

1976

Southern Exposure

PASSING GLANCES



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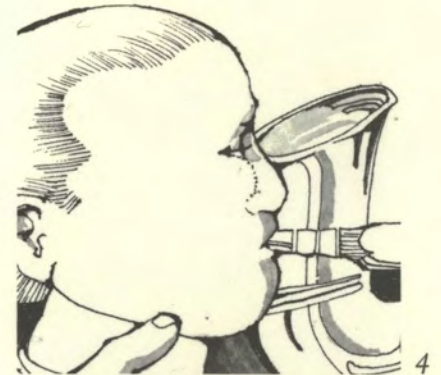
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Southern Exposure



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from
our
readers. . . .



Illustration by Leslie Udry

I am fairly new to the South and since being here have greatly enjoyed reading *Southern Exposure* and used the knowledge it shares with us. Recently I read your issue "Generations: Women in the South" and was surprised and disappointed to find the whole issue of lesbianism conveniently excluded from the issue. Lesbians are very much an integral part of Southern women's culture, work and political action. They have played a role in the Southern labor movement, in the struggle for racial justice, and most clearly in the feminist movement.

Historically, Lesbians have been left out. There is a lack of research and scientific knowledge partly due to this leaving out of lesbianism and partly due to lesbians learning to hide for their own protection.

As a magazine dedicated to research and education it seems that *Southern Exposure* should be making an effort to include and search out those areas of Southern living that aren't necessarily given adequate coverage in the press.

Heidi J. Silver
Atlanta, Ga.

Just a few lines to let you know that I am grateful for the Books of "Sick for Justice" [Vol. 6, No. 2] and that it sold wonderfully. The people enjoyed reading it. I thank you for the beautiful story you've written for me. Every time I read it I shed tears. Whenever you write another Book, I'll be glad to give a input. I am asking you to send me a hundred more "Sick for Justice" books. . . .

Square Mormon
Rossville, Tenn.

For the past two years I have been receiving *Southern Exposure* in a sporadic manner, missing issues here and there while deciding whether the magazine is really worth it. I have finally reached the conclusion that *Southern Exposure* is one of those rare things that makes me feel like I've lived in the South for years and know something of its culture, people and habits (or almost). It has given me invaluable insights into the Old South, and helps me interpret the new.

Gregory Feise
Olympia, Wash.

We received the following response to a promotional letter signed by Julian Bond, president of the Institute's board of directors.

Mr Bond I Could Have Put Your Letter In The Trash Can But I Dident Because I Like People From The South But You Are From One South And Im From Another South Yeah I Grow Up In The Hills Of A Little Town Called Grundy Virginia On A Farm And We Lived Off The Land And Stuff We Grow My Grand Ma Was All So A Midwife I Can Still Remerber Back When I Was Ten Years Old Quite Afuw Times When My Grand Ma Would Take Me With Her Two Hold The Women s Hands While She Caught Little Juner And When She Would Home She Would Pick Up Her Old Bango And Bang Away On It For A While I Guess Thats Why I All Ways Likeed Music Thats How All My Brothers Learned How To Play Music Form My Midwife Grand Ma I Had Nine Brothers In All And All Of Them Could Play Some Kind Of Music But Me I Never Did Care About Playing Music My Self I All Ways Wanted Two Write

For Music But I Have Been Along Time
Trying To Get Started With It Because
My Husband And I Have Worked And
Paid Off To Homes Here In Baltimore
The One We Live In Now We Got It
Paid Off Three Years Ago Now So I
Told My Self Now I Must Get Going
With My Song Writing So I Have Got
Four Sounds in Mr Rogers Have Made
Down In Nashville But I Havent Sent
Them To A Record Arranger As Yet
And Mr Rogers Is Working On Another
One Called Im A Boogie Woogie Man
Mr Julian Bond Might Bragge About
That He Is The Best Southern Writer
In The South But You Wait Until I
Get Started On Him Im Going To
Knoch His Boots Off Well Any Way
I Dont Want To Bragge To Much
Because I Dont Know What Kind
Of Luck Ill Have Yet With My New
Sounds That Im Trying To Come Up
With But I Would Have Liked Far You
To Have Met My Bango Picking Baby
Catching Grand Ma I Still Miss Her
Even Thou She Passed Away Afuw
Years Aga She Was Eighty Nine Yes
I Remember Ever Time She Would
Let Me Help Her Catch A Baby She
Would All Ways Let Me Help To Cut
The Little Gut That Was Sticking
Up On Its Little Belley When It Was
Borned So Her Records Will Live For
Ever Down In The Court House Of
Grundy Va So You Tell Mr Bond Thit
Was The Way We Liveed In The South
Afuw Years Back

And I Must Close For Now

Margie Bish
Baltimore Md

While Pres. Carter and Andrew Young
blast other nations for practicing Cruel
and Inhumane treatment against their
Citizens and Prisoners which violates
"Human Rights" it would do them
and the American people well to take
a long hard look in our own Back
Yard before we look for faults in other
Nations!

The Anglo-Saxon Prison Philosophies
in American Prisons both state and
federal do Violate the Human Rights of
Inmates! Articles I and VIII of the Bill
of Rights is neglected and Ignored
for Prison Officials and in the process
Rehabilitation is not effective! . . .

It makes little sense why the tried
and failed Prison Programs and Systems
are allowed to continue while Crime
goes up! . . .

In Tennessee, 8 inmates have filed
Law Suits against all Wardens and the
Dept. of Corrections for Overcrowded
Conditions!

Inmates are sleeping on the floors at
the school in the Main Prison and in
another building inmates are Crammed
like sardines in dormitories which has
caused Unhealthy Conditions, thefts,
rapes, stabbings and a rise in tensions!

Thanks for reading and for con-
sidering coverage and support for
Progressive Alternative Changes in
Prisons!

Vaughn McLemore
No. 73944
Unit 5, 8/6
Station A West
Nashville, Tenn.

*Southern Exposure's next issue will
be devoted to prisons in the South.*

I was nonplussed when I read your
disclaimer to the "heavy dialect" of
the Federal Writers' Project article
"Such As Us." (Vol. V, No. 4) Your
statement has made visible the un-
written rule about "proper" trans-
criptions so often hinted at in "social
conscience" magazines.

By refusing to write an interview the
same way it was spoken you are deni-
grating the speaker's oral style as wrong
and the Oxford English Dictionary as
right. This judgement casts out all local
dialects of the American colonies as
not worthy of serious study or preserva-
tion in favor of a uniform speaking and
writing style. This paternalism of style
removes from our everyday lives all but
the homogenized high school grammar.

While I realize that many transcrip-
tions of natural speaking rhythms and
grammars are often distortions and
caricatures, the way to solve this prob-
lem is to take pains in accurate tran-
scriptions with carefully phoneticized
spellings. To gloss over regional style
denies regional value.

Richard L. Perry
La Plune, Pa.

Your issue "On Jordan's Stormy Banks:
Religion in the South" was as splendid
as any previous *Southern Exposure*.
Your article "Growing Up Catholic,"
however, was totally inadequate. As a

dyed-in-the-wool cynic who has worked
for, with, and against the Catholic
Church on matters of social justice all
my life, I'm the last person to worry
about, still less defend, its image. But,
insofar as some live cells continue to
hold out, and even grow, within the
cancerous body, there is a *tension* with-
in the Catholic Church. That tension,
between a number of Catholics in the
South actively and faithfully committed
to the struggle for justice, and the
institutional behemoth that stands a-
gainst the struggle, or, as is more often
the case, does not stand at all, was not
reflected in Pam Durban's piece or in
the entire issue.

I thought at first that that article
reflected as good a picture of Catholi-
cism as any one article could, until I
went on to read your own figures
showing Catholicism to be the second-
largest denomination in the South.
There's a diversity among those 5½
million people, and a few newsworthy
stories within that diversity. The work
of the Catholic Committee on Appa-
lachia, and the long struggle of Fr.
Vince O'Connell and the cane cutters
in Louisiana, are two examples that
come to mind. And anyway, the ex-
poses of the wealth and power of the
Southern Baptists, Methodists and Pres-
byterian Churches were so delightful
that I'm disappointed that you'd let
the Catholic Church off so lightly.

Pat Speer
Washington, DC

A group of us in Austin, in conjunction
with people in other Texas cities, are
interested in developing an organization
which could speak to the needs of ten-
ants throughout the state. We've begun
to put together the Texas Tenants' Rights
Association.

We're interested in hearing from
people in Texas who would support a
state-wide organization and/or people
interested in forming local grassroots
tenants' organizations.

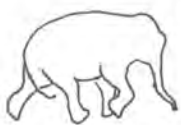
Since Texas is comparatively less
liberal in its landlord-tenant laws, we
would be happy to correspond with
anyone who has had experience organiz-
ing in areas where rent strikes are illegal
and the local Board of Realtors finances
the city council election!

Paul Gottlieb
Austin, Texas

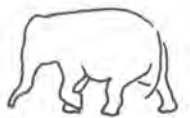
Illustration by Frank Holyfield



THE SOAPBOX TRIO



Toppling White Elephants



Editors' note: Despite all the talk about America turning right, a year from now at least four conservative Republican stalwarts, all from the South, may no longer be in the US Senate. They may not be replaced by progressive legislators, but the threat to their entrenched positions clearly merits our attention – and we are indebted to free-lance journalist Mark Pinsky for suggesting the subject. The seats in jeopardy, he noted, are:

"In Virginia, where Senator William Scott, designated by New Times as the 'Dumbest Man in the US Senate,' has simply decided not to run. (This series only looks at the races involving the incumbents).

"In North Carolina, where Senator Jesse Helms, a former television editorialist, has in one term made himself the number one target of organized labor, the women's movement, civil rights organizations and Zionist groups. . . .

"In South Carolina, where Senator Strom Thurmond is beginning to lose his allure among voters, despite his calisthenics, young wife, four children attending integrated schools and a passel of savvy black patronage. . . .

"In Texas, where Senator John Tower, a favorite of the Pentagon and the oil and natural gas industry, is running hard for a fourth term, no longer the beneficiary of internal splits within the Democratic opposition."

Now for the view from the campaign trail.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Thurmond vs. Ravenel

by Jan Collins Stucker

Senator J. Strom Thurmond, 75, strode through the cafeteria line on the University of South Carolina campus, briskly ordering servings of broiled fish, black-eyed peas and skim milk when he was spotted suddenly by a middle-aged, black waitress.

"Aren't you Senator Thurmond, Senator Strom Thurmond?" the woman hesitantly asked.

"Yes, Ma'am, that's right," the senator replied amiably, "and how are you

today?"

"Fine, Senator, just fine," she answered. "I just want to shake your hand, I've been wanting to shake your hand for the longest time."

The veteran politician smiled, stuck out his hand, and then proceeded to pump the outstretched hands of each of the women staffing the serving line. They all happened to be black.

Finally, Strom Thurmond settled down at a table and began to eat his lunch.

One of the ironies of Southern politics today is that South Carolina's black voters may be a crucial factor in determining whether Republican Strom Thurmond, the embodiment of Old South politics, is returned to the United States Senate in November to begin his fifth and final term. If the contest between Thurmond and his young, charismatic challenger — 40-year-old Charles "Pug" Ravenel — becomes as nip and tuck as some pollsters predict, the black vote could help tip the election scales this autumn.

Blacks were not always so important to Strom Thurmond. A longtime symbol of Southern segregation, Thurmond was the standard-bearer in 1948 for the Dixiecrat Party. "There are not enough laws on the books of the nation, nor can there be enough laws, to break down segregation in the South," then-South Carolina Governor Thurmond told cheering crowds as he accepted the nomination of his splinter party. He maintained his nay-saying posture on civil rights after his 1954 election to the Senate, and he still holds the one-man record for a filibuster (24 hours, 18 minutes) in battling the 1957 civil rights bill.

But slightly more than a decade after the Voting Rights Act was signed into law, more than a quarter of South Carolina's electorate is black; and Thurmond and other ex-segregationist politicians in the South are paying homage to the increasing strength of blacks in the voting booth. This year, Thurmond predicts he will collect "a third, perhaps a half," of the black vote in his race against Ravenel. "In their hearts," Thurmond says earnestly, "at least half of the black people favor me."

Strom Thurmond began his courtship of the black community after the 1970 elections, when a protege, an evangelical patriot named Albert Watson who wore a white tie to symbolize his outlook on race, lost the governorship of South Carolina to racial moderate John C. West. "Strom saw the handwriting on the wall," remembered a former political associate, "and he got to work."

Thurmond hired a black staffer — the first member of the state's Congressional delegation to do so. He began announcing a host of federal grants to black colleges, communities and day-care centers, many of them the result of programs he had voted against. He nominated the leading civil rights attorney in the state to be a federal judge; and last fall, he enrolled his six-year-old daughter in an integrated

school. The child's teacher, specifically requested by the Thurmonds, is black.

Thurmond's persistent wooing of the black community has begun to bear fruit. Isaac Williams, field director of the South Carolina NAACP, acknowledges that the veteran senator has "neutralized" much of the hostility previously aimed at him by blacks. Reports continue to circulate that the presidents of several predominantly black colleges — recipients of much of Thurmond's federal largesse — will endorse the senator's re-election bid. Ten black mayors were among a group of 168 city executives who publicly gave their backing to Thurmond in April. "Senator Thurmond," says Charles Ross, the black mayor of Lincolnville, "has been extraordinarily good to our town. We have never asked to see him and been refused. I'm going to be there for him in November."

So will a lot of other folks. A loyal but sparse state Republican organization that in 1974 helped elect South Carolina's first GOP governor in a century will be working for Thurmond. So will a giant network of devoted followers put together over the four decades that Thurmond has been a political officeholder in the state. Some of this throng are ideologically dedicated to Thurmond's positions; others have reaped the benefits of his patronage and federal grants over the years; still others have had difficult personal problems solved by Thurmond's legendarily competent staff.

Strategists for Thurmond wistfully talk about his doubling, and perhaps even tripling, the eight percent of the black vote that he garnered in his 1972 race. In a tight contest, any slice of the black vote greater than 15 to 20 percent would spell trouble for Democrat Ravenel. But State Representative Earl Middleton, one of 13 black members in the South Carolina House of Representatives, believes that, in the end, few blacks will pull the voting lever for Thurmond. Middleton vows that he and many other blacks will campaign strenuously against the senior senator. "I can't forget what has happened in the past because so many people were affected by what Thurmond did," the 57-year-old legislator says. "If I were to forget the past, I couldn't live with the present." Monetary gestures, adds Middleton, "don't make up for slapping us and spitting in our faces for so long."

The handsome, vigorous candidate, shirt sleeves rolled up and coat slung over one shoulder, loped across the street, stopping to chat with a group of townspeople about education, jobs and health care. "Isn't it time the people, not the politicians, elect a governor?" intoned the resonant voice from the television set.

South Carolina had never seen anything like it. Who was this total newcomer to politics, this young Catholic from Harvard University and a Wall Street investment firm who was running such an aggressive campaign in the Bible Belt? He was Charles "Pug" Ravenel, and his sophisticated, \$600,000 media-dominated race in 1974 turned his first try for political office into a victory in the Democratic gubernatorial primary. But the politically ambitious and exceedingly articulate Ravenel was kept out of the general election by a court ruling that he did not meet the state's residency requirement for office seekers.

The stocky, athletic son of a sheet-metal worker, Ravenel grew up in Charleston, leaving South Carolina in the late 1950s to attend Harvard on scholarship. Dubbed "The Gambler" when he was the star quarterback on Harvard's football team (he passed when he was supposed to run and ran when he was supposed to pass), Ravenel went on to earn a graduate degree at Harvard Business School, worked in the Lyndon Johnson administration for a year, married a woman from Connecticut and became a successful investment banker on Wall Street. In 1972, he returned to his native state to open an investment banking firm in Charleston and to prepare for the 1974 governor's race.

Ravenel introduced to South Carolina the type of carefully orchestrated, costly television campaign blending issues and image that had proven so successful in many other states North and South. He lashed out at the Democratic power-

brokers and special interest groups that were backing his opponents, attacked "conflict of interest as a way of life here," and portrayed himself as a coolheaded outsider beholden to no one.

Political experts believe that Ravenel rose quickly in the Democratic Party because he came along at precisely the right moment — immediately after the Watergate scandal, when the electorate was weary of "politics as usual" and ready for reform. Campaigning as a progressive reformer, he lampooned the state Senate establishment that blocked legislation on ethics, home rule and campaign finance reform. He was well on his way to becoming governor of South Carolina when the state Supreme Court ruled in the fall of 1974 that he hadn't lived in the state long enough.

The South Carolina Constitution requires that a candidate for governor be "a citizen and resident . . . five years next preceding the day of election." Ravenel had been back in Charleston for more than two years following a 17-year absence. In a suit before a lower court judge, Ravenel won a favorable ruling that he had never surrendered his residency, although he had voted and paid taxes in New York. But after Ravenel scored a stunning upset against his leading opponent, William Jennings Bryan Dorn, in the first primary and won decisively in the runoff, a second court suit challenging Ravenel's residency status was filed.

The question of who was responsible for the suit that disqualified Ravenel has never been answered. The official plaintiffs were a perennial candidate in the state's Democratic primaries and a right-wing country music disc jockey. Their attorney, however, was Eugene Griffith, a former Republican state senator who is a first cousin of W. J. Bryan Dorn. When Ravenel was disqualified, Dorn became the Democratic candidate. Stories were circulated that Dorn's wife, Millie, had at least given her approval to the idea of a lawsuit. Rumors also were spread that unnamed members of the Democratic hierarchy, anxious to get rid of the upstart Ravenel, likewise encouraged the suit. Some believe that various state Republicans were behind the suit, hoping to elect the GOP candidate, oral surgeon James B. Edwards, amidst the confusion if Ravenel were ruled off the ballot at the eleventh hour. Edwards, in fact, was elected in precisely that fashion.

Four years later, Ravenel's "New Politics" campaign for the US Senate tests the true strength of the expensive, airwave-dominated campaigns that have helped bring younger and more moderate politicians to power in the South. And in 1978, Ravenel's latest crusade collides with the enduring master of traditional Southern politics, Strom Thurmond. Thurmond, the incumbent since 1954 and a Republican since he defected from the Democrats in 1964 to campaign for Barry Goldwater, remains immensely popular with scores of South Carolinians. Few of his constituents disagreed with his futile struggle to keep the Panama Canal ("the biggest giveaway of the century," Thurmond called it). And fewer still quarrel with his clear-cut view of international problems: "The goal of the Soviets is the spread of communism, and if we don't remain strong, they'll put a gun to our heads and destroy us."

"Strom stands up for what he believes in, even if it's wrong," explained an admiring textile worker to author Jack Bass in 1972, just minutes after the man had done his part to re-elect the senator with 63 percent of the vote. It is that symbolism of dogged individualism that Thurmond's political advisors are stressing in this campaign. The veteran lawmaker is being portrayed as honest, courageous and individualistic — the personification of the values of ordinary South Carolinians. "You know where Strom stands — he stands for you," trumpets a Thurmond campaign brochure. The veteran senator is gambling that the traditional Old Politics style of "standing up for the people" and making them *feel* proud and secure and represented, whether or not they actually *are*, still wins elections in South Carolina.

Ravenel, on the other hand, is betting his "New Politics" bottom dollar that the old way no longer works. People in this state are puzzled, he says, about why

"Strom stands up for what he believes in, even if it's wrong," explains an admiring textile worker.

government doesn't seem to be working for them. They are worried about inflation, unemployment, swelling health care costs and the energy shortage. And Thurmond's actual record in these areas, Ravenel argues, doesn't reflect what the average South Carolinian wants.

"The substance (of Thurmond's voting record) is rancid," declares Ravenel, "and that's the whole damn nub of this whole race." He pulls out a 16-page selective summary of his opponent's voting record in Congress since 1970 to illustrate his point. Nearly every program for social welfare, education, employment, tax reform, health care, the environment and civil rights singled out by Ravenel received a "no" vote from the senior senator.

Ravenel's radio and television ads this year will deal heavily with issues and try to convince the voters that the Charleston investment banker, who peddles his technical expertise along with the charisma still so important in Southern politics, has a better grasp of the intricate problems of the modern world than does Thurmond. Trading heavily on his business background, Ravenel proposes a variety of specific "new" solutions for the nation's economic and social ills.

To cure "stagflation" (Ravenel defines it as rapidly rising prices in the face of a stagnant economy), the Harvard Business



School graduate recommends a five-pronged program: a balanced budget, an 18-month moratorium on "net federal cost-raising measures," tax incentives to encourage employers and employees to restrain wage and price increase demands, reduced sales taxes and an energy plan that "reduces our reliance on expensive imported energy." To blunt the ever-increasing rate of unemployment, Ravenel proposes more federally funded technical education, a system of wage subsidy, and a "temporary moratorium" on minimum wage increases for teenagers.

A common thread runs through all of Ravenel's suggested remedies for what he calls the "critical" problems of inflation, unemployment, welfare and energy. It is that the private enterprise system, with a little help from the government, ought "to provide people with a fair chance to make it on their own." Every Wall Street banker would nod his head in approval.

Many Democrats are convinced that Ravenel's youthful image and articulate style will have more appeal to the state's city dwellers and under-40 voters than the plodding, hand-pumping techniques employed by Thurmond. "Television will be a large part of Pug's advantage," says Donald L. Fowler, the chairman of the South Carolina Democratic Party. "He knows how to use TV, and he's good at it. Remember, those under-40 voters are the children of television." Ravenel expects to spend two-thirds of the \$900,000 or so he hopes to raise on media advertising.

As he did in 1974, Ravenel is relying heavily on his friends from his days at Harvard and on Wall Street to provide him with campaign dollars. *Jaws* author Peter Benchley, an old college chum, is a generous contributor. So are West Virginia Governor Jay Rockefeller, former Treasury Secretary C. Douglas Dillon, Allied Chemical Corporation executive Alexander Trowbridge, Philip

Morris vice-president W. W. McDowell, Jr. and magazine publisher Warren D. Manshel. A host of New York investment bankers have donated money to the campaign of their former colleague. In South Carolina, youngish professionals and businessmen, mostly fairly moderate in their politics, have shelled out contributions. They include J. Donald Dial, a Columbia attorney who has made it big in real estate; Samuel J. Tenenbaum, a steel company executive; and Macon G. Patton, a Greenville corporation official. But most businessmen in the state are conspicuously absent from Ravenel's campaign contributors' list. The reason? Ravenel stood alone among major politicians in the state in support of the labor reform bill — legislation that most South Carolina businessmen opposed vociferously in the belief that it would help unionize the South. Organized labor has made important contributions to the Ravenel campaign, but that is offset by the paucity of overall business donations.

Ravenel expects to be outspent more than two-to-one by Thurmond, who is expected to fill with ease a campaign chest of \$1.5 to \$2 million. Richard Viguerie, the direct-mail wizard of conservative causes, had raised nearly \$250,000 for Thurmond by late spring. Other national conservative figures and groups have come forward with financial support, including Chicago insurance company president W. Clement Stone, Richard Nixon's favorite donor; retired Nebraska Senator Roman Hruska; the National Rifle Association; and the Conservative Victory Fund. South Carolina textile executives, who appreciate Thurmond's unyielding stand against the threat of labor unions, have coughed up thousands of dollars. They include Roger Milliken, a staunch Republican and owner of the third-largest textile firm in the world, Deering Milliken, Inc.; former Nixon Commerce Secretary, Frederick B. Dent, now an executive with Mayfair Mills in Arcadia, South Carolina; various members of the Chapman family, who own Inman Mills in Inman, South Carolina; and Robert S. Small, chairman of the board of Dan River Mills, Inc., of Greenville. The Good Government Committee of J. P. Stevens & Co., Inc., contributed \$750. So did the Wellman Industries Good Government Fund, a political action committee of a large textile firm in Johnsonville, South Carolina.

Thurmond's "friends and neighbors" brand of politics (he invited everyone in

South Carolina to attend an "openhouse" at his modest Columbia residence in April; 7,000 people showed up); his superb reputation for snipping bureaucratic red tape for his constituents ("I urge my staff to give every problem special attention"); and his unflagging energy may be difficult for Ravenel to overcome. So might the knowledge that the durable Thurmond has notched political victories as a Democrat, Dixiecrat, Independent and Republican.

The consummate politician, Strom Thurmond never stops building and mending political fences. Almost daily he telephones dozens of South Carolinians, sometimes to offer his congratulations on a job promotion, sometimes to offer a family member an internship in his Washington office, sometimes to offer condolences on the loss of a loved one. All high school graduates in the state receive from the senator a special letter, suitable for framing.

There are yet additional potential stumbling blocks for Ravenel in his effort to unseat the Old South conservative who preaches patriotism, states' rights, free enterprise and military strength, but who, at the same time, has the uncanny ability to sniff the changing political winds and accommodate himself accordingly. For one thing, Thurmond can point to nearly half a century of government experience — with almost 24 years of that in the US Senate — at a time when the polls in South Carolina indicate that experience is of prime importance to the voters.

For another, some traditional Democrats are still bitter at Ravenel for his refusal four years ago to work for Bryan Dorn, who succeeded him on the Democratic ticket; the party split that year and voters elected the state's first Republican governor in this century. "Old Guard" Democratic politicians like Rembert Dennis and Marion Gressette, who between them have served more than 80 years in the South Carolina Legislature, will undoubtedly refuse to help Ravenel. Some political observers in South Carolina, in fact, wouldn't be surprised to see them quietly lend a hand to Thurmond under the table. (Ravenel made Dennis and Gressette his whipping boys during his 1974 campaign, and they haven't forgotten. Other old-line Democratic senators, who wield considerable influence in legislatively controlled South Carolina, likewise have no love lost for Ravenel, who in an unguarded moment

four years ago referred to the Senate as "a den of thieves.") Even the "age factor," as it's delicately referred to in South Carolina, may be turned around by Thurmond as he shows off his four young children, his 32-year-old beauty queen wife, and his well-publicized devotion to vitamins, health food and physical fitness.

For his part, Thurmond is convinced that he will be re-elected or retired from

office on the basis of his past record. "I think the record made in the Senate will determine whether I get re-elected, period," he says, thoughtfully. "I'm not too sure that any politicking I do or anything that anyone says about me will have the deciding weight. I think if the people have been pleased with my record for 24 years, they'll vote for me. If they're not, they shouldn't. It's just that simple."

And it is that same record, ironically, which both Thurmond and Ravenel count on to elect the next United States Senator from South Carolina.

Jan Collins Stucker is Special Assignments Writer for The Columbia (S.C.) Record.

TEXAS

Tower vs. Krueger

by Pat Black

“We’re going to embarrass people for supporting John Tower. He’s one of the last racists in the US Senate,” says Garry Mauro, campaign manager for Bob Krueger.

“Krueger is just a damned dishonest man. He’s cut from the same hypocritical mold as Lyndon Johnson,” says Ken Towery, campaign manager for John Tower.

When politicians don’t really disagree on any major issues all they have left to fight over is personalities. Bob Krueger and John Tower are two of the staunchest allies big business has ever had, and their current campaign for Republican Tower’s Senate seat promises to be personal, petty and vicious.

Krueger, a two-term Congressman from the huge 21st District stretching from Central Texas to West Texas, has recently emerged from a solid victory over opponent Joe Christie in the Democratic Party primary. He spent just under one million dollars earning the right to challenge Tower’s 17-year hold on the Senate seat which used to belong to Lyndon Johnson.

Tower had no opponent in the Republican primary, and he didn’t bother to run a single television spot this spring. He was virtually ignored by the media as the press concentrated on the barrage of accusations Krueger and Christie slung at each other.

Krueger and his aides hope the atten-

tion focused on the Democrats will create momentum for their effort against Tower. They expect the national Democratic organization to throw enough support to Texas to overcome the huge financial resources Tower can draw on. Campaign manager Mauro is counting on a \$2 million budget for the November election and appearances by President Jimmy Carter and other prominent Democrats.

In the meantime, the Tower camp has not been idle. Tower spent more money on the primary than did Krueger, even with no opponent and no TV spots. The money went into advance preparations to produce expensive TV footage and to build a staff of 45 full-time campaign aides. Campaign manager Towery is also counting on \$2 million for the general election. He expects appearances by Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan.

The well-financed and well-organized Krueger campaign will be the toughest



challenge Tower has yet faced in his political career, but he has survived some strange races before. His initial election to the Senate in 1961 was simply bizarre.

Tower was born in Houston in 1925 and grew up in various East Texas towns where his father served as a Methodist preacher. Young John finished high school in Beaumont and enlisted in the



Navy in World War II. After the war, he entered college, receiving a bachelor's degree in political science from Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas, and a master's degree from Southern Methodist University in Dallas. He then studied for a year at the London School of Economics, an experience which left him a lifelong anglophile.

Tower's connection to the Texas establishment began when he joined the Republican Party in 1951 while a student in Dallas. Upon his return from London a year later, Tower married Lou Bullington, a member of a prominent family in Wichita Falls. He then obtained a job teaching at a small college, Midwestern University, in his wife's home town.

Wichita Falls is not one of the largest cities in Texas, but it is one of the richest, lying on the edge of the giant Burkburnett oil field. An ambitious young man could find a good base for future campaigns by building contacts with the network of millionaires living there.

Tower advanced to the State Republican Executive Committee in 1956. Four years later, he volunteered to run against Lyndon Johnson. Republican officials in Texas thought the race for Johnson's Senate seat would be hopeless, but they were grateful that Tower was willing to show the party flag in the 1960 election.

Johnson's Presidential ambitions turned the Senate race into anything but another Lyndon landslide. With Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn trying his best to get Johnson the Democratic nomination for President, Johnson decided to have the entire Texas primary speeded up by three months so he could get the Senate nomination out of the way long before the national party convention. Ed Clark of San Augustine, a master in backroom politics, was sent to the Texas legislature to fix things.

In February, Johnson easily won the Democratic primary for the Senate; five

months later, he lost the Presidential nomination. But he was granted the Vice-Presidential nomination as a consolation prize. Not trusting Kennedy's fortunes, LBJ decided to run for the Senate and the Vice Presidency at the same time. That didn't seem fair to some Texas voters, and they gave John Tower a surprising 40 percent of the November ballots in the Senate race.

Johnson won both of his races in 1960, so he had to give up the Senate seat. A special election was scheduled for 1961, and it turned into a free-for-all as 70 candidates entered the Democratic and Republican primaries.

Tower won the Republican nomination. The Democrats ended up nominating Dallas millionaire Bill Blakley after he survived a close contest against liberal Maury Maverick, Jr., and moderate Jim Wright, the candidate backed by the



Johnson machine. Blakley, head of Braniff Airlines, was an arch-conservative with close ties to former Governor Allen Shivers, famous in Texas for organizing Democratic voters in support of Republican President Dwight Eisenhower's campaigns.

Texas liberals just couldn't take Blakley. Willie Morris, the Texas *Observer* editor, wrote a column urging protest votes for Tower, and his advice proved influential. John Tower became the first Republican Senator from Texas since the 1877 retirement of scalawag Morgan Hamilton. The liberal Democrats who voted for Tower expected him to be a pushover in 1966.

It didn't turn out that way. Tower's 1966 opponent was Waggoner Carr, a conservative state official with an air of scandal surrounding his career. Many progressive Democrats sat out the Carr/Tower contest, and Tower won again.

Tower's luck held during his third race for the Senate in 1972. The Democrats had an attractive, untainted candidate in Barefoot Sanders, but the McGovern debacle that November was too much for Sanders to overcome, even though the Sanders vote in Texas was much higher than the turnout for McGovern.

As a Senator, Tower's voting record has been one of the most reactionary of anyone serving in the US Congress. This, of course, is consistent with Tower's campaign promises and political philosophy. For the past 17 years, Tower has

been at the top of the ratings list for conservative organizations such as the Americans for Constitutional Action and at the bottom of the ratings given by the Americans for Democratic Action, consumer groups and labor unions.

There have been variations within the basic reactionary framework. Tower reportedly expected to be a one-term oddity after his 1961 election, and he spent his first term enjoying himself, establishing along the way a reputation as a drinker and woman-chaser and as a sponsor of pet bills for fringe groups on the far right.

The 1966 victory changed Tower's mind about his career, and he shifted slightly to the center to become a more conventional Republican. After Richard Nixon's election as President in 1968, Tower's influence rose dramatically as he was made the chief enforcer of party loyalty in Senate votes on Nixon programs. Tower stuck with Nixon during the Watergate investigations until the very end, when the "smoking gun" tapes made Nixon's resignation or impeachment certain.

Tower continued in the role of Republican loyalist when Gerald Ford became President, even though Ford was unpopular with many Texas Republicans. Tower had a bad year in 1976 when the Texas primary resulted in a 100 percent delegation for Ronald Reagan. Even though Ford beat Reagan at the national convention, Tower was forced to resign as head of the Texas Republican effort and had to watch the job go to his old enemy, John Connally. Tower then saw his eight years of access to the White House evaporate when Ford lost to Jimmy Carter. Also that year, Tower and his wife obtained a divorce after 24 years of marriage.

Tower made a remarkable recovery



in 1977. He helped erase the old political stigma against divorce by marrying an attractive Philadelphia heiress, Lilla Cummings. He made peace with most of the Texas Reaganites at a series of Republican conferences where he warned, "I can be beaten," unless the party united. Wasting no time, Tower began fund-raising and assembling a campaign staff early in the year. By July, 1977, when Bob Krueger announced for the 1978 Senate race, Tower had already collected \$400,000.

Tower may have started earlier, but Krueger knew just as much about tapping into funds from the Texas ruling class of oilmen, bankers, attorneys, manufacturers and ranchers. Krueger's brief career as a Congressman had still given him plenty of time to prove himself to business groups.

Being from a rich family hadn't hurt. Krueger was born in 1935 in New Braunfels, where his father had an auto dealership and textile mill along with his other holdings. The Krueger family first came to Texas as part of a wave of German immigrants who arrived in the 1840s, and Bob grew up speaking both German and English.

Although his father advised him to study business in college, Krueger decided to major in English at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. After graduating from SMU, Krueger obtained a master's degree at Duke University in North Carolina and then transferred to Oxford, where he received a B.Litt. degree and a PhD in Elizabethan literature.

He joined the faculty at Duke in 1961 and shifted his energies more towards administration than scholarship as the decade ended.

Curriculum reform efforts laid the groundwork for his being appointed dean of arts and sciences in 1972. His career moves fit perfectly with plans he had made as a graduate student to first become a college president and then run for national political office.

The death of Krueger's father in 1973 created a change in his plans. He decided to run for Congress in 1974 without waiting for further success as an academician. Krueger hired his former SMU roommate, Jim Land, as family business manager to settle his father's \$2 million estate.

Krueger's first move was to hire young professionals to run his campaign. Advertising executive Roy Spence of Austin was his initial contact. Spence then told Krueger to hire Garry Mauro and Tom Henderson, a pair of aggressive young lawyers who first

worked together as undergraduates in campus elections and who had worked in several liberal statewide races in Texas.

Mauro, Spence and Henderson developed a basic plan late in 1973 which has been used in all the subsequent Krueger campaigns. Krueger would always be called an "Independent" and never labeled a liberal or conservative on any of his issue stands. Krueger would be kept on the road constantly while Mauro handled all the staff decisions. Krueger's speeches and campaign literature would be vague on specific issues and concentrate on patriotism and moral uplift.

Depending on who describes it, Krueger's media materials have been the slickest or the most professional ever seen in Texas. Everyone Krueger meets

Although staff members are trying valiantly to develop issues for their candidates, the contest so far has been over who could raise the most money.

on the road gets a follow-up letter. Bumper stickers and billboards are designed for maximum effect in building name identification. The TV spots are worthy of Madison Avenue. Schedules for both TV ads and Krueger's appearances are carefully coordinated with the results of detailed polls on Krueger's strength in different cities.

That kind of staff support in the 1974 campaign cost Krueger the most money ever spent on a seat in Congress — \$362,053 — but it got him past tough races in both the primary and general elections. Krueger finished the year with a debt of \$206,000, which was signed for by his family and by wealthy oilmen, ranchers and car dealers in the 21st District.

Krueger's Congressional district has so far been among the most conservative in Texas and has had a record of sup-

porting Republican presidential candidates and Tower's bids for the Senate. To survive in the district, Krueger had to vote for basic conservative positions on matters affecting ranching, oil and defense interests, but he could have chosen to specialize his committee work in a liberal area without ruining his chances for re-election. He chose instead to become a champion of big business in its attacks on any form of government regulation and interference.

Krueger's national prominence has come from his series of close votes on deregulation of oil and gas prices, a windfall for the petroleum industry which would cost consumers \$46 billion by 1985 in his own estimate and \$86 billion in White House estimates. The media attention on the three near-misses Krueger orchestrated in the House has been misleading. Krueger's grandstanding cost him the support of the House Democratic leadership, and when deregulation in a compromise version was finally worked out in May, 1978, Krueger was completely excluded from the House energy conferences on the bill.

The headlines on the earlier votes had the desired effect, however, as Krueger became widely known and was adopted as the official spokesman of oil and gas producers. His huge 1974 campaign debt was paid off within a few months of his first decontrol bill, with \$51,147 coming from oil and gas sources alone. Over half of the debt was paid by contributors from outside Krueger's own district. In his later campaigns, he would forge a potent alliance between Texas millionaires and corporate Political Action Committee (PAC) funds from across the country.

Although he hasn't received as much publicity, John Tower has also been a loyal worker for the petroleum industry and has been rewarded with contributions from the same sources tapped by Krueger. Both men have made dramatic speeches, put out scores of news releases and written magazine articles defending business against government interference. They are eloquent on the dangers of national health insurance, no-fault car insurance, industrial safety rules, land-use policies and various reforms sponsored by consumer groups. They are equally eloquent on the need for massive military budgets.

The response goes beyond campaign



contributions. Krueger and Tower are favorite guest speakers at meetings of the US Chamber of Commerce, trial lawyers, realtors, doctors, car dealers, insurance underwriters and other business groups. It is not a simple matter of their being tools of cattle and oil. They are rewarded for these appearances with fat speaking fees which go into their personal income. Tower, with \$23,750 in honoraria in 1977, is in the lead in this particular conflict of interest.

If Krueger has taken less money for speaking before special interest groups, he has more than compensated through conflicts arising from his \$400,000 stock portfolio. A 1977 study showed Krueger as the only House member with stock in top defense contractors, one of seven members with bank stock, one of four member with oil and gas stock and one of two members with pharmaceutical stock. His participation in every category was unique.

Although business manager Jim Land sold off some obviously embarrassing stock holdings in petroleum companies and companies in South Africa, Krueger still has significant direct conflicts. His largest investment, Allied Chemical, owns major gas pipeline and exploration companies in Texas. Allied Chemical and Imperial Chemical, another Krueger holding, are involved in the North Sea oil operation. Imperial Chemical makes all the paraquat sprayed on marijuana in Mexico.

Allied Chemical owns one half of the Barnwell, SC, nuclear reprocessing plant, a project for which Krueger voted to give a \$14 million federal subsidy. Krueger's second largest holding is in Union Carbide, the major supplier of uranium to the Atomic Energy Commission. Krueger has voted several times to give maximum funding to the Clinch River Breeder Reactor, without which the Barnwell plant isn't necessary, and has voted to limit the liability of nuclear plants in case of massive accidents.

Tower and Krueger have depressingly similar voting records. The most recent rating by the liberal Americans for Democratic Action gave Krueger a 20 out of a possible 100, and Tower a 15. Krueger supported the programs of his own party's President, Jimmy Carter, on 43 percent of 1977 votes, while Republican Tower supported 40 percent of Carter's programs. Both Krueger and Tower get low scores from Public Citizen and high scores from the Chamber of Commerce and the Business Roundtable. A Quaker group which monitors pro-military votes gives Krueger a 20 and Tower a seven.

Krueger and Tower have almost identical records on agriculture. They both played fast and loose on the recent farmers' strike, making statements suggesting support of parity while voting for cosmetic legislation without really backing the small farmers. Both men receive strong support from the conservative Farm Bureau and cattlemen's groups. Both have voted for the types of subsidies which help agribusiness corporations and have opposed reforms designed to build up family farms. Krueger again has conflicts of interest in a 1,000-acre cattle ranch in East Texas and large holdings in agribusiness stocks.

Finding the difference between Krueger and Tower takes a divining rod. Krueger's labor record is slightly better. Both men support right-to-work laws and oppose *common situs* picketing, but Krueger has supported a labor law reform designed to give unions and management equal time in making appeals to workers before plant elections. Krueger has supported the \$2.65 minimum wage, but he voted for delays and to deny the same rate to teenagers. Tower opposed the minimum wage increase right down the line.

Starting with his victory speech in Austin on May 6, Krueger has attacked Tower on the issue of civil rights, and Krueger's staff is using the racism question as its main tactic in holding liberals and minorities behind Krueger in November. Tower has voted against

every civil rights and voting rights bill to appear since he took office in 1961. Krueger did vote for the Voting Rights Act extension in 1975, and he has supported the concept of civil rights in his campaigns.

Krueger wears thin as a friend of minority citizens when his record is examined closely. He has voted against a five cent increase in federal payments for school lunches. He has opposed the Humphrey-Hawkins bill and most other job programs. He was not above demagoguery on "forced busing" in his first campaign, although John Tower goes much further on the busing issue by calling for a constitutional amendment to stop it forever.

Although staff members working for Krueger and Tower are trying valiantly to develop issues for their candidates to fight over in this year's Senate election, the contest so far has been over who could raise the most money. Tower is slightly ahead, but both men will probably have \$3 million when the primary and general election totals are in.

The bedrock for both candidates has been their contacts with wealthy Texans. Tower's campaign chairman for raising money is none other than Ed Clark, the former star of the Lyndon Johnson machine. The rich supporters behind Krueger and Tower have been slowed down some this year by a \$2,000 limit on the primary and general elections combined, but they slip around the rules by having everyone in the family, including children, chip in. Clusters of business partners added to family members can put donations from a single source at \$10,000 or more.

Independent oil producers lead the list of large contributors and account for some 30 percent of Krueger's funding. The oilmen are followed closely by bankers, ranchers and attorneys. About half a dozen men, including George Brown of Brown and Root Construction in Houston (you remember, the people who built the "tiger cages" in Vietnam), have given to both Krueger and Tower. Tower and Krueger also have received large contributions from the same corporate PAC funds — independent oil companies, the Realtors Association, the American Medical Association, LTV Corporation, banking groups, Shell Oil, Braniff Airlines, Automobile and Truck Dealers and insurance underwriters. Tower, the senior Republican on the Senate Armed Forces Committee, has done better than Krueger



with war industries' PAC gifts. Krueger, a longtime foe of strict auto pollution standards and the son of a car dealer, has done better with the automobile industry. Tower seems to have slightly better contacts with the giant bank holding companies in Texas such as First International Bancshares in Dallas. Krueger has a slightly better showing with agribusiness groups.

Faced with the high-rolling Krueger and Tower campaigns, the liberals barely made a dent in the Senate race. Joe Christie, a former state Senator from El Paso and former chairman of the State Board of Insurance, started his race for the Democratic primary months after Krueger had announced. Christie never generated enough money to run an effective campaign and never organized grass-roots support.

One problem was that supporters had to stretch their imaginations somewhat to make Christie a liberal. Like Krueger and Tower, Christie supported deregulation of petroleum prices, and Christie also faced a staggering potential conflict of interest as a Senator in his \$200,000 holdings in oil and gas leases in West Texas. Christie's overall wealth and yearly income were almost identical to Krueger's.

Christie looked better and better, however, as the campaign progressed this spring. He placed more distance between himself and Krueger through his support of federal job programs, consumer protection, the Panama Canal treaties, pollution controls and expansion of parks and wilderness areas. As evidence of his progressive credentials, Christie would point to reforms in insurance regulation during his term as an agency chief and to sponsoring new parks while serving in the state Senate.

The Christie campaign wasn't able to afford any TV spots, and this proved crucial in the last weeks before the May 6 primary. Christie had the athletic looks and quick sense of humor to make him a natural for television, and he usually did well in joint appearances with the pompous Krueger. The polls showed Christie and Krueger neck and neck throughout the primary with

voters already familiar with the candidates, but the 50 percent of undecided voters remaining toward the end of the campaign proved to be willing fodder for Krueger's blitz of commercials.

Complaints among Christie's staff members about his loss to Krueger being a typical example of big money Texas politics have served to obscure the debilitating elitism of liberals in the state. Although Christie campaigned as the candidate of the "people," he received only a tiny percentage of his campaign funds from small contributors who gave less than \$100.

Christie spent about \$500,000 in the Democratic primary, but his campaign raised just half that much from supporters. Christie had to loan the campaign \$97,200 from his own sources, and the rest of the debt is still outstanding for phone bills, rent, travel and other expenses.

Of the money that Christie raised, most of the contributions came in chunks of \$500 and \$1,000 from the same sort of independent oilmen, attorneys, ranchers and bankers who gave to Krueger and Tower. Christie did manage to avoid the large clusters of family and business partner gifts common with the other two candidates.

Another major source of Christie funding was from labor union PAC funds, mostly from outside the state. About \$40,000 came from unions such as the AFL-CIO, Garment Workers, Auto Workers, Communication Workers, Steelworkers and Seafarers. Less than half that amount came from small individual contributions. The rest of the money raised for Christie came from several \$100/plate banquets.

Following the example of previous futile crusades by Texas liberals, the Christie campaign never bothered to organize effective county committees, never sent volunteers out on foot into neighborhoods across the state, and never put together a thorough direct mail drive. Krueger and Tower didn't make the same mistakes in their campaigns, despite their heavy reliance on rich individuals and corporate funds. Each of the two conservative candidates received about one-fourth of their donations from gifts under \$100, and Tower's campaign manager, Ken Towery, estimates 30,000 people have sent in money for Tower during the past year.

Krueger calls Tower a "racist" and accuses him of being "ineffective" in serving business interests in Texas. Tower responds by accusing Krueger of being the choice of "Eastern labor bosses."



With similar voting records, similar budgets, support from national party organizations and highly professional campaign staffs, Krueger and Tower couldn't be more evenly matched. Trying to pick a winner at this writing (June 1st) would be foolhardy.

The rhetoric is already heated. Krueger calls Tower a "racist" and accuses him of being "ineffective" in serving business interests in Texas. Tower is responding by accusing Krueger of being the choice of "Eastern labor bosses" and hammers at Krueger's low attendance record in Congress.

"Krueger might as well get used to the idea that he won't be running against Good Old Joe," Towery says.

A lot will depend on luck. Tower was asked to temporarily vacate his seat on the Senate Ethics Committee in March because of his friendship with Korean influence-peddler Tongsun Park. No evidence of Tower taking bribes from Park has surfaced, but Krueger will win easily if Tower is implicated before November.

Tower also faces a problem on the far-right fringes of the Texas Republican Party in the proposed candidacy of

Reaganite Henry Grover as an independent. Grover narrowly lost the November, 1972, governor's election to Dolph Briscoe, and his anti-abortion position has earned him a devoted following in the right-to-life movement. Krueger and Tower both support individual choice on the abortion issue.

In a close race between Tower and Krueger, just a five percent turnout for Grover, his current standing in the polls, could cut into Tower's Republican support and throw the race to

Krueger. Grover must obtain 17,000 petition signatures in June to qualify for a place on the November ballot, but that is not expected to be a formidable obstacle.

No matter how the odds ultimately fall in favor of Krueger or Tower, big business can't lose. It's easy to imagine a gathering of oilmen, bankers and corporation chiefs at one of the Petroleum Clubs high above Dallas or Houston. As they drink whiskey and soda, one executive asks the others, "How'd we

ever get both of them nominated in the same year?" The men around the table break into wide grins and take another sip of their drinks. □

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NORTH CAROLINA

Helms vs. Ingram

by Bob McMahon

"Ingram vs. Helms," ran the editorial headline in the *Charlotte Observer*. "North Carolina Doesn't Deserve This."

The *Observer's* editorial dismay reflected the widespread shock in North Carolina's political community following Insurance Commissioner John Ingram's upset victory in a May 30 run-off for the Democratic nomination for the US Senate. The headline also typified the displeasure of the state's leading newspapers and political wags at having to face a contest between two men outside the well-heeled tradition of North Carolina politics.

Ingram's opponent in the Democratic primary, Charlotte banker Luther Hodges, Jr., exemplified the moderately-toned conservative politics that political scientist V. O. Key labeled a generation ago a "progressive plutocracy." Ingram violated that political norm with a fiery economic populism, forcing Hodges on the defensive with the charge that the banker was the candidate of "the monopolies and special interests."

With the Democratic primary over, Ingram's fall contest against incumbent Republican Senator Jesse Helms will be a battle between contestants who have each — in very different ways — built an intense following as champions of "the little people." The very prospect of such a campaign is viewed as threatening by the proponents of a New South built on industrialization and racial moderation. Claude Sitton, editor of the strongly Democratic *Raleigh News and Observer*, continued his paper's jabs at Ingram and

Helms with an ominous warning:

The contest between the two may turn into a throwback to that Southern era when wild-eyed rustics with empty slogans pitched their appeals to the lowest common denominator, or in their own cynical phrase, "put the hay down where the goats can get at it." All of this is not to rule out the possibility, or the hope, that public rejection of such demagoguery will force a return to decency and a more or less informative debate on the issues. But if it does not, the truth in the ballot box next November will be the destruction of whatever is left of North Carolina's reputation for progressive moderation.

John Ingram is not unfamiliar with such opposition, even from his fellow Democrats. In fact, he has learned to

use it to his advantage. In 1976, he won re-election handsomely when voter reaction boomeranged against the lavish campaign funding the insurance industry gave his primary and general election opponents. The next year, a massive lobbying drive by the industry resulted in legislation stripping Ingram of most of his regulatory power. He bounced back a few months later by declaring his candidacy for the Senate, vowing to take his crusade against the insurance industry to the federal level since state politicians had blocked him. When Hodges began pouring money into what eventually became his million-dollar bid for the Democratic nomination, Ingram adopted the posture of David against Goliath. It worked again.

