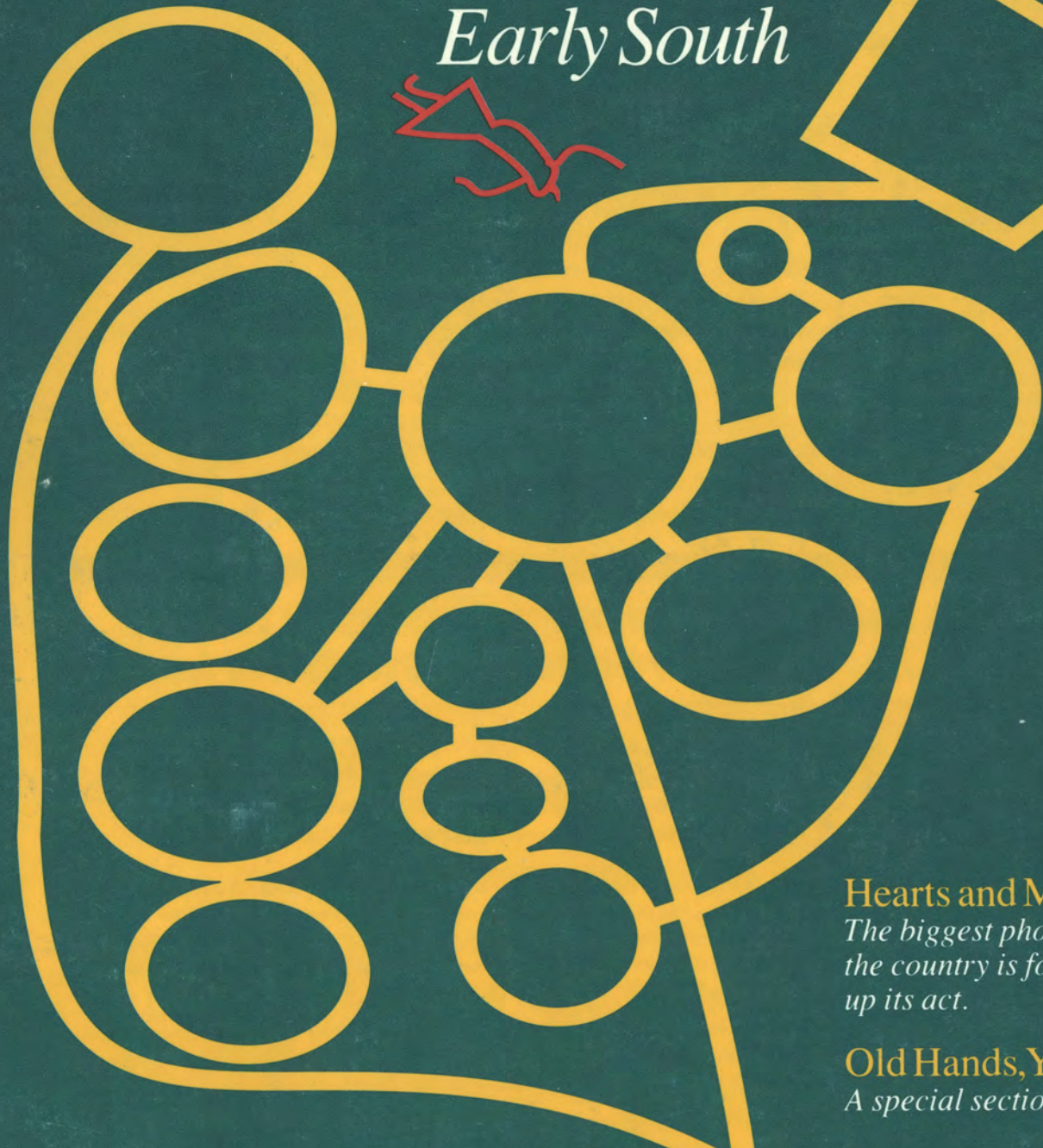
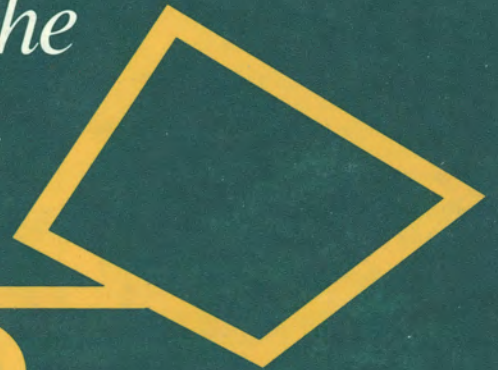


On the Map:

*New Views of the
Early South*



Hearts and Mines

The biggest phosphate mine in the country is forced to clean up its act.

Old Hands, Young Blood

A special section on SNCC



Southern Exposure

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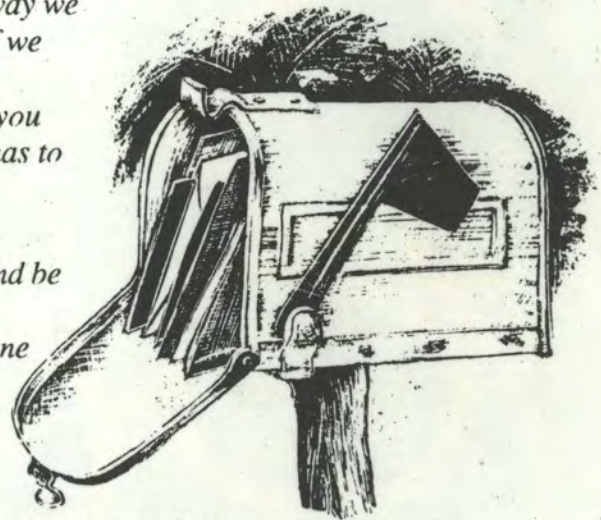
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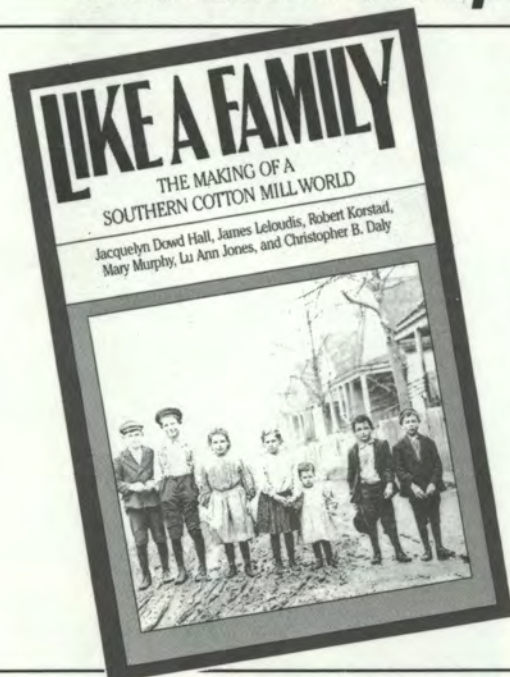
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FEATURES

- 8 **Hearts and Mines** *By Robin Epstein*
A handful of Southerners are forcing the country's biggest phosphate mine to clean up its act.
- 38 **Kitchen Table Crusader** *By Mike Hudson*
Cora Tucker is right at home raising hell in Southside Virginia.
- 46 **Old Hands, Young Blood**
Student activists of the '60s meet campus organizers of the '80s. A special section on SNCC, the most dynamic force of the civil rights movement.

COVER SECTION

- 18 **Breaking New Ground** *By Theresa A. Singleton*
Archaeologists are unearthing new evidence of the critical role slaves played in shaping the early South.
- 23 **Lamhatty's Map** *By Gregory A. Waselkov*
A rare look at Indian maps offers a glimpse of how native Americans viewed the South 300 years ago.
- 30 **Re-Counting the Early South** *By Peter H. Wood*
The first population breakdown of the entire colonial South by race and region reveals a sweeping revolution that took place *before* the Revolution.



DEPARTMENTS

- 2 **Dateline: The South**
A tour through the region's headlines.
- 4 **Southern News Roundup**
Overtaxing the poor, the right to know, a two-lane town, Hispanic coup d'etat, Louie Bluie, and tons of garbage.
- 42 **The Lloyds** *By Denise Giardina*
Fiction from a work-in-progress, by the award-winning author of *Storming Heaven*.
- 59 **Southern Scene** *By Julie A. Hairston*
Less hair, more children. *The Great Speckled Bird* flies into the '80s.
- 63 **Southern Music** *By Richard Boyd*
New Orleans was once home to The Sound, but the music got away. Now there's only the Jazz Fest — and 305,000 loyal fans.

GONZALES, Tex. (March 5) — Citizens organized a coalition called Texas POWER (People Organized to Win Environmental Rights) to unite local groups fighting toxic chemical pollution across the state. The coalition plans to share resources and information and take on large multinationals and federal and state policies.

THE FLORIDA KEYS (March 25) — Federal and state officials signed an unprecedented agreement today prohibiting offshore oil exploration for five years in 11 million acres of water around the Keys. The agreement — a response to a campaign led by the Florida Audubon Society, Greenpeace, and Florida PIRG — is the strictest limit placed on offshore oil development in any state.

DADE COUNTY, Fla. (March 25) — The Nicaraguan community around Miami protested the new peace treaty signed by U.S.-backed contras. Jose Francisco Cardenal, a founder of the chief contra group, criticized contra directors "who draw juicy salaries from the CIA" and said "the Americans should have more shame and tell their servants — those directors — to keep fighting."

ATLANTA, Ga. (April 1) — Members of the Carver Homes Tenants Association invited Mayor Andrew Young to give an anti-drug speech at their housing project, and then skipped his talk to berate him for 90 minutes for neglecting poor neighborhoods. "We are here to indict the mayor," association president Louise Whatley told the crowd. The mayor's aides later complained about the "ambush," but Young himself pled guilty and turned the meeting into a forum on urban problems.

BELZONI, Miss. (April 1) — In the first election since a voting rights lawsuit was settled last November, citizens elected three blacks to the five-member board of aldermen. Though Belzoni is 53 percent black, it was the first time the town ever elected a black alderman.

TAYLOR COUNTY, Ga. (April 2) — Citizens for Safe Progress collected enough petition signatures to require a

recall election of John J. Neely and Billy C. Ames, two county commissioners who voted in secret session to submit a county application for a toxic waste dump. A court later ruled the application illegal.

NORFOLK, Va. (April 3) — Philip Berrigan and three other peace activists staged an anti-nuclear demonstration aboard the battleship Iowa on Easter Sunday, dousing missile casings with blood and dismantling them with hammers and bolt cutters. The four were arrested and charged with trespassing.

CLEVELAND, Tex. (March 16) — *Kenneth Earl Simpson, a black man, died in jail today after being "subdued" by white police officers who arrested him for stealing a ball point pen from the police station. The pen was later found on a soda pop machine in the station. The death has reopened race wounds in this East Texas town of 6,000, and more than 550 blacks and 50 whites met in a school gym to organize a new political group to hold city officials accountable.*

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (April 4) — More than 3,000 people marched to mark the 20th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. The group marched from AFSCME Local 1733, which represented the striking sanitation workers who brought King to Memphis in 1968, to the Lorraine Motel where King was killed.

ROCK HILL, S.C. (April 6) — The Catawba Indian claim on 144,000 acres of land resumed in federal appeals court today. The land, ceded to the Catawbans by the British in 1763, is

valued at over \$2 billion. It includes the town of Rock Hill, a portion of the Carowinds theme park, land owned by Duke Power and other corporations, and Congressman John Spratt's home.

DALLAS, Tex. (April 10) — Black community leaders launched a city-wide petition drive today calling for a referendum to give the Citizens Police Review Board a full-time staff to review charges of police brutality and misconduct against blacks. The campaign was a response to the city police association, which earlier launched petition drives to abolish the review board.

VICKSBURG, Miss. (April 12) — Robert M. Walker, former state director of the NAACP, was elected the first black mayor in the city's history.

NEW ORLEANS, La. (April 14) — For the first time in the 50-year history of the Housing Authority of New Orleans, two tenants were elected to the agency's governing board. Augusta Henry and Donald Jones immediately won support for measures calling for more open meetings and frequent public hearings on tenant issues.

CHATSWORTH, Ga. (April 14) — At a meeting of Ripped Off and Un-counted Taxpayers, 400 Murray County residents voted to form a new bank and remove funds from banks that support a building code they believe will result in skyrocketing construction costs.

DALLAS, Tex. (April 17) — White students at Texas A&M have repeatedly attacked shanties set up on campus by a group called Students Against Apartheid, who had hoped to raise awareness of racism in South Africa and convince the school to divest. Two white male students recently trashed the shanties with paint and axes, leaving behind two dead birds and several racist slogans.

LUNENBURG, Va. (April 18) — The county board of supervisors agreed to settle a voting rights lawsuit by creating seven voting districts, including three with black majorities. Almost 40 percent of the county is black, but there are currently no black supervisors.

CLINTON, Tenn. (April 19) — Almost 200 students at Clinton Junior High School rallied today to support 12-year-old classmate DeWayne Mowery, who is infected with AIDS. The students handed out AIDS information to parents and community leaders who were protesting DeWayne's readmission to school.

INSTITUTE, W.Va. (April 20) — Officials today staged a "carefully planned evacuation" at the only methyl isocyanate plant in the country, but only 30 of 1,500 residents showed up. The Union Carbide plant is similar to the one in Bhopal, India, where more than 5,000 people died from methyl isocyanate exposure in a 1984 leak.

DURHAM, N.C. (April 21) — After two months of faculty and student protests, Duke University agreed to require each of its 50 departments to hire an additional black faculty member by 1993. Only 2.2 percent of the current Duke faculty is black.

ATHENS Ga. (April 23) — David Bliss, a University of Georgia freshman who cannot walk because of a congenital birth defect, crawled up the stairs of the campus administration building to present a university vice-president with a list of demands for handicapped students rights. The building houses the handicapped student center on its second floor but has no handicapped access.

BATON ROUGE, La. (April 25) — Public school teachers, prohibited by

state law from striking, have been staging "sick-outs" to force school administrators to address their grievances. Half of the Tangipahoa Parish teachers called in sick today, and teachers in Bogalusa Parish returned to school after a three-day illness.

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (April 27) — The Binford County Tenants Council reached a settlement with the local housing authority today that will require the city to replace at least 110 of 210 rental units scheduled for demolition.

ROANOKE, Va. (May 1) — Rather than go on strike after four months of contract negotiations with the Pittston Coal Group, United Mine Workers demonstrated outside banks considering loans to the company. Mine workers have warned the banks that a strike would cripple the firm and make loan repayments impossible.

LIBERTY, S.C. (May 2) — Members of Citizens Against Toxic Substances told government officials that an informal survey by the grassroots group reveals an abnormally high cancer rate among county residents. Don Perry, president of the group, called for scientific studies to determine whether PCBs dumped in a local creek have increased the cancer risk in the area.

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (May 14) — Officials at the University of Tennessee agreed to consider removing a statue of Nathan Bedford Forrest from a recently-acquired park after the NAACP threatened to stage a protest demonstration.

Forrest was a Confederate Civil War general and a founder of the Ku Klux Klan.

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (May 17) — Londell and Tammy Williams, two white supremacists, were charged in federal court today with conspiring to kill Democratic presidential candidate Jesse Jackson on July 4. The Williams are members of a right-wing group called The Covenant, The Sword, and the Arm of the Lord.

SAVANNAH RIVER, Ga. (May 18) — DuPont Company came under investigation by a House subcommittee today for attempting to bill the government \$75 million for severance pay to 6,500 workers at its Savannah River plant, even though most won't lose their jobs because another company is taking over the facility.

POINTE-A-LA-HACHE, La. (May 27) — Promised Land Academy, established in 1966 by segregationist Leander Perry to avoid federally ordered school integration, closed today because of declining enrollment.

BIG CYPRESS, FLA. (May 30) — The National Park Service announced plans to restrict Miccosukee Indians from harvesting cypress trees to make their thatched-roof chickee huts.

Readers are encouraged to submit news items to Dateline. Please send original clippings or photocopies and give name and date of publication.



ATLANTA, GA. (May 13) — Black residents prepared to boycott nine banks and savings and loans after a series in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* revealed that lenders give whites five times as many loans as blacks of the same income.

The week-long series, based in part on research from the Southern Finance Project, documented how city lenders rarely finance homes in black or integrated neighborhoods.

The disclosures prompted more than 800 ministers to prepare sermons urging their congregations to boycott city banks. Before they could deliver their message, however, nine lenders agreed to earmark \$65 million in low-interest loans for black residents.

Nickel and Diming The Southern Poor

The poorest families in the country — those earning less than \$8,600 a year — pay five times as much of their income in state sales and excise taxes as the wealthiest families making over \$612,000, according to a new study.

The study, conducted by the non-profit group Citizens for Tax Justice, reveals that the poorest families paid 5.4 percent of their earnings in sales and excise taxes last year. Middle-class families earning \$31,000 a year paid 3.3 percent, and the ultra-rich paid only 1.1 percent.

"The nickels and dimes add up," the study reported. "And when they do, they take a far greater chunk out of the pockets of middle-income families and the poor than they do the bankrolls of the rich."

The study also found that eight of the 10 states with the most regressive sales taxes — those that hit the poorest families the hardest — are in the South.

SALES TAXES IN THE SOUTH

The percent of income paid by a Southern family of four for state sales and excise taxes in 1987.

	POOREST 20%	MIDDLE 20%	RICHEST 0.7%
Mississippi	9.6	5.2	1.4
Tennessee	9.3	5.4	1.6
Louisiana	8.6	4.8	1.5
Alabama	7.8	4.2	1.1
Arkansas	7.1	4.2	1.1
Texas	7.1	4.2	1.5
S. Carolina	6.0	3.6	1.0
W. Virginia	5.8	3.4	1.1
N. Carolina	5.6	3.4	0.9
U.S. average	5.4	3.3	0.9
Kentucky	5.3	3.0	1.0
Georgia	5.3	3.0	0.9
Virginia	5.0	3.0	0.9
Florida	5.0	3.1	1.1

SOURCE: CITIZENS FOR TAX JUSTICE

The Southern states — Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, North and South Carolina, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Virginia — all tax food and other essentials while giving the rich what the report called "a virtual tax holiday."

"These states, which are so adept at taxing the necessities of life for working families and the poor, seem to lose their courage when it comes to taxing some of the favorite spending of the well-heeled," the study said. "Alabama, for instance, which taxes food and over-the-counter drugs, exempts legal and accounting fees, as well as landing and docking fees."

The worst states, Tennessee and Mississippi, both take over nine percent of the incomes of their poorest residents in sales taxes — more than seven times the share of income that they ask the super-rich to pay.

In addition, sales taxes in both states account for about five percent of the incomes of middle-class families — almost \$1,400 a year in Tennessee and \$1,100 in Mississippi.

The bottom line? "We need to begin howling about over-reliance on sales and excise taxes," the report concludes. "It's time to begin to change the political climate in the states that too often makes sales and excise taxes somehow more palatable than income taxes. . . . The data in this report provides us with a starting point from which to organize. Let's get started!"

For a copy of the report, send \$20 to Citizens for Tax Justice, 1311 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20005.

Progress vs. People In America's First All-Black Town

A century ago, white residents in the central Florida town of Maitland were alarmed to discover that blacks were beginning to outnumber them. So they opted for a convenient solution.

They asked the blacks to move.
The blacks did more than move —

they set up their own town and named it Eatonville after a Union Army veteran. Next thing the good white citizens of Maitland knew, Eatonville had become the first incorporated black city in the United States.

Now, however, a common enemy has forced the 9,500 mostly white residents of upscale Maitland to form an alliance with the 3,000 mostly black residents of low-income Eatonville. The enemy: a five-lane highway county commissioners want to put smack dab down the middle of Eatonville and a nearby Maitland neighborhood.

Commissioners insist the highway will bring progress to Eatonville and cut traffic jams in the nation's fastest-growing state, but residents say such arguments overlook the tiny town's quiet lifestyle and historic significance. The Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community (PEC) has filed suit to stop the highway, saying it would clog the main street with traffic and air pollution, destroy parking and sidewalks, and hurt small merchants.

Black and white residents from both towns are active in PEC, holding potluck dinners to raise money to pay attorneys and donating services to produce PEC bumper stickers and petitions.

"This is Eatonville's main street," said Germaine Marvel, a PEC member and Maitland community activist. "This is where the schools, the grocery stores, the churches in this little town are located."

Eatonville is perhaps best known as the hometown of Zora Neale Hurston, the novelist and anthropologist resurrected from literary obscurity by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Alice Walker. In her book *Mules and Men*, Hurston described Eatonville as "the city of five lakes, three croquet courts, 300 brown skins, 300 good swimmers, plenty guavas, two schools and no jail-house."

Yet the works of Hurston remain the only real record of life in historic Eatonville. No sign informs visitors that they are in one of the oldest black towns in America.

"Above and beyond Zora, there is a historical significance to the town," said

Amina Dickerson, president of Chicago's Du Sable Museum of African-American History. "Scholars are just beginning to focus on Florida and some of the wonders down there. Florida is only one of two states with historically black towns."

Dickerson called the proposed highway "a calculated attempt to essentially destroy black communities. Once you do that, you disembowel a spiritual and historical center."

Georgia Workers Win Chemical Right-to-Know Law

State employees have it tough in Georgia. Most earn less than \$18,000 a year; they are forbidden to collect overtime pay; and they can be fired for refusing to take a polygraph test.

As if that weren't bad enough, public workers in Georgia can't even negotiate a contract because the state refuses to recognize their union, the Georgia State Employees Union (GSEU).

Yet that didn't stop union members from winning an important labor victory last spring. After three years of hard lobbying by the union, legislators finally passed a law requiring the state to notify employees when they are exposed to hazardous chemicals and to train them in handling the substances. When Governor Joe Frank Harris signed the "right-to-know" law on April 12, it was the first time in his two terms that any union was in his office for a bill signing ceremony.

"The most important effect of the bill is making the state admit that there are chemical hazards out there and embarrassing them into minimizing those hazards," said union director Stewart Acuff. "I think that was the state's primary problem with the legislation."

It was a hard-fought victory. The Georgia Department of Transportation, one of the most powerful agencies in the state, fought the right-to-know measure, but 400 state workers virtually took over the capitol on February 4 to lobby for the bill.

Union members who arrived at the capitol in nine buses, two vans, and dozens of cars got some pointers on lobbying from John Sweeney, national president of the union's parent organization, the Service Employees International Union.

"Don't be shy. Be firm," Sweeney said. "Tell them who you are and where you come from and that you represent all the workers of the state of Georgia. Tell them how important these issues are and impress them that your organization not only has an aggressive legislative program, but also has an aggressive political program. We reward our friends and take a second look at our enemies."

Environmentalists also teamed up with workers to back the bill, and the Georgia Environmental Project helped broaden support by promoting the measure as an important public policy issue affecting citizens beyond the workplace.

The joint effort paid off. The new right-to-know law creates an advisory council to implement the measure, requires the state to let workers know what substances they are working with and how to protect themselves, and prohibits the state from firing workers who assert their rights under the law.

Although the state has yet to fund the new law, workers say their victory shows the strength of their new union. The GSEU is the fastest growing progressive organization in Georgia, picking up 4,500 members in the past three years.



MORE THAN 400 GEORGIA STATE WORKERS MARCHED ON THE CAPITOL TO LOBBY FOR A RIGHT-TO-KNOW BILL. THE MEASURE BECAME LAW APRIL 12.

"The whole question comes down to power," Acuff said. "If average folks and working people and senior citizens are not interested in working together in a cooperative effort, their agenda is not going to get taken care of, at this Capitol or any other capitol."

Ten-Year Battle Forces Chemical Waste Cleanup

In July 1978, 19-year-old Kirtley Jackson died of hydrogen sulfide poisoning while emptying a 5,000-gallon tanker at the Bayou Sorrel hazardous waste dump 20 miles southwest of Baton Rouge.

Now, almost 10 years later, one of the most infamous cases in the often tragic environmental history of Louisiana has ended. On March 18, the U.S. Justice Department announced that 101 defendants have agreed to share the \$23 million cost of cleaning up the waste dump.

In addition, the defendants will pay the \$1.88 million it will take for state and

federal officials to oversee the cleanup and \$800,000 for past safety violations at the site.

Among those signing the historic consent decree were Rollins Environmental Services, Freeport-McMoRan Resource Partners, and several prominent Fortune 500 oil and chemical companies doing business in Louisiana.

From 1976 to 1978, the companies dumped pesticide wastes and heavy metals on 50 of the 265 acres at Bayou Sorrel. Its lethal mix of toxic chemicals earned it a spot on the National Priority List of the federal Superfund program.

Under the terms of the settlement, the defendants agreed to put caps over waste areas at the dump, build walls up to 30 feet deep to prevent chemicals from leaching into water tables, and monitor ground water for at least 30 years.

For years, Bayou Sorrel residents had often complained about illnesses they

believed were caused by vapors, fumes, and smoke from the loosely-regulated dump. But the death of Jackson gave birth to a new and more potent environmental awareness in the state. Citizens began taking on big companies like Rollins and helped enact the state's first comprehensive environmental control laws.

—Richard Boyd

Majority Rules In Cockrell Hill

Cockrell Hill, Texas is a working-class town of 3,500. More than half its residents are Hispanic, but the city council has remained all white — until now.

Last November a seat on the council

was vacated, and council member Dolores Singleton proposed appointing Sam Rodriguez to be the board's first Hispanic member. When the council rejected the proposal, the Hispanic community in Cockrell Hill was moved to action.

Rodriguez contacted Domingo Garcia, a Dallas lawyer and president of Chicanos Actively United for Social Advancement. Together they organized Hispanics, formed a new neighborhood association, and conducted an intensive voter registration drive and get-out-the vote effort.

The hard work paid off. Hispanics turned out in force at polling places on May 7, claiming two of the five seats on the city council and forcing a runoff election for a third seat. Dolores Singleton, the council member who had

backed Rodriguez for a council seat, was elected mayor.

Since then, Hispanic leaders encouraged by the victory have referred to the election as a "voter booth coup d'etat."

—Cathie Mahon

Louie Bluié Comes to Public TV

Howard ("Louie Bluié") Armstrong is sometimes hailed as the leader of the last black string band in America. Wise, sly, and wickedly funny, the 77-year-old musician and raconteur still plays the fiddle he picked up as a boy in his hometown of LaFollette, Tennessee and tells wild and raunchy stories of his own invention.

