whole question of your relationship with the people you interview; I mean, with you writing books from these encounters, there is the possibility of an exploitative relationship. What are you able to give these people?

Coles: In some of these homes, I began and proceeded to be and ended up being a royal pain, pure and simple. In other homes, some things happened — human involvements, some of them precious and lovely to me. And the involvements have been as various and diverse and as hard to categorize as the variations of human life that we all are. Now, if you want me to be officious about it, I can say this: I brought a child in Roxbury, a black section of Boston, to the Children's Hospital for medical help. Great! You can say: "He not only was taking something out of him in these interviews, he was performing an active service." I participated in Congressional hearings that ultimately led to the food stamp program. I was involved in that. Great! The proceeds from *Still Hungry in America* went to the Southern Regional Council for distribution among the needy. Great! We can all understand that. There is a family here that I got in touch with, an agency there, and this or that happened. O.K., I'm not denying that. I don't want to say that I don't do things that are of a little value.

But I am not going to go on the defensive, to the point that I feel that this is the only thing that, you know, I can fall back on for the justification of this work and that anything else is "exploitative." I do not apologize for those moments that we had — some individuals and I — even if no social or political change resulted. And I don't mean only the good moments, the bad moments, too. It isn't necessarily hurtful and exploitative when a strange, kooky guy comes on the screen and talks and maybe a little news is exchanged, you know, something. That doesn't

have to be looked upon as political oppression or manipulation from the point of view of aggrandizement in a professional career. I'm not saying that that isn't something that should be taken into consideration; but why do we have to strip these meetings, these encounters, these moments, of the fact that they have to do with being human beings on the planet, for a moment, a brief moment of eternity. In addition to being social scientists and social observers and all these things, we are, after all, men, women, people, citizens, a lot of things. There is room, you know, in all this work for a little bit of humor, a little bit of willingness to relate oneself to some larger things. You know, writers, thinkers, essayists, and just plain people are interested in talking to people — and they do it very well without worrying about all these confining structures, jargons. To end this, I'll tell you a little story about my father.

My father is just an ordinary human being. I remember as a boy that he used to tell me about when he would go down to London from Yorkshire; he was interested in talking to people. Well, my father, my son and I went to South Africa at the end of August to give a lecture on apartheid. (They bring in outsiders to say things that South Africans can not say.) We stopped off in Rio de Janeiro and on the beach, my son and I went for a long walk, and we came back and my father was talking to four young people of a whole range of racial backgrounds. He wasn't doing any fieldwork and he had no tape recorder, but they were smoking a lot and he told them that they shouldn't smoke so much. And that led to a whole series of things and then he went and bought them some ice cream to tell them that it was much better to have some of this ice cream than to smoke all those cigarettes: "It is going to hurt your lungs." Part of this he was doing with some Spanish he knew, and a few words of Portuguese, and his English and the broken English of the young Brazilians and whatever. So then we came back, and with this mind that I have, I said, "Oh, this is interesting. He's talking to these people; I must get involved . . ." (laughter) So, I started questions, you know, other kinds of questions and then they didn't seem as interested; they began to get ready to leave. So my father resumed by talking to them about the cigarettes. And then, of course, I realized what I was: I was hungry and greedy. We were going to leave the next day and I had thought, "Ah, I'll just snatch something, learn something." Meanwhile, my father, who has no methodological training and you might consider politically to be rather conservative, not as liberal and generous and kind as I am, had got something going. Him and them.

YUKKING IT UP

AT CBS



by David Underhill

A chief news editor at CBS put a tape on the playback machine and called a few of his colleagues around. It might have been standard procedure for the New York staff, which works in shifts around the clock, handling reports that pour into the newsroom from CBS correspondents around the world. But the editor treated this tape differently. He wasn't calling his staff together to decide whether to use the tape on the news. He had already heard it once and was now calling his staff together for a laugh.

From the newsroom speaker boomed the drawling voice of a Tennessee lawyer concerned with the image of his profession since Watergate's disclosures. The attorney was telling a Washington meeting of lawyers that they should face the damage to their profession squarely, and, as he put it, "belly up to the buzz saw."

Everybody listening laughed. The tape was such a social success that the editor ran it again a little later for some people who had missed the first playing, and it drew another round of laughter. If this incident showed only that the staff appreciated a crisp figure of speech, it would hardly be worth mentioning. But several of the people who listened to the tape started smiling before the lawyer reached the "belly up" punch line. His manner of speech amused them, as well as his figure of speech. They wanted to laugh at him.

Another tape revealed the newsroom's sense of humor again. A prisoner was telling a CBS reporter how he had been taken hostage by some other convicts during a brief uprising at an Appalachian prison. His story contained nothing to laugh at. His accent, though, was straight out of the hills. The head editor ran the tape three times that afternoon, with the volume turned up. Each time, the newsroom rang with laughter. The CBS news team thought the man's accent was screechingly funny.

The hilarity did not end there. Some people tried to double the fun by mimicking the accent as best they could. One young woman spotted a newscaster, a native of a small Appalachian town, working at his desk and chewing a matchstick. She

launched into a speech about "land sakes alive and lawdy me how downright surprisin' it was to see a purebred downhome cracker make it in the big city and land a job with CBS." He sparred with her awhile to be polite, and then ended the game. Her New York City humor had struck a little too close to home. She was implying that if a person from the Appalachian mountains could somehow get into the central CBS newsroom, it was a mistake. Hillbillies don't belong there. To her and others at CBS, the southern mountain accent was not merely amusing: it was also a mark of ignorance and incompetence.

In fact, these accents struck the staff as funny *only* because so many of them regarded such inflection as the sign of lame brains. Three men much in CBS news lately—Henry Kissinger, British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, and Israeli Foreign Minister Yigal Allon—all speak English with accents as distant from standard American speech as the convict's or the Tennessee lawyer's. But editors do not play back tapes by these men and gather the staff around to chuckle. The staff regards them as intelligent and able. Therefore, their accents are not laughable, no matter how peculiar compared to the staff's own speech. In contrast, the Appalachian accent is a panic.

CBS has a relatively new reporter specializing in legal matters who previously worked on newspapers, where he didn't have to correct his accent. His voice sounds like it comes from somewhere far south and somewhat west of New York City. One afternoon someone asked an editor across the newsroom if he had any tapes coming in. A story was due from this reporter. So the editor shouted back, loudly, "We'll have one in ten minutes from our crack court reporter—or should I say our cracker court reporter?" When your native accent

David Underhill worked in the New York CBS news room as a "transcriber of electronic transmissions" (typist) to finance his graduate study at Columbia University. He has published in various political science journals, been on the staff of the *Harvard Crimson* and *Southern Courier*, and currently lives in Mobile, Alabama.

produces treatment like this from your colleagues, the rational lesson to learn is to conform. Refining your speech stands out as the first step.

Although folks from the hills are ridiculed in the CBS newsroom, they are not alone, if that's any comfort. Jokes with punch lines aimed at other minorities are socially acceptable. People with names that sound Italian can be talked about in terms vaguely suggesting that they are ridiculous or sinister. Among foreigners, Arabs are a fair target. But among the regional, ethnic, and social groups of America, openly-expressed prejudice in the CBS newsroom clearly falls hardest on all people out there somewhere beyond the Hudson River, known as hillbillies, crackers, or rednecks.

I.

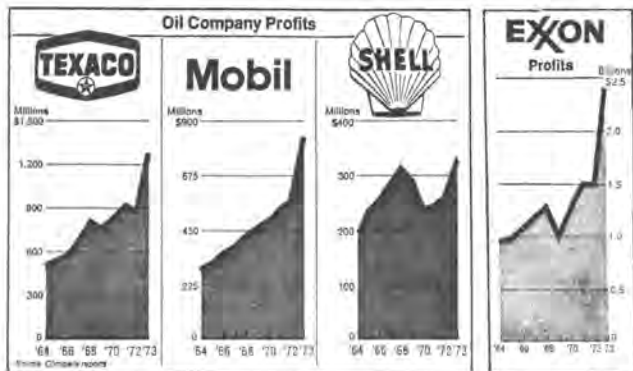
If the same prejudice against Appalachians existed on, say, the staff of a Bulgarian fishing boat or a lumber mill in Maine, this would be a strange situation—worthy of a laugh or two perhaps. When it is true in the newsroom of a major network, a serious question comes up: what effect does this have on the way the CBS radio network reports the news?

It certainly affects what goes out over the air. Every major broadcaster and newspaper receives much, much more information than it sends out as news. For each line of news that actually goes out over the air, hundreds are thrown away. The minute-by-minute decisions about what to keep and what to discard shape the news. Simple ignorance can not explain how some news is consistently dropped or distorted. An old saying claims that familiarity breeds contempt. But contempt also breeds unfamiliarity. When the CBS staff faces heaps of information, it makes choices to cover the events and people that best mirror its sensitivities and prejudices. Other perspectives are

simply ignored. For example, on many occasions—like presidential speeches—CBS telephones various “important” people to get their reactions. Names well known to the staff come first to mind, and they get most of the calls. Frequently-called senators come mainly from the Northeast and the West Coast, plus a couple from the north-central states. Such attention helps them become famous and powerful, as well as effective advocates for the areas and interests they represent. CBS does not normally call Southern or Appalachian spokesmen for their opinions.

This fixed sense of what is important and what is not, of who counts and who does not, also affects how news items are covered. Take, for example, last year's squeeze on the independent truckers and the strike that it produced. At its height, the CBS radio network carried reports almost every hour about the “violence” as some striking truck drivers tried to “force” reluctant truckers to shut down, too. From the truckers' viewpoint, when fuel prices and speed limits make it impossible for them to clear enough money for the payments on their rigs and food for their families, then they too are being “forced” off the road, and “violence” is being done to them and their families. Yet CBS never used such words to describe the actions of the oil companies and government. CBS stories about the truckers did not simply report the facts; they also encouraged the listeners to look down on the truckers. Respect, according to the network, is reserved for the urbane, relatively rich, politically powerful.

Another example illustrates how Appalachia, which ranks close to the top in poverty and powerlessness, ranks close to the bottom at CBS news. When a heavy rain eroded the Pittston Coal Company's gob pile dam at Buffalo Creek, West Virginia, three years ago, more than a hundred people



regularly turned as sharp an eye on the presidents of the seven major oil companies? In short, the media—including CBS—have been much busier hounding the watchdogs, than keeping an eye peeled for the skull and crossbones.

Perhaps the news media like CBS could offer themselves as protectors of the public interest. Through their network control over public communication and their budgets, they surely have the ability to report the news in ways that would make them awesome defenders of ordinary citizens everywhere. But the suggestion looks silly as soon as it is made. To carry it out, week after week, CBS would have to challenge and embarrass publicly the very companies that it does commercial business with every day.

Beyond this, the members of the news staff do not have the attitudes necessary for such an approach to the news. To raise a persistent challenge against the abuses and excesses of power, they would need personal commitments to the effort. They display, instead, a large capacity for overlooking such abuses, plus a personal inclination to indulge in the same thing themselves.

Several months ago, the word leaked out that President Nixon had shrunk his personal taxes almost to the vanishing point by giving the government his vice-presidential files and papers. It was a scandal, thoroughly and critically reported by CBS. A couple of CBS reporters were discussing this one day in the newsroom. One of them mentioned that Walter Cronkite, CBS' most famous star, had done the same thing. According to the reporter, Cronkite had given a load of his old news scripts and other such "worthless stuff" to a journalism school and then subtracted it from his income tax return as a donation. The two reporters

discussing this shortchanging of the public purse did not hesitate a second in shock or amazement at the idea of Cronkite's deducting "worthless stuff." They laughed. Then they went back to work. The truth of the reporters' conversation is immaterial. That they were undisturbed by the picture of Cronkite's slick maneuver is the point to remember about CBS.



(Editor's note: Speaking through a CBS spokesman, George Hoover, Cronkite claims that his donation of "scripts and correspondence" to the University of Texas at Austin was not claimed as a federal tax deduction. He offered no evidence to support his claim, however. Hoover argued that even if Cronkite had taken the deduction, "It was legal, wasn't it?")

For CBS to become a true defender of the public interest against both public and private abuses of power, it would have to dedicate itself to exposing its own newscasters and advertisers with as much zeal as Richard Nixon. CBS will never develop this dedication, for doing so would breed public anger against big business, just as all the news about Nixon and the Watergaters has bred suspicion toward government in general. And, the CBS Board of Directors—whose members also direct Atlantic Richfield, AMAX, Union Pacific Railroad, Pan American Airways, American Electric Power, Eastern Air Lines, Borden, Cummins Engine, Corning Glass, among others—would not want to see the CBS News team focus the public's attention close to their homes.

It's one thing for CBS to fault unions and the Nixon Administration; criticizing blocks of private power is something else again. CBS News knows where its bread is buttered.



ATLANTA

July
1972/\$1

...the diary of a
woman reporter...

THAT'S THE SPIRIT—OF ATLANTA
AND SO IS THE ALL-STAR GAME



by Diane C. Thomas

It has now been a good six months since the out-of-court settlement of the charges of sex discrimination brought against the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce by myself, Suzanne Anderson, Dianne Penny, Robert Coram and the Atlanta chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW). Each of us on the staff of the Chamber's *Atlanta Magazine* received cash settlements, the women for back pay differential, Coram for a promised raise which had not been forthcoming. Penny, Suzi and I also received raises. (Coram had resigned before the final settlement to freelance in south Georgia.)

Today, Penny is serving as caretaker of a house on Cumberland Island off the Georgia coast, rising with the sun, painting and experimenting with banners as an art form. I am a freelance writer, which is what I've wanted to be for some time. Only Suzi remains at the Magazine. She has been named art director.

The Atlanta Chamber of Commerce now has an internal task force to monitor its own employment practices, will soon come out with a new nondiscriminatory employees' manual, a single employment application for men and women which asks neither maiden name nor marital status, and a new schedule of insurance benefits with liberalized provisions for maternity costs. A standardized pay scale is now in effect.

An official of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Atlanta stated a belief that "the influence of what you did will be felt beyond the city, beyond the state."

I listen to this statement now, sift through year-old newspaper clips, and feel strangely divorced from the whole proceeding, as though it were something done by an alter ego, while flesh-and-blood me stood by and watched. I do not disown it. I simply still cannot believe I became involved.

But my involvement was central to initiating the action. Many of the women at the Chamber had seethed under such unconscious slights as telephone memos marked "Mr. _____ called," memos from Crowder to "Staff Girls" instructing us to tidy up the offices of our (male) superiors, all female schedules for cleaning the coffee room, and telephone extension lists with columns segregated into men and women. But I was the first person among us recognized as having a clear-cut case of sex discrimination. *Atlanta Magazine* is the official monthly publication of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. As the Magazine's only female editorial associate (staff writer), I was making \$9,600 in August, 1973, when we filed charges. Two other editorial associates, Robert Coram and Don Smith, were pulling in \$13,500

and \$12,000, respectively. We all did essentially the same thing — write for the magazine. I turned in my share of the "heavies," the lengthy business articles, along with the men. I had seniority over both of them, in fact over everybody except the editor and the advertising manager. Coram had more years on me as a journalist but had not completed his undergraduate degree. Smith had fewer years in the field than I but had nearly completed his Masters degree work at Georgia State University. I hold a Masters from Columbia University. Given the fact that all it takes to file a discrimination charge is the knowledge that males and females performing the same job in the same company are being paid unequally, it was clear that on whatever level the management chose to challenge me, I could field from a position of strength.

Discussion of salaries among Magazine staffers was strongly discouraged. While editor Norman Shavin had never called it a firing offense, the implication was there. For years we lived in virtual ignorance of each other's gross income. But with the advent of Smith and Coram, a strange, happy chemistry took effect. Co-workers became close friends. In an atmosphere of mutual trust and easy conviviality, a chance remark here, an aside there, and it wasn't hard to come up with \$13,500, \$12,000, and \$9,600.

Once we put it together, the knowledge rankled.

It was in mid-July of 1973, 2 p.m., the hottest, sleepest, least productive part of the day, when I found the copy of *Ms.* magazine stuck in my typewriter. Coram had left it there, circling a squib stating that the Wage and Hour Commission of the United States Department of Labor had broadened its scope to include discrimination charges from salaried professional persons as well as wage earners, and that such charges could be filed anonymously for investigation. To the page he had stapled a note: "OK, Thomas. Here it is. If you don't get in gear and do something, a lot of people will be very disappointed in you."

I've always been a pushover when it came to peer pressure, and he knew it. I picked up the magazine by a corner, gingerly, with thumb and forefinger, as if it were a dead mouse. My ears were ringing. I paused with it mid-way between trash can and desk. I laid it on the desk.

I took a deep breath. My ears were still ringing and strange things were starting to happen to my peripheral vision. Things were starting to get red around the edges. I got up, walked to Dianne Penny's office, and asked her, since she was an active member in the organization, whom I should contact in NOW for advice on filing a sex

discrimination charge. She gave me the office number of a woman named Karen Over. I called her and made an appointment for lunch.

Or rather, my alter ego called Karen Over. It couldn't have been me. I have never been a boat rocker nor a maker of waves. If my life had had one guiding principle up to that moment, it was that of keeping my nose clean. I had never so much as crossed the street in support of a cause, never put a political bumper sticker on my car, never sent contributions to strange organizations that solicited through the mails. I am not sure today that I would class myself among the feminists. It has always strained my sense of the rational that any talented, productive, goal-oriented human being should be made to suffer injustices for possessing those seemingly laudatory qualities, but since I defined myself as talented, productive, goal-oriented, and a sufferer of injustices, I hardly considered myself the bearer of an impersonal standard.

None of us could have been said to possess a "radical taint." Penny's membership in Atlanta NOW and Coram's pro-union activities while a reporter on the *Atlanta Journal* were about as far as our collective involvement went.

Penny grew up the eldest child and only daughter of a NASA engineer working in Huntsville, Alabama. Suzi's father is a Republican businessman, owner of a chain of furniture stores in South Carolina. Coram's early south Georgia upbringing centered around his father's military career. I was raised the only child of parents who were 50 and 52 years old at my birth. My father was a retired Navy Captain-turned salesman. Most of my youth was spent in Sylvan Hills, a quiet residential Atlanta neighborhood composed about equally of blue- and white-collar workers.

With the exception of Penny, the "baby" of our foursome, we had all come to social awareness, or what then passed as a reasonable facsimile, in the Eisenhower years. It was a consciousness bounded by fall-out shelters, segregated schools, Chuck Berry and "The \$64,000 Question." My own teen-age fantasies stopped at a ranch-style house with a patio, a tall, dark-suited, smiling husband, a tow-headed little boy in bluejeans with a pocketful of baseball cards and bottle caps, and a curly-haired prissy little princess of a girl, sensibly spaced two years after the boy. A "career" was something that a woman only turned to if the above didn't materialize by high school graduation. She then feigned great interest in her work to avoid hiding her head in public shame for her feminine failure. She knew, and the world knew, she would rather be home washing diapers with Cheer in a Maytag and reading *McCall's*, "The

Magazine of Togetherness."

As a proper teen-ager of the latter Fifties, I starched my crinolines, rolled down my bobby-socks, and dutifully batted my eyes at the boys in my class, despite the fact that I was sure such conduct must be an insult to their intelligence and that they were all four inches shorter than I.

Maybe it was that fateful four inches, but I think it had more to do with the fact that nobody told me girls weren't supposed to speak up in class with the answers. Perhaps it was something else entirely. But the ranch-style house, the smiling husband, and the ideally-spaced children eluded me. The career did not. At age 24, in 1966, by what I then viewed as an incredible series of accidents, I had become the entertainment editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*. It was five years later that I realized I'd got there because it was exactly where I wanted to be.

As a "woman in a man's world," it did not occur to me to do anything but take my lumps. I think it eased some of the guilt I felt for enjoying my lot so much. But they smarted, nonetheless.

Every afternoon a copy boy delivered the afternoon *Atlanta Journal* to every male reporter in the *Constitution* city room. After watching this for about three months, I asked him if I could please have a paper, since I was an editor and needed to keep up with what my *Journal* counterpart was writing.

"There's just enough for the men," he answered, confirming my suspicions.



"Here, Diane, you can read mine," said a nearby male reporter, fishing his *Journal* out of the trash can and picking a pink wad of Dentyne off the front page. I smiled and thanked him. He was really trying to be helpful. But my hands shook with fury.

Two years later, on leave of absence from the paper to take a graduate degree in theater and film criticism, I watched the student rebellion at Columbia University from the sidelines, motivated only to keep out of the way of the TV cameras, lest the folks back home see my face and think me a participant. I refused all suggestions that I should cover the events for the *Constitution*, fearing my reports might be interpreted as leftist by the mere fact that I was present on the scene. I sent the *Constitution* one feature story on an open-air campus benefit concert by the Grateful Dead.

I returned to the *Constitution* to find myself for some still mysterious reason no longer entertainment editor but drama critic and general assignment reporter, back about where I had started four years before. I resisted suggestions that I file a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board, fearful such a move would brand me as a trouble-maker. I simply left the newspaper six months after my return from New York and went to *Atlanta Magazine*. I was the first editorial associate hired by new editor Norman Shavin and for two months the only editorial associate on the staff. My starting salary in January, 1970, was \$7,000.