In the first primary, Ingram ran second with 26 percent of the vote to Hodge's 40 percent. Ingram's main base of support was described by the *Raleigh News and Observer* as the "blue collar, mill-town vote . . . people who show up at the polls to express their discontent with government." Once the primary field had narrowed from eight candidates to two, Ingram was able to increase this following in a runoff, drawing many "conservative" voters as well as liberal, labor, and some black support that had gone to State Senator McNeill Smith in the first primary. The result was a 54-46 percent upset victory over Hodges.

While the Republican Party is relatively weak in North Carolina — after a peak in 1972 with the assistance of the Nixon landslide, 1974 and 1976 witnessed the near extinction of Republican strength in the state legislature — Jesse Helms is expected to be a formidable antagonist in the fall.

Republican strength has gradually grown in North Carolina, with the addition of upper-income voters in the urban Piedmont to traditional mountain Republicanism. Even in its feeble showings in 1974 and 1976, the party could still muster about 40 percent of the vote for its statewide candidates. To this base Helms adds a large and fervent personal following in the traditionally Democratic eastern section of the state.¹

Helms built this base in the 1960s when he was a television commentator on WRAL-TV in Raleigh. His editorials were rebroadcast throughout the state on the Tobacco Radio Network and reprinted in many rural newspapers. In them Helms voiced the rancor, defen-

siveness and pride of many whites who saw their way of life threatened by bureaucracies in Washington, black militants in the streets, or radical students at the University in Chapel Hill. In his 1972 race, Helms drew enthusiastic support from blue collar, Wallace Democratic voters with a campaign that centered on opposition to busing and an explicit appeal to "vote for one of us."

His media experience has served Helms well. Familiar and comfortable with television, he uses it extensively in his campaigns. Unlike many media candidates who come across as polished, Madison Avenue products, Helms takes care to retain a folksy, "down home" identification with his viewers. He also continues to communicate his views to rural voters through a weekly column he donates to many North Carolina

"Your tax dollars are being used to teach our children cannibalism, wife swapping, and the murder of infants. . . ."

— Jesse Helms

newspapers.

In his 1978 re-election campaign, Helms avoids much mention of his Republican ties, preferring to maintain a bipartisan image. Much effort has gone into building Democrats-for-Helms groups, headed by old leaders of the party's right wing, such as former House Speaker Joe Hunt.

The core of Helms' in-state fundraising and campaign organization is the NC Congressional Club, established on a bipartisan basis in 1974. The *Charlotte Observer* once described the club's membership as "a printout of the names of the executives of the state's top 100 industries." The club includes many Democratic businessmen and professionals tied to the party's conservative wing, such as Dr. Archie Johnson, chairman of the NC Medical Association Political Action Committee and ally of Lieutenant Governor Jimmy Green.

Both Helms and his campaign manager, Thomas Ellis, have deep links to the old segregationist wing of the Democratic party. Helms and Ellis began their political activities in the 1950 US Senate campaign of Willis

Smith. Smith's opponent, New Deal progressive Frank Porter Graham, was buried in a wave of red- and race-baiting that still stirs bitter memories among participants. From 1955 to 1956, Ellis served with his law partner, William Taylor, as special counsel to the Pearsall Commission, which drew up North Carolina's plan for resisting school desegregation. Helms himself still says that segregation was not wrong "for its time."²

Issues Helms has taken up since his election — the Panama Canal Treaty, Right to Life, Stop ERA — carry the same message of injured national or regional pride and defense of a traditional way of life. Like his anti-busing campaign, even when his issues do not always muster the support of a majority of North Carolina whites, the fervor of the backing they draw carries a political weight the numbers alone might not show.

Helms has become a national leader in such causes, and the support he has gathered outside the state is an important element of his strength. A national campaign to raise funds for Helms' re-election is being conducted by conservative direct mail artist Richard Viguerie. Since mid-1977, the Helms campaign has raised \$3.4 million, much of which has been plowed back into expanding the direct mail effort. Helms' campaign staff boasts of assembling a list of 80,000 people that can be counted on for money in the months ahead. Three-quarters of this money has come from outside North Carolina. The *Raleigh News and Observer* reacted to this national fund-raising campaign by accusing the radical right of coming into the state and seeking to buy a Senate seat.

Like other members of the aggressive New Right network centered on Viguerie, Jesse Helms is adept at "pushing the hot buttons" with emotional issues. "Pro-family" issues have been among Helms' favorite hot buttons.

A member of the board of the NC Right to Life Committee, Helms has sponsored a variety of anti-abortion measures in Congress. In 1975, when a Senate committee held hearings on constitutional amendments barring abortion Helms had his own proposal to offer. The Helms-favored amendment was so restrictive the committee debated whether it would bar the widely used IUD (intrauterine device) method of contraception.

In 1977, Helms made a special target of the International Women's Year (IWY) conference in Houston. At unofficial hearings that year in Washington, Helms offered a forum for Right to Life and Stop ERA activists from 40 states. No representative of the IWY Commission was invited to defend its work as Helms' witnesses claimed that delegate selection had been dominated by "radical feminists," "militant Marxists," and "lesbians."

Foreign policy has been another Helms concern. Besides opposing the Panama Canal treaty, Helms has been a vocal advocate of closer ties between the US and South Africa. He has also befriended the Chilean junta. A 1976 visit found Helms praising the "dynamic" General Pinochet, and telling the press how impressed he had been to find the junta leader a Christian who kept a Bible on his desk.³

Some of Helms' most determined opposition has been aimed at labor unions. He is one of five senators pledged to filibuster against the labor law reform act. Earlier stands have opposed the availability of food stamps for strikers, the use of union dues to get out votes, and the right of municipal workers to organize. In 1975, he drew flak for using Senate stationery for a fund appeal for Americans Against Union Control of Government, a Viguerie-sponsored lobbying group.

Helms and his political associates are closely tied to several other groups backed by Viguerie.⁴ Viguerie uses direct mail techniques and a computerized list of ten-to-twenty million known backers of conservative causes to fuel an array of special issue groups; those groups in turn channel funds and technical help to conservative candidates and mobilize massive grassroots lobbying on legislative issues.⁵

Helms serves on the Congressional Advisory Board of the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress (CSFC), founded in 1974 by Viguerie with seed money from right-wing beer magnate Joseph Coors. Jackson Lee, NC state Republican chairman and Helms ally, did 1976 campaign advertising for CSFC.

The National Conservative Political Action Committee — chaired by Richard Black, a former Helms senate aide — raises funds and provides a team of professional consultants for conservative candidates. In a direct mail appeal for the group, Helms warned that "Your tax dollars are being used to pay for

grade school courses that teach our children that *cannibalism*, *wife-swapping*, and *the murder* of infants and the elderly are acceptable behavior...."

In 1975, Helms chaired the Committee on Constitutional Alternatives, set up by a group of GOP right-wingers, including Viguerie, to explore the idea of bolting the Republicans to form a third party. Instead, they threw their support behind Ronald Reagan's presidential bid. Helms' support in North Carolina brought Reagan his first primary victory after a string of losses to President Ford.

Reagan found the Helms forces invaluable but not always comfortable allies. At one point Reagan had to intervene to block distribution of a racist leaflet prepared by Tom Ellis. The leaflet suggested Ford had decided his running mate would be black GOP Senator Edward Brooke, a supporter of school busing.⁶

While Viguerie's direct mail appeals have been the mainstay of Helms' 1978 fund-raising, the Senator also enjoys considerable backing in the state's business community, centered in the textile industry. In 1972, Helms drew over \$40,000 in donations from textile executives. Leading donors were Hugh Chatham of Chatham Manufacturing Co. with \$10,500, and Roger Milliken, a John Birch Society sponsor and Goldwater Republican, of Deering Milliken Inc. Chatham carried out a bitter 11-year war to destroy union locals in his plants. In 1972, about the time of his donation to Helms, he told the *Winston-Salem Journal* that he would close his mills if the union won a pending decertification vote. Deering Milliken did close its Darlington, South Carolina, plant in 1956 after a union victory there. More than 20 years later, the workers at Darlington have yet to see any of the damages which courts have awarded them, and many have given up hope of getting any payment before they die.

Election law reforms that restrict the size of individual donations have cut down the amount the textile industry has given Helms for his 1978 campaign. But donations from executives in such firms as Blue Bell, Cone Mills, Cannon Mills, Hanes and Pine State Knitwear continue to form the core of Helms' North Carolina business support.

Helms also received a \$750 donation from the J.P. Stevens Good Government Committee. The donation was returned because Helms' campaign manager,

Thomas Ellis, feared it might create the appearance of a conflict of interest. Ellis' Raleigh law firm represents the J.P. Stevens Employees Education Committee, an anti-union group among Stevens workers, and also represents the company against former workers with brown-lung disease who have filed for disability compensation.

But while Helms has strong business supporters in North Carolina, he does not typify the business-oriented conservatives who have dominated the state's politics for decades. Luther Hodges, Ingram's opponent in the Democratic primary run-off, was widely seen as the carrier of this tradition.

Hodges had been seen as the front runner among the Democrats almost since he resigned as board chairman of North Carolina National Bank, the state's largest, to run for the Senate. His campaign was bolstered by the reputation of his father, Luther Hodges, Sr., governor from 1954 to 1960. Governor Hodges had emphasized education and industrial recruitment. His policies expressed the growth-oriented business domination of the state which had earlier led V.O. Key to coin the phrase "progressive plutocracy."

Luther, Jr., stressed the same themes in his Senate campaign, offering himself as an "ambassador for economic development" in Washington. Hodges also emphasized programs to upgrade the skills of the state's work force, citing his own experience while a private citizen with manpower development efforts.

Hodges enjoyed wide business support. Unlike Helms' textile backing, Hodges drew heavily from the banking and investment community, from retail trade, and from real estate and development interests. The difference between Helms' and Hodges' main backers seems typical of a split in the state's business leadership over economic development policy. Hodges' supporters have been more interested in promoting economic growth and consumer purchasing power within the state. Manufacturers in the low-wage textile industry, producing mainly for markets outside North Carolina, have resisted, especially on the local level, entrance of better paying industries that might force up general wage levels.

L. K. Mann, president of Blue Bell, Inc., and a Helms backer, expressed common textile industry suspicions of Hodges' development proposals. "Luther wants more government inter-

vention," Mann said, "and we've got too much already."

But while drawing broad support among the business community and conservative Democrats, Hodges' awkward campaign style failed to draw public enthusiasm. Ingram found it easy to portray Hodges as a "silk-stocking" candidate. One Raleigh Ingram backer suggested many Ingram votes were primarily aimed *against* Luther Hodges. He traced this vote to a "general deep-seated antipathy to large institutions, like banking and insurance."⁷

John Ingram likes to trace his hostility to corporate monopolies to his childhood, when his mother was driven out of business as a service station operator by a giant oil company. Elected to a single term in the legislature in 1971, he joined the progressive minority. He supported or introduced a wide range of measures there, including auto insurance reforms, lower class sizes in elementary schools, a consumer protection division in the Attorney General's office, reduction of the maximum allowable interest on loans, the 18-year-old vote, and tenants' rights legislation.

Elected Insurance Commissioner in 1972, he established a consumer complaint section in the state insurance department. His major goals were to abolish an assigned-risk auto insurance plan he felt was unfair to many drivers; to fight age and sex discrimination in insurance rates; and to block rate increases he found unreasonable. Ingram claims to have held down or reduced rates for many categories of insurance. His Senate campaign stressed his success in saving people money as a consumer advocate.

During his term as Insurance Commissioner, Ingram also hired more blacks and women for executive-level posts in his department than most other state departments put together.

Critics — including several of the

state's largest newspapers — charged that Ingram's rulings were often "arbitrary," and showed an "unwillingness to compromise." The insurance industry was able to reverse a number of rulings in court. These court defeats helped prepare the climate for 1977 industry-backed legislation gutting Ingram's regulatory powers.

Ingram has responded that his record of court reversals has been inflated by critics who fail to note when decisions against him were reversed by a higher court. A number of court defeats came in actions where the law left the power of the Insurance Commissioner unclear — such as age and sex discrimination cases — and set the stage for legislative action in these areas.

The criticism of Ingram's record has left many in the liberal community uneasy about him, wondering if he is a demagogue, all noise and posturing with few real accomplishments. This fear was fed by the extent to which his campaign focused on the issue of insurance, with other questions often untouched or dealt with only in vague generalities.

The North Carolina *Anvil*, a liberal weekly published in Durham, was the only newspaper in the state to endorse Ingram before the first primary. Bob Brown, the editor of the *Anvil*, offered this assessment of Ingram:

One needs a lot of trust with Ingram, although you sense and feel he will be on the right side of an issue. On specifics in Africa, and some related areas of foreign policy, he is not well-prepared. His feelings are right but he lacks the facts...His major asset with progressives is that he is accessible...His approach in rural areas would carry him, no question of that, so why jeopardize that by raising issues that he thinks are not relevant to the "common man" out there in North Carolina, who basically understands only dollars and cents.⁹

Can Ingram attract the support necessary to defeat Helms? Many of Hodges' business supporters will undoubtedly not be drawn to Ingram's anti-monopoly rhetoric. And it is likely Helms will attempt to strike a more "respectable" image to garner business

and moderate votes. But Ingram does have many friends among Democratic politicians at the local level. These supporters know him less as a maverick than as one who has paid his dues campaigning for local candidates. Ingram credits the support given him by such local leaders in the second primary with having played an important role in reversing Hodges' lead.

In the aftermath of the primary, some of Hodges' supporters took note of the many conservative votes that Ingram had drawn. They suggested Helms supporters had turned out for Ingram to confront Jesse Helms with a weaker candidate in the fall. Ingram acknowledged he had gotten Democratic votes that had gone to Helms in 1972, but said they would stay with him in the fall.

Anvil editor Brown suggested that Ingram could well draw votes from Helms. "Ingram can speak to the blue collar voter — the little guy who feels put upon and could go either way," Brown says.

The New Right's "sunbelt strategy" puts great stress on drawing these voters into a conservative bloc on emotional, social issues like busing, abortion, or the Equal Right Amendment. The left and liberals have looked wistfully to draw them into a populist coalition of blacks and whites, labor and consumers, united by economic issues. The North Carolina senate race has surprised the state's political establishment by turning into a contest between these two strategies.□

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1. Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, *The Transformation of Southern Politics*, pp. 232-238.

2. *Raleigh News and Observer*, January 8, 1978.

3. *El Mercurio*, International Edition, July 4-10, 1976.

4. Americans for Democratic Action, *A Citizen's Guide to the New Right*, pp. 8-14.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-25.

6. Jules Witcover, *Marathon: The Pursuit of the Presidency, 1972-1976*, p. 438.

7. *Raleigh News and Observer*, June 1, 1978.

8. *North Carolina Anvil*, June 23, 1977.

9. *North Carolina Anvil*, May 26, 1978



ADAMS' JOURNEY



BY FRANK ADAMS

Who exactly — them or me — first came up with the idea, I'm not certain. No matter. The Institute for Southern Studies staff asked if I would take out six months to travel the South as a reporter for the Institute's then-new syndicated weekly column, Facing South. Captive to Southern fondness for poking about the region and to that larger American myth about freedom deriving from travel, I claimed the job before any list of applicants could be gotten up.

A new van was purchased and fitted out with a bed, typing stand, CB and regular AM-FM radio, specially cut

mosquito netting, and a fan. The Institute's charge dictated that I'd see the rural South, not too much of the Interstate/urbanized South. Places like Ville Platte, Louisiana; Ink, Arkansas; Ripley, Mississippi; Pickens, South Carolina; and Fincastle, Virginia. The blessings of this constraint came vividly to mind when my path intersected an Interstate cloverleaf in Georgia — typically crammed with service stations, motels and fast food franchises. Over the door of one eatery hung a banner proclaiming "Join the Fun — Eat and Run." All told, I logged nearly 28,000 miles

between May and October, 1977.

I kept an eye out for the little things. Graffiti, for example. In the rest room of a Charlottesville, Virginia, vegetarian restaurant I found: "Mother made me a homosexual." Below, in another's writing, "Frantastic! If I bought her the yarn, would she make me one?" Or signs, like one on a New Orleans building: Straight Business College. And listened for larger themes, not at all certain I could hear them — but knowing that these, too, were a Southern tradition going back at least to the days of Fannie Kemble's Journal of a Residence on a Georgia

Plantation in 1838-1839, the powerful attack on slavery, and William Byrd's History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina, the travelog some assert first described "the good ol' boy."

At the truck stops or cafeterias, in the state or national parks where I usually slept, or in the fetid motels, I encountered a diverse people trying to get along, trying to make some sense out of the political and economic forces buffeting their lives, and trying to be other than the gussied up impersonations of themselves portrayed on prime-time TV.

Some were angry, some hurting, others feeling good about themselves. Many were distressed. And no one seemed terribly excited that Jimmy Carter, a Southerner, was in the White House. But then, no one seemed to expect much from Washington except costly trouble. Often there were surface contradictions to think on.

Verlie Foskey — a barrel-chested man who has been making asphalt for the roads around McRae, Georgia, since 1947 — is at heart as ardent an environmentalist as you'd find in the Sierra Club. Most evenings, after overseeing the mixing of asphalt all day, he and his wife walk in the woods or to a nearby lake to quietly meditate on the beauty surrounding them. Asphalt, he said, is the best road-building material available. "It can be pulverized, and things will grow there again. But not concrete. Concrete buries everything. Nothing will grow after it's been poured. Every road should be made of asphalt."

In Stearns, Kentucky, I found myself amidst over a hundred angry striking coal miners, sticks and clubs in hand waiting for state police to try to break their picket line. They had shut down Blue Diamond Company mine eighteen months earlier, protesting dangerous working conditions. Democrats, you'd assume, in the tradition of John L. Lewis and all the advocates of equality for the working man. As we talked, I learned most of them voted Republican. They paid lip service to the need for a revival of the Ku Klux Klan. Shortly after, they were set upon by nearly two hundred helmeted, well-protected state police. After a swift and bloody fight, eighty miners were arrested, the largest number of United Mine Workers ever jailed at a single picket

line confrontation.

At Gulf State Park, east of Mobile, I talked with an engaging young dancer. On stage, his gift for ballet was obvious. He had balance and grace, and a practiced sureness of movement during each of a variety of complex roles, modern and classical. His easy confidence offstage belied his origins in a tiny Alabama cotton mill village, a community, he said, still uncertain if it should be delightedly proud or mutely ashamed to have spawned a male dancer.

Obviously, the images of the South during the mid-Seventies were skewed by the region's past. There may be a Sunbelt, but unlike Kemble or Byrd I found no typical Sunbelter for easy stereotyping. Still, race relations, or recollections linked inextricably with how blacks and whites have worked out ways to live with one another, intersected the trip as surely and frequently as the ever-present Interstate.



I Did It For the Law

Ever since police in Scottsboro, Alabama, arrested nine young black men in the 1930s on charges of raping two white women, writers have been coming to this north Alabama town. Hard news, speculative pieces, lofty comment, propaganda, countless books and magazine articles, several

plays and a television show have been written about the Scottsboro boys. So, fancying myself a writer, I arrived at Scottsboro aiming to take my turn at the story.

At the cafe where the elders gather daily, I was greeted with the suspiciously curious looks reserved for strangers in small Southern towns. I learned nothing. At the post office, where I stood in line waiting to mail letters and hoping to hear even a smidgen of a lead, I again learned nothing. At the newspaper office, they immediately sensed my purpose. Their eyes clouded over and they politely offered non-information. Scottsboro had had enough of Scottsboro stories. No one ever said that, but you could feel it in the air of the uncharacteristically quiet newsroom. I left town figuring I'd never write my Scottsboro yarn.

I was wrong. At Tuskegee Institute, way to the south, I met Dr. Lewis Jones, a sociologist and legendary raconteur. Near retirement now, Dr. Jones has been at Tuskegee since the days when, as he said, "two responsible persons, meaning whites, of course, had to vouch for a black man before he could vote." During an evening of exciting conversation, Dr. Jones got to talking about Southerners who, in his judgement, ought to be remembered for principled positions they took in spite of popular sentiment or reaction. Judge James Edwin Horton was one of those persons, according to Dr. Jones.

"You know, after the trial, Judge Horton was not re-elected. People were determined he'd have no peace. He had to leave Athens where his family had lived 150 years. He tore his father's house down piece by piece and moved it to a farm in a community called Greenbriar, and there he rebuilt his family home.

"I was in Greenbriar in the Fifties. I forget the year. But we were doing a study of the changes in farm production in Alabama. And so one day I was up there interviewing people in this county — tenants mostly — what they were doing, how they were getting along — the whole thing. There was this big white house in the middle of grazing land with Black Angus all around it. As I talked with the tenants on the place, I asked them,

'Who's place is this?' They told me it was Judge Horton's place.

"Well, they told me stories about Judge Horton. An Alabama legislator lived across the road and when he changed from mules to tractors, he sold his mules to his sharecroppers to make them tenants. The legislator charged \$450 a pair for the mules. Judge Horton sold his mules to the glue people and made arrangements with tenants who could drive the tractors to use them for cultivating their own crops. The older ones, or ones who couldn't drive tractors, would pay the wages of the tractor drivers to do their cultivating. Another story they told me was how, as the crops would be harvested, Judge Horton would come by and say, 'Let's not be greedy. Prices are good. You'd better sell now.' He would even talk with them about selling. He was a Christian gentleman.

"One of my old friends who used to teach at Tuskegee was up there in Scottsboro at the time of the trial. He said that when they were going to the case, he went by to see Judge Horton. His wife said, 'The Judge is praying.' My friend said, 'Well, I know he'll do right by them.' And she said, 'Well, the Judge is praying and he's going to do what his conscience tells him.'

"So I was sitting there one day on one of his tenant's porches and I see this tall Lincolnesque man in suntans out there fiddling around with some machinery in a shed. The tenant said, 'That's Judge Horton.' Well, I'm going to meet Judge Horton. So I go over there and introduce myself to Judge Horton and tell him I'm doing this survey. He wasn't concerned. I'd talked with many tenants where their landlords were very concerned. 'You all right?' he asked. 'Nothing happening?' 'No,' I told him, everything was all right. He was curious as to what I was finding out. So I told him my tentative findings and I started to congratulate him on his role in the Scottsboro case. He told me, 'Well, you know, they tried to invite me to dinners and give me some awards or medals or something. But, you know, I didn't do it for the nigras. I did it for the law. You've got to respect the law.'

"I didn't know what to say. I didn't have anything else to say. Well, he's a man who should be remembered."



We Had No Choice

In Mississippi, I found a forgotten side of Southern history. For two men whom history had decided against, recollection of their actions was still painful. Under duress, they had taken part in a haunting episode that forever changed the way many people felt about the South and catapulted one woman into deserved and enduring recognition.

Late one steamy, rain-showered August afternoon I pulled off a jolting road, Highway 51, into Winona, Mississippi. By luck, when I stopped beside a gas pump for refueling, I found a Winona police car beside the van. Inside was a black policeman, a surprise in itself. Before he could drive off, I asked if he might have known the late Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer. Yes, he said, cautiously, not knowing what a white stranger might be wanting. Did he know she had been jailed in Winona during the Sixties? Yes, he said, again with caution. As easily as possible — and blurring the word beating rapidly — I asked if he knew how I might find the men who had beaten her in the jail. His eyes hesitated for only a moment. The former sheriff lived directly across the street. He was retired. The highway patrolman lived less than a mile off. He was still on the force. Two others, the men I had come to search out if possible but whose names and feelings had never been recorded — William Poe and Roosevelt Knox — still lived in town. He directed me to their houses. A third man, he said, known only as Acorn, had moved away to the Delta years

before.

That night, after I'd found a campground and had eaten, I returned to Winona to find Poe and Knox. This was the history I wanted to learn more about:

On June 9, 1963, a bus destined for Greenwood, Mississippi, stopped at the Trailways bus station in Winona for a short layover. On it were five Mississippians returning home from a Community Development and Voter Education Workshop in South Carolina. A sixth member of the group, a civil rights worker from Atlanta, travelled with them. At the time, the notion of blacks voting in Mississippi was both outside the law and beyond the emotional reason of most of the state's white citizens.

All but one of the group got off the bus either to go to the rest rooms or the lunch counter, both supposedly open to them by federal law — but only recently. They had barely set foot inside the station building when Winona's chief of police and a highway patrolman, the warning lights on their patrol cars flashing, drove up beside the parked bus. The travelers were pushed into the police cars, and when their companion, Mrs. Hamer, got off the bus to see if she could help her friends, she, too, was pushed and kicked into the police car.

They were taken to the Montgomery County jail, maybe three country blocks from the bus station, charged with failing to move on and with resisting arrest. Then, individually, they were savagely beaten, first by police until they were exhausted, and then by three inmates ordered to do so at pistol point. Poe, now thirty-nine, and Knox, now thirty-seven, were two of those men.

FA: What were you in jail for at the time?

Poe: They had me for peepin' tom at the time. I'd come in that Saturday night from work. I had been pulling corn. Headed home. And, ah, I got at the house and started in the yard, and he called me back to the car, the sheriff did. He asked me where I was going. I told him I was going to the house. He opened the door and told me to get in the car. He got me in the car and then he went on 'round to another street and told the other cop, "I got him." He took me up there to the jail, and I

pulled off my shoes and got on the couch and went to sleep. I hadn't done nothing.

Knox: I was in for bad checks.

FA: What were you both doing that Sunday, the next day?

Knox: I was laying 'round. It was hot.

Poe: I had been laying 'round. I had been in the back washing out clothes.

FA: Can you tell me what happened when the prisoners arrived at the jail?

Knox: We heard a commotion up front. We went to the door and peeped. They was beating those peoples with a tractor tire. I wouldn't beat a mule the way they was beating on 'em.

FA: Who was beating who?

Poe: The police was beating on those women and that young man.

FA: Who were the police? Do you remember their names?

Poe: Was John Basinger...ah... Tommy Herod — he's dead now — Mr. Partridge, Surrell, Bill Surrell...ah... there was five of 'em. I can't think of all their names.

FA: Did you know any of the people they were beating?

Knox: Never seen 'em before.

Poe: No. I hadn't seen 'em to know 'em. I had heard of her.

FA: Who? Mrs. Hamer?

Poe: Yeah. I heard she had some people out here in Kilmichael, and I know'd some Hamers out there, but I didn't know her.

FA: How long did you peep at the police beating the prisoners?

Knox: Until we heard 'em say they was coming back to the bullpen where we was.

FA: What did you do then?

Poe: I went to the back and started washing.

Knox: I got back on my bed.

FA: Then what happened?

Poe: They brought 'em back there with us. In the bullpen. They put the women in the bullpen with us. Baysinger, he said, "Get your black ass up here." So I went over to them and he gave me a slapjack and told me to start hitting. All of 'em told us to beat 'em. They were cussing. They said, God damn, if we didn't do it they was going to get us. He had a pistol on me. There was nothing I could do.

Knox: Then he told me, "This nigger ain't hittin' her hard enough. You try." What could I do? I had no choice, no choice. We had no choice.

FA: Who were you hitting?

Knox: We was hitting Mrs. Hamer. Yeah...Mrs. Hamer.

FA: How long did you hit her?

Knox: I don't know. It was awful.

Poe: So afterwards I think they gave us some whiskey. They all went out after they put them in other cells. They didn't want us to talk with them people.

FA: Did you ever talk to them?

Pope: Oh, yeah. We'd slip notes. I think they had eavesdropped the jail. So we didn't talk much. I talked to the fellow some. We waited on him. He was in the bullpen.

FA: Were you able to help them at all?

Poe: Oh, yeah. I slipped and made a phone call.

FA: How did you get out?

Poe: Oh, they'd let me out to do work, and I'd slip and make phone calls.

FA: Who did you call?

Poe: I don't know. They gave me a number. It was one day on up in the week. They gave us a number they meant to call. In a few days they got out. They made their bond, I guess. A day or two later, they took us out of the jail and kept us at the courthouse. We was there when their folks came and got 'em.

FA: How did you feel having to beat someone?

Poe: I felt terrible. Terrible.

Knox: That left me with a troubled mind. When I see police...what do you call it...hurting someone, I can't help but think on it. I wake up some nights with it on my mind. It was terrible. My family come up that afternoon late. They brought me some food. I didn't eat nothing. I didn't talk much to 'em. They asked me what was wrong. I couldn't tell 'em. I couldn't eat they food. They know'd something was wrong, but I couldn't talk about it. I didn't want to think on it.

Poe: They might have thought we hated them the way the thing happened. But we had no choice.

Knox: We had no choice. We had pistols on us.

On September 12, 1963, the Winona Times reported:

"The Justice Department Monday (editor's note: September 9) charged five law enforcement officials in Mississippi with kicking and beating Negro prisoners.

"The seven-count information was filed in United States District Court at

Oxford under civil rights laws.

"Named as co-defendants were Earl W. Partridge, sheriff of Montgomery County, which includes Winona; Thomas J. Herod, Jr., police chief of Winona; John L. Basinger, a state highway patrolman; and Charles T. Perkins, a former patrolman.

"The Justice Dept. charged the defendants themselves beat, or directed other Montgomery County jail prisoners to beat: James Harold West, June Elizabeth Johnson, Lawrence Guyot, Fannie Lou Haner(sic) and Annell Ponder.

"One count charged the officers with conspiracy to deprive the Negroes of their constitutional rights. The other six counts charged specific beatings.

"Maximum penalty for each of the five defendants could be a year in prison and a \$1,000 fine on each count."

On December 6, 1963, a jury returned a verdict of not guilty against the lawmen in U. S. District Court, according to records there. Poe, who testified for the Justice Department in the trial, was returned to Parchman Prison to complete his sentence for peeping tom. Today, he works as a laborer in a lumberyard and lives in Winona. He is not married. Knox, who also testified for the Justice Department, also returned to Winona. He is married, the father of nine children, and while partially disabled, works part-time as a night watchman in the same lumberyard as Poe.

The Government's Youth Program To Clean Up Peter's Creek

*Thin legs
stuttering for balance
in small rapids —
pale faces
surveying
underbrush
full of copperhead
and rust —
vines of light
flashing
on white
circling arms*

*from Periods of Lucidity
by Joseph Barrett*



Proud to Dig the Grave

Few events during the Sixties transfixed the nation as did the assassination of John F. Kennedy. The great and mighty gathered at his graveside, a place dug by men never glimpsed by the throng, but with great pride in their labor nonetheless.

In the shocked aftermath of the death of the young president, Metro "Mitch" Kowalchick, Sylvester Smith and Clifton Pollard dug the president's grave but were ignored by history in their necessary ritual task. I talked with them in Arlington National Cemetery on a sunny, but chilly, spring day.

Kowalchick: As I recall, President Kennedy was assassinated on a Friday. Like I guess everyone else, I remember the exact date and what I was doing when I heard the news. I was working at Arlington National Cemetery as a cemetery assistant. I was in charge of burial operations. That particular day, I was participating in a supervisory or middle management course. We were having a coffee break after which we were to receive our certificates. One of the fellows who was attending the course called home. He came back to the table and said, "President Kennedy has been assassinated!" Ah...this kinda shook everybody up. One of the instructors came down and said they would discontinue the ceremony and just hand out the certificates. We could go.

When I got back to Arlington Cemetery and the superintendent's of-

fice — John C. Metzler was superintendent at that time — I believe news was coming over the radio indicating that he would be buried in his home town. Mr. Metzler had a premonition of some kind. He says, "Mitch, we'd better be prepared. They say he's going to be buried in his home town, but I have a feeling he may come here."

So we discussed it at some length. Mr. Metzler selected three possible sites. We numbered them on a map, one, two, three.

The next day was Saturday. It was raining, raining hard. Mr. Metzler called me to meet him at the cemetery. Secretary of Defense McNamara was there and Ted Kennedy for the purpose of selecting a site. Mr. Metzler showed them the map with the three recommendations for possible locations. They immediately selected number one without looking at the others. I think the first site was selected because it was near a place President Kennedy liked. He used to visit the cemetery from time to time. The story goes that at one time he had been visiting on top of the hill up there at the mansion and looking down on Washington. He is supposed to have said, "What a beautiful sight. What a beautiful place. I could stay here forever." Somebody remembered this and I think it had something to do with the site they selected.

So, as I say, it was raining that day, and raining hard. While Mr. Metzler directed me by eye — he did not use a transit — I drove a stake into the spot. It turned out to be exactly one foot from where he is buried now. When they constructed the present, existing memorial to him, it was necessary to move his body, ah . . . the casket . . . one foot from where Mr. Metzler had sighted by eye.

We had planned to open the grave sometime Sunday. We figured nobody would be around, and we'd dig it Sunday evening by hand. But as it turned out, when the news got out that he was to be buried in Arlington, the cemetery was loaded with people. People came from everywhere. I still don't know what they were doing there so early. He wasn't to be buried until Wednesday. But they were showing up in droves. Mr. Metzler directed me to dig the grave by machine, and to dig it as quickly as possible. But even so, there were so many

people around — even newsmen in helicopters overhead flying above the cemetery — that we built a fence around the site to screen off the operation.

Smith: Sunday morning the rain was over. I got up bright and early and prepared to come out and open up his grave for him. I was the supervisor at the grave. Mr. Pollard was the backhoe operator. Mr. Kowalchick was there. It was a very sad occasion for me knowing that I was opening it up for one of the greatest presidents. And I hated to do it, but it had to be done. And, then again, as bad as I hated it, it was an honor for me. I didn't boohoo. But there was some tears.

Pollard: I had no idea when I heard the news that I would be the one to dig the grave. It was an honor, you know. A lot of things crossed my mind when I was digging. I wanted to do the best job I could at the time. I got to work that morning at eight, but they weren't ready to dig the grave until almost noon. We dug it later that afternoon.

It didn't take too long to do just right. Actually, to dig the grave only took about, I would say, forty-five minutes. Normally, it wouldn't take that long to dig a grave. But we were careful and correct in what we did. I had one or two tears. A lot of people had tears. Sometimes now thinking about it...I think we worked that night until six or seven.

Kowalchick: While we were digging the grave I was thinking that, you know, the day I bury him I'm going to have all these other burials. How are we going to do all of this? I had no inkling what problems we were going to run into. I had no idea what it was going to be like.

Monday morning I got up early and came out to the cemetery before we were supposed to open. There were people all over the place. Here again, remember, the burial wasn't until Wednesday. People were coming out in droves. There was a lot going on. We had thirty-one other burials scheduled that day. People wanted to know if the ceremony was going to consist of this, this and that. And there were special units that wanted to participate. No one was inconvenienced because we were burying the President that day. Nobody was rescheduled or cancelled. He was the last one to be

buried that day. Everything went off on time.

By the time the funeral was over, it was actually closing time. The cemetery was closed. We had some hangers-on. The news media were the last. But we finally got them out. We, ah, lowered the casket into the vault, placed the lid on the vault, and back-filled the grave. It was late into the night when we completed the job. We back-filled it, tamped it, and it was all done by hand, and we had sod and we sodded it. The post engineer had built a small white picket fence. It was erected before we left. We worked on into the night so that the next morning the place would be ready.

Smith: Like I say, I hated doing it. But it had to be done. At first, it bothered me some, but as time goes, I have to bury so many, it has slipped away from me. But I shall never forget it as long as I live. Never. I went home, sat down and hung my head in sorrow.

Kowalchick: When I got to the cemetery the next morning there were thousands of people already there waiting at the gates. I got here about six o'clock. People were actually sleeping in sleeping bags inside the cemetery, over the wall, and just this side of the wall. We had made no preparations for such crowds.

Where they walked around the grave became a mud trail. We went down to the warehouses and got canvas and put that down. In no time at all, they had trampled that into the mud. We got our carpenters to build duckboards — wooden walkways — and we put canvas over them. We placed them around the site outside the picket fence. We brought in bluestone to put around the immediate area. Bluestone gave us a problem. It turned out that visitors were picking up the stuff for souvenirs. We had to replace the stone every few days. Finally, we constructed wooden walkways and covered them with canvas. We had to replace the canvas every few days. There were so many people coming out that the canvas just wore out.

There would be lines of people ten or twelve deep all the way from the Kennedy graveside right down to our main gate every day. At closing time, we had to close the gates and shut some people out. This went on for months. The people never stopped. They never stopped.



People Lived in Fear

Bullets are not the only way to end a life's work. The political career of Orval Faubus, who later became world famous for his opposition to public school desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas, hung in uncertain limbo one night in a Pine Bluff baseball field.

I found the former governor at the War Eagle Branch of the Huntsville bank where he works as a teller. We talked there and later into the night at his elegant, handcrafted (literally) home, first about Commonwealth College and then about his fateful brush with redbaiting.

Faubus was making his first run for the governor's seat in 1954. His opponent, the incumbent governor, Francis A. Cherry, had been forced by young Faubus into a primary runoff election. Cherry, apparently shaken by the strength of Faubus' support, charged in a speech delivered Monday, August 2, that Faubus had a pinkish background, that Faubus had been elected president of the student body at Commonwealth College in 1935.

Faubus, in 1935, then twenty-five and married, had hitchhiked from his home, a worn farm near Huntsville, to Commonwealth College near Mena, Arkansas, to study, he said, public speaking, bookkeeping, history and literature. He was on a scholarship. He had learned of the school from a mailing his father, Sam Faubus, a socialist, had received. Commonwealth, one of several labor schools across the nation at the time, taught, perhaps more ardently and outspoken-

ly than most, that the Great Depression signalled the arrival of the socialist revolution. The school's aim was to train leaders for that event.

Commonwealth was under investigation by the Arkansas legislature when Faubus arrived, and the college was finally hectoring out of existence by state and federal authorities in 1940. Faubus claimed his election as president of the students was engineered without his knowledge as a front to placate investigators.

Within a few months, Faubus left Commonwealth. Ideology kept getting in the way of his learning, he said; and the place was not accredited. An evening lecture on economic equality, in which a teacher declared marriage was legalized prostitution, sent Faubus packing. "I immediately thought of my mother who married my father when she was sixteen. Chaste, country girl; never loved but one man, True to him all her life. And I thought if he was going to classify her a prostitute, that was too much for me. That was the straw that broke the camel's back."

I lived through the Great Depression. I had been teaching school for one year, starting at age eighteen, when in 1929 the Stock Market Crash came. I'd started teaching before I had been to high school. So during the interim between terms of [teaching] school, I'd go to high school two or three months. Took me six years to get through. Then as there would be two or three months left, I would become a timber worker — I was raised a timber worker — and a farmer. I became an itinerant fruit picker. I followed the strawberry harvest one year from Arkansas to Michigan. Pick two weeks in Arkansas, go to Missouri and pick two weeks, then on up to Michigan for two weeks' harvest. On the way to Michigan, we went to Chicago. Our mode of travel was what we called side-door Pullman. We were hoboes riding the freight trains. And every train was covered. Not hundreds of but thousands of workless men. Homeless men. Railroad men without work. I was never completely broke. I never bummed a back door for a handout as I saw many people do. But in Chicago I spent the time in the park. If there was one person sleeping in that park, there was a thousand.

They ate twice a day at the Salvation Army soup line. They slept wrapped in newspapers which more affluent people would buy, then sit on the park bench and read, then leave on the bench on purpose for those homeless people to use....

It was obvious to anyone that there were what we called then defects of capitalism. It was a time of turmoil. There was no scarcity of goods. Wheat rotted in the fields. Cotton went unpicked. There was want among the people because of the absence of material goods. It was maldistribution. One of my country friends that never could read nor write said, "There never was overproduction. It was underconsumption." We needed overalls. We needed the food. We needed the shirts. But we couldn't buy them.

But it was in those days that I went to Commonwealth College. It was billed as a labor school. There was no mention of, or thought of socialism or communism, or anything of that kind....But I found it quite different once I arrived. They were more interested in teaching you leftist philosophy than they were in teaching you greater skill or academic excellence in order to make a living....I left without paying anything to become an official student for a semester which was three months, or without finishing any course....

Governor Francis Cherry made the charges on Monday night, August 2, over television in Little Rock. The second primary had just opened — the runoff. And it shook my people. It was like firing a shotgun blast into a covey of quail. They were concerned; some struck with consternation; it was a surprise to many of them. Some of my aides knew about it. My own people knew about it. It was no secret to the people of Madison County. They knew when I went down and when I came back. I don't recall any publicity about it at the time, but there doesn't have to be in a small, rural county. It had been twenty years before. In the meantime, I had been elected to county office and made a fairly good record. I had joined the military and served four and a half years and was commissioned an officer in the US Army — actually engaged in undercover work. Then I was home and appointed postmaster.

I didn't hear the speech. I had been campaigning. But I could sense from the people I met and from my own people that it was a very effective speech. Governor Cherry was quite an eloquent speaker. He was an attorney. In fact, he was chancellor at the time. That is an equity court judge in Arkansas. He was very effective. And I could understand that if the people believed this that I was actually a far left-winger, they would be justified in rejecting my candidacy. But knowing it was an errant journey on my part, or what you might call an indiscretion which I hastened to correct as soon as I could, I believed if I could get this message over to the people that it would not be fatal.

The big question in people's minds was what's the explanation? So I gave that explanation at Pine Bluff on the night of August 4 on statewide radio hookup. Harry S. Ashmore [executive editor of the *Arkansas Gazette*] helped write the speech. I never will forget one of the phrases that Ashmore put in there. It was this: "...when I went out from the green valley of my youth..." Well, in those days, people were idealistic. They still believed in the American dream, the rags to riches thing, the Horatio Alger theme — all were very much a part of the scene at that time. Many people were in sympathy with me because of that background. Ashmore had started to write some of it before I arrived at headquarters. I read the first part and I knew it was good. I said fine. That's just what I need. Tell him to keep writing. He was writing all the time. And a runner went back and forth between Ashmore and me bringing portions as he finished. I passed them on to an aide who took them to a typist to put in final form. When we finished we had a speech I guess of an hour long. There wasn't time for all that but there was no time to change it.

We got to the park and I got out alone. There were groups of people in the semi-darkness. Very few came up to me. Most of them were conversing in subdued tones. It was an air of seriousness that you would envisage if a very dear friend or relative was at the point of death, or maybe had already died.

In the stands were seated mostly women. Mostly middle-aged women dominated. Of the working class type.

You could tell by their dress. I looked at my watch. It was eight minutes to air time. I didn't see anyone to assist me. There was no lectern to hold the papers. There was just a lone microphone sitting in the baseball field where home plate would be — where the wire barrier separates the players from the spectators.

I went through a side gate and moved up closer to the people. I liked to be as close to them as possible when I talk. I had a bunch of documents I was going to use — photostats of the testimony that had been taken by this legislative committee, testimony of the president of the college that my name was not among the students there, and things of that nature. I also had the typewritten speech. I had to decide what to delete and what to keep as I went along.

So I looked for a stone or something to hold the documents. I had to place them on the ground beside the microphone. I had to hold my loose-leaf speech. There was a brisk breeze blowing. If I'd lost my speech, the thing would have been scattered and you'd never found it all in time. All I could find was an empty soft drink bottle. Not the most suitable object to hold down the documents. It was round and had a tendency to roll around and your documents could blow away in the wind.

But I got ready and was prepared to open up and a voice beside me said, "Here, Orval, let me hold those." I looked around and it was a man by the name of Jimmy Karam from Little Rock. As I wrote in my book, which I hope will soon be published, I didn't know if he came to spy. I didn't know if he came out of curiosity. Or if the Lord sent him. But his presence was sufficient. There was not time for explanations or anything. I just handed him the papers and I said, "When I call for one, just hand me the one on top." Then I made the speech.

I told about my youth. How I grew up. I went over that and then went into the detailed explanation of my journey to the college, what I discovered, and what I found out, and why I left. And then I used those documents which we had researched. The biggest thing they had against me was that I was there and was elected president of the student body.

As I progressed, the people in the darkness it seemed were unconsciously

drawn close to the wire and into the light. At the most critical point in my speech I could see many of the women crying. Wiping their eyes with their handkerchiefs, I knew I was being effective. Once I heard Jimmy say, "Give it to 'em, Orval." I closed out the speech with the issues of the campaign. I think that I explained adequately my presence at the college — how it could happen to anyone — how if I could be smeared and ruined at that particular moment for an errant journey or an indiscretion — that the same thing could be done to their son, or their daughter, or one of them if they were seeking public office or whatever.

When the speech was over we went back to Little Rock to headquarters. We could tell it was effective. Telephone calls came flooding in. People came back who had disappeared. I think it was a turning point. Then many of the political leaders I couldn't find were voluntarily back at the meetings, were voluntarily back at my headquarters. They came flooding back. You know, it was like a covey of quail recongregating after the danger is gone. And our bandwagon started to roll again. So then people began to say, "Get back to the original issues. They were the ones that made the Governor unpopular."

I don't recall that I ever entered into active defense of Commonwealth College. But I did not join in its condemnation, and I did not join in the movement to destroy it. They owned their own property. Students came there on a voluntary basis. No one was compelled to go there, or stay. No one was compelled to accept their philosophy. I can see where if you quash and destroy an institution like that because its views are unpopular, that this could destroy freedom of the press, freedom of expression, freedom in education. Now, there's a fine point when it comes to communism, or any subversion. If it advocates overthrow of the government by violence, perhaps that could be made a law which could be constitutional and it would stick. Now if they'll stick to the democratic processes, however unpopular their views — but if you take away the right to express yourself to advocate change through the proper processes of our government, then you are violating the Constitution and you are violating the rights of the

people.

Redbaiting is worse than attempted assassination. I mean physical assassination. If someone tries to kill you, or he succeeds, then it's all over. But if you're smeared, or your reputation destroyed in such a way that you do not have time to repair it in — let us say — a lifetime, that's a pretty heavy burden. And that's a pretty heavy thought. Because not only is it going to affect you personally, it also affects your family and your children.

This was just about the height of what was known as the McCarthy period where a number of subversives were found in government — enough so that the smear could be extended to many, many others. People lived in fear. I could have been ruined and been denied the governorship by the accusations.

Before the trip, these places — Scottsboro, Winona and the others — were merely names, pieces in an abstraction entitled The South. Their meaning as places has now become real and alive. No transcending images emerged for me as they did for Fannie Kemble or William Byrd. Nothing I write will add fuel to a civil war or establish the character outlines for a new stereotype. Perhaps what I learned and am learning — and the trip is not over, for memories keep surfacing — is that beneath the cordiality of traditional Southern history lies an abundance of human poignancy which may fruitfully add to our understanding of this unique region. □

Frank Adams is a teacher, writer, author of Unearthing Seeds of Fire, and a longtime friend of the Institute.

The Strikers

*Arisen from the smoke
and anxiety
of their father's paydays
and nights
and own children's
drivelled bribes of candy
to go home
they stare and nod
leaning against the bar
in low talk*

*— tonight the one armed men
shoot pool
with no one
calling them artists —*

*the storm blows open
double doors,
cigarettes roll still
burning in sawdust —*

*and outside car horns
and men shouting, "it's time" —
hands on hats
they walk into rain*

by Joseph Barrett
from *Periods of Lucidity*
Old Guard Printing Co.
Hinton, W. Va. 25951

Our Place WAS *Beale ST.*

by Andrew Yale

JUDGE HARSH BLUES

*They arrest me for murder, I ain't harmed a man,
Woman's hollering murder, I ain't raised my hand.*

*Please Judge Harsh, make it light as you possibly can,
Cause I ain't done no work, Judge, since I don't
know when.*

—Furry Lewis



Casey Banks

Beale Street runs from the Mississippi River out into East Memphis for nearly a mile, but for most people in Memphis, Beale Street means the four blocks between Hernando and First. It is this section that used to be “the black folks’ downtown” — the trade and recreation center for the black community of Memphis, as well as for the country people who periodically traveled to the city from eastern Arkansas, northern Mississippi and western Tennessee.

Within this four block stretch were pool halls; bars and clubs; gambling and prostitution houses; movie theatres; doctors’, lawyers’ and dentists’ offices; pawnshops, dry goods stores; hotels; boarding houses, even chop suey joints. But Beale Street was most famous for the musicians who played its clubs and for the music publishing houses and recording studios which made famous such names as W. C. Handy, Furry Lewis, Booker

White, B. B. King and Elvis Presley.

Today Beale Street is closed down and boarded up. Although it has been designated a national landmark, its future is uncertain. In the Spring, 1977, issue of *Southern Exposure*, David Bowman documented a pattern of mismanagement by the city and private developers following Memphis Mayor Edmund Orgill’s 1959 announcement that Beale Street would be converted to a major tourist attraction. Almost two decades later, buildings have been torn down and people relocated, but redevelopment has not occurred.

Beale Street, however, continues to live in the memories of the musicians, shopkeepers and street people who knew it in its heyday. The following excerpts are from interviews conducted over a seven-year period by Andy Yale, who first traveled to Memphis in 1971 to meet Booker White. The photographs of Beale Street and its residents are selected from those Yale took during his stay.



Furry Lewis

Rabbit in a Thicket

Furry Lewis was born in 1894 in Greenwood, Mississippi, and came to Memphis with his mother when he was six. He grew up on Beale Street, and by the time he was fourteen, he was playing in W. C. Handy's band. He was rediscovered in 1959 by Sam Charters, and toured widely. He has appeared in movies, on TV, and played with the Rolling Stones. Joni Mitchell wrote a song about him, "Furry Sings the Blues."

BLACK GYPSY BLUES

*My woman must be a black gypsy,
she knows everywhere I go,
She met me this morning
with a brand new 44.*

*My woman got a mouth
like a lighthouse in the sea,
Everytime she smiles,
she shines her light on me.*

— Furry Lewis

Well, when I first started hanging around Beale Street, it was sixty some odd years ago. I'm eighty-three and been here in Memphis ever since I was six, because they brought me here from Greenwood, Mississippi, but I been around Beale Street all my life. That's where I came up on.

Well, I first started playing down there, I was about fourteen or fifteen years old. I didn't have a music teacher, nothing like that, but I go around people and see them play a guitar and I just watch their hands and come on back home and do the

same thing. Then I joined Handy – W. C. Handy, that's Christopher Handy – I started when I was fifteen years old. But I was a man that played with the band when one of the band people was off. But after that I got so good – I won't say famous, now, but I'm famous *now*, though – I got so good until I got hired in W. C. Handy's band.

I quit grade school and went to high school. And that was a school up on the hill – reason I call it high. Yeah. Then I hoboed and roust-about on the boats – I used to be on the Delta Queen *all* the time.