Louie Bluié, a rare and joyful film profiling Armstrong, will air on PBS stations across the country this summer as part of a 10-week series of independent documentaries entitled "P.O.V." Directed by Terry Zwigoff, the film follows the musician from his boyhood playing in the Tennessee Chocolate Drops, one of the black string bands that were popular all over the South in the 1930s. Today he lives in Chicago and continues to play music with roots deep in blues, jazz, country, ragtime, gospel, and western swing.

The film is scheduled to air nationwide on August 23. For information about other documentaries in the



series and local broadcast times and stations, call toll-free (800) 338-5252.

Dumping on West Virginia

West Virginia residents are used to being dumped on by snooty folks from up North, but lately the trashing has gotten out of hand. Now, states like New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania are dumping thousands of tons of garbage in West Virginia — and many residents say the out-of-state waste is polluting their drinking water and scaring off tourists.

"We're literally being covered up with garbage," says Sharon Garnes, chair of West Virginia Citizens for a Clean Environment (WVCE). "Out-of-state

people are coming in and buying property and putting in landfills for Northeast garbage with the intention of becoming fast millionaires. We're in a crisis situation."

The state Department of Natural Resources estimates that 1,000 tons of out-of-state garbage is trucked into West Virginia every day, but WVCCE members have counted the trucks and put the figure at closer to 30,000 tons a day. If accurate, that means four tons of out-of-state garbage arrive annually for each person in West Virginia.

The garbage winds up in landfills scattered throughout nearly a third of the state's 55 counties. "This is the worst kind of degradation that could happen to us," Garnes says. "The people of the Northeast are really telling us what they think of us by dumping on us."

Citizens formed WVCCE last year to educate people and pressure county officials to ban out-of-state garbage. The group has also proposed a state law to prohibit the dumping, and on June 13 nearly 300 people picketed a Tucker County landfill owned by an Alabama firm.

"I think they're dumping on us because we're easy pickings," Garnes says. "We have a lax state regulatory agency and lax enforcement of the laws already on the books. If regulatory officials aren't doing their jobs, citizens are saying get rid of them. If elected officials aren't doing their jobs, citizens are talking impeachment."

Georgia Protects Retarded Citizens

Since the Supreme Court approved the death penalty in 1976, Southern states have executed at least five citizens known to be mentally retarded. Last year Louisiana executed John Brogdon, a retarded prisoner, and in 1986 Georgia sent Jerome Bowden to the electric chair even though he had an IQ of only 56.

In April, however, Georgia took the lead in protecting the mentally retarded, becoming the first state in the nation to pass a law prohibiting the execution of retarded citizens convicted of murder. Although the measure won't protect retarded prisoners already on death row, human rights activists praised the move.

Richard Burr, director of the Capital Punishment Project of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, called the new law "a giant step in favor of human decency. Georgia calls attention to the fact that we are putting to

Executions in the South

On June 14, Edward Byrne was electrocuted in Louisiana, becoming the 100th person to be executed in the United States since the Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976. All but seven of the prisoners were put to death in the South.

	EXECUTIONS	ON DEATH ROW
Texas	27	259
Florida	18	283
Louisiana	18	44
Georgia	12	108
Virginia	7	36
Alabama	3	91
Mississippi	3	51
N.Carolina	3	78
Utah	3	6
S.Carolina	2	39
Nevada	2	40
Indiana	2	45
Total	100	1,080

SOURCE: LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

death people who aren't able to comprehend the seriousness or consequences of their actions, or in some instances even distinguish right from wrong."

Burr cited the 1986 case of Bowden, who signed a confession even though he didn't know what it meant and was unable to defend himself. "He simply didn't understand what death was or what he was confessing to," said Pat Smith, president of the Association for Retarded Citizens of Georgia.

The Georgia law against sentencing retarded persons to death follows a 1986 Supreme Court ruling that forbids executing prisoners deemed insane. "Protecting the mentally retarded would be an appropriate and only civilized next step," Burr said.

The Legal Defense Fund estimates that as many as 300 of the more than 2,000 prisoners currently on death row are mildly to profoundly retarded, with IQs near or below 70.

Factory Flees Further South

From a strictly business standpoint, things were looking good last year at the Schlage Lock Co. factory in Rocky

Mount, North Carolina. Sales of door locks were up 12 percent, and parent company Ingersoll-Rand had year-end profits of \$161 million.

So it came as a surprise to the Rocky Mount community when Schlage Lock began locking its own gates and moving their jobs to a new plant in Mexico. Three years ago there were 700 employees at the Rocky Mount plant. By June, there were fewer than 70.

"They've moved just about everything out except us, and we're on the way out," said Corrine Ham, an assembly line packer who had worked at Schlage for 14 years.

The plant closing has ignited the Rocky Mount community. Black Workers for Justice and Southerners for Economic Justice helped laid-off employees — mostly blacks and women — organize to demand the same severance benefits as salaried personnel. In April, hundreds attended a rally chanting "We want justice!"

Workers also want the company to compensate injured employees and clean up the environmental damage it has done to the community. Many Schlage workers handled toxic chemicals on the job, and at least 12 have died of cancer in the past several years.

In addition, tests by state officials found high levels of cancer-causing chemicals and metals — including chromium and nickel — in ground water around the Schlage plant. The company has been fined \$120,000 for illegally dumping contaminated water at another plant in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

In North Carolina, officials have been less aggressive in making Schlage clean up its waste. Whoever pays for the cleanup, though, taxpayers across the state will have to pick up the tab for the plant closing. A recent study concluded the shutdown will cost the state \$10.5 million in unemployment compensation and lost taxes over the next two years — \$15,400 for each worker displaced by Schlage.

News departments compiled by David Cecelski and Cathie Mahon.

Readers are encouraged to submit news items to Southern News Roundup. Please send original clippings or photocopies with name and date of publication, or articles of no more than 300 words.

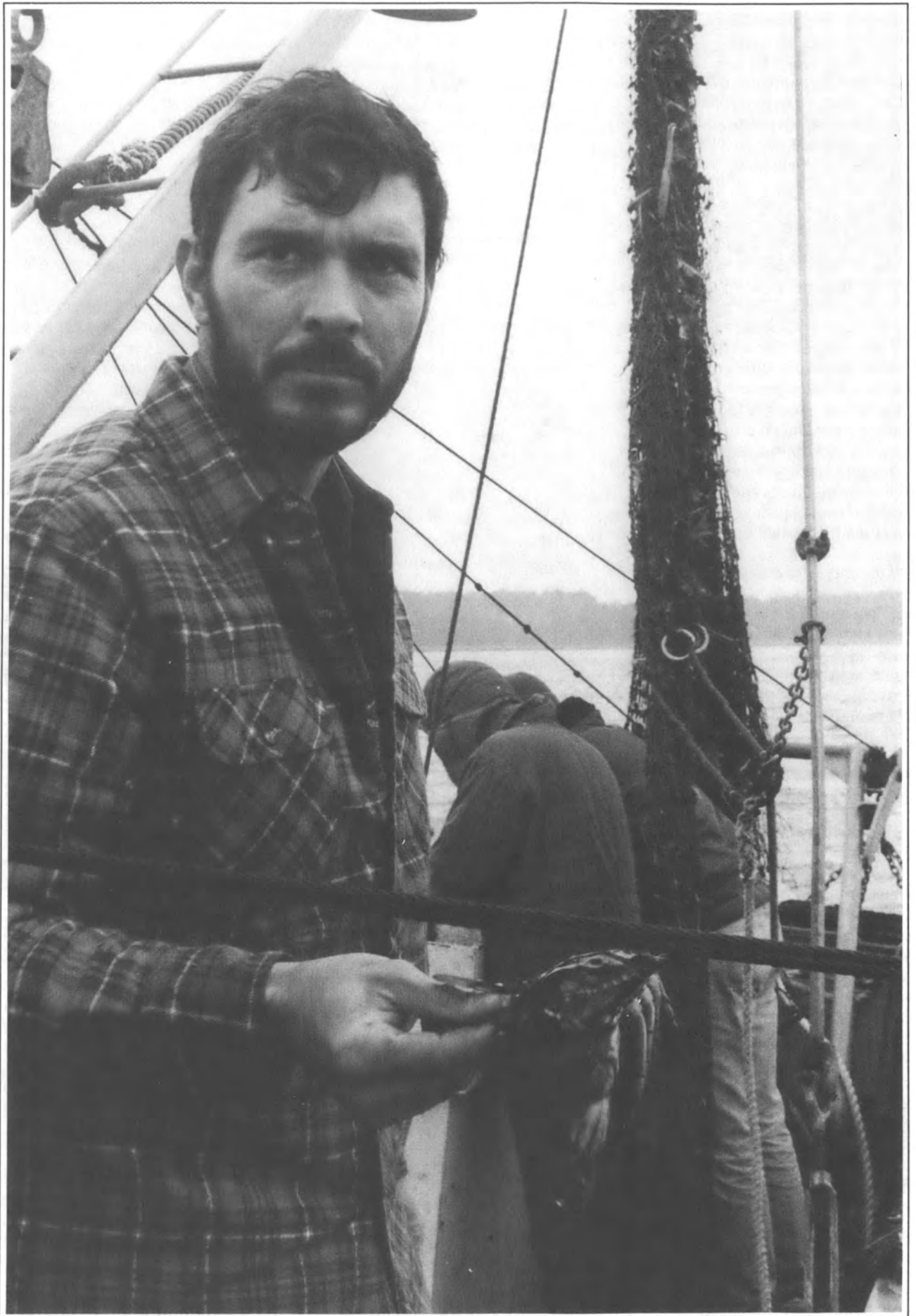


Photo by Robin Epstein

HEARTS & MINES

*How a handful
of Southerners
are forcing
the biggest
phosphate mine
in the country to
clean up its act.*

By Robin Epstein

Photo by Paul Nurnberg



ETLES HENRIES JR. ABOARD HIS BOAT (OPPOSITE PAGE) HOLDS ONE OF THE ROTTING CRABS FOUND IN THE PAMLICO RIVER BASIN (ABOVE).

The boat moved steadily in freezing rain through the waters of the Pamlico River in eastern North Carolina. Etles Henries Jr. held the helm and craned his neck out of the pilot-house to see how Jimmy Linson was doing with the nets. It was an icy cold Sunday in January with record low temperatures on the coast.

You couldn't pay Henries and Linson to trade their lives for landlocked security.

"Fishing gets in your damn blood," Linson said. "After it's all over you get in a warm spot and get thawed out a bit and laugh about it." He wears a paint-spattered, olive green, quilted jumpsuit, an olive hat with furry earflaps, and white rubber boots. The crow's-feet around the deep-set blue eyes in his full face crinkle when he grins. "Not fishing drives you up the wall," Linson said, gesturing with his pipe.

But that day they didn't catch much. A flounder. A baby menhaden, dead — with one of those red sores that plague almost every species in the estuary.

"It looks like cancer," Linson said. "You see a fish swimming in a circle. You look at its belly with the guts hanging out and it's still fighting for its life. It's like watching someone laying down

in bed to die."

Each dead fish Linson finds is like hearing his own death knell. He loves his work but may have no choice but to leave it. He has a family to feed and a mortgage to meet, and he can't survive if the fishing and crabbing he does on the Pamlico gets much worse. Last summer the catch was down by a third, and more than half the commercial fishers went

out of business. Linson works as a part-time security guard and chops wood on the side as it is.

"Jimmy is just hanging on by the seat of his britches," said Henries, who runs the crab-packing plant his father started 25 years ago. "If he doesn't have a decent year, he'll be gone."

As if the fish disease weren't bad enough, Linson has found holes eating away at the eye sockets and backs of hard shell crabs. "It was the first time I've ever seen something eat the shell of a hard crab except a human being," he said. "And we're scared. If that's what it does to the shell, what does it do to human skin? I ain't going to eat anything that's going to eat me back."

The dead fish and rotting crabs scare many people beyond the coastal fisheries where Linson and Henries make their living. The Pamlico River basin

covers a staggering 2,900 square miles — an area larger than the state of Delaware — and supports a coastal fishing industry worth \$500 million a year. Its waters produce more seafood than any estuary in the continental United States except the Chesapeake Bay, and most of that food goes to market without ever being tested for poisons and disease.

Ed Noga, a fish disease specialist at

the North Carolina School of Veterinary Medicine in Raleigh, has studied the growing number of fish afflicted with red sores, known as ulcerative mycosis. He calls the Pamlico "a mess. The lesions were just so massive. There were huge chunks of tissue missing. I don't know what's going on in that river but it's pretty bad news."

TAKING ON TEXASGULF

What's going on in the Pamlico River basin is pollution, and more of the pollution comes from one company than from any other single source — Texasgulf, operator of the biggest phosphate mine in the country. Every day Texasgulf pumps up to 67 million gallons of water out of the ground, uses it to mine ore and make fertilizer, and dumps almost all of the remaining waste directly into the river. The firm consumes as much water each day as the entire city of Charlotte, the largest city in North Carolina.

The waste from Texasgulf contains low levels of arsenic and uranium, tons of potentially toxic fluoride, and phosphorous, a nutrient that can deplete the oxygen in the river and disrupt the food chain. The company claims its pollution has little effect on the river, that the real culprits are municipal sewage, farm-land runoff, and waste from other factories. Nevertheless, by its own admission, Texasgulf accounts for nearly all of the fluoride and 25 percent of the phosphorous dumped in the Pamlico. The state attributes more than 40 percent of the phosphorous to the firm.

For years, local fishers have accused Texasgulf of killing the river, but state officials and the media refused to listen. No one in power wanted to take on Texasgulf, a subsidiary of the French multinational corporation Elf Aquitaine, the sixth largest company in Europe. The firm is the fifteenth largest land-

owner in North Carolina, and it seldom hesitates to use its economic clout and political connections to get its way.

Take, for example, the waste water discharge permit that TG is required by law to have. Its permit expired in 1984, but state regulators have been reluctant to issue and enforce a new one because, as one official privately admitted, "there are too many jobs at risk to close that place down." In another instance, years earlier, Texasgulf lobbyists singlehandedly quashed a bill in the state legislature that would have taxed all minerals taken from the earth — a victory that has

has cited Texasgulf with 1,724 air quality violations and slapped it with a \$5.7 million fine, the biggest environmental penalty in North Carolina history. And in January, Texasgulf agreed to recycle its contaminated waste water rather than dump it in the Pamlico.

Such changes have not come easily, though, and recycling is still years away. For now, Texasgulf continues to flush 3,000 pounds of phosphorous into the Pamlico every day. Pressuring the company to clean up its act has been a long, slow struggle, say local citizens — and one that is far from over.

Photo by Robin Epstein



THE HOUSE CLOSEST TO THE HUGE TEXASGULF PLANT. COMPANY SALES TOP \$400 MILLION A YEAR, BUT THE FIRM'S NEIGHBORS REMAIN POOR.

saved the company millions of dollars.

Now, however, local residents who live and work in the poor, isolated area that surrounds Texasgulf's giant operation are beginning to make themselves heard. Commercial fishers and environmentalists, overcoming years of mistrust, have teamed up to protect one of the most important estuaries in the country from a company the size of Dow Chemical and Coca-Cola combined — and they have started to win. The state

THE SOUTH OF FRANCE

The roads of Beaufort County traverse corn and soybean fields. They intersect infrequently at quiet crossroads, home to small, weathered grocery stores that double as meeting places. Farm buildings and trailers, churches and shacks, and an occasional white-pillared house dot the low-lying landscape.

Here the waters, not the roads, reign. Tributaries of the three-mile-wide Pamlico flow throughout the county, gradually joining the sea in an elaborate pattern of interlocking creeks, rivers, sounds, and inlets. This estuary, sheltered from the ocean by the string of narrow barrier islands called the Outer Banks, provides the brackish mixture of fresh water and salt water necessary for the spawning of fish and shellfish. Its shallow bays and

marshes serve as the nursery for much of the East Coast's fisheries.

Texasgulf sits on the southern bank of the Pamlico near the small town of Aurora. Begun as a Texas sulfur mine in 1909, the company came to Beaufort County in 1958 when prospectors found phosphate ore under and around Aurora. They were hailed as saviors — the impoverished region's ticket to the twentieth century. By the beginning of this decade, Texasgulf was reporting

record sales of \$662.5 million, most of it from the Aurora operation. The company estimated its 54,000 acres in Beaufort County contained 2.2 billion tons of phosphate reserves.

But on February 11, 1981, chairman of the board Charles Fogarty and eight TG officers and employees were killed when a company plane crashed during a storm. Within four months the company was the target of a takeover by Societe Nationale Elf Aquitaine, a French government-owned conglomerate eager to expand into the United States. When the farm crisis hit and American fertilizer companies went bankrupt, Texasgulf emerged as what Elf's former vice chairman Gino Giusti called "the top of a lousy industry."

Elf's 44-story headquarters glitters in the sunlight at La Defense, an ultra-modern industrial park on the outskirts of Paris. Despite its whimsical name, there's nothing elfin about Europe's third-largest oil company: The firm earns \$50 million in worldwide sales every week. In addition to its gas stations and petroleum products, Elf is a major producer of natural gas, chemicals, minerals, and health products. The little word is everywhere in France; Elf is as constant in French life as McDonald's is in the states. But, until the 1981 takeover, it was virtually unknown in eastern North Carolina.

Texasgulf's 3,000-acre plant site in Beaufort County includes belching smokestacks and huge tanks full of acid and fertilizer. Gray gypsum mountains stretch along the horizon. Twenty-five-story cranes pivot next to huge open pits. Then there are the clay slime ponds, surrounded by earthen dikes. Inside the plants, TG workers have to wear synthetic jeans on the job; the corrosive atmosphere eats holes in cotton, and in cars parked at the plant lot.

Texasgulf's executive offices, in a building known as the White House, afford a nice view of the river. All that

separates them is the spot where Lee Creek once flowed — until the company dredged it for ore, filled it with waste from other mines, and paved it to create a convenient private airstrip.

Most folks needing to get from one side of the Pamlico to the other take the free ferry. Day and night, the state ferry crisscrosses the river, carrying cars and trucks. Passengers on the 11 p.m. ferry to the south shore are invariably going to work the night shift at Texasgulf. They see the Lee Creek plant long before donning hard hats at the gate. From the ferry slip, TG glows in the distance like

restaurants. Today there are none. There were seven local grocery stores, which stayed open late on Saturday evenings as people mingled up and down the streets. Now there is only one supermarket near the highway.

Main Street's one downtown block is home to stray dogs and six abandoned stores which once housed a thrift shop, W.B. Thompson Nitrogen Fertilizer, Nellie's Bingo Beach, the Brothers Lodge (steam-heated rooms, hunting and fishing), a school of martial arts, and Aurora Seafood. The buildings currently in use include La Ladies Shop, the

Aurora Fossil Museum, the Church of God, the Church of United Methodists, a tiny library, the town hall, and Frank T. Bonner Insurance.

Photo courtesy Elf Aquitaine



ELF'S HEADQUARTERS IN PARIS. THE FIRM IS THE SIXTH LARGEST IN EUROPE — BIGGER THAN DOW CHEMICAL AND COCA-COLA COMBINED.

APPLE PIE AND CHEVROLETS

One thing hasn't changed in Aurora in over two decades: the mayor's last name. Grace Bonner has been mayor since 1973. Her husband Frank Bonner was mayor for eight years before that. Three years ago Texasgulf flew the couple to Paris for free. "They had extra seats on the plane. They left us in Paris and then went to Africa to some of their gold mines," the mayor said. "We kept calling in to the Aquifane [sic] offices to find out when the plane was coming in."

"Mayor Grace" is a tall woman partial to makeup, with coiffed brown hair. In a small town where most people wear work clothes, she

sports a white silk shirt, white embroidered jacket, white pearl belt, white skirt below the knee, white high-heeled boots, diamond earrings and rings. Frank Bonner, who calls his wife the "female Mayor" and "darling," is a little heavy and wears non-descript clothes. Their immaculate, over-decorated suburban ranch home squats resolutely on a lot with a circular driveway and landscaped shrubs.

"Texasgulf has done real well for

a strange metropolis.

In contrast to the never-sleeping industry, Aurora is almost a ghost town. A rusty, graying sign greets visitors: "We promote diversified & clean industry." If you drive through town, make a U-turn, and go back the way you came, which takes about five minutes, the sign bids you farewell: "You are leaving a growing and prosperous town . . . y'all come back soon."

In the early 1960s Aurora had three

us," the mayor said. Her husband agreed. Before the company arrived, Frank Bonner's insurance business only handled Aurora residents. "Now Texasgulf employees from Bath and Washington come to me for their insurance," he said. The Bonners, who still own 349 acres, said they sold about 800 acres to Texasgulf.

"I don't think Texasgulf's damaged the river as much as they're accused of," Frank Bonner said. The commercial fishermen and environmentalists, he added, "would fight apple pie and Chevrolets. They would oppose everything. They don't have any proof. I'm not anti-environmentalist. I'm not loving them either."

As far as the mayor is concerned, TG isn't doing the river any harm. "I'd like to see the river stay clean and pretty and I'm sure Texasgulf would too," Mayor Bonner said cheerfully. "They keep us informed of everything that's going on down there so we don't have to read about it in the newspaper."

Even if the mayor did have to read the local paper for news of Texasgulf, she wouldn't find much information about TG's poor environmental record. The *Washington Daily News* has been an unabashed supporter of Texasgulf since the phosphate prospectors opened their first mine more than 20 years ago, and publisher emeritus Ashley Futrell Sr.'s defense of the company has earned his paper the nickname "The Voice of Texasgulf" among many local residents.

Futrell urged landowners to sell their phosphate-rich land to Texasgulf. "It will never be mined until the people determine in their hearts and minds that phosphate is the secret to our economic greatness here in Beaufort County," he editorialized. "If the land is not made available then the phosphate will lie sleeping there just as it has been doing for thousands of years doing no one any good."

More recently, Futrell offered this glowing summation of the firm's contribution to the community: "Texasgulf participates in every civic project in the county. It bailed the Salvation Army out at Christmas time and just gave 10 acres of land to the county for a landfill. Texasgulf is a tremendous economic factor in this county. If you took them out, we'd be ruined. If you took TG away from Aurora you might as well take away Aurora. They and Weyerhaeuser [a lumber company] own half the county, I reckon."

Texasgulf is actually the second

The company wields pervasive influence in the community. It pays a third of all county property taxes. Its annual payroll is over \$31 million. It employs 1,200 people. Yet Beaufort has a higher poverty rate than half the counties in the state. "There are no jobs locally if you don't go into fishing," explained Etles Henries Jr. "You can't go into farming. Can't go into forestry. What else is there left to do? The only thing is TG."

DIRTY WATER, DIRTY TRICKS

At first, Texasgulf's tremendous economic power made local residents reluctant to fight the company. At least 1,600 people in Beaufort County fish or process seafood for a living. Since fishers and packers are scattered about on boats and in small plants, they have traditionally been slow to organize themselves and wary of conservationists.

But all that began to change in 1981, when a local environmental group called the Pamlico-Tar River Foundation (PTRF) successfully led resistance to a proposal by county commissioners that would have allowed Texasgulf to mine the

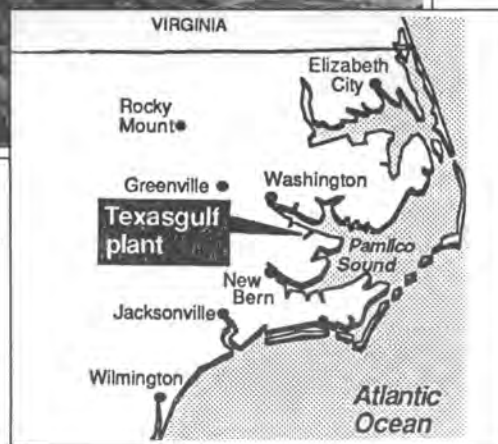
riverbed. PTRF and commercial fishers also joined forces with a constellation of conservation groups, including the Coastal Federation and the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, to block large-scale peat mining of local wetlands (see "The Peat Wars," SE Vol. XIV, No. 2). By 1984, when mas-

sive fish kills became a chronic problem up and down the Pamlico and dead fish covered with red sores washed up on both banks of the river, fishers and envi-

Photo by Robin Epstein



A TEXASGULF CRANE MINES PHOSPHATE NEAR THE PAMLIKO.



largest landowner in the county, right behind Weyerhaeuser. All told, it owns or leases mineral rights to 80,000 acres — nearly one of every six acres in the entire county. Together, Texasgulf and nine other landowners control 42 percent of the county.

ronmentalists were ready. With PTRF leading the way, citizens now began turning their attention more and more to Texasgulf.

This unusual coalition got its first real test of strength against Texasgulf in February 1986, when the company tried to downplay a massive spill. An underwater slime pipe ruptured, dumping 114,000 cubic yards of contaminated clay slime over a 26-acre area of South Creek. The company told a television reporter the spill was minor, but the evidence could not be concealed.

"We took her down there and showed her the three-foot sand bar where 13 feet of water should have been," Henries said. "She said, 'They lied to me again,' and got a shot of a boy holding up a paddle with what looked like concrete on it."

"The spill was caused by the lack of human concern," added his father, Etles Henries Sr. "There were no inspections, no monitoring, no flow meters. You can't use a metal pipe indefinitely. That pipe was under the creek 20 years."

Because it was so highly visible, the spill galvanized commercial fishers and PTRF to hold a barbecue pig pickin' to discuss what Texasgulf was doing to the Pamlico.

That wasn't an easy task. For one thing, most people have relatives who work at TG, and everyone knows everyone else in Beaufort County. "I'm classified as a rebel," said Henries Jr., who put up the money for the pig. "People think I'm the worst thing there's ever been."

Several fishers who stood on the back of a pickup truck at the pig pickin' and talked about their troubles on the river were shouted down by TG representatives. Insiders say Texasgulf paid several employees who crab part-time to defend the company at the meeting; others, they say, were frightened away from attending.

The "speak out" ended early, and the atmosphere was tense as fishers broke up into small groups to discuss what had happened. Things were tough for those who had spoken up. "A lot of people around Aurora called us liars and a lot of

other nice things," recalled Jimmy Linson. No one believed how bad things were, so Linson kept a few diseased fish in his freezer at home as proof.