During the following three years at the Magazine, it became increasingly difficult to swallow my lumps. When William Schemmel was hired two months after me as an editorial associate for a rumored \$9,000, I was not upset. After all, I reasoned, he'd been working as a reporter longer than I had. But I resented being made to answer the office telephones two lunch-hours per month as part of a rotating pool of "girls" to relieve the two receptionists, when Schemmel was never expected to take "phone duty." I also resented having to clean up the Chamber coffee room, another "all girl" enterprise. In a couple of months, women on the Magazine's creative staff were relieved of phone duty and coffee clean-up, but the remaining lists were still all female. My problem had been solved, but *the* problem remained.

I stood by silently as males were given all the foreign travel assignments. When I was finally sent on a story, to Jamaica for four days, Shavin informed me that he knew of at least one other woman going from the Atlanta area, "so you'll have someone to talk to." He sounded like a con-

cerned father, and again I felt ashamed of my anger. But the feminist movement had hit the South, and it was becoming much harder to dismiss the unintentional everyday slights as the way things were, had been, and would continue to be.

It was becoming apparent to me that most perpetrators of such slights not only were unconscious of what they were doing, but they had no idea of what "discrimination against women" even entailed — no conception of the concept, one might say. Shavin, for example, ensconced in the liberal, Democratic tradition, champion of 1960's civil rights, would surely have paled at the image of himself as oppressor.

When Penny, Suzi and I each received single red roses from Charles Crowder, executive vice president of the Chamber, along with all other female employees in honor of "National Secretaries' Week," I called Crowder, thinking to return the flower with a gentle explanation that, since my duties were not secretarial, I should really not be included in the celebration. I had some thought in the back of my mind about asking him to take stock of his female employees not simply as "the girls," but by nature of their positions, talents, etc. His secretary answered the phone.

"I wanted to talk to Charlie about the roses for 'National Secretaries' Week,'" I began.

"What's the matter? Didn't you get one?" she asked, worried.

"I'll just call back later." I put down the phone feeling like the world's worst misanthrope. I did not pursue the matter. It seemed like too long a trip.

I think as much as anything it was this utter unconsciousness on the part of otherwise well-meaning people, of men in high places, able to effect changes, to chart the course and identity of the city, and of women who could see no other way than the past, that led us to charge the Chamber. I know it wasn't the money. None of us were convinced we'd get any. I doubt that it was a desire for notoriety. Neither Coram nor I have pumped the experience for the journalistic mileage we could have got from it, and Penny and Suzi aren't writers. And it certainly wasn't to enhance our professional reputations. I, for one, was almost certain the Establishment would spit us out like peach pits.

I don't know what went through Penny, Coram, or Suzi's minds as we set the first wheels spinning. I thought about the men I knew who couldn't understand why their wives were jealous of their work. I thought about the married women I had met and envied — placid, seemingly content with their ranch-style homes, smiling husbands, and ideally spaced children — and who sat in rapt

and sometimes wistful attention as I talked about my life. And I thought of my friends with children, prissy, curly-haired princesses, and of the possibility that someday I might have one of my own. I would want her to be able to choose marriage as responsibly as she would any other way of life, and never, never be forced to view it as a woman's only means to the good life, a state to be rushed into with whomever as the sole avenue to economic stability and true social acceptability.

I also considered the paranoid possibility that I might never again be able to earn a decent living in Atlanta, and spent a lot of time indulging that old stand-by: fear of the unknown.

I.

Karen Over, who was serving in some sort of legal research capacity with the Atlanta chapter of NOW, advised me that Penny and Suzi might well have sex discrimination cases of their own.

That was fine with me. It made things a lot less lonely. A meeting was set up with the three of us, Peg Nugent, then president of Atlanta NOW, and an attorney who had some work on NOW's behalf. There our grievances were taped. Suzi and Penny, it turned out, did each have a case. Suzi was then assistant art director and Penny was designer. Each was making less than males who had previously performed those jobs.

We decided, and I can't remember why, to work through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission rather than Wage and Hour. We would each file anonymous complaints with EEOC, and NOW would file a class action charge and negotiate on our behalf, shielding our identities. Robert Coram then decided he would also file anonymously in support of Penny, Suzi and I. So one hot early August day in 1973, the four of us visited the EEOC's Atlanta Regional Office a few blocks from the Magazine. We went at lunch-time. Practically everyone in the EEOC office was at lunch also.



photo by Linda Fibben

"We'd like to file discrimination charges," Coram told the woman at the reception desk.

She looked at the white male and three white females. "What for?" she asked incredulously. In the South, "discrimination" still meant "race."

Another woman took information from us which was filed as background on the NOW charge made by Karen Over.

The following week I was due in the hospital for a minor, if confining, operation. I had three weeks of sick leave. During my convalescence, the Chamber was notified of the anonymous complaints and the charge from NOW, and NOW president Peg Nugent called a press conference. I sat home and watched it on the six p.m. news, congratulating myself on having accidentally happened upon the perfect alibi to preserve my own anonymity. "How could I have had anything to do with it? I've been sick."

Chamber officials refused to reply to anonymous complaints. A breakfast meeting scheduled between NOW members and Chamber officials to discuss the matter turned into a fiasco when Crowder prepared to run a standard orientation film on Chamber activities and several NOW members stood up and demanded they scrap the film presentation and talk about what the Chamber was, or was not, doing for its female employees.

By December we were convinced the Chamber really wasn't going to dignify NOW's class action charge with any serious consideration as long as it was based on anonymous complaints. Two courses of action lay open. We could either come out of the closet and try to force them to negotiate, or wait perhaps two years for our case to come up in the crowded regional EEOC calendar, when our identities would doubtless become known anyway. We were beginning to feel the strain of a self-imposed isolation from other staff members. With a "well, what the hell" attitude born of frustration and anger at the ineffectuality of all we'd already done, Penny, Suzi, Coram and I filed individual charges December 13, 1973, and prepared for whatever shock waves would be forthcoming when our identities were discovered.

An eerie closeness was beginning to grow among the four of us, which went well beyond the desire for friendship. It was suddenly necessary for each of us to be aware of the others' feelings at all times, as suddenly four individual personalities were expected to come up with collective and almost instantaneous decisions. We couldn't just call meetings and go with the majority vote. Our "majority" was three. That would leave a lonely minority of one. So we thrashed out each question until we arrived at a course of action

reasonably satisfactory to everyone. There were angry confrontations, tearful resolutions, late night phone calls to buoy flagging spirits, early a.m. breakfasts. We each for our own sake had to voice what we wanted, how we felt matters should proceed. We began to function almost like a therapy group.

Our attorneys met with Chamber officials, including *Atlanta* Magazine editor Norman Shavin and advertising manager Ronald K. Hill, to present our charges the Wednesday before Christmas. The meeting was scheduled at 4 p.m. At 3:45 p.m., Suzi, Penny, Coram and I walked into Shavin's office and closed the door. One of us, I believe it was Coram — I know it wasn't me — told him we were the charging parties and that, out of professional courtesy, we wanted to make our identities known to him before the meeting. Whoever was speaking added that none of us had intended the charges as personally directed at him. He sighed, said he had thought we were the ones, smiled a little sadly, and put on his jacket to go upstairs to the meeting. My hands were shaking so badly I tried gripping my elbows to steady them. That only made my whole torso shake.

We left the office before the meeting upstairs adjourned. I went home. I was to spend a lot of time at home alone. I had little emotional energy for social contacts that winter. None of us did. We spent time with each other.

Two days after we'd named ourselves as the conspirators (which is how we were certain we'd be thought of and were coming to regard ourselves), the annual *Atlanta* Magazine Long Christmas Lunch, compliments of our printers, was staged in lavish style in a private dining room at a downtown restaurant. It was more wake than party. But for some reason Suzi, Coram and I (Penny was home sick) each took advantage of this supposedly relaxed atmosphere to again stress to Shavin that our actions sheathed no personal vendettas. "I know," he said to me sadly. "But you understand that what you all have done has to be answered. There will be a confrontation, and I regret that."

& then

Two weeks later, we found out what he meant.

On January 7, 1974, an afternoon meeting was scheduled in which the Chamber would formally reply to our charges. In the small conference room upstairs were gathered Crowder, Shavin, Chamber comptroller Wayne Hare, the Chamber's attorney, our attorneys, Penny, Suzi, myself, and Cynthia Hlass, newly elected president of Atlanta

NOW. (Peg Nugent, at the end of her NOW presidency, had split from the organization to form her own group, the Feminist Action Alliance.) Coram had wanted to attend the meeting but was discouraged by our attorneys since he had no specific charges of his own, but was filing on our behalf.

Two days before the meeting, Shavin had solicited resumes from Penny, Suzi and me, saying they were needed for our personnel files. We complied, despite private suspicions. Our collective strategy at that point was to bend over backwards to be as cooperative as we could with the Chamber in an attempt to ease tense interpersonal relations in the office. At the meeting Shavin denigrated the quality of our work and attempted to use information on the resumes to discredit us. He didn't look at all happy about doing it. This, then, was the confrontation to which he had earlier alluded. Our attorneys sat silently. The Chamber's attorney concluded with the statement, "We feel there is no discrimination on the basis of pay for these girls."

"Women," amended Ms. Hlass.

The meeting was cut short. Crowder had to leave to prepare for the inauguration that evening of Atlanta's first black mayor, Maynard Jackson, whom the Chamber had supported. Jackson's election reaped sheaves of national publicity lauding Atlanta as one of the most forward-looking in the nation. The timing of our meeting with the Chamber seemed somehow tinged with irony.

After our confrontation with the Chamber, we retrenched. Our tactics were getting us nowhere except to undermine our own self-confidence. The atmosphere in the office was strained. And self-generated internal pressures were taking their toll on each of us.

Coram, Penny and I filed retaliation charges with EEOC, Penny and I on the basis of what happened at the meeting, Coram because a promised \$1,500 raise had been cut to \$500 "so that certain inequities might be corrected." Suzi, by then under consideration for promotion from assistant art director to art director of the Magazine after the resignation in October of art director Jacques Bulkens, declined to file a retaliation charge. The new charges automatically bumped our case up for earlier consideration on the EEOC roster.

Meanwhile the annual raises had been given out. My \$9,600 was brought up to \$11,000. I considered dropping my charge for about two hours. Suzi frowned and pursed her lips. Penny got so angry she began to cry. I quit talking about dropping my charge.



We all turned out on Saturday before the opening of the 1974 Legislative session to join in the march supporting the Equal Rights Amendment. My stomach knotted up and my hands turned cold on the steering wheel as I drove downtown, packing my head with country music from the car radio as if it were my last chance. Once on the street, I was glad I had come, yet I still shied away from cameras—an instinctive protective action, I figured.

Shortly thereafter, Suzi, Penny, Coram and I met for lunch with Ms. Hlass, Bebe Smith, Atlanta NOW vice president, and Judy Lightfoot, national NOW chairperson. NOW had decided to dismiss the attorneys and employ pressure group tactics. "We felt like both they and the Chamber were giving us the runaround," Ms. Hlass later recalled. NOW wanted to negotiate directly with Bradley Currey, president of the Trust Company of Georgia bank and the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. Any action broader than making reparations among the Chamber staff would have to come through him, NOW officers reasoned. A key demand, both from NOW and from the charging parties, was implementation of an affirmative action plan which would serve as a guide for correcting inequities not only within the Chamber staff, but in member businesses as well. NOW planned to picket the Trust Company and wanted, if not our full public support, at least assurance that we would not discredit their actions. We gave it to them, but that meeting marked the last time we were all four present and in agreement on anything. Suzi, Penny and I also dismissed the attorneys, deciding to work through the EEOC.

We reasoned that, while the Chamber officials might be reluctant to negotiate through our lawyers, they could hardly refuse to cooperate with a federal agency, particularly since they had been occasional recipients of federal monies.

NOW began picketing the main Trust Company building the last week in February. The weather was perfect – sunny and unseasonably warm. For seven days from noon to 2 p.m., members marched and leafleted in Central City Park, a popular downtown noontime gathering place in front of the Trust Company building. On March 3, NOW called a press conference in the park. Ms. Hlass announced that Currey had refused to negotiate. "Seven times I called him and seven times he refused to return my call. Finally he called to say he had nothing to say," she stated. The conference made front page news, which did not look very good for an "international city" planning to host in April the Organization of American States conference, being held for the first time outside Washington, D.C. A week later, "underground sources," whose identity I still am not sure of, had arranged a meeting between Currey and NOW officials. Meanwhile, Penny, Suzi, Coram and I filed background information with the EEOC District Office for public record concerning the conditions leading us to charge the Chamber with sex discrimination. We had done all that was needed on our part to initiate a pre-decision settlement.

Currey met with NOW representatives in mid-March. "We had a basis of understanding, once we sat down face-to-face," Ms. Hlass said later. "Currey stated he was unaware of any discriminatory practices within the Chamber, but decided to investigate the matter on his own."

With providential good (or ill) timing, just when Currey began looking into the situation at the Chamber, a Magazine employee was dismissed in a quarrel resulting from her refusal to stop typing a letter and fix her male superior a cup of coffee. Currey concluded discriminatory practices existed and forthwith nominated Bob Guyton, president of the National Bank of Georgia, to put together a task force which would initiate an efficient crash program to shape the Chamber into a model employer. Priorities, as outlined by Currey, included: drafting a statement of release to the public putting the Chamber on record as strongly in favor of equal employment opportunity for women; consideration of ways the Chamber could help erase the stereotyped image of women in our society; and other ways in which the Chamber could take an active leadership role in the Atlanta business community to encourage equal opportunity for women.

Guyton's committee returned in three weeks with three goals: to establish the Chamber as a model for equal opportunity in Atlanta; to place the Chamber's personnel policies and benefits on a par with industry; and to develop a salary administration program. Said goals were to be implemented by May 31.

Meanwhile, at the end of March, I took a much-needed week's vacation. On my return, I discovered that Robert Coram had resigned, citing mysterious "pressure tactics" from Shavin. He later admitted his sudden departure stemmed from the same internal pressures that beset us all. "I'd begun to feel like I just couldn't get up in the morning and go to that office again, but that if I didn't and didn't make it in on time, and didn't spend the whole day sweating over my typewriter, something horrible would happen. It was getting so I just couldn't write anymore," he said. It was a feeling shared by the three of us remaining.

(Coram's departure brought an immense feeling of relief to the Chamber. "With him out of the way, maybe now things will quiet down," one executive was heard to remark. Of course they would accept Coram as the instigator. He was the only man involved.)

I also discovered Crowder had resigned as executive vice president and would leave in May. Howard Benson, membership director, would function in his place until someone was selected to fill the post permanently.

When the formation of Guyton's personnel task force was announced, Penny and I sent congratulatory letters to Currey and Crowder. We also indicated we were willing to initiate informal discussion of a pre-decision settlement (which would not require full investigation by the EEOC) with Currey or whomever he designated. He designated Benson.

Suzi had decided to settle directly with the Chamber, ostensibly dropping her charge with EEOC. But Penny and I still wanted the clout of a federal agency behind us. (Although Suzi settled privately, she didn't sign the papers necessary to drop her charge through the EEOC until the rest of us did so.)

Benson, an affable, 30-year-old Chamber staffer, started off by tearing up the male/female telephone list. He then came to each of the charging parties. "We know there have been inequities and we want to see them corrected as badly as you do and as quickly as possible. Now please tell us what you want." That was late May. On July 31, the Chamber held a press conference announcing formal settlement of the charges.

"The Board of Directors of the Chamber adopted a policy of Equal Employment Oppor-



DISCRIMINATION IN THE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY AGAINST WOMEN AND BLACKS

Data for Women and Black Employees as a Percent of All Workers in Selected Job Categories for year 1969

	Women						Black					
	% of Total Employment	Managers	Professionals	Clerical	Blue Collar	Service Workers	% of Total Employment	Managers	Professionals	Clerical	Blue Collar	Service Workers
Alabama	35.3%	13.1%	26.2%	76.2%	26.2%	10.6%	7.4%	2.9%	.8%	4.0%	9.7%	68.1%
Florida	32.1	8.9	27.7	77.3	20.5	8.3	7.3	1.9	1.0	2.9	9.8	66.0
Georgia	25.5	7.8	23.6	68.6	17.0	7.9	9.3	1.6	2.3	5.5	11.4	74.3
Kentucky	31.7	6.9	18.5	70.4	28.4	16.7	8.5	.8	2.1	3.4	9.2	63.0
Louisiana	24.0	6.0	23.0	67.2	9.2	4.2	8.6	1.2	.9	3.5	8.8	89.8
North Carolina	37.4	6.2	23.9	73.5	39.4	4.4	14.2	.7	2.7	4.6	18.9	60.8
South Carolina	27.4	9.0	26.9	73.1	14.1	2.0	5.8	.0	1.4	3.0	7.1	73.3
Tennessee	27.5	9.5	21.4	81.8	20.9	10.8	7.6	.4	2.2	5.1	7.4	69.6
Texas	32.9	7.3	26.6	73.5	25.8	11.1	5.9	.4	.7	4.0	7.3	55.1
Virginia	32.2	13.4	20.5	75.5	23.4	23.8	12.2	1.2	.4	13.3	15.1	52.3
West Virginia	26.8	6.0	23.2	78.6	17.0	6.8	2.9	.0	.5	1.1	2.0	46.6

Data: Equal Employment Opportunity Report, Job Patterns of Minorities and Women, 1969 (EEOC). Data for Arkansas, and Mississippi unavailable. Prepared by Southern Exposure.

tunity at its June 12 meeting and urges its 4,000 member firms to be aware of the legal obligations of the Equal Opportunity Act," Currey read. "From the experience of the Chamber in this area, other business and professional firms may draw on the first-hand knowledge of our organization in planning their own affirmative action and compliance programs."

It was greeted by NOW as an extremely positive statement. Guyton's task force and NOW had hammered out a mutually agreeable affirmative action plan.

As for the four of us, we each got a little less compensation than we'd dreamed of, but more than we'd expected, the mark of a favorable settlement.

Suzi was named art director, after she and *Atlanta* Magazine editors had conducted an extensive search to fill the post. She was awarded a cash settlement and given a substantial raise. Coram received the additional \$1,000 he had been promised and denied in January. I received a \$3,000 cash settlement for back pay differential and a raise to \$12,000, which brought my salary in line with what the lower paid of the two male editorial associates (Smith) had been making when our charges were initiated. Penny was given a cash settlement and raise but was denied the title of assistant art director, although she had been performing the duties on an acting basis since Bulkens' departure. She remained "designer."

There were other, less tangible benefits. Shortly after Suzi's appointment as art director, she hired a male assistant who came from *Playboy* Books in Chicago, where he had functioned as chief designer.

"I was a little apprehensive at first," Ms. Anderson later admitted. "I was afraid Shavin might start bypassing me in making decisions, that he would prefer to talk to the male in the department. But so far that hasn't happened. He's always come to me first, as he would to any other department head."

I also noticed a subtle change within me, which manifested itself most clearly in my relationship with Shavin. Suddenly I no longer felt on the defensive, no longer felt the burden of proof for my abilities lay entirely on my shoulders and had to be renewed each time I asked for something. Suddenly I could meet Shavin, and anybody else on the staff, head-on in discussion of validity of story idea, editing changes, and other matters — something I had seen Coram and Smith do from the start in the camaraderie that often exists between men in an office but which I had always accepted as being closed to women. Perhaps Shavin had changed. Perhaps I had changed. Most

likely we both had.

The day the settlement was announced to the press, I privately told Shavin I was leaving. I gave 10 weeks notice so he would have ample time to find a proper replacement. I had wanted to freelance for more than a year. I couldn't wait any longer.

"I trust this has nothing to do with anything else that has happened," Shavin said. "You've assured me it doesn't and I believe you."

I hope he did. I had been telling the truth. My departure had nothing directly to do with the charges or their settlement. A few days later, Penny announced she, too, would be leaving.

It was August, 1974. A year had elapsed since we had initiated the charges. It had been an emotionally draining, physically wearing experience. Penny had insomnia. I was hyperventilating. Suzi went to the doctor for a persistent rash on her forehead and was given numerous vitamins and a prescription for tranquilizers. I proceeded to block most of the events of the previous year from memory. It took a surprising amount of research to put together this account. Unfortunately I did not follow Karen Over's advice and keep a diary. None of us did. We all should have.