Yes, I hoboed. That's the reason why I lose my left leg. That was in 1916. I have an artificial leg. I lose my leg in Dupont, Illinois, on the I. C. They take me to Carbondale, Illinois, to the I. C. Railroad hospital. And that's where I stayed until my mother sent me some crutches. And then the railroad – they *did* send me back home – but I come mighty near going to the penitentiary cause I had no business hoboing. Had good money in my pocket at that time. I just want to save the money, just ride for free. But see what free get you – it don't get you so much sometime, do it?

I worked for the city of Memphis forty-four years. I drive a mule and cart for the city when they didn't have a truck. And then I pushed some little old buggies like you see pushing up and down the street, cleaning the street. I work on the city dump, you know, tell the truck drivers where to dump at. I work on the thresher where you wash the streets, and I nightwatched and everything. I was with the city forty-four years and they just retired me in 1966.

I can't play the blues and live a Christian life cause I hope you heard this in your lifetime – you can't serve God and the Devil, too. That settles that. You gotta let one of those people alone – let God alone and serve the Devil or let the Devil alone and be in prayer. You know prayer changes things. You know God above the Devil, but a whole lot of the time seem like people enjoy the Devil's work better than they do God's work. But they condemning their souls.

Yeah, blues ain't nothing but the Devil's work; you don't hear no blues in no church. You never hear a preacher get up – a reverend or whatever name you want to call him – you never hear him get up and sing the blues. You heard him sing church songs. I know all church songs cause I study them. But if you study a thing and don't do it, you lost. Yeah. I'm still with the Devil.

You want to come on down to the fact, I don't call myself famous now. But I tell you what they *do* call me – they call me a rabbit in a thicket and it gonna take a good dog to catch me with a guitar. Every song that I sing I made it up myself. I never tried to pick up nobody else's music. I always keep up that old tune like I always have played. Just like the church song say, "Give me that old-time religion cause it's good enough for me."

I'm a good bluesman but I play religious songs and I can pick a guitar. I pick near about anything anybody ask me. I can play some real good church songs and I mean *play* it. And I be singing and I ask my guitar to help me out and I won't open my mouth and the guitar will sing the same song. I do that, I'm good on church.

Whole lot of people like the blues. Whole lot of Christians like to hear somebody pick a guitar and play the blues. And a whole lot of people *don't* like to hear it. But I can tell you *this*, there's gonna be blues long as the world stands; somebody gonna play the blues. There's gonna be blues, but a whole lot of people say they playing the blues and they be playing something else. I don't try to follow behind them, learn them – the blues I play I been playing for many years. And I got my own style and I ain't got a quarter now in my pocket. But I give anybody – if it ain't too late I go to the bank and give anybody five hundred dollars – if they can beat me picking my style with the blues! I tell you *that* now.

I bet on Furry – and then people say don't never praise yourself, but nobody else gonna do it quick enough. I'm a guitar picker from my heart! I am absolutely a guitar picker from my *heart*. I wants you to get Booker, I wants you to get any guitar picker what you know and bring 'em here and let 'em beat Furry. I run a ring around 'em. I just don't know. You know me. Can I pick?

But I'm gonna quit picking guitar altogether and I want a younger head to pick up where I'm leaving off. I put the guitar down, I ain't gonna play nothing, no. I let the guitar sit right there cause it cost me too much money for my guitar and my amp to just give to somebody. What I do, I take it out to the museum – art gallery – something like that, and have my name on it and everything. And just let it sit there until it rusts or busts or something. I'm really gonna quit, because I'm getting too old now to just keep this up. You need to get close to God sometime – you too. You can say this is *old* Furry Lewis.

The Smile of the Way

Booker ("Bukka") White was born in 1909 in Houston, Mississippi, and died February 26, 1977, in Memphis. One of the great Delta bluesmen, Booker White played in a driving, original bottleneck style, and recorded in the 1930s and '40s for Okeh and Vocalion records. He hoboed and traveled all over the South and Midwest. During the blues revival of the mid '60s, he was rediscovered by John Fahey, and toured extensively. Besides his original recordings, Booker is also on Takoma, Arhoolie, Blue Thumb, Biograph and World Pacific labels. Columbia reissued many of his original recordings on an LP in the late '60s.

A lot of people let money run em crazy. They be as poor as crawfish and they get some money, they change. I ain't never been like that. I always been nice to people, knew how to meet people, if I could help em, I help em. And I been a success behind that. Yeah, I'd help somebody else that trying to go along. You see, that's so many people's trouble. They wants it all to themself and don't try to help nobody else. But I tries to help people as I go along. You can't live in this world by yourself. Rich or poor. That's what I like about the good Lord, he don't care no more about the rich than he do the poor. Cause he made us all.

We play for white and colored, me, my daddy and my sister. We kept pretty busy all the time, wasn't no problem. Charlie Grice, he was a harp blower, he stayed busy. Luke Smith, he stayed busy. All back there, them old people *right*, I'm telling you. B. B. (King)'s grandfather, he was the king of all of them. Name Jap Pullian, That's his grandfather. You couldn't hardly stand to hear him play. Man, that man could *play*. Well, at that time I wasn't going out. I'd be at home when Uncle Jap and them would come over there. I had an auntie, she played pretty good. But my sister was a king, man. She sing so till frogs and things hop up and listen at her. Yeah, they'd hop up and listen at her. She could go, I'm telling you the truth. But after she married we got rid of her. We wouldn't, you know, try to take her off nowhere. So she passed, and her husband, he dead. Me and my father taken it over.

See, Papa died in '38. That was a fiddle man from his heart. I never played with a guy could play anything in open G, he play all kinds of tunings. I don't care what you play, he go along with you. Yeah, he was good. No problem for him to do those kind of things. So from a little boy nine years old, I come along to be an old blues player.

So many nights I would play. I wouldn't have but two or three strings on my guitar — be done broke the others. But they couldn't tell the difference. It sound good, they dance by it, and they just had a nice time. It never did throw me back — I break all my strings, down to one and two and I still be playing my guitar.

You know sometime you can be playing music and you can make a song so sad you can't take it. I have been to places and the house man would come and tell me, now Booker, don't play that no more — it's upsetting too many people. And I came to find out he was telling the truth. A lot of times I be playing, I have to stop, I can't take it. So many time. A lot of people don't understand that. A Christian feeling and the blues — both of em will make you shout. But the blues has got more power to it than a church song. I got a lot of songs, spiritual songs. I got just as many spiritual songs as I got the blues in a way. But there's so many people ain't got the spirit — they got the blues, that's what they want. They want the blues, their whiskey and wine they drink, then they feel like they can walk to heaven without dying.

I be lying here like I'm sleeping and I be having a



Booker White

song on my mind, turning just like the tape reel. Some of them I have to quit, cause they just make me sick. I be feeling so good even over things that I used to do. Past life. I don't know what tomorrow gonna bring – that's the best I can get out of life, thinking about what I done did. I can have for the future what I want to do, but I haven't did it, and may not be here to do it. But the past – I done did that. That give me something to think about, give me something to talk about, give me something to play. There's just something on the line moving all the time.

When you get up there and go to playing, hit that stage with that right stuff, it's going to come out all right. That's what I told B.B. when we went to Peoria, Illinois, going on three years ago. Well, I meant that cause I know Willie Dixon, Muddy Water. I know all them could play. But I had such a good feeling on me, I believed I could put it on them. I said, now I'm gonna tell ya'll, when you hit that stage if you don't play right, it's gonna catch afire on you. And they said, alright, White, we'll do that. I said, I ain't gonna try to play to beat you, I'm just gonna try to play to make you feel good.

And when I hit that stage, I jumped on that stage from the depths of my heart with all *kinds* of feeling. And I never knowed in all my playing, the people to tote me off the stage. They tote me off *that* stage. I was in such a high gear and feeling so good, till they come up there and toted me off that stage. And I had them boys so, till I'm telling you, they didn't know what to think. Muddy Waters and Old Willie Dixon – he said, well you done did it again. I said, I'm gonna do it all the time when I feel good. He said, Booker, you played tonight.

See now, where people make such a bad mistake – young folks die like old folks. You go to the cemetery, you see many short grave as you do long grave. No, it ain't like that – cause you young, that doesn't stop death, you still die. But we hoping we don't die till we get to the point of the time. When we get there, we gonna die, we born to die. But while we living, we gonna try to make it a great life. And when you make it a great life and a happy life, when you die, you most have a smile. Cause you done went, the smile of the way. So, so long to all of you, I hope when I get up, I can meet ya'll and tell it better.



Art Hutkins

And We Did Do Business

Art Hutkins runs a hardware store on Beale Street, one of the last four stores still open. He has been on and around Beale since he was a kid, starting out as a pawnbroker's clerk and watchmaker.

I come down here in '35. I worked up on the next block in a pawnshop. I was a watchmaker and clerk. In the store where I worked, we took in mostly watches and jewelry. Now, in those days the pawnshops down here took in mostly clothing. Clothing and jewelry and things like that. But the pawnshop I worked in, my boss didn't like clothing; he liked jewelry. We used to take in diamonds and watches and things of that sort. Outboard motors, musical instruments, all that kind of stuff.

Morris Lippman was one of the old-time pawnshop operators. His daddy was an old-time pawnbroker with his mother. And after they died he took the store over and he operated under the name of Morris Lippman until he sold out to Willy Epstein.

I drifted into the hardware business. I opened up a store over at 156 Beale and that was in 1941, the same year I got married. And I opened up the store, it consisted of dry goods, jewelry and things of that sort. And all my customers came there looking for hardware. So I investigated and found out that location was a hardware store for years and years before I moved in and everybody came there looking for hardware. So I just changed to the requests of the customers, that's all. They wanted saws, I could put em in saws. And I dropped the jewelry and dropped the clothing. So that's how I got into the hardware business.

The fun part of Beale Street, that was mostly the other side of Hernando. They had clubs down there, had dancing and singing, nightclubs, and all that kind of stuff. Like any other city. It was just a little city but mostly black people were down here. Then they had the pawnshops and everything. They had dry goods stores and they had restaurants, they had shoe stores, they had second-hand furniture stores, bakery, all kinds of stores like that. Just like any other neighborhood. Takes all kinds of stores to make a neighborhood. It was all strictly a business street, strictly a business street.

But, hell, it dates back to an old-time street. You take years ago, the boats used to stop down at the foot of Beale Street and all the help down there used to come up to Beale Street and do their shopping. Come up here and buy clothes and buy everything, go to the show, get a good drink, get a bottle of whiskey and all that kind of stuff. In those days people didn't worry about a pint of whiskey, half pint of whiskey — they bought a



*166 Beale Street:
Entrance to Morris
Lippman's Pawnshop*



quantity of it. Gallon. Sure, whiskey was cheap in them days. This was a whiskey store, oh, long time ago. In the basement they keep barrels of whiskey – ten-year-old whiskey, eight-year-old whiskey, and you know, different kinds of whiskey – and they used to go down there, take and buy you a gallon of whiskey, and seal it up for you. Years ago country man came in and bought one hundred pounds of coffee, one hundred pounds of sugar, big cans of lard, and all that kind of stuff. And they'd do that here on Beale Street. It was noted for that. Everybody came here – boats, cotton, everybody used to come here.

You see behind all these big buildings – an ark is like a row of houses and you have people live downstairs and people live upstairs – we used to call them an ark years ago, and it was one ark after another, you know. I guess at one time we lost ten thousand people living in this area. Years ago everybody lived behind these buildings, everything. And all those people came down on Beale to do their shopping over here. We used to have two hardware stores here, had one about three blocks from here. And we *always* did business.



Pool Hall, 179 Beale Street

A Real Live Scene

Casey Banks is a free-lance promotions man, musician, and pool player who grew up on Beale Street. His memories of Beale and its people generally relate to his childhood. His generation was the last to grow up on Beale.

Well, I think when I was real small, maybe at the age of eight or nine years old, you know, the only picture show that black kids could go to was on Beale. Like they had some other picture shows up on Main Street but you had to go in the side door. It was a segregated situation. And these movie houses were primarily for black people, you know. They didn't have what they call black-oriented films; they were the same films that you'd see in the white theatres but maybe they had played in white theatres four or five months before they got to a black neighborhood.

And Beale Street was rather an exciting place, especially from the eyes of a kid. You got to see a lot of things — man, you know, it kind of reminds me of the pictures I've seen of the Roaring Twenties. You know, ladies all made all up and heavily made-up lips and big earrings and they strutting and dancing. People used to really fix

themselves up, wearing the zoot suits with the big chains and the long pointed shoes and the big Stetson hats. And the girls used to wear their little fake mink coats and the funny-looking dresses – real flimsy-looking dresses, and the beads hanging all the way down here – man, you know it was a real picturesque scene. It was a fashion show constantly. On Easter and Christmas, Christmas Eve and Easter, New Year's Eve – man, everybody dresses up, more so than they did on Fridays and Saturdays. Everybody put on their Sunday finery and go down on Beale and just hang around and look around, you know. That was the thing – just show out on Beale Street. If you got a new car, man, if a cat got a new car, first place he came was to drive up and down Beale and show off to the fellas. Hey, look at my new car.

I used to sell *Jet* – that's the little black publication and magazine – and I also sold *Tri-State Defender*. So we used to go into these cafes to sell our merchandise to the patrons. And we got a chance to see all kinds of things, man, you know. But as a whole, the whole thing was just a fun scene. Man, it was crowded, like every night of the week there was a big crowd down there, and in the morning when the joints open up, they were crowded, and all day long it was crowded.

During certain days of the week – on Wednesdays and sometimes on Fridays – there was a theatre called the Palace Theatre and they used to have amateur hours down there. And the amateur hour consists of whoever want to be on the amateur hour – you come by and come to the side door, which was back around in the alley, and you knock on the door, and tell them you want to be on the show. Well, they had a little auditioning stuff, which consist of one guy who made up his mind whether or not you were talent-worthy. He have you sing four bars of something and then – “Okay, you can go on; can you keep time?” No uniforms or nothing. And the place was packed. They had a big band there – Phineas Newman band. If you ever heard of Phineas Newman, his son, Phineas Newman, Jr., he's a world renowned pianist. And the Phineas Newman that I have reference to is his father.

They went on, and they ventured a little further outside of just the amateur hour; they tried to revive the ear of burlesque down on Beale. They used to have a thing down there called the “Brown Skin Follies.” And we were too young to be in there, so we used to hide up under the seats until they put out all the kids, you know. When the

show started, it was easy for us little bitty cats to hide somewhere, you know, you can't see us. We used to sit there and watch the shake dances and whatever. It was a real live trip down there.

They also used to have big band shows. You know, they brought in Tuff Greene, Bobby Bland, B.B. King, oh man, everybody that you ever *thought* you wanted to see was there. I remember the first time I ever saw Bobby Bland – I saw him in a sideshow in Church's Park and that's on Beale. Bobby Bland was singing in a little, you know, little tent-type show. And who was to think he was ever to become a big star? And B.B. King was doing the same thing. All these cats, man. Club Handy was another major attraction, a place where major black attractions came to. And quite a few white people used to come down there cause this was the *real* Beale Street. Beale Street started at Third Street and it went from Third back to Fourth Street – it was just that one little strip. Now maybe forty years ago it may have stretched a little further, but the era I know about it started at Third and stretched on back to Fourth Street. And that was Beale. Hernando Street was another part of Beale Street.

The old-timers kind of ran things down there, you know. They monopolized the situation. Like if you were in good with the old timers, shit, you had it made. But if you weren't in good with the old-timers, well, you know, you just had to be on the outside, peeping through the door.

See Memphis is a hub, you know, to Mississippi, Arkansas and certain parts of Tennessee. When people call themselves coming to town, say the people who stay in Arkansas and north Mississippi, this is where the black people came to have a good time. And some of them, they were migrant workers and things, and they saved their money for two, three, four, five months just to come up and have a big blast on Beale, you know.

And there was quite a few little soul food joints down there. Miss Culpepper had a rib shack around the corner – she a big church lady, she didn't stay on Beale none. And she never would say no to anybody. If a cat was hungry, you know, go in there and Miss Culpepper she going to feed you. And it was certain other places if you were a regular customer. Nootie's, she was a madam, she was around on Hernando. She had a little prostitution joint around there, you know. And Nootie would feed you. And you eat all you want there; they had cooks and things, good food. Man, you know, people exhibit a hell of a lot more love and



Interior of Schwab's Department Store

understanding and compassion during that era than they do now. It wasn't so much of a doggish situation. Very seldom you hear about somebody getting ripped off or mugged. Well, you know, a little mugging went on, but it wasn't as bad as it is now. No kind of way.

Because they had some real live head-cracking police down there, black police you know, and they wouldn't hesitate to busting your brains out in any

kind of situation they got you into. And they ruled Beale Street with the strong hand of the law. One of the most significant ones was a cat by the name of Shug Jones. And he was a black dude – cat couldn't read and write – used to be a janitor in the police department. And when they first started hiring black cops they made him a police. He was the terror of Beale Street, him and another cat named Jubal, and they ruled Beale with an iron hand. Like you just didn't get away with that shit there, man. No kind of way. They were very much on the job. Because (Mayor) Crump ran things, you know. Crump was what you call a dictator. He ruled Memphis with a strong hand. Black people had their place. Their place was Beale Street. The black cops were striving for equality under the same administration of the law. And they were trying their damndest at being as proficient at administering the laws as white cops were. It's just the difference was they couldn't arrest any white people. They couldn't go any further than a black neighborhood. It was two different cities, one black and one white. And Beale Street was the black folks' downtown.

But white people came down on Beale. You know you had a lot of liberal whites that used to come down and frequent the Beale Street area. And what was so wierd about the whole situation was the white people that came down there, they had a good time and they got right involved in whatever was going on and it was no hassle. There may have been a little resentment, but due to the circumstances of how black people were persecuted for being black folks, they had to accept the white people for what they were, and be courteous and nice to them, even though you wanted to bust some of them in the head. But you weren't in a position to do that. Know what I mean? So they came down, they freely enjoyed the company of black ladies, spent a lot of money drinking and shit, and had a good time.

Pawnbrokers enjoyed kind of a, well, a pretty good relationship with the black people down there, cause of the fact of the economic situation. Black people didn't have much money, and pawnbrokers would kind of have one eye closed to certain things that you used to bring to pawn, hot or whatever. If you happened to be all right with this particular pawnbroker, you could pawn anything. They had the money. When you got the almighty buck down there, you a welcome addition to the system. And they controlled quite a bit of money down there, so they were readily accepted.

That was the part of Beale Street they call the



Interior of Schwab's Department Store

slum area, you know. Way up across from the pawnshops. They sold a lot of notions and potions and good luck charms. That's how they stayed in business, selling a lot of shit that's gonna make you have good luck. And you know how superstitious our black folks was, they flocked up in there buying all that crazy shit. Some magic, super good luck powder – throw it on the floor, throw another pinch over your shoulder, you supposed to have good luck. Old people just so foolish, they bought it.

Elvis Presley used to stay up on Linden, on Linden right across from Lee School. You know, he stayed in a black neighborhood. And he had an old motorcycle, and he used to ride around on his old motorcycle. And he had a guitar, and he used to sit on the porch – real live, what you call country yokel. He sit on the porch over there on Linden, he sit over there and play his old guitar – he was mostly a country and western dude, you know. He always used to hang around Church's Park when cats was rehearsing and singing and things. He used to come and play his little guitar and listen. He loved black music. His emergence as a star came mostly because of his association around black musicians and his interpretations of how it's supposed to sound.

Robert Henry was the kingpin down there, he ran things, you know. When Elvis was looking for a place to start somewhere, he confronted Robert Henry to give him a helping hand. And Robert Henry, at that particular time, didn't know nothing about managing no white boy. Robert Henry turned him over to Sun (Records), let Sam Phillips deal with him. And Sam Phillips, in turn, most of his artists were black. White stations wouldn't even play his songs cause they say it sound too black. Well, this is where he came from, and this is the kind of music he was accustomed to, so he couldn't do any better than to be sort of a white black entertainer.

He never forget where he started his shit from. When he first started getting big, like he'd come down to Lansky Brothers and walk up and down Beale Street, and fool around down there, hang around down there, get his picture took, you know. People had a whole lot of affection for him simply because of the type of character he had. He was a milk drinker; he's a, excuse the expression, he's a habitual cocaine snorter, but very few people know about that, you know. But they projected an image of him as being a sweet milk drinker, donut eater, Mister Goodfellow, you know.



Robert Henry with a picture of himself. Henry ran a number of pool halls and joints and was known as "The Mayor of Beale Street."

Beale Street, you know, like they tried their damndest to revive it, then they came up with this urban renewal situation. Some of the buildings is kind of condemned and things. They give them an opportunity to renovate them, to try to upgrade them – that's how Robert Henry came into that pool hall over there. They renovated one section of Beale Street. But the other section, the Palace Theatre, there was a long controversy about tearing

it down, because it has meant so much. It had launched careers, you know. Just think, that's where B. B. King came from, that's where Little Milton came from, that's where Bobby Bland came from, that's where Muddy Waters came from. All these cats started right down there, man. There was another cat named Bilbo Brown. And he had a little traveling troupe called Bilbo's Brown Skin Follies. Man, that was a real live show to see. It was Las Vegas style on the black side. All this went on at the Palace Theatre. And when they tore the Palace down, ah, well, things just started to decay.

When the new generation '50s children – kids born in the '50s and early '60s – when they started growing up, well, hey, their legacy from Beale Street is practically nonexistent. I would love to see it revived, but I doubt very seriously – because you got to capture that magic. There was kind of a magical situation down there. And, man, was it beautiful. It's hard to explain, it's just one of those things.

Right around when the Civil Rights Acts was passed, black people started going to other shows and they scattered around and stopped really patronizing, you know, their roots where they came from. That had a whole lot to do with the downfall of Beale. Because it would have been very easy, it would have been just as economically feasible for them to renovate the buildings as to tear it down. It cost a whole lot of money to tear down a building. So they tore down those buildings, they could have just leave them and refix them. But some Harvard brainchild thought up he's gonna make it a blue light district, then it's gonna be a red light district and then they done had a thousand different propositions and plans about what it's supposed to be and what they're gonna make out of it. And none of it came true. And from the way it looks, it's gonna be in the planning stage for the next five or ten years before they do anything down there.

They been squabbling about it now ever since they tore the buildings down. And this has been four years now. The Federal Government allowed them some money and they bought the joints out. And they relocated all the people, gave em severance allowance and things. When the federal government stepped in and did their thing, there wasn't shit to be said about it. What you gonna do about it, you know? You got to sit back and accept it, because that's what time it was. Uncle Sam, they declared Beale Street a shrine, wasn't nothing to be done about it, just keep it as a shrine. □



Children playing at the intersection of Turley and Linden, with Beale Street in the distance

FIXING TO DIE

*I'm looking funny in my eyes
and I believe I'm fixing to die,
believe I'm fixing to die.
I don't mind dying,
but I hate to leave my children crying.*

*Just as sure we living today,
so we born to die.
I don't mind dying,
but I hate to leave my children crying.*

*Your mother treated me, children,
like I was her baby child.
That's why I would try so hard
to make it back home to die.*

*Look over yonder, on the burying ground,
yonder stand 10,000 standing,
standing to see them let me down.*

*Mother take my children back,
before they let me down,
I don't need them standing crying,
on that burying ground.*

— Booker White



JAZZ LITERATURE

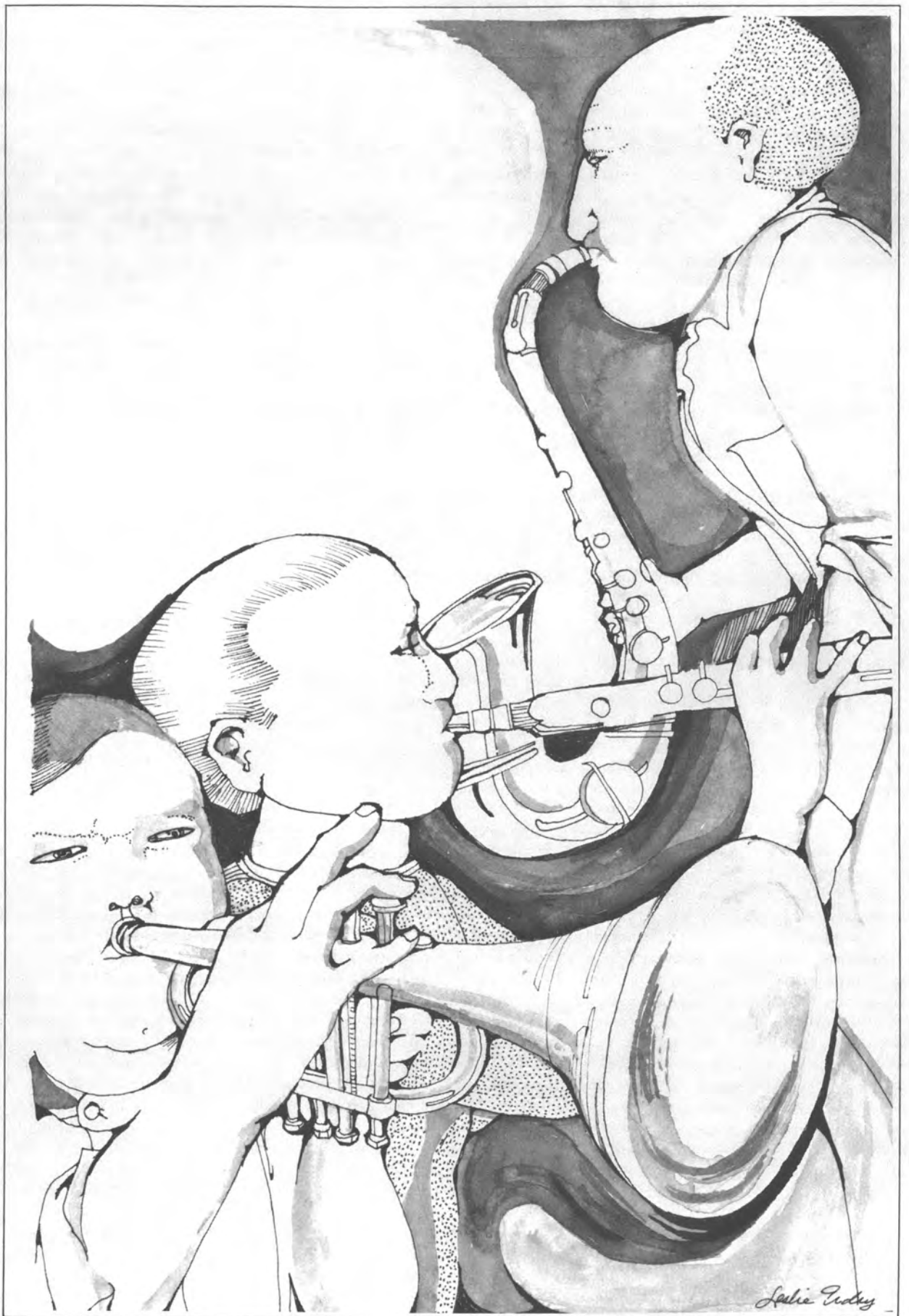
by Jason Berry

JAZZ IS A MUSIC, jazz is a people, jazz is all the people who make the music and then those who cherish it. Jazz is an awareness of what it took to make the music, its history, a magic evolution of special sounds, from the haunted blues of Robert Johnson to the mystical saxophone of John Coltrane. Jazz is a milieu of dances that have their own contiguous history with jazz, of colors you remember in certain clubs, of marijuana and alcohol, of religious roots and raucous bohemia.

Jazz milieu is legends that are tragic: the great Charlie Parker, only 34, his stomach afire with ulcers, saxophone gone and talent depleted, dying on the rug of a European baroness' palatial Manhattan apartment. And legends that rise to myth: the odyssey of Louis Armstrong; the elegance of Duke Ellington; the thunderous cornet of Buddy Bolden, grandfather of the art form, who died in a Louisiana asylum and never recorded.

Jazz is also a language. Or, better put, a specialized use of English in the United States has grown up around the culture of jazz. But the actual vocabulary of jazz stems from oral traditions of Southern blacks – the spirituals and work songs – and it manifests itself in the hip argot of city streets, in the slang and often coded terms which circulate among musicians themselves, a vocabulary any aficionado or serious critic better know. Jazz language ripples out of the radio and its cadences are heard each Sunday in black churches.

Illustrations by Leslie Udry



Leslie Udry

More than this, the actual rhythms of the music, the special arrangement of musical *sounds*, have exerted an enormous influence on American literature in the twentieth century. There is a rich history of jazz woven into the language of poetry, fiction and drama. Much of the oral history by which the music has been chronicled is actually profoundly musical literature. In 1938, the historian Alan Lomax sat Jelly Roll Morton down at a piano in the Smithsonian and taped hours of his reflections about his life and early jazz years. The 12-record set which came out of those sessions is a major source of information in early jazz history. The book, which was finally published in 1950, nine years after Morton's death, is generally considered a classic in jazz history. But *Mister Jelly Roll* is more than that; it is also a terrific story, fictionalized in parts by Morton's outrageous embellishments. Lomax, who also recorded remembrances of Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie and others, says he "came to realize that what these people had to say and their way of saying it was as good as their songs. Editing aimed to transfer the surge of speech into the quieter flow of type could, I found, sometimes produce prose as gracefully and finely-tuned as the best of written literature." Three other musicians in particular — Sidney Bechet, Bunk Johnson and Louis Armstrong — have produced major autobiographical literature based on the rhythmic speech patterns of the black oral tradition and on imagery drawn from the *sounds* of a cultural milieu too few literary critics have examined.

In a strict, technical sense, Jazz Literature is autobiographical, but I believe it is a genre of its own, a distinctive category of literary composition, and as such the language should *speak* to us in a way we are not accustomed to reading, but should have familiarity in hearing. Some American novels which have heretofore been called "lyrical," "musically influenced," or "black," are more accurately called Jazz Literature: *Cane* by Jean Toomer; *System of Dante's Hell* by LeRoi Jones; and, of course, Ralph Ellison's powerful classic, *Invisible Man*.

Jazz was the heritage Louis Armstrong personally wrote about on his own typewriter in the memoir *Satchmo* — published in 1954, when *On the Road* was written but still unpublished, and Jack Kerouac was roaring across Ameri-

ca, searching for the jazz-inspired prose which soon became his hallmark. Jazz forged a friendship between poet Kenneth Rexroth and Charlie Parker, united by its shared culture the late great Coltrane and the young black poet Michael Harper. Jazz is the rhythmic foundation of Albert Murray's award-winning 1974 novel, *Train Whistle Guitar*.

Other books, too, from the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s through the present, suggest the ongoing dialogue between jazz and the written word: *God's Trombones*; *Weary Blues*; *Banjo*; *Libretto for the Republic of Liberia*; *Hear Me Talking To Ya*; *Treat it Gentle*; *Dear John, Dear Coltrane*; *Black Blues and Shiny Songs* . . .

Jazz then, both as music and milieu, is one high expression of culture in America. Yet, for all of the impact the music has had on national life, the state of letters today (i.e., *white* letters) displays a dreadful ignorance of Jazz Literature, of its meaning as a genre, and of the remarkable statement on democracy contained within the broad flow of this literary tradition.

The problem emerges all the more clearly in the way critics classify "Black Literature" — a ridiculous term. By such logic, *Invisible Man*, a polyrhythmic novel reflecting folk and jazz culture, is lumped together under the same rubric with the searing realism of *Native Son*. If such rigid classifications were applied across the board, the works of Walt Whitman and Ernest Hemingway should be simply rendered "White Literature" — and Hemingway, who detested Whitman, would probably turn over in his Idaho grave.

It's time to expand traditional notions of literary classification and broaden the boundaries of criticism and literary history to include those works with roots deep in the oral and musical patterns of Afro-American life. For years the academic establishment has had an ordered methodology for assessing literature. One learned the craft of criticism by reading Coleridge, Wordsworth, Eliot, Pound, and latterly Wilson, Cowley, Frye, Tate, Brooks, Ransom and others. To date, the standards of criticism are dictated by classical concepts of grammar, diction, syntax, themes and recognizable styles.

Any study of literature must inevitably confront certain facts about the writer. That Faulkner lived in a rural province, heard its homespun spoken

rhythms, and was privy to its lore is elemental to understanding his work. But a study of music is qualitatively different. We may begin with the essential environmental data of, say, Louis Armstrong's life, and try to recapitulate the shaping influences of his New Orleans apprenticeship, but still something eludes us. Though great musicians create from sounds of other musicians and natural sounds they hear in the world, the essence of their music is drawn from a private, inner sound, a studio of pitch and tempo and timbres, determined by the artistic discipline in which it resides. This personal sense of *sound* is a major force in the literature produced by black musicians.

II

*God's body's got a soul,
Bodies like to roll the soul,
Cant blame God if we dont roll,
Come, brother, roll, roll!*

— Jean Toomer

In 1922, 22-year-old Louis Armstrong left New Orleans to join the band of his mentor, King Oliver, in Chicago. Armstrong's departure was symbolic as well as personal, for in him the ensemble tradition of early New Orleans jazz exported its most brilliant player to the urban North, drawing the curtain on New Orleans' great jazz renaissance begun at the turn of the century. By 1925 Armstrong was on his own, cutting now-classic records; he soon became the rage of New York clubs each time he came to town.

For all his brilliance, Armstrong was but one of many gifted artists who gravitated to Harlem during the 1920s, when that neighborhood emerged as a city-within-a-city. As if his stunning revolutionary horn play were not enough, he took the jazz trumpet and used it to sing, instrumentally, to the accompaniment of blues singers like Bessie Smith, fusing the lyrical and instrumental tradition of Southern music that was spreading, through recording studios, to

black folk transplanted in the urban North, a renewal of their Southern heritage.

At the same time musical strains were merging, there was in Harlem heavy traffic between musicians and novelists and poets and dancers. Black writers began to produce plays for New York audiences. Alaine Locke edited an influential book called *The New Negro*, which celebrated the emergent black cultural movement. Black musical dramas also appeared, like William Grant Still's three-movement cantata, *Levee Land*. James Weldon Johnson, author of the musically poetic work, *God's Trombones*, wrote the Negro National Anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," and worked on musical scores for the stage with Langston Hughes. Music had become a force now working its way into the literary ferment of the Harlem awakening.

The Southern tradition of black music served as the literary foundation for much of the poetry and theatre of Langston Hughes. His important 1927 collection, *Weary Blues*, was an affirmation of the black folk culture. And in the oral tradition both of his race and Anglo-Saxon verse in general, Hughes took to the road in the 1930s and traveled through the South, reading to black audiences his verse drawn from the songs and gospel shouts they knew so well. Several years earlier, Jean Toomer, a fair-skinned black of diverse ethnic backgrounds, abandoned academia in the North for a brief stint in a small school in Sparta, Georgia. Toomer's discovery of the Southern folk culture reached high eloquence in his 1923 book, *Cane*, which follows in the tradition of polyrhythmic music: part narrative and part verse. *Cane's* beautiful, often haunting lyricism is something of an anomaly in the history of the novel; many critics question whether it is a novel at all. In a letter to *The Liberator* magazine, Toomer explained the influences which converged on him and led to the writing of the work:

From my own point of view, I am naturally and inevitably an American. I have strived for a spiritual fusion analagous to the fact of racial intermingling. Without denying a single element in me, with no desire to subdue one to the other, I have sought to let them live in harmony. Within the last two or three years, however, my growing need for artistic ex-

pression has pulled me deeper and deeper into the Negro group. A visit to Georgia last fall was the starting point of almost everything of worth that I have done. I heard folk-songs come from the lips of Negro peasants. I saw the rich dusk beauty that I had heard many false accounts about, of which til then I was somewhat skeptical. And a deep part of my own nature, a part I had repressed, sprang suddenly to life and responded to them. Now, I cannot conceive of myself as aloof and separated. My point of view has not changed; it has deepened, it has widened.

The Harlem writers celebrated the beauty of blackness during a decade when whites began to notice their work. Claude McKay's 1929 novel, *Banjo*, set in the teeming international port of Marseilles, draws together a Caribbean, Senegalese and American black from the South. When one man questions the title character's love of instrument, he affirms the folk tradition.

"Banjo! That's what you play?" exclaimed Goosey.

"Sure that's what I play," replied Banjo. "Don't you like it?"

"No. Banjo is bondage. It's the instrument of slavery. Banjo is Dixie. Dixie is the land of cotton and massa and black mammy. We colored folks have got to get away from all that in these enlightened, progressive days. Let us play piano and violin, harp and flute. Let the white folks play the banjo if they want to keep remembering all the black Joes singing and the hell they made them live in."

"That ain't got nothing to do with me, nigger," replied Banjo. "I play that theah instrument becuz I likes it. I don't play no black Joe hymns. I play lively tunes. All that you talking about slavery and bondage ain't got nothing to do with our starting up a li'l orchestra."

In fostering the dignity of Southern folk life, Toomer, Hughes, McKay* and

* The influences of folk life and music were only one strand of the Harlem outpourings. McKay and Hughes in particular wrote many poems of a political and social nature, which are not Jazz Literature.

others were celebrating a dualistic culture built on both oral traditions which had endured since the earliest days of slavery and the profound musical life which flourished as ex-slaves migrated off plantations across the South and into the cities in the days after Reconstruction.

The Harlem Renaissance died quickly after the 1929 Stock Market crash. As the Depression of the 1930s set in, many musicians were suddenly out of work. Black writers who in the past had depended on white publishers and readers found it hard to sell their work. And jazz music changed. The tight ensemble tradition of New Orleans jazz became popularized over the radio by orchestral interpretations in the Swing Era. The Big Bands' music was built on the Southern idiom, but it watered down the music significantly. Hot jazz gave way to more dreamy croonings, a sentimental jazz more oriented to a growing audience of melancholy white listeners.

III

As a form, the blues is an autobiographical chronicle of personal catastrophe expressed lyrically.

—Ralph Ellison

As the Harlem Renaissance ebbed, a full-fledged literary movement arose in the white South. In 1922, the year Louis Armstrong left for Chicago, a group of well-bred, well-read young men in Nashville began a small literary magazine called *The Fugitive*, and called themselves the Agrarians because of their opposition to materialism and industrialization and their ties to some of the ways of the Antebellum South. The group included Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren and John Crowe Ransom. It is revealing of the Agrarian perspective that in their famous book of essays, *I'll Take My Stand*, Ransom wrote of the Old South:

It was a kindly society, yet a realistic one; for it was a failure if it

could not be said that people were for the most part in their right places. Slavery was a feature monstrous enough in theory, but, more often than not, humane in practice; and it is impossible to believe that its abolition alone could have effected any great revolution in society.

By 1935, the Agrarians' concern with their own output and the surrounding literary ferment in the South led to the founding of the quarterly *Southern Review* as the principal forum for the "New Critics," as they were then called.

The critical thought developed by Tate, Ransom, Warren, R. P. Blackmur and Cleanth Brooks focused on each literary work as a "thing-in-itself," having its own special language and inherent value. They called for close textual analysis of the work at hand. In 1941 Ransom published *The New Criticism*, which among other things, compared the Southern critical position then emerging to a similar development in England, especially as articulated by T. S. Eliot.

T. S. Eliot was of pivotal importance to the New Critics. If *The Waste Land*, published in 1922, the year *The Fugitive* was founded, served as a moral statement of literature — protesting the decay of traditional values wiped away by the Great War — Eliot's larger cultural philosophy, as expressed in his critical essays, spoke to the concerns of the New Critics. In one of his most famous essays, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), Eliot argued that tradition was much more than the simple handing down of ideas from one generation to the next.

...the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as the temporal and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what

makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity.

(Selected Essays of T. S. Eliot, 1964 edition, Harcourt Brace & World)

The literary concerns of the New Critics stemmed directly from the Anglo-Saxon tradition Eliot exalted. But there was a problem in the South, for the regional literature up to the Great War was sentimental and shallow, reflecting the spurious, pseudo-classical culture of the antebellum South, with its cornerstone of racial paternalism. Tate himself wrote that the Old South's culture revealed its lack of depth by failing to produce a serious body of literature. Coming out of such a meritless literary tradition, it was perhaps only natural that the New Critics, recognizing the worth of their own poetry, should attach themselves to the tradition of English literature by publishing weighty articles filled with references to the Greeks, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Eliot and his British contemporaries.

Significantly, the New Critics ignored the cultural heritage of the "other" South. They did not hear the blues, or if they did, probably viewed it as a peasant perversion. Where Eliot called for a tradition built on "the whole of the literature of [one's] own country," the Agrarians were concerned only with the literature of the white race, a conservative-elitist mentality that distorted literary criticism for 40 years. The Harlem Renaissance could be conveniently regarded by Allen Tate as the product of one of those "cosmopolitan and eclectic groups of the East" — despite the fact that its roots lay in the Agrarians' own region and that many of the Harlem Renaissance writers were profoundly influenced by the same works as the Agrarians.

Take, for example, Ralph Ellison. In 1935, the same year Tate's *Southern Review* began, a young Negro student at Tuskegee Institute in rural Alabama reacted to T. S. Eliot in a different way. Ralph Ellison had grown up in the colorful frontier culture of Oklahoma City, which he described in *Shadow and Act* as filled with "gamblers and scholars, jazz musicians and scientists, Negro cowboys and soldiers from the Spanish-American and First World Wars, movie stars and stunt men."

Ellison had studied the trumpet as a boy; at the same time, an early school-

teacher had introduced him to Negro history and "from her I'd learned of the New Negro movement of the twenties, of Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Claude McKay, James Weldon Johnson and others. They had inspired pride and had given me a closer identification with poetry...but with music so much on my mind it never occurred to me to try to imitate them."

Ellison had gone to Tuskegee intent on becoming a composer of symphonies. But:

...during my second year, I read The Waste Land and that, although I was then unaware of it, was the real transition to writing...

I was much more under the spell of literature than I realized at the time. Wuthering Heights had caused me agony of unexpressible emotion and the same was true of Jude the Obscure, but The Waste Land seized my mind. I was intrigued by its power to move me while eluding my understanding. Somehow its rhythms were often closer to those of jazz than were those of the Negro poets, and even though I could not understand then, its range of allusion was as mixed and as varied as that of Louis Armstrong. Yet there were its discontinuities, its change of pace and its hidden system of organization which escaped me.

There was nothing to do but look up the references in the footnotes to the poem, and thus began my conscious education in literature.

The influence of the blues was still dominant, however, with the result that Ellison's great novel, *Invisible Man*, is rightly called a "blues odyssey."* Consider, as a frame of reference for understanding that book, Ellison's own interpretation of the blues in Richard Wright's work:

The blues is an impulse to keep the painful details and episodes of a brutal experience alive in one's aching consciousness, to finger its jagged grain, and to transcend it, not by the consolation of philosophy but by squeezing from it a

*The assessment of Albert Murray, distinguished critic of jazz and literature, and author of *Train Whistle Guitar*.

near-tragic, near-comic lyricism. As a form, the blues is an autobiographical chronicle of personal catastrophe expressed lyrically.

The nameless narrator of Ellison's novel keeps alive the pain of his race's struggle by recounting his own travel: like innumerable Southern bluesmen, he rode the rails North to New York and confrontation with black nationalist politics in Harlem; he was ultimately left like the blues lyricist, alone in the end, to tell his tale. The polyrhythmic nature of Ellison's prose is analagous to jazz and reflective of *The Waste Land's* influence in the shifting tones, the lyrical passages and evocations of folk humor, counterposed with the powerful streak of realism and racial introspection.

In accepting the National Book Award in 1952 for *Invisible Man*, Ellison discussed the influence of his racial heritage as applicable to Anglo-Saxon

literary tradition.

Thus to see America with an awareness of its rich diversity and its almost magical fluidity and freedom, I was forced to conceive of a novel unburdened by the narrow naturalism which has led, after so many triumphs, to the final and unrelieved despair which marks so much of our current fiction. I was to dream of a prose which was flexible, and swift as American change is swift, confronting the inequalities and brutalities of our society forthrightly, but yet thrusting forth its images of hope, human fraternity and individual self-realization. It would use the richness of our speech, the idiomatic expression and the rhetorical flourishes from past periods which are still alive among us.

IV

Mary Warner, honey, you sure was good and I enjoyed you "heep much." But the price got a little too high to pay (law wise).

—Louis Armstrong

As the Agrarians were formulating their critical thought between the World Wars, the seminal school of New Orleans jazz musicians was intent on preserving and spreading the facts about their music and careers for future generations. In 1938, the year Jelly Roll sat down at the Smithsonian piano to tell his tale to Lomax, Louis Armstrong gave a tip to jazz scholars Frederic Ramsey and Bill Russell as to the whereabouts of old

FORM C
TEXT OF INTERVIEW (UNEDITED)

FOLKLORE
NEW YORK

STATE New York
NAME OF WORKER Ralph Ellison
ADDRESS 470 West 150th Street, Manhattan
DATE June 14th, 1938
SUBJECT Harlem

I hope to God to kill me if this aint the truth. All you got to do is go down to Florence, South Carolina and ask most anybody you meet and they'll tell you its the truth.

Florence is one of these hard towns on colored folks. You have to stay out of the white folks way; all but Sweet. That the fellow I'm fixing to tell you about. His name was Sweet-the-monkey. I done forgot his real name, I caint remember it. But that was what everybody called him. He wasn't no big guy. He was just bad. My mother and grandmother used to say he was wicked. He was bad alright. He was one sucker who didn't give a dam about the crackers. Fact is, they got so they stayed out of his way. I caint never remember hear tell of any them crackers bothering that guy. He used to give em trouble all over the place and all they could do about it was to give the rest of us hell.

It was this way: Sweet could make hisself invisible. You don't believe it? Well here's how he done it. Sweet-the-monkey cut open a black cat and took

out its heart. Climbed up a tree backwards and cursed God. After that he could do anything. The white folks would wake up in the morning and find their stuff gone. He cleaned out the stores. He cleaned up the houses. Hell, he even cleaned out the dam bank! He was the boldest black sonofabitch ever been down that way. And couldn't nobody do nothing to him. Be-cause they couldn't never see im when he done it. He didn't need the money. Fact is, most of the time he broke into places he wouldn't take nothing. Lots a times he just did it to show 'em he could. Hell, he had everybody in that lil old town scaird as hell; black folks and white folks.

The white folks started trying to catch Sweet. Well, they didn't have no luck. Theyd catch 'im standing in front of the eating joints and put the handcuffs on im and take im down to the jail. You know what that sucker would do? The police would come up and say: "Come on Sweet" and he'd say "Youall want me?" and they'd put the hand-

cuffs on im and start leading im away. He'd go with em a little piece; Sho, just like he was going. Then all of a sudden he would turn hisself invisible and disappear. The police wouldn't have nothing but the handcuffs. They couldn't do a thing with that Sweet-the-monkey. Just before I come up this way they was all trying to trap im. They didn't have much luck. Once they found a place he'd looted with footprints leading away from it and they decided to try and trap im. This was about sun up and they followed his footprints all that day. They followed them till sundown when he come partly visible. It was red and the sun was shining on the trees and they waited till they saw his shadow. That was the last of the Sweet-the-monkey. They never did find his body and right after that I come up here. That was bout five years ago. My brother was down there last year and they said they think Sweet done come back. But they caint be sho because he wont let hisself be seen.

Bunk Johnson. A popular New Orleans trumpet man of the 1920s, Bunk was doing field work in New Iberia, Louisiana. His teeth had rotted out and he didn't even own a horn. Money was raised, both for a horn and dental work. Bunk came back to life and his recordings established a sound link in jazz history, as his play derived from that of the legendary Buddy Bolden, who never recorded.

On June 12, 1942, Bunk reminisced for critic Ralph Gleason. Like Lomax, Gleason was sensitive to Bunk's spoken rhythms and in transcribing the memoir arranged the words like music to dramatize their place within the oral tradition of the African call-and-response pattern, slave work songs and spirituals. The result is folk poetry, as the section on his embellished influence over young Armstrong illustrates:

*Well, then I would show him and
show him til he begin
Understandin' me real good.
It was a short time before Louis
could play the blues.
And he learned to play the blues.
And I learn him how to play
Ball the Jack,
I learn him how to play Ball
the Jack,
I learn him how to play Didn't
He Ramble
Then I learn him how to play
Didn't He Ramble
And then the music become easy
to him –
By head, by ear
And Louis could play anything
that he could whistle.*

As the Second World War unfolded, with jazz players now finding work in clubs frequented by GIs on leave, jazz reporters like Ramsey, Russell, Nat Hentoff and Leonard Feather began interviewing players and writing the first histories of the music, based on oral revelations. Meanwhile, the music itself was undergoing a major transformation.

In the middle 1940s, Charlie Parker, a driving young saxophonist out of Kansas City, began exploring new jazz sounds, long rippling reaches of sound, pulsing the blues idiom into rich new heights. With Dizzy Gillespie's trumpet and Thelonious Monk's unorthodox piano, be-bop music forged into the jazz consciousness, shattering the reign of swing, opening new vistas of sound, expanding the language of jazz. The be-bop players dressed with casual

disregard for social propriety, and the spoken language of the jazz culture soon reflected their radical impact. Ross Russell writes in his biography of Parker:

Money was gold. Eyes meant willingness or enthusiasm. A pad was a bed, therefore someone's room or apartment. Old jazzmen's expressions, once in, were now out, and hopelessly dated the speaker. As root ideas they gave way to verbal improvisations, in the same way that old tunes served as armatures for bop compositions (A Dizzy Atmosphere from I Got Rhythm). Etymology remained reasonably straightforward. The intent was always the same: to exclude the uninitiated, to confound the square, to strengthen the inner community. Out of the world became gone, shorter and more allusive. Blow your top became flip your wig, leading to flipped, flipped out, wigged, wig, and wiggy...

Like the new music, the new linguistics revolved around fixed points and established ideas. Like the music, it was a language in motion, subtly changing from day to day, with ever-fresh coinages and connotations, subject to common concepts and needs.

The decade of the 1950s saw a great cultural bridge built between the language of jazz and white American literature. The Beats – particularly Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg – wrote novels and poems incorporating the hip idiom into their works. The frenetic bohemian lives of the writers always found them drawn back to be-bop music. Charlie Parker, who died in 1955 just as Kerouac and Ginsberg were emerging as important writers, became a tragic legend; his music exerted a profound influence on the Beats.