Despite Texasgulf's efforts to undermine local discussions, citizens continued to serve as watchdogs. They complained to state officials, solicited help from conservation groups across North Carolina, and wrote letters to newspapers. PTRF launched an aggressive campaign to recruit new members, and within a year membership in the group leaped from 250 to 1,200.

One of those who joined was Lynda

face, Oden speaks her mind. "These creeks used to didn't smell like they do now," she said. "A lot of the trees are dead or dying. People who don't care about TG notice the dieback of vegetation."

Her Texasgulf file, complete with letters to politicians and scientists, has grown to fill a dresser drawer in the "old house done over" where she lives with her parents. "I hate the fact that I can't go out and breathe the air outside my own house," she said. When the wind blows from the south, hydrogen sulfide wafts over from the plant. "It smells like burnt oyster shells and you can see it, like a fog. It irritates the sinuses directly."

DEAD DUCKS

As local citizens like Oden pressed for stricter control of TG's pollution, the company kept breaking the law. Six months after the South Creek spill, a second major event occurred that was too blatant for the state to ignore and too obvious for Texasgulf to blame on someone else. In August 1986, agents with the state Division of Marine Fisheries were doing routine monitoring on the Pamlico three miles away from the Texasgulf plant when they were "overcome" by ammonia fumes. "They were

debilitated, wheezing and coughing," said Paul Wilms, director of the state Division of Environmental Management (DEM).

Rumor has it that someone inside the company later tipped off the state that Texasgulf had removed the plastic packing from a scrubber in a smokestack. The state requires companies to use the packing material to prevent high levels of fluoride from escaping into the atmosphere. Fluoride can kill vegetation and make human bones brittle.

"It was clearly intentional," Wilms said. "They had clogging problems. A decision was made not to put the packing inside and not to report it." That December, after a detailed review of TG's records and equipment, the state fined the firm \$5.7 million, citing four years of flagrant and willful violations of air quality regulations.



TEXASGULF'S PLANT STANDS ON 54,000 ACRES OF COMPANY PROPERTY, MAKING THE FIRM THE SECOND LARGEST LANDOWNER IN BEAUFORT COUNTY.

Oden, a no-nonsense tobacco farmer who lives across the river from TG near the historic town of Bath. Oden was in high school when Texasgulf arrived in Beaufort County. "We had big meetings in the school cafeteria about how great it was going to be," she recalled. "We were all going to be nice bustling towns. Bath was supposed to grow to 10,000 in 10 years. They're up to 200 now."

"We were undeveloped and they snowed us," Oden said. "The area had no idea of the implications of the plant. We ate it up. And the state didn't look out for us."

Oden has no economic stake in the controversy. She neither works at Texasgulf nor in the fishing industry. She does keep careful notes documenting the company's visible impact on her community. With intelligent gray eyes and short, wavy, graying hair framing a thin

Photo by Chuck Eaton/Winston-Salem Journal

Photo by Chuck Eaton/Winston-Salem Journal

Photo by Chuck Eaton/Winston-Salem Journal

Photo by Chuck Eaton/Winston-Salem Journal

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Photo by Chuck Eaton/Winston-Salem Journal

The heat was on, and Texasgulf was starting to sweat. It challenged the fine in court, but it also replaced seven of its top 12 plant managers. It set up a 24-hour toll-free hotline for complaints, acted concerned and friendly at public meetings, and told everyone that the company cared about the Pamlico.

To many observers, though, it looked like Texasgulf was more worried about its public image than about the river. As the public outcry increased, the company bought lots of ads heralding its employees as a new breed of "worker-conservationists." One ad depicted mallards swimming in the plant's slime pond. "If we didn't care about the environment," the ad read, "these guys would be dead ducks."

But while TG was praising itself, the river was getting worse. The red sore epidemic peaked in June 1987, when the state trawled 40,000 dead fish off the bottom of the Pamlico. "Texasgulf tries to mislead the people that everything is fine when indeed we're going down hill like a snowball headed for hell," said Etles Henries Sr.

In fact, that same month, Texasgulf president Thomas Wright wrote a letter to state legislators in which he refused to take any blame for the wretched state of the Pamlico — even though a hotly debated legislative ban on household detergents containing phosphates had recently spotlighted the mineral's devastating effect on the state's water quality.

"Some environmental groups and writers have suggested that the Pamlico River has severe problems," Wright wrote. "It has been implied that our Phosphate Operations on the south bank of the Pamlico River may be part of the problem." Overstating the preliminary findings of a scientist under contract with TG, Wright continued, "Dr. Stanley of East Carolina University concludes that there have been no significant changes in water quality in the Pamlico River over the past 20 years."

By that time, however, a new constituency had noticed the problems on the Pamlico and was demanding answers. Stories of the toxic fumes and

dead fish worried tourists who vacation on the Pamlico, and the state's metropolitan press began to take notice. Not a week went by that summer without reporters from the state's inland Piedmont region turning up at the crabhouse run by Etles Henries Jr. "I didn't realize the power of the press," Henries said that August. "The people in the Piedmont, where the power is in North Carolina, are getting interested."

Frank Tursi, a reporter for the *Winston-Salem Journal*, wrote 34 stories on the Pamlico in one year — and Winston-Salem is 300 miles from the coast.

**If We Didn't Care
About The Environment,
These Guys Would Be Dead Ducks.**



The way some people have been talking lately you'd think we at Texasgulf were environmental bad guys.

Consider the swans and geese that mallards make their home next to our Lee Creek plant. The water quality there, and all around the site, is monitored constantly.

We work hard to maintain the highest possible standards in pollution control. We even developed a system for recycling water that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency calls a model for the industry.

You see, when it comes to the environment, we're the guys the ducks call friends.

Texasgulf Chemicals
P.O. Box 45 • Statesville, North Carolina 27163

Tursi's articles helped make Texasgulf a front-page story in every major daily in the state. "It was going to take an outsider," Tursi said, "because local papers [in Beaufort County] are weak, and local politicians won't take a hard look at TG."

ENFORCING THE LAW

Meanwhile, the controversy over the renewal of Texasgulf's water discharge permit was coming to a head. Early last year, the state finally released a "draft permit" for public comment, but conservation groups questioned whether it was

tough enough. Jim Kennedy, a former DEM employee turned full-time environmental scientist with the Coastal Federation, conducted a sophisticated analysis of TG's pollution levels over a six-year period that suggested the firm had not conformed to its original permit.

But then Kennedy made an even more surprising discovery. While digging through mounds of files and documents detailing the background of the federal Clean Water Act, Kennedy unearthed a section explaining that the law requires fertilizer manufacturers to operate with *zero discharge* — in other words, to recycle all their waste.

This was the legal weapon opponents of Texasgulf had been looking for. Kennedy's discovery made it clear that the waste TG was dumping was not only dangerous, it was *illegal* — and because the state administers federal water quality laws, it was required to do something to stop the dumping. In short, according to the law, the state didn't have to produce scientific data to show that the pollution from Texasgulf was harming the river — the company was forbidden by law to dump its waste in the first place.

Kennedy took his discovery to state DEM director Wilms. "I just read Wilms specific sections buried in the massive regulations," Kennedy said. "He needed to hear two or three of those paragraphs. In a case like this, it takes a Paul Wilms to mastermind a policy decision to recycle. He understands the law better than anybody

else at DEM."

Armed with the federal regulation, Wilms visited Texasgulf president Wright last December to discuss issuing a new draft permit for the firm. At the meeting, Wilms made a startling proposal: The new permit would require the company to install a closed loop system to recycle all contaminated wastes rather than dump them in the Pamlico.

More startling still, Wright soon emerged from a series of high-level meetings and agreed to set up the closed loop. "We have to improve or get in trouble, with respect to permits and public opinion," he said at the time. "If

you do nothing, the interest groups start talking about it. That leads to the confrontational thing, which has intangible costs. The company gets a reputation as the bad apple."

Though DEM engineers say the closed loop will look like a plate of spaghetti, its result will have a certain simplicity. "The beauty of the closed system is that no discharge to the river is easy to grasp," Wright said. "It eliminates Texasgulf from the debate of what's impacting the water quality on the Pamlico."

Wright admits, however, that convincing the public and TG workers that the company has changed may be tough. "The employees look at the management changes like the public does," he said. "They think, 'Are they just telling me that? After we've been discharging for all these years? You want to spend that kind of money when you're always after me for wasting gloves?'"

"DON'T TELL ME — SHOW ME"

David Fritzer, an electrical instruments planner for the firm, is convinced the company has changed. He is particularly impressed with Tom Regan, the new vice president for phosphate production at Texasgulf. "Regan says, 'Look, we've done things wrong. Not any more. We're going to do them right.'"

As a result, Fritzer said, it's now easier to fend off criticism from neighbors. "It's hell to go down to the grocery store. People say, 'You work at Texasgulf? You're polluting our river.' Regan has made us proud to work there. He is concerned with our public image. This is the first plant manager we believe in."

Fritzer blames the state as much as Texasgulf for the environmental infractions. "We weren't responsible about what we put in the water and the air, but the state let us," he said. "It was like the highway patrol telling you you can go 75 miles per hour. Now we're trying to go 55."

Some Texasgulf workers have even harsher things to say about what the state has let the company do to the Pamlico.

"It's a shame that a big company can get away with what they get away with," said one employee who asked not to be identified. "The state allows them through incompetence. If they'd pay me what TG pays me, I'd work for the state and burn TG's ass. All it takes is will-power and know-how."

Paul Wilms insists that both the state and Texasgulf have changed their approach to the environment. "Historically, their attitude toward environmental compliance was abysmal," he said. "Today they would do things differently. They know we are not hesi-

cepted the language, but state officials did not promise to include it in the permit.

Actually, if you read the company's own promotional material, you would think Texasgulf *already* recycles its waste. In a glossy brochure entitled "An Environmental Commitment," the company claims it "operates a totally closed process waste water system that has become a model for the entire phosphate industry and insures that no contaminated water is released into the Pamlico River." A caption under a full-color photo of the plant glowing in the night reads, "Texasgulf insures that no contaminated water is released into the Pamlico."

Whenever the recycling system is finally installed, no one says ending TG's discharge will restore the Pamlico's water quality. "The problems have been 50 years in the making and we would be fooling ourselves if we said it would take less than several decades to improve it," Wilms said. "It's better than the Chesapeake, Puget Sound, and San Francisco Bay, but now is the time to act."

On the coast, Etles Henries Jr. is optimistic, but wary. "I think Texasgulf is getting better," he said as his boat entered the mouth of South Creek. "They're more cautious than they were, but the pressure has to stay up."

As for the the recycling loop, Henries hasn't made up his mind yet. "Can I say I believe them? Not altogether," he said with a shrug. "Anything will help, if they

can keep some of their discharge out of the river. There's no way they can stop all of the spills, but if they can cut them down then we're in good shape," he added, expertly docking his boat at Carolina Seafood.

"It's to the point now where I say don't tell me. Show me." □

Robin Epstein is an intern with the St. Petersburg Times. This story was supported by the Investigative Journalism Fund of the Institute for Southern Studies. For further information on coastal pollution issues, contact the Pamlico-Tar River Foundation at (919) 946-7211 or the Coastal Federation at (919) 393-8185.

Photo by John H. Sheally



AS POLLUTION KILLS FISH IN THE PAMLIKO BASIN, MANY FISHERS AND PACKERS ARE BEING FORCED OUT OF BUSINESS.

tant to enforce the regulations. They know the state is not going to tolerate that behavior and when we find out something they're going to pay."

Environmentalists and commercial fishers are a bit more skeptical, however, and some question whether the state is truly prepared to make Texasgulf obey the law. When the state issued another draft permit for the firm earlier this year, it only required the company to study the feasibility of recycling its waste. At a public hearing in May, environmentalists proposed tougher language that would require the firm to actually install a closed loop system. Texasgulf ac-

O

Outside the

I'd missed them even when my work had been most successful. They were outside the groove of history, and it was my job to get them in, all of them. I looked into the design of their faces, hardly a one that was unlike someone I'd known in the South. Forgotten names sang through my head like forgotten scenes in dreams. I moved with the crowd. . . .

—Ralph Ellison, *The Invisible Man*, 1952

A teacher friend of ours tells a story of stopping for some biscuits one morning near Camden, South Carolina. Pouring his coffee, the waitress learned that he taught history, and when she returned to freshen his cup she said, "Listen, you've read a lot of books and all; can you tell me where we came from and where we're going?"

When he shook his head with the familiar uncertainty of an academic, she nodded. "I thought so," she observed, disappointed but not surprised. "We had an anthropologist in here one time from the university, and he didn't have no idea either."

How did we get here? Lately *Southern Exposure* has been moving with an intriguing crowd, sitting down with an occasional historian and anthropologist over biscuits. We have been hearing forgotten names, like "Lamhatty," and looking into the design of Southern faces, into the design of the South itself. At a time of year when many are working in the garden, we have been digging for our roots.

It is not a new pursuit for us. (How could it be? We are Southern.) The harder we push on the pressing issues of "where we are going" — monopolizing the land, abusing the environment, militarizing the world, denying equal justice — the more we find ourselves looking over our shoulder, asking how we got here and why no one has been able to tell us.

The more we look around, the more we agree with the waitress pouring coffee. Most historians and anthropologists seem confined, by timidity or tradition, to a very narrow world, coloring in predetermined little squares without challenging the broader boundaries. If none can answer the big questions, too few seem to be even asking them. Where we have found people who are asking, we have tried to pass on word of their ideas, publishing their articles or reviewing their books. In November 1984 we put together a whole issue entitled "Liberating Our Past: 400 Years of Southern History," that was so popular it's nearly out of print.

For the last few months we have been at it again, talking to respected friends in the region regarding what's new about what's old. This special section is designed to share some of the fruits of our poking around in the past.

We were amazed to learn what some committed scholars

are digging up these days. And digging is the right word, for historical archaeology is finally coming into its own in the South. For generations a gap existed between anthropologists who excavated pre-Columbian sites and researchers who explored the remains of plantation culture by examining and restoring huge homes and public buildings. They looked at different cultures, using different tools; they asked different questions, and they rarely talked to one another.

Such neglect has had a price. In the gap between these worlds, amateur diggers have roamed almost at will, poaching on the South's oldest heritage and robbing sites of their meaning and sanctity in the search for valuable artifacts. This summer in western Kentucky, for instance, near Uniontown on the lower Ohio River, scores of native Americans have come together to undertake the careful reburial of ancestral remains overturned by heedless treasure hunters.

While many of us winced at President Reagan's uninformed comments about native Americans at the Moscow Summit in May, his well-publicized gaffs before Soviet university students (who knew more about Indian affairs, past and present, than he did) only served to remind all of us how thoroughly that part of our history has been distorted and obscured. In the South, few of us could say anything to an inquiring foreign student about Indian life and culture between the world of Pocahontas in the early 17th century and the era of Forced Removal in the early 19th century.

In recent years anthropologists, historians, and the descendants of separate ethnic and racial groups in the early South have all begun to share increasing interest in the common ground of the so-called "post-contact era," after 1500 AD — and in what lies underneath that ground. One scholarly milestone in this convergence will be the publication next winter of a new book by the University of Nebraska Press entitled *Powhatan's Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast*. This collection of essays, edited by Peter Wood, Gregory Waselkov, and Tom Hatley, brings together recent work in archaeology and history, helping to flesh out a story which has only begun to be told.

With Nebraska's kind permission we have asked Wood and Waselkov to preview some of their ideas from the forthcoming book. Wood, who outlines a demographic overview which has been ten years in the making, is a consultant for a proposed Indian Cultural Center in Robeson County, North Carolina, where racial tensions have earned national headlines this spring. "Indians and whites each make up about 37 percent of the county's population," Wood observes, "and blacks make up the other 26 percent. That is an unusual situation in today's South, but it was far more common 250 years ago, and it is high time we understood this tri-racial heritage."

Groove of History

Like Wood, Greg Waselkov is no armchair scholar. His fascinating study of Indian maps has led him to archives in this country and in Europe. But he is most at home in the trenches. As a seasoned archaeologist who first worked in the Chesapeake region, he has become an expert on Creek Indian sites in recent years. In June, just before this section went to press, he called from his home in Notasulga, Alabama, to report the preliminary findings of his latest dig. At the site of Fusihat-
chee, a Creek town on the Tallapoosa River, he and his colleagues have uncovered

evidence of a large council house from the mid-18th century. This is an important find, the first such Creek structure found in a generation. It bears comparison with an even larger Apalachee council house located at San Luis near Tallahassee by archaeologist Gary Shapiro in 1986.

While examining Indian sites represents an established tradition among Southern archaeologists, the prospect of exploring African-American sites breaks new ground, as Theresa Singleton makes clear in her article. Singleton, one of the few black archaeologists in an area which is undergoing rapid growth, has done field work on a site in Georgia, which she describes in detail. Her pioneering efforts (she also edited *The Archaeology of Slavery and Plantation Life*) make her part of a generation of researchers who are exploring the material culture of slavery.

In Florida, for example, Kathleen Deagan and her crew have gained national publicity for their excavation at Gracia Real Santa Teresa de Mose, better known as Fort Mose. This free black settlement near St. Augustine was created in the early 1700s by African-Americans who escaped from slavery in English South Carolina and sought refuge with the rival Spanish. A unique aspect of this dig has been the enthusiastic support provided by Florida's black legislators, led by State Representative Bill Clark of Fort Lauderdale.

In South Carolina, black researcher Elaine Nichols and others are searching for the Pest House on Sullivan's Island in Charleston Harbor, where Africans were quarantined before being sold in the local slave mart. In Virginia, cautious and conservative Colonial Williamsburg held a weekend forum on black artisans in February. In eastern North Carolina, initial excavations were carried out in 1982 at Somerset Plantation (see "Digging Black History," SE Vol. XI, No. 2), and slave descendants held a reunion there recently. Now reunion organizer Dorothy Redford has established a foundation to continue work at the state site, and she expects 4,000 people at the next gathering on September 3.

All this activity has begun to catch the attention of the media. This spring a British film crew flew to Florida to explore

Engraving from Harper's Weekly



BLACKS DIGGING A CANAL NEAR VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI.

Fort Mose. In June director Jonathan Dent of the BBC toured slave sites at Carter's Grove and Monticello in Virginia, sketching plans for a documentary film. Recently another Englishman, Alex West, worked with North State Video to create a fascinating half-hour videotape on slavery archaeology in general and South Carolina's black-built rice dikes in particular. "The Strength of These Arms" includes interviews with such experts as Leland Ferguson, Theresa Singleton, Charles Joyner, and Daniel Littlefield, along with some extraordinary footage of the rice production process.

With such work in progress, who knows. Maybe one of these days Africans and Indians in the early South will no longer be considered outside the groove of history. It is part of our job to get them in, all of them.

—The Editors



A MUD-WALL, THATCHED-ROOF DWELLING IN ZAIRE

Breaking New Ground

*Archaeologists
are unearthing
new evidence
of the critical
role slaves
played in
shaping the
early South*



By Theresa A. Singleton

where slaves once lived and worked. In the South, slaves played a large and critical role in shaping plantation life for more than two centuries.

Now, by carefully sifting the dirt at excavation sites across the South, archaeologists are coming up with new artifacts from the past — a comb here, a pottery fragment there, remnants of mortar, burnt bones. Slender bits of evidence, to be sure, but such small items speak volumes in the hands of specialists. With a variety of new-found objects before them, these experts are starting to build a better image of the slaves who shared life in the South with their European owners and their native American predecessors.

The findings are striking. Archaeologists have unearthed firearms, pieces of graphite for writing, trenches for walls, cooking equipment, and food remains from slave quarters. These artifacts clearly suggest that the earliest slaves used guns for hunting, built their own dwellings, occasionally learned to read and write, and prepared their own meals to suit their tastes — even though written records show that slaveholders forbade their slaves to practice these activities. In short, the wealth of buried treasure being brought to light every day reveals that Southern slaves actively sought to improve their material conditions whenever possible. In doing so, they exerted a strong and creative influence on life in the early South.

OUT OF AFRICA

The primary target of the archaeologist's shovel has been the coastal fringes and interior flatlands of Georgia and South Carolina, where one of the heaviest concentrations of blacks in the nation once lived in relative isolation from whites. These first "low-country" or "sea-island" blacks came to the region from the West Indies when an English colony was founded in 1670.

When the planters initiated large-scale production of labor-intensive crops

IT HAS BEEN ALMOST FIVE CENTURIES SINCE SPANISH CONQUISTADORS FIRST BROUGHT ENSLAVED AFRICANS TO the New World, but archaeologists have only recently begun studying what life was really like for the early slaves. Investigators were slow to recognize that if they wanted to deepen their understanding of European settlements in the New World, they would have to expand their research to include the places

(rice in the 1690s and indigo in the 1740s), it required an enormous work force. Neither captured Indians from the interior nor indentured servants from Europe could meet the rising demand, and soon enslaved workers were being imported directly from West Africa by the thousands. Historian George Rogers has calculated that in the decades between 1706 and the Declaration of Independence, 93,843 Africans entered the New World through Charleston Harbor. In coastal rice-growing districts, blacks soon outnumbered whites by as many as 10 to 1.

Historian Peter Wood, in his book *Black Majority*, has shown that these slaves provided more than labor; they played an integral role in the settling of the frontier colony. They functioned as cultural agents, helping their European owners adapt to the new environment. Many of these Africans brought with them skilled knowledge of rice-growing, cattle-raising, woodworking, and boating. Their familiarity with rice-growing — a pursuit outside the experience of the English — literally made possible this plantation society.

African culture was thoroughly woven into the daily lives of South Carolinians. Some of the most striking evidence in support of this little-known fact is emerging from excavations at 18th-century sites such as Curriboo and Vaughan in Berkeley County, South Carolina. Digs at each plantation have revealed what may have been African-styled dwellings designed and built by slaves between 1740 and 1790. These slave quarters consisted of mud walls, presumably covered with thatched roofs made of palmetto leaves, similar to thatched-roof houses in many parts of Africa.

Although no standing walls exist, archaeologists have found wall trenches containing a mortar-like

clay. Significantly, there is no evidence of other building materials at the sites. If wood had been used, for example, archaeologists would expect to find a distinctive color in the soil indicating where a post or foundation had rotted.

Since this discovery, a careful examination of written records has revealed references to slave-built, mud-wall structures. Indeed, previously unnoticed written descriptions seem to suggest that these African-styled houses may have been commonplace. W.E.B. DuBois offered a description of palmetto-leaf construction in his 1908 survey of African and African-American houses. "The dwellings of slaves were palmetto huts," he wrote, "built by themselves of stakes and poles, with the palmetto leaf. The door, when they had any, was generally of the same materi-

als, sometimes boards found on the beach. They had no floors, no separate apartments, except the Guinea Negroes built themselves after task on Sundays."

African slaves also appear to have shaped material life in the colonial South by making their own pottery and preparing their own food. Clay pots known as colonoware are common finds at South Carolina plantation sites. Such low-fired earthenware, which was used to prepare and store food, often comprises 80 to 90 percent of all ceramics found at sites occupied by slaves in the 1700s. It also accounts for a significant portion — sometimes more than half — of the ceramics used in planter households. This suggests that enslaved Africans not only prepared their own meals in their cabins, but may have fixed food for planter families using their

traditional culinary techniques, thus influencing local white Southern cuisine.

Until the past decade, archaeologists thought that only native Americans had produced colonoware, and it still seems likely that Indians created certain European-styled vessels such as shallow plates and bowls with ring feet which English settlers would have valued. But now most scholars agree that African slaves produced a great deal of this hand-built pottery, because much of it has been found at sites that date long after the demise of coastal Indian groups.

The first real clue that blacks made their own pottery came when some pottery fragments turned up that appeared to have been fired on the premises of Drayton Hall, a plantation located west of Charleston, South Carolina. Further research by Leland Ferguson, a historical archaeologist at the University of South Carolina, has shown that this colonoware resembles pottery still made in parts of West

Photo courtesy Elisofo Archives, National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institute



POTS IN THE AFRICAN MARKET OF MOPTI, MALI ARE STRIKINGLY SIMILAR TO POTTERY FRAGMENTS DISCOVERED ON EARLY SOUTHERN PLANTATIONS.

Africa today. Accumulating evidence thus supports the notion that colonoware is a tri-cultural product, fashioned from the collective traditions of Africans, native Americans, and Europeans.

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE

After the Revolutionary War, however, this African-textured culture began to disappear. Homemade pots eventually gave way to mass-produced wares imported from England, and mud-wall dwellings were replaced by European-styled frame houses. As the slave trade was interrupted by war and then ended by law, the percentage of African-born immigrants in the labor force declined, as did the overall ratio of blacks to whites. Inevitably, the strong influence that African newcomers exerted on coastal life gradually came to an end.

It is easier to say with certainty that these changes took place than to say why they happened. One driving force behind the changes was the abolition of the slave trade in 1807. With the labor supply cut to a smuggled trickle, planters had an economic incentive to improve the health — and thereby the reproductive capacity — of the slaves they already owned. The changes were further fueled by the ideology developed by the proslavery reform movement, which was aimed at revising slave codes to make them more humane and “to rid slavery of its attendant evils.”

One way planters sought to improve both the physical and spiritual well-being of slaves was to improve housing — a change slaveowners equated with imposing European standards. The makeshift slave housing that prevailed in the colonial era soon gave way to more permanent dwellings. The mud-wall dwellings at the Vaughan and Curriboo plantations were replaced with frame houses around 1790, and the new structures were occupied until the plantations closed in 1820.

By 1830, the recommended standard for each slave family was a dwelling measuring 16 by 18 feet, raised on piers, with planked floors and a large fireplace.

of this stated ideal, photographs and standing ruins from the period reveal that most slaves of the 1800s lived in European-styled housing.

The standardization of slave housing gradually led to the suppression of African-influenced architecture, as proslavery reformers pushed to “elevate” the Africans to European ways. One often-cited case involved Okra, a slave from Cannon’s Point Plantation on the island of St. Simons, Georgia. When Okra built an African mud-walled hut, his owner ordered that it be burned down. The owner said that he did not want an African hut on his property. Digs at Cannon’s Point have revealed that Okra’s owner preferred a European-styled, two-family cabin.