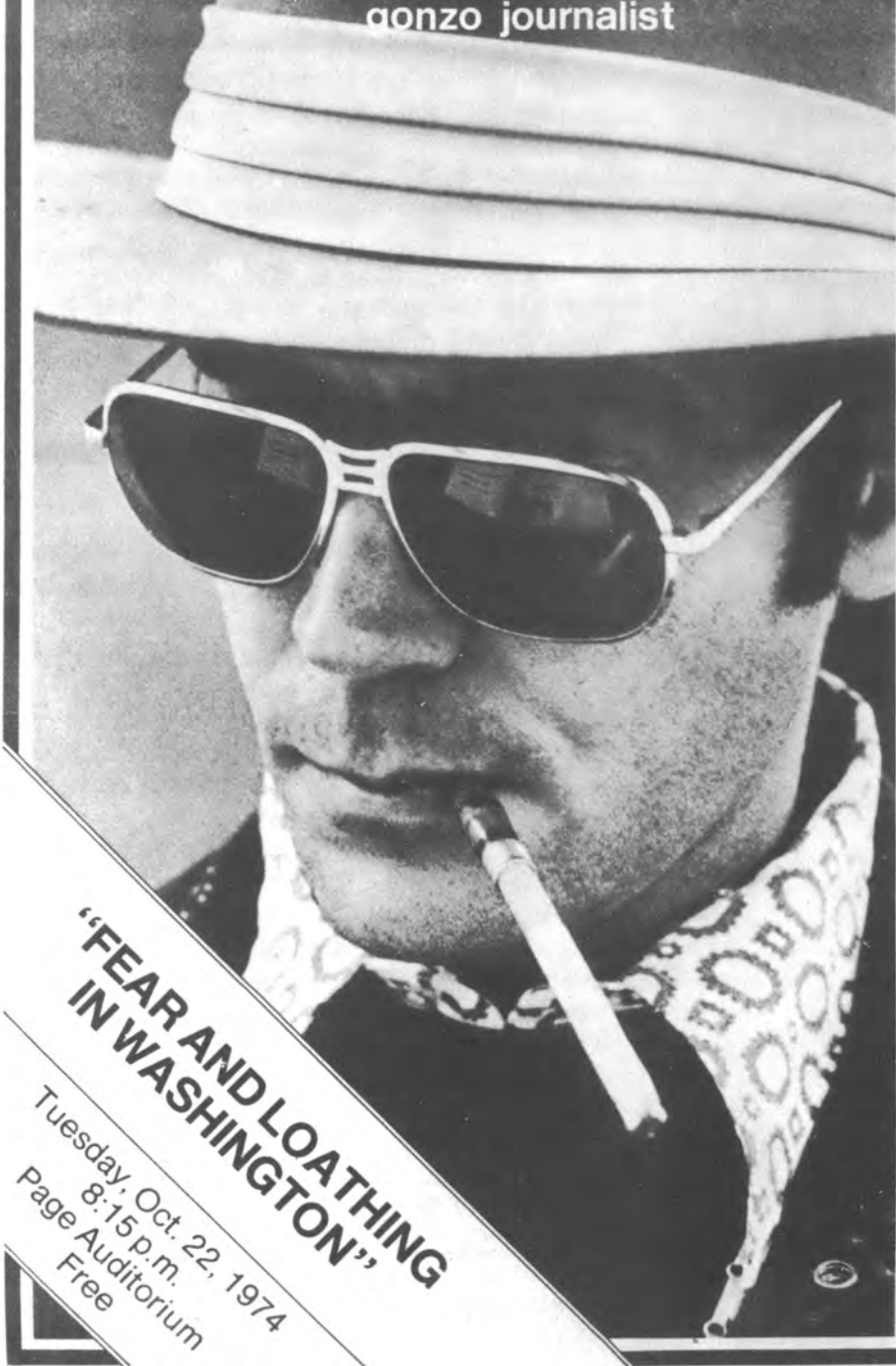
Atlanta Magazine has gone through a gradual reorganization. Today no two staff positions are exactly the same. While this leaves no room for internal promotion, it also safeguards against the type of situation which gave rise to our discrimination charges.

The four of us are somewhat altered by the experience. Penny has become less of an activist. Coram is more of a feminist. Suzi no longer shields her considerable executive abilities behind pretended feminine incompetence. And I am better able to stand up and express my needs and feelings without apology.

I would like to say my attitudes about men and women are greatly changed, but I don't believe they are. I still recognize my maternal instincts, as well as the little girl inside myself. And I see the men in my world as authority figures and small boys, as well as companions. I do notice one difference, however. Having once fought for my rights and won, I am far less inclined to view men as adversaries.

None of us has given much thought to whether or not we helped effect any far-reaching changes. The long, slow process is simply over. We all learned from it, as much about ourselves as about other people and the ways of power. None of us regrets the action we took. Nor would we care to relive what began so casually that sleepy August afternoon.

Duke University Union Major Speakers Committee
HUNTER THOMPSON presents
gonzo journalist



**"FEAR AND LOATHING
IN WASHINGTON"**

Tuesday, Oct. 22, 1974
8:15 p.m.
Page Auditorium
Free

THE JOURNALIST AS SUPERSTAR

"Great art is not an expression of Personality but an escape from it. Of course, only someone with a strong personality can know what it means to want to escape it."

— T. S. Eliot

by Steve Cummings

The audience that had assembled at Duke University's Page Auditorium on a cool October evening could have been mistaken for any crowd gathered for a rock concert. Frisbees and paper airplanes flew from the floor to the balcony and back again. Joints and bottles passed down the rows of seats filled with long-haired students. But there was a strange difference. Instead of banks of amplifiers, the stage contained only a podium, a few chairs, and a microphone. Instead of programs or complimentary t-shirts, spiral notebooks were eagerly clutched in young hands. The attraction that had drawn these Duke students, the self-conscious cream of Southern academia, was not a band but a single journalist, a writer who had emerged from the poorly-paid drudgery of free-lancing into the limelight of popular and professional acclaim. The Big Draw tonight was Hunter S. Thompson, "The Dean," as the posters had announced, "of Gonzo journalism."

I.

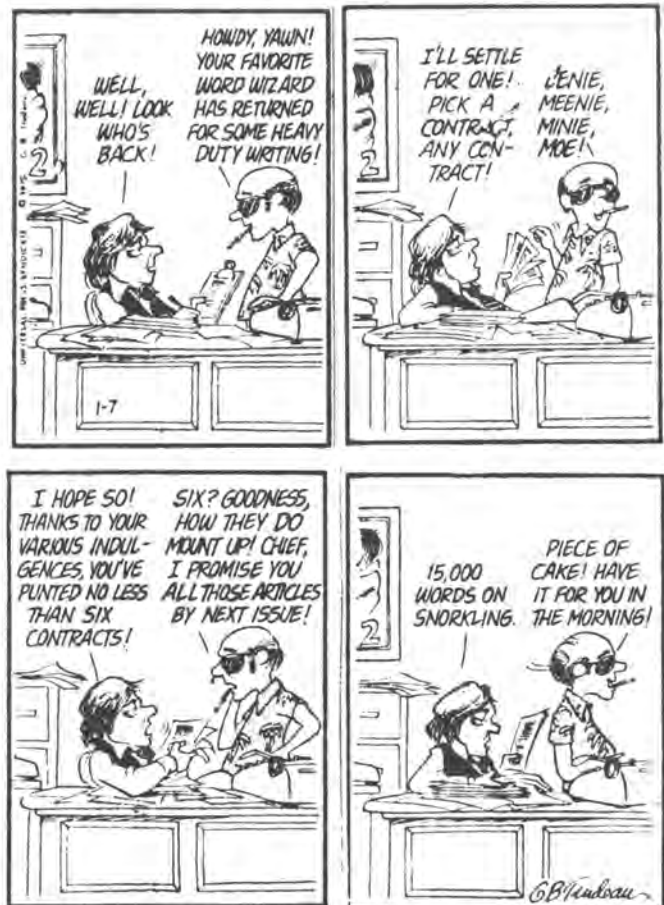
Thompson, an ex-Kentuckian, had written for *Sports Illustrated*, *The Nation*, and various newspapers before attracting popular notice with one of the earliest forays into New Journalism, a book on California motorcycle gangs called *Hell's Angels*. He followed with several articles for *Rolling Stone* and a frenzied campaign for sheriff of Aspen, Colorado, on the Freak Power ticket. Perhaps his greatest achievement to date, however, has been *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, a semi-fictional account of a week long, drug-induced, credit card powered attack made by Thompson (under the alias of Raoul Duke) and Chicano activist Oscar Zeta Acosta (passing as a Samoan attorney) on the hype-ridden Nevada way of life.

Fear and Loathing is an LSD fancier's version of the *Divine Comedy*, a journey through a uniquely-American Purgatory with eyes forced wide-open by chemicals. When it first appeared, serialized in *Rolling Stone*, it rang bells of recognition in the heads of activist-visionaries who had tried to maintain the spirit of the sixties in the face of the deadening Nixon seventies through sheer audacity and adrenalin. It was a book of great perception, compassion, and humor, and it earned Thompson the National Affairs desk at *Rolling Stone*, a job that basically entailed covering the 1972 Presidential primaries.

As Timothy Crouse recounts in his book on the media's campaign coverage, *The Boys On the Bus*, Thompson hit the Ziegler-cowed press corps like an obscene thunderbolt, disregarding all the cherished rules of political journalism, such as "privileged information" and "objective reporting." He despised Nixon and made no effort to hide the fact. He had a qualified, tentative regard for George McGovern though, and was one of the very first journalists to understand the strategy of his campaign and take it seriously. Upon publication of his collected campaign articles, entitled *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail*, Thompson hit the peak of his profession. His articles were sought after, he was interviewed by *Playboy*, and Garry Trudeau created a new *Doonesbury* cartoon character named "Duke."

DOONESBURY

by Garry Trudeau



Thompson's meteoric rise as an "articulate freak" coincided exactly with the re-emergence of the Reporter as pop hero; but while journalists like Woodward and Bernstein were relatively normal folk, soft-spoken, and essentially linked with the system and structures they "constructively criticized," Thompson was something else again. Battered, defiant, and determined to stay high, he is the logical successor to the short-lived heroes of the late sixties. Hunter Thompson has become, probably without his knowledge, and almost certainly without his consent, a Star.

II.

All this became disturbingly apparent as the Duke crowd, annoyed that Thompson was nearly an hour late, stomped their feet and clapped their hands in unison. All that was lacking was the occasional strident yell of "Boogie!" or "Start the music!" This crowd had not come to be lectured, but to be titillated. And at first they were not disappointed.

Thompson shambled on stage with the student M.C. anxiously guiding him to the lectern. As he was introduced, Thompson grimaced and squinted out at the audience. A tall, nearly bald, powerful looking man, he could easily have been mistaken for the sort of mean Army lifer who makes his career in the Airborne divisions. Only his cigarette holder implied that his personality might belie the visual impression.

"I'm pleased to be here at Richard Nixon's alma mater," he began, referring to Duke's Law School. There was only scattered applause. Re-opening an old wound was not guaranteed to appeal to proud Dukies. "First, I really don't know why I'm here. I don't have anything to say. I was on my way to Africa when the agency that ships me around like a piece of meat told me to come here. I don't even know if you paid anything to get in, but at any rate, all I'm going to do is to stand up here and argue."

And that was precisely what happened. Thompson leafed through a pile of notecards bearing questions submitted by the audience, flipping them one by one onto the floor where they joined a dozen or so paper airplanes that already littered the stage. Occasionally he would mutter "bullshit," or "Jesus Christ," all the while shaking his head in disbelief. He paused when he reached one card, took the time to re-read it, then leaned into the microphone and said, "This one wants to know, 'What's the happiest you've been in the past month?' Christ, isn't there anybody here with any intelligence?"

The question was resoundingly answered in the negative by a barrage of stupid queries shouted

from the audience.

"What's your favorite drug?"

"I don't do drugs."

"What do you think of Rockefeller?"

"Come on, get serious!"

"Does Nixon have a political future?"

"He'll try."

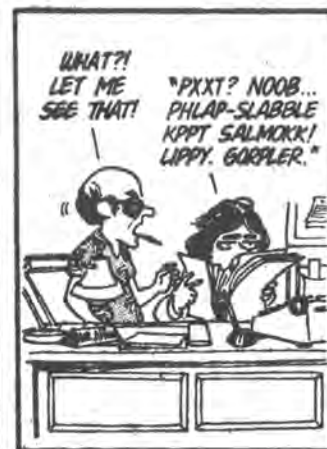
"What about Terry Sanford?"

"God, I hope not."

DOONESBURY



by Garry Trudeau



Things went on like that for a few minutes, the audience asking about motorcycles, the relevance of voting, the sex life of Hell's Angels women, and various minutiae that had become attached to the Gonzo legend. Then came a voice from the balcony:

"What are you high on right now?"

This question, nightmarishly reminiscent of the Joplin and Hendrix concerts, where the prime topic of conversation was whether the star was tripping, on downs, or drunk, seemed to catch Thompson like a blow to the solar plexus. He had previously been sparring, but his mood suddenly changed. He turned on whom he obviously considered his tormenters with nearly incoherent relish. The fact that he probably *was* high at the time did not do anything to calm him down.

"What the hell do you fucking people think you're doing? . . . You're the wave of the future, God forbid. You're the type that went to see Evel Knievel bash his brains in at the Snake River Canyon . . . You're beer hippies! You don't give a shit or lift a finger to change things." Now anyone at all familiar with southern academic life knows to be a Duke student is to be as close as one can come in this life to Perfection, at least in the eyes of Duke students. So Thompson's assault came as somewhat of a surprise. Brooding resentment grew into outright cat-calls and insults.

Thompson responded to this by wandering from one end of the stage to the other; mumbling, pausing to answer inane questions, or challenge hecklers to fight. No one accepted. Only occasionally did he remember to speak into the microphone, and then he generally answered a question nobody had heard. It was obvious that Thompson considered himself involved in a verbal barroom brawl. Yet several times he dropped the fighter's role to deal with serious queries. One student asked, "Who was the greater man, Neal Cassidy or Eugene McCarthy?"

Thompson immediately answered, "Cassidy. And thank you, that was an intelligent question."

A student asked if it wasn't possible to "infiltrate the system." Thompson laughed nastily and asked how the kid proposed to do this. When the student answered that he was a journalism major and wanted to air his ideas discreetly through a major newspaper, he was scornfully asked what ideas he had. There was a pause and then the quiet answer, "Socialism." With long years of newspaper work behind him, Thompson snorted in amazement at such naivete. But the wave of laughter the kid's brave vocalization had brought forth caught Thompson short. After all, here was one beer hippie with the guts actually to defend his commitment in a hall full of half-baked

cynics. He leaned over the podium and advised the kid to go ahead and try it; there were a few editors into that sort of thing. It may not have been a realistic thing to say, but it was a satisfying bit of professional and political solidarity. There were few such human moments that night.

The unequal contest continued for a few more minutes, until Thompson flew into a fit at some particularly noxious question and threw his notes, water glass, and everything else handy at the stage curtain and began to pound on the microphone. At this point, the student committee responsible for the whole disastrous evening dispatched a petite, young woman to fetch Thompson from the stage. He was led off as sheepishly as he was led on, to a chorus of boos. Some were meant for the committee; most were intended for Thompson.

Afterwards, a small crowd of Thompson fans engaged the student committee outside the stage door in one of those interminable debates on Free Speech that are an indispensable feature of college politics. Thompson himself eventually emerged from backstage and wandered about the campus, talking to groups of students in a strained, though civil, manner. The next day, he would be off to cover the Ali-Foreman bout, no doubt glad to be away from Durham and dealing with a fight in which, with any luck, he would not be a participant.

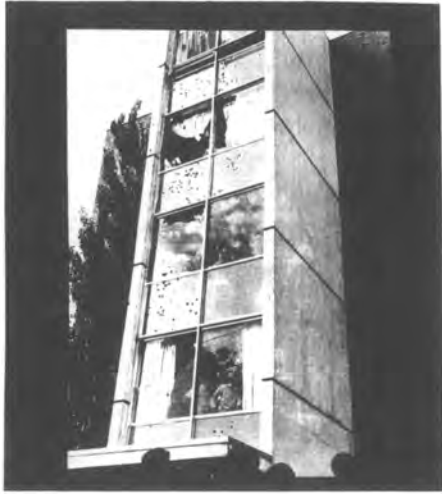
III.

For those he left behind, however, the whole bizarre incident raised some disturbing questions. In the first place, some of the audience that night had not been punks; there were many people there who had gone through the same changes and ordeals as Thompson. And like him, they were attempting to lead committed, humane lives in a society that frowns on that sort of thing. In their daily hassles, Thompson's work had been a welcome assistance. It was painful to see him becoming a prisoner of his image. Finally, there is always the nightmare memory of Hemingway and Dylan Thomas, leading lives that were caricatures of their dreams. The comparison becomes more explicit and deadly when it is realized that Thompson's true predecessors, as mentioned before, were the sad, doomed geniuses of sixties rock music.

There are enough tragedies in this benighted decade to keep us busy: the loss of a valuable writer and man is not at all necessary. All we can do though, is wish him well as he battles the Great American Success Machine, an enemy as corrupt as the Hell's Angels, as elusive as an LSD vision.



JACKSON STATE MASSACRE



Kudzu staff, David Doggett and Everett Long, in Jackson office



photo by Bob Analavage

underground in mississippi

by David Doggett

During the late '60's and early '70's, a small press boom hit the country and the South. Scores of papers sprang up, flourished briefly, and died. One of them, the *Kudzu*, was published by myself and others in Jackson, Mississippi, from 1968 to 1972. In those days, Tom Forcade of the Underground Press Syndicate liked to startle people by pointing out that the South had more underground papers in proportion to its population than the rest of the nation. But it was no surprise to us. After all, writing and music have long been the prominent modes of expression in the South, if for no other reason than the economic reality that printing is the cheapest medium, and therefore the most accessible one to Southerners.

Economics has a lot to do with the media, as does the larger political and social situation surrounding the people who use it. As a Southerner, I am also keenly aware of the intimate relationship between past and present. So in telling the story of the *Kudzu*, a little background is appropriate, and a continual reference to the broader political picture is necessary. And since the *Kudzu*, like many papers of the period, was largely a one-man show — despite all our efforts to the contrary — this story is also a personal account of my own experiences.



photo by David Doggett

The black community in Mississippi had begun moving into action in the early '60's, with the Freedom Summer of 1964 highlighting the times; at the time, only sporadic connections existed between local whites and the Movement. The first competent attempts to reach out to local whites in Mississippi were made by the Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC) beginning in 1966. (Of course, I am speaking here of radical organizing, the term radical meaning loosely an approach to social change which seeks to go beyond mere reform, which seeks to build a consciousness of the inevitable need to change, *from the roots up*, all of the basic social, political, and economic institutions of society.)

When SSOC began organizing in Mississippi in 1966, I was a sophomore at Millsaps College, a small Methodist liberal arts college in Jackson. Millsaps was a place where kids went who didn't have the grades or money to go to a big name school out of state; also a good number of working-class kids on scholarships and loans went there. I grew up the son of a rural Methodist preacher in north Mississippi, and as is usual with young Southerners with intellectual pretensions, my biggest ambition was to get away from provincial Mississippi to experience the supposedly exciting life in the urban intellectual centers. That being beyond my means or know-how in 1966, the next best thing was to make contact with the young intellectuals from New York and San Francisco who came to Mississippi to work with the Civil Rights Movement. I also became involved as one of the earliest and most consistent Deep South contacts for SSOC, a relationship which lasted for three years, and I began reading the Movement papers such as the *National Guardian* and the publications of SSOC and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

I wanted very much to expose other young Southerners to the information I was coming into contact with for the first time. Jackson's two newspapers, the biggest in the state, were so notoriously right wing that even Ho Chi Minh, on the other side of the world, had singled them out for special comment. (I forget the exact quote, but it had something to do with using racism to divide the working class.) I felt that much could be gained by just communicating progressive information and analysis to people. But I was faced with the traditional southern reluctance to take "outside propaganda" seriously. A possible solution to this obstacle seemed to be to produce a purely local publication which presented information in language more tolerable to local whites

than the often excessively rhetorical language of the Movement press.

My earliest compatriot in this endeavor was Lee Makamson, an ardent political science major and debater from a working-class family in Jackson. Lee used to say that if he had been alive back in the early historic days of the labor struggle, he would have wanted to be involved in that; and since civil rights was the historic struggle of his generation, he jumped in with both feet. In late 1965, Lee and I began publishing a mimeographed sort of newsletter called the *Free Southern Student*, which we passed out to friends at Millsaps and mailed out to a few other students we knew in the black and white schools around the state. We used the mimeograph of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. The *Free Southern Student* contained our opinions on civil rights and the Vietnam War, and a smattering of factual reporting on various civil rights projects we visited around the state. It was not, however, a mass publication and its effects were indeterminant; I think we printed four or five issues altogether.

In the spring and summer of 1966, I began traveling to southeastern and national civil rights and antiwar conferences. I joined the James Meredith March from Memphis to Jackson and finished out the summer working for the Freedom Information Service, a small staff organization in Jackson which serviced the Mississippi Movement with research and information. I returned to Millsaps in the fall more determined than ever to communicate with other students. Lee, however, had unexpectedly become disillusioned with publishing. Alone, I printed one issue of a sequel to the *Free Southern Student* which I called the *Mockingbird*, a play on the state bird and my intentions of mocking the status quo. My plea for help with the publication didn't get a single positive response, so I abandoned the project.

During this period, a new dynamic arose — the hippie movement. While the Movement had been my only means of escape from the straightjacket of Mississippi, younger students had found another avenue to freedom. Consequently, those few young people in Jackson who might have joined me in throwing in with the Movement grew long hair and played rock music instead. Not that they felt no kinship with the Movement, but integration was moving along without their help, was actually moving faster than anyone had expected, and the Movement leaned more and more toward a theoretical and rhetorical approach which intimidated all but the most intellectually oriented young people. Besides, the new hippie movement was far more glamorous. So over the next two years, drugs and music took precedence over

political activism among those few white young people inclined toward rebellion against the ways of previous generations in Mississippi.