It is not possible in this space to discuss the myriad evocations of jazz in Beat literature of the '50s, so let us briefly hear Jack Kerouac, whose words Ginsberg called "bop prosody." His second novel, *On The Road*, brought him immediate fame after its 1956 publication. A subsequent novel, *The Subterraneans* (1958), was written during a speed-induced three-day stretch; a tale of the San Francisco underground, it recounts the love affair of the nar-

rator (in fact Kerouac) and a black woman named Mardou Fox. Early in the book, they visit a jazz club.

...and up on the stand Bird Parker with solemn eyes who'd been busted fairly recently and now had returned to a kind of bop dead Frisco, but had just discovered or been told about the Red Drum, the great new generation gang wailing and gathering there, so here he was on the stand, examining them with his eyes as he blew his now-settled-down-into-regulated design "crazy" notes – blew the booming drums, the high ceiling...

...to hear Bird, whom I saw distinctly digging Mardou several times also myself directly into my eye looking to search if really I was that great writer I thought myself to be as if he knew my thoughts and ambitions or remembered me from other night clubs and other coasts, other Chicagos – not a challenging look but the king and founder of the bop generation at least the sound of it in digging his audience digging his eyes, the secret eyes him-watching, as he just pursed his lips and let great lungs and immortal fingers work, his eyes separate and interested and humane, the kindest jazz musician there could be while being and therefore naturally the greatest....

Like Parker's sax, the language of *The Subterraneans* moves rapidly, descends to re-ascend, his repetitions force new sound openings in words that convey the spirit of the milieu shared by the Beats and the Bops. In his later book of poetry, *Mexico City Blues*, Kerouac devoted a poem to Parker. Kerouac read some of his verse to the accompaniment of jazz in San Francisco and New York clubs, he recorded some of his literature on LPs, and he lived a life as intensely consuming as Parker's consumption of booze and pills and pot, bursting through marriages and affairs, struggling constantly for the next burst of living beyond the smoky layers of a mutual yearning to transcend. Bird died at 34, Kerouac at 52.

Some critics call the Beats romantic, but it's not a serene or pastoral romanticism, rather a spiritual rebellion

against the conformities of the 1950s, a shout against the deadening of cultural life under the technology of corporate America. The Beats used their own frenetic lives to embody protest against the wasteland of the 1950s. In this sense they differed from Bird and Dizzy and the be-bop jazzmen; although their music was a radical stylistic departure, they were still creating music more than protesting. The Beats augmented the music of the Be-Bops with booze, pills, pot, Zen, and mystical ideas; jazz provided the stylistic undercurrent for their orchestration of words.

While Kerouac and the Beats surged across cultural barriers to immerse themselves in the idioms of jazz, Louis Armstrong, now in his 50s, began to write. Although he had a grade-school education, Louis read well and enjoyed books. He spoke in a naturally cadenced voice that still stands as a leitmotif through many records. Armstrong, a self-taught typist, left a trail of hundreds of letters to friends, fans, kin and jazz critics; in them he tried to imbue stress sounds of his music through the medium of the written word. One letter, written at the behest of biographers, reflects on his 1931 arrest outside a Los Angeles jazz club for possession of marijuana and ends with a vintage defense of the now-popular herb. Note the sounds.

As we always used to say, gage is more of a medicine than a dope. But with all the riggermaroo going on, no one can do anything about it. After all, the vipers in my haydays are way up there in age – too old to suffer those drastic penalties. So we had to put it down. But if we all get as old as Methusala our memories will always be of lots of beauty and warmth from gage. Well, that was my life and I don't feel ashamed at all. Mary Warner, honey, you sure was good and I enjoyed you "heep much." But the price got a little too high to pay (law wise). At first you was a "misdomeanor." But as the years rolled on you lost your misdo and got meanor and meanor. (Jailhousely speaking.)

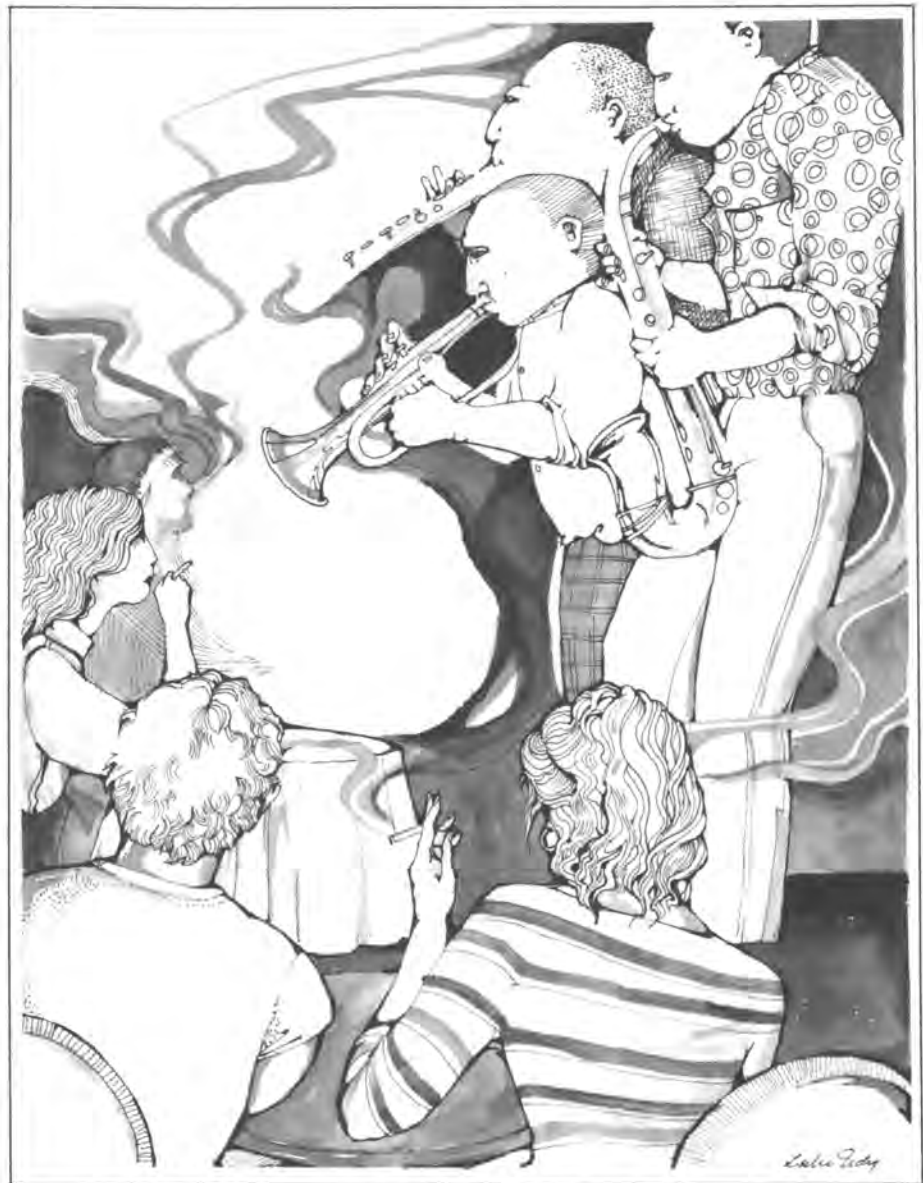
Armstrong produced two books which bore his name as author. *Swing That Music*, a ghosted number published in 1939 for publicity purposes, and

Satchmo: My Life in New Orleans (1954), a vivid recollection of early New Orleans jazz which recounts in detail Louis' life up until his 1922 reunion with King Oliver in Chicago.

Louis also wrote privately, for his own enjoyment. I recently interviewed Dizzy Gillespie, who told this story. "I went to see him one time, he was in the hospital, sick, intensive care, only family to see him. So I went over there,

went up to his room. He was sittin by the window, with light comin down, doin this" – here Dizzy made a hunt-and-peck typing motion with his fingers – "He looked up and saw me, say: 'Gawd-damn, baby, come in heah!' 'What you doin, Louie?' 'Listen, this the introduction: *Chefronda, Chefronda! Come in here and get outa that cold, nothin on you but that skinny nigger!*'"

He was writing an erotic short story.



V

Trane, Coltrane; John Coltrane;
it's tranetime; chase the Trane;
it's a slow dance;
it's the Trane
in Alabama; acknowledgement,
a love supreme,
it's Black trane; black;
I'm black man; I'm black;
I am; I'm a black man –

–From “Brother John,” in
Dear John, Dear Coltrane
by Michael Harper

Jazz literature dramatically expanded in the 1960s. As the struggle for civil rights in the South challenged the white liberal mind and moved North in explosive statements from urban ghettos, so did streams of literary, musical and political statements begin to merge and blend into a cultural poly-rhythm now called the Black Arts Movement, giving rise to what many critics see as an evolving Black Aesthetic. It is essential to understand the evolving Black consciousness of the late 1970s, for herein lies the key to a full awareness of Jazz Literature, and the potential for a communitarian criticism which the tradition itself demands.

In many ways, the message of Martin Luther King was an extension of the oral tradition of the South. His charismatic demands were supported by the network of black churches, and his stirring calls for suffrage and civil rights were cast in the scriptural language of Southern blacks. King himself recognized the difficulty of transposing this message to the urban ghetto, a culture of vast complexities and concentrated anger, with an oral tradition built on different slangs and often irreligious idioms. Malcolm X, by contrast, came out of that culture and spoke directly to what Kimberly Benson calls “the fundamental chaos of violent, urban, ghetto life....”

*Malcolm knew instinctively
and by experience that this chaos
concealed an approach to life,*

*an adaptability in the face of
abuse and painful dues-paying
that created something beautiful
amidst and despite the enveloping
misery – the will and character
to survive. This chaos was akin
to the music of Malcolm's time,
epitomized by the “life-in-death”
lyricism of John Coltrane, which
the fearful took to be cacaphony.
Malcolm went into the bars,
prisons, slums, and streets to
preach the message; he spoke to
the whores, pimps, and hustlers as
well as to the others.*

Malcolm X became a spiritual hero to the generation of black artists who came to maturity in the 1960s. Countless poems are written in his honor, and his name conveys a meaning, the quest for a black cultural consciousness, a liberation embracing the heritage of the African and American. And by this time, the music was soaring, reaching for newer heights by consciously importing African musical rhythms into modern jazz. Coltrane's saxophone spoke of a racial mysticism, and as the violent protests of the urban ghetto spoke politically, the musical revolutions in jazz communicated deepest yearnings of the writers. In 1965, the last year he wrote under his American name, LeRoi Jones, Imamu Baraka said succinctly: “The denial of reality has been institutionalized in America, and any honest man, especially an artist, suffers from it.”

The cultural cause of black artists in the 1960s, as it has endured to the present, is to create a *new* reality, bring to the surface the unwritten legacy of black speech and (very often) set it on paper with the musical quality of jazz/blues. In so doing, the black arts movement has affirmed the dignity of “substandard” English by broadening the cultural heritage of the motherland. In Africa, drums were the basic sound at tribal convocations. Drums duplicated sounds which often were real words. Word and song blended in the drum-beats. The leader of the tribe sang to the beat of the drums, while a chorus, usually female, sang refrains behind him. In Dixieland jazz, a one-two thump of the drum begins the song. A brassy trumpet, playing the lead role, intones, and the reed instruments – sax, flute, clarinet – join in like the chorus.

And so with the new black writers. The role they have taken for themselves

in so many poems is like that of the jazz musician, as a spiritual speaker, a priest or priestess of the culture.

In his book, *Understanding the New Black Poetry: Black Speech and Black Music as Poetic References*, Stephen Henderson extols the present generation of poets and, with a sharp critical savvy, analyzes one potential obstacle:

*In their insistence upon jazz as a
model and inspiration for their
poetry, these writers were and are
confronted with enormous technical
problems, some of which
may be insoluble if they continue
to write that poetry down. For
their model is dynamic, not static,
and although one can suggest
various vocal and musical effects
with typography, an extensive use
of mechanical devices may be
ultimately self-defeating. Thus
Black poets are rediscovering the
resources of their oral traditions
and have occasionally been very
successful with them. Some idea
of that success may be obtained
by listening to Imamu Amiri
Baraka (LeRoi Jones), Larry Neal,
Don L. Lee, Nikki Giovanni, and
Ghylan Kain and the Original Last
Poets. In the meantime, however,
the question of typography is still
quite formidable and still unre-
solved.*

“Poets,” Henderson says, “use Black speech forms consciously because they know that Black people – the mass of us – do not talk like white people. They know that despite the lies and distortions of the minstrels, both ancient and modern, unlearned and academic – and despite all of the critical jargon about ‘ghettoese’ and ‘plantation English,’ there is a complex and rich and powerful and subtle linguistic heritage whose resources have scarcely been touched that they draw upon.”

Jazz Literature, as one strain within the broader movement of black arts, has not been studied seriously by the academic establishment. For the inheritance of the American university form of criticism, even after the wrenching changes of the '60s and rise in Afro-American studies, is still seated in the New Critics' *linguistic* tradition of Anglo-Saxon English. It is not terribly interdisciplinary, as witnessed by the volumes of criticism-of-criticism, ponderous academic debates, old literary

grounds furrowed and retilled to be furrowed again, and much of it is simply abominable in what it says to intelligent readers. The New Critic's strict adherence to a textual analysis renders too many critics helpless when confronted with a polyrhythmic novel or poem that draws on Alabama blues or oral riffs of Harlem.

There are in America two great cultures, two mighty linguistic traditions, the Afro-American and the Anglo-American. In a very real sense, Jazz Literature is the bridge, for the music has been international language for many years now. Today, white academic critics have begun to recognize and acclaim the works of black novelists like Albert Murray, James Allen McPherson, Toni Morrison, Ernest P. Gaines, Alice Walker, Imamu Baraka and others. But the challenge Jazz Literature poses for white scholarship is bi-cultural — a new way of reading and writing about language.

In "The Function of Criticism," T.S. Eliot says that above all a critic must have a very "highly developed sense of fact." Basic questions about a critical standard suggest the need for literary reporting to unearth facts: How deeply rooted a tradition is Jazz Literature? What are its thematic evolutions? What influence has it had on foreign writing, particularly African — and vice versa? To what extent have white writers contributed to this literary genre? How many jazz-inspired works are buried in scattered libraries, out of print and unknown to the average critic? Who are the contemporaries, musically inspired narrators in America yearning for their stories to surface? Not all black writers produce Jazz Literature; which authors were most deeply influenced by which musicians — and who did the musicians read?

Black critics like Stephen Henderson are bringing to the fore facts about Jazz Literature. Who are other critics doing such seminal important work? Why don't they appear more frequently in white-edited literary journals? Beyond the "highly developed sense of fact" which T.S. Eliot emphasized for all critics, Jazz Literature demands a special form of criticism by inviting a synthesis of music and literature in a critical standard, a binding together of the two major language traditions into a self-conscious literary community, and a democratic one at that. □

Jason Berry is the author of Amazing Grace, which chronicles Charles Evers' campaign for governor of Mississippi. He has written for numerous national publications, and last appeared in Southern Exposure in "Long Journey Home," with a profile of the Creole poet, Jack Nocentelli.

JASS

BY JULIA FIELD

*It never came,
The splendid sound
From pain
And grace
And agony.
The sounds of elegant
Strings reverberated:
In stiff collar,
In black coat,
He flowed forth a prelude
With deft tenderness of technique
But the possession of the
Thing never came to be.
It never came at all.
The echo in the velvet hall
Was heard and drew applause
But the thing itself
Never did appear. It never came.
A hollow echo
Of pain resounded,
A hollow echo
Of grace not grace —
Of agony devised.
And faces of the searchers,
Pallid under chandelier,
Were harsh with what
The sound had missed,
Angered that the thing itself
Eluded and evaded them.
They knew it as a breach of power —
The thing, so real, could not
Be mocked nor imitated,
A beauty not to be conjured.*

— from *East of Moonlight*
Red Clay Books
6366 Sharon Hills Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28210



Hog Killing at the Rowland's

Text and Photographs by Jackson Hill

SEPARATED FROM HIS BROTHERS and cornered in the backyard, the pig raises his dull stare to the man with the rifle. At the sharp crack of the .22 – always one shot, always between the eyes – the dying hog drops to its knees. Within seconds another man “sticks him” with a knife and a hot red fountain of blood spurts from the pig’s throat. The man moves quickly, for at this last wound the large animal thrashes and flails its powerful hooves in a final paroxysm of death. As soon as the carcass lies still, a board is tied to its rear legs and the two men drag the dead weight up the hill to where clouds of pungent vapor rise from a vat of water and lime.



On the morning of a killing, Mr. Rowland is in his yard well before dawn, stoking a small fire under the large vat. The mixture of water and lime it contains must be heated to precisely 155 degrees. A pig will not “pick pretty” if the temperature is too high. If placed in too hot a vat, the cadaver becomes rigid and the hair stiffens so that it must be shaved. Years of experience enable Mr. Rowland to simply stick a finger in the steaming liquid and pronounce it correct.



So begins another hog-killing on Dale Rowland's small Carolina Piedmont farm. The 76-year-old Mr. Rowland first slaughtered a pig himself at the age of 10 on his father's farm and has raised them on his own farm for over 60 years. His initial taste of pork came as an infant when a strip of boiled fat meat was tied to his wrist for him to suckle. Today Mr. Rowland says that if he did not eat pork at least once a day, if not twice, he would “perish to death.” And this daily meat must be pork, for Mr. Rowland states bluntly, “Beef will kill you.”

Dale Rowland and his wife, Leone, raised eleven children: to keep their larder full, they slaughtered about 35 hogs each winter – 10,000 pounds of pork. Today, with the children grown and scattered about the country, Mr. Rowland has slowed down some, but he still raises a number of the finest pigs he can manage. “It just won't do to raise trash,” he says emphatically. He is quite proud of the quality and purity of the meat he raises.

The killing of the hogs for home consumption takes place in December or January on “the shrinking of the moon.” According to the Rowlands, to slaughter the animals under “a growing moon” risks hanging up hams that will not cure with lard that will not dry. Also, if the weather is too warm, the meat will rot – the bone marrow turning green – in the three weeks it takes for the curing salt to penetrate. On the other hand, if the weather is so bitterly cold that the meat freezes solid, it won't “take the salt” and will spoil as it thaws.



Shortly after sunrise, Mr. Rowland's brother, several of his sons, and a couple neighbors arrive to help. It becomes quickly evident that all these men have gone through this chore many times. No one snaps any orders, for each man knows his work and goes to it. On many farms, hog-killing is a time for the men folk to bring out whiskey, but Mr. Rowland allows no drinking or cursing here. He says, "I never heard tell of anyone getting hurt at this less they were drunk. Now, I ain't so good myself, but I believe in doing right."

Within minutes of being shot and stuck, the dead hog is lowered with chains into the vat and turned slowly, bobbing about like a trapped white whale. Shortly, the steaming pig is pulled from the vat. Next the men use either knives or the sharp edge of zinc canning lids to scrape the hair off the body. Once cleaned, a cut is made behind the heel strings and the pig is hung head down beneath a set of forks. The suspended animal is then gutted. The liver and lights (lungs), which are used in sausage, are separated from the intestines. The kidneys are thrown to the dogs since "all the poison is in the kidneys."

The intestines are taken into a shed where Leone Rowland, her sister and several neighbor women wait to begin their odorous tasks. The great lengths of gut are trimmed, cut, washed, turned inside out, skinned and washed again to become raw chitlins. The fat meat must be cut into chunks and the lard boiled down. Sausage is made with selected scraps, pepper, sage and salt.

Ask Dale Rowland whether the men or the women have the easier chores and he'll answer, "There ain't nothing easy in it." Leone Rowland mentions that, though the men's work is harder and heavier, the women's work takes longer.



The gutted carcass will hang from the forks until the blood has drained, usually overnight. It is also important that the animal heat dissipate before the meat is carved and packed in salt. Carving must leave the meat "smooth and pretty" so insects won't have any folds to hide in. If bugs do infest the meat, entire hams can be eaten out, leaving nothing but the bone hanging in a hollow casing of skin.

Ten pounds of salt are used for every hundred pounds of pork and a pound of sugar is mixed with every ten pounds of the salt to sweeten the taste. The salted hams, shoulders and side-meat are placed on shelves in the smokehouse to ensure an adequate flow of air during the curing. After the meat has thoroughly "taken the salt," it is washed and coated with a mixture of black pepper and molasses. The meat is edible at this point, but is not considered fully cured until it has hung in the smokehouse some eight or nine months.

As Mr. Rowland tells visitors, "No matter what, we're going to have something to eat." □

SENSATIONAL RELATIVES

*Alexis Krasilovsky
Memphis, Tennessee*

For my brother, Peter

Last time I left
Bill's Twilight Lounge
with a young black poet
whose words hit home
like the shiny gun
that got him on probation
and my sixteen year old brother
who passed for eighteen
and was fascinated by sensationalism,

we were driving up
to the Lorraine motel
to catch the tail end
of King's commemoration
when the police
shone a flashlight
in our faces.
The poet had left.
My brother, I taught
not to talk back
the way I'm talking now
because there's a time and place
for blah blah blah –
the police said I had thirty days
to get my registration changed
to Tennessee.
I thought about mobility.

My brother thought it was a joke,
something he'd seen on TV –
Beale Street's most celebrated gambler's
reply to the police
when told he had 24 hours
to leave town,
"That's OK –
here's eighteen of them back."
He got in his car,
bags already packed,
and drove straight up Highway 51
into Chicago.

We left for New York the next day.
Tennessee was ablaze
with red-bud trees.
Calves roamed the Virginia fields.
My brother pointed out
farmhouse hex signs,

and my cat watched
New Jersey birds
through the windshield.

We knew we were getting home
when we picked up WLIB
"where the Third World comes
together,"
and could finally joke
about the Ku Klux Klan
back on prime-time radio
in Memphis.

And then all I remember
is throwing my arms around my mother
and wearing fancy clothes again
and wanting to get married
and pouring white sugar into tea
and promising my grandmother
I'd never change.

The look in my grandmother's eyes,
dying, but sure
she was keeping on through me,
was the same look I saw
the very next day
on emerging from the subway
into the bright lights of Times Square,
when three white cops
threw a black man
down to the cement,
crowds forming fast
as spittle in their mouths.
One of them
pushed a gun into his back
and he looked at me
and surrendered.

My own sister
must have looked that way
at knifepoint,
demanding forgiveness
while some dude
demanded back
ten dollars
for a blow job
in an alleyway on 42nd Street.

I woke up early this morning
trembling the way she trembled
on the cold Hudson River pier.
I got up and drove towards the Mississippi
flooded with the same tears.

I reached Fayette County,
third poorest county in our country,
and stopped a kid bicycling along the
fields.

I asked if he'd heard of John McFerren.
Or the Fayette County Civic & Welfare
League?

He looked at this white lady
in a car with California plates
and said Ma'am, he didn't know.
He said Ma'am a hundred times.
I said John McFerren was a hero
I'd read about in a book.
I looked at his face
and hurried home.

Now I'm back
diary and diaphragm in place,
"I Am a Man" sign
hanging on a door,
left over from the sixties.
I'm dealing with the same shit,
like watching Greta Garbo on TV
and thinking I have TB.

It's possible God
kicked his foot into my lungs
the way the white man
beat up John McFerren
for registering to vote
in Fayette County.

But nowhere in Fayette County
did I see the pain.
Only spring
crying out in beauty,
roots pushing through hard soil
people talking through the sunset
about catfish struggling on a line.
Catfish didn't register
to swim this brook.

Family Portraits

Photographs by George Mitchell

Joaquin, Texas





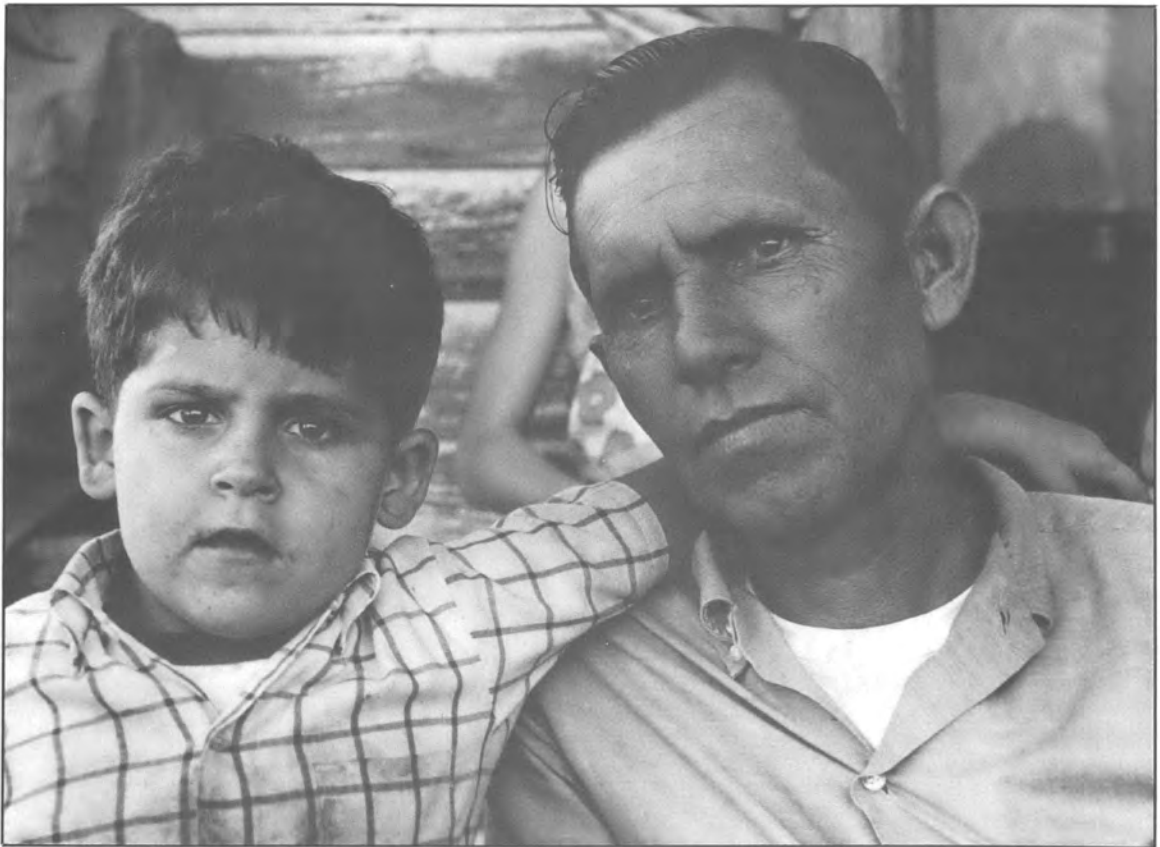
Olivehill, Tennessee



Aberdeen, Mississippi



Arnaudville, Louisiana



*George Mitchell, a free-lance writer and photographer, took these and many more photos of Southerners on a recent trip through the region. He is the author of *Blow My Blues Away* (LSU Press, 1971); "I'm Somebody Important": Young Black Voices From Rural Georgia (University of Illinois Press, 1973); and "Yessir I've Been Here A Long Time": Faces & Voices of Americans Who Have Lived A Century (E. P. Dutton, 1975).*

Yellville, Arkansas





The ERA in Virginia: A Power Playground

by Patricia W. Goodman

If the Equal Rights Amendment is to be ratified by the required 38 states by March, 1979, some of the Southern legislatures will have to reverse their previous rejections and approve it. The struggle in many states — like Virginia — involves intense lobbying in the legislative halls and may well determine the fate of the ERA.

Virginia Network News reporter George Bowles keeps telling ERA lobbyists that Virginia legislators want to see their women wearing crinoline, not carrying picket signs. "It's militancy that's killing ERA in the South," he says. And in the wake of the arrests of two ERA lobbyists in Richmond last February, those not in tune with events might agree. But a closer look at how the ERA has been bandied about in the cloakrooms shows that the problem lies with the legislators themselves.

In Virginia, as in many of the other 15 states which have not passed the ERA, the battle has less to do with the merits of equal rights for women than with the wheeling and dealing of legislators who use their votes to gain greater power in other fights. Every year since 1973, the struggle between the pro-ERA forces and captains of the legislature has intensified. It culminated finally in February, 1978, with the first arrests connected with the ERA debate since the amendment was originally introduced in Congress in 1923.

The chief obstacle to passage in Virginia is a committee in each house of the legislature which must approve any proposed constitutional amendment before the entire legislature votes on it. Called the Privileges and Election (P&E) Committee, its members in each house are senior legislators with general-

ly secure positions in their home districts. By using their capacity to keep the ERA off the floor — and thus sparing other legislators from embroilment in the controversy — the members of the P&E Committee can wield even greater influence among their colleagues. Some members have used their position to negotiate with other legislators on issues as remote as the legalizing of parimutuel gambling.

The architect of this strategy, and until recently, its most skilled practitioner, is James M. Thomson, the brother-in-law of US Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr. Thomson began serving in the House of Delegates in 1956, and by 1973, when the ERA first came up, he chaired the P&E Committee, served as majority leader for the House, and was generally known as the engineer of the Byrd machine in the legislature. Both pros and antis on the ERA issue fingered Thomson as the key figure in blocking and eventually killing the ERA each year.

The dapper Thomson reveled in the controversy, wielding his power over the powerless feminists. His Alexandria constituents lobbied hard for ratification, but Thomson stood firm. Then, in 1975, using a plan developed by Marianne Fowler, one of Thomson's colleagues on the city Democratic Committee, a small band of feminists targeted seven of the city's 31 pre-

cincts in an effort to unseat him during the primary. While the feminists won overwhelmingly in six of the seven precincts, Thomson received enough support in other precincts to win the election. Bolstered by his triumph, Thomson once again led the ERA to defeat in committee in 1976, causing Virginia to share with Mississippi the dubious honor of never allowing a floor vote on the amendment.

In the Senate, P&E chair Omer Hirst, who favors ratification, wields less power than Thomson, and the ratification effort there has been less flamboyant. Convinced in 1977 that the ERA could be ratified by the full Senate, Hirst persuaded his colleagues to discharge ERA from P&E to the Senate floor when the committee defeated it 8-7. Supporters were jubilant. Finally a floor vote was at hand, and all counts showed the necessary 21 votes in the "pro" column. Then, in what is becoming a recurring theme in the national ratification effort, Senator A. Joe Canada, who had campaigned on a pro-ERA platform, switched his vote, leaving the total one vote shy of Senate ratification.

Jubilation gave way to rage.

Rumors persisted that Canada, seeking the Republican lieutenant gubernatorial nomination, and Senator J. Marshall Coleman, contender for the Republican attorney general nomination, received pledges of support from conservative groups in exchange for nay votes on ERA. Both men held moderately progressive records, but such an offer would no doubt have appeal. Coleman, who remained loyal to ERA, and Canada were both nominated. Campaign disclosure forms show heavy conservative backing for Canada, including a \$5,000 contribution from the Santa Monica, California-based Citizens for the Republic, headed by Ronald Reagan.

During the general election, ERA opponents rallied around Canada, but he made few references to his ERA vote. He babbled endlessly throughout the summer and fall of 1977 about the dangers of the Panama Canal treaties to Virginia citizens, a tactic that brought ridicule from Democratic Party regulars across the state. His Democratic opponent, Charles S. "Chuck" Robb, son-in-law of former President Johnson, smiled benignly each time it came up. "I don't think the Virginia lieutenant governor,"

Robb would say, "will have a decisive vote on that issue."

Feminists were not amused by Canada's rhetoric. Mounting evidence shows the ERA has been used by the far right across the country as an organizing tool for other issues. Canada's injection of the treaty into the 1977 Virginia race after receiving the Reagan money is viewed by many as a right-wing effort to build early public opposition to the treaties that were later ratified. Canada, of course, was the ultimate victim because he lost the race to Robb by an 8.5 percent margin as enraged feminists around the state denounced and voted against him. He stands to lose his state senate seat in 1979 in the strongly pro-ERA district of Virginia Beach.

Canada's duplicity and the approaching March, 1979, deadline politicized ERA supporters in Virginia. The Alexandria group that had challenged Thomson in 1975 began organizing a city-wide campaign for the fall election. Strategist Marianne Fowler formed a state-wide group, Virginians for the ERA Political Action Committee (VERA-PAC) to run similar projects in targeted legislative races. Meanwhile, the Virginia National Organization for Women organized an ERA Caravan, based on the winning Indiana formula, to marshal support for pro-ERA candidates. NOW state coordinator Jean Marshall Clarke and Fowler soon realized that both groups had similar goals, and the two groups joined forces by mid-March, 1977. These two groups organized political action committees around the state to work for pro-ERA candidates in the House of Delegates races. The impact of this organizing program is best seen in Lexington. There the Rockbridge ERA, organized in early May, came within 600 votes of unseating a 15-year veteran who later resigned, paving the way for his pro-ERA opponent to capture his seat in the 1978 special election.

Member organizations of the Virginia ERA Ratification Council, a statewide coalition, stepped up their educational programs, sending speakers to churches, colleges and community meetings. By mid-summer, the ERA had become foremost in the public mind, and by October a poll conducted by a Washington, DC, consulting firm showed that 59 percent of Virginia's voters favored ratification of the ERA, while only 28 percent opposed it.

Local groups unrelated to the statewide effort began appearing, staging ral-



Photograph of Jean Clarke by Bob Brown/Richmond Times-Dispatch

lies and marches — even in districts where staunch anti-ERA incumbents went unchallenged. One locally spawned group, in the Staunton-Waynesboro area, lies in the same senatorial district as Lexington. When State Senator Coleman became attorney general, these two groups flexed their new political muscles and ensured a pro-ERA replacement. The winner, Democrat Frank Nolen, had been ousted from the seat in 1975 by Republican Coleman after voting against an ERA procedural move that year; this time, he pledged his complete support for the ERA, sacrificing some of his previous strong farm backing, including the anti-ERA Farm Bureau, for the winning votes of women.

But the biggest 1977 race was in Jim Thomson's Alexandria. Project coordinators Charlise Armstrong and Susan

Blair picked up Fowler's 1975 plan and led a team of 300 volunteers in calling every household with registered voters in the city to locate pro-ERA voters. More than 10,000 pro-ERA households were found, and each received letters and a door-to-door visit encouraging a vote for the ERA with votes for both Democratic incumbent Richard Hobson and Republican challenger Gary Myers to defeat Thomson.

As the polls closed on election day, the project's success was undeniable. The campaign message had been that votes for Hobson and Myers were votes for the ERA, and in precinct after precinct, Hobson and Myers received a close vote total, while Thomson's vote total fell below theirs. In little more than an hour after the polls had closed, Thomson conceded.

Democrats around the state were stunned. Feminists claiming victory were publicly scoffed at, but privately, party regulars were agog that the ERA was no longer locked in a box. At first, Thomson denied that the ERA was a factor, but in December he told the *Roanoke Times* that the women were "entitled to their share of the cadaver."

Reaction to this challenge to the existing power structure was swift and decisive. The Alexandria Democratic Committee, violating its own by-laws, purged Marianne Fowler from her seat on the committee. In the legislature, Thomson's defeat created a power struggle within the House Democratic ranks that left pro-ERA forces with little improvement. Liberals and right-wingers vied with the remnants of the Byrd machine for the key positions of House majority leader and Democratic caucus leader. The slots went to two anti-ERA veterans, A. L. Philpott and C. Hardaway Marks. The feminists and their allies were even outmaneuvered in an attempt to get the Democratic caucus to adopt a rules change that would put the ERA to a vote on the House floor before the 1979 deadline. The ERA's chief House sponsor, Dorothy McDiarmid, eyeing an appointment to P&E, convinced ERA supporters to soften their demands by saying that new appointments to the seven vacancies on the committee, coupled with the pro-ERA leadership of new chair Warren White, would create a more favorable climate there and that the ERA would probably come to the floor anyway. If it didn't, she agreed, a discharge motion could be made similar to the one used to get the amendment onto the Senate floor.

McDiarmid, the grand lady of the General Assembly, believes in playing primly by the rules. The smoke-filled cloakroom is outside her sphere, making her no match for political dealers like Thomson, Philpott and Marks. She didn't rock the boat when the caucus proved rigid, and she wasn't appointed to P&E either.

The General Assembly opened in January, 1978, with virtually no ERA activity in the Senate. Attention was riveted again on the House's notorious P&E Committee. Pro-ERA forces were highly visible in multiple lobbying offices in the creaky Raleigh Hotel across the street from Capitol Square. Their task was to translate the voters' majority sentiment for ERA into a legislative victory. To keep up the pressure that had been

building all year, lobbyists unfurled banners, published a thrice-weekly newsletter, staged a labor-sponsored rally and captured daily press coverage. While traditional groups like the League of Women Voters lobbied actively, VERA-PAC's Fowler and NOW's Clarke emerged as the leaders, recognized by the ERA's legislative friends and foes alike as the chief political strategists.

The opposition forces were less visible, organizing one massive lobbying day and busing in conservative churchgoers from Norfolk and students from Liberty Baptist College in Lynchburg. Virginia Stop ERA head Elyse O'Neill worked from newly elected Republican Delegate Robert L. Thoburn's office. Thoburn, a segregation academy administrator with far-right connections who met with Thomson before the session opened, emerged as 1978's most outspoken ERA opponent.

The new P&E chair for the House, Warren White, who was recuperating from a massive heart attack in the fall, felt pressure from both sides. A gentle man who favors ratification, White was nevertheless determined to establish a reputation for fairness. Renouncing the Thomson image that came with the gavel, he refused to use his influence to deal for votes, and sponsored a public hearing prior to the Committee's vote, thus telling pro-ERA lobbyists the task was theirs. White's reticence allowed Philpott and Marks to fill the Thomson void.

The air in the Capitol and in the adjacent office building was electric as opposing forces faced each other at the public hearing February 8. Capitol police, jumpy from the tension, barred lobbyists on both sides from the General Assembly Office Building until minutes before the hearing began. Witnesses from each side spoke to the legal, religious and emotional reasons for and against ERA. But the real star was clearly former Attorney General Andrew P. Miller, candidate for the US Senate. In 1974, a memo from Miller's office had legitimized the arguments that the ERA would require sexually integrated public rest rooms, legalize homosexual marriages and permit federal intervention in the Virginia legislative process. As the 1976 outstanding attorney general in the nation, Miller had a following in other unratified states where anti-ERA forces circulated the memo. Miller lost his 1977 primary bid for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination in part because feminists held him responsible for the ERA's repeated

defeat in more than one state. Recognizing that his senatorial bid could not succeed unless he made peace with ERA forces, Miller asked to speak at the hearing. Reading testimony prepared by Jean Clarke, Miller recanted each section of the memo. Across the room, A. L. Philpott, who had been a strong Miller supporter in the gubernatorial bid, turned his back — refusing to watch or to sanction the political drama unfolding before the committee.

The P&E Committee vote was scheduled for the next day, February 9. Spectators, camera crews and reporters began assembling three hours before the committee actually met. Capitol police were everywhere — in corridors, in aisles, in doorways. Would-be spectators crowded the halls outside the committee room. Finally, the committee began arriving; all members were present except Earl Bell, pro-ERA delegate from Loudoun County. The tension heightened as White sent aides scurrying around the Capitol in search of Bell. Red-faced, he finally arrived, having gone to the wrong room. The long-awaited vote was quickly over with 12 nays and eight ayes for reporting the bill, followed by a swift parliamentary maneuver by Philpott and Marks to ensure there would be no reconsideration of the bill.

A stunned crowd began moving weakly to the doorway. One small group of women sang — badly and off-key — a chorus from Helen Reddy's "I Am Woman." One middle-aged lobbyist sobbed uncontrollably. Outside the committee room, chants of "Remember Thomson" and "Get the Dirty Dozen" echoed in Thomas Jefferson's rotunda.

Suddenly, Capitol police, as if on cue, seized Marianne Fowler as she left the committee room, rushed her out of the building, down the driveway and onto the street. Struggling to free her pinned arms, Fowler spat on an officer. The crowd and camera crews ran behind, and all huddled on the sidewalk outside the Capitol grounds, interviewing and being interviewed. The police positioned themselves along the driveway and on the lawn, nervously watching the crowd outside.

Slowly the crowd dwindled and crews packed their equipment. The remaining ERA supporters began walking back to the Capitol, hoping to meet with legislative friends to plan their next move. Suddenly, Jean Clarke was stopped and threatened with arrest if she proceeded further on state property. Protesting her

right to be there, she was quickly dragged several feet by the police. Fowler ran to her aid and was immediately whisked into a waiting police car. The hefty Clarke required four grunting policemen to stuff her behind Fowler.

The two women were later released on their own recognizance after being charged with disorderly conduct and trespassing on the Capitol grounds. Fowler was also charged with assault for spitting. In court a few days later, prosecutors asked for a continuance. As ERA supporters left the courtroom, Clarke was re-arrested and charged with assault for allegedly striking an officer with her knee during her first arrest. The case has been taken by the ACLU and will go to trial in September.

When it was clear that the Old Guard had won this first skirmish of 1978, many of the ERA's legislative friends weakened. McDiarmid called Capitol police to apologize for the lobbyists' behavior and told the press she was disappointed in them. To symbolize the invincibility of the old power structure, Thomson appeared in Richmond the next day — his first visit of the session.

Fearing that support might shift in wake of the arrests, lobbyists began polling delegates on procedural moves the next day. Not one vote had changed; yet McDiarmid refused to make good her promise to introduce a discharge motion to get the ERA out of committee and onto the full House floor. Tempers flared on both sides and lobbyists looked to freshmen Elsie Heinz and Gary Myers for help; both had been elected by pro-ERA forces. But they both refused to introduce the discharge motion, apparently fearing the wrath of House leadership above the wrath of their pro-ERA constituents.

As the dust from the battle settled, it was clear that the ERA had been badly bruised. It had not, however, been beaten. The voting booth will be the next battleground. One lobbyist told a P&E committee member before this year's vote, "We're going to replace you all, and we're going to replace you all with us. I like *your* office. It has a nice, sunny location; I could be very comfortable here." He laughed, and he voted "aye." But the lessons of defeated legislators Thomson and Canada have yet to be learned by all. □

Patricia W. Goodman is an Arlington, Virginia-based free-lance writer and ERA lobbyist.

"That Women May Learn Truths"

ELIZABETH CITY, NC — With legislative debates for and against ERA still raging, memories of W. O. Saunders surface.

Saunders, who edited a weekly newspaper for nearly 30 years here starting at the turn of the century, was one of the South's most outspoken advocates of equality for women. And he was a man of decisive action as well as iconoclastic word. His word or deed either seared the ear or warmed the heart. Seldom was there any middle ground with regard to Saunders, who proudly called himself "the independent man" and his paper *The Independent*.

H. L. Mencken is reputed to have found Saunders among the few things in Southern life he did not detest. "If the South had forty editors like W. O. Saunders," Mencken said, "it could be rid of most of its troubles in five years."

Entrenched courthouse politicians, evangelists and patent medicines were Saunders' favorite targets. He sustained libel suit after libel suit from the politicians and preachers, and, miraculously, sustained life without revenue from the patent medicine ads.

That he was tough on what he called the "spleen-surfeited plotters" he saw in rural northeastern North Carolina was evident when he once reported that his chief political adversary, whose name he printed, "was seen in the courthouse one day this week with his hands in his own pockets."

But it was his unending efforts on behalf of women which sent me to his son's loving biography for a memory refreshed. Keith Saunders' *The Independent Man* was published in 1962. Much of the book is in his father's own fiery words.

During the early '20s, North Carolina's lawmakers in their wisdom enacted laws prohibiting publication of birth control information. This infuriated Saunders, whose fuse could be lit with half a spark.

He invited Margaret Sanger, the nationally famous advocate of birth control, to speak in Elizabeth City. She accepted. It was her first trip into the South on a public speaking engage-

ment. Saunders rented a movie house for the event, and gave it a big play in his paper.

The house was packed the Sunday afternoon Ms. Sanger spoke. Men and women were present. She talked for two hours about the birth control movement, and its importance in her lights. When she finished not a person stirred to leave. Saunders, sensing they wanted to hear more, stood and said, "I know exactly what you good women in this audience want to hear. Fortunately, there is not a word in the statutory laws of North Carolina prohibiting the dissemination of birth control information by word of mouth. So, if the men in this audience will depart quietly and then leave the house to the women, we shall have a birth control clinic here this afternoon, that women may learn truths that will indeed make them free."

Ms. Sanger spoke for another two hours.

In a 1923 editorial Saunders wrote about women (and what his paper stood for), he said: "They have no vote . . . and are but infants before the law. *The Independent* works for them. It shows them how politics affects their every day life and how those politics are corrupted by men. We put woman in the position to talk intelligently to her male dependents and persuade them in the way they should conduct all public affairs."

News about women, or of presumed interest to them only, wasn't segregated to one section of his paper. Once, for example, Saunders learned that a young woman had rescued her husband from a mean-spirited mule. The animal had the man cornered in a stable and had repeatedly kicked him. The story made the front page under this typically Saunders headline: "Bride of Three Weeks Beats Ass Off Husband."

Saunders was killed in an automobile accident in 1940. Three years earlier, he had been forced to suspend publication. The Depression was a major factor, but to the end he refused to run patent medicine ads, saying ". . . if every newspaper in America were to follow suit, Americans would recover from most of their female troubles, kidney troubles, nerve disorders, halitosis, athlete's foot, etc., almost overnight." Still, as son Keith noted, his father's attacks on cherished shams helped, too.

— Frank Adams



Numbers Are Power at Carolina Action

by Malcolm Jones

Two years ago, Jim Harrison worked as a research technician for a Greensboro, North Carolina, textile firm and held down two part-time jobs as well. He worked hard, trying to make a decent life for his wife and kids. But the bills kept piling up.

Since then, Harrison's life has changed a lot. He's still the same soft-spoken Arkansas native, still trying to make life good for his family, still religious, and conservative about a lot of things, still works too hard and doesn't get to stay home enough. And by day he has the same job at the textile company.

But the two part-time jobs have been traded for a new one that doesn't pay anywhere near as well, at least not in the sort of coin that Harrison can take to the bank. He calls it "selfish volunteer work." Self-effacing as this might sound, it's not a bad description of what he does.

Harrison is the president of the state executive board of Carolina Action. And while other members of the North Carolina organization may not have as much responsibility as Harrison, their stories are very similar. Since 1974, when Carolina Action began, it has involved a lot of people who had never thought of spending willing hours doing things like marching with picket signs in front of the state Utilities Commission, staging protests at the state headquarters of one of the nation's biggest automobile insurance companies and making speeches in front of city councils.

In its first year, Carolina Action attracted about 350 dues-paying families in Durham, the first city in which it organized. Today, the organization

thrives in four of North Carolina's five major cities, with a membership of about 1,600 families paying annual dues of \$10. The executive committee that Harrison presides over makes policy decisions for the entire organization and consists of representatives from 37 semi-autonomous neighborhood chapters and 22 issue or action committees in the four counties now organized; like the membership as a whole, the board is roughly 60 percent white and 40 percent black. Other cities are begging Carolina Action to form chapters in their neighborhoods, and only the lack of funds keeps the organizing teams away. By the end of 1978, an affiliate, Georgia Action, will be firmly established in Atlanta, the organization's first leap outside North Carolina. Given the discontent over utility rates, the price of car insurance and sluggish city governments unwilling to make neighborhood improvements, the possibilities for expansion appear limitless.

Until two years ago, Braxton Jones made his living painting houses in Raleigh. It was the only job he had ever had; he left school at 15 to help his father.

Today Jones, 50, is retired; he had a heart attack and can no longer climb a ladder. But bad health or not, Jones isn't sitting around warming park benches and feeding pigeons. He, too, has gone to work in Carolina Action, spending the bulk of his labor fighting car insurance companies.

When he talks about himself, Jones has a touch of amazement in his voice for, like Harrison, he had no experience

with the work he's in now. He, too, was a family man, busy with his painting and rearing five children. He worked hard, paid his bills and cursed the cost of living.

But while he was recuperating from his heart attack, a canvasser from Carolina Action came by and knocked on the door one day. Jones took a liking to the young man right away — "He's about my son's age" — and liked what he heard about Carolina Action as well: "It was accomplishing things."

There were things that Jones and his neighbors could see, such as more street lights, stop signs and a victory which kept a threatened part of the neighborhood zoned residential. That was in the fall of 1977. Jones decided to join the ranks of Carolina Action himself, and since then he has helped fight a Southern Bell Telephone Co. rate hike request, tried to get cablevision in his part of town, lobbied city hall for parking signs and, most important, fought the insurance companies. Today, when Carolina Action issues a press release in Raleigh on its insurance battle, the release refers the reader to Braxton Jones for more information. He is president of his neighborhood organization (Caraleigh/Fuller Heights Action), and a member of the Wake County committee working on the insurance campaign.

As Jones sees it, the issue at stake in the insurance fight is the principle of fairness. "It don't seem American to me to take a man's money and put him in this high risk facility and not notify him or anything," Jones says.

The "high risk" or reinsurance facility is a pool authorized in 1973 by the state legislature. The state requires all car owners to buy liability insurance, and it requires insurance companies to write a policy for any owner who requests one. But a company can turn over to the facility as many policies as it wishes, *for any reason*. Today, about 30 percent of the state's auto owners are insured through the facility — even though two-thirds of them have never filed a claim. It's obvious that many good drivers are shoveled into the facility with the statistically "poor risk" cases. The problem, says Carolina Action, is that nobody knows whether they are in or out of the facility.

The issue surfaced in 1977 when the insurance companies won approval for a rate hike for all drivers, plus an added surcharge on the bills of drivers in the reinsurance facility. The penalty for

being in the pool thus greatly increased, but insurance companies still refused to tell people whether — or why — they were among the chosen many to suffer the extra consequences.

That's what got Jones and the rest of the members of Carolina Action teed off and that's why they're spending a lot of time browbeating insurance companies these days, exerting enough public pressure to make the companies squirm in the unflattering light of bad publicity. Automatic notification of reinsured drivers is Carolina Action's first goal, and Allstate Insurance — the largest automobile insurer in the state — is its first target.

Jones is optimistic about getting changes made. "We've got them under a lot of pressure. We're already hurting them," he says. Most recently, the fight has taken a turn in Carolina Action's favor: Allstate replaced its former state director of public relations with a new man whose first official act was to announce his willingness to meet with Carolina Action.