As owners forbade slaves to build their own homes according to African traditions, colonoware pottery and other homemade possessions also began disappearing from slave quarters.



PLANTERS OFTEN REPLACED AFRICAN-INFLUENCED SLAVE QUARTERS DURING THE “REFORM PERIOD” WITH EUROPEAN-STYLED HOUSES LIKE THIS ONE.

England’s Industrial Revolution made inexpensive, mass-produced goods readily available, and slaves substituted imported ceramics for their own pottery. It is not known whether they made the switch by choice, because owners supplied them with cast-off European housewares, or because African traditions for shaping and firing their own pots were gradually lost.

Despite the switch from local pottery to overseas ceramics, food preparation on plantations may have continued much as it had in the 1700s. Leland Ferguson has noted that many of the mass-produced ceramics served the same function as the colonoware they replaced. For example, the most common

slave-made serving vessels, small bowls, were replaced with small, mass-produced serving bowls in the 1800s.

Although excavations at later plantation sites have revealed little about how blacks may have drawn on African traditions in their use of mass-produced objects, the digs do present a clearer picture of how slaves survived the rigors of day-to-day life. One of the most extensive digs took place at Butler Island, a large rice plantation off the coast of Georgia. Those of us who worked on the dig found ourselves serving as historical detectives, relying on the slimmest of clues to deduce how slaves lived.

FROM THE GROUND UP

Before we lifted a single shovel on Butler Island, we studied historical maps, deeds, plantation records, and aerial photographs to decide where to dig. Sketches drawn by an overseer of the plantation in the 1830s indicated the location of slave villages, structures used to store and process rice, and a pre-Columbian site he identified as “Indian shell.”

As archaeological sleuths, we also relied on informants. Workers at a nearby waterfowl refuge pointed out areas where they had unearthed artifacts, and former tenant farmers recalled places where they had seen ruins of the plantation.

Once everything above ground was carefully mapped and recorded, we began to dig. Each site was measured into squares forming a grid, and the exact position of every significant find was reproduced on paper.

Most of the structures we located were slave cabins. Slaves on Butler Island lived in dwellings measuring roughly 24 by 28 feet, made from cypress planks, with fireplaces that measured eight feet across. The fires in the fireplaces burned very hot at times, a fact attested to by the buckling and separation of the hearths from the outer chimney walls and by findings of food bone burnt to a whitish-blue color.

When we located building hardware such as hinges, locks, and shutter pintles, we were able to work out the



AUTHOR THERESA SINGLETON AND A STUDENT UNCOVER A BRICK HEARTH OF A TWO-FAMILY SLAVE DWELLING ON BUTLER ISLAND, A FORMER PLANTATION IN GEORGIA.

placement of doors and windows. And when we found no windowpane fragments, we deduced that the windows were not glassed.

Outside the cabins, we used clues uncovered just below the top layer of soil to spot areas where slaves washed clothes, tilled gardens, burned trash, and penned pigs and chickens.

Inside the cabin outlines, stoneware fragments indicated that the typical slave household possessed only two or three stoneware crocks used to store molasses, cornmeal, and salted meats — foods frequently rationed to slaves by planters. Bottle fragments, clay pipes, and medicine vials documented that slaves sometimes received rations of tobacco, pipes, patent medicines, and alcohol.

Hunting and fishing gear, cooking equipment, and the remains of plants and animals all provided evidence of what slaves ate. Food bones indicated that beef and pork contributed most of the animal protein to their diet, but slaves supplemented these rations by hunting and fishing — adding ducks, fish, raccoon, opossum, turtles, and shellfish to the menu.

WHO STUDIES THE PAST?

Such findings are significant. Because slaves recorded almost nothing about how they lived — and because so many aspects of their daily lives were dictated by European owners — the study of African-styled dwellings and pottery can give us a better understanding of how Southern slaves viewed their own lives.

It appears, for example, that the use of colonoware to prepare and serve food enabled slaves to maintain their old culi-

nary practices and social customs or establish new ones. In addition, blacks continued to exercise their creativity in building design and the use of space whenever possible. Unusually small, 10-foot-square cabins suggest the recurrent

use of an African floor plan. In this subtle way an African perception of space may have been perpetuated until fairly recent times.

Such observations demonstrate how rapidly slave archaeology has grown from modest beginnings into a specialized interest. Early studies offered little more than an embellishment of written sources, but recent excavations provide physical proof of the existence of slave-made pottery and African-styled

buildings, as well as the household equipment, personal possessions, and family diets of early generations of black Southerners.

Yet despite such findings, most of the archaeological treasures being unearthed have been stockpiled away from public view. Specialists share their research with one another, but rarely with ordinary citizens. And black participation in this specialty remains scant. Of several hundred professional archaeologists in the country, fewer than 10 are black, and only four of these have been involved in investigating plantation sites. It is interesting to speculate about what might happen if more young black students were to equip themselves to search for their own past by studying the objects their ancestors left behind. Such participation is crucial for the study not only of African-American life, but of Southern society as a whole. □

*Dr. Theresa A. Singleton is an archaeologist with the National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. She is the editor of *The Archaeology of Slavery and Plantation Life*, Academic Press, 1985.*

THE STRENGTH OF THESE ARMS

THE STRENGTH OF THESE ARMS:


Black Labor - White Rice

This video focuses on the central role that African-American slaves and their knowledge of rice cultivation played in the economic survival of colonial South Carolina.

The Strength of These Arms presents new findings from archaeological excavations on Low Country plantations and features interviews with Theresa Singleton, Leland Ferguson, Charles Joyner, and Dan Littlefield. (26 min. VHS) \$60

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The Strength of These Arms is one of the five-part new Perspectives series about African influence in Western and American art and culture. A catalogue containing information on this and other North State productions is free upon request.



Lamhatty's Map

*How Indians viewed the South
300 years ago*

By Gregory A. Waselkov

In 1502, on his fourth and last voyage to the West, Christopher Columbus waylaid a Mayan trading canoe carrying an old man. The European admiral still believed he was near the Indies, and he always described such local inhabitants as Indians—a term which has stuck ever since. The Mayan, whose geographical outlook was very different, knew exactly where he was and drew charts of the Honduran Coast to prove it.

As subsequent foreign explorers probed the New World, time and again they called upon the expertise of indigenous mapmakers in an effort to get the lay of the land. In 1703, two centuries after Columbus, Baron De Lahontan told how northeastern Indians kept maps “drawn upon the Rind of your Birch Tree; and when the Old Men hold a Council about War or Hunting, they’re always sure to consult them.”

By this time, after generations of

contact, some Indians had adopted certain conventions of Old World map-making, such as the European practice of putting North at the top of the map. According to the Frenchman:

they draw the most exact Maps imaginable of the Countries they’re acquainted with, for there’s nothing wanting in them but the Longitude and Latitude of Places. They set down the True North according to the Pole Star;

Lamhatty Maps His Long Journey

The Towasa Indian named Lamhatty was 26 years old when he was captured and forced into slavery in 1707. This rendering of a map he drew shows the course of his journey — more than 600 miles in nine months — from his home near the Florida Gulf Coast to the English settlements of eastern Virginia.

Captured from his home village (1) by Creek Indians allied with the English, Lamhatty was first taken to Creek towns such as Abekas (2) on the Coosa River and Tallapoosas (3) on the Tallapoosa River, where he was forced to work in the fields through the summer. During several months in the fall, his captors carried him east toward the English slave markets, pausing at Oconee (4) on the Oconee River and then crossing through southern Appalachia to the headwaters of the Savannah River (5), where Lamhatty was sold to a small group of Shawnee Indians.

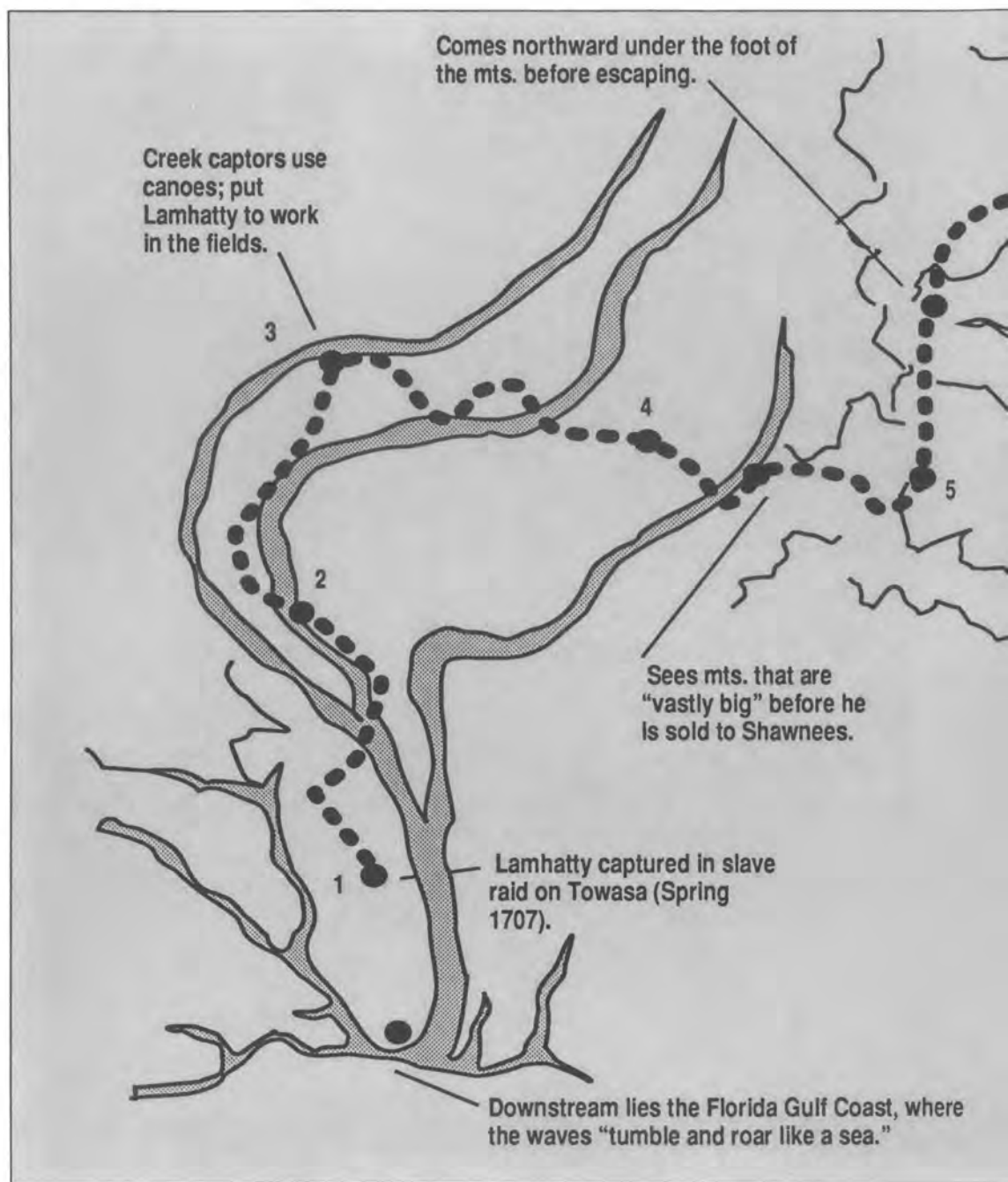
The Shawnees marched him north during November and December “along the ledge of Lower mountains” known as the Blue Ridge, no doubt with an eye toward selling him as a slave to white settlers in Virginia. But when they made camp on a branch of the Rappahannock (probably the Rapidan) where it flows out of the mountains north of present-day Charlottesville, Lamhatty escaped.

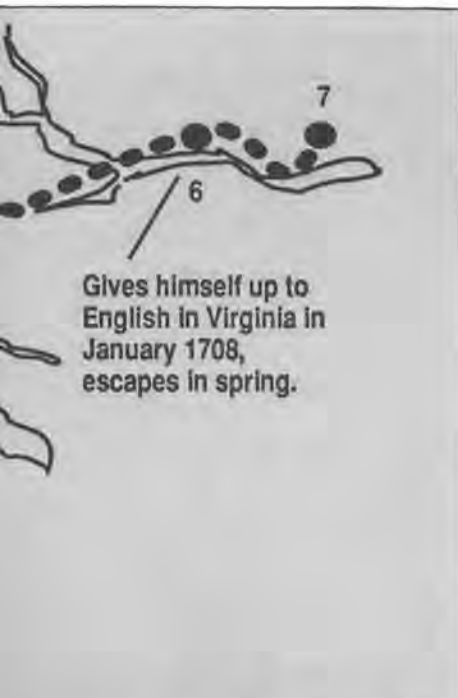
For nine days he headed east and somewhat south until he came upon the backcountry homes of Andrew Clark and Robert Powell (6). He

surrendered himself to these English colonists, but the settlers “being frightened Seized upon him violently & tyed him tho’ he made no manner of Resistance but shed tears & shewed them how his hands were galled and swelled by

being tyed before.”

Lamhatty was taken to Colonel Walker’s (7), where he recounted his journey and prepared a map for his captors, showing the rivers and mountains in black and depicting his forced





Gives himself up to English in Virginia in January 1708, escapes in spring.

Map from Virginia Historical Society



march with a red line. When the warm weather came, he managed to end his year as a prisoner by slipping away from Walker's farm "& was never more heard of."
— G.A.W.

the Ports, Harbours, Rivers, Creeks and Coasts of the Lakes; the Roads, Mountains, Wood, Marshes, Meadows, etc. counting the distances by Journeys and Half-Journeys of the Warriors and allowing every Journey Five Leagues.

What was true elsewhere in North America can now be documented explicitly in the South. Little-known records make clear that the ability to draw maps was widespread among Southern Indians during the colonial era. What's more, the few surviving copies of Indian maps from that period also provide insights into how native Southerners organized their societies and perceived their world. They were not the separate and peripheral "tribes" conceptualized by European colonizers and perpetuated over the generations in our history books and popular culture.

NICETY AND FALSE REPORTS

Early evidence for the mental maps of Southern Indians was noted by the English colonists who settled at Jamestown in 1607. They inform us that local members of Chief Powhatan's confederacy produced maps on several occasions. One simple chart showed the course of the James River, while a more ambitious map depicted their place at the center of a flat world, with England represented by a pile of sticks near the edge.

During ensuing years, early colonizers found native Southerners to be proficient cartographers whose geographical knowledge greatly expedited the first European explorations of the region. Only rarely, however, did the newcomers express any interest in how the Indians viewed the world; their curiosity generally was limited to immediate practical matters, such as the locations of rivers, paths, and settlements (not to mention possible mines). When entering totally unfamiliar terrain, these geographical pointers from the

Indians proved invaluable to hundreds of Spanish, English, and French explorers seeking new lands to exploit.

"They will draw Maps very exactly of all the Rivers, Towns, Mountains and Roads, or what you shall enquire of them," reported John Lawson, who travelled through the Carolinas at the start of the 18th century. "These Maps they will draw in the Ashes of the Fire, and sometimes upon a Mat or piece of Bark. I have put a Pen and Ink into a Savage's Hand," Lawson wrote, "and he has drawn me the Rivers, Bays, and other Parts of a Country, which afterwards I have found to agree with a great deal of Nicety."

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"But you must be very much in their Favor," Lawson added, "otherwise they will never make these Discoveries to you, especially if it be in their own Quarters."

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"But you must be very much in their Favor," Lawson added, "otherwise they will never make these Discoveries to you, especially if it be in their own Quarters." He realized the Indians were quite clear about the value of geographic information to newcomers, so they sometimes provided false reports or withheld significant details. "And as for Mines of Silver and other Metals," Lawson concluded:

Now, say they, if we should discover these Minerals to the English, they would settle at or near these Mountains, and bereave us of the best Hunting-Quarters we have, as they have already done wherever they have inhabited; so by that means we shall be driven to some unknown Country, to live, hunt, and get our Bread in. These are the Reasons that the Savages give for not making known what they are acquainted withal of that Nature.

But on the whole, geographically uninformed Europeans were seldom disappointed in their hundreds of requests for Indian maps of the Southern terrain. For several centuries, information imparted by means of ephemeral charts scratched

in the sand, sketched with charcoal on bark, or painted on deerskin, was incorporated directly into European colonial maps, usually enhancing their accuracy.

"I have not rested satisfied with the verbal Discription of the Country from the Indians," Governor James Glen of South Carolina wrote in 1754, "but have often made them trace the Rivers on the floor with Chalk, and also on Paper." Impressed by such drawings, Glen added patronizingly, "it is surprizing how near they approach to our best Maps."

One Indian mapmaking tradition of the colonial period, as described by Lawson, Glen, and others, did indeed

of the most intriguing examples of this kind of detailed, geographic travel map.

LAMHATTY'S JOURNEY

In 1708 Colonel John Walker of Virginia sent the governor a map drawn by a Towasa Indian named Lamhatty. Though the original is lost, colonial officials preserved a contemporary copy of the map which still survives in the Virginia Historical Society, along with two accompanying accounts by Walker and Robert Beverley, a prominent English settler. (See map, page 25.) From these shreds of evidence, a strange story emerges.

Photo from Ashmolean Museum, Oxford



A DEERSKIN MANTLE PROBABLY WORN BY THE VIRGINIA CHIEF POWHATAN AND PRESENTED TO THE ENGLISH CIRCA 1608. THE CIRCLES MAY SYMBOLIZE GROUPS OF INDIANS WITHIN POWHATAN'S CONFEDERATION.

involve approximations of European maps, as geographic information became another commodity in intercultural trade, along with deerskins, ginseng roots, and Indian slaves. In fact, it was an Indian slave who provided one

before; where upon they used him gentler & tyed the string onely by one arme," as they set out downstream with their captive.



On Sunday they reached the estate of Colonel Walker, who took matters into

his own hands. Reporting the Indian's presence to the governor in Williamsburg, Walker wrote that, "at first I put him in irons, and would have brought him to yor Honr, but the extremity of the weather prevented any passage over Yorke River. After three dayes, finding him of a seeming good humour, I let him at liberty about the house where he still continues." Perhaps seeing an opportunity for an additional slave or a backcountry guide, Walker concluded, "he seems very desirous to stay, if I might have yor: Honrs: leave to keep him."

Meanwhile, Walker reported, the newcomer "at all times seemd verey in-

Following the Christmas holidays of 1707 a single Indian, "naked & unarmed," approached the frontier home of Andrew Clark, an English settler on the Mattaponi River in eastern Virginia. According to the letters, he appeared there on Saturday, January 3, "in very bad weather." Unsure of his whereabouts, the wanderer had entered the upper reaches of King and Queen County, north of the new capitol at Williamsburg.

More pitiful than dangerous, the stranger willingly "surrendered himself to the people." Nevertheless, they were frightened by his sudden appearance and "Seized upon him violently & tyed him tho' he made no manner of Resistance but shed tears & shewed them how his hands were galled and swelled by being tyed


The basic symbol of the circle probably represents the social cohesion of the group in contrast to the square English.


clinable to be understood, and was verey forward to talk." Though his language was unfamiliar to local translators, bits and pieces of his story got through the communication barrier and can be linked with what is known of events taking place at this time.

The young man was Lamhatty, age 26, a Towasa Indian from the Gulf Coast region of north Florida. His home had been just above the fall line on the Chippola River, between modern-day Panama City and Tallahassee. He had been south to the coast and seen the Gulf of Mexico, stretching like a great salt lake, "whose waves he describes to tumble and roar like a sea."

Lamhatty, it appears, was one of several thousand local Indian inhabitants who fell victim to the fierce slave wars

being sponsored by the English. Within a generation of settling Carolina in 1670, Englishmen began leading raids against Spanish missions in the Apalachee region of northwest Florida. The newcomers realized they could export enslaved Indians (more valuable elsewhere, since they could not escape home) and use the proceeds to import black slaves from the West Indies or Africa. By attacking the Spanish missions, the English hoped to cripple the Catholic powers and their Indian allies along the Gulf Coast, create new prospects for Western expansion, and secure profitable slaves all at the same time.

The strategy worked. Colonel James Moore of South Carolina and his private army destroyed several missions in northern Florida in 1703 and 1704, killing or enslaving several thousand Indians. Moore later boasted that these brutal forays cost him fewer than 20 men "and without one Penny charge to the Publick."

Indian refugees from the missions fled to nearby Towasa villages, but before long these towns also came under attack from Creek Indians allied with the English. Lamhatty was among those taken captive in the spring of 1707 and bound with rawhide cords.

The map Lamhatty drew for Walker details his remarkable journey as a slave, covering more than 600 miles in nine months. During his captivity he was first taken to a number of Creek towns indicated on the map "where they made him worke in the ground between 3 & 4 months."

Eventually, Lamhatty was traded by his Creek captors to one of the bands of Shawnees living on the upper Savannah River. He traveled north with a small group made up of "6 men 2 women & 3 children, he continewed with them about 6 weeks, & they pitched thier Camp on the branches of Rapahan: River where they pierce the mountains." Then on Christmas day, 1707, "he ran away from them" and headed east and south until he reached the English settlements on the Mattaponi River, where frightened settlers bound him again.

Lamhatty was not alone in his fate. Others from his village were probably among the Indian slaves brought into Charleston (then called Charlestown) by the Savannahs in 1707, and some of them may even have been sold into

Virginia. According to a postscript written by Robert Beverley, "some of his Country folks were found servants" in the area, and after that Lamhatty himself "was sometimes ill used by Walker." As the winter continued, Lamhatty soon "became very melancholly after fasting & crying several days together sometimes using little Conjurat[i]on." Finally, "when warme weather came he went away & was never more heard of," leaving only his map behind.

The surviving copy of his map provides a rare personal glimpse into the colonial South nearly three centuries ago. Lamhatty displayed a knack for cartography, although his detailed geographical knowledge seems to have been limited to the Gulf Coast region where he grew up. His names and locations for rivers seem accurate in the southern reaches but become progressively distorted further north. While being led into the interior, he crossed rivers that he mistakenly equated with those flowing through Towasa territory, but such errors are understandable for a disoriented prisoner in unfamiliar country. Even his imperfect knowledge undoubtedly exceeded that held by Colonel Walker and others in Virginia.

THE BRITISH ARE SQUARE

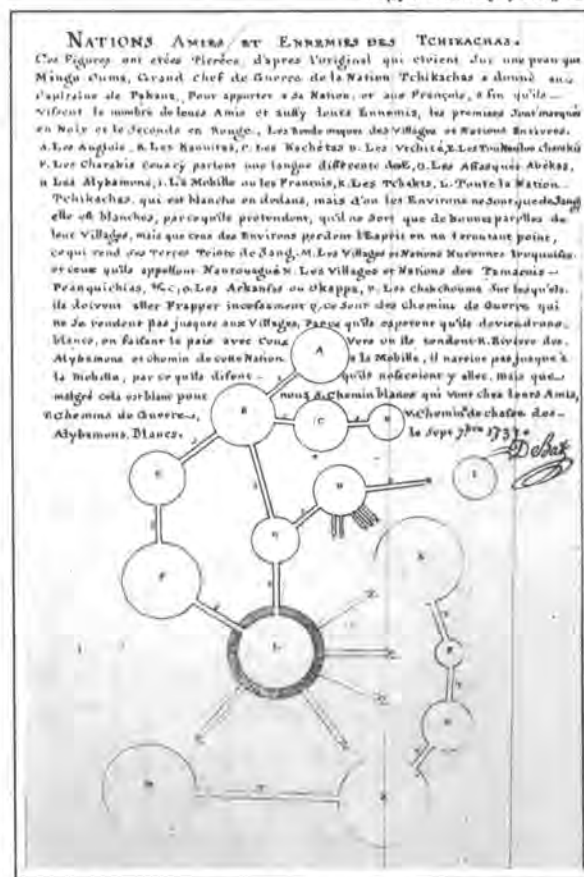
In contrast to Lamhatty's personal depiction, drawn in response to English inquiries while he was in servitude, consider several extraordinary maps created two decades later and preserved by Francis Nicholson, Governor of South Carolina from 1721 to 1725. They were marked out on deerskin, and the apparent authors were a Catawba Indian from the South Carolina piedmont and a Chickasaw cartographer from what is now northern Mississippi.

Together with several similar maps from the same era, they represent a

second, more independent Indian mapmaking tradition. Each provides a schematic rendering that shows relative positions and important interconnections for an informed mapreader — much the way bus or subway diagrams condense complex information into a limited space for city dwellers who know roughly where they want to go.

As was customary upon the appointment of a new colonial governor, Indian leaders from each of the major tribes were summoned to Charleston in 1721 to meet Nicholson. Among those invited were Creeks, Cherokees, and Catawbas: "A Head man out of each Town of each Nation to come

Map from Library of Congress



A COPY OF A MAP DETAILING THE ENEMIES AND ALLIES OF THE CHICKSAW INDIANS, WHO EXPLAINED THEIR GEOGRAPHIC KNOWLEDGE TO AN ALABAMA EMISSARY SENT BY THE FRENCH IN 1737.

down." The Catawbas were a loose confederation of Siouan-speaking peoples settled near one another for protection in the South Carolina piedmont.

Nicholson probably took this opportunity to solicit a map, painted on deerskin, from a leader of one of the

small Catawba groups. The original chart is lost, but two similar copies survive in London, drawn in red ink on paper cut in the shape of a deerskin. At the corners are pairs of triangles, presumably representing deer hooves, and there are several striking features, such as a man with a musket facing a buck, captioned "An Indian a Hunting."