One incident alone during this period brought the emotional appeal of the civil rights struggle temporarily back to the forefront. In the spring of 1967, a sequence of loosely organized events surrounding student protest about traffic passing through the center of the predominantly black Jackson State College campus culminated in the shooting of a local civil rights worker by the police. A number of facts tended to discredit the official story that the man was part of a street crowd attacking the police, including the fact that the man, Benjamin Brown, was shot in the back. It appeared that at best he was the victim of typical police overreaction and at worst he had simply been recognized and murdered by a cop.

The following morning several of us at Millsaps made up some quick placards and organized a march to city hall. We were prepared to march with as few as five students, but were amazed to find twenty people lining up to march. Now this may not seem like very many people, but only two of us had ever been in a political demonstration before. And this was Mississippi. Everyone on the march was calling forth completely unknown consequences at the hands of school, family, friends, future employers, and the Ku Klux Klan — not to mention the police, who had the night before gunned a man down in public. It was the first demonstration of this type in memory, maybe ever, carried out solely by Mississippi whites, and it was a little different from your usual Movement march. The president of the junior class, who was also a first string lineman on the football team, took my placard away from me and led the march; and the campus karate champ strolled along beside the line to protect us from any threatening bystanders we might encounter. Well, nobody got shot, or even kicked out of school, but the event made the NBC evening news and caused untold turmoil in twenty Mississippi families immediately thereafter. It also threw a godawful kink in the school's big drive to raise funds from conservative alumni to match some promised Ford Foundation money.

That march was one of the most powerful experiences of my life. It was one thing to work and demonstrate with northern students and blacks; it was many times more moving to do so with my own people. In retrospect, however, problems appeared at that point which haven't substantially changed even now. The march indicated the potential strength of average people — and the Movement's failure to reach them on a day-to-day basis; thus, after the Ben Brown

controversy, things settled back into the previous apolitical stupor.

II.

By the spring of 1968, the continuing impact of the national student movement had created an atmosphere which left some of the more morally-inclined students — whether hippie or not — feeling a little restless to get on with things like ending the Vietnam War and reforming the university. A controversy developed at Millsaps over the firing of an anthropology instructor who had come from Columbia University two years before. The alumni had gotten upset about his research into social change in Mississippi, and the administration was uptight about his fraternization with the most rebellious elements of the student body, namely myself and several others. In response to this issue and to things in general, a number of us began publishing a little mimeographed publication of satire and comment called the *Unicorn*. I'll never forget the experience of walking into the school cafeteria right after the first issue had been passed out and seeing a couple hundred people intently pouring over our writing; after the previous years of frustration, the sense of communication was so gratifying. I was hooked on writing.

The trick that made it all so different from the old *Free Southern Student* and *Mockingbird*, the trick it took the hippies to teach us, was to make the publication more general in appeal and content. We used the Freedom Information Service's electronic stencil maker which copied illustrations, got artists to draw covers and cartoons for us, and published poetry and music commentary and other things besides dry, serious political writings. We had the writers from the censored school paper doing stuff for us and the whole thing was a great success. We probably could have made money if we had sold *Unicorn*, instead of giving it away. That spring we had an antiwar demonstration which we promoted as a "Peace Parade" with cars decorated with banners and crepe paper. The most successful organizational approach, both in terms of getting the participation of young people and communicating with the rest of the population, seemed to be to combine the aesthetic concern and fun-loving nature of the hippie movement with the political insight and moral direction of the civil rights and antiwar movements.

Another major event occurred in the spring of 1968 — the beginning of Atlanta's *Great Speckled Bird*. Many of the *Bird's* founding staff members were friends of mine through SSOC. I watched the *Bird* take shape and decided that such a paper could be done in Mississippi on a smaller scale and

would be the most effective tool for organizing and communicating; besides, I really was hooked on writing. That summer I went to Atlanta and lived in a basement room of the *Bird* office on 14th Street for about a month while I learned the necessary technology and skills. Photo-offset made it all so simple and cheap; you just type your stuff up, paste it down with the artwork, mark spaces for the photos and give the whole thing to a printer, who photographs your pasteup and makes plates from his photocopies. Several thousand copies of a tabloid size could be printed at a cost somewhere around 10 cents a copy.

Also, during that summer I became the Mississippi organizer for the Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC). Few people knew anything about SSOC; its history was brief, its development rapid, and staff turnovers so frequent that even people who were at one time or another part of the staff have an incomplete comprehension of SSOC's development and demise. In certain fringe areas of the South such as Texas and Florida, SDS was the major white student organization, but in most of the South SSOC played the major role. Its influence was so strong on us in Mississippi, and on other individuals and small groups working in isolated places in the South, that in some ways a discussion of SSOC is the beginning point, and in too many ways also the end point, of the story of my generation's experience of radicalism in the South. In many ways what happened to the *Kudzu* and other small press operations in the South was merely a delayed echo of what happened to SSOC.

SSOC was organized in 1964 by several young white Southerners who had been active in SNCC. At that early date they perceived what the national Movement learned somewhat later, namely that although integration was a beautiful ideal, it simply was not a practical reality at that time. Meaningful organizing required that blacks organize blacks, and whites, who were the real problem anyway, be reached by whites, and in particular, southern whites be reached by other southern whites.

In addition to their experience in SNCC, most of the original founders of SSOC also had roots in the few progressive, somewhat covert activities of southern churches, although by this time little vestiges of religiosity remained. From its headquarters in a small house in Nashville the staff raised funds, organized conferences, coordinated regionwide demonstrations, published a regular magazine and many pamphlets on various subjects, and sent out campus travelers around the South. Essentially, it operated as a loosely-knit network of organizers trying to keep up with the developments in the national Movement and at the same time reach out to the most unsophisticated, provincial, and reactionary constituency in the country.

After joining the SSOC staff, I began using Mississippi's share of SSOC's budget to publish the *Kudzu*, although most of the money came from local supporters and subscribers. At that time, it would have been impossible to say which meant more to me, SSOC or my dedication to the *Kudzu* and to changing Mississippi. When we



photo by David Doggett

Bill Rusk and Mike McNamara in the *Kudzu's* Farish Street office before it burned.

started in the fall of '68, I was the only full-time member of the *Kudzu* staff; everyone else went to Millsaps, but by the spring a few others had dropped out and the full-time staff fluctuated around four to six members.

We were never doctrinaire leftists but instead were enthusiastic supporters of the new youth movement. Marxist-Leninism looked just great when you sat home and read about it – and we all began our understanding of economics with Marx – but I came to believe that while Marx was a genius at analysis, the father of social science, he was lousy at predictions. Revolution had not occurred in the industrialized capitalist nations as the old left claimed was inevitable. Revolution had occurred in the least industrialized countries and long years of practicing doctrinaire Marxist-Leninism in the U.S. had resulted in virtually nothing and only slightly more had been accomplished by Marxist-Leninists in Europe. It seemed clear that something more was needed and the new youth movement was the best we could do for the time being. It made no more sense to me to go out and try to coerce the American people into swallowing the CP line than it would have for me to try to get people to join my father's church; on the other hand my own generation was onto something which was spreading like wild fire and which seemed to offer unlimited possibilities for revolutionary change.

III.

Organizationally, the *Kudzu* was small enough that a maximum of democracy could be practiced. We decided on the content of each issue by consensus and nobody did much specialization. We more or less did things all together as the need arose. People would write for a few days, then we'd type up copy and start pasting up. When the paper was printed we'd all spend the next few days mailing out the subscriptions and exchanges and hawking the paper on the street.

We were scrupulously legal, but arrests were inevitable. We dared not print anything that could be construed by a judge as pornographic, and our political writings were quite mild by national standards, certainly nothing that could easily be called seditious. We showed no nudity to speak of but we often wrote in a conversational style interspersed with everyday slang. We wanted to bring the printed word down off of its bourgeois intellectual pedestal, and we felt it was class prejudice that prohibited the public use of the old peasant Anglo-Saxon four letter words. We wouldn't really have been disappointed if there had been no arrests, but we were ready for them. Several lawyers in Jackson had extensive experi-

ence dealing with the local authorities on civil rights cases, and we had great confidence in them. A rash of arrests of *Kudzu* vendors around high schools broke out with our second issue. Everyone on the staff was busted at least once. The charges ranged from assault to vagrancy, all false and all eventually dropped. But the publicity turned out to be just what the paper needed to get off the ground. The second round of arrests were for "pandering to minors," four letter words being the issue; these cases died two or three years later in federal court.

An accurate account of arrests, atrocities, and major incidents of harassment would be a whole story in itself; we averaged several arrests a month throughout the first year of publication. Most arrests didn't involve any brutality, but beatings occurred often enough that one could never be sure what to expect. The *Kudzu* also catalyzed a number of other incidents such as high schoolers getting sent off to military academies and college students being cut off from financial support from home. Things were moving very fast and we felt we were breaking a lot of ground and reaching huge numbers of people, so we really didn't care how often we got thrown in jail as long as we kept getting back out and kept publishing. The arrests drained time and energy from us, and sometimes it looked like we wouldn't be able to come up with bond money; but somehow we always found a handful of liberals willing to risk putting up their suburban homes as property bonds, and fortunately we never sustained a conviction except for a few traffic violations.

We considered ourselves very fortunate in that we never came under any serious physical attack from the right, except from the police themselves of course. We got threatening phone calls all day and night, and one time somebody loosened the lug nuts on our VW's front wheels hoping we'd wreck before we discovered it. Then there was one guy who took to following us around, but we eventually confronted him and he started coming in the office and arguing politics with us. And just once somebody fired a .22 through the front window several times. But considering where we were, and considering things that happened to others, Mississippi's renowned night riders never really did anything to us to speak of. Just the same, nobody ever did anything so rash as to spend the night in the front room of any office or house we ever had.

We worked hard that first year. We were called lazy hippies and the police charged us with things like loitering and vagrancy, but we worked sixteen hours a day. We didn't try to get a printer in Jackson; even if we could have found one, it

would have been too easy for pressure to be brought to bear on him. We had a printer in New Orleans, a black man and a Kennedy liberal who printed the *Louisiana Weekly*. He had a lot of sympathy for what we were doing and gave us good rates and most important of all, credit. We would stay up all night finishing the layout and then take off at five o'clock in the morning for New Orleans trying to make the printer's nine o'clock deadline. While we waited for the paper to be run off, we usually visited the staff of one of New Orleans' underground papers, most notably Bob Head and Darlene Fife's *NOLA Express*. New Orleans became our second home, and one or another of us made the four hundred mile round trip to New Orleans once or twice a month for the next four years. We had a hundred thousand breakdowns and the car left the road with us twice that I was a witness to; I guess as long as I live I'll have nightmares of breakdowns and crack-ups between Jackson and New Orleans.

Our first issue was laid out on the kitchen table of an off campus apartment near Millsaps, and as a writer for *Rolling Stone* later wrote, the *Kudzu* always looked like it was actually printed on the run. The truth of the matter is that over the next four years we operated out of an oft changing succession of rundown rental properties. Only once during our third year of publication did we operate out of an actual office in a business district. That brief period ended one night when somebody snuck in the back window and set fire to the place. One of us just happened to come along at three a.m. and call the fire department before much damage occurred. At that point, we had a falling out with the landlord and went back to our usual arrangement of operating from a post office box and the kitchen table.

It was a rough existence in those early days. Five to fifteen people and a newspaper office crammed into some rundown one or two bedroom duplex. You had to eat, sleep, and work all day and night, every day and night within the same four walls and with the same people — except for the ever-present and ever-changing assortment of high school runaways, political travelers, California hitch-hikers, etc. And while these people were a constant stimulation (and also distraction) in their own right, there inevitably followed in their wake knocks on the door by juvenile officers, parents, and FBI agents. We found ourselves learning many new skills, like how not to get attached to small articles which might disappear in the morning with last night's hitchhiker, and how to get a night's sleep undisturbed by ringing phones and knocks on doors, and how to tactfully ask someone we just met to shut-up and please leave



photo by Bill Peltz

My room after raid on *Kudzu* house in 1971.

the room while we held a staff meeting.

Naturally, under such conditions there were constant personality problems and in fact the ability to work out one's personal problems (either collectively or individually) quickly became an automatic prerequisite for survival on our staff. Of course, collective solutions were what we knew should be happening, and things ran much smoother when we forced ourselves to take the time to sit down periodically and talk things out rather than waiting until things built up beyond the point of no return. The struggle between individual freedom and collective needs within our little group was in our minds as much as the greater struggle of the Movement. Invariably it became clear how a person's politics and personality were inseparably related: those who tended toward anarchism were sometimes undisciplined and irresponsible on a personal level, and authoritarians sometimes disregarded democratic and egalitarian ethics in personal struggles. We found that while we struggled toward a certain idealized concept of interpersonal freedom and egalitarianism, it became necessary at times to draw the line and exclude disruptive individuals.

For me, the living and working conditions were the worst, and the pressures, publicity, and the harassment were the most stressful that I ever experienced – but it was the happiest period of my life, before or since. The best integration I could ever hope for of my personal talents, skills, background and interests with my moral goals occurred during these years. We felt we were accomplishing so much and threw ourselves so completely into dealing on a day-to-day basis with the greater moral issues of life. We really felt that we were an important part of humanity's struggle through history. It was the most fulfilling, meaningful, productive, and creative period of my life.

But I had never known how long to expect the paper to sustain itself. I had gone into the first issue fully prepared that it be the last, believing that even one issue would be better than none; if we came out of it able to publish a second issue then so be it, and on and on, issue after issue, for as long as it lasted. But the initial rapidity and intensity of our success only served to make more depressing the lack of direction and activity of the subsequent years. Really, I'm not over it yet.

IV.

In the spring of 1969, SSOC was reluctantly dragged into the national Movement's accelerating whirlpool of self-indulgent factionalism, hair-splitting rhetorical debate, and violence fetishism. Before it was all over the SSOC leadership had lost the support of any real constituency in the South, and SSOC was ostracized and denounced by SDS on the basis of highly questionable factionalist grounds. At that point SSOC dissolved itself. SDS's own dissolution was just around the corner.

But even before it became clear that SSOC and SDS were finished, I resigned from SSOC because I could see that even if the organization continued, it was irrevocably committed to a preoccupation with debate and theory. It was going nowhere that would help me in the everyday struggle in Mississippi, and that struggle in the end was the only hold on anything real that I had. I really could find little help from the rhetoricians and debaters in SSOC and the national Movement. If it didn't help me deal with the people I had grown up with and lived among in Mississippi, the only people in all of history and in the whole round world that I really knew – the guys who I started to school with in the first grade and who came to school in overalls and bare feet and who grew up and worked at the corner service station, and the girls who wore dresses made out of flour sacks and who grew up and worked at the garment

factory or in the dime store – if it didn't give me something to say to those people then I didn't want anything to do with it. If you couldn't talk to those people in their own language and say things to them that they could immediately relate to themselves, then you had nothing to say to them at all; all the meetings and conferences and debates and pamphlets and books were worthless unless they could help us develop something to say to those people, and the Movement was suddenly doing everything in the world but that one supremely essential thing.

But if SDS and SSOC were a lost cause, they weren't the whole Movement. The underground press was a mushrooming phenomenon all over the country, and papers seemed to be drawing in people who were more oriented to real communication than the organization freaks of SDS and SSOC; and these people also tried to integrate the divergent tendencies of pure politics and apolitical counter-culture, an integration that seemed essential to real communication. Even in the most backwards areas of Mississippi, young people of all classes were attracted to the hip culture by the mass media, and they were simply too turned on by the newness and excitement of it all to be susceptible to a purely political approach. They literally demanded greater and greater exposure to the new culture with all of its wide-ranging concerns. But as their participation in this new culture increased, they came up against the same brutish, reactionary, intolerant Mississippi power structure that the black activists had been fighting all those years.

We forgot about SDS and SSOC; the battle was right here in our own back yard now. We had to stake out some kind of sane territory which somehow balanced the superficial and naive idealism of the hippie love and anarchy tendencies with the deeper and more realistic understanding of society that politics could provide. This was the goal of much of the underground press at that time, and we exchanged publications with hundreds of papers all over the country and the world and went to occasional regional and national conferences of the Underground Press Syndicate. In Mississippi, we were building up a growing network of contacts around the state, mostly on college campuses and to a lesser extent in the high schools.

In the spring of 1969, we organized "The First Annual Mississippi Youth Jubilee." We used a former college campus leased to the Delta Ministry, a left-liberal civil-rights-oriented project of the National Council of Churches, and showed a bunch of Movement films and had a few speakers and discussion groups and invited local

rock bands to come play Saturday night. The Jubilee was all things to all people. For some people it was just a party, but there was substantial participation by most of the two or three hundred people in the politically-oriented functions.

Saturday afternoon the highway patrol illegally entered the grounds and provided a fruitful center of focus. They had lurked around the entrance the whole weekend checking licenses, issuing an occasional ticket. Saturday they took to cruising through the campus without permission or invitation, and on one of their incursions an irate crowd closed in around two of their cars and prevented them from leaving. We confronted them and told them they could either buy a ticket like everyone else or they could promise not to return. When they refused to do either, people started breaking bottles in the road where they would have to pass. A heated debate started between the pacifists and the bottle breakers, and the pacifists picked up the broken glass and the patrolmen left. During the rest of the weekend, we kept the entrance blocked with cars so they couldn't return. The incident greatly enhanced everyone's sense of solidarity and collective power and it stimulated a lot of creative interchange over the issue of how to deal with repression. A statewide organization was established to keep people in touch and to plan another Jubilee the following year.

V.

The next years were a downhill struggle. We printed twice as many issues of the *Kudzu* during our first year of publication than in any of the next three. We became a monthly publication and finally couldn't even make that. We were never able to develop an advertising base and had to depend solely on the income from sales. But distribution was so bad we never really scratched the surface of our potential readership. Newsstands and commercial distributors refused to touch us, so we had to depend on student volunteers and a sort of hand-to-hand distribution system. Sometimes we had good distributors on the campuses and sometimes we didn't; and sometimes they sent us the income from the sales and sometimes they didn't. We didn't have the time or the means of transportation to make the rounds of the campuses and small town distributors. And Jackson is not a very big city and street sales were never profitable enough for us to develop reliable street hawkers. We usually ended up standing on the street corners ourselves, more to see the paper reach people than to make even enough bread to feed ourselves and pay the printer. A small core of left-liberals composed of the Delta Ministry people, a few holdovers from the earlier civil rights movement, and a few older local people kept a trickle in our bank account



Edge City—biracial young people's community center in downtown Jackson, 1972.

that helped us subsist. But we found it necessary to take turns holding down outside jobs and sharing the income with the rest of the staff. That worked for awhile, but as the years dragged on and self-sufficiency became more of a dream than a real probability, the personal strain of that arrangement became too great and the sacrifice became less and less justifiable.

But living in Mississippi had always been a constant struggle financially; hell, half the population of the state, white and black both, walked around scarcely knowing where their next meal was coming from, and always had. Back in my civil rights days I had walked the streets of Jackson collecting pop bottles from the gutters to get grocery money, had rolled countless cigarettes from stray butts found in ash trays, and learned to make the best of every opportunity to eat leftovers off the tables in restaurants and lunchcounters. No, it wasn't the hard times that finally got to us; God knows we knew how to live with that in Mississippi.

What took the wind out of our sails was looking on the disarray of the rest of the nation and finding nothing real out there to identify with. Within a year of SSOC's demise SDS itself splintered into several factions and lost its national following. I was too busy with the *Kudzu* and things in Mississippi to even say "I told you so." But over the next three years the loss of national organization made itself felt more and more and before it was all over I came to realize that as important as local roots were, they could be rendered worthless by the isolation that the lack of national solidarity imposed on us. Liberation News Service had split down the middle over the counter-culture versus purist politics debate. The cultural faction disappeared into Vermont or somewhere and all that was left was the verbal diarrhea of the New York political heavies. Other underground papers around the country seemed to be moving relentlessly down the trail SDS had blazed of being increasingly obsessed with purist politics and violence fetishism. Meanwhile the whole counter-culture thing became increasingly superficial and reactionary under the onslaught of commercialism and escapism; and if that wasn't enough, people were taking more and more of a depressing turn to the mindless mysticism of religious cults and astrology. The middle ground of sanity disappeared and with it our hopes for the emergence of an effective national Movement. One after another *Kudzu* staff members became frustrated with the isolation of Mississippi and packed up and headed out for parts unknown.

But for awhile new people kept joining the staff, and if we no longer had quite the energy



photo by David Doggett

Women's Dorm at Jackson State, 1970.

and vision of our original mission, we were at least turning out bigger and bigger demonstrations against the Vietnam War and recording Mississippi's recurring brutalities. We were there when the highway patrol, led by the same man we confronted at the Jubilee, shot up a crowd of black students at Jackson State College wounding a dozen and killing two; and we were there to cover the way the Jackson police provoked the Republic of New Africa leadership into a shootout and railroaded them into prison. One of our staff members, a former small town high school football first string guard, went to Cuba with a Venceremos brigade and managed to cut enough sugar cane to get elected a brigade leader. We had one more Jubilee, but our staff was too small by the third year to organize another one. The state-wide organization formed at the first Jubilee withered from lack of national involvement.