(Last minute update: In early June, 1978, Carolina Action won its first goal when Allstate and other insurance companies agreed to automatically notify policy holders if they are placed in the reinsurance pool. The organization applauded the victory — and immediately began pressuring the companies on their next demand: drivers should be told exactly why they are in the facility and should have a mechanism to appeal the decision.)

Such victories may seem limited; however, it may help to reiterate that most members are not radical nor even liberal. They want only a fair shake for their money, and they are willing to fight for what they believe. "You're not going to bust up a big insurance company, that's for sure," Jones says, "but something is going on behind some dark green doors that they don't want to let out."

The low- to middle-income families who make up most of the membership roll of Carolina Action may not be asking for socialization of utilities or insurance companies, but they aren't willing to play their part as members of the silent majority either.

Joe Fish joined Carolina Action long before either Braxton Jones or Jim Harrison, having jumped in almost at the very beginning when he heard that the organization was gearing up

to oppose a request for a rate hike from the Duke Power Company. "It was the first time I'd heard of somebody fighting a rate increase," he recalls.

A Durham native, 51 years old and employed by one of the nation's largest computer firms as an electronics technician, Fish is a big man, tall and broad, and his size is underlined by his taste in clothes — leisure suits and tropical colored shirts. Even if his manner were not so determined, Fish would be impossible to ignore in a confrontation.

But his grit and determination are mixed with an innate sense of courtesy and an unflinching sense of humor. When asked to describe how well Carolina Action gets along with the utilities companies it fights, he stops for a moment to consider the question, and then says in measured tones, "They watch us and watch their step accordingly. And we watch them." Then he adds with a chuckle, "But I wouldn't call it a good working relationship."

Actually, Carolina Action had its beginning fighting utilities. Back in 1974, in conjunction with the United Mine Workers' strike at Duke Power's coal mine in Harlan County, Kentucky, the original organizers for Carolina Action took some seed money, began canvassing neighborhoods and sponsored meetings for North Carolina ratepayers opposed to Duke Power's fresh bid for a rate increase. Research showed that

Duke made its customers pay over \$1 million a month for coal from other mines so the company didn't have to settle the strike in Harlan County. It also showed that residential customers were subsidizing the cheap electricity Duke sold to its industrial clients. After several weeks of publicity and organizing, ratepayers turned out by the hundreds at a series of night hearings Carolina Action forced the Utilities Commission to hold in cities across the state. It was a major achievement and instantaneously established Carolina Action as a force to reckon with. The Utilities Commission eventually sweetened the victory by putting the burden of Duke Power's rate increase on the industrial customers instead of on the residential customers.

Since those days, Carolina Action has been less successful in scoring big wins against the power companies. But they have kept up a steady campaign in the state legislature and at the Utilities Commission to get reforms which will hold down the price of electricity, especially for the amount needed to meet a home's basic necessities.

Joe Fish has been around long enough to know how to take the defeats with the victories. He has been a leader both at state and local levels, having served as president of his neighborhood chapter, the Durham executive board, the state executive board and currently



Demonstration outside campaign headquarters of a gubernatorial candidate with ties to Eckerd Drugs, a longtime holdout on drug price posting.

as vice president of the Durham board. He believes you don't stop fighting city hall just because you lose now and then. The Durham City Council, he says, "thinks we are a force to be dealt with. They asked our opinion on what to do with the Community Development money this year. Two years ago, we couldn't even get on the agenda."

Fish recalls two particularly bitter losses in Durham. One involved a campaign to force the city and county governments to merge their operations under one new roof. Since both governments were planning to build new quarters, Carolina Action members reasoned that the governments might as well co-exist under one roof and save some tax money. The two sparkling municipal buildings in downtown Durham reserved for city and county are solid proof of a lost battle.

When the city planned its third parking garage downtown, Carolina Action went to work again, this time to get an official referendum to see if the public wanted the garage. Although a recount later proved them right, Carolina Action's petitioners were told after their deadline that they had not collected enough signatures to call for a referendum. Today, the third parking garage sits downtown, and if pigeons paid rent, the city budget would show a surplus.

Despite the battles and the wrangling, city officials have generally good things to say about Carolina Action. Occasionally, an official will say that some members are hotheads, or that they sometimes come to meetings ill-prepared or misled by erroneous information. But mostly, Carolina Action draws praise, especially for its work for senior citizens, including reduced bus fares, drug prescription price posting and the work on lifeline electricity rates (lower rates for basic necessities).

"They're tenacious and they don't let go," said a Durham City Council member. "It's hard to judge if we'd be working on condemnation of houses if Carolina Action hadn't pushed us."

On at least one occasion, that tenaciousness got Carolina Action in real trouble. In May 1977, near the end of a campaign to get lifeline rates passed in the legislature, the organization published a newsletter listing opponents of the bill in the House Utilities Committee. The Committee had tied up the bill for almost three months, indicating someone, probably the chairman, hoped the bill would die a slow and peaceful

Counterattack from the Conservatives

On May 2, 1978, when Durham voters went to the polls to vote in the state primary, many of them encountered card tables outside the polling places staffed by citizens who asked them if they cared to sign petitions calling for a recall vote on two city council members who had failed to pay their city and county taxes.

Peripherally, at least, Carolina Action was involved in the affair. One of the council members under fire was Howard Harris, a long-time Carolina Action member and former member of the Durham executive board who had received the organization's endorsement in the November, 1977, election. On the opposite side, directing the recall effort, was Harry Rodenhizer, a man with whom the organization had tangled previously. Rodenhizer is an outspoken figure in Durham politics, considered by most observers to be allied with the town's conservative forces. He was also a city council candidate in the election that saw Harris elected, but unlike Harris he did not receive an endorsement from Carolina Action.

Because of that, the organization accused him of sour grapes when, immediately following the election, he asked state officials to investigate Carolina Action for what he claimed were violations of the state campaign and solicitation laws. Rodenhizer pointed out that it was illegal for a corporation to engage in political activity. However, although Carolina Action is incorporated, it had set up a political committee outside the corporation which endorsed candidates during the election. According to a ruling handed down by the state attorney general's office, the organization was cleared of any improprieties, although it did have to pay a penalty for filing its campaign expense statement late.

Rodehizer's other gripe, relating to solicitation procedures, still awaits a final ruling from the state Department of Human Resources. He claims that the organization spends more than the legal 35 percent of its revenues to raise money. Carolina Action denies this, claiming that it spends only 33 percent of its revenues to pay canvassers who tour neighborhoods, asking for donations and plugging Carolina Action's programs.

Thus far, Carolina Action has escaped official censure, but the charges pale when compared to the delinquent tax question involving Howard Harris.

The Durham executive committee of the organization has said publicly, both before the city council and in a letter to the Durham *Morning Herald*, that it considers the recall petition effort purely political, and, while it disapproves of not paying taxes, it stands behind those under fire. The majority of black and liberal leaders have remained silent on the issue, but there is considerable public sentiment favoring a recall or, more directly, the resignation of the delinquent council members.

Carolina Action's reputation may not suffer irreversible damage from the controversy, but its members may shy away from getting involved in overt political activity next time. The organization's endorsements in the last election helped elect a city council far more open to Carolina Action's demands; but many members privately express doubts about getting wrapped up in the fickle nature of electoral politics and elected politicians.

Even if it avoids partisan politics, one thing is certain: Carolina Action, at all levels, can expect to receive much more fire as it gains power across the state. Other officials will counterattack with their own version of Rodenhizer's favorite charges: "I would not want to see the thing they set out to do crippled. Their original purpose was looking for good, responsible government. Now they're advocates for poor government, the very thing they're organized to combat. They've become a haven for young people who want to make money off of old people."

Joe Fish just smiles and says, "When you get into the business of asking questions and raising issues, you've got to expect this sort of attack."

— M. J.

death. Indeed, Rep. Hartwell Campbell, committee chairman, had shown no love for electrical rate reform in the past. But by listing Campbell and other committee members as opponents without even asking them how they intended to vote, Carolina Action snuffed out any hope that lifeline would get through that session.

As soon as the news release came out, Campbell took the opportunity to publicly berate the group for trying to force action on the bill by embarrassing the committee. Carolina Action in fact gave the bill's opponents the very ammunition they needed to dilute the legislation.

Joe Fish is philosophical about such incidents. "Sometimes I think we came on too strong and sometimes not strong enough," he says, but on the whole, he thinks the group has learned "that you can get by with a little more demanding" than you might think at first.

Citizen pressure is what the organization is all about. And the victories testify to its frequent effectiveness. In Durham, Carolina Action recently won a major battle, convincing the city council to use Community Development money to pay for street assessments in Community Development target areas. In Raleigh, organized citizens in the southern part of that city stopped an expressway in its tracks and kept their neighborhoods intact. Greensboro is on the verge of winning a Homeowners Bill of Rights in a drive to make the city more responsible for deteriorating conditions in neighborhoods. And in Charlotte, Carolina Action has championed an issue with state-wide repercussions by urging the city to offer school bus service to children who live within a mile and a half of their schools; the issue will come before the legislature this summer with the support of Speaker of the House Carl Stewart, thanks to the lobbying efforts of Carolina Action.

Still, the question must linger: What can bring together thousands of low- and middle-income people from all walks of life, black, white, union members, anti-union people, old people, young people, professional people, blue-collar workers, die-hard liberals and former Wallaceites? What glue unites these people into an organization with an increasingly strong and flexible muscle for change?

Jay Hessey is 32 years old. He came to the Carolinas four years ago to build

Carolina Action by way of Kentucky, the Northeast, Africa, VISTA, the Peace Corps and a childhood in the mountains of California, the son of, ironically, an electric company employee. He dropped out of college in 1966, joined the Peace Corps and went to Africa. Two years later, he came back to America, criss-crossed the country playing country music to make some money, and when he couldn't sing for a living, enjoyed the generosity of what he remembers as amazingly kind people all over America. Then he got into community organizing and has been there ever since, with one brief spell to work and recruit for VISTA. "But all I saw were these young college kids, and all I talked about was organizing."

He still picks a little guitar now and again, drinks a few beers occasionally and takes snuff, a more manageable substitute for a former tobacco chewing habit. Last book read: *Democratic Promise*, a book on the Populist movement by fellow Durham resident Larry Goodwyn, a professor at Duke University. A copy of *Power Shift*, a study of the southern rim by Kirkpatrick Sale, lies on Hessey's desk at Carolina Action's headquarters, a nest of offices stuck over a downtown restaurant in Durham. He hopes to read it one of these days, if he has the time. He hopes to take a day off, too, maybe in a month or so. Getting in touch with him isn't hard: "Just call my office, and if I'm not there, leave a message. I work seven days a week." He was not exaggerating; it's the truth.

Despite his schedule, which requires constant traveling across the state to the regional Carolina Action offices, Hessey is utterly self-deprecating about his job. He thinks the people who pay dues to the organization — the rank and file membership — are the important people to discuss and write about. But he is not naive, and he knows that the organizer is absolutely essential to such an outfit. He scoffs at the old theory of organizing where the skilled worker went into a neighborhood, got it mobilized and then moved on to let the group move ahead under its own steam. That won't work, he says, not if you're dealing with an organization as extensive as Carolina Action. Coordination is the key to success; Hessey and a staff of 16 hard-working organizers provide that coordination, organizing meetings and marches, mimeographing flyers and distributing press releases.

They work on a relatively meager budget. In 1977, Carolina Action took in \$132,312. Of that, \$30,000 came as a grant from the Campaign for Human Development, a Catholic foundation. The rest came from dues and contributions. Salaries for the canvassers amounted to \$29,034. The rest was spent paying the staff, the rent and the cost of running the operation.

In the end, the essence of the organization is its members and what they want. The rest could change tomorrow but the people would still be there.

It is this simple fact that makes most of the criticism of the organization look foolish. For instance, one of the common jibes is that Hessey and his little band of organizers are pursuing their own radical ends using the membership of Carolina Action as a front, as a collection of pawns. While one conversation with Jim Harrison makes the idea look silly, Hessey has a broader answer.

"If the people ain't hot, you ain't got an issue," he says. "I don't care what anybody says, I couldn't get somebody to go up in front of the city council if they didn't want to." And while people who have never had their share of the limelight may stumble and fall the first time they get up before the Utilities Commission or the board of Aldermen, "once our people have done that a couple of times, they don't feel intimidated by those characters," Hessey says.

In fact, many people in Carolina Action have had so much experience dealing with the powers that be that the pendulum has swung the other way: Carolina Action members have lately taken some heat from a Greensboro newspaper for failing to pay deference to some political figures who came to an organization gathering to state their campaign platforms.

"But hell," Hessey says, "we had a board up to rank those guys and we had three categories for answers: Yes, No and Runaround. They either said it or they didn't. Our people are working people. They got jobs to get up and go to in the morning, and they say, 'All right, we came here tonight to hear what you have to say, so say it.'"

Working people. It is a phrase that you hear again and again from anyone talking about Carolina Action. It is the common denominator. It matters not that many Carolina Action members are retired or without a paying job. They,

too, want to work to help themselves, and they are willing to fight anything that gets in their way. "It begins in self-interest," Hessey says of what motivates Carolina Action members. "You want your neighborhoods working together to overcome racial and economic differences," but those are issues and issues are secondary to the main point:

power.

As Joe Fish points out, people will organize around issues that are near and dear to their hearts; they proceed from there to do what Jim Harrison calls self-ish volunteer work. And pretty quickly they find out that the only way they can succeed is to band together. And as Jim Harrison says, "Numbers are power."

Malcolm Jones is an editorial writer for the Durham Morning Herald.



Barbara Harris at left

Black, White and Green

The importance of racial difference can never be underestimated in any study of things Southern. Carolina Action is no exception. In fact, race is the central riddle of the organization, conspicuous because members almost never mention it. If asked, they shrug, as if to say, it's not that important. But can a shrug erase 200 years of racial unrest?

Probably not, but one color cancels out black and white: green. The pragmatism of the pocketbook works a heady spell on the members of Carolina Action, whether former Wallace voters or angry blacks.

So says Barbara Harris, vice-president of Carolina Action's East End Neighborhood Council in Durham. Mrs. Harris, 32, is one of the most articulate and forceful members of the organization. Her three years of experience with the group have been mutually beneficial.

Carolina Action has given her the framework necessary to help herself and other people, a desire which she says was partially frustrated when she tried other community organizations. In return, she has given the group untold hours of work, boundless energy and a way with words that not only silences opponents but converts many of them as well. No one writes the script for Barbara Harris; she is one of a kind, a truly free spirit. When she graduated from high school, a college in Tennessee offered her a scholarship. She turned it down, deciding instead to attend Cortez Peters Business College in Washington, DC, because she had heard that Mr. Peters was the fastest typist in the world, "and I just had to find out if it was true."

Her curiosity satisfied, she returned to Durham after her graduation. After a frustrating stint with an anti-poverty agency and a job for an insurance company, she now works for the Employment Security Commission as a claims investigator. "I don't regret coming back," she says. "The more I do for the community, the better I feel, because I see myself help someone." And her work with Carolina Action has proved to be the best way to do that.

She thinks other groups, such as the NAACP and the Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People (the city's powerful black political machine) are fine organizations. But their scope is limited. Carolina Action attracts her because it can accommodate local and statewide issues, blacks and whites, poor and not so poor.

That broad scope is not only its charm but its very reason for success. She won't say that racism has been eradicated in the minds of Carolina Action members; she just thinks that the members have learned to leave their prejudices at the door when they sit down together to do

the business of the group. Or, as organizer Jay Hessey says, consciousness-raising isn't Carolina Action's business. If it happens, fine. But it won't happen unless the pragmatic alliance on consumer issues comes first.

Mrs. Harris thinks that the only reason government and business officials pay attention to Carolina Action is that "blacks and whites have joined together to fight them," something she considers a breakthrough. She believes that government leaders and the special interests have long taken advantage of low- to middle-class people by successfully pitting blacks against whites. Self-interest was sacrificed to racism.

To survive, Carolina Action cannot tolerate racism. "We meet together as one. There's no tension," Mrs. Harris says. "We're supporting each other." She goes so far as to say that blacks and whites will help each other even when the interests of one group do not serve the other, because only the combined forces can make a difference. "Your numbers speak," she says. When she says the word, Mrs. Harris gets an edge on her voice, and the emotion shows in her eyes. "You get the power to change things, and that's what's important."

Then she relates an incident that she thinks sums up the way she feels about blacks and whites working together: "I was telling someone at my church who asked me about that the other day. I said, 'A lot of these issues don't affect us (black people), but we do it anyway because we deserve a say-so. We're paying those bills, and those industries are listening to us because they know we're not going to stop — that's the important thing.'"

As Duke Ellington, another strong-willed, individualistic black once said, "Necessity is the mother."

— M.J.



Standing Up To Fear in Mississippi

by Fredric Tulskey

Blacks carry picket signs on Main Street in Tupelo, Mississippi, while Ku Klux Klansmen circle the area in cars and pickup trucks. A cross burns in Holly Springs, 50 miles northwest, at the church where a black protest march began one day earlier. The Tupelo city attorney tells a federal judge that his city is a "powder keg waiting to explode." And a 17-year-old white youth drinking beer illegally in a bar tells reporters he drives through black neighborhoods yelling obscenities "to get them stirred up."

It is the civil rights struggle of the past, only it is happening in Mississippi in 1978.

— frustrated by high unemployment and poverty. Per capita income for Holly Springs was \$2,853 in 1975, less than half the national average of \$5,902. These economic frustrations, compounded with what they consider unequal treatment at the hands of the local white power structure, have led blacks to organize in local communities throughout the region for jobs and equal justice. Marches, rallies and boycotts are becoming commonplace activities, spearheaded by a relatively new civil rights organization called the United League.

Founded in 1966 by Alfred "Skip" Robinson, the United League fights its battles both in the streets and in the courtroom. According to Robinson, the League is a "priestly, militant, revolutionary organization" committed to winning employment, education and health opportunities for Mississippi blacks. It has sponsored lawsuits challenging local election laws, local officials' use of federal funds and inaction on school desegregation matters. The complaints also include police brutality and a series of murders of

The center for the movement is Holly Springs, the largest city and county seat of Marshall County. The town boasts antebellum mansions set in northeast Mississippi's rolling hills and national forest. At one corner of the town square a state historical marker recalls the old cotton town's past as a "center of social and cultural life." Today, most of the 6,000 residents are black and — like many white residents

blacks in which white suspects were arrested but never indicted or tried.

Until recently, the organization remained little-known outside the area. Its principal claim to fame was a boycott of Byhalia, Mississippi, a town 10 miles from Holly Springs, following the 1974 killing of a black man, Butler Young, Jr., by a part-time policeman. Two grand juries refused to return indictments against the officer, and the League, building on the momentum of protests that resulted, filed lawsuits challenging various discriminatory practices and began a boycott of downtown stores. It also initiated a lawsuit against the police officer on behalf of Young's mother that resulted in an award of \$15,000 in damages from an all-white jury. The League is now appealing that verdict because, in the words of League attorney Lewis Myers, "we think that's too small a sum for the death of a 21-year-old man."

The United League is not the only group on the move these days. The Hunger Coalition and Concerned Citizens Against Police Brutality are behind protests in parts of north Mississippi which the United League has not reached. Unlike traditional forces such as the NAACP or SCLC, these groups lack both fame and money. With membership costing just one dollar, the League appeals to the poorest citizens and seeks its strength from the masses, rather than from a hefty treasury. "The League is better off without a lot of money," says Joseph Delaney, a black journalist from Oxford, Mississippi, who has been active in League affairs. "Money just means trouble."

Indeed, the NAACP has recently been cautious pending a decision in its appeal of a \$1.25 million state court judgment against it for the association's 1968 boycott of white stores in Port Gibson, Mississippi; meanwhile, the League leaps to the forefront of such activities. "The League doesn't have that kind of money to lose," says Henry Boyd, Jr., secretary of the League. "Some of the blacks who once stood up and fought for justice now are complacent," says Robinson. "They have become part of the system. We are trying to awaken black folks to this."

This past January, the League called for the ouster of Marshall County Sheriff Kenneth Smith after a black man, James Garrett, was found hanging in Smith's jail with hands and feet bound. Smith called Garrett's death a

suicide. Largely because of League efforts, the Marshall County Board of Supervisors held a special hearing in February in which witnesses detailed beatings in county jails. One woman said the jailer allowed a man to enter her cell and rape her. As a result of the hearing, the supervisors cut back the federal funds of Sheriff Smith.

In March, United League officials wrote the area's US attorney, H.M. Ray, complaining about his poor track record in prosecuting civil rights violations and saying, "There is an air of hopelessness on the part of many black citizens in north Mississippi concerning the attitude or seeming attitude toward the vindication of their constitutional rights as black American citizens." In a reply letter, Ray denied that his office failed to prosecute civil rights cases.

In April, one week before the annual pilgrimage of tourists to Holly Springs' antebellum mansions, hundreds of blacks turned out for a League-sponsored "March for Justice." The League has since held several more marches and has threatened to picket downtown stores unless more blacks were hired. Holly Springs merchants, mindful of the League's success in nearby Byhalia, quickly formed a committee to try to meet the League's demands. But by late June, the League was still unwilling to call off its protests.

Recently, Robinson has sought to spread his gospel outside of Marshall County, organizing marches in parts of Tennessee and Alabama. He has announced a July protest in Plains, Georgia. At a recent press conference in Holly Springs, Robinson declared that the League would be going "nation-wide." He already claims 50,000 members in the organization, but Robinson has a reputation for considerably inflating such figures.

The United League's rapid success gained a boost from its recent move into Tupelo, a town of 21,000 that serves as the retail trading center for the northeast part of Mississippi and that is widely known as the birthplace of Elvis Presley. The Tennessee Valley Authority provides cheap electricity for residents and industries, and Tupelo's low-wage, non-unionized labor force has grown rapidly in recent years. The town's per capita income jumped almost 58 percent between 1969 and 1975, from \$2,859 to \$4,515. Several multinational corporations, such as

Rockwell International and FMC, have set up shop in the area.

The catalyst for Robinson's entry into Tupelo was an incident involving Eugene Pasto, a Memphis man picked up by Mississippi highway patrolmen in March, 1976, and taken to the Tupelo police department on check forgery charges. After questioning by police captains Dale Cruber and Roy Sandefer, Pasto signed six confessions and six forms waiving his constitutional rights. Last January, a federal judge awarded Pasto, who was by then serving time in the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, \$2,500 in his lawsuit against the officers for beating the confessions out of him.

Cruber, who received the "Officer of the Year" award in 1974, and Sandefer were both longtime veterans of the Tupelo police force. Prisoners had frequently charged at trials and in complaints to the FBI that the pair's success came from beating confessions out of suspects. After the federal court's decision in the Pasto case,

more complaints began reaching Tupelo's board of aldermen, along with demands that the two be fired.

The seven-member board voted to suspend the officers while Police Chief Ed Crider investigated the matter. Crider, who is elected to his post, concluded that the officers had not committed a crime; he claimed to know of no other complaints involving the two and recommended that they be reinstated. On February 24, 1978, the aldermen accepted Crider's recommendation over the sole dissenting vote of Boyce Grayson, the only black alderman, who entered an unsuccessful motion that the officers be fired.

The city's action provoked an angry response from Tupelo's blacks. The United League seized the opportunity and stepped up efforts to organize a Tupelo chapter. Robinson lashed out at local black leaders who sought to solve the problem through further meetings, exclaiming, "You can't negotiate from a position of weakness." In early March, the United League began



Leonard McLellan, a United League attorney at a demonstrations in Holly Springs.



Mississippi Grand Dragon Douglas Coen, at a Ku Klux Klan rally in Tupelo, 1978.

sponsoring a series of marches, drawing 400 demonstrators at the first, then 800 one week later. While Tupelo's mayor, Clyde Whitaker, called the Pasto incident a "dead issue," the League escalated its demands to include more jobs for blacks in city government and local businesses. The city made a last-ditch attempt to avoid a League-sponsored boycott by transferring Cruber and Sandefer to the fire department. The League rejected the city's effort and on Good Friday began a boycott of downtown stores.

The boycott was so successful that Lewis Myers, Jr., the League's attorney, says, "White merchants from the two largest stores in Tupelo have personally come to me, pleading for an end to our boycott. The black boycott of white-owned stores has not only had an economic effect; it's causing an emotional breakdown in the white community."

The activity is unprecedented in Tupelo, which was largely bypassed by the tumult of racial battles over school desegregation and voting rights that raged across Mississippi a decade ago.

The rise of black protest in Tupelo has brought a white militant backlash, including formation of a Ku Klux Klan klavern. Douglas Coen, a former Pennsylvania policeman who moved to southern Mississippi five years ago, spearheads the backlash. Coen is now Grand Dragon of the Mississippi Invisible

Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

"Whites are in a hole," says Coen, "and we have to get back to level ground before we can start making any gains. The white working man has been stripped unreasonably and punished unreasonably for something he never had anything to do with. He was not the cause of slavery."

While Coen is against the black movement — "we want the threats of black pressure removed from Tupelo's streets" — he is not unhappy with the loss of business the boycott has created.

"The white merchants survived before they had the nigger business," he said, "and they'll survive a lot better after they get rid of the blacks." He claims the Klan was needed to instill unity in whites. "Blacks recognize now that there is a white resistance to intimidation," he said. "But had there not been, had we just kept giving and giving, there would be no end to their demands, and they would turn this city into a mass ghetto, unfit for habitation by any decent, self-respecting Christian."

When fewer than 100 whites turned out for the Tupelo Klan's first rally, the speakers blamed "white apathy" which they said could ruin the country. But three weeks later, that number was tripled when the Klan and the United League both demonstrated on May 6 in a dramatic confrontation.

The May 6 showdown began with a Klan press conference at the local Ramada Inn. By the time the League march started, reporters from CBS, NBC, the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* had arrived. United League members assembled in a black neighborhood and silently made their way toward the center of town, led by men driving pickup trucks, with rifles prominently displayed in their rear windows. The demonstrators carried anti-Klan signs and were flanked by League scouts armed with clubs, binoculars, and walkie-talkies.

Every policeman on Tupelo's 65-man force was on duty that day; a helicopter hovered overhead and officials from the US Justice Department, sent by the Attorney General, monitored the situation. Everywhere one turned, pickup trucks and cars bearing rifles and guns were obvious. Ku Klux Klansmen, some wearing white hoods, patrolled the streets threatening to make "citizens' arrests" of the demonstrators. In mid-day, a Klan motorcade drove down Main Street while

blacks, bearing anti-Klan signs, watched from the sidewalks.

Nothing more than words were exchanged. But that night a Klan rally and cross-burning ceremony drew 300 people who demanded the reinstatement of Cruber and Sandefer. The two officers had announced two weeks earlier that they were resigning their positions in the fire department "with the hope that demonstrations by the United League of north Mississippi be terminated." The United League quickly rejected this suggestion.

The crowd at the Klan rally was vocal and emotional, and participants frequently shouted racial slurs against blacks. At one point, Cruber acknowledged the crowd's support with a Nazi-type salute. At the cross-burning, Cruber tried to pull the camera from the neck of Joseph Shapiro, a reporter for the *Memphis Commercial-Appeal* assigned to the paper's Tupelo bureau. Another reporter stepped in and broke up the trouble.

Several days after the events of May 6, Tupelo city officials passed a resolution asking both groups to leave town and barring them from further use of the city facilities. When each group continued its plans for another showdown on June 10, the city passed an ordinance on May 18 prohibiting demonstrations for 90 days.

With the aid of North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, the League promptly challenged the ordinance in federal district court. At a hearing on the matter, city attorney Guy Mitchell warned that a "holocaust" could occur if the city could not forbid the demonstrations. The city paraded 25 witnesses, including all the aldermen, the police chief, several newsmen and residents. Newsmen testified that they had seen Klansmen at the May 6 demonstrations with flame throwers, hand grenades and submachine guns. City officials spoke of a "highly inflammable" situation and said that Tupelo was "permeated with fear." But US District Judge Orma Smith struck down the ordinance as a violation of the right to peaceful protest. It marked the third time Judge Smith had ruled in a League lawsuit based on the First Amendment. In his two previous rulings, Smith had ruled against the League and been reversed by the US Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. This time, as he read his decision before a packed courtroom, Smith quoted from 13 lawbooks stacked on the bench in front of him.

Smith encouraged the city to draft



A Klan rally and cross burning ceremony drew about 100 spectators. At the next rally, a month later, the number tripled.

another ordinance that could regulate the two marches to keep them from coming into direct conflict. But in the days preceding June 10, city officials rejected efforts by Alderman Grayson to find such an alternative and waited for the potential outbreak.

When the day arrived, the media, the helicopter and the full police force were once again on hand to observe. This time the police wore bullet-proof vests and riot helmets and waved shotguns and rifles. More than 700 people marched with the United League, including members of the state ACLU chapter, who held their annual meeting in Tupelo that day because, in the words of one member, "we do more than talk about civil liberties." The march lacked the show of arms so obvious in previous demonstrations and passed without trouble. League demonstrators wrapped up their rally on the steps of the courthouse, while Klansmen waited a few blocks away to begin their march.

Then, about 50 robed Klansmen and 150 supporters marched to the courthouse while onlookers lined the streets. But the mood quickly changed. Bill Wilkinson, Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, was speaking to the crowd

when a white man wearing a T-shirt that bore the United League slogan "Justice for All" shouted out, "You symbolize hatred. You call yourself a Christian!" Wilkinson directed some Klansmen to take care of the man, who was later identified as David Ohmes, a lay minister. Klansmen dragged Ohmes and knocked him to the ground; the minister offered no resistance. Tupelo police stepped in, saying, "Let us have him," and began striking and gagging Ohmes. Reporters who tried to photograph the incident were told to stop, and one was pushed away. When the *Commercial-Appeal* reporter, Shapiro, began to argue, he was dragged to a waiting police van and tossed inside, while the crowd cheered.

Shapiro later described the incident: "As the van drove off, from the floor I heard the driver gleefully radio headquarters, 'We got Shapiro.'" Shapiro said police complained of his earlier news reporting and advised him to leave town. He was charged with conspiring to incite a riot and assaulting police and interfering with police. Ohmes was charged with inciting a riot.

Reporters rushed to the police station to get more information. With them was

Freddie Crawford, a black Justice Department official from Atlanta who stood in the station's reception area and waited for police to let him inside so he could talk to the mayor. A white man in his late 50s walked in and said to Crawford, "Well, look at that goddamned nigger." Crawford, incensed, whipped around and demanded, "What did you say?" The white man, who turned out to be H. D. Cruber, father of one of the former officers, moved through the reporters and began pulling on the door, brushing up to Crawford and demanding to get inside.

Crawford flung his fist at Cruber and threw his tape recorder, which narrowly missed Cruber's head and flew through the plate glass front window of the police station. The two men grappled to the ground. As reporters moved out of the way, police officers poured in through the door and over a side counter. They first grabbed Crawford, who shouted, "What is the matter? Won't you grab him because he's white?" Some police then grabbed Cruber, and Crawford flung off the officer holding him down and grabbed him from behind. A second Justice Department official grabbed another police officer, and for a moment

the scene was frozen in an amazing standoff: two black Justice Department officials holding two Tupelo policemen, a third policeman holding Cruber, while reporters stood by in disbelief. The officers confiscated a length of chain from Cruber, and Crawford later said he started the fight after he saw Cruber reach into his pocket where the chain was. Cruber was charged with assault. On a day that city officials had said would inevitably lead to trouble, the only scuffles involved police.

Skip Robinson, 42-year-old brick-mason and building contractor, blends fiery rhetoric with preaching in speeches that have moved his audience to tears. He calls on blacks to find their own leaders; and when he speaks of having "found a cause worth dying for," a comparison to Martin Luther King, Jr., seems inevitable. Since forming the League, Robinson has at times sought local political offices such as mayor and sheriff, prompting critics to charge him with opportunism. Among those to accuse Robinson of inflaming issues to grab headlines are Mayor Sam Coopwood of Holly Springs and Mayor Clyde Whitaker of Tupelo.

Indeed, Robinson even incurred some initial resentment from local black leaders as an outsider in Tupelo. When the League first came to town, John Thomas Morris, head of the area's NAACP, criticized the organization for pushing the city's own black leaders aside. But after the League won a recent lawsuit against the city ordinance banning League and Klan demonstrations for 90 days, Morris stood on the courthouse steps and declared, "City leaders are going to have to learn they can't pick who the leaders should be for black folks." When Judge Smith struck down the ordinance, he said one of the "major issues" causing the city's problems was the "inability of some people in charge of city affairs to accept the fact that people can come in from out of town and take a leadership role."

Leadership is Robinson's strong suit, and he has almost single-handedly directed the League's effort. He drives from city to city, trying to set up organizations with little to offer other than personal support and the concept of unity. As an emerging black leader, Robinson is vulnerable to politicians seeking support. One week before the Mississippi Senatorial runoff, Robinson had to call a press conference to explain why the cam-

paign of Gov. Cliff Finch had paid him \$1,375. Indeed, while the League's grassroots strength is one of its major assets, its lack of money does have drawbacks. The League had no office or staff. It has, however, an important ally in North Mississippi Rural Legal Services (NMRLS), a branch of the federally funded legal services network governed by local communities. Robinson works out of the Holly Springs office of Legal Services, and Lewis Myers, Jr., director of litigation for NMRLS, serves as the League's attorney. Legal Services staff member Henry Boyd, Jr., is the League's secretary.

Myers, a 30-year-old Houston native, studied law at Rutgers University. He came to Mississippi six years ago through an exchange program between the law schools of Ole Miss and Rutgers and decided to stay. Myers takes part in the League's weekend marches, files suits on its behalf and represents it in negotiations over grievances with local governments and businessmen. The close relationship rankles many public officials.

Recently Tupelo's aldermen, with only Grayson dissenting, called for a federal investigation of the ties between the League and the Legal Services office. Myers has recently received an official notice from the Legal Services Corporation's regional office in Atlanta that he is under investigation and facing suspension from the program, based on complaints from the mayor and board of aldermen of Tupelo and the local bar association. Myers is charged with violating a section of the Legal Services Act that prohibits the corporation's lawyers from taking part in and encouraging public demonstrations. Myers' case will be the first prosecution under this section of the act.

The impending investigation will not be the first for the League. During the height of the 1974 Byhalia protest, requests from Mississippi Senators James O. Eastland and John C. Stennis prompted a similar probe. Because most League members qualify financially for Legal Aid, Myers was cleared of any wrongdoing. Since then, the federal act has been rewritten.

"I think it is clear that some people would like to see me stopped because they do not like my outspokenness," Myers said, "but I have First Amendment rights, too. Can the (Legal Services) Corporation tell me that I can't spend my weekends supporting a cause I believe in, supporting the cause of my clients?"

With help from NMRLS, the League

has won landmark cases on voting rights, education and employment issues. In Holly Springs, says Myers, the League won the right for students at predominantly black Rust College to vote in local elections. In 1970, the League blocked an attempt by Holly Springs officials to redraw district lines without the approval of the Justice Department in violation of a federal voting rights law. The League also was able to force the city to change from at-large elections to single member districts. Before this, there were virtually no black elected officials, says Myers. Now, blacks are represented on the school board, the election commission and the board of supervisors.

The League has not only won the right to vote for thousands of blacks, says Myers, but has encouraged them to register and to exercise that right. The League also encouraged blacks to serve on juries.

The League pursues economic as well as political goals. "We've gotten more people around here jobs than Mississippi Employment Service," says Myers. "We are willing to stand up against lawlessness as well, and black people now look to the League when something happens."

But as the League grows in effectiveness, it draws increasing intimidation and harassment. In Holly Springs, a cross was burned at Robinson's church one day after a march started from that building. A bottle filled with blue spray paint, apparently fired from a tear-gas gun, exploded into the home of League secretary Boyd. The League responded with stepped-up security, including patrols through Holly Springs' black neighborhoods at night. Now, when Robinson appears at rallies, two bodyguards protect him. "We're non-violent," he says, "but our freedom has been jeopardized. If we have to walk over a person, we'll do it."

League attorney Myers echoes this determination. "My knees won't bend," he told a cheering crowd on June 10. "If I have to die in this country, I want to die on my feet, not on my knees. We have won the dignity of our people back." This, Myers believes, may be the League's greatest achievement: "If it's done nothing else, it has brought black people together in a bond of solidarity and pride that is unparalleled in this area. We are no longer afraid." □

Fredric Tulsy is a reporter for the Jackson Clarion-Ledger, Mississippi's largest newspaper.

Downtown Atlanta in the 1930s



LETTERS FROM THE GREAT DEPRESSION

A Tour Through A Collection of Letters
To An Atlanta Newspaperwoman
by Julia Kirk Blackwelder

The Great Depression was an anxious visitor to the South, arriving early and staying late. Farm owner and tenant farmer, businessman and mill-hand, housewife and working woman watched helplessly as incomes dwindled and disappeared. In 1938, for example, the average annual cash income in one Georgia county was \$38.

In the face of persistent unemployment and repeated crop failures, victims of the Depression besieged public personalities with individual requests for jobs and relief. Letters commenting on economic conditions and urgent pleas for help were addressed not only to public officials, but also to corporate executives, journalists and

Hollywood stars. Hundreds of Southerners confided their problems to Mildred Seydell, an Atlanta newspaper columnist.

Seydell, a member of a prominent Georgia family, began contributing occasional articles to the Hearst-owned *Atlanta Georgian* in 1924. She later became editor of the food page, achieved some recognition as a Hearst representative at the Scopes "monkey" trial, and in 1930 published her only novel, *Secret Fathers*. Throughout the '30s she wrote a daily advice column which commented on a variety of topics from manners to morals, entertainment to politics. She encouraged correspondence from her readers and occasionally printed excerpts from their letters in the *Georgian*. But in 1939 the Hearst corporation discontinued the *Georgian*, and Seydell moved on to other forms of writing. She eventually donated her papers to Emory University, and included in that collection is the correspondence she received from her readers as well as copies of her responses.

In all Seydell received more than one thousand requests for advice or assistance, most of which she was unable to answer. At times she passed readers' needs on to welfare agencies, and on rare occasions she extended small loans to readers.

Seydell's letters were primarily from Georgians, but some of the *Georgian's* 75,000 readers lived in Alabama, Tennessee, and North and South Carolina, and letters came from these states as well. Although black citizens were among her readers, most of Seydell's correspondence came from whites. The majority of the letters were from women, and no requests for charity came from men. Both men and women asked Seydell to help them find jobs and both complained about working conditions. Excerpts from some of the letters convey the pathos and the despair as well as the courage of Depression America.

The city of Atlanta had enjoyed growth and prosperity during the late 1920s, and in the early months of the Depression the city's residents hesitated to admit that the boom days were over. Some Atlantans, surveying commercial activity or pockets of wealth in the city, rejected the Depression as rumor, or misinterpreted the popularity of cheap entertainment. One woman wrote that the city's substantial residential districts and its many autos offered an assurance of prosperity. In 1931 another Atlanta resident wrote Seydell,

People says it is hard time. And they are suffering for foods & clothing & Etc. But you can believe it or not, Last night at the Capitol & Georgia Theatre I watched the line of people which blocked the sidewalk trying to buy a 60¢ ticket for the show. Also the ten

cent store was so crowded with candy buyers you couldn't walk. Do you think there is any depression here if so please explain in your column. I think the biggest thing is talk.

Other Seydell readers believed that journalists and public officials were unduly optimistic about economic conditions. A banker recommended, "I have reached the conclusion that we should tell the FACTS to the people of Atlanta about the unemployed in our midst." The letter, written early in 1931, went on to warn that the denials of crisis would not solve the problem.

Some readers suggested means of coping with hard times. A few women wrote that prayer was the only thing that saved them from despair. Readers warned against risky investments. A Jakin, Georgia, woman wrote, "I would suggest Postal Savings as we know this is safe. Old age is coming and we should provide for it by practicing thrift and economy." (1930)

As early as 1931 a few readers of the *Georgian* sensed the need for strong leadership and a unified program to spur recovery. A veteran from Tennessee advised,

Rite now what is needed is Leadership and Co-operation or we will become a mob. First a Leader, behind that Leader, good hard Cash with the Proper Spirit behind it. The whole Country seems to be going around and round, getting no where.

Seydell also heard from a supporter of the "part-time work for all" movement.

We are told in the president's message to Congress that income and employment were in December about 80% to 85% of what they were in 1928. Certainly if all of our workers were employed on an 80% normal time basis as is advocated by this writer the return to normalcy would not only be materially speeded up, but the need for charity due to [un]employment would be practically eliminated. (Atlanta, 1931).

Before it was commonly acknowledged that the nation was undergoing a depression, workers who lost their jobs in 1930 and '31 blamed themselves for their misfortunes. One unemployed Atlantan confided,

I am a complete failure. I have failed in everything I have undertaken. I have loved and lost. I have studied for years and accomplished nothing. I have given to others and I am hopelessly in debt. There are times when I feel like giving up in despair - it seems I belong to the race of men who don't fit in. . . .

Yours truly, a nobody.

Unemployed workers complained to Seydell that they met coldness from friends and indifference from employers besieged with work applications. An unemployed woman wrote that people she had considered her friends had turned their backs on her misery.

Really some people do not seem to realize that times are as hard for people as they really are. One party told me a few days ago that she did not know whether times were as hard as people said they were or not. She has a good position and evidently has had no cut or does not realize or care about her fellow creature. (Atlanta, 1931).

An Atlanta man moralized, "We have all been hit by the lull in business more or less. I for one [was] hit and hit hard, but I kept a stiff upper lip as it were, got out and got another job." (1931). He recommended the same course of action for other persons out of work.

A large number of unemployed persons who confided in Seydell had grown bitter and desperate. In Atlanta, one woman warned, "If work cannot be gotten soon, thousands will have to be obliterated in some way." Another job seeker charged, "Numbers of employers are taking advantage of the general depression and are cutting salaries when there is not cause for it."

After two years of the Depression, Atlanta's citizens grew more fevered in their pronouncements of crisis. In December of 1932 Seydell received a letter stating, "The oppressed are crying day and night pleading in their heart for a leader one to champion their cause." In that same year, another Atlantan warned,

A day of reckoning is coming – a glorious day when those who produce all the wealth of the world will not be forced to walk the streets from time to time in pinching hunger and sore distress. With every new recruit to the unemployed army the chain of Capitalism is weakened – some great day . . . the present system will fall, like Lucifer, never to rise again.

There are here in Atlanta thousands of able bodied men who have produced untold wealth walking the streets trying hard to find some means of making an honest living in this land of the free and home of the brave. O for a Lenin or a Trotsky!

While the needs of the unemployed were the most pressing, anger and despair were also voiced by persons who remained employed. Many workers were frustrated by their failure to advance to higher paid or more responsible positions. A female clerical worker complained,

I'm now 22 years of age, began working at 19 after finishing High School at the age of 18. I feel like my four years have just been wasted, as my life in the business world has been a failure as far as I'm able to judge. For since I began to work, it has been nothing to my mind, but just simple jobs, that required no preparation at all and held no future. (Atlanta, 1931).

Discontent was particularly prevalent among mill and factory hands in Atlanta and the surrounding towns, partly because the memory of strikes or shutdowns of the past haunted the present. A woman, whose husband had traveled a hundred miles before finding work, wrote Seydell,

Almost a year ago our mill struck, it was shut down & we were without funds, and at times even the necessary meal. There were two babies, to make matters worse, who needed milk, clothes, and at this trying time one needed a doctor's care. (Thomaston, Georgia, 1935).

Another woman remembered, "Owing to a strike in our mill something over a year ago this community was almost at war. Then a three months stop last Summer. Our church was almost helpless." (Commerce, Georgia, 1936). A wife and mother of mill workers complained that the mood in the mills was always "blue" because of the many collections which were taken for fellow workers who had met with disaster.

Young people had hopes of breaking away from the factory, but their dreams were apt to end in bitter frustration:

I am born when the great war was and matured in a great depression with so elementary an education that I know about things a very little, there is only left for me to wonder about the world and mostly its people in a detached and futile sort of way. . . . I work in a factory doing dull and uninteresting work for fourteen dollars a week. There are many of us young and futile, in factories here in Atlanta and elsewhere and we are the only people unmentioned in events. (1931).

Early marriage was a fact of life in Southern society which saddled men and women still in their teens with parental responsibilities and thus tightened the hold of factory and mill on their energies. A teenage father, disappointed in his job and his marriage, wrote, "I cannot quit but I cannot go on." (Griffin, Georgia, 1931). Three years later he was holding the same job, a position his father had occupied before him. Then 21 years old, he had given up earlier hopes of escaping the

mill and confessed to Seydell,

I work in the mill because when I married I threw away my chance of ever being anything. . . I work in a mill, I guess you'd say a lowly common working boy, but my life once meant as much to me as yours do to you.

A young woman related a similar tale of how marriage had destroyed her opportunity for a bright future:

I am just seething within like a volcano, sending forth a rumbling sound ere it goes into eruption. I am bursting with red hot revolt, I want to snatch things up and tear them into shreds. Throw things out the window and say the meanest things to those around me.

I am just another factory girl cramped, bound down, held within an iron cage of my own making – futility beating a pair of helpless wings against the iron bars, for freedom. I am just a factory girl, working the long hours of the night that others spend in refreshing sleep, earning barely enough to keep me alive, and hating every minute of my existence. I have just said that the prison that holds me is of my own making and that is really true. A few years ago I had the wonderful opportunity – that most girls consider the turning point of their lives – that of receiving as fine an education as can be given to any wealthy man's child. But I cast it aside, for matrimony. Just a fifteen year old child – I ran away from school. Too late I realized my mistake. Then I tried to play square and live up to my contract – but somewhere in my makeup there's a weak spot. Anyhow I gave it up. During the four years of this nightmare I call it – I gave birth to two beautiful children. They in themselves have been some recompense for this terrible mistake. Though it only drew the cord that binds me a little tighter. . . I've tried hard not to think of the past and hope and build for a brighter future, but I am no nearer



Mildred Seydell, 1973

Photos courtesy of The Atlanta Journal

a solution to my problem than at any other time.

Between 1930 and its closing in 1939, the *Georgian's* circulation expanded by nearly 15,000. The growth of the *Georgian* apparently included a geographic widening as more and more of Mildred Seydell's correspondents after 1935 were from outside the Atlanta area. Whether farm conditions or the paper's growth was the primary factor, Seydell received requests for assistance from farm women after 1935 and not before.

Farm wives complained that loneliness compounded the misery of rural poverty. A woman from Bowman, Georgia, wrote,

I am just a farm woman living far out in isolated place and must make my own pleasure and diversion, because for long while

have been practically an invalid. From so much illness and depression we lost our nice farm home and now living away from old home and friends. . . I feel I cannot live long unless I have more nourishment to give me strength.

The following year, apparently having moved again, the same woman reported that she had spent most of the year in bed and that her husband had also been ill. Her health had deteriorated to the point that she had difficulty controlling a pencil, and consequently her letter is difficult to read. She besought Seydell,

If some kind person would only lend me some money to buy [a cow] we could use her until fall & then if we cannot pay the money we could sell the cow and repay the lender. . . I am most desperate for if I don't get nourishing food I fear I cannot live. I have tried to get some Gov. relief, but there is no fund available in this County for the sick & we are not eligible for the old age pension being in our late fifties. (Carnesville, 1938).

In an unusual gesture, Seydell loaned the couple \$35 for the purchase of a cow and their health gradually improved. They were eager to repay the

loan, but tenant farming was a losing proposition. Some months later the grateful woman wrote,

Now dear Mrs. Seydell I hate to write you this, but must. I am worried because I see no way of paying you soon. My husband has little crop he pays landlord half, boll weevil infestation was heavy, then very dry, last but not least the deplorable low price, he will get 3½ bales of cotton, the fertilizer people will get his part, leaving us practically nothing.

In 1939 they were able to pay \$5 against the loan, but their hardships continued:

It's been a bad cotton year here (our only crop). Husband had nice prospects early in the spring until the "wilt" attacked his little crop. And it began to die, just like was burned. The gov. allowed him only five acres, so much of it died his crop was very short.

From his proceeds the farmer had to pay for the use of a mule and the fertilizer, again leaving him almost no cash income.

Despite New Deal programs intended to improve rural life, there were farm families for whom the regulations of public assistance seemed only to make survival more difficult. In desperation a young mother wrote,

I've just met with a problem I cannot solve alone. I am a Mother of six children the oldest is only 11 years old the youngest 18 months and Im expecting another in March. We couldn't get any crop for 1936 because we could neither furnish ourselves or had any stock. So here we are having made out on a little work once in a while all summer. And then in Aug I had to have a serious operation and now I'm not able to feed & clothe our six children as my husband couldnt find anything at all to do was compelled to get on relief job at \$1.28 a day 16 days a month. Well you take 8 meals 3 times a day out of \$1.28 and what will you have left is 24 meals and what kind of meals do you have? We have to buy everything we eat. We have nothing except what we buy. Our bedclothes are threadbare our clothes the same. No shoes and no money to buy yet the relief say they cant help us as he is working. Can he work naked. Can he sleep cold. I dont know of any one at all that can help me and I know we cant go on like this.

We have four children in school and they cant go on unless they have some warm clothes when cold weather sets in....Do you know of any people in Atlanta that have any used clothes they would give in exchange for

piecing quilts or quilting. Id be glad to do anything I can in exchange for clothes to keep our children in school.

I hate to be like this but can a person that is willing to work for a living and that honest and disable to help themselves sit idle and see their small children suffer day after day without enough food or clothes to keep their bodies warm when there are thousands of people with plenty to give if they knew your need.

How it hurts to know that you are almost starving in the land of plenty. (Commerce, Georgia, 1936).

Seydell passed this woman's request on to an Atlanta charity which sent her a parcel of clothing.

A consistent theme in the letters which Seydell received from rural and urban areas is the shame of dependence, the need for the dignity of labor. Following the earlier expressions of helplessness, of fear that limited work options meant being "held within an iron cage," and the even more desperate appeals for food and shelter, there was ultimately anger at being made objects of charity.

In 1930 an unemployed Atlanta widow expressed her resentment against welfare agencies:

What is the great idea of these so called charitable organizations - who - instead of getting work of some kind, for self respecting people, send around sporty painted up young ladies, in fine cars, to give a stale handout; which if eaten today, would find the unfortunate cold and hungry tomorrow?