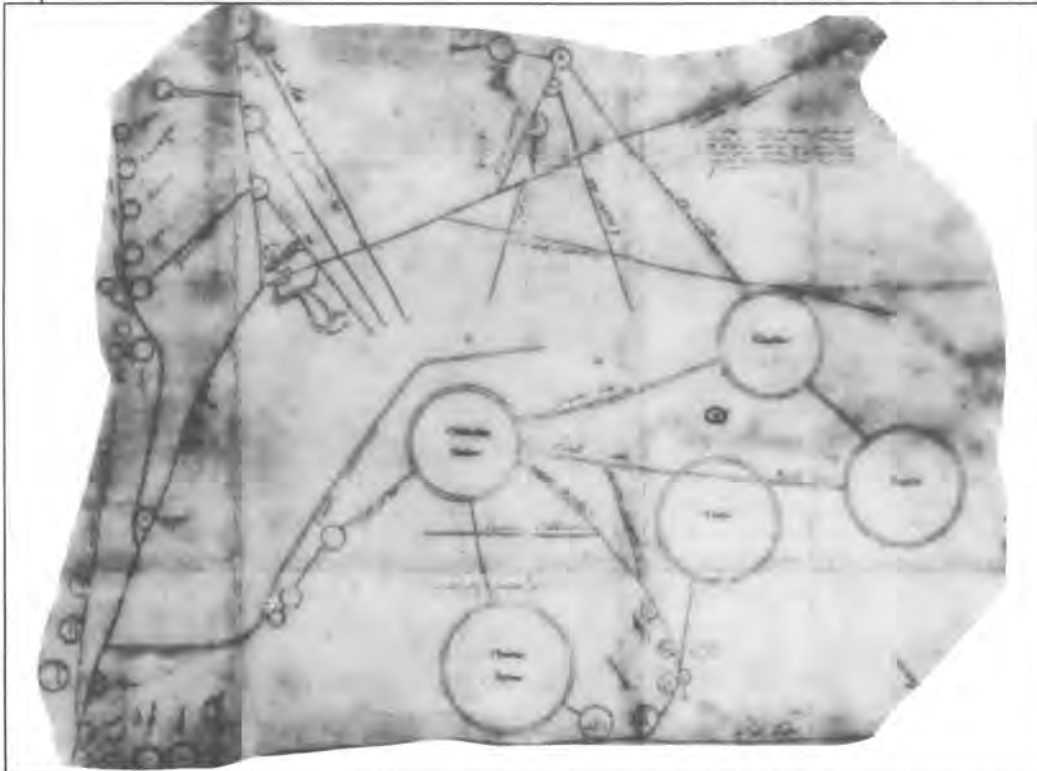
The central features are 13 circles

labeled with Indian names and connected by an intricate network of double lines representing paths. Along the left side of the map is "Charlestown" with a boat in harbor, pennants flying. (Could it be the ship on which Nicholson had just arrived?) The distinctive grid may represent the rectangular street pattern of Charleston, or the low-country rice fields and irrigation channels then under

construction, or both. Clearly the Indians associated straight lines and square corners with the newly arrived English, for in the lower right corner is a large rectangle marked "Virginie."

By manipulating distance the mapmaker suggested the proper spatial ordering of map elements within the irregular confines of a deerskin, conveying a great deal of information regarding

Map from British Public Records Office



with its numerous small tribes (each labelled F) is at the lower left. From there, the Mississippi stretches northward, with its western tributaries, the Red and the Arkansas, squeezed against the edge of the map. From the Chickasaw Nation, the Natchez Trace leads southwest, running roughly parallel to the nearby Yazoo River.

Further north, an Indian figure leading a horse represents the lucrative trade in "chickasaw" horses taken from the west and sold to colonists in the east. At this point, the Ohio River

branches eastward, stretching all the way to Seneca country in western New York. Its southern tributary, the Tennessee, is represented by a straight line slanting southeast near the domain of the "Charikee."

South from the Chickasaws, a single line suggests hostility with the larger Choctaw Nation, and wider trails to the east mark open routes for commerce with the English. The most important is the "Creek and English Path," passing through the Creek domain of Alabama and Georgia to Charleston, where the Chickasaws found a ready market for deerskins and Indian slaves.

"A MAP DESCRIBING THE SITUATION OF THE SEVERAL NATIONS OF INDIANS BETWEEN SOUTH CAROLINA AND THE MASSISIPI"

The British Public Record Office in London contains a faded version of an extraordinary map of the South. According to the tiny note in the upper right, it "was Copied from a Draught Drawn upon a Deer Skin by an Indian Cacique and Presented to Francis Nicholson Esqr. Governour of Carolina." The original, now lost, may have been given to the governor in September 1723, when Chickasaw Indians were invited to Charleston and "presents were exchanged." The map's organization, with the "Chickasaw Nation" of northern Mississippi at the center, suggests the perspective of these key English allies.

The map's scope is enormous. South Carolina is represented by the "English" circle on the right, and French Louisiana

the Siouan groups and their surroundings. He showed that upon leaving Charleston, a separate trail branched off to the west, going beyond the piedmont groups to the Cherokees in southern Appalachia and beyond them to the Chickasaws in northern Mississippi. But he gave disproportionate space to the Catawba groups, almost like a larger blow-up in the midst of a small-scale regional map.

Such enlargement of the piedmont region suggests a Catawba-centered worldview, similar to modern caricature maps of "A New Yorker's View of America" or "The World as Seen from Texas." But it also underscores the importance of the Catawbas at the center of a regional trading network with numerous towns and trails familiar to the mapmaker.

He highlighted, with a large central circle, the significance attached to Nasaw (or "Nauvasa"), a principal town linked to the English in South Carolina and Virginia by direct trading paths. In 1728 William Byrd, traveling from Virginia, noted in his diary that after leaving Crane Creek, North Carolina, "About three-score Miles more bring you to the first Town of the Catawbas, call'd Nauvasa, situated on the banks of Santee river. Besides this Town there are five Others belonging to the same Nation, lying all on the same Stream, within a Distance of 20 miles."

A CACIQUE COMPOSITE

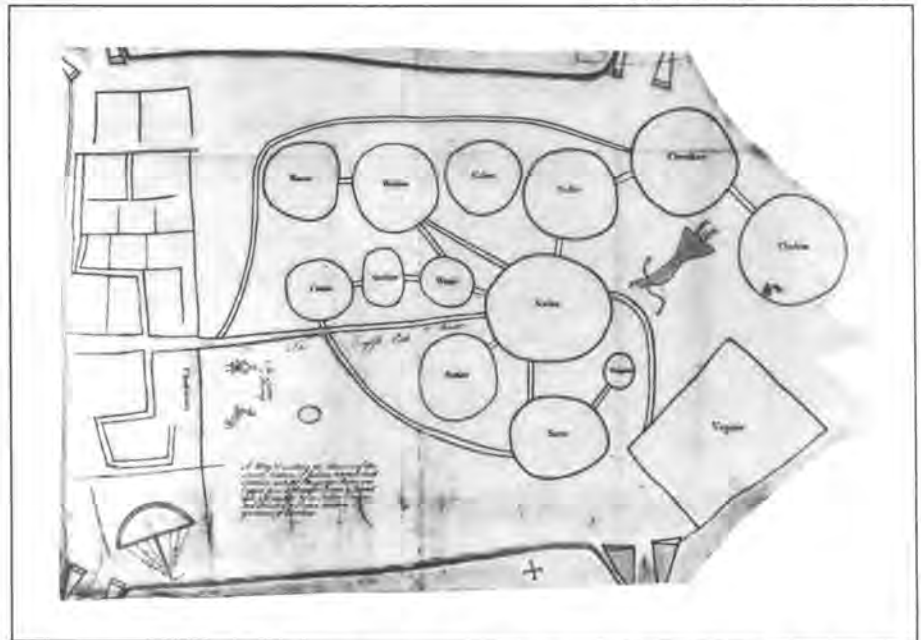
Sometime during his brief tenure as governor, Nicholson received another Indian chart on a far grander scale — the Chickasaw deerskin map shown on the opposite page. This map, with its extraordinarily comprehensive view of the "Greater Southeast," was drafted by a Chickasaw headman who probably had access to information accumulated by other tribe members. In other words, the great breadth of geographical knowledge indicated by this map, ranging as it does from Texas and Kansas in the west to New York and Florida in the east, may represent the collective knowledge of the Chickasaws in 1723, even if no individual Chickasaw had ever travelled so widely.

Such maps, drawn by caciques or headmen, can provide insights into the ways Southern Indians perceived their environment. They depict self-contained

and ethnocentric worlds. Rivers arise and flow to their outlet within the confines of the maps, and paths end at the most distant villages or tribal domains. In each case, the cartographer has placed his native group near the map center with paths radiating outward from the focus of attention in a concentric, hierarchical organization of social space. The mapmaker's village or tribe

occur throughout these maps. In the concentric structure of some maps, we see an inherent opposition between we and they, the center and the fringes of the world. In other cases color draws the contrast, as in the use of black paint to indicate allies and red to identify enemies, or continuous trails to note peaceful trade and "broken" paths to signify war.

Map from British Public Records Office



A COPY OF A CATAWBA DEERSKIN MAP OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA PIEDMONT, CIRCA 1721. THE CIRCLES DEPICT INDIAN GROUPS, AND THE SQUARES SHOW THE PORT OF CHARLESTON WITH A BOAT IN THE HARBOR.

occupies the exclusive innermost position, while all others are relegated to an outlying ring. (This is not unlike American world maps of today, which are always oriented to place the United States in the upper center.)

The single most widely shared feature of early Southern Indian maps, however, is the use of circles to represent human social groups. In this context, the basic symbol of the circle probably represents the social cohesion of the group, mirroring the village plan common to many Southern native societies of the period. The Catawba mapmaker expanded the metaphor of the social circle when he drew a rectangular grid plan of Charleston and a square representing Virginia.

This dichotomy carried the clear message that diverse Indian groups were alike in being circular people, in contrast to the square English. Other symbolic oppositions, either implied or explicit,

By recognizing and attempting to interpret the symbolic content of the maps, we begin to understand that they are indeed political documents, graphic depictions of the balance of power among Southern Indians. The visual messages encoded on these maps are still only partially decipherable, because our ignorance of this lost world remains so great. But, with time, we may yet appreciate more fully these few remarkable documents by native Southerners and the complex vision of the region that they contain. □

Greg Waselkov is excavating a Creek Indian site this summer and will teach archaeology at the University of South Alabama in the fall. A longer version of this essay will appear in the forthcoming book Powhatan's Mantle from the University of Nebraska Press.

*Revolutionary Changes in
the Early South*

Re-Counting the Past



Sketch from Von Reck's Voyage, The Beehive Press

By Peter H. Wood

Since 1976, a parade of flag-waving American bicentennials has come and gone. But in the South, as the confetti finally settles, we still have no real feel for the

diverse mix of people who inhabited this region in the age of George Washington and Francis Marion. Who actually lived here 200 years ago — 250 years ago — 300 years ago? How did their numbers change, and what effects did this have on early Southern culture?

Puzzled by these basic questions, I set out to find some specific answers more than a decade ago — not long after

the 200th anniversary of “the shot heard round the world.” After dividing the South into 10 subregions, I began combing hundreds of colonial records in search of accurate headcounts (see the accompanying box, page 33). Eventually, after confirming some numbers and discarding others, I was able to create the first racial breakdown of the entire Southern population, at 15-year inter-

vals, from 1685 to 1790. The numbers tell a startling story. Long before the new Southern states ratified the Constitution in Philadelphia, a revolution had already taken place in the South as a whole — a demographic revolution as important as the separation from England, but far less recognized and understood. In a brief span, the region’s original inhabitants had given way to black and white newcomers. This dramatic shift over the course of four short generations sparked revolutionary cultural changes in property attitudes,

vals, from 1685 to 1790.

The numbers tell a startling story. Long before the new Southern states ratified the Constitution in Philadelphia, a revolution had

language patterns, and religious beliefs that have lasted to the present day.

THE NUMBERS CRUNCH

The overall population of the South in the century before the Constitution was incredibly small by our standards. In 1685 the entire region had less than 250,000 inhabitants, fewer people than Charleston, West Virginia has today. A century later, the estimated population was more than six times larger, but even this total of nearly 1.7 million is smaller than the current population of metropolitan Miami.

Although these figures might suggest uninterrupted growth, the South's population was actually falling in the late 1600s, nearing the end of a steep decline that had been underway since Indians were first exposed to unfamiliar diseases from the Old World. The total population of the South continued to fall for another generation, dropping more than 10 percent in 30 years, as Indians died from disease and warfare faster than Europeans and Africans arrived from overseas. In 1685, Indians constituted four of every five inhabitants in the region. By 1790, they amounted to scarcely three persons among every 100.

Perhaps most significant, however, is the way in which the figures contradict our popular imagery of the Old South. Although the bustling markets and Southern gentry of colonial Virginia have often been used to represent the early South, the colony was actually a demographic aberration in the region as a whole. Though younger than Spanish Florida, Virginia was the first successful settler colony in the region, and by 1685 over 40,000 blacks and whites — more than three quarters of all newcomers in the entire South — lived in coastal Virginia.

Three generations later, on the eve of the American Revolution in 1775, Virginia still contained more than half the European and African newcomers in the whole region — almost 466,000 of nearly 917,000 Southern residents. For the region as a whole, therefore, Virginia's early growth makes it the demographic exception rather than the rule. Its foreground shadow has obscured our view of the wide region beyond.

Put another way, Virginia was simply out of sync with the rest of the South, more in phase with Northern colonies where coastal Indians had been

native Americans — 95 of every 100 people living in the rest of the South. Only 75 years later, however, the number of Indians dwindled to fewer than 54,000 — scarcely one for every four who had lived in that same vast area in 1685.

THE RED MAJORITY

Everywhere the decimation among Indians proved enormous during the first half of the 18th century, but the timing and pace of their demise varied from place to place (see the graphics for three subregions). In Southern Appalachia, smallpox epidemics and wars with the English and Creeks reduced the Cherokees from more than 30,000 in 1685 to fewer than 8,000 in 1760. In Louisiana, where Frenchmen all but obliterated the Natchez Indians after an uprising in 1729, native numbers fell from over 40,000 to under 4,000 in the same span. In East Texas, the Caddo and other tribes declined from roughly 28,000 to 10,000.

After 1760 the overall Indian population leveled off somewhat. Resistance to foreign diseases had increased, and the pressure to capture Indian slaves had declined as whites imported more enslaved laborers from Africa. In some areas the number of Indians actually grew slightly, as rebellious colonists became preoccupied with Atlantic politics.

Nevertheless, by 1760 well over 300,000 whites and 200,000 blacks domi-

nated the region in demographic if not in geographic terms. During the next 30 years there would be unprecedented influxes from both Europe and Africa, and the birth rate among newcomers would continue to rise. By 1790 there were more than one million whites and nearly 600,000 blacks spreading out from the coastlines across much of the Southeast.

Again, however, the timing and pace



ENGRAVING FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

SURVEYING HIS PROPERTY WITH A SLAVE RELEGATED TO THE BACKGROUND, GEORGE WASHINGTON (ABOVE) WAS TYPICAL OF THE WEALTHY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PLANTERS WHO SPECULATED IN LAND TAKEN FROM THE INDIANS (OPPOSITE PAGE).

systematically suppressed and killed during the 1600s. By the time La Salle descended the Mississippi River and claimed Louisiana for the French in 1682, only several thousand Indians remained in Virginia, making up less than a tenth of the colony's burgeoning population east of the Appalachian Mountains.

To the south and west of Virginia, by contrast, there were nearly 200,000

of the increase varied greatly from one region to another. In the Cherokee region of Southern Appalachia, for instance, the white contingent grew from a few scattered settlers in 1760 to more than 26,000 by 1790 — a figure two and a half times the red and black populations combined. In contrast, totals for the Louisiana area in 1790 show more than 23,000 African-Americans — almost equal to the Indian and European contingents combined.

By 1790, Indians comprised a majority in only a few areas of the South. In Florida, returned to Spain by the British in 1783, several thousand Indians outnumbered even fewer non-

Indians. A similar situation existed in the timberland of East Texas, which was home to fewer than 10,000 persons — three-fourths of them Indians. In what is now Mississippi, the powerful Choctaw nation and the smaller Chickasaws to the north had absorbed remnants of other Southern tribes and numbered nearly 18,000 together, alongside fewer than 1,000 white and black residents.

For the most part, though, the demographic shift that began in Virginia was now evident in many other portions of the South. The area that is now Georgia and Alabama was inhabited entirely by an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 Indians of the Creek Confederacy until the founda-

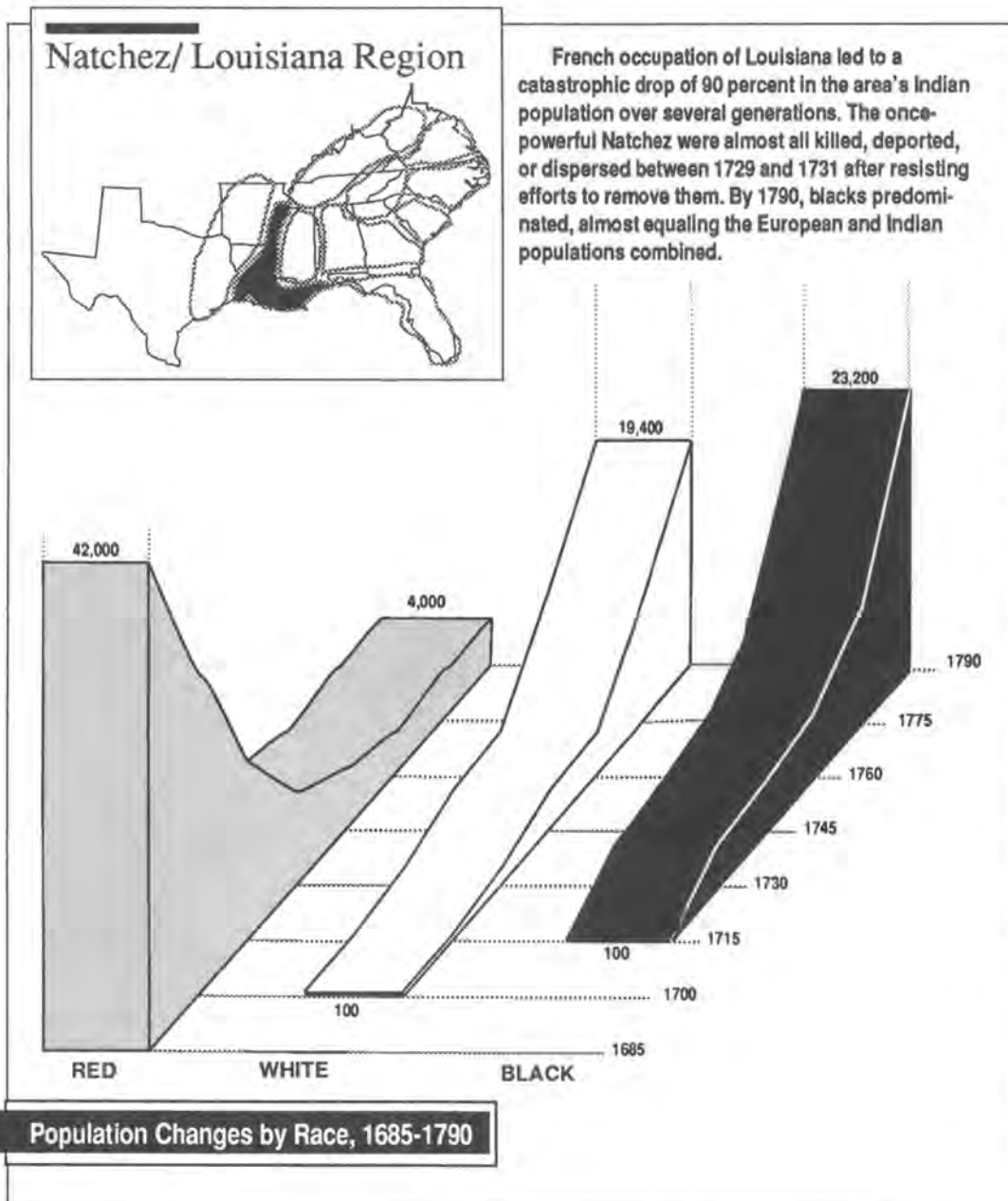
tion of colonial Georgia in the 1730s. Though their numbers remained relatively stable, the number of non-Indians grew to 10,000 by 1760, to well over 30,000 by 1775, and to more than 80,000 by 1790.

In the vast expanse of what is now Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia, the changes were even more sudden and dramatic. Long a hunting ground shared by bands of Cherokees and Shawnees, the whole area had no more than 5,000 permanent Indian residents in 1700 and fewer than half that many throughout much of the ensuing century. After the Revolutionary War, white and black settlers poured into this fertile interior from the east, and by 1790 some 80,000 had pressed through Cumberland Gap or streamed down the Ohio River.

THE LAND GRAB

Inevitably, major cultural changes coincided with these revolutionary shifts in population. Between the 1680s and the 1780s, the South became a region where European property ideas and plantation agriculture gained sway, where the English language became the dominant tongue, and where Protestant Christianity gained the upper hand. Each of these trends had begun nearly a century earlier and would continue for at least another hundred years before the enormous process of consolidation was complete. But it was in the 1700s that these three great “sea changes” took place, along with many lesser and related shifts.

At the start of the century, it was unclear that private property, English speech, and Protestant Christian worship would predominate in the Southern interior. By the time of the American



TAKING A COUNT OF EVERYONE

When I decided to compile population figures for the early South, I recalled the traditional colonial population maps many of us saw in high school which showed dots representing English settlers as they spread out across the empty American landscape like a case of measles on a baby's bottom. Why didn't these maps take account of native Americans and enslaved Africans, I had wondered, or of French settlers in Louisiana and Spaniards in Florida?

When I had asked my teachers, they had made it clear that such persons did not count as English colonists, and that their numbers could not be determined anyway. "Suppose they *could* be determined," I speculated. "Then what would the population look like for the entire Southern region, from the Chesapeake Bay to East Texas?"

As a colonial historian, I realized that there are few reliable population estimates for Indians, Africans, and Europeans in North America during the first two centuries after Columbus. Though we know that many natives were killed by their initial exposure to Old World diseases, especially in such areas as Florida where contact was greatest, we may never agree upon the exact scope of this early decline.

But I also knew that sources for the late colonial period, from roughly the 1680s onward, were more varied and numerous. Perhaps enough records still survived to allow me to piece together a detailed portrait of demographic change in the South over a crucial hundred-year span.

On an Exxon road map, I divided

the entire domain east of the Great Plains and south of the Ohio River into 10 distinct subregions. None of them conformed exactly with any modern Southern state, but each area had a separate enough geographical, political, or social identity to distinguish it from the rest of the region during the colonial era.

With these rough boundaries in mind, I then combed colonial records, ransacking archives for bits and pieces of population data. By digging through hundreds of military, commercial, and religious accounts, I gradually discovered that detailed statistics exist for those willing to search.

These varied headcounts are sometimes vague, partial, and contradictory,

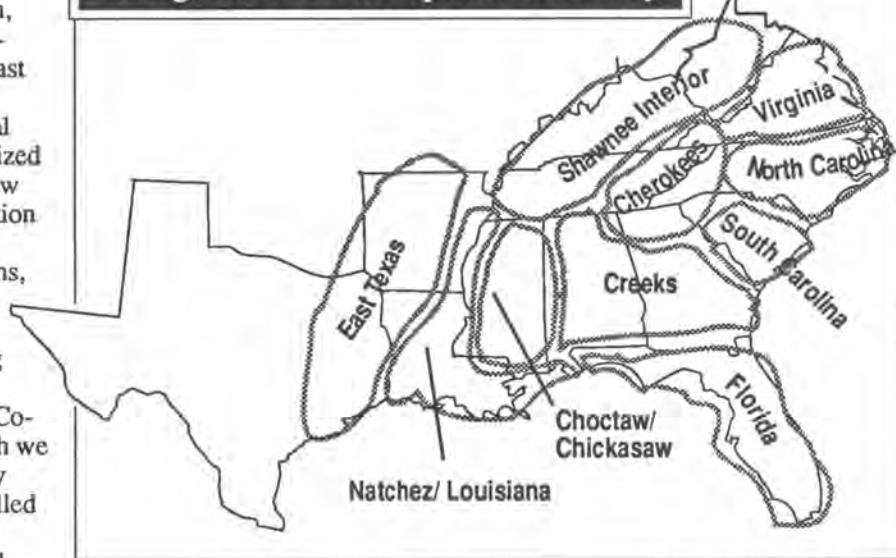
Fortunately, most of the hundreds of sources contributing to this overview were divided by race, which allowed me to work out separate totals for red, white, and black populations over time. By the 1680s there had been contact between North Americans, Europeans, and Africans for well over a century, so that a portion of the South's population was already of mixed ancestry. Genetically, that percentage was notable and would increase over time — laws and protestations to the contrary notwithstanding. But in terms of the projections given here according to race, such persons figure in the general totals of one group or another.

Such demographic work is important for two reasons. First, the counting of human populations, although often avoided as being dry and technical, tends to have a dramatic equalizing effect. It puts women and men, children and adults, rural and urban, indigent and well-to-do all on the same footing. Neither reputation and intellect nor wealth and power count for anything in a demographic overview of an entire population.

Equally important, examining demographic shifts over time can provide a basis and context for understanding social, political, and economic changes. The revolutionary demographic shifts revealed by this particular overview of the colonial South, for example, help explain the radical and enduring changes in property, language, and religion that swept the Southern landscape in the century prior to the drafting of the Constitution.

—P.W.H.

Subregions Used in Population Survey



Illustrations by Jacob E. Roquet

but viewing them together made it possible to confirm some numbers and discard others, gradually working out a series of plausible estimates for different racial groups over four generations. Eventually, I was able to create a breakdown of the entire Southern population, at 15-year intervals, from 1685 to 1790. The resulting rounded totals, while in need of greater refinement and discussion, are generally accurate within a 10 percent margin of error.

Revolution, however, the future of the region had become obvious to all. Dragging Canoe, a Cherokee warrior who was a young man during the Revolution, told white intruders that his Appalachian homeland would become a "dark and bloody ground." After elders sold away much of this land to white speculators at Sycamore Shoals, Dragging Canoe formed a militant confederacy of Southern Indians and retreated into the mountains of south central Tennessee near Chickamauga to conduct a long-term, last-ditch resistance that lasted more than a decade.

Dragging Canoe, like other Indian leaders before and after him, was

concerned with the expropriation of land — what some call "primitive accumulation." Throughout the world, European entrepreneurs have used political and military methods to undercut or overpower precapitalist forms of landholding as a necessary prerequisite to the imposition of capitalism. Where land is the base of production, expanding mercantile capitalism seeks to control the land.

In the South, "headrights" provided the key to such primitive accumulation of land by Europeans. The headright policy, granting settlers land for each person they helped to import, had been framed to ensure that large families

received enough land and to encourage importation of indentured servants, who would soon take up land of their own. In the late 1600s, however, Virginia planters began an enormous land grab by claiming headrights on slaves.