During our last two years of publication, we recognized that the *Kudzu* would not achieve self-sufficiency in the foreseeable future, so we began working on a biracial youth community center hoping that it would have a better chance of survival and that we could support ourselves and keep the *Kudzu* going on the side. There was constant harassment from the police and from a right wing motorcycle gang. At one point it got down to me holding off with a 12-gauge shotgun a group of the bikers who were trying to rob the cash box. They weren't happy with the stand-off, and immediately went over to the *Kudzu* house, beat up the only person there, and stole a bunch of stuff. I moved out of the house and slept beside a gun for a month after the incident — they had sworn to see me dead.

After about a year and a half with the community center, we found ourselves unable to raise the funds to mount the necessary court battle against legal technicalities the City Hall threw up against us and we had to close down the center. The closing of the youth center was sort of the last straw. At that point, only two of us were keeping the *Kudzu* going, and the other person besides myself was driving a taxi twelve hours a day to keep us going. We were beating a dead horse. In the spring of 1972, we packed up the paper's files and gave them to Delta Ministry and I left Mississippi.

I had corresponded with Liberation News Service about writing for them. They had no one on their staff from the South. But finally they said they were trying to maintain a ratio of two-thirds women to one-third men on their staffs and couldn't take on any more men at that point. I went to Atlanta to see about working on the *Great Speckled Bird*. Several of the people wanted

me to stay there, but when I criticized the *Bird* for losing its once large readership because it wasn't reaching people, some East Coast intellectual who had recently joined the staff called me a "tailist" for wanting to lower myself to where the people were at. It was the old chauvinism. I was just a bumpkin from the provinces who hadn't read enough Marx and Lenin. These people were just as happy as they could be sitting there being irrelevant and unread; I made plans to leave.



photo by Beverly Hensley

I wanted to take out a full page ad in every Movement paper in the country and say, "Well, what about 'failurism!' Doesn't anybody on the left care that the left's most consistent characteristic in this country is its failure to initiate and sustain real communication with the American working people?!" My experience was that nobody really did care. People cared about establishing their place in history as a Movement leader; they cared about working off their guilt for being middle or upper class by passionately embracing intellectually whatever the Movement's latest trend was; they cared about advancing their intellectual prestige in debates, and any number of the other games the intellectual class occupies itself with. But the American left has rarely been able to see the peculiarities of its own subculture and to transcend those peculiarities to establish communications with another culture, the culture of working-class America.

I got a job doing construction; not for any political reasons, but just to make a living. After two years of construction work, I've gone back to school to try to find something worthwhile to do with myself in the area of health care. Maybe I can find a way to express how I feel about people in a personal way even if I can no longer do it through the Movement.



photo by Bill Fibben

by Steve Hoffius

Christ, I just don't know what should be included in a list of alternative media outlets. I really don't. I used to know. Once I was sure. But not any more.

In the spring of '71, I hitched around the South trying to decide which underground paper I could work with. I knew I would have to leave North Carolina, since the *protean Radish* had already folded, and I felt too much an outsider at Fort Bragg to work with *Bragg Briefs*. So I headed South. I knew where to go. First to Atlanta and *The Great Speckled Bird*, which since its '68 beginning had been the leading underground of the region. It was thriving, with a circulation still approaching 20,000. It blended news of national and international liberation struggles, with music and art reviews and a recently improved collection of local news and analyses. It was an angry, defiant paper, bitter and cynical, which took joy in itself and the people around it. It was a model for others. From there to Jackson and *The Kudzu*, New Orleans and *NOLA Express*, *motive* magazine in Nashville, a couple black papers, a few college radical publications, GI papers. I knew where to go.

Terms like "alternative media" were never defined, but I assumed everyone sensed what they meant. You know, man, underground papers, like the *Bird*. Right? Everyone knew. You picked up a copy of *NOLA*, and it was filled with full page wavy-lined graphics covered in bleeding colors, and long prose poems wound in and out of the drawings. You knew it was an underground paper. The *Daily Planet* had a cover photo of the Florida governor slouched in a chair with his balls clearly outlined as they drooped into his pants. *Kudzu* described the latest attacks on their offices or staff. The *Radish* printed directions for the manufacture of Molotov cocktails. The *Bird* featured a long article about the Allman Brothers' free concerts in Piedmont Park with the statement,

"There are times when it's easy to think that the rock and roll musician is the most militant, subversive, effective, whole, together, powerful force for radical change on this planet. Other times you know it's true." You know, underground papers. Right? Everyone knew. But of those publications I visited, only the *Bird* is left, and it has changed its orientation a half dozen times since it announced that rock music would lead to a revolution.

I no longer understand the terms. Now any paper occasionally to the left of the Democratic Party is described as "alternative." An FM radio station that simply plays rock album cuts instead of Top 40 singles is called "progressive." Does "alternative media" refer to the creativity of the staff or their radical political beliefs? The two rarely coincide. I know what I'd like the term to designate: outlets not dependent on business interests for survival. Staffs given the freedom to rely on their own creativity and interpretations and those of the people around them. A flexible format that allows for plenty of experimentation, in both content and form. Audiences willing to accept that flexibility without immediately switching loyalties. A willingness to open part of the outlet to whomever is interested. Honesty about the beliefs and concerns of the people behind the media. A news staff with time and skill enough to investigate news reports and social conditions with some thoroughness. According to that definition, though, there is absolutely no alternative media in the South. Nor in this country. Some papers and stations are simply closer to the ideal than others.

Steve Hoffius, now living in Durham, N.C., co-edited *Carologue: access to north carolina* and is on the staff of *Southern Voices*.



Photographs by Bill Fibben



I.

A popular trend in weekly papers is to produce consumer publications that are virtually services for local businesses. Their pages are filled with long reviews: of restaurants, shops, movies, plays, concerts. Pages are filled with access guides to recreational facilities, bars, art resources, the best places to buy off-beat items. So much of the paper is filled with this that there is room for only one or two articles. Liberal or radical editors, who might have put out truly alternative papers (or once did), have found that this format allows them to squeeze in a few articles and reach a large, diverse audience. In addition, many editors have found that if they increase the press run and distribute the paper at no charge, they can more than make up for the lost sales revenue by the increase in advertising that will result. But, of course, that admits the power of the advertiser and identifies businesses as the final censors, for it is their money that totally controls the paper. A few papers are willing to accept that.

In Atlanta, *The Great Speckled Bird* is one of three papers vying for a young, white audience. At various times, it has been a youth culture paper, anti-war, anti-imperialist, feminist, gay, and muckraking. It never was, and still isn't a consumer publication. It is the only one of the three that isn't.

The main emphasis of the *Bird* recently has been on its local news reporting. Throughout a series of damning revelations about corruption within the city's police department, it was the main paper to write in-depth analyses and investigate the grumblings of people on the force. It was at least a week ahead of the dailies in much of its coverage. The *Bird* blends extensive city governmental reporting (many would say it is too extensive, and that articles are nit-picking and unbearably boring), brief descriptions of recent music performances, and articles of national and international events from left news services. It's a continuous voice within the city, frequently impressive, occasionally inaccurate, in its research. The quality of the paper varies with every issue, as the staff changes, volunteers emerge and disappear, people find time to complete a few articles or are rushed to finish several. But it is the only paper of the three which does not bow down to advertisers. Subscriptions and street sales account for a large percentage of its income (the other two are distributed free), and benefits, donations, and ads make up the rest. The staff receives subsistence salaries only when there is enough money on hand. It's an aggressive paper, the only one in the city with a sense of outrage, the only one ready to challenge governmental officials.



Creative Loafing, one of the other two weeklies, offers no writing of any substance at all, but makes no pretenses about it. It is simply an expanded calendar: more than half the pages consist of ads, the rest list upcoming events. But what it attempts, it does well. It is a comprehensive service and is frequently useful. Its restaurant reviews are especially good.

MOVIE GUIDE
 TELEVISION GUIDE
 CALENDAR OF EVENTS
 RESTAURANT DIRECTORY
 APARTMENT DIRECTORY

CREATIVE LOAFING
 NEWS IN ATLANTA
 COVERS THE "DO" IN DIXIE

The *Atlanta Gazette* attempts to blend the two concepts, and succeeds in equalling neither the *Bird* nor *Loafing*. Like the latter, it attempts to review local activities, though it is not nearly as extensive. And like the *Bird*, it includes feature articles about Atlanta. But so far its only political view has been a vaguely liberal bent. It frequently stays away from political topics and includes cast-off articles that the dailies in town have rejected.

The *Gazette* does, however, include a column entitled "Ripsaw," covering local politics in a cynical, sarcastic tone. The pieces are pseudonymously authored and based on rumor and innuendo. But its main contributor is a long-time, extremely knowledgeable activist who applies years of political and personal experience in his native state to his writings. He is capable of writing strong, factual articles of political analysis, as he has for the *Bird* and on one occasion for the *Gazette*. But as a political gossip column, his writings cannot substitute for the expanded coverage necessary for a credible political section.

In format, neither of the two papers offers any competition for the *Bird*. But every week they each distribute 30,000 free copies around the city. The *Bird* sells only 7,000. Their music and culture sections are far more extensive than the *Bird's*. They have far more to offer those who run the music enterprises of Atlanta, who have for years been the *Bird's* main advertisers. It's no coincidence. Rick Brown, former advertising manager for the *Bird* and now one of the editors of the *Gazette*, said recently, "The record companies don't advertise with anybody but the *Gazette*. You haven't seen a record company ad in the *Bird* since I was its ad manager. I brought them with me. They looked at our paper when it first came out and said, 'This is exactly what we need. We're going to get behind it and support it.' They need a review medium. It helps their business."

Volume 3 Number 18 January 1, 1978
ATLANTA GAZETTE
 On Hating New Year's Eve
 Randy Mantley and Hockey
 Plus: Mervyn Music, E... & TV
 This Car can be Saved;
 there may be an alternative
 to gasoline
FREE
 300 copies Atlanta Area

RIPSAW

II.

Jim Clark is director of the Ministry for Social Change in Greensboro, North Carolina, an organization attempting to increase communication among various groups in the city. In 1972, as part of that effort, Jim and the ministry began to publish a monthly newspaper, the Greensboro *Sun*, that is distributed free throughout the city. The *Sun* is one of the most un-polished papers I've seen. Lines are crooked, graphics are small and dark, objective journalism rules are ignored, and few articles read smoothly. It is definitely not published by professionals, and somehow in its lack of pretension, its honesty, its openness to people of many viewpoints, it's a refreshing paper to read. It doesn't claim to present the answers, doesn't suggest that it is the final word in journalism or analysis. But reading it is as enjoyable as listening to people who excitedly describe previously-unimagined concepts and newly-discovered friends. It's a community bulletin board for diverse groups in the area, and each eagerly presents its views and projects. Articles are personal and generally unrheterical. A few scattered ads pay only for the printing; all editorial work is donated.

The ministry's interest in communications has now led it into another area of media: cable television. It started pretty simply. Jim Clark was sitting at home watching television. He says he does that occasionally to escape. "And I was watching 'Dragnet,'" he explains. "You know, the Joe Friday detective show. I couldn't believe some of the things that were being said. I mean it was offensive, straight out of the Nixon Administration! So I called the station to protest about the contents. The woman just sent me, to the Federal Communications Commission in Washington. I wrote them a letter and they said that with 'Maude' and 'All in the Family' on, they were giving equal time. But I couldn't buy that. I mean there are plenty of people who really dig Archie Bunker. And how does that combat images of freaks and gays and blacks that are presented?"

Soon after that Jim began investigating the steps for gaining control of a channel on the local cable network. "I was ready to fight. We were all set to take the local cable operation into court when they turned us down; we were ready to sue. But when we finally talked to them, they were just pleased to find people interested and ended up giving us the channel and this studio and a hundred thousand dollars worth of equipment."

Jim stood in the new studio of CAT-CV6 (Community Access Television) which broadcasts 5-7 p.m. Monday and Wednesday nights. Two

cameras faced a talkshow setting, with table and chairs before a curtain. A number of microphones covered the table and a nearby shelf. In the mixing room he inserted various tapes into a large machine and showed some previously recorded shows: a talk with members of the Venceremos Brigade, recently returned from Cuba; a puppet show produced by a local school; a discussion involving black Greensboro athletes.

THE GREENSBORO SUN
Volume 3 Issue 4 P.O. Box 5526 Greensboro, N.C. DECEMBER 1974

Public Access TV Begins

DANGEROUS CHRISTMAS TOYS

THE GREENSBORO REDSKINS

subscribe

Every local cable outlet is required to offer one channel for public access. With the help of the local Jaycees, one group ran the Greensboro public channel for four years, attempted some local origination shows, and then gave it up. They sold all their equipment to the sponsoring company. In the two years since then Clark and the ministry were the first to ask about the possibility of using it. Local cable officials helped them prepare a board, taught them to use the equipment, and are paying much of the operating costs.

"When we began, we sent out letters to every group in the city which we thought might be interested, offering them air time. So far groups like the U.S. Labor Party, the AFSC, the ACLU are the main ones to take advantage of the offer. But we don't want to be identified as a radical channel. We don't want to be branded like that, and turn people off immediately. We're hoping to have programming of local bird clubs, maybe, of Y's, of churches, you name it. Really make it a community station. The radicals are just part of that community. We definitely want them to have access, but not just them. There are plenty of



Jerry Hicks, general manager of Cablevision,
with high school students from Greensboro.

other groups that can't get on private TV. We want to do with the station what the *Sun* accomplishes: public access media. It's a powerful tool. We want to open it up to everybody."

III.

Though in many parts of the South cable television is a relatively new phenomenon, in the mountains of Appalachia cable has transmitted national network broadcasts for the past twenty years. "In fact," claims the 1975 catalogue for Appalshop, "National TV has done more to change (and perhaps destroy) the Appalachian culture than anything else in the last 200 years." Appalshop (P.O. Box 743, Whitesburg, Kentucky 41858), a rapidly expanding mountain media group, attempts to offset some of that national programming with its own cable presentations on the public access channel. Four hours a week Appalshop broadcasts music shows, children's programs, local sports, news, and the group's own films. In addition, their catalogue explains, "a system of trading videotapes with Broadside TV in Johnson City, Tennessee, has brought in a

series called 'In These Hills,' which features such aspects of mountain culture as herb gathering, music and midwifery, and provides further exposure of our own tapes." Like the Greensboro access station, the Appalshop staff maintains that they provide "open access to anyone who wants programs televised."

But cable is just one of many projects being pursued by the group. It was originally begun as a film production outfit, and that is still the staff's most noted enterprise. They have made more than two dozen films and are now at work on a feature length production of Gurney Norman's *Divine Right's Trip*, the novel originally serialized in *The Last Whole Earth Catalog*. As in all their work, Appalshop's film division has two main goals: to involve the people in the surrounding mountain area in their work, and to present an accurate picture of the region. Their cameras capture individuals at work — midwives, moonshiners, butchers, farmers, musicians — and probe political issues. Two years before the presidency of the United Mine Workers was taken from Tony



APPALSHOP INC.

P.O. Box 743 Whitesburg, Kentucky 41858 606-633-5708

Boyle, the group made a film identifying mine workers' complaints, and shortly after the Buffalo Creek mining disaster of 1972, Appalshop crews arrived to produce what has become a devastating exposé. Their films contain political commentary, investigative reporting, and present sensitive portraits of a culture.

Besides cable, Appalshop has expanded into other areas: a theatre workshop, recording studio for producing traditional Appalachian music, and *The Mountain Review*. September, 1974, marked the first issue of the quarterly *Review*, featuring both previously-published and unknown contributors. It included photographic essays and articles on religion, music, politics, media, and education. Single copies sell for \$1.50, annual subscriptions for \$5. Considering the work of editing the *Review*, preparing it for publication, printing copies, and distributing them (I don't know if contributors are paid), the cost is reasonable.

But that points out one of the ironies of these alternative media outlets. Media is an expensive field. How many Appalachian homes can be expected to subscribe to the *Mountain Review*? Not many, I suspect. Appalshop (like most quarterly publishers) probably exists to gain sales primarily from libraries, not individuals. The print medium, after all, is inherently elitist. Who does it reach? A still significant number of people are illiterate, especially among the working class to which so many alternative media projects claim to direct their material. Do a majority of the people in this country even enjoy reading? I doubt it. And who can afford it? Even should they want copies, most households must consider quarterly literary publications as unthought-of luxuries.

Printing is an expensive process. No publisher or print shop can change that. Yet it is one of the most accessible media forms of all. Certainly one of the least expensive. The Greensboro cable station—which cannot yet film outside the studio—has a minimum amount of equipment: \$100,000 worth. FM radio station licenses (if obtainable at all) can rarely be bought for less than that price. AM radio licenses are even more.

IV.

One way a radio station might avoid the massive expenses of buying a license is by incorporating as a non-commercial station. No cost. The only requirement for such a classification is that no advertising may be aired. Without ads, however, income to run the station must come from elsewhere. Most often, stations in this situation are supported by the sponsoring group, usually a university. Two non-commercial stations in the South, however, have chosen a different group on which to rely for their funding: their listeners. The two are WAFR-FM in Durham and WRFG-FM in Atlanta.

WAFR, begun in 1971, is the only black owned and operated public radio station in the country. It broadcasts a blend of jazz, gospel, blues, and other black-oriented music. African music is played, with each piece described by an African student from nearby North Carolina Central University. Durham high school students have their own show; the Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People presents a series on local political issues; speeches given at NCCU are taped and rebroadcast; local Muslims provide the station with tapes of "Muhammed Speaks."

"We've been the kind of station," explains station manager Obataiye Akinwale, "that a brother would come to. There's one brother in particular who plays a very nice blues harmonica. He'll come up here and pull his harmonica out and say, 'Can I blow, man?' I'll turn the microphone around and say, 'Go right ahead.' We'll record it while he's blowing; he'll sing some blues and whatnot. And that's a nice little show." The radio station is that flexible, that open to the input of individuals within Durham's black community.

Although the station is occasionally described as listener-supported, and in fact it receives more support from its audience than most stations, contributions actually account for a small fraction of the WAFR budget. It has received a number of grants from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to buy equipment, from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, from the Inter-Religious Foundation for Community Organization, and others. Benefit concerts have been staged to raise money, a 168-hour marathon broadcast netted \$10,000, and two years ago a group called Friends of WAFR was organized to seek extra funds from the surrounding community. Thousands of dollars were contributed at cocktail parties, fashion shows, and a beer bust.

Atlanta's WRFG also continually sponsors benefits—everything from concerts to barbecue



photo by Boyd Lewis

Rodger French, program director, with Bonnie Hayward and young friend

WRFG 89.3 FM

dinners in the backyard of the station. The staff prints a monthly program guide which is sent to subscribers. But the budget for WRFG is considerably below that of WAFR. It has received no grants. Including the salary for the program director, the only paid staff member, \$800 is spent each month. Soundproofing consists of walls covered with egg cartons and long curtains. But from the station comes some of the best jazz, blues, gospel, folk, and bluegrass programming in Atlanta. It offers the most complete coverage of City Council meetings and some other local news of any station in the city. Its schedule easily includes the most political commentary of any station, which is often presented clearly and honestly. Commentary peppers most of the musical programs. The station provides studio space for community groups who would like to produce a show. The result is a varied schedule, in both musical content and commentary. Yet WRFG remains loose enough to feature its own street blues harmonica performer who wanders into the studio at various times and is put on the air.

Both stations, however, have recently been crippled by controversies. WAFR has become embroiled in a dispute between the president and station manager of the station, and the Board of Directors. The two staff members have fired the Board and attempted to replace it with another; the Board has tried to fire the president and, when he refused to leave, has taken the issue to court for a declaratory judgement concerning just who actually does control the station. The Board claims they have no criticism of the station's programming; Obataiye Akinwole, the station manager, disagrees and says the Board hopes to eliminate all political programming. If the courts determine that the original Board has control, says Akinwole, "We're dead. This station is dead."

Board members maintain that the only point of contention involves the management of the office. Over the years a number of suits have been brought against the station for payment of numerous debts. The staff has been lax in its attention to many FCC regulations. Elections for the two top positions at the station, required by the by-laws, have not been held since WAFR first

went on the air. Akinwole, who admits the station owes \$15,000 despite its many grants, claims these problems will be taken care of. "We've got a plan that's going to take care of all that, that will bring in professionals for the key jobs. We'll take care of that," he says.

"They've said that for a long time," responds one Board member. "The court case should determine if we on the Board are responsible for the debts of the station. If we are, we'll have to make some changes concerning internal business practices."

The situation was further complicated when the station went off the air on December 26, 1974. Station president Robert Spruill claimed WAFR would resume broadcasting after a three week absence. "We just need a little time to raise more money," he says. "Lately all we've gotten have been the kind you or I could give: \$10, \$15. We want enough to run this station the way it should be. We're looking for big money. Grants."

One grant, in fact, has already been made. HEW has earmarked \$62,000 for new stereo and automation equipment, which will be paid when the courts determine responsibility for the station.