An Atlanta worker wrote Seydell in 1932 that "Charity is noble and necessary but we don't all want to be charity patients. What we want is a fighting chance, a square deal." Similarly, a member of the Georgia House of Representatives advised Seydell, "My mind tells me that it is not Charity people (the majority) are wishing - it's self-respect and that self-respect only is gained by the toil of our own hands." (1933). And an Atlanta man praised the intentions of President Roosevelt, but the letter writer added, "He [Roosevelt] would *not* sell his manhood for a FERA loaf of bread." □

Julia Kirk Blackwelder indexed the Seydell Collection while employed by the Emory University Library from 1973 to 1975. She is the author of a number of articles on Southern society, is studying women in Southern cities during the Depression, and currently teaches history and American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

THE GREENSBORO SIT-INS

by William Chafe

On February 1, 1960, four black students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical (A&T) College walked into Woolworth's in downtown Greensboro, purchased a few small items, and then sat at the lunch counter seeking equal service with white patrons. Their action sparked the student phase of the "civil rights revolution." Within days, the sit-in movement had spread to 54 cities in nine states. Two months after the first sit-ins, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was formed in Raleigh, North Carolina. Within a year, more than 100 cities had engaged in at least some desegregation of public facilities in response to student-led demonstrations. The 1960s stage of the freedom struggle had begun.

In light of subsequent history, it is not surprising that many have viewed the Greensboro sit-ins as a watershed, a sharp break with the past and a departure point for the future. News accounts at the time emphasized the immediate events that had spurred the students to action — a recently viewed TV documentary on Gandhi, or an experience with bus terminal segregation — rather than long-term causes. Indeed, some have interpreted sit-ins almost as an "immaculate conception," a miraculous new movement in stark contrast to the pre-1960 behavior of the black community.

Although this approach is dramatic, the Greensboro sit-ins can be understood only as part of an ongoing process of race relations and struggle within a community. This article examines the environment out of which the sit-ins grew and demonstrates how the black quest for freedom has been a continuous process, marked by shifts in direction, but fundamentally a story of each generation transmitting strength and support to its children.



Photographs from the Greensboro Daily News, courtesy of the NC State Archives

The action by the four students to sit-in at Woolworth's had roots deep in the black community.



To a passing observer in the late 1940s, Greensboro might have appeared either as a striking example of “the new South,” ready to set aside old patterns of racial oppression, or as a smoother version of the traditional South, disguising its racism with a “progressive” image. Most whites preferred the first interpretation, pointing to the city’s cosmopolitan air, the presence of three colleges and two universities, and Greensboro’s history of good race relations, which included the election of a Jew as president of the Chamber of Commerce and then mayor of the city. Most blacks, on the other hand, leaned toward the second interpreta-

tion. Although the black community in Greensboro had historically ranked ahead of other areas in the state in education, median income and occupation level, one black leader spoke of Greensboro as a “nice-nasty town”; and Nell Coley, a veteran black schoolteacher, commented that “there has been a kind of liberal strand running through the air . . . but make no mistake about it, Greensboro is not all that liberal.”

In fact, there was evidence to support both points of view. Some white liberals and black educators had been involved in interracial activities throughout the '40s. The Guilford County Interracial Commission, a private citizens' group, quietly lobbied local merchants to remove Jim Crow signs from the water fountains in downtown stores. United Church Women, an interdenominational group, held interracial

social activities and discussion groups, as did a few faculty members of the local colleges. The YWCA integrated its board of directors during the late '40s, and in the early '50s hired a black secretary-receptionist. Perhaps most supportive of the “liberal” Greensboro image was the election in 1951 of Dr. William Hampton — a Negro — to the City Council by one of the largest majorities given any candidate.

On the other hand, a layer of paternalism and resistance to change could be detected in many of these activities. Rev. Edward Edmonds, who came to Greensboro in the 1950s, noted that although a Human Relations Council existed, the “only place it could meet was the YWCA.” Furthermore, as soon as the YWCA integrated its board and began to hold interracial luncheons, many of its most prominent members resigned. The hiring of a black secre-

tary proved especially controversial. The director of the United Fund alerted the "Y" leadership that it was alienating people and endangering contributions. Within a few months, the secretary had been hired away at double the salary by the president of predominately black A&T College. When one white liberal benefactor wished to donate a swimming pool to the black YMCA, he attempted to set as a condition that the black YWCA join the "YM" so that there would be only one pool for all blacks, thereby avoiding the prospect of black girls swimming at the downtown "white" YWCA. It seemed that interracial activity was sanctioned only when it involved whites going into the black community, or when it did not visibly offend the traditional racial etiquette of the South.

In this context, the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown vs. the Board of Education* decision provided a crucial test for the leadership of white Greensboro. The same night the decision was handed down, a group of Greensboro leaders met at the home of school board chairman D. Edward Hudgins to discuss their course of action. The next night, Hudgins brought with him to the regular school board meeting a resolution committing Greensboro to a policy of implementing the Court's edict as the law of the land. The ruling, Hudgins said, was "one of the most momentous events" in the history of education, and he urged his colleagues not to "fight or attempt to circumvent it." School Superintendent Benjamin Smith, a devoutly religious man respected by many black leaders for his support of steps toward racial equality, sounded the same theme: "It is unthinkable that we will try to abrogate the laws of the United States of America, and it is also unthinkable that the public schools should be abolished." Dr. David Jones, the only black member of the school board, supported the responses of Hudgins and Smith. "Isn't there a possibility," he asked, "that we of Greensboro may furnish leadership in the way we approach this problem? Not only to the community, but to the state and to the South?" After a brief debate, the board voted 6-0, with one abstention, to endorse Hudgins' resolution.

The morning newspaper applauded the decision, and within a few days the Greensboro Jaycees and the Ministerial Fellowship added their endorsements. But the hope of Dr. Jones and other

blacks that Greensboro would quickly integrate its schools soon gave way before the reality of inaction and resistance. Most of the powerful white churches in the community failed to follow through on the endorsement by the Ministerial Fellowship. More importantly, the leaders of the largest corporations refused to support desegregation actively. Spencer Love, head of Burlington Industries (the state's largest employer, headquartered in Greensboro), decided it was not appropriate for him to become involved in the issue. Other businessmen quickly followed his lead.

A few days after the Hudgins resolution passed, the newspaper provided a harbinger of subsequent policy in an editorial entitled "Time for the Golden Mean." "During 50 years," the *Greensboro Daily News* argued, "the Negro race has moved rapidly to its rightful place in the mainstream of the nation, but these extremists on both sides—the Talmadges and the NAACP—should remember the moderate views held by most Southerners. They cannot be pushed too fast." The question was, what did it mean to be moderate? Governor Luther Hodges gave his answer in the summer of 1955 when he urged North Carolinians to pursue a "moderate" policy of voluntary segregation.



Black Greensboro, meanwhile, pursued its own agenda. There had long been a strong tradition of educational and economic self-improvement within the black community. Nearly three thousand blacks in 1960 had some college education—almost twice as many as in Durham, a comparable city. Many blacks were property owners, taxpayers and registered voters. Furthermore, through such institutions as the YMCA, the Greensboro Men's Club, and various church groups, black citizens had organized for their own protection and advancement.

Nevertheless, there were two different styles of activism in black Greensboro. One directly challenged the oppressiveness of white power, while the other sought to work within the white power structure for black advancement. Randolph Blackwell embodied the first style. Born in Greensboro during the 1920s, he grew up in a family which instilled values of independence and pride. Al-

though Blackwell's parents were not well-off, they would not permit him to hold any jobs that might place him in a position subservient to whites, such as delivery boy or newspaper carrier. Blackwell's father was a railroad worker who was devoted to the teachings of the black nationalist leader, Marcus Garvey, and Blackwell recalls attending meetings in Greensboro where as many as 50 followers of Garvey would be present. While Blackwell was still a boy, his father took him to Atlanta to visit the prison where Garvey was held, and to see a black insurance company with all black workers. In high school, he was inspired by two teachers at Dudley High who were active members of the NAACP; and in 1943, after hearing an address by Ella Baker, a field secretary for the NAACP, he helped to start a Youth Chapter in Greensboro. Five years later, as a student at A&T, Blackwell ran for the state assembly on a platform that challenged the entire white power structure. He also organized a voter registration campaign and worked to expose and defeat black politicians who were hired by whites to influence black votes. Eventually, in the 1960s, Blackwell became an important leader in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

The second style of leadership was typified by Dr. F. D. Bluford, president of A&T College. Since A&T's existence depended upon white legislative support, Bluford repeatedly found himself accommodating white expectations; he discouraged protest on the campus and performed those public acts of subservience to white leaders necessary to improve A&T's funding. Faculty members quickly got the message that, as one put it, "you could make it here if you didn't go too fast," or protest too much. Participation in the NAACP was discouraged and any form of overt resistance was forbidden. As a price for his accommodation, Bluford was denounced as "the last of the handkerchief heads," and the president's house was referred to by students as "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

In specific situations, the two kinds of leadership occasionally worked together in unpredictable ways, as a private conversation between Blackwell and Bluford illustrates. During his 1948 campaign for the state legislature, Blackwell was lambasting local textile magnates and posting campaign literature around the A&T campus. He knew his actions embarrassed the administration, and he expected reprisals. One day, while Blackwell was

talking with some students, Bluford walked by and said, "Blackwell, I'd like to see you in my office." "Here it comes," thought Blackwell. "Now I've had it." Instead, when he arrived at Bluford's office, the president told him that he was free to use one of the college auditoriums if he wished. But he must never ask for permission, because if Bluford were called on the carpet, he needed to be able to say that he had not sanctioned Blackwell's actions. Blackwell concluded that despite Bluford's dissembling before the white community, he was a man with "a sense of dignity . . . a man [who, though] thoroughly discredited and constantly abused . . . also had some of the same yearnings as those of us that were out there raising hell."

The conflict between the two styles of leadership continued into the 1950s with first one, then the other dominating. Some black principals refused to allow teachers in black schools to solicit for NAACP memberships, and many members insisted on paying their dues privately and in cash rather than risking economic reprisal by having their names publicly associated with the NAACP. Nevertheless, other leaders kept the spirit of public protest visible. When Hobart Jarrett arrived in 1949 to teach at Bennett College, a black women's college in Greensboro, he found a newly formed organization, the Greensboro Citizens Association, combating politicians who sold black votes and working for candidates whose programs benefited the black community. The GCA lobbied effectively for paved streets, better lighting and improved sewage, and quickly became identified with Dr. William Hampton's campaign for the city council. Jarrett was also instrumental in a voter registration drive conducted by Bennett College students and faculty. "Greensboro black people saw something they had never seen in their lives," he recalled. "Long lines at the Community Center [of] people waiting in line to get registered." Hampton's election in 1951, together with the appointment of Dr. David Jones to the school board in 1952, suggested that the political self-assertion of the black community was beginning to make a mark.

Throughout the 1950s, the protest movement resisted white attempts to uphold the "old order" and demanded desegregation in schools and public facilities. The *Brown* decision had not caused the protest, recalled Vance Chavis, a teacher and politician, but it helped

spur "people to come out and express how they felt more . . . a lot of black people sometimes have a way of answering you the way they thought you wanted to hear." Now, it became more likely that blacks would answer the way they actually felt.

The most dramatic example of overt protest came on the A&T campus itself. North Carolina Governor Luther Hodges had been invited to attend the Founder's Day Ceremony in the fall of 1955. The invitation was extended before Hodges' voluntary segregation speech in August of that year, and before his appeal to the all-black North Carolina Teachers' Association to endorse separate schools — an appeal which they unanimously rejected. Although Bluford had warned students they would lose their jobs if they misbehaved, campus observers knew that if Hodges insulted the audience, he would receive an appropriate response. Arriving 15 minutes after the ceremonies had begun, Hodges in effect gave two speeches. In the first he praised the founders of A&T and scrupulously referred to blacks as "Negroes." Then, he launched an attack on the NAACP, specifically criticizing "some of your unwise leaders." In the process, he began to use the word "Nigra." Almost instantly, the students started to scrape their feet on the floor and cough.

The next day, newspapers throughout the state reported that black students at A&T had humiliated and embarrassed their governor. But the black newspaper, *The Carolina Times*, called the protest "a product of three-quarters of a century of flagrant disrespect for the humanity of the Negro . . . another link in a chain of events showing obvious and outspoken Negro dissatisfaction with an unwise and inept public servant." Two days after the Hodges incident, Dr. Bluford went to the hospital. Within a month, he was dead.

The demonstrations at A&T set the tone for the increasing assertiveness of black protest during the middle and late '50s. A group of black professionals went to the local public golf course in 1955 demanding the right to play. The city had rented the course for a nominal sum to a "private" concession. As the blacks arrived, the golf pro cursed, and asked why they were there. "For a cause — the cause of democracy," they answered. That night, the black protesters were arrested. Eventually, the federal courts ruled that all citizens had a right to play on the course. But then the clubhouse

burned down mysteriously and the city ordered the golf course closed. Two years later, another group of blacks demanded that the Lindley Park swimming pool be opened to blacks and whites alike. Again, they were turned down, but this time the city avoided a court contest by immediately closing down the pool and selling it, as well as the black public pool, to private buyers.

The greatest upsurge of activism, however, occurred with regard to the public schools. "One of the things that the NAACP recognized very early," Rev. Edward Edmonds, a protest leader, later recalled, "was that one of the ways to move black folks is to move them about their children. You can't be conditioned for years to achieve, to become somebody, and then have your kids denied. School was a very sensitive thing . . . a pressure point . . . so we had all kinds of support from people willing to go down and confront the school board." Beginning in December, 1955, the parent-teacher associations of two black high schools, Dudley and Lincoln, sent frequent delegations to the monthly school board meeting to demand better facilities for black schools. In the 18 months between October, 1956, and April, 1958, representatives of black organizations appeared at all but two meetings to protest and lobby for their children's education.

Black parents were especially persistent in their demands for a new gymnasium at Dudley High School. With skill and shrewdness, the Dudley delegation demanded that either a new gymnasium be started immediately or that the white high school be opened for black basketball games. The board stalled, but eventually said that the building schedule could not be altered and that the white gym was being used on every occasion that Dudley had a basketball game planned. Not to be outwitted, the Dudley PTA offered to rearrange the schedule to play on the nights when the gym was free. With no other way out, the school board instructed the superintendent to make the Senior High available on nights when it was not in use. Shortly after the Dudley team played its first game at the white school, the board of education shifted its building schedule and constructed a new Dudley gymnasium. As the NAACP leader Rev. Edmonds recalled, "The minute you use their facilities, they find the money."

The persistent campaign of black parents and the NAACP strikingly demonstrated the increased assertiveness of

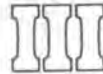


Picket line in front of the Mayfair Cafeteria, February, 1960.

blacks. They would not permit the school board to deny their children a better life. Despite the apparent contradictions between demands for a new black facility and desegregation, these two prongs of the NAACP attack were complementary, reinforcing each other in the quest for a better education for black children. Furthermore, each bespoke a growing commitment to open protest in the black community.

Meanwhile, a number of black parents applied to have their children reassigned to previously all-white schools. Although many whites claimed that these applications came from outside agitators and elite educators, the parents actually reflected a broad cross section of black Greensboro, including a black milkman, a printer, an express handler, a barber, a maid, a student at A&T, a minister and a worker in the stockroom of a local mail-order house. All were willing to undergo social ostracism and economic intimidation in order to seek a better life for their children.

It would be a mistake, of course, to over-emphasize activism and under-emphasize the continued intimidation of protesters. When Rev. Edmonds left Bennett College in 1959, many blacks believed it was at least in part because he was "too far ahead of his time" and had stirred up too much trouble as the head of the NAACP, thereby invoking the hostility of powerful whites and their black allies. Though the tension between assertiveness and caution remained unresolved, there could be little question that by the end of the 1950s black leadership as a whole was moving decisively toward overt challenge to white power.



The white community, meanwhile, remained largely indifferent to black demands, and in particular, failed to implement desegregation quickly. Events soon proved that the near unanimity of the school board's vote for compliance obscured significant differences over what the Hudgins resolution meant. Although board chairman Ed Hudgins had drafted the compliance resolution, he believed that desegregation would be "traumatic for the average white southerner," and did not contemplate any immediate action toward desegregation. John Foster, school board chairman from 1955 to 1958, viewed the board's action as "more or less an easing of conscience." Thus, the primary purpose of the school board action was to neutralize the issue and prevent the kind of disruption that might hurt the city's image. As had been true so often in the past, the promise of change obscured an agenda for continued control.

The dominant view of the school board grew out of a profound misreading of black community sentiments. Foster was convinced that "the average Negro does not want desegregation" — a judgment he based on personal contact with the maid in his home, the man who drove his truck, and the janitor in his place of business. Although he acknowledged that a new assertiveness had "crept" into the manner of blacks who visited school board

meetings, he viewed such delegations as atypical. The NAACP, Foster believed, was like a labor union that claimed to have a lot of support but whose members "never paid any dues."

Significantly, the white members of the school board sought corroboration for their point of view from their black colleagues who, given the power relationships surrounding the racial contacts in the South, could only achieve positions of eminence by seeming to accept prevailing white assumptions. Thus, while the black community perceived Dr. William Hampton, who replaced David Jones as the only black school board member, and Dr. J.A. Tarpley, the supervisor of black schools, as strong supporters of racial equality, many white board members saw them as allies working for the common goal of maintaining order and controlling the situation. White leaders praised Hampton as a "level-minded" realist who could be depended upon to help chart a "moderate" course between extremes. Foster noted that when a black activist became particularly "obnoxious," Dr. Hampton could be counted upon to "handle him well." White leaders relied on both men to "look after" the black community; indeed, their presence gave the school board an excuse to discount the more militant assertions of other black activists, since, after all, Hampton and Tarpley "represented" the black community. Both men, of course, were playing other roles than that of accommodationists, and frequently stood up in support of black delegations to the school board. Nevertheless, white officials focused

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selectively on those cues which conformed to their own preconceptions and needs.

On the state level, meanwhile, Luther Hodges had quickly assumed an anti-black and pro-segregationist position. In the summer of 1955, months before the 1956 gubernatorial election, he charged that the NAACP was trying to destroy the "good race relations" in North Carolina. Although his own advisors assessed public sentiment as apathetic and even tinged with a feeling of inevitability about integration, Hodges warned of a crisis unless the state acted to forestall integrationists.

The state legislature implemented Hodges' retreat from compliance in 1956 when, at a special session, it passed the Pearsall Plan, a series of constitutional amendments that provided "safety valves" against integration. The plan permitted local school districts to close schools if desegregation took place, and granted tuition aid for white students in those districts to attend private schools. Advocates of the plan cleverly ruled out other options and controlled the debate over ratification by the manner in which they defined the issues. The Pearsall Committee claimed that the voters had only two choices: they could either save the public schools by voting yes, or risk losing the schools by voting no.

In this manner, the Pearsall Committee defined the political spectrum by portraying the Pearsall Plan as a middle path between the extremes of the violence of die-hard white racists, and the demands of black integrationists. Through such public opinion manipu-

lation, the committee equated the NAACP with the KKK. The *Charlotte Observer* called the Pearsall Plan a blend of "conscience and common sense . . . an effort to preserve the public schools and at the same time North Carolina's identity with constitutional government." In the words of the *Shelby Star*, the Plan would "maintain separate school systems," but with a "tone of moderation." Although many Greensboro white liberals would later blame Hodges and the Pearsall Plan for preventing a racial breakthrough in their own school system, white executives and politicians had, by their silence, recognized the right of the governor to speak for them. Of the local school hierarchy, only Superintendent of Schools Benjamin Smith opposed the Pearsall Plan. In Greensboro, as in the state at large, white leaders simply were not ready to deal with blacks who demanded their rights. As the Pearsall Committee staff wrote on one occasion about a court hearing, "We were shocked at the . . . rudeness and complete self-confidence of the Negro attorneys." The juxtaposition of words did not seem a coincidence.

It is impossible to overestimate the disastrous impact of the plan. It postponed meaningful desegregation in North Carolina for more than a decade — far longer than in some states where "massive resistance" was practiced. It placed the entire burden for seeking justice on the shoulders of the victim, without aid from the state or the law. Above all, it gave the moral sanction of the state to a policy of circum-

venting significant movement toward racial equality.

The Pearsall Plan provided the context for token desegregation of Greensboro schools in the late summer of 1957. School board members understood that they would have to desegregate, but could proceed slowly, in a manner designed to limit the number of blacks and reduce the possibility of white dissension. Black applicants for transfer to white schools had to fill out complicated forms and have them notarized, while white parents could secure automatic reassignment for their children if they objected to desegregated schools. Most black requests for transfer were denied, notwithstanding the cogent reasons offered in the applications. At the same time, board chairman John Foster arranged with Winston-Salem and Charlotte to announce their desegregation plans on the same night as Greensboro. If we act separately, he told them, "the segregationists get three shots at us. If we act together, they get one . . ." One month after the school board meeting, six black students entered previously all-white schools, one in the senior high school, the others together in Gillespie Elementary School.

From a national point of view, Greensboro's action seemed a "progressive" breakthrough. *Newsweek* called the city a symbol of the "new south, astir with new liberalism." A group of Princeton sociologists heaped praise on the city's leadership, predicting that "desegregation will not only surely triumph but will do so quickly." But from the perspective of Greensboro's blacks, such phrases de-



The Four: David Richmond, Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair, Jr., Joseph McNeill

scribed a city on another planet. By 1957 the hopes raised by the board's 1954 resolution had evaporated. The black community perceived the 1957 desegregation plan as carrying out the spirit of the Pearsall Plan — a spirit they identified as unmistakably racist. "The white power structure was trying to appease," a black activist recalled. "They wanted a token thing . . . so that they could call Greensboro the gateway city, an all-American city — and they got it."

The black perception was accurate. A leader of the Pearsall Committee had written that one of his worst nightmares was being in a federal court trying to defend the school board "when a showing is made that nowhere in all the state . . . had a single Negro been admitted to any of the more than 2,000 schools attended by white students." In this context, the Greensboro decision to desegregate on a token basis constituted an integral part of an effort to protect the state by salvaging the Pearsall Plan. John Foster recalled how angry and frustrated he became when segregationists from eastern counties attacked him for his liberalism. "I tried to tell them," he said, "that dammit, we were holding a big umbrella over them. We're protecting them really, because we are at least getting into a position where the state of North Carolina can't be forced into integrating."

The history of the next three years only confirmed the growing anger of blacks at white duplicity. Black students and parents were frequently victims of harassment and reprisal. Josephine Boyd, the first black girl to attend all-white

Senior High School, experienced repeated insults and intimidation. Her dress was splattered with eggs, a boy spit on her sweater, and her mother's car was pelted with rocks. Often, she felt like leaving the situation entirely, and only the support of family, two or three student friends and some teachers sustained her.

The school board's approach to desegregation was perhaps best revealed in 1959 when the parents of four black students sought to restrain the city and state from operating segregated schools through a lawsuit demanding that their children be admitted to the all-white Caldwell High School. Thurgood Marshall, and later Jack Greenberg of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, argued the case in court. In an effort to forestall what the school attorney called one of the most important suits in North Carolina history, the board merged the all-black Pearson school with Caldwell. Four months later, the board transferred every white student out of Caldwell and redrew the district lines so that Caldwell became an all-black school with an all-black faculty. In the meantime, the board successfully argued in court that the legal action on behalf of the four black students had become moot since the students were now in the school they had applied to. The episode highlighted the gap between promise and performance. As one black minister declared, "these folks were primarily interested in evading, and they weren't even embarrassed."

Not surprisingly, as the decade drew to a close, blacks intensified their pro-

test activities. NAACP membership on a local level rose from 12,000 in 1958 to 23,000 in 1960. When Martin Luther King, Jr., came to Greensboro in 1958, the audience filled not only the chapel at Bennett College, but a number of auditoriums on the campus into which King's address was piped by loudspeaker. Most Greensboro blacks had reached their own conclusion on the sincerity of the white leadership structure in promoting desegregation, seeming to agree with the assessment of a Little Rock school official, writing to an associate in North Carolina: "You North Carolinians have devised one of the cleverest techniques of perpetuating segregation that we have seen."

IV

It was against this background that the student sit-ins of 1960 began. Three of the original four sit-in demonstrators spent their adolescent years in Greensboro attending Dudley High School. There, they encountered teachers who instilled in them a sense of pride and dignity — teachers like Nell Coley, mentioned over and over again by black activists as a model of strength. By her actions, as well as her words, Coley inspired the young to realize their potential. "I had to tell kids that you must not accept," she said. "I don't care if they do push and shove you, you must not accept that . . . You are who you are." Through the literature she assigned and the discussions she conducted, Coley drove home the

On Sunday, January 31, Ezell Blair, Jr., came home and asked his parents if they would be embarrassed if he got in trouble.

"Why," his parents wondered. "Because," he said, "tomorrow we're going to do something that will shake up this town." The next day, the four friends took their historic journey to Woolworth's.

message that nothing was beyond the reach of her students if they would only dare boldly. The same message came from Ezell Blair, Sr., a shop teacher and NAACP activist who was the father of one of the sit-in demonstrators, and from Rev. Otis Hairston, who led the NAACP membership drive in 1959 and who was minister to two of the students.

Three of the four initial demonstrators also participated in a revitalized NAACP youth group headed by Rev. Edward Edmonds. Edmonds had been involved in the original March On Washington Movement in 1941 and had helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Each week from 1956 on, the Youth Chapter met at St. James Presbyterian Church or one of the black colleges in Greensboro to discuss local politics and the freedom struggle. Ezell Blair, Jr., later the spokesman for the sit-in movement, recalled that the Montgomery Bus Boycott provided a focus for many of the NAACP Youth Group's discussions. "It was like a catalyst — it started things rolling." When Martin Luther King, Jr., came to Greensboro in 1958, his presence particularly affected the young. King's sermon was "so strong," Blair recalled, "I could feel my heart palpitating. It brought tears to my eyes."

By the fall of 1959, the three Greensboro natives were freshmen at A&T where they were joined by Joseph McNeill from Wilmington, North Carolina. The students read an anthology with selections from W. E. B. DuBois, Ralph Bunche, and Toussaint L'Ouverture among others. The course work led

to numerous late night discussions about blacks in America. In that same fall and winter, the group began a series of conversations with Ralph Johns, a white clothing store owner who had long supported the NAACP and been committed to the idea of some form of demonstrations against segregated public facilities. And one of the students worked in the library with Eula Hudgins, an A&T graduate who in 1948 had participated in freedom rides to test the desegregation of the interstate bus system.

The resolve to act crystallized in late January. In December, McNeill had returned from a trip to New York, angered because he could not get food service at the Greensboro Trailways Bus Terminal. The late night discussions took on a new focus, and on Sunday, January 31, Ezell Blair, Jr., came home and asked his parents if they would be embarrassed if he got in trouble. "Why?" his parents wondered. "Because," he said, "tomorrow we're going to do something that will shake up this town." The next day the four friends — nervous, fearful, but determined — took their historic journey to Woolworth's.

Almost immediately, the students knew they were not alone in their struggle. On the following day, 23 men and four women students sat in at Woolworth's. Wednesday, students occupied 63 out of 66 seats at the lunch counter. By Thursday, three women from the white Woman's College had joined the sit-in. Nearly 300 students participated in the protest on Friday; this time Ku Klux Klan members disrupted the protest with violence. Finally, on

Saturday, hundreds of students, including the A&T football team, descended on the downtown area to continue the protest and resist white intimidation. When the A&T student body held a mass meeting on Saturday night to vote on a proposal for a two-week moratorium on the sit-ins, more than 1,600 students participated.

The demonstrations shocked the white community into action — six years after the *Brown* decision. Concerned about the city's image and its continued ability to attract industry, Greensboro's white leadership sought to quell the disruptions and to pressure Woolworth's to change its policy. As in 1954, some turned to Spencer Love, the leading industrialist, for aid. This time, Love responded positively, giving support to the efforts of his close associate, Edward R. Zane, to find a solution. Armed with Love's economic clout as well as his own moral conviction about racial injustice, Zane entered the situation by the end of the first week of demonstrations and established a close relationship with the students. Despite significant local resistance and Governor Hodges' desire to arrest the demonstrators, Zane pushed through a proposal to create a Human Relations Advisory Committee, headed by himself. The students postponed further demonstrations while the Committee sought a negotiated solution. Although the Committee failed initially, a black economic boycott of Woolworth's and further picketing in April and May created pressure that resulted in the desegregation of Greensboro's lunch counters in early summer.



The picket line and sit-in spread through downtown and to other cities in the South.

The impact on the black community, however, was perhaps even more significant. The local NAACP endorsed the sit-ins on the second day, and other activists quickly provided similar support. In addition, groups and individuals who previously had adopted accommodationist positions now refused to use their influence to restrain the demonstrators. Despite strong pressure from Governor Hodges, the administrators of A&T basically supported the demonstrators. Under pressure from below, ministers who previously had been conservative now permitted mass meetings in their sanctuaries. Summarizing the impact of the demonstrations, a librarian at A&T commented: "It shook the people up in both ways. Some were happy about it, some were scared to death." But the demonstrations had raised the consciousness of the second group and showed them they no longer had to accept injustice. "They learned something from those four fellows, that if you want something done you've got to go out and fight for it." City leaders had expected adult blacks to put a brake on the students. Instead, the adult community reinforced the student efforts and joined them in pushing for a satisfactory settlement. When the owner of Meyer's, a prestigious local department store, tried to desegregate only his lunch counter and not the Garden Room, where middle-class women lunched, black middle class customers turned in their charge cards and conducted their own economic boycott until the Garden Room was also desegregated.

Support from the black adult com-

munity was perhaps best exemplified by Dr. Willa Player, president of Bennett College. Always a strong woman, she was described by one of her faculty members as "an administrator with a capital A; she went according to the rules, and regulations were carried out to perfection." Some whites saw Player as a potential ally in their efforts to control the protest movement. Shortly after the sit-ins began, Spencer Love wrote her "about certain disturbances with which I am sure you're familiar." Assuring her that he, together with all broad-minded people, wanted to keep "our part of the south on top of the heap as becoming more and more enlightened and progressive," Love offered his own view of the situation. "To people who are younger, progress may seem slow," he wrote, "but as long as it is there, and as long as it is sure, it seems to me best to be patient and not to try to rush the clock too much." Though not an open request for restraint, the letter's message seemed clear. So too was Player's polite response to a subsequent letter from Love. "We hope that you will have time to express in a letter to Mr. Zane and to Mayor Roach," she wrote, "your desire to see us work together in our community for provision of services for all citizens alike." Throughout 1960, as well as later, Player offered complete support to her students. In addition, she was the first black adult to turn in her charge card when Meyer's Department Store refused to desegregate its dining room. As one observer commented, "something happened to Willa Player when the students took the lead and went out . . . she

became real impatient. She may have been impatient in her own right all along; it may simply have been that front she was putting up. But then she no longer put up that front."



Although an examination of the Greensboro sit-ins is instructive from many perspectives, a few themes stand out. First, and perhaps most important, the demonstrations continued a long tradition of protest within black Greensboro. To Nell Coley, the sit-ins did not seem unusual because, she said, "we had been teaching those kids those things all along." Indeed, a significant number of blacks in Greensboro had always engaged in overt protest, whether in the Garvey movement or the NAACP or the Greensboro Citizens Association. In the 1950s and later, such protest became more pronounced, taking the form of the black PTA's visits to the school board, the revitalization of the NAACP, the challenge to segregated public facilities, and the resurgence of an NAACP youth group. In this context, the sit-in demonstrations were an extension of, rather than a departure from, traditional patterns of black activism in Greensboro.

The second theme involves the forms of social control practiced by the white power structure. The style championed by white leadership was that of "moderation." By proceeding gradually, and with civility on issues of race, white leaders believed that they could both preserve the progressive image of their city and

The sit-ins contributed a fundamentally new form of expressing protest. The very fact of sitting-in circumvented those forms of fraudulent communication through which whites had historically controlled black self-assertion. A new language was being devised, one which whites could no longer easily dismiss or ignore.

meet the demands for some change from local blacks and from the Supreme Court. The style of moderation, however, served primarily as a guise for inaction. As the sociologist Thomas Pettigrew observed in 1961, "good race relations, for the moderate, refer to the relaxed relations of paternalism when the white man's superior status went unquestioned."

A central ingredient of the "moderate" style was the form of communication which existed between whites and blacks. Whites listened to those blacks who conformed in manner and approach to white expectation and denounced as "unrepresentative" and "extremists" those who failed to so conform. The result was an inescapable trap for men like William Hampton. Forced to cooperate with white officialdom if he were to have any voice at all, Hampton found his cooperation taken as a sign that blacks were satisfied, while his support of protest was discounted as a sop to black militants. Within such a contorted framework, whites dismissed as atypical those delegates from the NAACP and black PTAs who appeared before them in the '50s; the style of moderation thus entailed a ritual of distortion in which honest expression of opinion was subverted. In the end, blacks could get their real message across only by going outside the existing process of communication.

In this sense, the sit-ins contributed a fundamentally new form of expressing protest. The very fact of sitting-in circumvented those forms of fraudulent communication through which whites had historically controlled black self-assertion. A new language was being devised, one which communicated a dif-

ferent message than had been heard before. In a most dramatic way, the sit-ins embodied the dissatisfaction and anger of the black community at white indifference and injustice. From a black point of view, the message was the same as it had been all along, but now it was expressed in a manner that whites could no longer dismiss or ignore. From a white point of view, the message also appeared different because, for the first time, it had to be heard.

The integral relationship between style and content was perhaps best illustrated in the response of Governor Hodges and some local white leaders to black self-assertion. What disturbed the Governor and his aides most was the "intemperate" behavior of blacks seeking social change, their "rudeness . . . and self-confidence." The style of the demonstrators was offensive precisely to the extent that it conveyed a message of discontent which could not possibly be mistaken for acquiescence. The underlying issue was strikingly revealed in a Greensboro *Daily News* editorial on the death of Dr. William Hampton, one week after the sit-ins began. The editorial eulogized Hampton for never engaging in public argument and for never forcing an issue when people disagreed with him. Hampton, it said, was a model for everyone to follow.

Ultimately, then, the sit-ins were both a consequence and cause of black activism. Consistent with the tradition of protest, the sit-ins reinforced and extended that tradition to the entire community, at the same time changing the form through which old as well as young would express their demands for dignity and equality. The sit-ins did not bring

victory to the black community. But they provided a new vehicle for carrying on the struggle. Despite the desegregation of lunch counters, white Greensboro did not easily give up its "cherished traditions." In the battle between "civil rights and civilities," as the Greensboro *Daily News* called it, most whites came down solidly on the side of "civilities," preferring the style of moderation, "unimpeded by the threat of force or the worry of economic reprisal." It would be necessary again and again for black students and adults to take to the streets during the 1960s in order to drive their message home. The Greensboro sit-ins of 1960 were not a radical departure from the black past of protest, but they did provide a transition to a new language of self-expression which broke through white patterns of self-deception and control. Thereafter, the forms of communication between white and black would never be the same. □

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Photographs by Jim Lee



CASE STUDY:

Death at the Caledonia Prison

by Jim Lee

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The details are unique, but in broad outline, the story related below is hardly exceptional: a prisoner dies a slow death in his jail cell while his pleas for medical help are ignored. When reporter Jim Lee tried to expose the scandal, he met a bureaucracy working vigorously to conceal — and a press unwilling to reveal — the circumstances of Glenn Pitt's death.

The events surrounding the death of Glenn Pitt illustrate both the inhumanity of what we euphemistically call our "corrections" system, and our desire to isolate it physically, morally and intellectually from our lives.

The problems of corrections and punishment will be the focus of the Fall, 1978 edition of Southern Exposure. Our reasons for devoting a special issue to prisons are many. Certainly we will witness in this era some crucial decisions concerning the criminal justice process in America. Whether those decisions involve radical shifts in philosophy, or mere cosmetic changes, the

future of corrections in this country is to a large extent being charted today in the South.

A combination of factors makes the crisis in Southern prisons unique: a particularly acute overcrowding problem, the exhausted condition of our prison facilities, the region's legacy of racial injustice, and a tradition of severely punishing criminals. Moreover, an aggressive federal and state judiciary has demanded sweeping reforms in the prison systems of Florida, Alabama, Tennessee and Louisiana. Georgia, Florida and Texas are made distinct by the fact that the Supreme Court has upheld their death penalty laws, and today more than 75 percent of the nation's condemned prisoners await execution in Southern jails.

By compiling the best thinking on the subject from the system's professionals, its victims and its challengers, we hope to stimulate interest and activity in efforts to bring a measure of humanity to our treatment of crime and criminals, and provide an educational resource for those struggling to rescue our criminal justice system from centuries-long isolation.

On the evening of December 24, 1977, Glenn Earl Pitt, an inmate at the Caledonia Prison Farm in Halifax County, North Carolina, was pronounced dead on arrival at the Scotland Neck Hospital. A routine autopsy by the North Carolina medical examiner's office ruled that asthma was the probable cause of death.

The State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) conducted an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding Pitt's death and forwarded their findings to District Attorney W. H. S. Burgwyn, who concluded after reading the report that there was no basis for bringing criminal charges against prison officials.

A letter from an inmate at the Caledonia facility to WVSP News prompted us to conduct our own investigation into the matter. Our conclusion is that Glenn Pitt did die of an asthma attack, but that his death might not have occurred had prison officials complied with the orders of medical personnel to transport him to a hospital. We have also found that prison officials as high up as the superintendent of the complex of Halifax County area prisons have engaged in a cover-up of the circumstances surrounding the death of Glenn Earl

Pitt.

Glenn Pitt was 24 years old at the time of his death. He had been plagued by asthma since he was 14, and his condition was generally recognized as serious. He was strong, however, and with medication was able to control the ailment, although hospitalization was required from time to time. With his mother and sister he had moved from New York City to Enfield, North Carolina, mainly to get away from the New York air which aggravated his asthma.

In Enfield, a town of about 3,300 in the northeastern part of the state, Pitt fell in with a local man named Willie Mitchell who was involved in selling marijuana in the area. Pitt, along with a few other young men, worked for Mitchell pushing the weed. Mitchell had an unsavory reputation as an "Uncle Tom" and was frequently heard to brag about having control of the police department. Many people believed he was paying off the police in order to protect his drug sales. In fact, alleged attempts to bribe the Enfield police chief resulted in the arrests of Pitt and Mitchell in the spring of 1976.

Both men, through plea bargaining arrangements, were able to get suspended sentences. Pitt was given three to five years, suspended, on the condition that he pay a \$1,000 fine through his probation officer, maintain a full-time job and break no laws. Payments on the fine were set at \$40 a month. According to Connie Pitt, Glenn's sister, Mitchell promised to pay Pitt's fine for him.

In the spring of 1977, Pitt was cited for being behind on his payments; his probation was revoked and he was ordered into the custody of the NC Department of Corrections. Judge Donald Smith's order required a physical exam and treatment for Pitt, and recommended work release for the young first offender. Pitt was locked up on August 31, 1977. Willie Mitchell also ran afoul of the law and had his probation revoked. He, too, was sent to prison, and both men wound up at the Caledonia Prison Farm.

Pitt was considered a relatively well-adjusted inmate who got along with both prison employees and other inmates, though one prison staff member described him as "arrogant." It was Pitt's refusal to give in to authority when his rights were involved that brought him

into conflict with a prison official, Captain Fredrick Rehnor.

On December 7, shortly before Glenn Pitt was to be shipped to Central Prison Hospital for treatment of his asthma, he was ordered to submit to a strip search. There are conflicting reports about what happened that day, but we do know that Captain Rehnor was involved. One reliable source told us that Pitt had complied with the search order except for removing his shoes and socks — which he refused to do because he was having difficulty catching his breath. Prison officials used force to complete the search. Captain Rehnor later filed a "Use of Force" report about the incident.

The die had been cast in the relationship between Rehnor and Pitt. Rehnor's dislike for Pitt was rather widely known and Pitt was assigned to the segregation unit in punishment for the strip search incident. That same day, however, Pitt entered Central Prison Hospital, where he stayed two weeks. On his return to Caledonia, he was immediately placed in segregation.

On December 23, Pitt, still in segregation, was having difficulty breathing and saw Troy Dillander, medical supervisor of the complex. Dillander ordered Pitt transferred to the hospital for treatment. For some reason, Pitt was not transferred but instead remained in his small segregation cell. The next morning, Raymond Adams, a correctional health assistant assigned to the unit, saw Pitt and apparently found him in good shape. But later in the day Pitt developed more breathing problems.

Inmates in segregation are only allowed out of their cells for exercise in the custody of an exercise officer, and a duty officer is required to make checks of the area every 30 minutes, so it was virtually impossible for an inmate in distress to go unnoticed. Pitt's condition was both noticed and reported by Quincy Wills, the officer in segregation that day, and by Sergeant Jesse Morgan, who was on escort duty.

We have not been able to determine when the first report of Pitt's condition was made, but we do know that someone tried to call Adams, the health assistant, in the early afternoon. A prison employee who was on duty at the time told us that Adams called the prison at about 1:45 p.m. and told Wiley Davis, the officer who

happened to answer the phone, to tell the officer in charge to get Pitt to the hospital. Officer Davis in turn told Sergeant Burger, the control sergeant that day, thus putting the information into the chain of command. Logically, Burger would have told either Ernest Smith, who was the shift officer in charge, or Rehnor, who was the weekend duty officer. We don't know who Burger talked to, but we do know that more than one call went between the Caledonia unit and Adams' Roanoke Rapids home.

Medical supervisor Dillander is also reported to have called the unit and ordered Pitt transferred. Our source says Dillander gave the order directly to Captain Rehnor sometime before 3 p.m., but still Pitt was not moved. A witness housed in the segregation unit says that Pitt was wheezing and begging for medical help, and that Sergeant Morgan made numerous calls for help over the intercom, but none arrived. According to one source, Captain Rehnor was aware of the situation from early afternoon and vowed to "teach . . . [Pitt] a lesson."

As the afternoon progressed, Pitt's condition worsened. Our sources say that between 6 and 7 p.m. he lapsed into a coma. He was finally taken to the Scotland Neck Hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival at about 8 p.m. The hospital is just 20 minutes from the prison. An inmate witness says the authorities carried Pitt from his cell on a stretcher, bound in leg irons and handcuffs, even though his body appeared lifeless at the time.

It is not clear why the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) was called into the investigation. Ben Runkle, information officer for the prison system, said prison director Ralph Edwards ordered the probe. Prison administrator Fletcher Saunders says the investigation is a routine matter in all prison deaths. SBI agent W. H. Thompson, the investigating officer, referred all questions to District Attorney Burgwyn, who in turn says he isn't sure how the investigation was initiated, even though the final SBI report was sent to him for evaluation.

The SBI refused to let a WVSP News reporter read the lengthy SBI report on the grounds that it is not a public document, but we have discovered that it contains statements from a number of prison staff members and at least one inmate, Willie Mitchell, the man arrested with Pitt on the charge of conspiracy to

bribe.

We have not been able to confirm whether the report contains other inmate testimony, but we do know that on January 9, the reported time of completion of the probe, SBI agents had not talked to any of the inmates who were confined in the segregation unit and witnessed the entire sequence of events. Furthermore, the SBI investigators never contacted the dead man's family and consequently did not have access to correspondence from inmates concerning the matter. Information held by WVSP News in the form of inmate correspondence has also not been seen by the SBI. We also know that the SBI report was sent to the typing pool as a complete report before the autopsy report was finished, although the medical examiner's office did tell the investigator that asthma was the probable cause of death.

It is not clear why SBI agents avoided eyewitness testimony from inmates in segregation with Pitt but included testimony from at least one inmate who was not in segregation at the time of the incident. In short, there were serious shortcomings in the SBI investigation. Furthermore, there is reason to believe that information in the SBI report does not represent the whole truth.

Fletcher Saunders, the superintendent of the complex of prisons that includes Caledonia, hosted a late night meeting with prison officials on December 27 to discuss potential difficulties arising from the circumstances surrounding Pitt's death. The testimony originally given by the two medical staff members was of special concern since they had both specifically ordered that Pitt be taken to the hospital. Both medics were urged to change their versions of what happened and both gave "modified" statements to the SBI. We do not know which statements were included in the report sent to Burgwyn, but we do know that the SBI has had access to both the original and modified statements from the medics.

Lieutenant Ernest Smith was the shift officer in charge on the day Pitt died, and as such had the authority to send Pitt to the hospital. According to our sources, Smith was specifically ordered by Captain Rehnor not to transport Pitt to the hospital until about 6 or 7 p.m. Smith's original statement to the SBI said this, but that statement was later modified, too. Lieutenant Smith has since been promoted to captain. Dillander, the medical supervisor, has been transferred to

another prison unit.

Willie Mitchell had a statement written on his behalf in which he claims to have seen Glenn Pitt flush his own medicine down the toilet. There is other inmate testimony, possibly from Mitchell, that Pitt would fake his asthma attacks as a means of getting sympathy. The thrust of the testimony tending to show Pitt as partially at fault in his own death is further enhanced by the portion of the SBI report describing Pitt's removal from his cell. According to our sources, Pitt had passed out and was possibly comatose, if not already dead, when he was finally removed from his cell. The SBI report, however, contains a version of the final moments in which Pitt was placed on the stretcher because he *refused* to walk to the ambulance.

Inmates confined to the cells nearest Pitt at the time of his death have been transferred to other prison units and their status has been upgraded. Mitchell has been transferred to the nearby Halifax prison unit and promoted to honor grade. Sergeant Burger has also been transferred.

Caledonia Commander L. V. Stevenson granted WVSP News permission to interview inmates we believed would have knowledge of the facts in the case, but at the last minute, these interviews were cancelled without explanation. A credible source told us that five prison staff members connected with the case, including the two medics, went to Raleigh to take lie detector tests to resolve contradictions between their statements and Rehnor's version. We have not been able to determine what the results of those tests were, if in fact they were carried out.

WVSP News reported the results of our investigation in our monthly program guide, *Dialogue*. Shortly afterward, the SBI reopened its investigation into Pitt's death at the instruction of District Attorney Burgwyn. On April 21, two SBI agents visited Robert Harrell, an inmate who was confined to the segregation unit with Pitt at the time of the incident and who has since been transferred to a prison unit in Taylorsville, North Carolina. Harrell gave the SBI agents the names of two other inmates who were in segregation and witnessed the events of December 24.

Burgwyn has confirmed that he received the SBI's latest report. He says that, based on the new information, he has something "stronger" than before, but still sees no basis for criminal charges.

Recently a claims adjustment officer

for the Attorney General's office offered to meet with an attorney retained by Pitt's family, Charles Becton of Chapel Hill, to discuss a possible settlement of any claims against the state, even though Becton had not yet filed any claims. The adjustment officer, B. H. Whitehouse, told WVSP News that his action does not constitute any admission of wrongdoing on the part of state employees.

Even with the reopening of the investigation, most state officials have stonewalled attempts to get information on the case. SBI officers have refused to comment on the investigation, and prison officials have instructed all persons involved not to discuss the matter. When Fred Morrison, head of the Inmate Grievance Commission, a state agency, asked for information on Pitt's death, he received a scathing letter from corrections administrator David Blackwell telling him not to make any further inquiries. A well-known jailhouse lawyer, Daniel Ross, has sued the SBI in an attempt to force the bureau to release its report.

Press coverage of this case, or the lack of it, has been of some interest. Both major wire services, Associated Press and United Press International, have had access to the story as we have reported it. So far these agencies have reported only the fact of Pitt's death and the initiation and completion of the investigation. They have not covered the state's offer to discuss a settlement and the reopening of the investigation. Needless to say, the WVSP report of the circumstances surrounding the death and the subsequent cover-up has also been ignored. Only the *Carolina Times*, a black weekly newspaper in Durham, has seen fit to cover the story in depth. One veteran wire service employee suggested that the tongue-lashing Governor James Hunt recently gave the press for its coverage of the Joan Little case had made the wire services somewhat jumpy. □

Jim Lee is news director at WVSP, a non-commercial, listener-sponsored radio station in Warrenton, North Carolina.

Information contained in this article has come from a number of sources, none of whom wants to be identified but all of whom say they are willing to testify in court as to the same things they have told us. These same sources claim knowledge of other persons willing to talk about the matter in court but unwilling to talk with the press.

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CASE STUDY: Who's Getting Rich in the New South

by Bob Hall and Bob Williams

In the midst of the cheery talk about a prosperous New South, few observers have analyzed exactly who benefits most from the region's new wealth. In future issues, *Southern Exposure* will examine various aspects of corporate, personal and government finances to expose inequities and test a number of assumptions about the distribution of income, the elimination of poverty, and the broadening of control over public and private assets.