The scheme of stretching headrights beyond short-term European servants to include lifetime African and Indian slaves represented, in the words of historian Anthony Parent Jr., a "coup for the planters. With one stroke they secured a perpetual labor force and vast stretches of Virginia real estate." In 1698 the Crown protested that planters had abused the headright law by claiming slaves as family, in order "to take

and Create to themselves, a Title to such quantities of Land which they never intended to (or in truth Could) occupy or Cultivate, but thereby only kept out others who would have planted and manured the same."

What began in Virginia later spread to other colonies, as sympathetic courts accepted the planter euphemism of slaves as family members in the interests of development. A forthcoming book by Alan Gally details how Jonathan Bryan, a typical member of the early elite in South Carolina and Georgia, used this approach to accumulate a personal empire of more than 32,000 acres and 250 slaves. Having acquired some cheap land, Bryan would sell off small parcels to newcomers, buy more slaves, and claim larger estates in key locations. In 1755, for example, he petitioned the Georgia Council for 1,800 acres of prime rice land west of Sapelo Island because, "having Seventy eight persons in Family, he was desirous of improving another Tract."

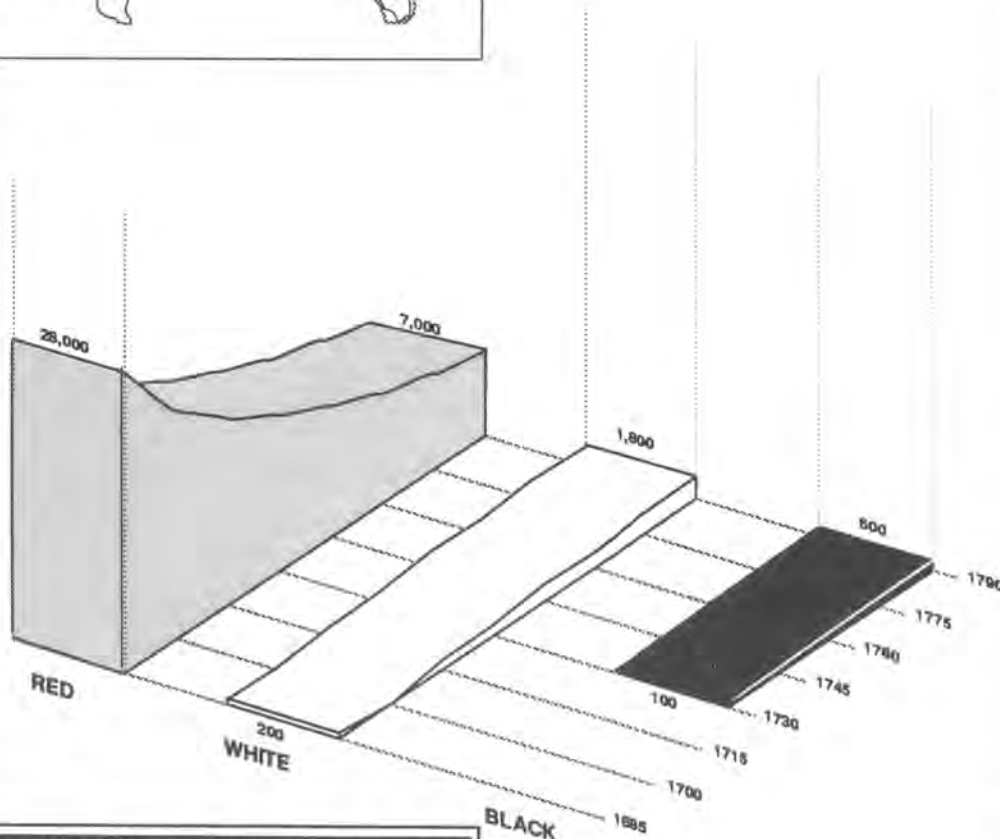
In North Carolina, land speculation occurred on an even larger order, with Lord Granville in England

East Texas Region



After the demise of LaSalle's short-lived French colony in the 1680s, Spaniards founding a string of missions in the region exposed local Indians to more than a dozen virulent epidemics. Smallpox and measles were rampant in 1739, and again in 1759.

Nevertheless, by 1790 Caddo Indians and other native survivors still made up three-fourths of the area's sparse population.



Population Changes by Race, 1685-1790

owning half the colony for much of the 1700s. His lock on the land spawned a generation of speculators who quickly moved to stake claims in Tennessee and Kentucky. Toward the end of the century settlers in Kentucky tried to enforce a resolution that no one person should own more than 50 acres, but by then it was too late. Wealthy planters and politicians — George Washington among them — were reaping the benefits from large investments in uncleared land and unfree labor. Not only would most Southern land be privately held, but powerful “developers” would gain initial and cumulative advantages over small landholders.

THE KING'S ENGLISH

The triumph of English as a language in the Southern interior seemed no more uniform or inevitable to contemporaries than the triumph of private property ideology. There were dozens of languages and dialects in use on the colonial frontier, making the region a Southern Babel. When the Indian slave Lamhatty arrived in backcountry Virginia in 1708, for example, his story went uncommunicated at first because neither the local interpreter nor a Tuscarora Indian engaged to speak with him could understand him.

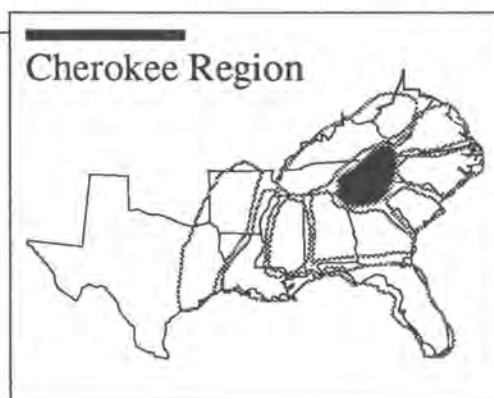
Translators between Europeans and Indians were always highly valued, and Indian women who lived with white traders were sometimes referred to as “sleeping dictionaries.” Because of communications barriers, a pidgin trade language known as Mobilian evolved in the Gulf Coast region. It derived primarily from Chickasaw and incorporated elements of Choctaw, French, and English. Working on the Atlantic seaboard, the engineer William de Brahm still thought it necessary to

include an English-Cherokee and Cherokee-English compendium in the “General Survey of the Southern District” he presented to George III in 1773.

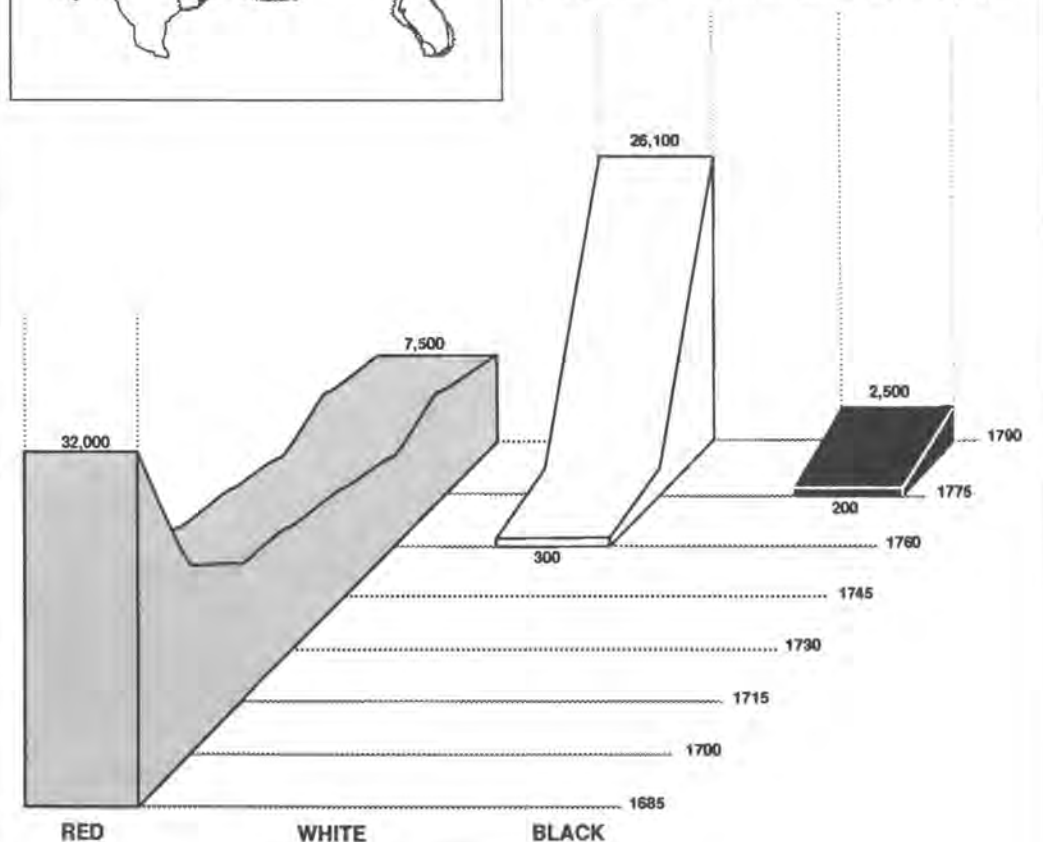
The intermingling of European and Indian languages was small compared to the larger linguistic contact involving thousands of West Africans who disembarked annually at the quarantine station, or “Pest House,” on Sullivan’s Island, South Carolina — what has been called the “Ellis Island of Black America.” These new Carolinians also brought many related languages with them, and they continued to learn from one another, comparing and sharing

speech in an effort to build communication.

Simultaneously, many began to learn English, the language of their oppressor, begrudgingly memorizing basic commands and questions, somewhat the way, a generation ago, Chinese were obliged to learn some Japanese from their invaders and Poles were forced to pick up smatterings of German from the Nazis. Much as Indians on the Gulf Coast fashioned the serviceable pidgin language of Mobilian, blacks in the Sea Islands evolved Gullah speech, a durable pidgin language combining West African and English characteristics. Needless to say, the black dialect which



Warfare and repeated smallpox epidemics reduced the Cherokees by three-fourths in less than a century. When the naturalist William Bartram visited Southern Appalachia in 1775 he saw “vestiges of the ancient Indian dwellings” and encountered the “feeble remains of the once potent and renowned Cherokees.” By 1790, the number of white settlers had soared above 26,000.



Population Changes by Race, 1685-1790

survives in the low country today and which bears a complex relation to modern "Black English" spoken elsewhere, is only an Americanized shadow of the much more African speech of the 18th century.

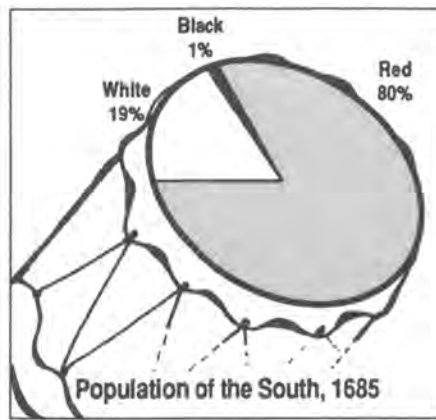
Predictably, many of the migrants learned almost no English at all. Charley Barber, an ex-slave from South Carolina, once told an interviewer that his parents had "both come from Africa where they were born. . . . They never did talk lak de other slaves, could just say a few words, use deir hands, and make signs."

Other newcomers, in contrast, became passably bilingual, or mixed together Old and New World speech. Richard Jones of Union, South Carolina, recalled his grandmother Judith and the ties she maintained with several other Africans living nearby. All had come to North America aboard the same ship in the late 1700s, and "deir masters always allowed dem to visit on July Fourth and Christmas. When dey talk, nobody didn't know what dey was talking about. My granny never could speak good like I can. She talk half African, and all African when she got bothered. I can't talk no African."

Slowly but surely, however, English began to take hold. By the early 1800s, the slave trade had been prohibited, the Southern Indian trade had slacked off, and the French and Spanish presence had been curtailed. For the next few generations, immigration by non-English speaking settlers would be minimal. Linguistic diversity persisted in the South — French Acadians from Canada fostered Cajun speech in the bayous of Louisiana, white and black Moravians spoke German in the North Carolina piedmont — but the hegemony of English was well-established by the time Thomas Jefferson, a one-time scholar of Virginia's Indian languages, became president of the United States.

THE COMMON FAITH

Just as the Southern English which evolved in the 1700s had many local variations and an overall regional distinctiveness,



so did the Southern Protestantism which gained ascendancy in the same era. Here, too, the dramatic reduction of the Indian population figured in the transition, particularly since sharp demographic decline meant an inevitable weakening of cultural bonds and traditions. Likewise, the departure of the

Spanish and French, with their strong Catholic connections, influenced the eventual faith of the region, as did the arrival of nearly 500,000 West Africans.

In 1701 English Anglicans founded the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) to send missionaries to the American colonies. But early SPG efforts to Christianize native Americans and African newcomers in the South met with little success, even in South Carolina where the commitment was greatest. Missionaries arriving in Charleston found that frontier wars and the traffic in native slaves limited viable Indian contacts, and earlier efforts by Spanish missionaries had done little to endear coastal inhabitants to Christianity (see "The Gulean Revolt of 1597," SE Vol. XII, No. 6).

As for Christianizing blacks, many of their white owners resisted the idea, fearing it would remove a key justification

for the enslavement of "heathens." Besides, the growth of the African slave trade meant that recent arrivals outnumbered those already assimilated, and newly arrived blacks were eager to share and preserve their African beliefs and cultural forms.

Blacks in Carolina who did learn their catechism and agreed to be baptized at first found their motives questioned and their practices ridiculed by fellow workers. "Profanne men . . . laught at their Devotions," wrote one minister. Another confirmed that blacks preparing for baptism were reluctant because "all other slaves do laugh at them."

The commitment among these early African-Americans to resist the English language and the Christian faith is glimpsed in a telling line from an SPG letter of 1710. "I asked once a pretty ancient and very fine slave whether he cou'd read," wrote the Rev. Francis Le Jau. "His answer was he would rather choose hereafter to practice the good he could remember."

A generation later, the slave's response might have been different. During the First Great Awakening of the mid-

The Story in Numbers

The population breakdown reveals that in 1790 more than 85 percent of all whites and blacks in the South lived in the new coastal states of Virginia and the Carolinas, while nearly 99 percent of all Indians were spread throughout the rest of the vast Southern region. (All numbers are rounded estimates.)

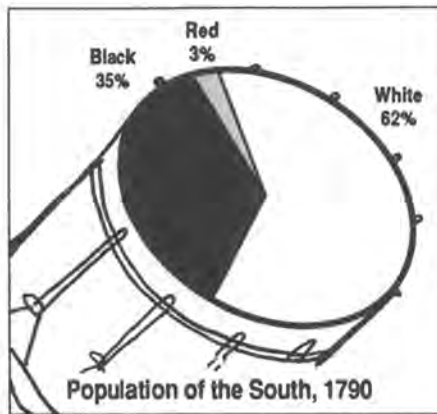
	1685	1730	1790
Population of the Entire Region			
Red	199,400	66,700	55,900
White	46,900	144,600	1,039,600
Black	3,300	80,600	590,500
Total	249,600	291,900	1,686,000
Population of Virginia and the Carolinas			
Red	22,900	4,900	800
White	45,200	140,400	870,500
Black	3,300	76,800	519,900
Total	71,400	222,100	1,391,200
Population Outside Virginia and the Carolinas			
Red	176,500	61,800	55,100
White	1,700	4,200	169,100
Black	3,800	70,600
Total	178,200	69,800	294,800

1800s, itinerant preachers around Williamsburg, Charleston, and Savannah spread a new form of Protestantism that made white Christianity more accessible and more acceptable to blacks. New Light evangelists, led by George Whitefield, emphasized the spontaneous speaking rather than the scholarly reading of the Christian word. They also stressed emotional preaching, congregational responsiveness, singing, and baptism. For Africans coming from societies with a long oral heritage, rich musical traditions, and a varied legacy of communal ceremonies involving water rituals and responsive chanting, such changes combined to give Christianity a slightly less alien and more viable appearance.

The Great Awakening provided an important bridge between African and European religions, a place to begin the intermingling of beliefs. The overall proportion of converts must have remained small at first, for resistance was intense. But it gradually became clear that adopting certain Christian forms did not mean an utter abandonment of African faith. Indeed, the faith might actually include or disguise African traditions. As a result, there is ample evidence that by mid-century Christianity was not only tolerated, but was actively discussed and taught by blacks within African-American communities.

Newspaper notices for runaways in the *Virginia Gazette*, for example, record the presence of blacks who knew and preached the Christian faith. William Hunt, an experienced shoemaker and blacksmith, "pretends also to know something of religious matters and misses no opportunity of holding forth on that subject." Hanna, meanwhile, "pretends much to the religion the Negroes of late have practiced." The paper reported that Tom is "fond of talking about religion," Sam professes "a deal of religion," and Nat "pretends to be very religious and is a Baptist teacher."

Similar developments are more fully documented in South Carolina. Accounts tell of one young African, sold in Charleston, who became a driver on the rice plantation of Richard Waring in St. George's Parish, near where small numbers of blacks were being baptized regularly during the 1740s and 1750s. The African learned to read and write,



accepted Christianity, and married a black seamstress (who had acquired considerable herbal lore from the Indians). Their son Boston King was born in 1760.

Boston King later became a black preacher and recalled admiringly his father's character. Clearly an excep-

the lives of many early Southerners. When he was brought to the region, he was declared the property of whites and lived on a plantation that had been Indian hunting ground only a few generations earlier. Gradually, he reconciled the language and beliefs of his ancestors with the new world in which he found himself. He learned English, read the Bible to his son, and professed Christianity.

The life of Boston King's father provides a fitting emblem of the revolutionary changes in property, language, and religion that were sweeping the South in the century before the Constitution. As we seek to understand how such unknown people contributed to the history of the region, we are laying the groundwork for a broader vision of the Southern past. □



Sketch from Von Reck's Voyage, The Beehive Press

tional man, the elder King provides a fitting emblem of the religious transition that was well under way by the time of the American Revolution. Boston King recalled that his father "lived in the fear and love of GOD" and "lost no opportunity of hearing the Gospel, and never omitted praying with his family every night."

The elder King's experience mirrors

Peter Wood teaches early American History at Duke University and chairs the board of Africa News Service in Durham, North Carolina. His complete demographic overview of the early South will be published in the forthcoming book Powhatan's Mantle from the University of Nebraska Press.

Kitchen Table Crusader

Cora Tucker is right at home raising hell in Southside Virginia

BY MIKE HUDSON

HALIFAX, VA. — The white men who ran Halifax County a decade ago didn't have room for Cora Tucker in their monthly rituals.

The boys in the audience grabbed most of the chairs in the Board of Supervisors' meeting room. Then they plopped their briefcases and hats onto the empty ones. Nobody offered her a seat.

Tucker, shrunk by cancer, leaned on a cane or crutches at the back of the room.

"Then one day hell got in me," she remembers. "And I sat on this man's hat in the seat."

Everybody jumped up — in one motion, as if the seats had become electrified. They grabbed for their papers, their briefcases, their hats. Tucker's victim plunked his hat in the trash.

HOME-STYLE HELL-RAISER

Cora Tucker is a short woman with a wide brown face and dark eyes. She laughs a lot, sometimes mischievously, sometimes in an ear-piercing cackle, her mouth opening wide and her gold tooth flashing. Her voice turns syrupy-sweet when she gets a call

from her granddaughters who live with their mom and dad in a trailer behind her brick home. "Hello, Sugar," she coos.

Her voice can boom, too. For years now, it's been the voice of political confrontation in this tobacco-growing Southside Virginia county. Her voice has helped awaken black voters from the long dark nights of Jim Crow. And it has angered many — whites and blacks — who don't want a loud black woman making waves and shaking up the old order.

Flat out: Cora Tucker's a hell-raiser. "Change don't come from the top,"

Tucker said. "You have to pull the grass up by its roots."

Tucker, 47, started Citizens for a Better America in 1975 to promote change in Halifax County and South Boston. She runs the grassroots organization from her three-bedroom home north of the town of Halifax, close enough to the Norfolk and Western tracks to feel the freight cars rumble by.

Her kitchen table is cluttered with newspapers, documents, letters. Her new telephone book is already dog-eared. A television drones all day in her kitchen. She doesn't watch it much, but she likes

Photos from Style Weekly



the way the noise fills her empty home. Her non-stop pace helped to break up her marriage last year.

Tucker's crusades against back-room politics, voting discrimination, and uranium mining have brought her success and rewards. Jimmy Carter once appointed her to a presidential commission on women's issues, and big-name politicians like presidential

hopeful Michael Dukakis send her Christmas cards.

Last fall her anger at a prominent state legislator helped swing unheard-of numbers of traditionally Democratic-voting blacks to his Republican challenger.

Even when Tucker hasn't gotten what she wanted, however, she has made her voice heard in Halifax County. She's forced whites and blacks to think about race and racism, power and powerlessness.

The triumphs haven't come easy. People have spit in her face, threatened her life, slashed her tires. The area's conservative newspaper, the *Gazette-Virginian* has blasted her work for social change as extending the "gimme" hand.

"She's black, she's a woman, and she knows it," said the paper's editor, Keith Shelton. "All you got to do is have a black middle-aged woman screaming 'civil rights' and you got feds all over the place."

BLACK LAND, WHITE STRONGHOLD

Halifax County sits deep in Virginia's Southside along the North Carolina line. In the center is the county seat of Halifax, which is dominated by an old brick courthouse. State Sen. Howard Anderson Sr., whose family has dominated courthouse politics for years, still has an office there with a portrait of Robert E. Lee over the fireplace.

Six miles down Virginia 501 is South Boston, a small city of tobacco warehouses and factories. Between the town and the city is a strip of fast-food restaurants, shopping centers, and motels.

Together the county and the city have about 37,000 people, but the population has been shrinking as young people looking for jobs head for Richmond and other large cities.

The area, which has more than 17,000 black residents, is rich in black history. Some of the first black-owned land in the New World was in Halifax County.

But in this century, Halifax was a stronghold of the Byrd political machine that controlled Virginia for decades by keeping blacks and poor whites away from the polls. Such tight control by the same group of white men was demonstrated most clearly in 1979, when it was learned that party bosses had inadvertently re-elected a dead man to the local Democratic committee.

Area leaders describe local race

relations these days as progressive. Yet many blacks in Halifax and South Boston remain poor, living in dilapidated houses and working low-paying, dead-end jobs.

Tucker says prejudice thrives below the surface. "People like black folks who say 'Yes sir' and 'Yes ma'am' and know how to stay in their place. And Southside Virginia is probably the most famous place in the world for that."

Tucker says grassroots organizing is the best way to fight racism. In recent years she's been a leader in a surge in black voting strength in Southside, as the last vestiges of the poll tax and literacy tests have fallen away.

That power displayed itself last year when Tucker opposed the re-election bid of longtime state legislator Frank Slayton, a South Boston Democrat. Tucker was furious at Slayton for suggesting that two men he was defending in a civil rights lawsuit had been horsing around when they had thrown a rope over a tree and talked about lynching a black man.

She had always supported the silver-haired Democrat, but last fall she stumped for his young Republican opponent, Mark Hagood, to show Democrats they can't take black voters for granted.

"If we're gonna get our ass kicked, we just as well get our ass kicked by a Republican," she said. "Frank had forgotten who sent him to Richmond. You have to remind people every once in a while."

Predominantly black districts went strongly for Hagood and helped him pull off one of the biggest upsets of the 1987 state assembly elections.

"SHE'S TOO UPPISH"

Cora Lee Mosely was born on December 12, 1940, in Halifax County.

Her father, a Pullman conductor, died when she was three. Her mother, Bertha, sharecropped corn and tobacco to feed Cora and her three brothers and five sisters.

From the time she was six, Cora spent many days in the tobacco fields, bent over with a grubbing hoe or on her knees pulling weeds.

Cora remembers coming home crying the first time somebody called her a "nigger."

"My mom went and got a belt and tore me up. She said: 'If you put a cat in the oven and it has kittens and you call them biscuits, that don't make them biscuits, do it? Just because somebody calls you a nigger don't make you a nigger. Nobody can't make you a nigger but you.'"

When Cora was in high school, she won an award for an essay on "What America Means to Me." She wrote angrily about having to go to white folks' back doors and other indignities suffered by Southern blacks in the 1950s.

Cora and her family went to Richmond for an assembly of prize-winners from black schools all over



Virginia. She was excited, but something was different when a teacher read her essay at the ceremony: Someone had changed it to reflect a white view of America. "They tried to make me sound like a happy little girl."

When Thomas Stanley, governor of Virginia, tried to give Cora her award, she kept her hands by her sides and refused it.

"My momma cried like a baby," she remembers. "White folks told her: 'You better do something with that little girl or she's going to cause you pain someday. She's too uppish.'"

CONTROVERSY AND VIOLENCE

Cora Mosely quit school and married Clarence Tucker, a farmer, when she was seventeen.

As a young woman, she got involved in politics in a few civil rights demonstrations. But she spent most of her time caring for her seven children. She refused to allow them to miss school — as she often had — to work in tobacco.

By 1975, her home had become a gathering place for young people, black and white, who lived nearby. They played softball in a field beside the house or went in Tucker's basement and played records and danced. There was nowhere else for them to go. Recreational opportunities were few in Halifax County.

Tucker and some young people from her neighborhood who had formed the Winns Creek Youth Group asked the Board of Supervisors to accept a federal grant to build a recreation center. The supervisors agreed. But three weeks later — after what Tucker says was opposition to building a center where blacks and whites would mix — the supervisors changed their minds about taking the money.

Tucker and the youth group members decided they had had enough. They changed their group's name to Citizens for a Better America and began studying black hiring in local government offices and businesses. With the help of Baltimore Congressman Parren Mitchell, a friend of hers, Tucker went to Harvard University to take a course in community research. She came back and taught other members of her group what she'd learned.

After two years of study, Tucker asked the local NAACP director and other black leaders to file complaints against government agencies that employed too few blacks. "They said: 'This is too controversial. We don't want to do anything controversial.'" So Citizens for a Better America filed complaints of its own. Federal education officials investigated hiring in the local schools, confirmed the group's findings, and threatened to cut off federal money.