In Atlanta, WRFG has run into its own difficulties. It originally broadcast over 18 watts (now increased to 1250) from an antenna placed on television station WQXI's tower. In mid-September, 1973, WQXI told the radio station to remove its antenna, claiming that it interfered with television transmission. WRFG personnel say they have checked with a number of engineers and have found no reason to think any interference could have taken place. They have also discovered, however, that shortly before WQXI's decision the general manager of the station was visited by a pair of detectives from the Atlanta Police Civil Disturbance Unit. That same unit was thought to be investigating the station and its involvement with "subversive" political groups. They are convinced that the police detectives' visit triggered the station's decision to demand that the antenna be removed. The general manager claims he was not persuaded and that the visit simply reminded him of WRFG's interference. The station eventually erected their antenna on a 50 foot mast on the roof of their studios. At that height, transmission was blocked on one side by a school building, and on another by a large tree. Only after weeks of searching for a new location did Clark College agree to allow the WRFG antenna on its tower.

V.

And there are the special media projects that defy description and categorization—like the

Black Dockers Stop Rhodesian Imports

ALLIANCE, 44 (The Black Dockers Union, 12000 10th Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10026) has announced that it has successfully organized a strike of Black dockers in the port of New York and New Jersey. The strike, which began on December 15, 1974, is the result of a long and bitter struggle against the National Dockworkers Union (NDU), which has been the dominant force in the industry for many years. The Black Dockers Union, which was formed in 1973, has been fighting for recognition and better working conditions for Black dockers. The strike has resulted in the closure of the port and the loss of jobs for many dockers. The NDU has refused to negotiate with the Black Dockers Union, and the strike is expected to continue for some time.



Black Dockers Union, 12000 10th Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10026. The strike is a significant event in the labor movement, particularly for Black workers. It highlights the ongoing struggle for equality and fair treatment in the workplace. The Black Dockers Union has been successful in organizing the strike, which is a major achievement. The NDU's refusal to negotiate is a clear sign of its opposition to the Black Dockers Union's demands. The strike has also drawn attention to the issues of racial discrimination and union solidarity in the labor movement.

Beware Of This Man

The man in the picture is a member of the Black Panther Party. He is a dangerous and violent individual who has been responsible for many deaths and injuries. He is a member of the Black Panther Party, which is a terrorist organization. He is a member of the Black Panther Party, which is a terrorist organization. He is a member of the Black Panther Party, which is a terrorist organization.

'Cost of Living' Strike

LEWISVILLE, Ohio (UPI) - A strike by 100 workers at the Lewisville, Ohio, plant of the General Electric Co. has resulted in a 10% increase in the cost of living. The strike, which began on December 15, 1974, is the result of a long and bitter struggle against the General Electric Co. The workers are demanding better wages and working conditions. The strike has resulted in the closure of the plant and the loss of jobs for many workers. The General Electric Co. has refused to negotiate with the workers, and the strike is expected to continue for some time.

Texas Observer and *Southern Patriot*, probably the longest continually published alternative papers in the South.

Begun in 1942, the *Patriot* is the monthly organ of the Southern Conference Education Fund, or SCEF. It is a source of information and copy for many of the alternative papers, for despite its zealotry it provides the only in-depth coverage of many southern political conflicts, including strikes, demonstrations, and arrests. It is especially concerned with organizing efforts among poor black and white people and with multi-racial union drives. And it is consistent in its coverage. When the *Patriot* gives space to an issue, it stays with it. If a demonstration is mentioned, the events leading up to it have usually been described at length and the results will be covered in a future issue.

Twenty years ago, the liberal wing of the Democratic Party in Texas started a paper. The first issue, edited by Ronnie Dugger, was critical of the liberals; the party demanded that the paper step into line, Dugger refused, and the *Texas Observer* became an independent publication (see more detailed discussion in Larry Goodwyn's article in this issue). It has remained so ever since. Like most alternative papers it has led a metamorphic existence, depending on the staff

and its interests. It has covered the Texas legislature and the University of Texas, attacked the oil powers, supported the civil rights movement, proffered a southern consciousness, espoused feminism. Over the years the *Observer* has come to represent the richness of the state in its format and has virtually stood alone in struggles against the moneyed and powerful.

Yet like the best of the alternative media, the *Observer's* circulation has never been especially large. Now it has waned even more as it has come into competition with one of the most successful new slick magazines, *The Texas Monthly* (P.O. Box 1569, Austin, Texas 78711). An award winner as the best regional magazine in 1974, the *Monthly* has taken the popular consumer format for newspapers and has applied it to magazines. It's fantastically successful in terms of circulation (over 300,000 after its first year) and advertising. Every issue features more than 120 pages. Dozens of pages are spent describing activities in the state's largest urban centers, comparing stores and restaurants, identifying recommended shopping sprees. Along with this are one or two extensive political articles, many of them well researched and written. It may not be "A Journal of Free Voices; A Window to the South" as the *Observer's* masthead claims, but among mass-circulation slick magazines it is impressive.

From its Clintwood, Virginia, base, the Council of Southern Mountains publishes a monthly newspaper entitled *Mountain Life & Work*. Much of the paper is given to descriptions by local people of the activities of the Council's constituent groups; the rest is made up of feature articles about life in the southern mountains, from social gatherings to political controversies. Topics are covered thoughtfully, as seen in an entire number on the lives of mountain women. The issue stayed away from strident rhetoric, from the charges and challenges of big city feminists, and instead produced a warm, strong, and insistent publication that educates without indoctrinating, and provides enjoyable reading as well.



In North Carolina, one of the South's most unique alternative media outlets exists in the home of the Durham branch of the Southern Africa Committee. Years ago the Committee, a

research group supportive of African liberation struggles, decided to decentralize its work, and a group of staff members moved South. A few months after they arrived, they began to publish "Africa News" (P.O. Box 3851, Durham, NC 27702), a news service that provides subscribers with the only inexpensive source of extensive and continuous reporting of African events. Twice-weekly, the "News" staff prepares approximately 10 pages of news and features reports from a variety of sources, including special correspondents, dozens of African publications, and the BBC. They currently supply about 40 papers, broadcast stations, and libraries, with their reports.

VI.

Dozens, hundreds of alternative groups are scattered throughout the South. They're often found in the seedier parts of town. The offices are not panelled, nor carpeted by Bigelow. Equipment is old and breaks down regularly. Many of the staff live nearby in the same low rent buildings in which they have set up their businesses, their media outlets. Storefronts on secondary streets, nestled between dry cleaners and locksmiths. Walk-up offices with broken windows. A back room. Second-hand furniture that was cheap when it was new. In the winter they're cold.

The people who work in them do so for their own individual reasons. They include a great many volunteers who help when they can. People who have always been fascinated with media perhaps. They have political beliefs that they want people to hear, and need a means of reaching others. They're looking for new art forms. They seek to avoid the limited responsibilities and freedom they might find at the better financed stations and publications. Some are ego-tripping. Few of them know whether this is their life's work. They don't set up institutions from which they can expect years of employment. They take risks.

And more keep springing up. Alternative papers. Movement print shops. Progressive FM outlets. Community access cable franchises. Quarterlies. Film groups. Theatre. Dance. Bands. More than we could ever mention, even more varieties than we can cover here. Few of them break even. Even fewer expect to turn a profit. Occasionally they produce the most innovative and powerful work being done in media. They persevere, forever begun by those with vision, with a message to deliver, with a desire to communicate as much by their own rules as possible. Dozens arise and dozens fall every year, as they always have and will.

progressive radio

The most commonly-used term for alternative radio is "progressive": progressive FM. It is one of those radio descriptions that no one seems able to pin down, like Middle of the Road (what road?) or Easy Listening Music.

Billboard magazine regularly publishes a listing of albums being played on progressive FM stations around the country. But it doesn't define it. According to George Meier, who publishes *Walrus* (1709 Lansing St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19111), a trade journal for these stations, progressive FM "means a rock-oriented album format. The news and public affairs programming should be in the context of the audience so it wouldn't be just 'rip 'n' read' from the wire services, not just *Daily News* blood and guts. It would have an intelligent, alternative point of view. But 85 to 90 percent of the programming is probably music."

Everyone has his or her own definition. The station manager of one of Meier's subscriber stations claims it means a varied musical format, advertising for no more than 10 minutes an hour, and extensive news and public service programming. Bob Chapman, who has helped set up two of the South's best stations, says, "Oh hell, I know what it is. At least I know what it is for me. You're always surprised by what you hear next. And what you hear next should be an extension of what you heard before. There's a flow to it that makes it an unending tapestry of sounds. It uses literary techniques. It's an art form, really, and you should be able to get high from it." And how many stations that are described as "progressive" actually fit that description? He shrugged. "Maybe five percent."

The following list is made up of those stations which appear in *Billboard's* listing, which contribute to *Walrus*, or which have been described to us by other sources. It's incomplete, especially because it excludes a number of college stations which, for perhaps a year, may produce an excellent alternative format and the next year would end it. We don't know how to keep up with all of them. But this is a beginning.

Alabama

Mobile: **WABB**, Box 2148 (36601), 97.5, 100kw

Arkansas

Little Rock: **KLAZ**, 2309 Durwood Road (72207), 98.5, 100kw

Florida

Sarasota: **WQSR**, Box 7700 (33578), 102.5, 2.75kw

Georgia

Athens: **WUOG**, University of Georgia (30602), 90.5, 3.2kw

Atlanta: **WRAS**, Box 691 (30303), 88.5, 19.5kw
WREK, Box 32743 (30332), 91.1, 40kw
WRFG, Box 5332 (30307), 89.3, 18w

Valdosta: **WVVS**, Box 142 (31601), 90.9, 180kw

Kentucky

Fort Knox: **WSAC**, Box 70 (40121), 105.5, 3kw

Louisville: **KLRS**, 800 South Fourth Street (40203), 102.3, 3kw

Louisiana

Baton Rouge: **WJBO**, Box 496 (70821), 102.5, 100kw

New Orleans: **WRNO**, Box 6071, 3400 North Causeway, 99.5, 56kw

WTUL, Tulane University, 91.5, 10w

Mississippi

Jackson: **WZZQ**, Box 2171 (39205), 102.9, 100kw

North Carolina

Durham: **WAFR**, Box 1166 (27702), 90.3, 3kw

WDBS, Box 4742 Duke Station (27706), 107.1, 3kw

South Carolina

Beaufort: **WBEU**, 3040 Boundry Street (29902), 98.7, 18kw

Tennessee

Memphis: **WLYX**, 2000 North Parkway (38112), 89.3, 10kw

WMC, 1960 Union Avenue (38104), 99.7, 300kw

Nashville: **WKDA**, 1202 Stahlman Building, Union Street (37201), 103.3, 100kw

WFRN, Fisk University, Box 887 (37208), 88.1, 700w

Texas

Arlington: **KAMC**, Box 460 (76010), 94.9, 97kw

Austin: **KLBJ**, Box 1209 (78767), 93.7, 50kw

KOKE, Box 1208 (78767), 95.5, 10kw

KUT, Box 7158, University Station (78712), 90.7, 4.1w

Dallas: **KAMC**

KZEW, Communications Center (75202), 97.9, 57kw

Houston: **KLOL**, Box 1520 (77001), 101.1, 97kw

KPFT, 618 Prairie (77002), 90.1, 49kw

Lubbock: **KSEL**, Box 2805 (79408), 93.7, 100kw

Waco: **KEFC**, Box 3332 (76707), 95.5, 3.1kw

Virginia

Norfolk: **WOWI**, 2712 Colley Avenue (23517), 102.9, 5kw



LIBERATION NEWS SERVICE

#629 JULY 20, 1974

alternative press

An intense questioning, perhaps that is what binds together individual alternative papers. They are filled with articles and graphics that question, protest, and challenge the basic assumptions of most daily papers in the country. It is done sloppily sometimes, but it is always rooted in a desire to understand more, to avoid the lies and misleading statements of authorities, to reveal the actual motives behind and results of officials' actions. When done thoughtfully and creatively, this questioning and the resulting newspapers are exciting and thought-provoking.

It appears in the coverage of cultural events, in local news reports, in national and international news articles. For virtually all papers this last is provided by news services, especially Liberation News Service (160 Claremont Ave., NY, NY 10027). LNS sends subscribers twice-weekly packets of news and feature stories and graphics from correspondents around the world. Yet while many papers have filled their pages with LNS copy, it has never been financially secure. A press service that supplies material to perennially poverty-stricken papers can expect nothing more. Inflation has made these especially bad times for LNS. In addition to the economy, a number of competitors have arisen, including Zodiac News (950 Howard St., San Francisco, Cal. 94103). Zodiac sends print material to papers, tapes to radio stations, is less rhetorical and produces more cultural copy than does LNS. The two of them (along with others, such as Dispatch News) keep papers supplied with national and international news, and are responsible for much of the quality and questioning within alternative papers.

The bulk of the following list has been derived from LNS and Zodiac subscription lists:

Arkansas

Little Rock: **Arkansas Advocate**, 1501 South Arch (72202)

Florida

Coconut Grove: **Miami Phoenix**, 2665 South Bayshore Drive (33133)

Jacksonville: **Both Sides Now**, Box 13079 (32206)
David (gay), Box 5396 (32207)

Georgia

Atlanta: **Atlanta Voice**, 1066 Washington Street SW (30315)

Great Speckled Bird, Box 7847 (30309)

Kentucky

Louisville: **Southern Patriot**, 3210 West Broadway (40211)

Louisiana

New Orleans: **Courier**, 1232 Decatur Street (70116)

North Carolina

Durham: **North Carolina Anvil**, P.O. Box 1148 (27702)

Greensboro: **Greensboro Sun**, P.O. Box 5526 (27403)

Jacksonville: **Rage** (GI), P.O. Box 1163 (20540)

Spring Lake: **Bragg Briefs** (GI), P.O. Box 437 (28302)

South Carolina

Columbia: **Osceola**, P.O. Box 5033 (29250)

Tennessee

Nashville: **The Bulletin**, Station A West (37203)

Texas

Austin: **The Texas Observer**, 600 West 7th Street (78701)

We The People, 1501 East 12th Street (78702)

Dallas: **Community Voice**, P.O. Box 45574 (75245)

Hondo: **Los Barrios**, c/o Lopez, 109 15th Street (78861)

Houston: **Abraxas**, P.O. Box 52493 (77052)

Contact (gay), Box 22104 (77027)

The Southern Voice, 3402 Carolina (77004)

Virginia

Clintwood: **Mountain Life & Work**, Drawer N (24228)

Norfolk: **The Ghent Press**, P.O. Box 1144 (23501)

Grapes of Wrath (GI), P.O. Box 9870 (23505)

National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, Box 524 (23501)

Richmond: **Richmond Afro-American**, 301 East Clay Street (23219)

Richmond Mercury, 16 East Main Street (23219)



photo by Bettyann Shelfer

Book Reviews

Southern Exposure has, almost from the beginning, offered the largest number and widest variety of reviews of books and publications about the South of any publication. Beginning with this issue we have added a compilation of books, Ph.D. dissertations and other reports about the South that have come out since the publication of our last issue. Though probably not complete, it is the most extensive list of such publications available. We hope you find it useful.

You can help us serve the needs of all of our readers by contributing to the book review section. We always welcome your comments, criticisms and suggestions. We invite you to review books for us. The staff of *Southern Exposure* does not believe that all reviews must be written by academics. Indeed, many books could be better reviewed by individuals who have first-hand knowledge of, or practical experience with, the subject of the book. You are these people, the people who have participated in the history of the South and who are now actively engaged in creating its future. We encourage you to share your experience with us and our other readers.

The reviews in this issue (as in previous issues) were written by a wide variety of people. The lead-off review, our first review of fiction, was written by Ellen Horowitz, a graduate student in southern history at the University of North Carolina and a freelance journalist.

Dan Singal, a Columbia University graduate student who is engaged in a study of twentieth-century southern intellectuals, reviews a book about H. L. Mencken and the South.

George Vecsey reported on Appalachia for the *New York Times* and currently covers Long Island for that paper. He is the author of *Joy in Mudville and One Sunset a Week: The Story of a Coal Miner*, published last year by *Saturday Review Press*.

Marsha Darling is a graduate student in history at Duke University. She has been engaged in exploring the problem of personality development under slavery and in applying oral investigatory techniques to the study of black land loss in the South.

Cliff Durr, a native Alabamian, studied law at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar and was appointed to the Federal Communications Commis-

sion by President Roosevelt, serving as a member of that body from 1941 to 1948. Long active in civil rights and civil liberties struggles in the South, Cliff Durr was recognized for his contributions to these causes as the recipient of the Alabama Civil Liberties Union annual award last year. He reviews for us William Barnard's *Dixiecrats and Democrats: Alabama Politics, 1942-1950*. An interview with Cliff Durr about his years with the FCC appears earlier in this issue.

Lonnie Plecha is a recent graduate of the College of William and Mary. He now lives and works in Chapel Hill, N.C.

Frank Kilgore is a student at the Clinch Valley College of the University of Virginia in Wise, Virginia. As an intern with, and an advisory board member of, the Ethnic Heritage Program, he is involved in promoting Appalachian studies in area high schools.

Chip Hughes and Cary Fowler are research associates of the Institute for Southern Studies and editorial staff members of *Southern Exposure*. Chip was active last year in the Institute's Brookside Miners Research Project. Currently, he is working for public ownership and local control of utilities in North Carolina. Cary, a native Southerner, is doing research for a doctoral degree in sociology from the University of Uppsala in Uppsala, Sweden.



The River to Pickle Beach, by Doris Betts, Curtis Books, 382 pp., paper, \$1.25.

State of Grace, by Joy Williams, Doubleday and Co., 260 pp., \$6.95.

Although it is the 1970s now and we face still another new South, laid over thickly with flashy modern America, southern literature has yet to show signs of giving up its ghosts. In two 1973 novels from North Carolina and Florida—both nominated unsuccessfully for the 1974 National Book Award—writers have begun exploring the litter-strewn landscape of this newest Southland, a place they find overgrown with weeds and Airstream trailers, a world choking on shotguns and all-night radio talk shows. But the tales they tell are still rooted in tradition-bound communities and inherited obsessions, in what Faulkner

would have termed the trashy aftermath of the past.

Perhaps Erskine Caldwell found this landscape first—a generation ago, in the garbage and dry raunch of *Tobacco Road*. Carson McCullers glimpsed it in the suffocating emotion and violence of *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* and *Clock Without Hands*. Doris Betts and Joy Williams, however, are far better at their craft; they seem more at home with the environment and less oppressed by it all. Their novels rank with the best of southern fiction, which is to say they stand far above the average of contemporary American literature.

In Betts' *River to Pickle Beach*, the more traditional of these works, protagonist Bebe Sellers is just trying to stay calm, to go about her business while the world is turning out from under her. It is the summer of 1968; King and Bobby Kennedy have been shot, American children are gathering in Chicago. Bebe and her husband live far from the mobs, sequestered on an ugly spit of sand by the Carolina coast, where people live in clusters of block-mounted homes, and the stench of pickle weeds fouls the salt air. But society's storms will come home.

Bebe describes herself as "simple-minded," too simple-minded to struggle with time and change, the kind of person who just lets things happen and calls them good luck or bad luck, whichever. Her life flows on, and in her forty years she has slid like a river down from her hometown in the Appalachian foothills to the Piedmont cities of Winston-Salem and Durham, on down to Pickle Beach, where she can hear the ocean in her sleep. "She had not heard a surf like that since it beat for Irene Dunn under Dover's white cliffs," writes Betts, referring to the river-like flow of movie images Bebe drags along with her "to ornament events." Her girlhood was full of movies, but it seems all the new movies are so ugly she doesn't go see them anymore.

She does try to go home sometimes, to the town where thirty years ago her big brother used to sing "The Letter Edged in Black" and make everybody cry. Once, she rides the bus back across the state and goes picnicking with her mother and dozens of kin, out by the old family graveyard. There is a moment, then, of old-time idyll—hymn-singing and sun on the hillside,

and sweet potato pudding and tea in a washtub. But the children don't know any of the songs, and they run off screaming "Hee-haw!" in imitation of television imitating Nashville. And there's too much political talk and too much drinking; things just aren't right around the edges. "You're not missing much," Bebe whispers to her dead father, as she pulls out the thistles growing on his grave.

Her husband Jack is also a little uneasy about the changes swirling around them, but he never wants to go home again. His past pursues him in his dreams, in gruesome nightmares filled with his mother's passion and misery, bloody dreams where the violence of the past can't be shaken. And people he once knew and yearns now to forget keep tracking him down, meddling incessantly in his life.

There's Mickey McCane, an old Army buddy, who keeps coming out to the beach to visit, and to make passes at Bebe. Mickey is not at all pleased with life in 1968; he is feverishly gathering weapons and ammunition for the imminent race war, and joining in the nervous reaction of the local Cotton Club. He is not pleased that Jack and Bebe have befriended a wandering hippie longhair from up north, or that the owner of Pickle Beach has hired a black nurse to care for his retarded relatives. Times are changing, and Mickey sets out to defend himself against time with two rifles and a BAR scope; he is bound for an explosion, right there at Pickle Beach.

"The past is the easiest future to stagger into."

This is Betts' third novel, and her first to assemble a complete cast of living characters, all rooted firmly in a living, functioning community. The style is polished and relaxed, pacing the action smoothly in a lightweight, almost cinematic tone. Indeed, *Pickle Beach* is as immediately accessible and intensely visual as any movie, even in the details of the smallest scene:

"How you like this?" said Earl, leading Bebe between juniper and Chinese holly to the dark blue door of his new house. He turned on the hall lights with a rotating dimmer knob and banged one heel into the foyer tile, which was meant to look

like marble. "How you like this?" Bebe carried her own suitcase while he ran an assortment of light switches from medium to blinding. The den had a brick fireplace with a built-in barbecue and a plasterboard eagle flying toward it from one wall. "So how you like it?"