In the following tables, we present several simple – and startling – comparisons indicating who's getting rich in the New South. Generations of progress-minded Southerners have asserted that the solution to the region's poverty lies in the development of industry and the mechanization of agriculture. In the 1880s, the father of the New South, Atlanta *Constitution* editor Henry Grady, claimed that if Southerners "go to work in earnest to multiply and diversify our products and industries, independence and wealth will be the certain reward."¹

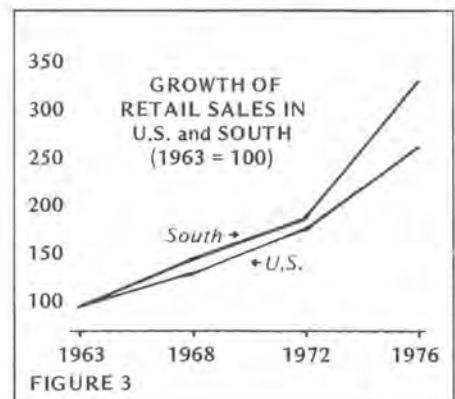
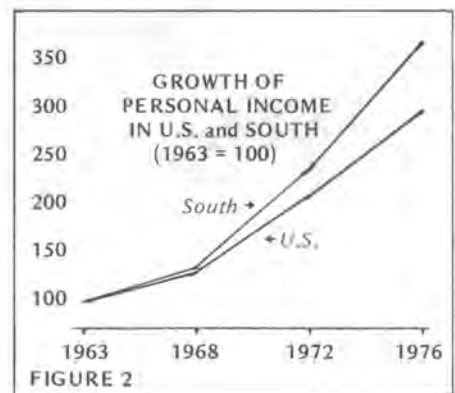
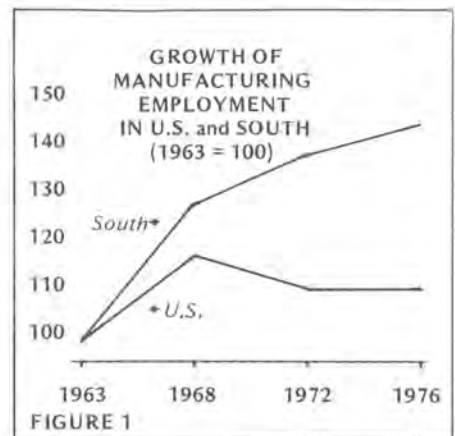
Shortly after World War II, a blue-ribbon Committee of the South of the National Planning Association sent to Congress its seminal report on "The Impact of Federal Policies on the Economy of the South." The 50-member committee – laced with leading liberals, educators and industrialists – declared, "The fundamental means by which the economic lag of the South can be overcome is through the increase of productivity and value of output of southern industry and agriculture."²

Nearly 30 years later, the Southern Growth Policies Board (SGPB) rejoices in the fact that "the South is now the fastest growing region of the country in both population and economic activity." But in its study, *The Economics of Southern Growth*, the group concludes

that "while the growth has been rapid, the level of economic achievement of the South has not yet reached the national average."³ To help eliminate this gap, the SGPB recommends the enactment of government policies which balance the development of higher-paying, more productive jobs and the acceleration of the accumulation of capital in the region with a concern for preserving the "environmental and quality of life considerations" (including an anti-union atmosphere) that attract industry and people to the region in the first place. Figures 1-3 dramatize the success of the South in capturing an ever-larger share of the country's employment, per capita income, and retail sales. There may yet be truth in Henry Grady's prediction about "the steady shifting of the greatest industrial centers from the North to the more favored regions of the South."⁴

From this ambitious perspective, it is not hard to see why today's New South boosters take pride in the region's increasing share of national wealth. Had they been concerned with the relative distribution of resources and income within the South, however, the story might be different. By focusing on comparisons of the whole region with the whole nation, and on aggregate data lumping together various classes of income groups, the modern Henry Grady can find encouragement in such general indicators of prosperity as the rapid growth of the South's total income and industrial output relative to the nation's. But like previous generations, they consistently underestimate ingrained disparities within the region and the nation between black and white, poor and rich, worker and investor.

Thus, while it is important to point out that the average Southerner's income



has grown from 84% of his or her national counterpart in 1970 to 88% in 1975, it is equally significant that the number of people in the nation and the 13-state South who live in poverty barely declined during the same period. (In 1975, 10,783,000 Southerners lived below the poverty line, compared with 11,355,000 in 1969.) And while the majority of Southerners now live in urban areas and have jobs in an economy nearly as diversified as the nation's, the unemployment rate remains about twice as high for blacks as for whites and the income gap between the richest 5% of the population

and the rest of the South remains unchanged.⁵

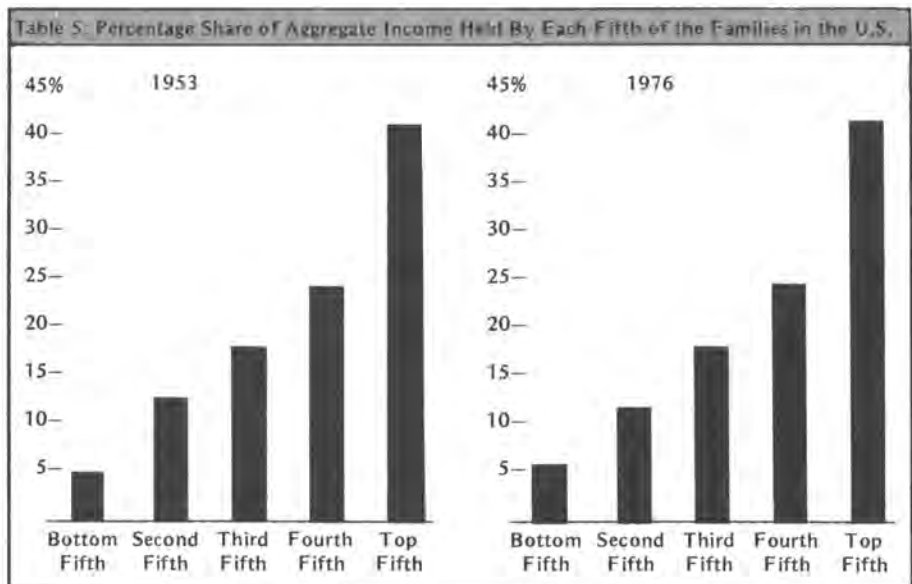
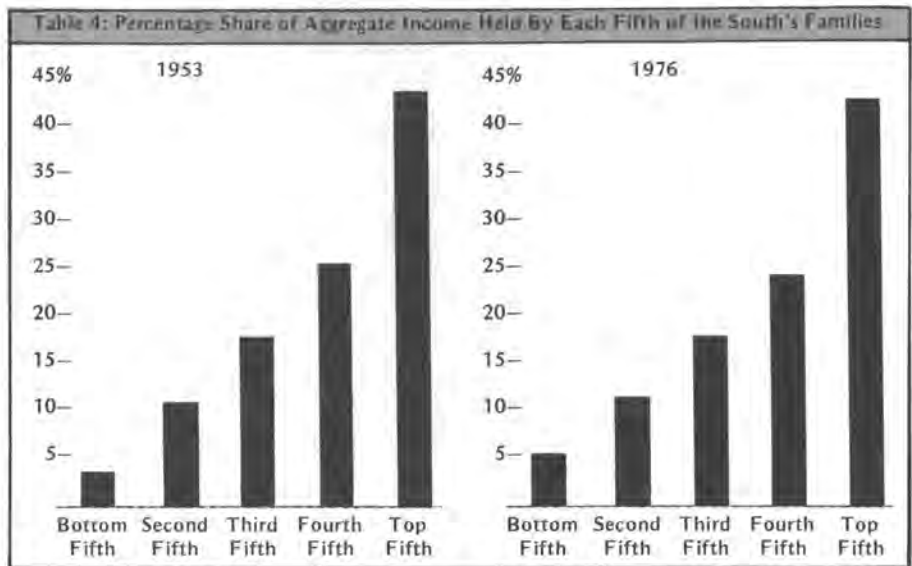
To highlight these and other disparities requires a different perspective from that of the New South proponents, a different juxtaposition of the data documenting regional growth. The following tables reveal the handsome increases in the South's total wealth. But they also reveal that this new money is being absorbed and redistributed along lines that have existed since 1963, if not well before — despite the presidential reign of the South's Lyndon Johnson, the monumental reforms brought about by the civil rights movement, the rise and fall of the War on Poverty and Great Society programs, and the emergence of a new round of New South rhetoric.

The first set of charts shows that the rich are staying richer, receiving as much of each income dollar as they did a generation ago. The second set of statistics reveals that industrial expansion has not altered these inequities since workers are not getting their share of the wealth generated from the New South's factories. The last set of tables demonstrates that instead of correcting the imbalance between rich and poor, government policies are actually preserving the inequities.

I. The Rich Stay Richer

Figures 4 and 5 provide a dramatic illustration of how the gap between the annual income received by the rich and the rest of the population follows the pattern that existed 25 years ago. If all Southerners in 1953 were divided into five equal parts, ranked according to their yearly income, then the bottom fifth received a total of only 3.5% of the South's total personal income, while the top fifth shared 43.3% among themselves. Figure 4 shows that in 1976, the proportions barely changed, with the bottom fifth of the population receiving only 5.0% and the top fifth getting 42.3%. In other words, while the poorest fifth had to live on only a nickel of every dollar made in the South, the richest fifth took in eight times as much, more than 40 cents of every income dollar.

Even the slight improvement at the bottom can largely be explained by the huge migration of poor families out of the South, especially blacks moving to the Northeast. Between 1950 and 1970, over 2,500,000 blacks left the South, many of them displaced from subsistence



level farms by the mechanization and industrialization called for by the New South advocates. Although for the South the portion of income held by the bottom fifth increased slightly, the relative influx of poor families to the Northeast caused the corresponding portion in that region to drop from 6.8% in 1953 to 5.8% in 1976. The South simply exported part of its problem instead of curing it. Consequently, the national situation for the poorest fifth remained fairly constant (see Table 5).

II. Payrolls and Profits

One reason why the richest fifth still gets 40 cents of each dollar earned is that the average worker doesn't receive the full benefits of helping industry expand and increase its output. Table 6 compares the growth in wages paid industrial

workers with the growth in the value that each worker adds to the raw materials consumed in making the finished product, or the value added by the manufacturing process. "Value added" is a technical term that refers to the additional value created by labor and capital in transforming raw materials, fuel and other production ingredients into goods for sale. For example, if a furniture company sells its products in a given year for \$100,000 and spends \$10,000 on the wood, metal, cloth, fuel, etc., that went into the furniture, then its value added is \$90,000. Out of this \$90,000 comes the payroll for the workers (including the salaried executives), money for merchandising the product, profits for the owners, interest for the creditors and taxes.

The question, of course, is who gets how much. Traditionally, corporate

owners have tried to restrict workers to wage increases that are offset by a corresponding increase in the output or value added per worker, or productivity. Thus, if ten workers in the furniture company generated \$90,000 in value added (or \$9,000 per worker) in 1963 and fifteen workers generated \$270,000 (or \$18,000 per worker) in 1976, then it would seem reasonable that each worker's wage should double since their per worker contribution to the value added also doubled. But Table 6 shows that in reality, Southern industry has not followed this logic. The gains made in improved productivity continue to flow disproportionately to the owners of industry.⁶ While wages per worker increased over 100% between 1963 and 1976, value added climbed more than 150%; the return to capital thus grew considerably more than wages, as illustrated by the fact that the profits of the top 15 manufacturing companies headquartered in the South grew 285% in this same period.⁷ In short, the reward for labor in the New South has not been as great as the reward taken by capital. Or put yet another way, much of the industrial expansion in the region has come at the expense of an underpaid work force.

The increased portion of value added which has gone to corporate owners, investors and lenders has had important effects on concentrating more and more wealth in the hands of fewer institutions and individuals. Not only are the rich continuing to get richer, but the portion of profits retained by corporations for

expansion has fueled the tremendous appetite for mergers and acquisitions of one company by another — but that story will have to wait for another issue. It is enough here to point out that industrial expansion and the New South riches have flowed disproportionately to the owners of capital instead of to the region's wage earners.

III. Public Wealth vs. Public Welfare

The disparity between rich and poor, corporation owner and average worker, is further heightened by government spending and taxing policies. The last set of tables demonstrate the failure of state and local governments in the New South to redistribute wealth and help equalize income between different classes of citizens.⁸

The figures in Table 7 show that, while the total per capita expenditures by state and local governments in the South increased more than threefold, the portion paid for welfare programs dropped in many states and remained fairly level for the region, sliding from 9.1% to 8.9% between 1963 and 1976.

Thus, contrary to popular opinion, welfare is not the cause of increased taxes in the South. On a national level, the portion of state and local government expenditures that went to finance welfare programs did increase, from 8.5% in 1963 to 12.3% in 1976. In terms of actual dollars, the gap between per capita expenditures in the South and nation leaped from \$3 in 1963 to \$60 in 1976, thus indicating that the region's

commitment to the poor increasingly lags behind the nation's.

At the same time, the burden of paying for the expanding services provided by the New South governments has not been equally shared. The ability to pay is generally accepted as the standard of tax equity, but this criterion has apparently had exactly the reverse effect on Southern lawmakers. As Table 8 indicates, the more heavily a tax tends to fall on the rich, the less it is used as a source of income by state and local governments. In fact, in several cases, taxes that heighten rather than lighten the disparity in income are increasingly relied upon; governments not only perpetuate the old inequities, but even aggressively increase them.

For example, most Southern states have minimal estate taxes and no inheritance or gift taxes at all. These laws, collectively called death taxes because they tax the passage of wealth from one generation to another, are possibly the most progressive in making the rich pay more than the poor; but their contribution to the total state and local tax coffers had slipped from an already scant 0.8% in 1965 to 0.7% in 1976. Meanwhile, the highly regressive sales tax continues to provide more than two-thirds of most state revenues; and the sales tax on food, perhaps the most pernicious of all taxes in discriminating against the poor and working person, provides a slightly higher portion of the states' tax receipts, rising from under 8% in 1965 to nearly 9% in 1976. The following comparison illustrates how the sales tax takes a greater chunk of the income from the family least able to pay:

Family income	\$8,000	\$40,000
Family purchases	6,000	20,000
4% sales tax on purchases	240	800
Percent which sales tax takes of family's income	3%	2%

Although not as regressive as sales taxes, property taxes penalize small homeowners and favor commercial and landlord interests which can pass the tax on to consumers and renters. Property taxes constituted nearly 80% of local tax revenues, but the actual levy paid by the typical Southerner falls far short of the \$266 national per capita average in 1976. In California, home of Proposition 13, per capita property taxes went from \$161 in 1963 (51% of state and local government tax revenues) to

Table 6: Comparison of Growth Rates for Industrial Wages and Value Added Per Worker

State	Wages Per Worker		% Change	Value Added Per Worker		% Change
	1963	1976		1963	1976	
Alabama	\$4263	\$8988	111%	\$11,680	\$29010	148%
Arkansas	3470	7861	127	10,010	27,960	179
Florida	4220	8676	106	15,890	36,640	131
Georgia	3700	8140	120	11,220	30,640	173
Kentucky	4679	9716	108	18,200	41,170	126
Louisiana	5026	11249	124	18,250	60,160	230
Mississippi	3391	7685	127	9,420	25,840	174
North Carolina	3437	7612	121	10,290	26,730	160
South Carolina	3593	7963	122	9,510	23,960	152
Tennessee	3898	8449	117	12,360	25,790	141
Texas	4826	10104	109	12,690	32,410	155
Virginia	4141	8819	113	19,720	49,280	150
West Virginia	5447	11504	111	20,760	39,980	93
TOTAL SOUTH	\$4060	\$8770	116	\$13,430	\$34,190	155
TOTAL U.S.	5076	10539	108	15,705	39,187	150

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Annual Survey of Manufacturers, 1976

Table 7: Welfare as % of Total State & Local Gov. Expenses					Table 8: Per Capita State & Local Taxes Collected from Own Sources, by % Source Contributor to Total [‡]											
State	Total per capita expenditures		per capita public welfare expense		per capita state & local taxes collected		% from all sales taxes		% from property tax		% from person. income tax		% from corp. income tax		% from death taxes	
	1963	1976	'63	'76	1965	1976	'65	'76	'65	'76	'65	'76	'65	'76	'65	'76
Ala.	\$248	\$928	13.7	9.6	\$171	\$622	48	56	18	13	6	15	2.8	3.6	0.3	0.3
Ark.	\$243	\$862	13.7	11.9	\$171	\$455	46	47	28	22	5	16	3.5	5.9	0.3	0.2
Fla.	\$323	1006	6.2	5.8	\$228	\$566	38	47	38	34	*	*	* 3.8	1.1	0.8	
Ga.	\$276	\$971	9.1	10.2	\$197	\$549	43	40	31	32	7	15	4.9	4.9	0.3	0.2
Ky.	\$295	\$937	8.8	12.8	\$179	\$549	42	40	27	19	8	21	4.1	7.2	1.3	0.9
La.**	\$357	1113	15.4	9.5	\$159	\$610	33	33	22	15	2	5	2.8	3.8	0.5	0.6
Miss.	\$253	\$962	10.3	9.2	\$180	\$486	45	56	27	23	2	9	3.3	3.6	0.3	0.4
N.C.	\$232	\$926	8.2	8.2	\$193	\$527	38	41	27	25	13	21	7.1	5.4	1.2	1.0
S.C.	\$210	\$966	7.1	7.6	\$162	\$489	49	47	23	24	9	18	4.6	5.7	0.5	0.6
Tenn.	\$256	\$935	7.0	9.7	\$184	\$493	42	53	32	26	††	††	4.1	6.2	1.2	1.5
Texas**	\$282	\$960	8.2	9.0	\$208	\$581	31	42	45	38	*	*	*	*	0.7	0.8
Va.	\$275	1022	4.0	8.9	\$193	\$609	21	33	36	28	15	20	4.1	4.2	0.9	0.6
W. Va.	\$250	1044	14.4	9.0	\$197	\$584	53	57	27	18	5	13	*	1.9	0.9	0.7
SOUTH	\$275	\$965	9.1	8.9	\$197	\$543	38	44	33	28	5	9	2.7	3.6	0.8	0.7
U.S.	\$344	1191	8.5	12.3	\$264	\$730	33	35	44	36	8	16	3.8	4.6	1.4	1.0

[‡]Does not include portion from federal sources; other state & local sources making total add to 100% not included. * No tax. † Applies only to personal income from dividends & interest. **States collecting substantial amounts in severage taxes on minerals, etc. Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Governmental Finances, 1962-3, 1964-65, 1975-76.

\$415 in 1976 (43% of taxes collected). In the South, only Florida, Virginia and Texas citizens paid even half as much on a per capita basis in either year; for most Southern states, the portion of revenues brought in from property taxes dropped from under 35% to under 25% in the same period.

Every Southern state collects a significantly larger share of its revenues from personal income taxes, primarily because personal income nearly tripled between 1965 and 1976. For the region as a whole, the portion of state and local government tax receipts coming from personal income taxes nearly doubled, jumping from 4.8% in 1965 to 9.2% in 1976. Income taxes are generally considered progressive since they normally take larger bites out of the income of the rich than the poor; but in most Southern states, the tax rates are relatively flat. Only four states in the region require a person with a taxable income over \$10,000 to pay a larger portion in taxes than a person with less than \$10,000. Hence personal income taxes in the South tend to operate like the regressive sales tax and the across-the-board social security tax, rather than like the more progressive federal income tax with its graduated rate structure.

Perhaps the most astonishing aspect of Southern tax policy is that the share

extracted from business has actually declined in the last 15 years, in spite of the much ballyhooed industrial growth during the period. State and local governments collect a slightly higher portion of their tax revenues from corporate income taxes — from 2.7% in 1965 to 3.6% in 1976 — but a 25% drop in the largely business-related license taxes (from 7.3% to 5.4%) pulled the net revenues from companies down. So despite the boost governments have given economic development by creating the framework of services for expansion (from sewage disposal to manpower training programs), the owners of businesses have actually pushed an increasing share of the tax bill onto poorer members of the community. (In a later report, we will look at industrial development costs by governments and the impact of incentives offered new companies on the larger society.)

IV. Summary

The various tables presented here dramatize three devastating realities about the consequences of Southern industrial development:

- The gap between rich and poor in the New South remains almost exactly where it was 25 years ago.
- Industrial workers are not getting

their fair share of the increased riches generated from New South factories.

- Local and state government taxing policies discriminate against the poor and the working family in favor of the rich and the corporation. □

Bob Hall is the director of the Institute for Southern Studies which publishes Southern Exposure. Bob Williams is a graduate student in economics at the University of North Carolina.

Notes

1. From Paul Gaston, *The New South Creed* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1970), p. 65.

2. National Planning Association, *Economy of the South: Report to the Joint Committee on the Economic Report on the Impact of Federal Policies on the Economy of the South* (Washington: US Printing Office, 1949), p. 91. The Committee was chaired by E. W. Palmer, president of the Kingsport Press in Kingsport, Tenn., and included Will Alexander, the first director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation; Ralph McGill of Grady's Atlanta Constitution; North Carolina Senator Frank Graham; Charles Johnson, president of Fisk University; Marion Folsom, treasurer of Eastman Kodak; and many others.

3. E. Blaine Liner and Lawrence K. Lynch (eds.), *The Economics of Southern Growth* (Durham, NC: Southern Growth Policies Board, 1977), p. 9 and *passim*.

4. From *The New South Creed*, p. 78.

5. For a detailed study of the persistence of poverty in one Southern state, see Tommy W. Rogers, *The Extent and Distribution of Poverty in Mississippi* (Jackson: Office of Human Resources and Community Services, 1976). For the latest in a long line of studies documenting how the top 5% of America's families control the majority of the country's net worth, see Maurice Zeitlin, "Who Owns America," *Progressive*, June, 1978. A study of the control of income in Texas appears in Julie Ardery and Bill Bishop, "Prosperity for the Few," *Texas Observer*, May 26, 1978. For statistics on black and white families, see Dorothy K. Newman (et al.), *Protest, Politics and Prosperity: Black Americans and White Institutions, 1940-75* (NY: Pantheon, 1978).

6. As Dennis Eckart and John C. Ries write in *People vs. Government: The Responsiveness of American Institutions* (edited by L. N. Riesback, Indiana Univ. Press, 1975), "under our political and economic system, increased productivity does not resolve the problem of redistribution; it merely perpetuates the inequity in income and wealth."

7. The fifteen largest manufacturing companies by sales are LTV, Reynolds Ind., Coca-Cola, Burlington, Dresser Ind., Reynolds Metals, Texas Instruments, Lykes-Youngstown, Ethyl Corp., Genesco, Blue Bell, Akzona, Liggett, West Point-Pepperell, Universal Leaf. Their combined profits leaped from \$351.5 million in 1963 to \$1,352 million in 1976.

8. For a dated, but still relevant study of tax structures in the region, see Eva Galambos, "State and Local Taxes in the South, 1973," a report from the Southern Regional Council.



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BOOK REVIEWS

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Zora Neale Hurston

By Robert E. Hemenway. University of Illinois Press, 1977. 371 pp. \$15.00.

By J. Lee Greene

For those familiar with twentieth century Afro-Americana, Zora Neale Hurston (1901?-1960) is legend. Word-of-mouth tales that have circulated — and continue to circulate — about her are as fascinating and suggestive as the folk tales she collected and published. Zora remains as steeped in myth as some of the black folk cultures of the Americas she studied, as elusive and intriguing as the hoodoo and voodoo cults, the folk religions, that attracted her investigation and, at times, participation.

Robert Hemenway's recently published study of certainly one of the most arresting figures in American literary history is a major contribution to American literary scholarship. Sensitive, restrained, well-documented, Hemenway's *Zora Neale Hurston: A Literary Biography* places its subject within the intellectual, historical and literary contexts of her time and place. Woven throughout the text are informative and balanced discussions of background materials, the Harlem Renaissance, folklore, and people important for understanding Hurston's life. Careful not to allow such materials to overpower his subject, Hemenway always smoothly brings Zora to the fore. By the book's end, we have the most complete portrait (though there is much more to be said) to date of this remarkable woman — creative folklorist, anthropologist, author, at times flamboyant character.

One wishes that more biographical details about Hurston from her birth through her teens had been available to Hemenway. Such details would have given the reader a fuller understanding of the extent to which her immediate family and childhood environment helped shape her adult personality.

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Zora Neale Hurston

University of Illinois Press

She was born (Hemenway chooses 1901 as the most convenient date) and grew up in the all-black town of Eatonville, Florida, a town and an experience that she would later incorporate into her writings. At age 14, five years after her mother's death, she joined a "Gilbert and Sullivan repertory company traveling through the South." Zora worked with the show for 18 months before leaving it in Baltimore, where she enrolled in the secondary division of what is now Morgan State University. A year later, 1918, she enrolled in Howard University in Washington, DC, where, between 1919 and 1924, she worked at various jobs, completed a year and a half of college work, and published her first story. Hurston, like hundreds of thousands of Southern blacks during the first three decades of this century, eventually migrated to Harlem, "black capital of the world." There she became a "New Negro" (a term used to describe the intellectual, artistic and psychological stance of blacks, particularly those in the urban North, during the 1920s) and joined the literary component of the Harlem Renaissance.

Zora Hurston arrived in "Harlem City" in 1925, the same year Alain Locke edited the influential *The New Negro*, a manifesto of black art and thought for the period. The twin events are important to the reader for two reasons: first, one of Hurston's stories appeared in the anthology, and second, it is crucial to see Hurston in the context of her development and absorption within the Harlem Renaissance, the most concentrated period of artistic and creative activity among black Americans before the 1960s. Hemenway provides a detailed and informative view of Hurston against the background of the

Renaissance. Indeed, his compact discussion of the Renaissance is itself one of the book's highlights.

The most comprehensive discussion Hemenway provides of Hurston's life and career is of the 20-year period between the time she arrived in Harlem and the end of World War II, the period during which her best works were published. Though he does not say enough about *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Hurston's most polished novel, he does provide useful appraisals of most of her book-length publications and several of her stories.

Between the mid-1920s and the mid-'40s, Hurston moved with relative ease — as only she could — among a variety of people, giving rise to many tales about her personality and experiences. She served as "secretary" and companion to writer Fannie Hurst in New York, and developed a useful friendship with a fierce woman named Big Sweet while living and collecting folk materials in a Florida lumber camp. She attended gatherings at the posh Park Avenue home of Mrs. Rufus Osgood Mason, a woman who preferred anonymity as Hurston's and other black artists' patron and as a patron of Afro-American arts in general. Hurston graduated from Barnard College and was a graduate student in Columbia University's anthropology department where "she came under the influence of Ruth Benedict, Gladys Reichard, and Franz Boas"; as a collector of folklore, she came under the tutelage of powerful hoodoo doctors in New Orleans and learned first-hand from voodoo practitioners in Haiti. She clashed with the president of what is now North Carolina Central University while she was employed there; she reacted with seeming nonchalance to racial epithets yelled at her by University of North Carolina students as she drove her convertible through the campus to attend meetings, give speeches and visit playwright Paul Green, with whom she considered collaborating on plays about black life.

Though her experiences and desires were diverse, her first love was black folk culture. In 1935 her intentions to pursue a PhD in anthropology at Columbia under the guidance of Franz Boas were cut short (there is probably even more to this story than her biographer tells — or knows). She abandoned the degree program and returned to live among and preserve the folk culture of blacks in the rural South. Though she

achieved recognized success as a creative artist, having published numerous short stories and essays and four novels during her career, probably her greatest contribution to American culture and to Afro-Americana was her work in folklore, as evidenced by her *Mules and Men* (1935), one of the most important collections of Afro-American folklore ever published. *Mules and Men* puts her in the front rank of collectors of black American folklore, and though "she was not a formal theorist," says Hemenway, she left us "a body of 'scientific' literature that provides evidence for the existence of a number of distinctive Afro-American cultural domains, including that domain of black aesthetics which so interested her."

Zora Neale Hurston, refusing to consider black folk life pathological, "liberated rural black folk from the prisons of racial stereotypes and granted them dignity as cultural creators," not only in her folklore publications but also in her creative works, most of which incorporate the black folklore she knew so well.

As creative author and folklorist, Hurston's vision was essentially to close the gap between literature and life. She "searched hard for a way to transfer the life of the people, the folk ethos, into accepted modes of formalized fiction." She never achieved her vision. She and most black writers who look to black folk traditions for aesthetic inspiration and technique have had to settle for *representing* the folk culture in their works. Untranscribable features of black literary folk traditions are so integral to the art that it is difficult and often impossible to reproduce in "formalized fiction" what Hurston and others before and after her envisioned. Had she been a poet, Hurston may have been better able to achieve her vision. Several black American poets, to varying degrees, have come close to capturing the folk art in their poems, such poets as Paul Laurence Dunbar, James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes and Gwendolyn Brooks. But only when these poems are re-oralized — *performed* — is any full sense of the black American folk ethos achieved. Only in a few areas, such as music and poetry, can the artist be removed from his or her setting and natural audience and the art itself remain essentially intact. To remove the *art* from its folk environs and yet maintain the unadulterated essence of that art is an even more

difficult task. The problem is an obvious one: the medium of the art necessarily changes, from an oral to a written one, and this change necessarily alters the art itself. Only when that art is re-oralized can it be one with the folk tradition from which it sprang. And even in many of these cases, such as the case of the black folk sermon, the audience remains an integral part of the art itself.

I am reminded of an incident that occurred a few years ago in a town in eastern North Carolina. A theater group had come to a local church to perform a play that extensively used Afro-American folk materials. The audience was attentive during the performance, well aware that it was witnessing a formal dramatic production. However, at the point in the play where a traditional black folk sermon was performed, the audience was transformed into a "congregation"; literature and life merged. At that point the "audience" made no distinction between the formalized art and the folk art on which it was based. It began to participate so fully in the scene that the actors, unaware of what was occurring, halted their performance until the "congregation" assumed its formal role of audience. In the vernacular we would say the audience had "got happy." As it turned out, the sermon (and, unfortunately, the rest of the play) could not be completed; each attempt to continue the sermon produced a singular audience reaction. The performers were somewhat indignant and did not recognize that the spectators' reaction was a testimony both to their acting expertise and to the authenticity with which the dramatist had rendered the black folk sermon. Although the troupe no doubt concluded that these backwoods people could not appreciate *art*, the re-oralization of this black folk sermon achieved exactly what Hurston had aimed at in extended literary forms. Her novels, excepting *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, exemplify both the strengths of her efforts and the extent of her failures in attempting to achieve her vision.

From 1925 until the end of her life, Zora Neale Hurston experienced several triumphs and failures in her professional life. Hemenway presents a portrait of a strong-willed woman alternately on the brink of a glorious triumph or a tragic failure and never quite consumed by either. Though after about 1950 her life seemed to head steadily down-

ward — unsuccessful attempts at fiction, unrewarding political activities, disappointments in her personal life, among a variety of other problems that would have defeated anyone who lacked her fortitude — there were, as Hemenway demonstrates, small victories (some attention for her writings, reintegration with folk people and their environment) that helped her remain the vibrant personality that both attracted and repelled people all her life. Zora Neale Hurston died in 1960 in a county welfare home in Florida. Hemenway states that the "definitive" book about Hurston "remains to be written, and by a black woman." Nevertheless, any future books about her will owe a tremendous debt to this one. Readers can know her skill as a collector of folklore through *Mules and Men*. We can know her polish as a creative artist through *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, a classic short novel, skillful in the beauty with which it treats Southern black folk life. □

Excerpt from *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Janie stirred her strong feet in the pan of water. The tiredness was gone so she dried them off on the towel.

"Now, dat's how everything wuz, Phoeby, jus' lak Ah told yuh. Ah'm back home agin and Ah'm satisfied tuh be heah. An done been tuh de horizon and back and now Ah kin set heah in mah house and live by comparisons. Dis house ain't so absent of things lak it used tuh be befo' Tea Cake come along. It's full uh thoughts, 'specially dat bedroom.

"Ah know all dem sitters-and-talkers gointuh worry they guts into fiddle strings till dey find out whut we been talkin' 'bout. Dat's all right, Phoeby, tell 'em. Dey gointuh make 'miration 'cause mah love didn't work lak they love, if dey ever had any. Then you must tell 'em dat love ain't somethin' lak uh grindstone dat's de same thing everywhere and do de same thing tuh everything it touch. Love is lak de sea. It's uh movin' thing, but still and all, it takes its shape from de shore it meets, and it's different with every shore."

"Lawd!" Phoeby breathed out heavily, "Ah done growed ten feet higher from just listenin' tuh you, Janie. Ah ain't satisfied wid mahself no mo'. Ah means tuh make Sam take me fishin' wid him after this. Nobody better not

Continued on page 110

Media-Made Dixie

By Jack Temple Kirby. Louisiana State University Press, 1978. 203 pp. \$9.95.

By Morton Sosna

Jack Temple Kirby's *Media-Made Dixie* is an interesting yet beguiling book, which traces shifting images of the South from roughly 1900 through the present. His litmus test for the popularity of various images is their success in the marketplace — in best-selling fiction, television, Hollywood films and occasionally in music and advertising. For counterpoint, Kirby compares the Southern portraits produced by professional historians and other serious writers. Only rarely, he reminds us, did works of genuine historical and aesthetic value also do well in the market.

According to Kirby, four Southern genres have dominated the mass media since the turn of the century. First, following the hostile imagery of the immediate post-Civil War years, there began in the 1890s a national infatuation with sentimental, simplistic, and racist interpretations of slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction. Best exemplified by the novels of Thomas Nelson Page and John Fox, Jr., and the films of D. W. Griffith (most memorably *Birth of a Nation*, 1915), this "neoconfederate" genre proved remarkably durable and was carried well into the twentieth century by Claude Bowers' *The Tragic Era* (1928) and Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind* (1936).

By the 1920s, however, popular works about the South began to ignore the momentous political issues of the last century in favor of a largely flattering portrayal of contemporary whites. Kirby calls this genre "sharecropper realism," and his examples include such novels as Ellen Glasgow's *Barren Ground* (1925), Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's *The Yearling* (1938), and the movie *Cabin in the Cotton* (1931). Though sharecropper realism remained popu-

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lar until World War II, a distinctly "Southern gothic" genre emerged after the mid-1930s through the works of T. S. Stribling, William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams and — in particular — Erskine Caldwell. Where Americans outside the region had previously seen Southern whites as humble, courageous and independent (if somewhat quaint), they now began to see them as race- and sex-crazed neurotics.

From Southern gothic it was a relatively short step to the next major genre, "neoabolitionism," which turned the neoconfederate image on its head, at first cautiously as in the films *Pinky* (1947) and *The Defiant Ones* (1958), but later with abandon as in *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* (1974) and *Roots* (1976). The main theme of neoabolitionist books and movies was that white Southerners needed Northerners and blacks to save them from themselves.

On the whole, *Media-Made Dixie* tantalizes rather than satisfies. At its best, it is a lively, unpretentious survey of popular perceptions about the South. Those who at one time or another have pondered the great themes of Southern history and literature will find its perspective refreshing; they may even be overcome with an irresistible urge to play a Hank Williams record or go see *W. W. and the Dixie Dance Kings*. Yet ultimately they will be disappointed at Kirby's selectivity, his frequently strained analysis and his reluctance to pursue some of his better thoughts. Like the South's most heavily advertised soft-drink, *Media-Made Dixie* leaves an afterthirst.

Whether intentionally or not, Kirby gives one the impression that images of the South necessarily had to be trivial in order to be popular. Judging from the works he selects, the neoabolitionists were about as guilty as the most ardent neoconfederates in promulgating misconceptions. But was this so? Lillian Smith's 1944 novel *Strange Fruit*, to name one, was both popular and perceptive. It was a Southern white woman's searching exploration of the hideous consequences of white supremacy and caste, and it sold in the millions, making it one of the biggest "Southern" best-sellers of all time. Curiously, Kirby fails to mention either Lillian Smith or *Strange Fruit* (also ignored is Flannery O'Connor), which makes his favorite putdown — "But no mind, never matter" — slightly ironic.

Kirby's explanation of why certain images of the South prevailed when they did is also uneven. Parts are exceptionally good, such as the analysis of W. J. Cash's related concepts of the South's "savage ideal" and "forgotten men," which in the book's best chapter nicely dovetails into discussions about the songs of Jimmie Rodgers and Hank Williams, and the plays of Tennessee Williams. Often, though, Kirby wanders from one subject to another without tying them together or saying anything significant. At other times, his arguments appear to be at war with evidence mustered in their behalf. For instance, he cites the 1967 film *Hurry Sundown* as an example of the "devilish South" image then at its peak. Yet another 1967 movie, *In the Heat of the Night*, is put forward to show that an entirely different image was already emerging in a complete turnabout which would eventually lead to the "folksy South" of the 1970s, typified by the friendly redneck sheriff in Dodge commercials and the popularity of *The Waltons* on television. To account for this, Kirby insists that, because *The Waltons* were riding high in the ratings, the "devilish South" portrayed in *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* was anachronistic and because *The Beverly Hillbillies* and *The Andy Griffith Show* were popular "folksy South" television series during the civil rights-conscious 1960s, they were exceptions to the negative image then prevalent.

In truth, the persistence of contradictory representations of the South defies Kirby's explanation. Before we can accept his conclusion that the current national lionization of white Southern culture signifies the end of regional distinctiveness — a trend which, in Kirby's opinion, has been underscored by the election of Jimmy Carter to the presidency — we need a better understanding of the inherent ambivalence of that distinctiveness than *Media-Made Dixie* provides. It may still be, as Stark Young once observed, that "the changing South is still the South."

In examining the South as depicted in the mass media, Kirby has taken on an important, largely neglected subject. Unfortunately, his book falls short of the mark. Content with surveying images and commenting on them, he ignores two fundamental questions, each of which has profound implications for Southern studies: (1) To what extent has the idea of "Dixie" (i.e., a unique

South) been "media-made?" (2) How accurately has "media-made Dixie" actually reflected Southern life? Had Kirby tackled such problems, he might have produced an important book, rather than one which is merely engaging □

Blacks and the Populist Revolt

By Gerald Gaither. University of Alabama Press, 1977. 251 pp. \$14.50.

By Paul M. Pruitt, Jr.

In *Blacks and the Populist Revolt*, Gerald Gaither concerns himself with a paradox inherent in Populist racial attitudes. Admitting that white Populists worked for the unification of the "producing class," he demonstrates that Southern agrarians were children of a racist world. Hence, there was bound to be a gap between "egalitarian rhetoric and the crude contrasts in black-white relations."

As he explains these well-known complications, Gaither mounts an astonishingly violent attack upon the People's Party. The tragic vulnerability of the Populist interracial coalition has been apparent since the publication of C. Vann Woodward's *Tom Watson, Agrarian Rebel* (1938). For Gaither, it follows that the movement was a "purveyor of the crassest sort of opportunism and racism." Lumping Populists, Republicans and Bourbon Democrats together in terms of political motivation, *Blacks and the Populist Revolt* treats the complex politics of the 1890s as purely a diabolical whirl of corruption, violence and Machiavellian calculation. Given this one-sided view, we can see how Gaither concludes that the racial democracy latent in Populist doctrine must necessarily have been submerged in a desire to exploit black voting power.

Logically enough, black agrarians and politicians fare none too well in this singular book. After commenting upon the independent-mindedness of the Colored Farmers' Alliance, Gaither seriously underestimates the courage of Southern blacks. There is little hint, for instance,

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of the determination with which Alabama blacks carried five of that state's rigidly controlled Black Belt counties for the agrarian Reuben Kolb in 1892. On the contrary, Gaither's blacks, "poor in both spirit and finances," cheerfully sell their votes when the Democrats crack the whip. "The usual method of buying votes," he writes, "was through a coterie of corrupt leaders, or preachers whose influence over their following . . . approached something akin to thought control." Relying too often on the interpretation of such Bourbon historians as E. Merton Coulter, Gaither provides us with a stereotyped picture of black passivity and greed. Not surprisingly, such creatures of "economic expediency and political despair" were easily disillusioned with the racist lapses of their would-be white agrarian allies. If we are to trust *Blacks and the Populist Revolt*, the People's Party lacked the varied means to attract large numbers of Southern blacks, a point "proved" with masses of "official" election statistics heavily weighted with stuffed ballots.

Readers who want to understand the potential of Alliance-Populism should turn to Lawrence Goodwyn's *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (1976), for there is in Gaither's book no sense of Populism as a fresh and creative "movement culture." *Blacks and the Populist Revolt* talks a good deal about "ideology," but fails to take seriously any motivation beyond racial "self-interest" in the combination of black and white farmers. Whatever the racism of the times, the Alliance vision of a "cooperative" society proved to be a powerful tool capable of reconciling even "natural enemies."

Gaither fails to grasp the fact that the People's Party was more than "a political defense mechanism of the disinherited," because he has consciously limited his perspective. Many of his ideas come straight from Richard Hofstadter's survey, *The Age of Reform* (1955), which defines Populism as a backward-looking, unreasoning reaction to the inevitable urban growth of America. In this spirit, Mr. Gaither is considerate enough to warn us against taking rural "fantasies" at face value: "If Hofstadter is correct in his assertion that Populists were paranoid and conspiracy-minded," he notes, then there is for historians "an inherent danger of accepting" the Populist point of view. In light of more recent works such as Walter T. K. Nugent's *The Tolerant Populists: Kansas Populism and*

Nativism (1963), most students have agreed that Hofstadter was *not* correct in his assessment of the agrarian revolt.

Gaither's attitude toward the Populist world view ignores an important racial interpretation. The People's Party, with its emphasis on "Greenback" economics, cooperative enterprise and class unity, sought to cast down "white supremacy" as the monolithic preoccupation of the South. After a generation of Bourbons had preached racial solidarity as a consecrated "central theme" of Southern culture, thousands of common folk, black and white, were transformed into an army of vengeance against the "party of the fathers" and the establishment it served. If most of the white Southern Populists remained racists, not all did so. For every Tom Watson who descended into pathological negrophobia, the People's Party molded a Joseph Manning who, after "the fadeout of Populism," campaigned for civil rights and helped launch the NAACP.

Finally, *Blacks and the Populist Revolt* maintains that Populists, frustrated by Democratic manipulation of black votes, were in the forefront of the movement for disfranchisement. This theory, first advanced by C. Vann Woodward in *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (1955), has been convincingly modified by J. Morgan Kousser, whose *The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880-1910* (1974) describes a ruthless long-term process of Democratic consolidation. In most Southern states (most emphatically in Alabama) dissident or impoverished whites and blacks, Populists and Republicans, fought disfranchisement for reasons of political survival.

Awkwardly written and poorly printed, *Blacks and the Populist Revolt* is an uneven book. For those who must have a non-ideological interpretation of Populism, the last chapters of Carl Degler's *The Other South: Southern Dissenters in the Nineteenth Century* (1974) are bound to be more satisfying. □

Images of the South: Visits with Eudora Welty and Walker Evans

Southern Folklore Reports, Number 1,
1977. 41 pp. \$7.50.

by Chris Mayfield

Today, as the old, slow South is being snapped up into the mechanisms of the Sun Belt, it is important to look closely at the prevailing artistic images of the region, and how they are changing. Particularly interesting are the values of the image-makers themselves. *Images of the South: Visits with Eudora Welty and Walker Evans* allows

— Chris Mayfield is a free-lance writer living in Durham, North Carolina.



Walker Evans, 1974

us to enter into the minds of two artists who, as much as anyone, have contributed to a vision of the pre-Sun Belt South. The book is the first edition of *Southern Folklore Reports*, a series published by the Center for Southern Folklore in Memphis, Tennessee. Bill

Ferris, the editor, recorded several conversations with Welty and Evans and presents them here with some of the photographs they took while working in the South during the 1930s. This is a quiet, serious and reflective book, and a pleasure to look at as much as to read. The photographs are beautifully arranged to complement each other as well as the text.

For many readers, it may come as a surprise that Eudora Welty worked as a photographer as well as a writer. During the early years of the Depression, she became a sort of journalist with the WPA, traveling around her native Mississippi to interview people about their work projects. She began taking photographs on the side, for her own satisfaction, and 40 years later some of them were published in a volume called *One Time, One Place*. Contrasted with Walker Evans' famous photographs, Welty's are far poorer technically, and they lack that astound-

Bill Ferris/Southern Folklore Reports

A Return Visit: Charles Waddell Chesnutt

By Bob Brinkmeyer

Charles Waddell Chesnutt was one of America's first black writers to receive a national reading audience and the attention of the white literati. The acceptance of his short story, "The Goophered Grapevine," by the highbrow *Atlantic Monthly* in 1887 is a literary landmark of sorts. But his real success came 12 years later when Houghton Mifflin brought out two collections of his stories, *The Conjure Woman* and *The Wife of His Youth*. Both books were received well, and established Chesnutt as a writer of national prominence. His publishers, however, not wanting to jeopardize a good thing, kept Chesnutt's racial identity (Chesnutt was light enough to pass for white) concealed for a year. Following the two collections of stories, Chesnutt published a biography of Frederick Douglass and three novels, *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900), *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901), and *The Colonel's Dream* (1905). These novels brought Chesnutt continued fame, but also a great deal of controversy.

Chesnutt was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1858. His family, whose roots lay in

— Bob Brinkmeyer teaches English at North Carolina Central University.

the Cape Fear River region of North Carolina, had moved North earlier when the elder Chesnutt decided he would not see his children held back by the shackles of "social and intellectual proscription" that he had endured. After the fall of the Confederacy, the Chesnatts returned to the South, taking up residence in Fayetteville, NC, where the family ran a prosperous grocery. Charles' education ended with grade school, but he had a hearty intellectual appetite and read every book he could get his hands on. He established a plan of study which reads today like the bulletin of a liberal arts college. He also taught for nine years.

But Chesnutt was not happy in Fayetteville. Few other blacks shared his intellectual interests, and he felt inhibited by Southern racism. Like his father before him, Chesnutt moved his family to Cleveland, where they settled permanently. On his decision to move North he wrote:

I will go North, where although the prejudice sticks, like a foul blot on the fair scutcheon of American liberty, yet a man may enjoy these privileges [of associating with people of similar interests] if he has the money to pay for them. I will live down the prejudice; I will crush it out. If I can exalt my race, if I can gain the applause of the good, the approbation of God, the thoughts

of the ignorant and prejudiced will not concern me.

In Cleveland, Chesnutt acquired the skills of a court stenographer, and, later, while working in a judge's office, he studied law and passed the Ohio bar in 1887. At the same time, he was publishing stories in newspapers and magazines. In 1899, after the success of his two volumes of stories, he closed his office of legal stenography so he could devote his time to writing and lecturing.

But being a professional writer in America has always been a difficult path to trudge; the situation was even more trying for Chesnutt, a black in an almost exclusively white occupation and a writer who brought up topics that many people preferred left in the closet. Consequently, after two years of financial struggle, Chesnutt reopened his legal office. Despite decreasing popularity, he continued to work at his craft until 1905, when he finally gave up writing altogether.

Chesnutt's experience was similar to other early black writers who tried to communicate their perspective in an heretofore white medium. By the end of the nineteenth century, for instance, a number of literary stereotypes of black people had become entrenched in American literature (the happy slave, the wretched free black, the tragic mulatto, to name a few). The black writer was

ing, timeless, visual beauty which characterizes the Walker Evans classics. They do, however, give us a more intimate, emotional, people-centered vision — the satisfaction we get from reading old letters, maybe, as compared to the satisfaction of reading a great novel.

In her conversation with Bill Ferris, Welty tells how her travels with the WPA contributed to her later work as a fiction writer. "It provided the raw material," she says. She learned to exercise her eye as an artist, to look for the "moments that reveal," and to listen to what people say about themselves and the world. Accurate observation is essential to Welty's approach — "One detail can tell more than any descriptive passage in general, you know." And she talks about the fiction writer's natural dependence on folklore and folkways — the spinning of tales, the wisdom about life and people, the emphasis on the spoken word. Again and again, she

makes a quiet reference to the ways in which Southerners and Southern life are changing: "I guess we're getting more and more like people anywhere else. I don't mean we ourselves, but the people who have come along." True or not, this observation touches a nerve in those of us who have come along, and who guess we may be missing out on some things our elders knew.

While Eudora Welty is a true native Southerner (still living in the house where she grew up in Jackson, Mississippi), Walker Evans approached the South in the '30s with the fresh, objective eye of an outsider. But he felt, he says, an immediate attraction to the area and its people — "almost a blood relation . . . an understanding and love for that kind of old, hard-working, rural, Southern human being." He saw in the South the remnants of "old America," where people still followed traditional folkways, not from choice but because that was all they knew.

Evans, who died a year after this conversation was recorded, explains that he has always had trouble reconciling his idea of the artist as an aristocrat with his belief in social justice. "Aristocracy *is* unjust socially," he acknowledges, yet as a genuine artist, Evans claims membership in a natural elite: "I look at those other photographs from the Farm Security Administration files and I see that they haven't got what I've got." It's hard to look at his photographs and argue this point.

But aristocrat or not, Walker Evans (with James Agee) did much to awaken national interest in the South as a place where beauty and self-worth grew hand in hand with terrible grinding poverty. After sharing these conversations with Evans and Welty and musing over the photographs, one cannot help wondering whether the money now pouring into our land is uprooting in its path some ancient virtues that we would not wish lost. □

almost compelled — if he or she wanted to be published — to work only with these character types. Moreover, though certain popular literary devices — such as nostalgic plots and direct narrators — developed by whites were not appropriate for black self-expression, black writers felt constrained to squeeze their distinctive messages into such ill-fitting molds.

Chesnutt's stories in *The Conjure Woman* illustrate the limits placed upon the black writer, and how a good writer could shape, to an extent, the prevailing forms to suit his purposes. The stories are written in the Southern version of the then-popular local color story. As this form was developed by writers like Thomas Nelson Page, members of the Northern aristocracy move to the post-Civil War South, where they learn, often from blacks, about the good times "befo de wah." The Old Order is validated in nostalgic lament, and the problems of the New South are overlooked. Blacks abound, but only as stereotypes, quaint period pieces to illustrate the pastoral beauty of bygone days.

Chesnutt's manipulation of this form is skillful. His stories are told by Uncle Julius, a shrewd old black patriarch, to a Northern couple who have bought the plantation home where Julius lives. Julius tells stories that give a dark and realistic portrait of slavery, although they are told in a comic vernacular which sugar-

coats their protest function, making them "acceptable." In addition, Julius tells his stories with an economic motive in mind: the stories embody moral lessons designed to manipulate the Northern couple to the advantage of the blacks on the plantation.

But Chesnutt can only do so much to a literary form which by its nature works against him. Even though he uses these stories to combat the stereotype of the happy slave, he ends up reinforcing in Uncle Julius the image of blacks as simple and shrewd, and essentially childlike. Julius is, after all, modeled upon Uncle Remus. And Julius' basic message — that blacks are human and need to be treated fairly — is far from earth-shaking, and far short of what Chesnutt has to say at other times about the evils of Southern racism.

Chesnutt's novels partake more openly than his early stories of the flavor of protest literature, and were naturally a good deal more controversial. Unfortunately, he never learned to write novels as well as short stories; his artistic success never coincided with his political intentions. The novels are primarily melodramatic tales, interesting and at times exciting, but not masterful. *The House Behind the Cedars* deals basically with the problems of passing; *The Marrow of Tradition* (his best novel, based on the Wilmington, NC, race riot of 1898) examines a South-

ern community's militant racism. In *The Colonel's Dream* he looks at the injustices of the convict labor system and the need for industry and fair labor practices in the South. This last novel is often overlooked because the main character is white and the book doesn't lend itself to a black studies approach. But in many ways it is among Chesnutt's most interesting work, particularly in light of its angry condemnations of the plight of Southern mill workers.