Meanwhile, Tucker hammered away at the local power structure with letters to the editor of the *Gazette-Virginian's*

competition, the *News and Record*.

"Everything seems geared for the haves and nothing for the have-nots," she wrote after the supervisors turned down the recreation grant. "Since the politicians make all the rules I think we should be very careful as to who we elect to public office, at least men that know we are here and acknowledge that we exist."

When her spinal cancer was at its worst from 1975 to 1978, Tucker would slump over her kitchen table all day scratching out her next salvo in a weak hand. Then, too exhausted to deliver her letter, she'd call the *News and Record's* editors and plead with them to come pick it up. "They'd say: 'Cora Lee, what in the world are you raising hell about now?' I'd say: 'Come out and see.'"

Sam Barnes, a former editor of the *News and Record*, said the talk around the country stores often turned to who was writing those letters signed by Cora Tucker. Many suspected they were written by the newspaper's editors. After all, the good old boys figured, Tucker had been educated in the county's poorly funded black schools, so she couldn't be capable of writing such prose.

Many whites wanted it that way, Barnes said. "They didn't intend for a black woman to be that insightful. The very idea that she was bugged the hell out of them."

Some people did more than talk.

Tucker got nasty phone calls. Someone broke into her home while she was gone and soaked her bed in flammable



How to Raise Hell, CORA-Style

Cora Tucker's grassroots methods are based on three simple principles: get the facts, publicize, and organize.

She has this advice for people who want to change their communities:

GET THE FACTS FIRST.

To learn more about your community, attend as many public meetings as possible. Complain when public bodies try to meet behind closed doors, and make use of citizens' access to public records. Congressional representatives can be helpful sources of information, as can national lobbying groups. Stick to the facts instead of your opinions: "Once you give people the facts, they will make

fuel. A man walked up on her in her yard with a shotgun, stared at her, then turned and left. One of her daughters was hospitalized for two months after she was struck by a car that drove by their home twice before swerving off the road and hitting her. No arrests were made in any of the incidents.

In 1981, Tucker ran as a write-in, protest candidate for Virginia governor. She got only a handful of votes, but the campaign gave her a soapbox to blast Democrats and Republicans, who she said were ignoring the needs of black voters.

On the day the *News and Record* ran a story about her campaign, a white man spit in her face at the post office. "I looked him right in his face and said: 'Lord forgive him,'" she remembers. "I thought if I started cussing him I'd still be cussing."

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

One county leader Cora Tucker often clashed with was Senator Howard Anderson Sr.

She could remember Anderson standing on the courthouse steps in the late 1950s saying he'd rather see the schools closed than blacks and whites in the same classrooms.

She took him on when his family dominated county politics: The senator was a leader in the state assembly, his brother commissioner of revenue, his cousin county treasurer, his son county

prosecutor. Tucker didn't think one family should have that much power.

Yet despite his politics, Tucker had always liked the patrician senator, because he was polite even when he disagreed with her. "He's a Southern gentleman," she said.

So it was strangely satisfying for Tucker to find herself fighting on the same side with Anderson in the early 1980s when a mining company wanted to dig uranium upriver from Halifax. Tucker used her connections with national lobbying groups to feed information to Anderson and county supervisors about uranium's dangers. Opposition from Halifax residents helped kill the proposal in the state assembly. The mining company was sent packing.

The scenario repeated itself in 1986 when federal officials considered the county as a possible site for a nuclear waste dump.

Tucker's work in those environmental battles helped her gain more acceptance in her hometown, but it didn't change the minds of all her critics. Keith Shelton, the newspaper editor, complains that "she gets too much ink, for what she does."

That sort of criticism doesn't bother Tucker. "I'm grateful for the Lord that I don't feel bitter. As bad as Halifax County is, I love this place. I really do. I love all of the people in it."

Besides, she likes a good fight. "I don't like fighting with a weakling.

You haven't won nothing. In fact, I like Keith Shelton better than a lot of folks. Because he has the guts to fight."

"CORA, YOU GO TO HELL"

Cora Tucker sits at the kitchen table of her country home in her housecoat, her wig off. She is down-home, unpretentious. Radiation treatments for her cancer — which has come out of remission — have left her head bald in patches.

While cancer doesn't sap her strength as badly as it used to, it still threatens to take her away from the fray someday.

But for now, she has work to do.

Black employees are beginning to disappear from the fronts of local stores, she said, so it might be time to raise hell again about minority hiring.

Even though she gets along better with the local power brokers these days, she's still not afraid to take them on.

She remembers the old days, when local black leaders avoided making waves. Sometimes they could make a few calls and get somebody a job. But most blacks were locked out of the best jobs.

Cora Tucker doesn't want to be part of the establishment.

"I don't want people to be grateful to me," she said. "I want 'em to say, 'Cora, you go to hell.'" □

Mike Hudson is a staff writer with the Roanoke Times & World-News.

up their minds in their own best interest," Tucker says.

To bolster plans for a boycott of white-owned businesses in 1981, Tucker's grassroots organization, Citizens for a Better America (CBA), surveyed blacks on where they spent their money. When the group announced its "Spend Your Money Wisely" campaign, it was able to compare the numbers of black employees at area businesses to the amount of money that blacks spent at the businesses.

GET THE WORD OUT.

If the news media ignores the issues you're interested in, write letters to the editor. You don't have to be an expert, or worry about whether your spelling or grammar is perfect. Tucker also puts out a monthly, typewritten newsletter that is crammed with information. She tries to

relate local issues to national ones, so people will make the connection when they're watching the news on television.

GET ORGANIZED.

Churches are the best place to start when you want to organize support. Each year, CBA holds a prayer service on the county courthouse lawn to emphasize what citizens say are the most pressing issues in the area, the state, or the world. Cultivate a pool of supporters who are ready to show up at public meetings or work on projects when they're needed. Tucker uses a "10-10-10" phone tree to get her supporters moving. She calls 10 people, who each call 10 more people and ask them to call 10 more people each. In an afternoon, she can contact 1,000 people.

CBA's anti-poverty projects — such as a fuel-assistance hotline for the

elderly — have helped generate goodwill for the group. Senior citizens who have been helped through the program are now some of the group's most valuable workers.

To build coalitions, link up with other groups and help them on issues that may not be at the top of your list. They'll return the favor when you need their help. And be willing to work with political opponents when you have common goals. Tucker did that during the fights against uranium mining and nuclear dumping.

DON'T BE DISCOURAGED.

Even if you're the only person working toward change, be persistent and people will eventually come over to your side. "Anybody can change their community if they're willing to work at it," Tucker says. — M.H.



The



ROQUET 68

*It was the summer
of 1965 —
the summer the
VISTA volunteer
came to the coal
camps of Winco,
West Virginia.*

Lloyds

By Denise Giardina

Uncle Brigham Lloyd still told the stories. That's why the VISTA liked him, Dillon said. Hillbillies were supposed to tell stories. The VISTA sat on Uncle Brigham's front porch a lot his first summer on Blackberry Creek. All the kids came too, Dreama and Toejam Day, Jackie Freeman and Natalie Angelli, Hoss Sizemore, and of course Uncle Brigham's own, Bobby and Brenda and Doyle Ray. The grown-ups never came.

It was the summer of 1965, the summer everyone had to move from Winco and the houses were torn down, the first summer of the boy from Cincinnati, the summer of the robbery and the shooting. Arthur Lee Sizemore said it was all the VISTA's fault, that he had come for the purpose of causing such trouble, that it was a plot that had been spelled out years earlier in the Dusseldorf Rules, a secret Communist document discovered in Germany.

"Corrupt the young people," Arthur Lee told everyone who stopped at the Esso station. "That's the first thing the Commies do. They been planning this for years." He pumped the gas himself.

Natalie and Jackie. "I wouldn't let my younguns hang around that VISTA. I made Hoss stop."

"That's what he thinks," Jackie whispered.

"I been talking to the other county commissioners," Arthur Lee said. "We'll stop this VISTA foolishness."

Arthur Lee was elected to the County Commission in 1964. Tony hadn't voted for him because he never voted for Democrats. But he was always nice to Arthur Lee to his face, told him how much he supported him. He turned to the back seat. "Natty, you heard what Arthur Lee said. Don't you hang around that VISTA."

Rachel had been silent but now she was angry. "That's ridiculous. He seems like a nice kid. That's what he is, a kid. Dillon says he's harmless."

"He saw the Red Sox play at Fenway Park," Jackie said. "And he played football in college."

"He's got all the Beatle albums and a new stereo up at Hassel's," Natalie added. "They turn it up loud and we dance on the porch."

"Where's Hassel?"
Tony Angelli asked.
"Had to let him go.

He's renting to that
VISTA, you know," Arthur
Lee stared disapprovingly
through the rear window at

Natalie and Jackie. "I wouldn't let my younguns hang around that VISTA. I made Hoss stop."

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"You heard me," Tony said. I don't want to catch you around him or I'll wear you out with my belt."

"You can't spank me," Natalie said. "I'm a teenager. You can't spank a teenager."

"Natty! Don't you backtalk me."

Natalie started to laugh. She knew he wouldn't do anything. His voice sounded frightened, as though he knew he had no power over her. Rachel shook her head at her, looked hard. Natalie knew what The Look meant. Be quiet. He'll never know because he's rarely home, and he doesn't pay attention when he is. Do what you want and don't tell him about it. It was the way they lived, as though Tony did not exist, as though he was a figment of their imagination. It mostly worked, except on the occasions when he realized everything had slipped away from him and tried to reassert himself. Then he made their lives miserable for a few days — don't do this don't do that no you can't spend the night with a friend you'd just be in the way no you can't climb that tree you'll break your arm stop reading that book you'll hurt your eyes no wonder you have to wear glasses and they cost money. Natalie hated him at those times but then he withdrew again and they sighed with relief and pretended they were a family of two.

Natalie daydreamed a lot. Her favorite daydream was to create her own family. Sometimes she imagined that Tony was not her real father, that her mother had a secret affair and her real father was the cheerful bakery man who delivered fresh brownies once a week in his white van. Other times she dreamed that she belonged to the Freeman family, that Uncle Dillon was really her father and Jackie her brother. But she could only carry the daydream so far, for while it was easy to unwish Tony as her father, she couldn't do the same for Rachel. Rachel was her mother, sister, and best friend all in one. She lived in terror that Rachel might die and leave her.

One day when Rachel was late from work, Natalie was taken with a fear that her mother was dead. She imagined a car wreck. She stood in the screen door listening for motors and pictured the glass scattered like shiny popcorn and red sticky blood puddling with the coal dust in the road. She got down on her knees and promised Jesus that if her Mommie came back safe she'd go off to Africa and be a missionary. It was a promise Natalie regretted as soon as Rachel walked in the door and announced she'd had a flat tire. Natalie knew she'd either have to follow through or become an agnostic.

She took her problem to Jackie Freeman, who was her only confidant in matters she was ashamed to share with her mother. Jackie never laughed at her, never told her she was weird like some of her classmates did. When she told Jackie

she didn't want to go to Africa but didn't want to go to Hell either, he regarded her gravely with his slanted eyes.

"I don't reckon God would take that promise serious," he said. "Maybe He don't even want any more missionaries in Africa and He's aggravated at you butting in."

"But what if He does want me to be a missionary?"

"Best thing to do is practice on somebody around here. If you find out you can save their souls and enjoy doing it, then you're cut out for a missionary. And if you can't then you aint got no business going to Africa and you don't have to worry no more."

"Who should I save around here?"

"How about the Lloyds? They're the biggest heathens in Winco and they live right next door."

"Corrupt the young people," Arthur Lee told everyone who stopped at the Esso station. "That's the first thing the Commies do. They been planning this for years."

The Lloyds never went to church, but that wasn't what made them heathens. In the combined coal camps of Winco and Number Thirteen, the only people who went to church were Rachel and her children, and Louella and Toejam Day. Louella taught Natalie's Sunday School class at the Felco Methodist Church. She couldn't say the long names in the Old Testament. She always pronounced the first and last letters only, with a sort of slide in the middle, so Jereboam became J-uh-humm and Nebuchadnezzar was N-uh-uh-her. But Louella knew how to say Je-sus and she always brought the lesson back around to him. And Natalie noted that she put fifty cents in the collection every Sunday, even though Dreama and Toejam's clothes were the leftovers from the church rummage sales. Sometimes Rachel came late to the sales on purpose with a bag of clothes to donate so there would be something nice left for Louella to look through.

But though no one else went to the church at Felco, they were not considered heathens like the Lloyds. The Freemans all believed in God. So did everyone else Natalie knew. And the Lloyds weren't atheists. But everyone else gave the impression that they would go to church some day, any day, it was just something they hadn't got around to yet. The Lloyds, it was assumed, would never darken a church door, and if they had people would shake their heads and wonder what the world was coming to.

There were five Lloyds for Natalie to save, and she decided to go after one of the three kids. Bobby, the oldest, she dismissed at once. He was Jackie's age, a sullen teenager in a black leather jacket like a character out of the kind of movie Rachel wouldn't let Natalie see. Bobby once pointed his rifle at Natalie because she threw red dog at his brother Doyle Ray, who had thrown red dog at her first.

Doyle Ray was the most obnoxious person in Winco, always picking fights and throwing red dog. At school he hit Natalie in the face with a hunk of red dog and broke her glasses. The doctor said she was lucky; without the glasses for protection she'd have lost an eye. Rachel looked at her daughter's bruised face and refused to speak to Betty Lloyd for a week. She told Tony she wanted out of Winco. He shrugged.

Doyle Ray needed saving, but Natalie couldn't muster enough charitable feeling toward him to do it. The Bible said to return good for evil, but after Doyle Ray hit her in the face she gave him a glass of Kool-Aid made with creek water.

That left Brenda.

Brenda was in Natalie's class at school. She sat at the desk behind Natalie, so she would be easy pickings. Besides, Natalie liked Brenda and thought she would enjoy saving her. Brenda was very short, and skinny. Her black hair was cut straight across in bangs and she had a feathery moustache of fine black hairs on her upper lip so that she always looked like she'd been drinking chocolate milk. She wore short-sleeved belted cotton dresses, no matter what the weather, made by her mother off the same pattern.

Brenda was the best arithmetic student in the class, which meant she was also the fastest. Mr. Ross, the sixth-grade teacher, believed in speed. He taught his students the steps of long division, then sent them to the blackboard in teams — boys against girls, one row against another — to see who could get the right answer the fastest. Brenda almost always finished first, with Natalie close behind. When Brenda worked at the board she had to reach high because she was so short. Her dress rode up her back, the material pulled up by the belt, until the hem was almost to her panties. Her long skinny arm skipped across the blackboard like a monkey searching for bugs on a tree bark.

Natalie decided to save Brenda gradually. She would start by asking questions like "What do you know about Jesus?" or "Do you feel a great emptiness in your life?" This last was the preacher's favorite line.

But every time she had a chance, like walking home from the school bus stop, the words lodged in her throat. She did manage to ask Brenda if she'd like to go to church.

"Not really," Brenda said.

She went back to Jackie.

"I can't save her. It don't feel right. It's like I think I'm better than she is or like I know more."

Jackie laughed. "You're a hell of a missionary."

"Jackie! Don't cuss!" But she really loved to hear him cuss. Which meant she was not saved herself. She forgot about saving Brenda, forgot about being a missionary, and started worrying because she didn't want to wear a bra.

The Lloyds were related to the Freemans, a situation which fascinated Natalie. Rachel explained the problem was with Dillon's father, who died long ago, when Rachel was small. Dillon's father was a wild, mean man, Rachel said. She recalled nothing more about him. And Uncle Brigham's father had been a brother to Dillon's father. So Dillon and Uncle Brigham were first cousins.

That was all right with Natalie. She liked Uncle Brigham and his stories. But Rachel said Natalie couldn't see everything. Rachel felt sorry for Brigham's wife Betty, a skinny black-haired woman who chain-smoked Camels. Uncle Brigham stayed drunk. Sometimes he and Betty went at it with dishes and brooms and frying pans. The Lloyd children ran next door to Rachel and begged her to make the peace. She'd return after half an hour, shaking her head, and be in a bad mood the rest of the day. Usually she did her ironing after she'd been to the Lloyds and smote Tony's cotton shirts with a strong right arm.

Once Natalie ventured across the fence after her mother's return and found Uncle Brigham slumped on the front porch glider.

"Uncle Brigham, how come you drink so much?"

"Hello, Natty." He stared into space.

She gathered her courage and repeated the question.

"Aw," he said, "hit aint as final as a bullet and tastes better than rat poison."

He rocked back and forth, smiled a thin smile. "My back hurts, Natty. Broke it in the mines oncet, you know." His face was broad, he had a large shapeless nose with a wart stuck on one side. A bluish scar, a coal tattoo, stained his forehead where he'd been hit by a chunk of falling slate.

"Come up on this here porch. Let me tell you a story."

She sat on the floor, her back against the glider, her fingers tracing patterns in the coal dust on the floor. He told the story of the Big Toe again. □



This story is a chapter from a work-in-progress tentatively entitled The Big Toe. Denise Giardina grew up in a West Virginia coal camp and currently lives in Kentucky. Her latest novel, Storming Heaven, won the W.D. Weatherford Award for writing about the Appalachian South.



POLICE
FINGERPRINT
SNCC
DEMONSTRATORS
AT A 1962 SIT-
IN IN ALBANY,
GEORGIA .

Old Hands, Young Blood

*Student activists of
the '60s meet
campus organizers
of the '80s*

Exactly 28 years had passed since a handful of college-age activists met at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina to form the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, better known as SNCC. Now, those who had survived the beatings, the murders, the endless meetings, and the fractious debates were meeting once more on a college campus, this time to discuss their historic battle against segregation in the South and what it all meant.

How time has obscured SNCC's place in history became evident on the first day of the April 14 reunion at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, when a high school senior asked why she had never heard of the civil rights group until she read about it in the local newspaper earlier that week.

"Why do you think so many young people have never heard of SNCC?" she said. "All anybody under 20 or so has

ever heard of about the civil rights movement is Martin Luther King. I was wondering why you think he's gotten all the credit and everybody else just seems to have been forgotten."

There was silence, nervous laughter, a few pained smiles. Then Charles McDew, who served as the first chairman of SNCC, tried to explain why most Americans have never heard of the most dynamic force of the entire civil rights movement.

"I don't think it was a deliberate attempt to subvert . . . yes it was — it was a deliberate attempt to subvert history," McDew said. "We were a mixed bag of people. It was said we were uncontrollable, too demanding, too radical, and ultimately unacceptable. We were unacceptable in the history of this country. That's why you haven't heard about us."

It's not hard to understand why SNCC never made it into the high school history books or the national consciousness. After all, what SNCC represented was a genuine revolt, a Southern revolt, a *student* revolt against the brutality of racism. It started in 1960 when four black students staged a sit-in at a whites-only lunch counter at Woolworth's in Greensboro, North Carolina. Within three months, 35,000 students had followed suit at lunch counters across the South. By the end of the year, the ranks of the sit-ins had swelled to 70,000.

The students who joined SNCC gave up everything to fight racism. Everything they did was nonviolent, but many were jailed and some were killed. They argued about everything, but shared what historian Clay Carson called "a common belief in sustained, militant mass struggle as the major agent of social change." They were viewed as the "shock troops" of the civil rights movement, but they always emphasized the importance of peaceful protest and democratic decision-making.

At the conference, the veterans of the struggle told their stories and talked about old times and sang the songs of the movement and cried and hugged and acted like people always act at reunions. During nine panel discussions over the course of three days, they also recalled their days registering voters in rural Mississippi and organizing blacks in places like Albany, Georgia and Lowndes County, Alabama. Taken together, their personal memories amount to a remarkable oral history of the front lines of the civil rights movement in the South. Excerpts from those discussions are included throughout this special section on the SNCC conference.

In addition, the conference brought these activists from the '60s together with campus organizers who are leading the current outburst of activism at colleges across the country. The students of today met with the students of the past, asking questions, trying to learn from the mistakes and successes of their predecessors. On page 54, two student activists discuss what they learned from the group that helped spark the Berkeley Free Speech movement, the resistance to the Vietnam War, the women's movement, and the environmental movement.

Above all, they say, they learned that the heroes and heroines of the civil rights movement were ordinary people, often students just like themselves, who came together and showed what a handful of people can do when they organize.

They also heard how SNCC encouraged women to take leadership roles, as Casey Hayden discusses in her article on the next page. "There is this common notion that women were oppressed in SNCC," said Jean Wheeler Smith, a SNCC member from 1963 to 1968. "I just was not oppressed in SNCC."

Joyce Ladner, a former SNCC field secretary, agreed. She said the group gave many women their first chance to express their views and explore their potential — even though they were surrounded by men with big egos. “The most individual-minded people you will ever meet were in SNCC,” Ladner said. “I mean, they would argue with a sign post.”

The reunion revived some of those arguments. Kwame Toure (better known as Stokely Carmichael, the outspoken leader of SNCC during its later Black Power stage) insisted that violence is unavoidable when confronting a violent economic system. “If nonviolence works, fine,” Toure said. “If not, throw hand grenades. Let’s be free. That’s the only question on the floor.”

Former SNCC member Michael Thelwell, now a professor of Afro-American history at the University of

Massachusetts, criticized Toure for espousing “a set of slogans that have no basis in reality. We know the contradictions. If they admitted to so simple a solution, black Americans would have liberated themselves a damn long time ago.”

Whatever the differences, however, former SNCC members agreed that the fight for equality is far from over. Poverty and homelessness remain high, and the number of black elected officials remains low. June Johnson, who helped register voters in her home state of Mississippi in 1963, said that “blacks can now sit at any lunch counter, but the vast majority are too poor to buy any food.”

In her call for continued struggle, however, Johnson also offered a moving summation of the enduring significance of SNCC. She thanked the SNCC organizers who had come to her home,

saying they had taught her to fight for her political rights.

“Growing up in Mississippi as a child, I never had the opportunity to have an outside summer vacation,” Johnson said. “My ‘vacation’ was either cleaning some white person’s house or going to chop cotton. One of the biggest enjoyments I have ever had in my life was to have met those persons that came to my hometown and taught me to become a first-class citizen. And I want to take this opportunity to say to each of you that I am appreciative of that, and I am glad that you taught me to fight for the rights of those who cannot fight for themselves.

“So that’s how I see SNCC,” she concluded. “It is the greatest institution that ever existed.”

—The Editors

Photo by Danny Lyon/Magnum Photos

SNCC STUDENTS SIT-IN AT THE DOBBS HOUSE LUNCH COUNTER IN ATLANTA TO PROTEST SEGREGATION.



A Nurturing Movement Nonviolence, SNCC, and Feminism

By Casey Hayden

Casey Hayden, one of the first white Southerners to join the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, was also one of the first to raise the issue of

sexual discrimination within the organization. In 1964, she and staff member Mary King wrote a paper stating that “assumptions of male superiority are as widespread and deep rooted and every much as crippling to the woman as the assumptions of white supremacy are to the Negro.”

They urged SNCC to “start the slow process of changing values and ideas so that all of us gradually come to

understand that this is no more a man's world than it is a white world." This and a later paper Hayden authored helped spark the women's movement that emerged from the 1960s.

In this article, Hayden discusses her journey through SNCC, the relationship of nonviolence and feminism, and her reflections on the conference at Trinity College. She is currently assistant to the director of Atlanta's Bureau of Recreation.

I had been apprehensive about attending this conference. I was afraid of old faction fights, of being on a panel with three brilliantly successful professional women when my own life had been so dim in this regard, of not looking right. But at the meeting our old radical egalitarianism cleared my eyes and head and I could see myself anew as I saw us all: dignified, aging, splendid. Mike Thelwell, SNCC field secretary from 1963 to 1964, said he had often thought he couldn't possibly be remembering SNCC accurately; he must be romanticizing. We couldn't possibly have been as brilliant, as witty, as brave as he remembered. But now he could see that yes, we really were as he remembered.

The conference moved us in unexpectedly profound ways. You know, people cried. Mary Britting, one of the early friends of SNCC, told me it took her about three weeks to understand her tears. Then she heard Pete Seeger singing "We Shall Overcome" on the radio, and she knew the tears were for her youth and the person she was then, her complete belief in herself and what she was doing, her complete identification with the path.

For me, this conference was about the assimilation of that visionary commitment into the woman I have become. The structured, historical, academic nature of the gathering provided the safety and form within which we could walk through the years with a whole self.

In the course of the walk, the weighty sense of loss and tragedy I have carried all this time about the collapse of SNCC dissipated. It became clear to me that it was no one's fault that SNCC died. Not the fault of factions or historical decisions or of the FBI or of the splintering into many special interests or of our having been bought off by the Great

Society. It seems, simply, that SNCC was raised up by the grand historical activity of many people acting in concert, in one mind. It was raised up from that activity and served it, and when the object of the activity — the system of segregation — was crushed, the movement and its servants dispersed.

And just as there is no one to blame, nothing to blame for, so no one is the legitimate heir, I thought someone had carried it on, and in a way the Black Power folks did. But in another way no single person or tendency or thread carried SNCC on more adequately or truly than anyone else. At the banquet the last evening of the conference, folks who weren't on the panels spoke, and I

was surprised at how little I knew of the history of so many familiar faces. I was touched by Faith Holsart and Betty Gorman, white women who've been out there in communities, raising children alone on little money, doing what they can in local organizing efforts, tracing their reason for being where they are back to the movement, finding their sustenance in this meeting.

We all are heirs equally, spokespersons of the legacy, and of our part in it only. When we sang "This May Be the Last Time" at the banquet and called the names of our martyrs, they were as diverse as we were then and are now. We all just came from where we were, were transformed in the caldron of

"This Quiet Campus Exploded"

Howard Zinn, professor of political science at Boston University and author of SNCC: The New Abolitionists, was teaching at Spelman College in Atlanta in 1956. He recalled how apathetic and career-oriented students seemed at the time:



HOWARD ZINN

Things looked very quiet. The campus was quiet, the city was quiet, my students were quiet. You could easily get the impression, as so many people did, that nothing is ever going to happen here. Yes, there is racial segregation. Yes, people are being humiliated. Yes, terrible things are going on behind the scenes, behind closed doors, out on the streets, but nobody is talking about it, and there doesn't seem to be much that's being done about it.