Joy Williams' *State of Grace* would not make much of a movie, and in conventional terms it doesn't even make much of a novel. Kate Stone, the heroine, might well be one of the most unreliable narrators of all time—she relates her tale like a punch-drunk fighter, still reeling from blows, groggy, queasy, and astonished. She seems anxious to climb over the ropes and quit the arena, desperate for peace and privacy, not for an audience of readers.

Kate has problems all right. She's pregnant, and that's all wrong. Her husband is in the hospital after a car wreck, and without him she can't even find her way back to their trailer home in the north Florida woods. Her father, a God-intoxicated New England preacher, is after her to come back home and be his baby girl again, pursuing her with Biblical threats and indecent proposals. But before she can settle any of this, there's some funny business to work through, a matter involving her old sorority sisters and a leopard from the town tourist zoo and a disfigured young junkyard guard named Corinthian Brown.

It's all too much to handle. The sheriff's deputies are after her to file a report of the accident that injured her husband, and for Cause of Accident she writes: "The track rod was loose the curve banked improperly the road greased with the fat of a wild animal struck down before we came . . ."

With her life so utterly disarranged, Kate summons a vision of the radio talk show Answer Man to come to her aid: "He is a dwarf with a soft head. Quite horrible." The baby growing inside her is stealing her nourishment, and she falls back finally on the lessons of infancy and the memories of her Puritan childhood. "God's begun a state of grace in me," she sings to herself. "I'm the only one in the neighborhood." The past is the easiest future to stagger into.

Williams' humor in this talk of God and the devil, of jungle queens and human beasts, sometimes lapses into a sneer, glibly dismissing all too many of

her characters as mindless Cretins. For example, there is "a girl with a slight mustache whose mother sends a torte from Cleveland monthly. When motorists scream *dimyerlights* at her while she is driving, she thinks that they are from Ohio too and acknowledges them with a cheery thump on her horn."

But when the humor is turned to quick sketches of Florida life, it works magnificently. There are dozens of perfect little scenarios — happy hour in a liquor store parking lot, an Airstream trailer caravan, restaurants with waterfalls inside, a convenience store called the Siesta Pig (Williams lives on Siesta Key, an island in the Gulf of Mexico near Sarasota, Florida).

Beyond the humor, *State of Grace* drifts away from the concrete world toward the compelling shambles of a psychic landscape. "The unimaginable pretended to be inevitable," says Kate as she dispenses with conventional logic and causation, stumbling through a world of outrageous, unnecessary, but exquisitely imaginable tortures.

"Nothing ever seems to come to a conclusion," Kate complains, "and that isn't my fault." Later, she focuses the problem more sharply: "Is there nothing that has not been going on forever?" It's not an easy question for a glowing first novel.

Ellen Horowitz



Serpent in Eden: H.L. Mencken and the South, by Fred C. Hobson, Jr., University of North Carolina Press, 1974.

For too long the notion has persisted that Henry Louis Mencken and the South were sworn enemies. Ever since Mencken's famous blast of 1920, calling the region "The Sahara of the Bozart" in an essay of that name, most people have assumed Mencken regarded the region as little more than a convenient board at which to throw rhetorical darts. That impression doubtless gained further strength in 1925 after Mencken's outrageous performance at the Scopes Trial. Well, such impressions were all wrong, and this first-rate book by Fred C. Hobson, Jr. has at last set the record straight.

Mencken did care deeply about the South, especially about that "civilized minority," as he called them, who

dared to criticize their society openly. In fact, no sooner had Mencken let loose his "Sahara" thunderbolt than he began offering much-needed advice and support to those southerners trying to prove him wrong. He encouraged journalists like Julian Harris, Grover Hall, and Gerald W. Johnson to take a more critical look at their region, coached the editors of southern literary magazines like *The Reviewer* and *The Double Dealer* to seek out more local talent, published previously unknown southern writers in his *American Mercury* (W.J. Cash was one), and went to bat when James Branch Cabell's *Jurgen* was banned by censors in New York. As Hobson shrewdly notes, by 1923 Mencken's efforts to spur southern self-criticism had turned him into the very thing he most loathed — an evangelical crusader for a good cause.

Hobson tells his story in great detail, based on thorough research. His writing is consistently good, with special praise due his ability to keep Mencken's flamboyant prose style from overwhelming his own — no mean task. He proves particularly adept at handling the complex relationships that existed between Mencken and such figures as Emily Tapscott Clark (editor of *The Reviewer*), Cash, and Cabell; he is perhaps a little less adept in the case of Howard W. Odum.

Ironically, the book's chief fault lies in Hobson's portrait of Mencken himself. The angle of vision is much too flat to capture the full measure of unresolved contradictions in his personality. Moreover, Hobson misses the real thrust of Mencken's intentions toward the South. Hobson depicts him as a man at war with gentility, yet it is also true that Mencken idolized the antebellum planter class, those "men of delicate fancy, urbane instinct and aristocratic manner — in brief, superior men — in brief, gentry" (significantly, Hobson omits the last seven words of this quotation). Mencken, always the elitist, was really battling *false* gentility in the South; his dream was somehow to restore the old aristocracy to power. Thus it is not accurate to say, as Hobson does, that Mencken's message to his southern disciples was one of "rooting out tradition" — quite the contrary.

Hobson is vaguely aware of how Mencken's aristocratic bias put him at cross-purposes with the young southern rebels he sponsored, but the book

never really meets the issue head-on. Didn't Mencken sense that men like Odum and Gerald Johnson did not share his ultimate aims for southern society? Hobson leaves the question unexplored.

"Why do I denounce the southern *kultur* so often and so violently?" Mencken once asked in passing. "Send a postcard to Professor Dr. Sigmund Freud, General Delivery, Vienna, and you will get the answer by return mail." Perhaps, for all the virtues of his book, that is the approach Fred Hobson should have tried.

Daniel Joseph Singal



Down to Earth—People of Appalachia, by Kenneth Murray, Appalachian Consortium Press, 1974.

For two years I was the Appalachian correspondent for the *New York Times*. I think it is fair to say I learned as much about the mountains from Ken Murray as from anyone.

I first met Ken at Hyden, Kentucky, where thirty-eight miners were killed on December 30, 1970. He was working for a newspaper around eighty miles from Hyden, in the coal fields. They weren't interested in documenting the disaster, but Ken went on his own.

We found the first funeral, in the new snow, way up one of the hollers. Ken spoke honestly and politely to the family of the dead miner, and they let him take pictures of everybody but the body. It must have been frustrating for Ken to have such excellent photographs in his camera, and to work for a newspaper that really didn't want them.

Now Ken has found a place for his pictures, a book called *Down to Earth—People of Appalachia*. The book presents the creeks and the hills in a way that makes the viewer understand why Appalachian people love their land. He also captures the devastation left by strip-mining, making the gouges seem like a personal affront to the viewer.

Ken also has a masterful touch with people. He avoids the easy shots, the stereotypes, and gets his subjects to look like I remember Appalachian people — natural, honest, proud. His miners at the bath-house, children playing at a one-room schoolhouse, housewives resting after supper, all remind me of the assignments we

worked on together. The pictures are right because Ken worked so hard to get them — photographing the land and the people from many angles, finally getting it right, I guess, because he belongs there.

Ken still lives in his bottom-land farm somewhere on the Tennessee-Virginia border. I'm back in New York, the walls of my office lined with his photographs of the misty hills, the rising creeks, the proud faces of Appalachia. I am delighted that now there is a book containing the best of his work and grateful that he included short messages with some of the pictures to help "outsiders" know what they are saying.

Perhaps if we could slip a copy of *Down to Earth* to President Ford, he might not blithely veto a strip-mining bill the next time. Or if we could get a few copies to the governors of the Appalachian states, they might have a better picture of life in the isolated corners of their states. Until Appalachia has some form of self-determination — until the coal industry pays for what it takes out — artists like Ken Murray may be the region's most powerful lobbyists.

George Vecsey



Dixiecrats and Democrats: Alabama Politics, 1942-1950, by William D. Barnard, The University of Alabama Press, 1974.

Bill Barnard has an instinct for the political jugular. If the purpose of history is to show us how the present comes out of the past and to offer forewarnings of the future, he has made it serve that purpose most effectively, and has done so with only an eight year segment of history. In reading his account of this small segment, one has the feeling of watching a re-run of the past, going back to, at least, the period of Reconstruction and, at the same time, a rehearsal of the Civil Rights struggle of the 1950s and 1960s and even the current battles between the "Loyalist Democrats" and the "Alabama Democrats" or "Wallacites."

Dixiecrats and Democrats is primarily about the maneuvers of the Dixiecrats, marching under the banner of States Rights, to gain control of the



Photo from Gideon's Army

Progressives Picketing Dixiecrats in Birmingham, Alabama, 1948.

Alabama State Democratic Party, and how they succeeded, at least temporarily, in capturing the apparatus and symbols of the party, if not the hearts and minds of the people, thereby making it impossible for a Democrat to cast his vote for Harry S. Truman, the Presidential nominee of the National Democratic Party. Regardless of the desires and intentions of the voters, a vote under the Rooster, the traditional symbol of the Alabama Democratic Party, was transformed into a vote for Strom Thurmond, the standard bearer of the Dixiecrats. The book, however, is far more than an account of a fight between Democrats and Dixiecrats for control of the electoral votes in the 1948 Presidential election, for that fight itself was a mere continuation of the timeless struggle between those who believe in the rule of the rich and the powerful and those who believe in the concept of government of, by and for the people.

The 1942-1950 years may be properly referred to as the twilight of the New Deal. It is true that by 1942 we were well launched into World War II, and "Dr. New Deal" had stepped aside in favor of "Dr. Win-the-War," but Roosevelt did not die until 1945 and the memories and emotions of the New Deal were still very much alive. The New Deal, of course, arose out of the Great Depression, but Alabama and the South generally were in a depression of their own long before the stock market

crash of 1929. In the immediate aftermath of World War I, the cotton economy tumbled in ruins under the joint onslaughts of the boll weevil and a catastrophic collapse of the cotton market. There being no money left for fertilizer, fields were left to erode away in idleness. Mortgages were foreclosed, people left farms in search of jobs in the cities, and, for those who remained on the land, agriculture became a desperate means of existence rather than a way of life. Country and small town merchants went bankrupt for lack of customers.

Then the Big Depression hit the cities. Industries closed down, banks failed, unemployment went up and up and up, and previously self-supporting and even moderately well-off people joined the lines at soup kitchens and relief offices, such as they were. Relief, in most places, was a matter of private charity. In many, if not most, southern states, there was no unemployment compensation. Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid did not exist, and there were no welfare programs, federal, state, county or municipal. In Birmingham, Alabama, the Steel City of the South and in Jefferson County in which it is located, half the population was out of work and seeking relief. The only source of help was the Red Cross and the best it could do was to provide \$2.50 per week for a family of five.

Under the circumstances, it is easy

to understand how Roosevelt and the New Deal were welcomed with overwhelming joy by the majority of the people of Alabama. Through WPA and PWA, jobs were provided for both black and white; relief and price support was provided for farmers; loans were made to railroads for improvements in their road beds and for the purchase of new cars and locomotives, which meant business for the steel mills and jobs for steel workers. Closed banks were re-opened, and their deposits were insured. But with the New Deal there also came the Wagner Act, giving labor the right to organize, and the wages and hours legislation, putting a floor under wages and a ceiling on hours of work.

The Big Mules (the big industrial firms centered around Birmingham) and the big planters of the Black Belt did not like this development. True, the New Deal measures had saved them from bankruptcy, but this business of coddling labor was going too far. How could a business keep going if it could not control its own labor and how could a farmer keep going when "niggers" who used to be happy to work for a dollar, or even seventy-five cents, a day, now had to be paid twenty-five cents an hour? Besides, this business of feeding trifling people who did not want to work anyway cost money and that meant higher taxes. The whole business was socialistic, if not in fact, communistic, and it had to be stopped.

So the Big Mules and the Black Belt planters, who, in political alliance with each other, had so long controlled the economy and politics of Alabama, did all they could to water down and destroy the New Deal programs. Since the electorate was limited to about 17 per cent of the population of voting age, they were pretty well able to control politics locally and, by a combination of Big Mule money and Black Belt votes, to dominate the state legislature. This domination was made much easier by the fact that, notwithstanding the constitutional mandate requiring a reapportionment of the legislature every ten years, none had been made since the adoption of the State Constitution of 1901. Due to demographic shifts, the population in some counties had grown greatly while in others it had decreased by many thousands. As an illustration of this imbalance, in 1940, Lowndes County

in the heart of the Black Belt, had a population of only 23,000 (85% were non-voting Negroes) and had one State Senator, while Jefferson County, with a population of 460,000, the great majority of whom were white, had only one. In other words, one Lowndes County vote was equal to twenty votes in Jefferson County.

The alignment of the anti-New Deal forces and those behind the Dixiecrat movement are difficult to distinguish, if they were not entirely identical.

Barnard is at his best in dealing with the characters involved in his story. They come alive, not just as protagonists in a political fight, but as flesh and blood people. "Big Jim" Folsom emerges, head and shoulders above the rest, as the hero, a flawed hero, it is true, but heroic for all the flaws. He was a true champion of the people, not just in the Populist sense of the term, but in the tradition of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. He did not lead the people to victory, it is true, but he never misled them by false appeals to their deepest felt yearnings and emotions (as, tragically, they are being misled today by our present Governor, masquerading in the garb of a Populist).

"Big Jim" is often pictured as an ignoramus and a clown. Ignoramus he was not, as Barnard makes perfectly clear. Although his formal education was brought to an early end by a combination of the Great Depression and a devastating flood that washed away most of his home town, he read widely, particularly in the field of history, and he understood how history applied to the realities of his own experience. He did often play the role of clown, sometimes for his own enjoyment but more often to serve his political ends. Humor was his most effective weapon and he used it to good advantage. But he never demagogued. Having seen early in life how the race issue was used as a smoke-screen to confuse the economic grievances shared alike by poor whites and poor blacks, he vowed never to use the race issue as a political appeal and he never did. He saw blacks and whites alike simply as people.

The significance of the Folsom story lies not in his defeats by the state legislature, but in the fact that, holding and advocating the views he did, he was twice elected Governor and came close to being elected to a then unprecedented third term.

In the early days of the nation, the South was the seed bed of American liberalism. Folsom's dream of "one man, one vote" which was frustrated by the legislature has now become a reality through action of the Federal courts. By constitutional amendment the poll tax has been abolished. Maybe now, the seed in that seed bed will begin to sprout again.

Barnard quotes "Big Jim" as having said a dozen years ago, "My leadership may have been wrong, but if so, I have left a heritage." He did and it is a heritage worth keeping.

Cliff Durr



Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 Through the Stono Rebellion, by Peter Wood, Alfred A. Knopf, 1974, 346pp., \$10.00.

How we attempt to solve a problem is in part a function of how we perceive and define it. The problem in this case is that southern history, in the words of C. Vann Woodward, "is a tribal myth written by the white tribe." We know, in short, what those who had access to libraries and who have left records have said about the past. Yet, knowing this to be the problem does not solve it. Any attempt to reconstruct a multi-racial American past involves more than a shift to a multi-racial perspective: it involves a quest for methodological keys to open up non-white evidence, seemingly locked in existing white historical sources.

Peter Wood's *Black Majority* provides proof that an interdisciplinary approach to the black past, calling on a variety of methods and concepts from the social sciences, can broaden the mono-racial historical heritage and provide new interpretations and insights into both behavior and attitudes. In this careful study of "Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 Through the Stono Rebellion," Mr. Wood portrays the entry of Africans into the colony and their determinative role in its settlement and growth. In doing so, he tackles a problem that has defeated a number of American scholars and has been ignored by others: namely the process through which Africans became Afro-Americans.

Wood begins with the presumption that the sheer size of the slave population was crucial. The surprises come

when he shows just how African slaves made their weight felt in the culture of the emerging colony. Wood tells us that the raising of livestock provided the necessary first stage in the colony's economic growth. Through a careful use of travel accounts, he reveals the relationship between this development and the expertise provided by the black population. Many of the Africans imported to Carolina after 1670 came from an area along the Gambia River in Africa, a society full of expert horsemen and herders who possessed considerable experience in handling large numbers of cattle. Wood shows that the pattern of animal husbandry which later emerged in Carolina was quite similar to that which existed in the lowlands and the rice growing area along the Gambia River.

In explaining the growth and popularity of rice as a staple crop in South Carolina, historians generally agree that "rice culture turned planters increasingly to slave labor." Englishmen were unfamiliar with rice growing, and the Indian groups preferred wild rice which grew in open fields needing little attention. But the majority of Africans coming from the wide area along the West African coast were adept at rice cultivation. Wood introduces heretofore overlooked evidence that a quality strain of rice seed was brought into Carolina by an African slave woman. He then examines the composition of the available labor supply — red, white and black — to determine the variables which might have affected who was responsible for the development of a profitable rice economy. Noting that rice production increased as the importation of Africans escalated, Wood concludes that slave traders seem to have preferred the human products of the Gambia River culture because of their agricultural know-how.

Wood's analysis of "labor theories of value" in colonial South Carolina leads him to an innovative new interpretation of the tensions between whites, Indians and blacks. In the early years of the colony's development, some of the Indian groups traded food, medicine, furs and information about the semi-tropical wilderness for English firearms and woollens. As the colony grew more secure English settlers "were greedy for involuntary as well as voluntary Indian labor." Obviously, this aggression increased the tension between the groups, decreased trade,

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and prompted the likelihood of Indian retaliation for slaving raids made upon their communities by whites. The response of Carolina's white settlers during the late seventeenth century reflected their fear that the Indian groups, blacks and Spaniards would combine forces as they had done in an attack on the settlement in 1686. They began to export enslaved Indians out of the colony in large numbers, and they "became increasingly willing to curtail their limited reliance upon native American labor."

The historical experience of white South Carolinians is also re-evaluated in light of the conditions of labor, primarily the competing pressures between maintaining contractual agreements with indentured servants and encouraging migration to a colony where land was plentiful. There was a rapid turnover in the white labor force, for as contract terms diminished, many whites grasped the opportunity to settle and farm their own plot of land. Competition for European labor among the colonies and the need for white settlers to populate and safeguard the settlements from angered Indians and recalcitrant blacks gave the white indentured servant the leverage for manumission.

English settlers were quick to appreciate the commercial fact that African labor could be exploited without concern for either negotiation of service contract or fear of Indian retaliation induced by kinship ties. Moreover, Wood indicates that the skills which Africans brought with them, and their general state of health, increased the value of their labor. The presence of a useful genetic trait—sickle-cell anemia—rendered African slaves considerably less susceptible to malaria, a medical fact unknown to white planters and their black laborers. Both merely understood that blacks had a capacity to survive hardship that neither Indians nor whites could approach. Indeed, as time passed and malaria threatened on more than one occasion to decimate the white population, white officials grew fearful lest the black population so outnumber the white that even the semblance of social control might collapse.

All in all, *Black Majority* is a provocative historical study—important for its specific subject matter and interpretation, and especially suggestive as a harbinger of the larger rewriting

of the American past that is now underway. Peter Wood has set an impressive standard for all who would venture with him into the complex and tragic world that constitutes the multi-racial American past.

Marsha J. Darling



The Way Life Was, compiled and written by Jeffrey Simpson, Praeger Publishers, 1974. \$19.95.

Few people have attempted to compile old photographs with the idea of bettering our understanding of history, and of those who have, most have been conservative propagandists. From these collections we are led to believe that the good old days were actually good. Life was simpler then, and simple translates as better. Indeed, our lives would have been easier had we only lived "back then."

The persistence of such notions is a powerful testimony to our parents' lively imaginations as well as the current nostalgia epidemic, which of late has produced collections of old photographs, beautifully bound and offered, at a price respectable enough to appeal to upper-class gift-giving occasions. Sooner or later, *The Way Life Was* was bound to appear. The only difference is that this collection is a good deal better than most.

Jeffrey Simpson has compiled the work of 17 photographers—male and female, amateur and professional—in this volume which focuses on the 35 years between 1880 and 1915. What emerges is, in Simpson's words, a "crazy quilt" made up of many ways of life, each distinct, often existing in physical isolation (as opposed to economic or political), if not ignorance of each other. This "crazy quilt" method of portraying a cross-section of history is chiefly valuable in avoiding the worst of previous volumes' faults—that of "finding" one great norm, as if photographs of Small Town or Middle Class America were typical or inclusive of life in the U.S. during any given period. Although these subjects find their place in Simpson's collection, they are juxtaposed with photographs of women in the mills. The life of New York's high society set is pictured alongside photographs of children laboring in the mines and textile mills of the period

by National Child Labor Committee photographer Lewis Hine. Photographs of the red-light district of New Orleans (brought out earlier in the year by Al Rose in *Storyville, New Orleans*), the rural South and Tuskegee, the Plains Indians, lumbermen in the Pacific Northwest and Chinese in San Francisco form other patches in Simpson's quilt.

For the most part, *The Way Life Was* shows our ancestors engaged in work, in the activities which constituted the necessities of their lives. There is the touch of reality. The ironies and inequalities of that reality emerge plainly but are most powerful and damning in contrast to the leisure activities and sadly opulent social functions of the rich.