Chesnutt's novels often suffered a stormy reception. Many of his old literary friendships cooled; in the face of public wrath and diminishing popularity, Chesnutt finally gave up writing. He himself aptly summed up his literary career in accepting the NAACP's Spingarn Medal in 1928: "My books were written, from one point of view, a generation too soon. There was no such demand then as there is now for books by and about colored people. And I was writing against the trend of public opinion on the race question at that particular time." A modest understatement.

While Chesnutt does not deserve the stature of a major writer, his work vividly portrayed many of the social injustices of blacks in America which white writers overlooked, and he helped to pave the way for the soon-to-follow Harlem Renaissance, when black literature finally emerged in full flower. □

Your freedom and a place called Skokie . . .

DAVID GOLDBERGER
Attorney at Law

My Dear Friend,

I am the American Civil Liberties Union lawyer who went into court last year to defend freedom of speech in Skokie, Illinois, for a handful of people calling themselves "nazis."

The case has had an enormous impact on my life.

It has also gravely injured the ACLU financially.

I would like to explain why we took the case, and why the ACLU needs your help now.

The case began when the nazis scattered requests to several Chicago suburbs seeking permits to hold a rally in their towns. Skokie was one of those towns. Many of the towns that received the nazis' request just ignored it. Skokie did not. Skokie responded by obtaining a court order banning the rally, and by passing several local laws that in effect prohibited most political rallies, not only the nazis'.

Though I detested the nazis' beliefs, I went into court to defend the First Amendment.

I've had a lot of experience with bans on speech like the one in Skokie. I've opposed them when they were used to block civil rights marches, and I've opposed them when they were used to ban anti-war demonstrations. At this very moment, I am representing the Martin Luther King, Jr., Coalition, which has been banned from Marquette Park, a hostile white neighborhood on the southwest side of Chicago, by a law very much like one of the Skokie laws.

But the Skokie case was quite different. Skokie's population is predominantly Jewish, and includes a large number of concentration camp survivors. To allow people calling themselves nazis to parade in that town seemed to many an agony too much to bear.

I share that agony. All of us at the ACLU do.

The Executive Director of the ACLU, Aryeh Neier, is himself a survivor of nazi Germany. He has more reason than most to despise what people calling themselves nazis stand for.

But the nazis are not the real issue. The Skokie laws are the real issue. They don't even mention nazis. The Skokie laws require anyone who wants to speak, parade or demonstrate to apply first for a permit, and they grant the village officials the power to deny a permit if in their opinion the proposed speech portrays a "lack of virtue" in others or "incites hostility."

Anyone who wants to speak must also post a \$350,000 insurance bond. Since insurance companies rarely will write such insurance, the requirement in effect prohibits everyone's free speech. In fact, Skokie has already used the very same law to deny Jewish War Veterans a permit to parade.

It is crucial that these kinds of laws and requirements be struck down, because there is no way to limit them. If they are not struck down, then towns everywhere will have the legal power to pass identical laws, and to use them to prohibit whatever they believe is offensive.

Think of such power in the hands of a racist sheriff, or police who are hostile to anti-war demonstrators, or the wrong kind of President.

That is what was at stake in the Skokie case.

Yet many, understandably, considered the nazis' views so reprehensi-

ble that they did not deserve the protection of the Constitution. A few people even made personal threats against me and other members of the ACLU staff.

On January 27, 1978, the Illinois Supreme Court declared the Skokie ban unconstitutional. And on February 23, 1978, a federal court struck down all three Skokie laws including the \$350,000 insurance requirement. We've eliminated the ban on everyone's speech. But the ban was not the only casualty of the case.

The ACLU has paid a heavy price for defending your First Amendment freedoms. Thousands of members have resigned, and its income has plummeted. For the first time in 58 years, the watchdog of the Bill of Rights is suffering a decline. All over the country, ACLU offices have had to lay off staff, and financial support for many of its cases is now in jeopardy.

Of approximately 6,000 cases handled by the ACLU throughout the country, only six are like the Skokie case. Now the others are in danger because there isn't enough money.

What do we say to the woman who has been cut off from Medicaid payments for abortion? Or to the parents of a mentally retarded child rotting in a state institution? What do we say to a former government employee whose book on the CIA is being censored? Or to parents and teachers in a high school that has just banned Kurt Vonnegut and Bernard Malamud from its shelves?

Right now, we may have to say no. We can't help.

The ACLU is now on the edge of a precipice, and it needs your hand. We are currently making long-range plans for rebuilding our financial strength, but meanwhile we must survive this crisis.

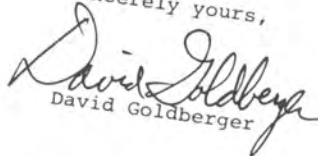
If we can get just thirty thousand staunch friends of civil liberties to contribute just \$20 each right now -- we can turn the tide.

In every generation, there is a comparatively small number of people with rare social insight whose thoughtfulness and conscience tip the scales in favor of important human values. Their names are not always recorded in the history books, but the consequences of their deeds are.

As a citizen deeply concerned with human rights, you represent a part of the "saving remnant" of our own time. Now I ask you to join with others like yourself all over the country not just to support ACLU but to help save it.

Won't you please use the attached coupon to contribute to the ACLU today?

Sincerely yours,


David Goldberger

DG/cm

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American Hunger

By Richard Wright. Harper & Row,
1977. 146 pp. \$8.95.

By Joyce Ellis

While unfinished autobiographies may prove disquieting to their authors, they often prove equally so to those of us who literally survive off the nourishment provided by those African-American writers who serve, perhaps reluctantly, as our very own literary *griots* and who, like Baldwin's musician, also serve the all-important function of "dealing with the roar arising from the void and imposing order on it..." Thus, while we relish, for example, Gwendolyn Brooks' *Report from Part One* and Chester Himes' *The Quality of Hurt, Part I*, we nevertheless feel a gnawing hunger for Parts II and III. We have had the long but rewarding wait for sequels to Maya Angelou's story, continuations which proved all the more palatable because she gave us two. Now we have the rest of Richard Wright's story. And although there are but six chapters in this offering, they nonetheless serve as a rather satisfying demitasse to the repast begun with *Black Boy*.

Originally titled "The Horror and the Glory," *American Hunger* chronicles the beginnings of Wright's Chicago experiences, offering us crucial glimpses of his literary and political growth, while at the same time providing the kind of commentary and analysis so quintessentially Wright:

I feel that for White America to understand the significance of the problem of the Negro will take a bigger and tougher America than we have yet known. I feel that America's past is too shallow, her character too superficially optimistic, her very morality too suffused with color hate for her to accomplish so vast a task Though he (the Black man) is an organic part of the nation, he is excluded by the entire tide and direction of American culture. Frankly, it is felt to be right to exclude him and it is felt to be wrong to admit him freely. Therefore, if, within the confines of its

— Joyce Ellis teaches at the Academic Skills Center at North Carolina Central University.



Richard Wright

present culture, the nation ever seeks to purge itself of its color hate, it will find itself at war with itself, convulsed by a spasm of emotional and moral confusion . . . America, lusty because it is lonely, aggressive because it is afraid, insists upon seeing the world in terms of good and bad, the holy and the evil, the high and the low, the Black and the White: Our America is frightened of fact, of history, of processes, of necessity. It has the easy way of damning those whom it cannot understand, of excluding those who look different, and it salves its conscience with a self-draped cloak of self-righteousness.

Wright's America, 1927. America, 1978.

True, there are no revelations nor grand insights to be gained from this reading, but for those of us still groping, still suffering, still trying to eke out some real living amid the daily reminders of man's continued inhumanity to man, especially to those of color, *American Hunger* provides some much-needed sustenance. Much of what Wright says has been said by some of our other griots, perhaps not as eloquently and incisively and pointedly, but because his caveats, his observations were issued so long ago, *American Hunger* is all the more poignant.

Wright's account of his solitary sojourn takes us from his early days in Chicago as he labors "to keep hunger from his elbows" (and from his family's: Ella and Aunt Maggie are still around) while holding fast to his literary yearnings, through his stormy days with the Communist Party of the USA. As he recounts those years, he affords his readers no respite. The sanguine vision of the North imagined in *Black Boy* is

at once shattered: "My first glimpse of the flat black stretches of Chicago depressed and dismayed me, mocked all my fantasies..." The land that he had envisioned would be one where "life could be lived with dignity, where the personalities of others should not be violated..." was instead an indifferent, impersonal urban wasteland, teeming with his "displaced and disinherited" kinsmen who, like him, had fled an unlivable South only to find themselves mired in an alien land, physically and spiritually oppressive.

Just as Wright's childhood and adolescent experiences as a victim of the South's other "peculiar institution" provide the drama in *Black Boy*, his interactions with those in Chicago's "melting pot" provide the framework for the finely textured vignettes he weaves into *American Hunger*: the Jewish delicatessen owners who give him his first job and who teach him a lesson of sorts; Tillie, the Finnish maid, who, for no discernible reason, daily spat into the soup pot; the "Irish, Jewish and Negro wits" at the post office who give him some measure of intellectual stimulation, though a bit hollow; his mimicking black bohemian friends; the unnamed, illiterate black girl he exploits and the automaton-like doctors at the medical facility.

These "stories" are all the more compelling and arresting because they amplify the extent of the psychic damage wrought by a nation that treated its native sons and daughters much like the subjects of the tests conducted in the labs of the hospital where Wright was employed as an orderly.

The hospital kept us four Negroes, as though we were close kin to the animals we tended, huddled together down in the underworld corridors of the hospital, separated by a vast psychological distance from the significant processes of the rest of the hospital — just as America had kept us locked in the dark world of American life for three hundred years.

For those who are as interested in the evolution of Wright's political ideology as they are in his continuing literary growth, Wright traces his attraction to, gradual disaffection with and eventual expulsion from the Communist Party. This discussion might well be considered the meat of *American Hunger*, since his affiliation with communism was spurred by his involvement in the John Reed Club, the vehicle which afforded him the psychic and physical space to write. Equally as

Harriet Crowder



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important, it was the communist potential that promoted Wright to shed his brooding pessimism and embrace a kind of cautious optimism:

My cynicism — which had been my protection against an America that had cast me out — slid from me, and timidly, I began to wonder if a solution of unity was possible.

He had, he felt, found "his place." Not for long. Ironically, his communist comrades erred, as had the South, in thinking that Wright could be other than his own man, that he would blindly follow anybody's dictates, that he was not a thinking man. Wright's romance with the CPUSA was short-lived indeed and once again, he was alone.

Wright discusses his affiliation with the CPUSA at length, providing a rather detailed chronology of the events which led to his final label as "enemy," and while the reading, at this point, does not become tedious, it does make one a bit impatient. Perhaps it's the naivete that the reader detects and resents, for surely Wright should have immediately discerned, given his acumen and antennae, that the Communist Party did not possess the know-how to design a blueprint for freedom and dignity. It is all the more disheartening to read, for it is clear that Wright desperately needed something sustaining with which he could align himself. That it was not the CPUSA was a painful reality for him to face. He deals with the pain of ostracism with his usual resolve, and moves on to new ground — the Federal Writers' Project, the Federal Negro Theatre and the South Side Boys' Club.

When *American Hunger* ends, one can almost see him boarding a plane for a land across the waters, a land that would not haunt him with bitter memories, a land that would indeed allow him to "hurl words into this darkness and wait for an echo . . . and to create a sense of the hunger for life that gnaws in us all, to keep alive in our hearts a sense of the inexpressibly human." □

Back to Texas

By Bobbie Louise Hawkins. Illustrated by Chuck Miller. Bear Hug Books, 1977. Distributed by Serendipity Books, 1790 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, Ca. \$4.50.

By Jennifer Miller

The book looks and feels like what it is — comfortable, easy reading. On its soft, cream-colored cover, besides the title and author's name, a pen-and-ink brown wash drawing of a house and a wide, furrowed field curls off the front, around the spine and across the back.

Back To Texas is an illustrated book of verbal scenes about a family and the state in which they live, put together in a way best described by Hawkins: "It might help to think of it as having gathered more than having been written. It's got about as much plan to it as tumbleweeds blown against a fence and stuck there."

The loose assortment of overheard conversations and poetic prose centers on Jessie, who is driving with her mother, Mae, back to their home state. Jessie travels in time as well as across the flat land, from present sights to memories.

Everything begins as a dot at the level of the horizon. The dot gets bigger as it comes closer . . . reaches full size and stops . . . a farm, a stand of mesquite trees, a humpbacked metal cotton gin with wagons standing derelict around the yard, their insides fuzzy with bits and tufts of cotton.

Or a combination gas station grocery store with two or three men in khakis or bib overalls and summer straw hats, hunkered back on their heels talking in the shade of the wall.

They glance up briefly when the Model-A Ford drives in.

'There's some monkies in that cage out back. Why dontcha take your little girl back for a look.'

Scenes: Jessie's early years made chaotic by a wild and rambling father; the inevitable split, father from mother; an extensive network of Texas relatives. It's a big state. When someone speaks of "going east" to visit long-lost relatives, they mean east Texas.

— Jennifer Miller is on the staff of the Institute for Southern Studies.

As the narrator travels across the state, she remembers: "Breaded veal cutlets, flour and milk gravy, shrunken peas, a wilted lettuce leaf with a slice of tomato and a big dab of mayonnaise going a darker yellow at the edges . . . all over Texas."

She spots a newspaper article which bemoans the fact that deprived children must swim in irrigation ditches rather than municipal pools, and Jessie scoffs, recalling good times in such ditches with her cousin, Bud. Who would *choose* to give up fast moving ditch water for chlorine? "The moisture rose up into the air, softening it, and there was a constant warm smell of mud and weeds gone rampant, the smell of chlorophyll."

About her Texas-Irish-Cherokee roots, she remembers "the Hardshell Baptists, the Holy Rollers, the snake handlers. My grandmother has second-sight and my Aunt Ethel has the gift of tongues." And there's Uncle Horace who moved back to southeast Texas because the paint at the job he'd taken elsewhere was affecting his lungs. He returns to his old family farm, and stores his life in a barn: "He was keeping the residue of his life secure there, Old books of wallpaper samples, mail order catalogs with fabric swatches glued to the pages, fencing foils; it drove him wild to learn that we had been there." Jessie remembers, too, a house in one town in which an insane young woman was kept in a cage because Texas did not have adequate mental institutions.

Against this backdrop of small towns and rural life, her family members re-enact childhoods, grow old, die.

'I was sorry to hear about your daddy,' I told Bud. Grown up now with a small moustache.

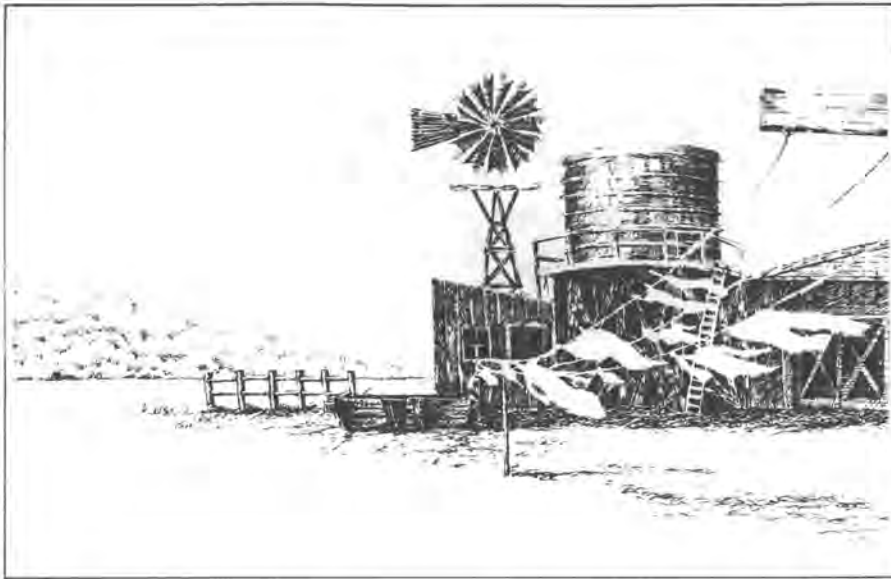
He looked at me intently for an instant, then ducked his head in a way he always had to keep his feelings in.

'Yeah. I guess it couldn't be helped.'

If this is life, there must be humor — the inside family stories, the kind that might not strike you funny unless you were there. And the childhood games, kissing in the movies, gossip, teenage pregnancy. Liver and stewed onions, violins, God.

Ethel held nightly prayers before bedtime and when we'd visit it always meant we'd gather in her bedroom; standing in a circle around her with our eyes lowered while she was on her knees in the middle. She used those sessions to get back at anybody who had irritated her during the day.

'Dear Lord,' she'd intone, 'help Mae to shield her tongue.'



Chuck Miller/Back to Texas

Throughout, there is a casual connectedness, a familial tone.

She entered the living room wiping the cream from her face onto the towel.

'Oh Velma!' her mother wailed, 'You'll ruin that towel honey!'

'I hafta wipe my face on something if I'm gonna kiss Aunt Mae.'

She tossed the towel onto a chair. Ethel snatched it up and looked underneath to see whether the grease had got onto the fabric.

This is not the "realism" of supermarket paperbacks, nor is it soap opera drama. Rather, Hawkins employs selective vision, like shining a light in a familiar closet — Jessie's family and home state appear out of the darkness. It's not a complete portrait of Texas. The places she revisits have no oil companies, no migrant laborers. Neither are there any completely developed stories or themes.

Though I'm pleased to have made the acquaintance of Jessie and Mae, Aunt Ethel, Uncle Horace, Velma, Bud and the others, I miss the structure that would have directed me toward more understanding of their lives. I regret the lack of momentum that comes with plot. And I miss the part in which the more traditional writer steps back and remarks on the moral/social/political/economic — whatever — situation in the state, or perhaps explains "why we are here," why we love, hate, struggle or choose not to. Hawkins doesn't explain. She presents. A less talented writer could never get away with it.

Bobbie Louise Hawkins couldn't have either had she submitted her book to one of the larger publishing houses, less given to experimentation. Only

750 copies of *Back To Texas* were printed; obviously, Bear Hug Books hasn't the marketing and distributing clout of a big publishing house. Copies of her book can be found in a few good bookstores, maybe some libraries, or determined readers can order it from the publisher. But that's nothing new. You've always had to be *motivated* to find your favorite unknown writer.

Back To Texas is one of many barely visible publications of approximately 5,000 small presses and literary magazines in the country today (with high densities in New York and California); over a hundred are located in the South. All these plus numerous university and college-supported literary journals make it difficult to keep track. Small magazines devoted to literary art and experimentation, though less ephemeral these days due partly to backing from the National Endowment for the Arts, still begin publishing without intending to entice the large audience they'd need to survive, never certain that their first issue won't be their last.

Bear Hug Books has allowed Hawkins the freedom characteristic of small presses. Hemingway, Pound, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Beecher, Jonathan Williams, Robert Duncan, Denise Levertov, Charles Olson and many others first published in these hand-crafted books of essays, fiction and poetry. And since offset printing has made the process less expensive, and the protest pamphlets and flyers of the 1960s taught people how to print their own writing, output has increased.

But long before offset, small presses

played an important role in the South's rich literary heritage, from the staid outpourings of the Agrarians in *The Fugitive* and *The Southern Review* in the '20s and '30s and the literary journals of the major Southern universities, to Lillian Smith and Paula Snelling's controversial *The North Georgia Review — The South Today* in the '30s and '40s. And from North Carolina's Black Mountain College in the 1950s came *The Black Mountain Review*, which first published some of our major contemporary thinkers and writers. Some university quarterlies locate new talent, but generally their "controversies" tend toward the academic, while small presses may concentrate on utterances of a private nature, thus making their circle of followers particularly small.

Lively fiction writing goes on in the South, of course. Some favorites: *Callaloo* from the University of Kentucky in Lexington; *Aura* in Birmingham; the *Dekalb Literary Arts Review* in Georgia; *St. Andrews Review* and *Carolina Quarterly* in North Carolina; *New Orleans Review*; a Virginia anthology entitled *Carry Me Back*. Certainly there is other work worth mentioning that I've not seen, and I haven't delved into poetry at all, far more of which is published than is fiction. Tastes differ, and if it is lists you want, go to the directories to these publications.*

Even with guides, casting a critical eye on the work of the small presses requires appetite. How tempting it is, when confronted with such quantity, to skim the tables of contents for familiar names — a handle. Many technically well-done pieces are lifeless, and it's easy to become jaded: a great deal appears to be writing for writing's

* COSMEP (Committee of Small Magazine Editors & Publishers) newsletter and catalog: Box 703, San Francisco, Calif. 94101. *COSMEP Van Catalog*, \$35; newsletter for the Southern region, \$5/year: Box 209 Carrboro, NC 27510.

Alternatives in Print, New Glide Publications, 330 Ellis St., San Francisco, Calif. 94102.

Catalog of Literary Magazines, Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines, 80 Eighth Ave., NY, NY 10011.

Small Press Record of Books in Print, and *International Directory of Little Magazines*, and others, Dustbooks, Box 1056, Paradise, Calif. 95969.

sake. But storytellers *do* surface who combine lively content with new forms, and that's when the perusing becomes exciting. These writers are the pathfinders, scouts for literature which will be meaningful to inhabitants of the late twentieth century.

And, as with other proud and struggling enterprises, the inherent energy of small presses makes the experience of sifting all the more enjoyable for the individual who decides to explore this new literature. There are readings, traveling book vans, book fairs, and plenty of material to present to a literary palate.

Fiction cannot be deliberately composed for a specific or regional audience — seek a following and you will find you have nothing to say — but *Back To Texas*, for example, is refreshing because it does focus on one place. Even though home states may differ, the reader recalls similar experiences. The setting is created with true details, so the characters appear true, too. And because the story is set in a particular place with its ties, traditions and trends, the culture is alive in the writing.

In a publishing world that largely gets its bucks from mass audience paperbacks — books that make blockbuster movies — it's reassuring to see experimental, less homogenized work continuing at the small presses. □

Jail Birds

*I break a rule everyday
when I take the bread away
I bring it in my pocket and hand
to the place where the pigeons land
I toss the crusts towards their feet
as I stand and watch them eat
and with a sad and lonely grin
I watch the sparrows flying in
When it's time to say farewell
it seems as if they all can tell
as I see them take to sky
I envy feathers born to fly
I see them land in holes and sockets
as I stroll away with crumbs in pockets.*

— H. B. Johnson
doing 25 years
Yanceyville, NC

criticize yuh in mah hearin'."

"Now, Phoeby, don't feel too mean wid de rest of 'em 'cause dey's parched up from not knowin' things. Dem meat-skins is *got* tuh rattle tuh make out they's alive. Let 'em console theyselves wid talk. 'Course, talkin' don't amount tuh uh hill uh beans when yuh can't do nothin' else. And listenin' tuh dat kind uh talk is jus' lak openin' yo' mouth and lettin' de moon shine down yo' throat. It's uh known fact, Phoeby, yuh got tuh *go* there tuh *know* there. Yo' papa and yo' mama and nobody else can't tell yuh and show yuh. Two things everybody's got tuh do fuh theyselves. They got tuh go tuh God, and they got tuh find out about livin' fuh theyselves."

There was a finished silence after that so that for the first time they could hear the wind picking at the pine trees. It made Phoeby think of Sam waiting for her and getting fretful. It made Janie think about that room upstairs — her bedroom. Phoeby hugged Janie real hard and cut the darkness in flight.

Soon everything around downstairs was shut and fastened. Janie mounted the stairs with her lamp. The light in her hand was like a spark of sun-stuff washing her face in fire. Her shadow behind fell black and headlong down the stairs. Now, in her room, the place tasted fresh again. The wind through the open windows had broomed out all the fetid feeling of absence and nothingness. She closed in and sat down. Combing road-dust out of her hair. Thinking.

The day of the gun, and the bloody body, and the courthouse came and commenced to sing a sobbing sigh out of every corner in the room; out of each and every chair and thing. Commenced to sing, commenced to sob and sigh, singing and sobbing. Then Tea Cake came prancing around her where she was and the song of the sigh flew out of the window and lit in the top of the pine trees. Tea Cake, with the sun for a shawl. Of course he wasn't dead. He could never be dead until she herself had finished feeling and thinking. The kiss of his memory made pictures of love and light against the wall. Here was peace. She pulled in her horizon like a great fish-net. Pulled it from around the waist of the world and draped it over her shoulder. So much of life in its meshes! She called in her soul to come and see.

— Zora Neale Hurston

Books on the South

This list consists of books published since March, 1978. Book entries include works up to September, 1978. Dissertations appeared in the Dissertation Abstracts Index during March-May, 1978.

The entries are grouped under several broad categories for your convenience. Mention of a book here does not preclude its being reviewed in a future issue. Unsolicited reviews of publications of general interest to our readers are welcome. Recent works are preferred.

Copies of the dissertations are available from Xerox University Microfilms, Dissertation Copies, PO Box 1764, Ann Arbor, Mi. 48106. The cost is \$7.50 for microfilm and \$15 for xerographic.

ECONOMICS, HISTORY AND POLITICS

"The Anti-Nuclear Movement in Tennessee," by Lynn Ellen Dwyer. Dissertation. The American University.

"Antislavery Thought in the Border South, 1830-1860," by Ian B. Turner. Dissertation. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

"Appalachia and Detroit," by Phillip E. Balla. Dissertation. University of Michigan.

"Black and White Labor and the Development of the Southern Textile Industry, 1800-1920," by Allen H. Stokes, Jr. Dissertation. University of South Carolina.

Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama, by Walter L. Fleming. Reprint Co., 1978. \$30.00.

Coal Resources, Characteristics and Ownership in the USA, ed. by R. Noyes. Noyes Data Corp., 1978. \$45.00.

Constitutional Development in Alabama, 1798-1901: A Study in Politics, the Negro and Sectionalism, by Malcolm C. McMillan. Reprint Co., 1978. \$20.00.

A Decade of Sectional Controversy, 1851-1861, by Henry H. Simms. Greenwood Press, 1978. Reprint of 1942 edition. \$18.75.

"An Economic Analysis of the Impacts of Natural Gas Price Increases and Curtailments on Integrated Agriculture in the Texas High Plains," by Marilyn K. Moore. Dissertation. University of Maryland.

"The First Hundred Years of Town Planning in Georgia," by Joan Niles Sears. Dissertation. Emory University.

The General Assembly of Virginia, July 30, 1619 — January 11, 1978: A Register. Virginia State Library, 1978. Price not set.

Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895-1943, by James R. Green. Louisiana State University Press, 1978.

\$20.00.

The History of Dillon County, South Carolina, by Durward T. Stokes. University of South Carolina Press, 1978. \$19.50.

A History of Mississippi From the Discovery of the Great River by Hernando de Soto Including the Earliest Settlement Made by the French Under Iberville to the Death of Jefferson Davis, by Robert Lowry and William H. McCordle. Reprint Co., 1978. \$32.50.

"The Impact of a Physician's Assistant Clinic on a Rural Southern County: A Descriptive Evaluation," by Robert E. Burke. Dissertation. University of Florida.

"Irony of Victory: Lowell During World War II," by Marc Miller. Dissertation. Boston University.

Journeys Through the South, by Fred Powledge. Vanguard Press, 1978. \$10.00

The Klan, by Patsy Day. Stein and Day, 1978. \$10.00.

Let Them Be Judged: The Judicial Integration of the Deep South, by Frank T. Read and Lucy F. McGough. Scarecrow Press. Date and price not set.

"The Little Rock Desegregation Crisis of 1957," by David E. Wallace. Dissertation. University of Missouri-Columbia.

Military History of Mississippi, 1803-1898, by Dunbar Rowland. Reprint Co., 1978. \$32.50.

Mississippi As A Province, Territory and State, by John F. Claiborne. Reprint Co., 1978. \$27.50.

New Deal Policy and Southern Rural Poverty, by Paul E. Murtz. Louisiana State University Press, 1978. \$14.95.

Ninety Six - The Struggle for the Back Country of South Carolina, by Robert D. Bass. Sandlapper Store, 1978. \$12.50.

Nothing Could Be Finer: Repression and Resistance in the New South, by Michael Myerson. International Publishing Co., 1978. Price not set.

The Political Economy of the Cotton South, ed. by Gavin Wright. W. W. Norton & Co., 1978. \$10.95.

"Printing in the Confederacy, 1861-1865: A Southern Industry in Wartime," by Ellen Gay Detlefsen. Dissertation. Columbia University.

"Prospecting and Mining on the Texas Frontier," by Duane K. Hale. Dissertation. Oklahoma State University.

"'Pure Democracy and White Supremacy': The Redeemer Period in North Carolina, 1876-1894," by Alan B. Bromberg. Dissertation. University of Virginia.

Revolutionary Virginia, the Road to Independence, Vol. IV: The Committee of Safety and the Balance of Forces, 1775, A Documentary Record, ed. by Robert L. Scriber and Brent Tarter. University Press of Virginia, 1978. Price not set.

"The Role of Business and Industry in Vocational Education in the Public Secondary Schools in Tennessee," by Jerry D. Scott. Dissertation. University of Tennessee.

"Rural Health Care Planning and Delivery Systems in Georgia," by William Hosking. Dissertation. University of Georgia.

"The Shoot-to-Kill Bill: A Case Study of Criminal Law-Making in Florida," by Eileen M. Vohryzek. Dissertation. Florida State University.

South and the Politics of Slavery, 1828-1856, by William J. Cooper, Jr. Louisiana State University Press, 1978. \$22.50.

"Subtreasury Politics and the Virginia Conservative Democrats, 1835-1844," by Harold D. Moser. Dissertation. University of Madison-Wisconsin.

Texas Labor Laws, by Joan McCrea. Gulf Publishing Co., 1978. \$6.95.

Texas Politics Today, by William E. Maxwell and Ernest Crane. West Publishing Co., 1978. \$7.95.

"The Virginia War Effort, 1775-1783: Manpower Policies and Practices," by John D. McBride. Dissertation. University of Virginia.

When the Yankee Came, by George B. West. Dietz Press, date not set. \$5.00.

BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"'Assistant President' for the Home Front: James F. Byrnes and World War II," by John W. Partin. Dissertation. University of Florida.

Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi. Reprint Co., 1978. 2 volumes, \$45 each.

Cousin Beedie and Cousin Hot: My Life With the Carter Family of Plains, Georgia, by Hugh Carter. Prentice Hall, 1978. \$12.50.

"David J. Lewis of Maryland: Formative and Progressive Years, 1869-1917," by Rev. Thomas D. Masterton. Dissertation. Georgetown University.

Dolly Parton, by Alanna Nash. Addison House, 1978. \$8.95.

"Douglas Hancock Cooper: Southerner," by Gail Eugene Balman. Dissertation. Oklahoma State University.

History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, by Thomas M. Owens and Milo B. Howard. Reprint Co., 1978. 4 volumes, \$37.50 each.

"Jacksonian Conservative: The Later Years of William Smith, 1826-1840," by Caroline P. Smith. Dissertation. Auburn University.

Jimmy Carter: From Plains to the White House, by Betty Glad. W. W. Norton & Co., 1978. \$10.95.

"John Patrick Grace and the Politics of Reform in South Carolina, 1900-1931," by Doyle W. Boggs, Jr. Dissertation. University of South Carolina.

Meet Southern Baptists, compiled by Albert McClellan. Broadman Press, 1978. \$12.95.

Merchant of Manchac: The Letterbooks of John Fitzpatrick, 1768-1798. Louisiana State University Press, 1978. \$30.00.

Mr. George in Pioneer Texas: Hardships and the Recovery of a Birthright, ed. by Mary V. Callcott and Robert Collinson. Stevenson Press, 1978. \$8.95.

The Orderly Book of Captain Benjamin Taliaferro, 2nd Virginia Detachment, Charleston, South Carolina, 1780, ed. by Lee A. Walker, Jr. Virginia State Library, 1978. Price not set.

Pat Harrison: The New Deal Years, by Martha H. Swain. University Press of Mississippi, 1978. \$15.00.

The Public Papers of Governor Wendell H. Ford. University Press of Kentucky, 1978. \$27.50.

"The Quiet Ones: A Cameo Study of Another Kind of Texan, 1854-1900," by Helen

Canada. Dissertation. St. Louis University.

The Rise of Rawlins Lowndes, by Carl J. Vipperman. University of South Carolina Press, 1978. \$14.95.

Speaker Blatt: His Challenges Were Greater, by John K. Cauthen. University of South Carolina Press, 1978. Reprint of 1965 edition. Price not set.

"Superintendent Mildred E. Doyle (of Knox County, Tennessee): Educational Leader, Politician, Woman," by Carol E. Baker. Dissertation. University of Tennessee.

The Three Kentucky Presidents: Lincoln, Taylor, Davis, by Holman Hamilton. University Press of Kentucky, 1978. \$4.95.

"William Bostwick: Connecticut Yankee in Antebellum Georgia," by Marilyn A. Lavin. Dissertation. Columbia University.

Yankee From Georgia, by William L. Miller. Quadrangle, 1978. \$10.95.

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

An Austin Sketchbook, by Tony Crosby. Encino Press, 1978. \$12.50.

"Breathitt County, Kentucky, Grammar," by John C. McGreevey. Dissertation. Illinois Institute of Technology.

Eyes Backward Please! A Reminiscence of Rural Alabama. Portals Press, 1978. \$7.50.

History of the First Baptist Church of Griffin, Georgia: 1811-1977, by John H. Goddard, Jr. Cherokee Publishing Co., 1978. \$12.50.

"A History of Music in Northern Louisiana Until 1900," by Robert B. Price. Dissertation. Catholic University of America.

A Loose Herd of Texans, by Bill Porterfield. Texas A&M University Press, 1978. \$10.00.

The Lure and Lore of Limestone County: Alabama Antebellum Houses and Families, by Faye A. Axford. Portals Press, 1978. \$17.50.

"Mandolins in the United States Since 1880: An Industrial and Sociocultural History of Form," by Scott Hambly. Dissertation. University of Pennsylvania.

More Tales of Tennessee, by Louise L. Davis. Pelican Publishing Co., 1978. \$10.00.

Outer Banks Mysteries and Other Stories, by Charles H. Whedbee. John F. Blair, Pub., 1978. \$5.95.

Plantation Homes of the Teche Country (Louisiana), by Paul F. Stahls, Jr. Pelican Publishing Co., 1978. \$12.95.

Richmond's Jewry, 1769-1976: Shabbat in Schockoe, by Myron Berman. University Press of Virginia, 1978. Price not set.

"This World and the Next: Religion, Death, Success and Love in Jefferson's Virginia," by Jan Ellen Lewis Grimmelmann. Dissertation. University of Michigan.

"Traditional Folk Medical Beliefs in Georgia," by Shirlee A. Owens. Dissertation. University of Georgia.

Wings of the Dove: The Story of Gospel Music in America, by Lois S. Blackwell. Donning Co., 1978. \$6.95.

BLACK EXPERIENCES IN THE SOUTH

An American Crusade: The Life of Charles Waddell Chesnut, by Frances F. Keller.

Brigham Young University Press, 1978. \$11.95.

Andrew Young: A Biography, by Carl Gardner. Drake Pubs., 1978. \$9.95.

Barbara Jordan: Keeping Faith, by Linda Jacobs. EMC Corp., 1978. \$4.95.

Black American Fiction: A Bibliography, by Carol Fairbanks and Eugene A. Engeldinger. Scarecrow Press. Date and price not set.

Black Art in Houston: The Texas Southern University Experience, by John Biggers et al. Texas A&M University Press, 1978. \$20.00.

"Black Slave Drivers in the Southern United States," by Shirley M. Jackson. Dissertation. Bowling Green State University.

Blacks in Blue and Gray: Afro-Americans in the Civil War, by Hubert C. Blackerby. Portals Press, 1978. \$7.50.

Blacks in Mississippi Politics, 1865-1900, by Buford Satcher. University Press of America, 1978. \$8.75.

"Citizenship Education in the South Sea Islands, 1954-1966," by Jerome D. Franson. Dissertation. George Peabody College for Teachers.

The Correspondence of W. E. B. DuBois: Selections, 1944-1963, Vol. 3, ed. by Herbert Aptheker. University of Massachusetts Press, 1978. \$22.50.

Dear Master: Letters of a Slave Family, ed. by Randall M. Miller. Cornell University Press, 1978. \$15.00.

Deep Like the River: Education in the Slave Quarter Community, 1831-1865, by Thomas L. Webber. W. W. Norton & Co., 1978. \$14.95.

Dizzy - The Autobiography of Dizzy Gillespie, by Dizzy Gillespie and Al Frazer. Doubleday & Co., 1978. \$10.95.

"DuBois' Propaganda Literature: An Outgrowth of His Sociological Studies," by Louie N. Gibson. Dissertation. State University of New York at Buffalo.

"Give Us the Ballot: The Expansion of Black Voting Rights in the South, 1944-1969," by Steven F. Lawson. Dissertation. Columbia University.

"Hurston's Folk: The Critical Significance of Afro-American Folk Tradition in Three Novels and the Autobiography," by Gloria J. Johnson. Dissertation. University of California, Irvine.

"The Impact of Annexation-Related City Council Reapportionment on Black Political Influence: The Cities of Richmond and Petersburg, Virginia," by Murel M. Jones, Jr. Dissertation. Howard University.

In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process: The Colonial Period, Vol. I, by A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. Oxford University Press, 1978. \$15.00.

"An In-Depth Exploration and Analysis of an Indigenous, Predominantly Rural Black Leadership Group in a Rural County in Georgia," by Clarence W. Moore, Jr. Dissertation. University of Georgia.

"An Introductory Essay and Subject Index to Selected Interviews from the Slave Narrative Collection," by Martia G. Goodson. Dissertation. Union Graduate School.

Jazz Records, 1897-1942, by Brian Rust. Arlington House, 1978. \$60.00.

"Jean Toomer's Cane: The Search for American Roots," by Richard L. Eldridge. Dissertation. University of Maryland.

"The Lyrics of Race Record Blues, 1920-1942: A Semantic Approach to the Structural Analysis of a Formulaic System," by Michael E. Taft. Dissertation. Memorial University of Newfoundland.

The Making of Jazz: A Comprehensive History, by James L. Collier. Houghton Mifflin Co., 1978. Price not set.

Medicine and Slavery: The Health Care of Blacks in Antebellum Virginia, by Todd L. Savitt. University of Illinois Press, 1978. \$12.00.

Protest, Politics and Prosperity: Black Americans and White Institutions, by Dorothy K. Newman. Pantheon Books, 1978. \$15.00.

Proud Shoes: The Story of an American Family, by Pauli Murray. Harper & Row Pubs., Inc., 1978. \$8.95.

"Public Images of Martin Luther King," by Carol E. Carr. Dissertation. Ohio State University.

Rags and Ragtime: A Musical History, by David A. Jason and Trebor J. Tichenor. Seabury Press, 1978. \$14.95.

"The Rhetoric of Black Congressmen, 1870-1877: An Analysis of the Rhetorical Strategies Used to Discuss Congressional Issues," by William A. Haskins. Dissertation. University of Oregon.

Richard Wright: The Critical Reception, ed. by John M. Reilly. Burt Franklin, Pub., 1978. \$19.95.

Runaway to Freedom: A Story of the Underground Railway, by Barbara Smucker. Harper & Row, 1978. \$6.95.

Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915, by Donald Spivey. Greenwood Press, 1978. \$14.95.

Shuckin' and Jivin' Folklore from Contemporary Black Americans, by Daryl C. Dance. Indiana University Press, 1978. \$15.00.

"W. E. B. DuBois: An Educational Critique," by David N. Mielke. Dissertation. University of Tennessee.

W. E. B. DuBois on Sociology and the Black Community, ed. by Dan S. Green and Edwin D. Driver. University of Chicago Press, 1978. Price not set.

William Wells Brown and Martin R. Delany: A Reference Guide, ed. by Curtis W. Ellison and E. W. Metcalf. G. K. Hall Pubs., 1978. \$24.00.

LITERATURE

Biographical Dictionary of Southern Authors, ed. by Lucian L. Knight. Gale Research Co., 1978. Reprint of 1929 edition. \$24.00.

"A Critical Study of Allen Tate's Poetry," by Leonard R. Roberts. Dissertation. Lehigh University.

Ellen Glasgow, by Blair Rouse. Irvington Pubs., 1978. Reprint of 1962 edition. \$12.95.

"The Fatal Arc: The Evolution of Tragic Image and Idea in Three Novels by William Faulkner," by John L. Dods. Dissertation. Loyola University of Chicago.

Faulkner's Narrative Poetics: Style as Vision, by Arthur F. Kinney. University of Massachusetts Press, 1978. \$15.00.

"Faulkner's Trilogy: A Reevaluation," by Richard D. McDowell. Dissertation. Tulane University.

"Flannery O'Connor's Artistry: Techniques of Characterization," by Peggy L. Garrett. Dissertation. Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

"From Physician to Novelist: The Progression of Walker Percy," by Suzanne B. Watkins. Dissertation. New York University.

George W. Cable, by Philip Butcher. Irvington Pubs., 1978. Reprint of 1962 edition. \$12.95.

GYASTUCUS: Studies in Antebellum Southern Humorous and Sporting Writings, ed. by James L. West. Humanities Press, 1978. Price not set.

"Harry Stillwell Edwards: A Bibliographical and Critical Study," by Paul E. McClure. Dissertation. University of Georgia.

"Incomplete Sentence: A Study of Tennessee Williams Since 1960," by Mary E. Shaugnessy. Dissertation. State University of New York at Buffalo.

"James Agee: The Child as Synthesis," by Albert W. H. Lum. Dissertation. University of Notre Dame.

Joel Chandler Harris: A Reference Guide, ed. by R. Bruce Bickley et al. G. K. Hall & Co., 1978. \$30.00.

"Kate Chopin's Use of Natural Correlatives As Psychological Symbols in Her Fiction," by Joyce A. Dyer. Dissertation. Kent State University.

Mark Twain's Mysterious Stranger: A Study of the Manuscript Texts, by Sholom J. Kalin. University of Missouri Press, 1978. \$15.00.

Mary N. Murfree, by Richard Cary. Irvington Pubs., 1978. Reprint of 1967 edition. \$12.95.

"Method and Vision in Kate Chopin's Fiction," by Sarah Hopkins Lattin. Dissertation. University of Kentucky.

"Plot Materials and Narrative Form in Faulkner's Early Fiction," by Jeffrey J. Folks. Dissertation. Indiana University.

"Portraits of Suffering Womanhood in Representative Nineteenth Century American Novels: The Contribution of Kate Chopin," by Phyllis G. Roumm. Dissertation. Kent State University.

Sidney Lanier, Henry Timrod and Paul Hamilton Hayne: A Reference Guide, ed. by Jack DeBellis. G. K. Hall & Co., 1978. \$20.00.

"The Uncreating Word: Creators of Fiction in William Faulkner's Major Novels," by Gillian J. Wilson. Dissertation. University of California, Santa Barbara.

"The Vision of Faith and Reality in the Fiction of Flannery O'Connor," by Catherine M. Dullea. Dissertation. Ball State University.

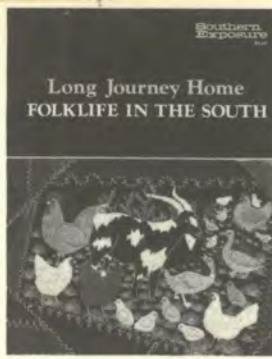
Wary Fugitives: Four Poets and the South, by Louis D. Rubin, Jr. Louisiana State University Press, 1978. \$24.95.

William Faulkner: Toward Yoknapatawpha and Beyond, by Cleanth Brooks. Yale University Press, 1978. \$17.50.

"William Faulkner's Thomas Sutpen, Quentin Compson, Joe Christmas: A Study of the Hero-Archetype," by Bernice Berger Miller. Dissertation. University of Florida.

"William Faulkner's World War I and Flying Short Fiction: An Imaginative Appropriation of History," by Nancy B. Sederberg. Dissertation. University of South Carolina.

"Within and Without a Region: The Fiction of Reynolds Price," by Daniel F. Daniel. Dissertation. University of Wisconsin-Madison.



Vol. I, No. 1 THE MILITARY & THE SOUTH. Robert Sherrill talks with William Proxmire and Les Aspin, Julian Bond and Leah Wise on "Our Violent Culture," New Orleans draft resister Walter Collins speaks from prison, an Atlanta Lockheed employee blows the whistle on the C-5A, Derek Shearer on "Converting the War Machine." Plus a 40-page analysis of what defense spending means to the South.

Vol. I, No. 2 THE ENERGY COLONY. Special report on Appalachia by Jim Branscome and John Gaventa, "Why the Energy Crisis Won't End" by James Ridgeway, "The South's Colonial Economy" by Joseph Persky, Kirkpatrick Sale on the Sunshine Rim behind Watergate, organizing for public control of utilities, how to investigate your local power company. Plus charts on who owns the utilities.

VOL. 1, No. 3&4, NO MORE MOANIN'. 225 pages of Southern history rarely found in textbooks, reported by the participants themselves. Surviving the Depression, sharecropper organizing, oral history of slavery, coal mining wars, 1929 Gastonia strike, 1936 Atlanta auto-workers sit-down, 1919 Knoxville race riot, Vincent Harding on black history, and Louisiana's New Llano Cooperative Colony.

Vol. II, No. 1. AMERICA'S BEST MUSIC AND MORE... The South as the source of American music: country music - from hillbilly to electric Opryland, Southern rock, working songs, blues, streetsinging, rural banjo pickin', Appalachian traditional music. Loretta Lynn, Tom T. Hall, Harlan Howard, Sonny Terry, Allman Brothers. Plus articles on planners in Ky., migrants in Fla., organizing in Ark.

Vol. II, No. 2&3. OUR PROMISED LAND. 225-pages including agribusiness vs. cooperatives, black land ownership, the Forest Service, land-use legislation, mountain development, urban alternatives, Indian lands. The voices of sharecroppers from *All God's Dangers*. Plus a 65-page state-by-state examination of land ownership and usage, with charts of agribusiness, oil, and timber company directorates.

Vol. II, No. 4 FOCUS ON THE MEDIA. Ronnie Dugger and the *Texas Observer*, the *St. Petersburg Times* reporting for the consumer, the early black press, Alabama's exclusively-white ETV network, a woman reporter takes on *Atlanta* magazine, and alternative media projects. Interviews with Robert Coles, Minnie Pearl, and early FCC Commissioner Cliff Durr. Plus charts on who owns the media.

Vol. III, No. 1 SOUTHERN BLACK UTTERANCES TODAY. Edited by Toni Cade Bambara. Features 37 pages of Southern black poetry. Addison Gayle on black literature. Articles on effects of migration north, Mississippi black folk artists, how black music works, torture at Parchman Prison, the Republic of New Africa jailed, images of black women, Pan-Africansim, lessons from China and Cuba.

Vol. III, No. 2&3 THE SOUTHERN ETHIC. The first collection of contemporary Southern photography. Southern people and their environments, in depth and detail, as seen by 41 artists. "Sensitive, vigorous," say photo critics. Produced for the touring exhibit of the Nexus Gallery.

Vol. III, No. 4. FACING SOUTH Includes a 13-page interview with Julian Bond on "The Movement, Then and Now," and a 33-page, special review of Southern textiles based on the oral history of three generations of women in the mill, union organizers and mill owners. Plus articles on the New South cities, blues singer Peg Leg Sam, changes in tobacco farming, and a photo essay on crafts.

Vol. IV, No. 1&2 HERE COME A WIND: LABOR ON THE MOVE. A 225-page book by unionists, academics, and journalists on: who is the Southern worker; campaigns at Farah, Oneita, and J.P. Stevens; run-away shops; labor education; OSHA and EEOC. Oral histories of industrialization. A 30-page report on "Bloody" Harlan, 1930-74. State-by-state profiles of the workforce, unions and their activities.

Vol. IV, No. 3 ON JORDAN'S STORMY BANKS. A special issue on religion in the South featuring articles on the black religious heritage, religion and country music, church women and reform movements, the money behind Billy Graham, the Moving Star Hall, the church and the civil-rights movement, growing up a Southern Baptist, and a 20-page report on where the church's money goes.

Vol. IV, No. 4 GENERATIONS: WOMEN IN THE SOUTH. The myth of the Southern belle, loose lady and Aunt Jemima versus the reality of women-headed households, working women and feminist reformers. Women's liberation as a ment. Community leaders and quilt makers. Bawdy humor, fiction, interviews about growing up female, plus poetry and demographic maps.

Vol. V, No. 1 GOOD TIMES AND GROWING PAINS. Jimmy Carter's Coca-Cola connection, and Larry Goodwin's analysis of "populism" Carter-style. Plus interviews with a granny midwife from Plains, Ga., and coastal fishermen, articles on the destruction of Memphis' Beale Street, growing up gay in Dixie, the decline of the Southern railroads, celebrating Emancipation in Texas, how one neighborhood saved itself.

Vol. V, No. 2&3 LONG JOURNEY HOME: FOLKLIFE IN THE SOUTH A 224-page celebration of the crafts, foodways, sports and music of people from the Louisiana Gulf Coast to the Maryland-Pennsylvania border. Includes articles on buck dancing and clogging, Grand Ole Opry, barbecue, Dixie Rock, Sacred Harp singing, the Negro Baseball League, 200 years of pottery, and a special 46-page Folklife Resource Section.

Vol. V, No. 4 SOUTHERN EXCHANGE. A sample issue of a new publication from the Institute for Southern Studies which digests the best articles about the region's developments appearing in media ranging from *Fortune* to the *Texas Observer* to the *Orlando Sentinel*. Includes articles on "The New North-South War," Bert Lance's future, TVA's new director, urban sprawl, LSU Press, Southerners in D.C.

Vol. VI, No. 1. PACKAGING THE NEW SOUTH. Special sections on the New South politicians (including New Orleans' Dutch Morial, South Carolina's Tom Turnipseed, and Alabama's Bill Baxley) and on Joan Little (including an in-depth interview). Also articles on "red-baiting" Highlander Folk School, the 150-year history of J.P. Stevens, the Federal Writers and Treatre Projects, and Bill Livers, Ky. storyteller.