In addition to the variety of portraits, there is a truly rare and enjoyable aspect of *The Way Life Was*—Simpson's captions and descriptions of the photographs. They are uniquely sensitive. Here Simpson's quilt comes to life. A not-so-striking photograph of an old woman standing at a spinning wheel at home becomes captivating when Simpson explains the process of spinning and points out the significance of the room's furnishings, a mixture of manufactured store-

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bought and homemade items. If we look carefully, this turn-of-the-century photograph reveals the demise of one form of capitalism and the coming of another. A braided rug made of scraps of worn-out clothes lies at the woman's feet. One chair is covered with factory-made calico, the other is homemade with its seat probably caned at home. We are informed that the wallpaper, typical of the period, comes from Sears Roebuck catalog. With descriptions such as this, Simpson gives one the material with which to study and reflect upon the photographs.

The Way Life Was still doesn't tell the whole story. We find ways of life that no longer exist, ways of life existent then and in decline now, but how we got from there to here is largely a mystery. Unfortunately, Simpson neglected a very important aspect of this period—that of people joined together working to change some of the horrible scenes so skillfully depicted in the book. A fitting end to the book would have been a section showing people in the act of changing their own history, as powerful and as powerless as they were. How can we understand the way life was if we have no comprehension of how it was transformed into the way life is?

Finally, a \$19.95 price tag is enough to tell the potential buyer that the way life *is* . . . is not the way life *was!*

Cary Fowler



How To Be Heard: Making the Media Work for You, by Ted Klein and Fred Danzig. Macmillan Publishing Co., \$9.95.

This amazingly straightforward volume amounts to a "how to" handbook for publicizing your cause through the efficient, effective use of mass media—from preparing leaflets and press releases to making it on the wire services or TV news. The authors, convinced by the direct relation between generating attention and generating support, emphasize the dependence of an individual or group's power on their ability to communicate their message to others. With an eye always to making and shaping the news, they tell how and when to write press releases, send fact sheets and news letters, use petitions and posters, enlist the aid of

local officials, congressmen, governmental agencies, and other public interest groups, hire lawyers and lobbyists, prepare oral interviews for radio, and filmed reports for TV. A final chapter of success stories, an exhaustive bibliography, and appendices listing national listener-sponsored radio stations, environmental and women's rights organizations, and sample cases from the files of the Environmental Defense Fund, are included.

— Lonnie Plecha



Open The Books, How To Research A Corporation, by Urban Planning Aid, Inc., 639 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass. \$2.95.

As economic chaos extends its reign over ever-widening areas of our lives, it seems more important than ever before to understand who the culprits and villains are in this process. Change will only come if fingers are pointed, blame is laid, and the "objective" nature of problems understood.

During the 1960s, the corporate responsibility movement was one of the various offshoot mutations from the larger multi-leveled "Movement." As a social force, it was largely unorganized, and its adherents ran the gamut from individualist conservatives to ecological nature-lovers, from dissatisfied trade unionists to happiness-seeking product-buyers. But at the base of all of this largely unfocused *angst* was the intuitive understanding that those who profit and prosper in an inter-dependent system are also those who must be held responsible for the problems of that system.

Throughout our recent history, from Vietnam to Watergate, corporations have come under ever-increasing scrutiny. As people throughout the country come to realize the dominant role that large economic institutions play in every aspect of their lives, a glaring need arises for widespread use of corporate research skills. The mystified hullabaloo of corporate finance can no longer remain the cherished domain of Ivy League-blessed experts. *Open The Books* is an important attempt to bridge this glaring information gap.

If one can wade through the swirling sea of corporate image propaganda, it becomes obvious that we don't know anything and aren't allowed to know anything about the very institutions that define almost every aspect of our lives. Who owns a corporation? Who makes the decisions? Who sets policy? Who gets all the profits? These are questions which are nearly unanswerable when asked of any corporation in the country—from electric utilities to food producers to military contractors.

Open The Books presents an easy-to-understand compilation of methods and resources for researching and investigating any corporate institution. As the economy deteriorates and the corporate propaganda increases, the need for clear, factual documentation is greater than ever. And if you want to find out the truth about the economy, don't naively wait to hear it from the mouths of well-paid experts. Pick a corporation and find out for yourself.

— Chip Hughes



Appalachian People's History Book, by Suzanne Crowell. Louisville, Ky.: Southern Conference Education Fund, 1973. 129 pages, \$5.

While reading the *Appalachian People's History Book*, I had to constantly remind myself that the events being described had taken place in America. Without the title and names, one could imagine reading about a people's struggle against foreign rule and oppression in South Africa or Asia.

I found myself wondering—how did the United States allow such atrocities to occur and persist in the land of the "free and brave." Are the principles our country is based upon merely superfluous; should the cliché be changed to the land of the rich and arrogant?

My answer was "yes," and this informative book backs my opinion to the hilt. We, as Appalachians, are living in the midst of plenty while our cups remain empty. We are a people whose mere existence only tends to hinder the "progress" of America. We are sitting atop an abundant source of energy that America wants and is prepared to take forcefully! As long as our backs remain strong enough to

extract the coal, then we are needed; but like disposable diapers, we are cast aside once our job is completed.

It is very ironic indeed, that high school students in Appalachia are hard pressed to talk about their culture and struggles, both past and present. The reason is simple. The school system has been geared to silence, or ignore, the people's movements — whereas the goals and methods of the capitalistic system in America are lauded and aspired to.

"Don't talk like a hillbilly; don't tell people your Dad is a coal miner; say 'yes ma'm' to the woman that hires your mother to clean house." This is just an example of the rules, both implied and expressed, that many Appalachian children learn much sooner than they master their three R's. During my entire elementary and high school 'education' in coal-producing Wise County, Virginia, I was never once taught about the struggles at Coal Creek, Harlan, Paint Creek, or even nearby Dante, Virginia.

My only source of information concerning early union fights was my grandfather. His breathing rattled and he gasped for air as he bitterly reflected upon his forty-plus years in the mines. Mines so poorly ventilated that his carbide lamp sometimes didn't have enough oxygen to burn. The fourteen-hour shifts and "doubling back" took its toll on this mountain man. During the organizing days, he was forced from work for two years because he signed a union petition. Ironically, two years was the length of time he needed in union mining to be eligible for a UMWA pension.

Forced to retire because of disabling black lung, my grandpa and grandma lived on sixty-five dollars a month from Social Security. Today, he is physically a vegetable, but does receive the highly-praised black-lung benefits. Of course this added income made him ineligible for most Medicaid and Medicare benefits, thus his "black lung money" is usually depleted after he pays for medicine and doctor bills.

This story is one in tens of thousands. Doctors and lawyers grow rich from black lung redtape, while the inflicted miner has his hopes dashed to bits by another stab in the back. Even some of our ministers chastise their flock for being on welfare, and one preacher I have met from Buchanan

County actually gives sermons on the beauty of "reclaimed" surface mines in Virginia and Kentucky. (Incidentally, he gets a bird's-eye view of these beauties from a coal operator's private airplane.)

So it seems that the cards are stacked, we can't cut the deck, and our children will likewise suffer — unless . . . unless we teach them, and ourselves, that the largest, most extensive propaganda attack upon any populace in history has been the concept that 'freedom' automatically works in the United States.

Freedom from aristocratic England was not won easily, the basic rights for coal miners were not won easily, and the fight to save our land will be the hardest yet. Let's stop mimicking middle-America and be proud of ourselves as Appalachians . . . independent resourceful and never saying 'uncle.' Money can not whip spirit.

— Frank Kilgore
Wise, Virginia



New Wood, songs and lyrics by Si Kahn. Produced by June Apple Records. Available for \$5.00 from Cut Cane Associates, Box 98, Mineral Bluff, Ga. 30559.

"Like a tree that grows in the
mountain ground
The storms of life have cut 'em
down
New wood springs from the roots
underground
Gone gonna rise again."

New music, like new wood, lives and grows and blossoms when it is firmly rooted in fertile soil. It is this feeling of rootedness — in the lives of other people, in the joys and sorrows of our era, in the day-to-day struggles that engulf us all — that emanates from Si's songs and that make his brand of composition and performance so distinctive. From the slick talk of the shifty-eyed politicians to the loneliness of a Saturday night at the pool hall, from the silent sighs of day's end in the mill to the sobering tragedy of death in the Kentucky coal fields — all are brought to life with a richness of subtle insight bred and tempered with a unique combination of organizer's anger, Harvard book learnin',

down-home mountain wisdom, time-weathered wit, and an insight-fullness into life of one who's been burned, but still returned to love again.

Even though Si's our friend, we don't want it to sound like we are reviewing his record just because we like him. In the wasteland that they call our culture — the plastic, cheap thrills and living for those momentary pleasures — it is rare to find a genuine dedication to political principles come through so clearly in an art form and to find a love of life and of other people that attempts honesty in a sea of lies.

As Charlotte Brody points out in the record's introduction, the songs are also more than just Si's songs: he is but a spokesperson to express the feelings of so many others throughout the mountains and the South and the whole country who feel the organic need for renewal, for change, for movement. I know that for myself the Brookside mine strike and the death of Larry Jones were very heart-breaking and emotion-packed experiences, but it is so moving to have those days re-created in song for all to hear and feel.

— Chip Hughes

Books on the South

This list is comprised mainly of works published since the last issue of *Southern Exposure*, that is, between November, 1974, and March, 1975. The entries have been placed under several broad and loosely-defined categories for your convenience. Mention of a book here does not preclude its being reviewed in a future issue.

Asterisks note that a major review of the book is planned for a future issue. Unsolicited reviews of other publications concerning the South or of general interest to our readers are always welcomed. Preference is given to recently released books.

Dissertations listed were accepted by the given university for the Ph.D. degree in December, 1974. Listings for January and February, 1975, were not available at our press time. Copies of the dissertations below are available from Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. The cost is \$5 for microfilm and \$11 for xerox copies, plus shipping and handling charges.

Architecture and History of Jefferson Parish, by Betsy Swanson. Pelican, 1975. \$15.00.

Au Texas: With the Great West and European Colonialization in Texas, by Victor P. Considerant. Reprint of 1855 edition. Porcupine Press, no date set. \$22.50.

Beginnings of Texas, by Robert Clark. Reprint of 1907 edition. Porcupine Press, 1974. \$9.00.

The Bituminous Coal Strike of 1943, by Thomas Clapp. Dissertation, University of Toledo.

Black Coal Miners in the United States, by Paul Nyden. 1974. A 73-page study by a University of Pittsburgh professor available for \$2.00 from AIMS, 20 East 30th Street, New York, NY 10016.

Black Migration: Movement North, 1900-1920, by Florette Henri. Anchor Press, 1975. \$7.95.

Black Names in America: A Guide to Their History and Meaning, new edition edited by Murray Heller and Newbell N. Puckett. G.K. Hall, 1975. \$29.55.

By Their Fruits: The Story of Shakerism in South Union, Kentucky, by Julia Neal. Reprint of 1947 edition. Porcupine Press, 1974.

Church and State in Virginia, 1776-1787, by Thomas Buckley. Dissertation, University of California-Santa Barbara.

Civil War, a Narrative: Red River to Appomattox, Vol. 3, by Shelby Foote. Random House, 1974. \$20.00.

Colonists for Sale: The Story of Indentured Servants in America, by Clifford L. Alderman. Macmillan, 1975. \$5.95.

Commentaries on the Constitution of Virginia, 2 volumes, by A. Dick Howard. University Press of Virginia, 1975. \$20.00

A Comparative Analysis of Composition Changes in the Investment Portfolios of Arkansas Commercial Banks, 1960-1972, by Leo Cheatham. Dissertation, University of Arkansas.

Confederate Women, by Bell Wiley. Greenwood Press, 1975. Price not set.

Culture, Economy and Urban Structure in Charleston, South Carolina, 1860-1880, by John Radford. Dissertation, Clark University.

Desoto Didn't Land at Tampa, by Rolfe Schnell. Island Press, 1974. \$1.95.

An Econometric Model of Arkansas, by Liang-Rong Shiao. Dissertation, University of Arkansas.

Emancipation of Angelina Grimke, by Katherine Lumpkin. University of North Carolina Press, 1974. \$11.95.*
Estero, Florida, 1882, by E.E. Damkohler. Island Press, 1974. \$1.00.

Financial History of Texas, by Edmund Miller. Reprint of 1916 edition. AMS Press, date not set. \$20.00.

First on the Land: The North Carolina Indians, by Ruth Wetmore. John Blair Publishers, 1974. \$8.95.

Florida Almanac, 1974, by Del Marth. E.A. Seemann Publishing, 1974. \$2.75.

Four Centuries of Southern Indians, edited by Charles Hudson. University of Georgia Press, 1975. \$3.00.

Hard Times on My Way: Slavery and the Struggle Against It: 1800-1860, by John A. Scott. Alfred Knopf, 1974. \$4.95.

History of the University of North Carolina, 2 volumes, by Kemp Battle. Reprint of 1907 editions. University of North Carolina Press, 1974. \$30.00 each.

History of White County, Tennessee, by Monroe Seals. Reprint of 1935 edition. 1974. \$10.50.

Income Elasticity and Determinants of Property Tax Revenue for the Support of Public Education in Arkansas, by Barry Morris. Dissertation, University of Arkansas.

Life Under the "Peculiar Institution," by Norman Yetman. Reprint of 1970 edition. Krieger Publishing. Price not set.

Louisiana: A Pictorial History, by Leonard V. Huber. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975. \$20.00.

Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863-1877, by Joe Taylor. Louisiana State University Press, 1974. \$20.00

Mark Twain's Notebooks and Journals, Vol. I: 1855-1873, edited by Frederick Anderson et al. University of California Press, 1975. \$20.00.

Myth and Southern History, by Patrick Gerster and Nicolas Cords. Vol. 1, The Old South. Vol. 2, The New South. Rand McNally, date not set. \$4.95.

New Negro on Campus: Black College Rebellions of the 1920's, by Raymond Wolters. Princeton University Press, 1974. \$15.00.

North Carolina Population Trends, by Horace Hamilton and Ronald Scott. Carolina Population Center-UNC, date not set. \$4.00.

Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement, 1801-1821, by Mattie Hatcher. Reprint of 1927 edition. Porcupine Press. \$17.50.

Outlaw Years: The History of the Land Pirates of the Natchez Trace, by Robert Coates. Reprint of 1930 edition. Gale Research Co., 1974. \$15.00.

The Political South in the Twentieth Century, by Monroe Lee Billington. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975. \$3.95.

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Race and Slavery in the Western Hemisphere: Quantitative Studies, by Stanley Engerman and Eugene Genovese. Princeton University Press, 1974. \$9.75.

Recent Merger Activity of the Largest Firms in the Forest Products Industries, by Dennis LeMaster. Dissertation, Washington State University.

Regulating Demands in Four Local Development Districts of Western North Carolina, by Sheron Keiser. Dissertation, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Rugby, Tennessee, by Thomas Hughes. Reprint of 1891 edition. Porcupine Press, 1974. \$10.00.

Saga of the South, by Edward Lawton. Island Press, 1974. \$12.00.

The Savage and the Child in Historical Perspective: Images of Blacks in Southern White Thought, 1830-1915, by Kenneth O'Brien. Dissertation, Northwestern University.

Slavery, Colonialism and Racism, new edition edited by Sidney W. Mintz. Norton, 1975. \$2.95.

The Slavery of Sex: Feminist Abolitionists in 19th Century America, by Blanche Hersh. Dissertation, University of Illinois (Chicago).

Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South, by Ira Berlin. Pantheon, 1975. \$12.95.*

The Sociology of W.E.B. Du Bois, by Danforth S. Green. Dissertation, University of Massachusetts.

Southern Methodist University: First Twenty-Five Years, by Mary Thomas. Southern Methodist University Press, 1974. \$12.50.

Thousand Years on Mound Key, revised edition by Rolfe Schnell. Island Press, 1974. \$7.5.

Three for Freedom, by James Forman. Random House, 1974. \$4.95.

Trial of Martin Luther King, by Alan Westin and Barry Mahoney, T.Y. Crowell, 1975. \$5.95.

The Use of Labor Mobility Demonstration Projects to Reduce Unemployment in Labor Surplus Areas: A Case Study of Projects in North Carolina, West Virginia and Texas with Special Emphasis on the LTV-Texas Project, by Alan N. Cook. Dissertation, University of Arkansas.

Folklore, Music and Art

American Labor Songs of the Nineteenth Century, edited by Philip Foner. University of Illinois Press, 1975. \$20.00.

Drums of Life: A Photographic-Essay of the Black Man in America, by Chester Higgins, Jr. and Orde Coombs. Anchor, 1975. \$5.95.

Life in the Leatherwoods, by John Quincy Wolf. Edited with an afterword by John Quincy Wolf Jr. Memphis State University Press, 1974.

Moonshiner's Manual, by Michael Barleycorn. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975. \$3.95.

Sang Branch Settlers: Folksongs and Tales of a Kentucky Mountain Family, by Leonard Roberts. University of Texas Press, 1974. \$12.50.

Soul Music, Black and White: The Influence of Black Music on the Churches, by Johannes Riedel. Augsburg Publishing House, 1974. \$3.50.

Geography

Camping Around the Appalachian Mountains, by Jim Crain and Terry Milne. Random House, 1975. Price not set.

City-County Consolidation: The Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, North Carolina Case, by George Carroll. Dissertation, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Colonial Florida and Its Borderlands, edited by Samuel Proctor. University of Florida Press, date and price not set.

Florida Place Names, by Allen C. Morris. University of Miami Press, 1974. \$5.95.

Geography of Blacks in the United States, by George A. Davis and O. Fred Donaldson. Houghton Mifflin, 1975. \$5.95.

Historical Atlas of Alabama, by Donald Dodd. University of Alabama Press, 1974. \$11.50.

Observations Upon the Floridas, by Charles Vignoles. Reprint of 1823 edition. University of Florida Press, date not set. \$8.50.

Regional Consciousness in West Virginia, by Charles Lieble. Dissertation, University of Tennessee.

The Significance of Manufacturing Activity in a Rural Area in East Tennessee, by Theodore Klimasewski. Dissertation, University of Tennessee.

Southeastern Campgrounds and Trailer Parks, by Ed Peterson. Rand McNally, 1975. \$3.95.

The Spatial Impact of Governmental Decisions on the Production and Distribution of Louisiana Sugar Cane, 1751-1972, by Philip Shea. Dissertation, Michigan State University.

Tour Through the Southern and Western Territories of the U.S., by John Pope. University of Florida Press, date not set. \$6.50.

Travel on Southern Antebellum Railroads, 1828-1860, by Eugene Alvarez. University of Alabama Press, 1974. \$8.95.

Urban Growth in a "Rural" Area: The Arkansas Case, 1960-1970, by Joe Copeland. Dissertation, University of Arkansas.

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FROM OUR READERS . . .

Andy Ranachan, Toronto, Canada: I have just received my first issue ("America's Best Music") of my subscription, and to put it mildly, I'm knocked out. I've spent all day reading it and feel I must inform you of its impact. Both on a graphic and content level, it is the most satisfying journal I have read in quite a long time.

I teach a course on Southern literature and history and I feel it will be an invaluable teaching tool for myself and a research aid for my students. I have called the University library and I am following up with a written request that they immediately subscribe to your publication. I will also pass it amongst my colleagues in the hopes of engendering similar subscription responses.

Jolly Robinson: I just saw Vol. I, No. 3-4 ("No More Moanin'") and would like to have a copy. My grandparents and mother and uncle lived in Llano and Fairhope; my cousin went to Black Mountain College, and a friend, Sis Cunningham, attended Commonwealth College in the thirties. I grew up in Arden, Delaware, a small single tax colony very few folks know about. I'm currently teaching a course in Labor Songs As History and am also much interested in the Gastonia strike and Ella Mae Wiggins, and all the southern songwriter/singers and their lives and struggles.

Name Withheld: I have purchased two copies of your journal at my local bookstore and wish now to subscribe. I wish you continued success (which I hope you are having) in this work. Might I suggest some possibilities for future articles?

a. Use of convict labor and efforts to end it.

b. Interracial or black communities; e.g. Koinonia Farms (Americus, Ga.); Freedom Farms (Ruleville, Miss.); New Communities (Leesburg, Ga.); Soul City, N.C.; etc.

c. Musical instrument makers in the South, both old and new, who make banjos, guitars, dulcimers, etc. There are some great old people (and some not so old) who have continued a multi-generation tradition of family instrument making. Some good history

and culture here — what's it been like during good and hard times, how has their craft changed, how has the music changed and the performers or purchasers, too, etc., etc. There appears to be a real boom going for the once dying dulcimer — why?

d. The Citizen's Councils, the Klan — dead, dying, hanging on — what? How much of the Klan is race hatred and how much is rebellion against class privilege or culture, etc.? How much of it is social, giving one a sense of belonging and purposefulness?

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All God's Dangers. Theodore Rosengarten. II, 2 & 3, pp. 22-32.
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Black Land Loss: The Plight of Black Ownership. Black Economic Research Center. II, 2 & 3, pp. 112-121.
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Brookside Mine—1974. Si Kahn and Aunt Molly Jackson. II, 1, pp. 52-55.
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