People talk about students today and they say, "Ah, look how apathetic they are, look how quiet they are, look — they're not doing anything, they're just interested in promoting their careers." You might have said the same things about Spelman students in 1956. They were going about their duties, just trying to move up in the ranks of society.

And then in just a few years, this quiet campus exploded, and the adjacent campuses exploded, and these students, who had been studying and walking quietly along the campus, suddenly they were outside the walls, outside the barbed wire, outside that little enclave that had been set up for them. They were out in the city, they were demonstrating, they were sitting in, they were marching, they were going to jail, they were sacrificing, and they were beginning to make a tumultuous change in the South and in this country.

And I mention that because I have to remind myself every once in a while that what happened there in the South in that period of history showed what ordinary people could do once aroused, once they woke up, once they got together, once they talked together, once they joined. They created a power that then was heard and seen all over the world.

“What’s the Problem, Sport?”

Charles McDew — the man Bob Moses called “a black by birth, a Jew by choice, and a revolutionary by necessity” — was asked how he decided to commit himself to SNCC. He recalled his first trip to the South as a student from Ohio:



CHARLES McDEW

I never quite adjusted. My father had the idea, as many black parents, that you should have the black experience. You should go to a black school where you see black professionals, have a full social life. And in Massillon, Ohio, there were maybe 3,000 black people in the town. So when my parents took me to South Carolina State I had never seen segregated anything, and I just could not adjust.

I went to college down there in September, and by the time I went home for Christmas I had been arrested three times.

The first time was in Sumter, South Carolina with a group of guys, and we were stopped by the police. I was driving. The police pulled us over, and I said, “What’s the problem, sport?”

We talked for a while, and the cop said, “Where you from?” and I said “Ohio, why?”

He said, “They never taught you how to say ‘yes sir, no sir’ up there?”

And I said something like, “Aw, man, you must be jivin’.”

He broke my jaw.

He hit me with his nightstick and broke my jaw. I tried to fight back and was beaten bloody.

One of the things I kept thinking as I was being beaten was not so much about these two cops that were beating me, but the four other fellows who were standing there watching me being beaten and not helping. And I was saying, “I’m going to kick your ass, every one of you.”

I could not understand that, why they would do that, why they wouldn’t help. I understood later.

But that night I was beaten, my jaw was broken, I was put in jail. When they got me out by bailing me out, I was put on a train to go from Sumter back to South Carolina State, still with those bloody clothes on. This guy says, “Get on back to the colored car.” I had never been on a train before. I had been driven to the South by my parents, I had never been on any public accommodation. And I said, “I’m not going to ride back there with caskets and dogs and all that sort of stuff. I paid my ticket; I’m riding in the regular car.”

And I was back in jail.

I called my parents saying, “Get me out of here. These people are crazy. I’m not going to stay.” And we sort of agreed that I would have to stay until the end of the semester, which, fortunately, ended in February. Before that time a group of people came and said, “Would you join us in this movement we’re starting?” And I said, “It’s your problem. You all going to put up with what these white folks do, that’s your problem. I’m getting out.”

As many of you know, I was reading the Torah at the time, and there’s a part in the Torah that says, “If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am for myself only, what am I? If not now, when?”

I gave that a lot of thought and decided I could not only be for myself, I could not only just fight for my own dignity. I’m having to deal with this now because my father didn’t deal with it back then, and my children will have to deal with it later, so I might as well do it now. And that’s when I sort of made the commitment.

apocalyptic experience, died or went on, some of us perhaps more cogently than others.

EAST MEETS WEST

When it came my time to talk at the conference, I found that I could only tell my story, add my threads to the tapestry. We were asked to speak on “The SNCC Women and the Stirrings of Feminism.” In thinking on this topic, however, I realized I don’t know what feminism is, so I went and bought a newly released book called *What is Feminism?* in which I discovered that no one else is quite sure what it is either. I was relieved to find myself on the cutting edge again. I also wasn’t quite sure what we meant by “SNCC women,” so I simply asked all those present to stand so everyone could see what we looked like. Then, in keeping with the style of SNCC, having thus defined my topic, I went on to talk about something else — the roots of feminism in the nonviolent movement for social change.

In her talk at the conference, Diane Nash, a leader of the movement in Nashville, gave a cogent restatement of the tenets of nonviolence, the philosophy of the sit-ins. She said that nonviolence is both the creation and the activity of what was called the “redemptive community,” and that to redeem means to rehabilitate, to heal, to reconcile rather than gain power.

She said that truth and love are both ends and means, that there is no separation of ends and means. Everything is a series of means.

She said that the enemy is never personal; the enemy is always systems or attitudes, as in racism and sexism. The oppression of these systems always depends on the cooperation of the oppressed. The activity of nonviolent direct action is the withdrawal of cooperation with injustice, the refusal to support oppression.

This philosophy came from Mahatma Gandhi in India directly through Jim Lawson, a minister in Nashville, to the Nashville Movement, of which Diane was a leader. Nonviolence was the first introduction on a mass level of Eastern thinking in the United States. This was not Western, nor was it masculine. It was essentially Eastern and feminine.



JACK CHATFIELD (LEFT), WHO ORGANIZED THE SNCC CONFERENCE, WAS A STUDENT AT TRINITY COLLEGE WHEN HE JOINED THE CIVIL RIGHTS GROUP. TODAY HE TEACHES HISTORY AT THE SCHOOL.

It was radically humanistic, placing human values above those of law and order, insisting that values could and should be acted out to be realized. One's actions were in fact the source of the unity of ends and means. It had to do with where you put your weight. If you didn't have any weight, you had to figure out how to throw yourself around to catch the other guy off base. Nonviolent direct action was a transforming experience — a new self was created. We assumed a new identity, and this new identity was, I believe, the essence of SNCC.

What this means is that by acting in a clear, pure way, a way in which the action itself was of equal value to its outcome, by risking all for this purity, we were broken open, released from old and lesser definitions of ourselves in terms of race, sex, class. We actually experienced freedom. And equality. In race. In sex. Not completely, but perhaps as close as it gets. We actually experienced integration. We may have been the only people in this county who ever really have.

Then we started doing it full time. We created a profession for ourselves. We gave it a name — we called it

organizer. We funded it. We also funded ourselves to be publicists, theorists, mythmakers and speakers, printers and car mechanics. To be an organizer was very asexual. What you could do, you did. There really weren't any limits.

THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

I could see the implications for myself as a woman. I came to SNCC raised by a single-parent mother in a small town in Texas, where I learned what it meant to be poor and matriarchal. I came through the YWCA at the national level, where I learned that roles of men and women were being redefined. And I came through a real heavy Christian existentialist background and a college education. When the sit-ins hit Austin in 1960, I was living in the only integrated housing on campus, so I got involved.

By 1963, I was reading Simone de Beauvoir and Doris Lessing. At the time, these books described my experience as a free woman in an enchained culture. Within the movement, however, there was greater freedom, a place of refuge, an open space where everything could be questioned, and was.

Free of our socially defined identities, we found our identity in the community with each other. Mirroring each other, we could see ourselves in this new way. I saw the people I worked with as my tribe, my family. We lived as a family. We lived communally, shared living spaces and funds and food. We were almost totally without personal possessions or lifespaces. Both our lifestyle and our work style were very nurturing. They were very loving. It really was the beloved community. It was neither masculine nor patriarchal; it was nurturing and familial.

It is not insignificant in this regard that the three people running the SNCC conference in Atlanta in the fall of 1960 were women: Ella Baker, Jane Stembridge, and Connie Curry. When I began working full-time for Ella Baker on a YWCA project on race relations, I began to see how her pragmatic philosophy and work style meshed with the principles of direct action.

Part of this style required us to reshape time. Restless and impatient with the pace of external change, we reshaped time to meet our own needs in our own internal work. Everyone should take all the time they needed to formu-



FORMER SNCC ORGANIZERS JUDY RICHARDSON (LEFT) AND MARTHA PRESCOTT NORMAN (CENTER) TALK WITH CURRENT STUDENT ACTIVISTS.

late and present their ideas. All basic disagreements needed to be ironed out before we took action, so we could act in unity. You couldn't ask someone to risk

his or her life without agreeing on what they would risk it for. Loving each individual ensured loyalty, which was both a means and an end.

“My Introduction to Ravioli”

Bob Mants worked as a SNCC organizer in southwest Georgia and Lowndes County, Alabama from 1962 to 1965. He is now a county commissioner of Lowndes County.

We remember what we called the prayer breakfast. Anybody who went down there and worked in southwest Georgia remembers the prayer breakfast. Every morning, over a glass of orange juice, and a cinnamon roll, and the ravioli that people had sent from the North — that was my first introduction to ravioli — we would sing and pray. Over a cinnamon roll, a glass of orange juice, and ravioli. I'll never forget how we used to sing, “Let Us Break Bread Together.” A very meaningful experience. . . .

There was one other thing that southwest Georgia taught me, and that is how to survive on nothing. SNCC didn't have any money, so when people would see us coming, they would run. We had to eat. We used to steal folks' chickens at night, go up under the house and bury the feathers. There were groups that used to go out in different parts of southwest Georgia from Albany and pick cucumbers, squash, go fishing, so that we could eat.

I remember the time that a farmer in Lee County, James Mays, told us that he had some wild hogs loose, and that if we caught the hogs, we could have one. Needless to say, that hog didn't have a possible chance. And we ate well. For a little while, anyway.



BOB MANTS

We were like a clan. If you had an intact clan, you could distrust everybody else. This was particularly effective with the press, which was to be manipulated but not empowered or trusted. It was very important not to believe one's own press. Danny Lyon, who photographed so much of the movement, said that we created our own myth. You didn't want to believe what you saw on the news — and those of us who were there will never believe what we saw on the news. We know the distance between the mass media and the truth.

We were a soft community that could support hard politics. Like children, we were wild, pragmatic, spontaneous. But we were supported by this nurturing family structure, which enabled us to keep going and circumvent, overthrow, organize a mass movement right out from under the established order, black and white.

One of the goals of SNCC all along was to create new black leadership, not as a romantic notion, but as real politics. Traditionally, as soon as leaders rose up, they were no longer of the class they sought to represent and couldn't be trusted. So new black leaders were needed.

WOMEN IN SNCC

After the Mississippi Summer of 1964, so much was happening so fast, we couldn't figure out what to do. There were so many threads to the movement, it was tangled up. Everything was getting knotted up; we couldn't weave any more. We started having a lot of meetings. I remember the one that fall in Waveland, Mississippi. The issue at that time was what we were going to do next. There was a big debate about what to talk about. Some of us felt we had to talk about what to do. Others felt we had to talk about how to structure ourselves to figure out what to do.

At this same meeting, the first piece of writing on women was produced in response to a call for papers on any and all topics. This paper drew parallels between discrimination against women and blacks and listed positions women didn't hold in SNCC. I expected the paper to be received negatively, which turned out to be correct. I felt womanhood was not a key issue at the time, and

looking back, it didn't really matter whether women were on SNCC's executive committee or held offices, since all those roles were empty given the participatory, town-meeting style of SNCC, which meant we were all equal in power anyway. Black women generally did not identify with the paper and didn't feel they experienced sex discrimination in SNCC. I am not sure I did either.

It was also at Waveland, as I recall, that it was first said whites should work with whites. I took that injunction seriously, and went off to Chicago — officially SNCC staff on loan to Students for a Democratic Society — to work with the Economic Research and Action Project. I settled in for the summer of 1965 to organize white women, welfare recipients, Appalachian migrants in the slums.

This was a modestly successful endeavor, resulting in sit-ins and arrests and the rudiments of a welfare recipients' union. But I could see I had seriously underestimated the oppression of this situation and the lack of unifying elements among women. I was not going to single-handedly create a movement there, and did not have the energy to try.

The culture shock of entering a white ghetto was enormous, a fact I didn't even really comprehend at the time. And I missed SNCC, my family. I retreated. I went to the West Coast, came back to the South to a labor-organizing workshop, wondering if this was the way to go. Many of us were at loose ends.

I later joined Mary King at her parents' home in Virginia, and it was there I wrote the second memo, with Mary's support, which was subsequently circulated and gained a following among women of the New Left. It was the women who received this memo who were responsible for much of the early activity of women's organizing. This memo was partly a reaching out from my sense of what was needed — that it



FORMER SNCC ACTIVIST AND GEORGIA STATE SENATOR JULIAN BOND (RIGHT) JOKES AROUND WITH JUDY RICHARDSON AND KATHLEEN CLEAVER (CENTER).

was necessary to create a community of discourse within the movement about women before a larger community could be organized.

But more basically, the memo was born of the desire to re-establish communication among us, now already so dispersed and unraveled. Its purpose, it says, "is to deal with ourselves and others with integrity, and therefore keep working." In other words, the point was not just to establish justice. In fact, in motive, that was secondary. Women's issues were something to "organize around," a means to organize people into the redemptive community, to keep working together, to draw in more people, to make more firm and then expand the community of vision, to keep talking about what to do and what we felt, at a time when the pressures led us otherwise. The point was to keep creating work, profession, self, and family. This was not a rebellion. It was an attempt to sustain.

Thus was this seed of feminism

rooted in the nonviolent movement. I am not sure this obscure historical fact will mean much to many, but it will be understood by my sisters and brothers in SNCC, and that is what matters to me. I don't know whether this conference addressed or skirted (pun intended) major historical questions. But I say, so what? History is never what gets written down. There's been some sense that the women's movement is related to the question of who cleaned the Freedom House. As far as I can recall, no one cleaned the Freedom House and no one cared. I don't mind saying that, throwing my pebble in the pond and watching the ripples.

But that's not the heart of the matter. To me, the heart of the matter is that to the extent the gathering at Trinity College reconciled us to our pasts and ourselves, we will be more and more free to be as we learned to be long ago, at one with our path. And for me, still, that's where the hope lies, in that atonement. Still. After all these years. □

Students of History

Two student organizers discuss the lessons they learned from SNCC — and the renewed activism on college campuses today

Barbara Ransby Three short weeks after student activists at the University of Michigan founded the Nelson Mandela and Ella Baker Center for Anti-Racist Education, seven of us involved in the project journeyed to Hartford, Connecticut to meet some of the “living legends” of the 1960s who had formed the radical youth wing of the civil rights movement under the mentorship of Ella Baker. This was an important trip for us. The legacy of SNCC has had a tremendous impact on our political work at Michigan, and our year-old organization, the United Coalition

Against Racism, is based in large part on Ella Baker’s philosophy of grassroots democracy and group-centered leadership. In addition, former SNCC women like Diane Nash and Prathia Hall have served as historical role models for many of us.

Two members of our contingent used their graduation money to pay for the trip. Others drove 12 hours straight from Michigan, arriving just in time for the first conference panel Thursday night. Because I had decided to do my dissertation on the role of women in the movement, my own interest in attending was both political and academic. We were all eager to meet in person the historic actors we had first met on the pages of Clayborne Carson’s *In Struggle* and Howard Zinn’s *New Abolitionists*. In our minds they were larger than life, heroic, romantic and fearless figures. They were part of the force that had jolted the conscience of the nation, transformed the American South, and made history.

MARATHON ACTIVISTS

After three days in Hartford we were left with several impressions. First, we were struck by the strong sense of community and family that still exists among this band of brothers and sisters, some of whom had not seen one another

for some 20 years. Bob Mants, former SNCC organizer in southwest Georgia and Lowndes County, Alabama, told a touching story about his lifelong friendship with Kwame Toure (whom he still stubbornly refers to as Stokely Carmichael). Toure had a loyal relationship with Mants’ mother until her death, and made a point of visiting her home on his most recent trip from Africa. This story and many others conveyed the strong and enduring comradeship SNCC members have maintained over many years and despite great distances. And when Bernice Reagon and Hollis Watkins led the entire group in a chorus of Freedom Songs, we too felt a part of their “beloved community,” and many of us were moved to tears.

The second impression we were left with, despite this strong bond of community, is the existence of very real and principled differences within the group. Some of these differences, such as the debate over nonviolence as a tactic or philosophy and the experience of women in the movement, are long-standing. Others, such as the relative importance of the Jesse Jackson campaign, are new and reflect the divergent political paths SNCC activists have traveled since their days together in rural Mississippi, Georgia, and Alabama. They are a community rooted in a shared history, but they are not homogeneous.

Third, many of us got reassuring glimpses of ourselves 20 years into the future, still committed and active. We saw first-hand that not all of the 1960s radicals have grown cynical, burned out, or sold out. People like Judi Richardson, Cleveland Sellers, Dottie Zellner, and others are still struggling in different ways and on different fronts for the same goals and ideals they fought for in their youth. As both Martha Norman and Prathia Hall said quite eloquently, the movement changed and shaped their lives in innumerable ways and is in large part responsible for who and what they are today. As my friend and longtime activist

Photo by Charmian Reading



FORMER SNCC ACTIVIST CHARLES SHERROD HOLDS THE MICROPHONE FOR STUDENT BARBARA RANSBY DURING AN ORGANIZING SESSION.

Prexy Nesbitt often says, "These are the long-distance runners in the struggle, not the sprinters" — those whose efforts over many years have made the current student struggles possible.

Our final and perhaps most lasting impression of these former student activists was that despite their shining moments in history, their admirable accomplishments, and their extraordinary deeds, they are, in the final analysis — ordinary people, flesh and blood, with imperfections like all of us. While it was somewhat disappointing to have our political heroes and heroines dethroned (they have never felt comfortable as icons anyway), the realization of their weaknesses and limitations was at the same time empowering. We realized that the historical moment, the collective experience of struggle, is much larger than any of the individual historical actors. And for our generation, no immortal figures can leap out of history and deliver the correct strategy, analysis, and tactics for our movement. It is our job to discover these for ourselves, and we can. While we look to SNCC for inspiration and historical lessons, we also realize, as Kwame Toure pointed out quite sharply, that "history does not repeat, and what was a radical strategy in 1968 might be politically irrelevant in 1988."

As times change, so do the methods by which people are oppressed, even within the same society. Consequently, our methods of struggle and organization must change as well. It would be quite convenient if someone had a prescription for political correctness that could be packaged and distributed to frustrated and fledgling young activists. What becomes clearer to me every day, however, is that this type of understanding grows organically out of the struggle itself, and that each historical period is different. So while history can offer us a general framework for analysis, it cannot offer us a blueprint.

FORGING GREATER UNITY

Anti-racist student organizing is at a critical juncture as we approach the 1990s. There has been a visible upsurge in anti-racist struggles on college campuses across the country over the past year, led largely by black student activists. The building occupation at the

University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the 90 black students arrested at Penn State, and the sit-in at Harvard Law School are only a few of the most recent examples of the intensified struggle. However, despite this escalation and the increasingly confrontational nature of many of these local struggles, there has yet to emerge a coherent national voice

comparable to SNCC. Our various struggles, although parallel and at times overlapping, are basically still localized and isolated. The issues and demands are strikingly similar on virtually every campus. Many of these local struggles, often ignited by individual racist attacks, have focused on the erosion of affirmative action programs, Third World

"As Good As Anyone"

Joyce Ladner, now a professor of social work at Howard University, was a SNCC field secretary from 1962-64:



JOYCE LADNER

I'm reminded of an incident that occurred with my sister Dorie. When Dorie was about 12 years old and I was about 11 — she's 15 months older than I am, even though she never likes to admit it — but when we were 11 and 12, we went to the grocery store, Hudson's Grocery in Palmers Crossing, four miles outside Hattiesburg, Mississippi to buy some doughnuts. There was a white cashier, a man named Mr. Patton who had no fingers on his right hand. I think he may have had a thumb, but no fingers. They were all cut off for some reason, cut off at the knuckle.

Dorie paid Mr. Patton for these doughnuts; he gave them to her in a brown bag. As she reached for them, he reached over and touched her breasts that were just beginning to develop. She took the bag of doughnuts and beat him across the head.

Now: Why did I tell you that story? I stood there as the little sister watching this. We went home — we ran all the way home, we lived a block from the store, we literally ran — and told Mother what happened. She said, "You should have killed him."

That story has importance, a great deal of importance. Because for us as two little black, poor girls, 11-and 12-year-old girls growing up in Mississippi where you have all these stereotypes about how everyone's oppressed, how people don't know they're even oppressed — we knew we were oppressed, we always knew. We also knew, however, that we came from a long line of people, of women, who were doers, strong black women, who had historically never allowed anyone to place any limitations on them. Therefore, my mother could say to us, "You should have killed him," and she meant it. Because she would have killed him; she would have done precisely that.

Mother never heard of Harriet Tubman or Sojourner Truth. Mother was one of 11 children; Mother went through third grade. But Mother also inherited the tradition that a Sojourner Truth or Harriet Tubman set before them. She taught us — and I am not speaking autobiographically so much as I am trying to strike a responsive chord for a generation of young black women from the South who came into SNCC — our mothers and fathers taught us that we are "as good as anyone."

Never allow anyone to call you out of your name. Never allow anyone to abuse you or to misuse you. Always defend yourself. All of our parents had guns in the home. And they weren't only for hunting rabbits and squirrels. . . .

studies, and financial aid. In other words, much of the anti-racist agenda of this decade, with the exception of anti-apartheid struggles, has been a reaction to cutbacks and attacks, and has attempted to preserve the hard-fought gains of the 1960s and '70s.

Yet despite the weaknesses of the current protests, there are on-going efforts to forge greater national unity. Over the past year and a half there have been at least six national student conferences, largely focused on anti-racist organizing, which offer some hope for the re-emergence of a radical, anti-racist student movement led by youth of color.

As Kwame Toure suggests, "History was kinder to the 1960s activists — the enemy was clear." Today more subtle but equally dangerous manifestations of racism make our task more complex, but no less important. While we grapple with the political realities of the 1980s and attempt to develop strategies and build a movement for the 1990s, we still look to the past for the inspiration and strength that comes from knowing what is possible. To help us tap that strength, foster a greater dialogue between current and former activists, and clarify the lessons of the past, a small group of former SNCC members and student activists from seven campuses nation-

wide are organizing a fall conference to bring together political activists from the 1960s and the 1980s. The logistics and dates for such a conference are still being discussed, but several meetings were held in Hartford and a tentative planning committee was set up. Anyone interested in participating should contact Tracye Matthews at (313) 747-9848.

Although each generation of activists must find its own political path, there are still many resounding voices from the past that urge us to carry on. At our alternative graduation ceremony at Michigan this year, inspired by the SNCC conference at Trinity, we closed with Fannie Lou Hamer's song, "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Round," substituting the names of local politicians and administrators who have opposed our campaigns and struggles. Symbolically, the revised song suggests that while the struggle and the enemies remain basically the same, the form of the struggle and the faces of the enemies have changed. But if we continue to sing the chorus of that song and mean it, as Fannie Lou Hamer did, we can begin to rebuild a radical, anti-racist youth movement — not as a replica of SNCC, but as a new structure upon its foundation. □

Barbara Ransby is a graduate student of history at the University of Michigan and a member of the United Coalition Against Racism.

Stephanie Berger As student activists of the 1980s, we have inherited the strong tradition of resistance that SNCC established 25 years ago. The students of SNCC have given us their strategies, their songs, and their vision — as well as many of their internal struggles and unresolved debates. These visions and struggles hold many valuable lessons for us today, especially with the increase of racist, sexist, and homophobic violence on our campuses and in our communities.

One of the most important lessons SNCC has taught us is that change is possible in the face of the most profound obstacles. SNCC demonstrated that students, as part of a political movement, are clearly a major force to be reckoned

"My Grandfather Was Black"

Danny Lyon spent years photographing and documenting SNCC and its struggles. He told a story about going to Greenwood, Mississippi to take photos of the group. He spent his first evening at the SNCC Freedom House in the black community:

The next morning a squad car pulled up, and the cop said, "Come on." He put me in the squad car and took me down to the city hall. He said, "Go in there." So I go in there, and there's an officer or a sheriff sitting there. He pulls out the book of the law and he shows me a paragraph that says that to do the practice of photography in Greenwood requires the photographer to post a \$2,000 bond. I said, "You want a check for this?"

We had a civil conversation, and I said, "That's all right. I'll be back in the morning and post this bond."

So I walked outside and this cop was waiting for me. Now I've always told the story with the guy having his gun out. It's hard to believe that a man would actually stand there with his gun out. So maybe I imagined that part. But I didn't imagine the rest. He said to me straight out, he said, "I'm going to blow your fucking brains out."

I said, "Now?"

I mean, the sun was shining, you know, and we were standing in the parking lot in front of the police station at 10 in the morning.

He said, "I'm going to blow your fucking brains out. What are you going in the nigger part of town for? We don't do it that way down here."

And then, you know, SNCC training. You know how they train you? This is what someone says to do: If this situation comes up — you know, I am Jewish — say you're colored. Because you see, that's the problem. The problem is the mixing of the races, so if you say you're colored, well, then, the problem's solved.

And here I really blew it. Because the key thing is to say that your mother or your grandmother was black. That's crucial. And I say, "Excuse me, but my grandfather was black."

I left town on the next bus.



DANNY LYON

with. It is certainly no coincidence that students today are at the forefront of the anti-apartheid struggle, both in this country and in South Africa. The students who were active in SNCC knew that the power to change society comes from people struggling together. This is the undercurrent of SNCC's basic philosophy — and it is clearly the challenge facing many contemporary student activists.

My interest in SNCC came directly out of my experiences as a student activist at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts. I was a member of a multi-racial, anti-racist group that laid much of the groundwork for renewed activism on campus. Many of the students of color in this group recently led a student takeover of a campus building to protest the administration's failure to meet the needs of students of color and to fulfill the college's stated vision as a multi-cultural institution. Women played a lead role in the takeover, but because of a strong feminist presence on campus I think many of us took it for granted that women were at the forefront of the struggle at Hampshire. Having been active in a variety of radical student organizations, however, I realized that this was actually a unique occurrence. I began to wonder what had happened to allow this coalition to develop, and to examine the historical and political significance of black and white women working together.

It was in the midst of this activism on campus that I completed my senior thesis on the politicization and the role of women in SNCC. I saw the study of SNCC as a way to address the need for coalition-building between black and white women. My own work had primarily been within the feminist movement, and I was beginning to come to terms with the limitations of both feminist theory and my own analysis. There seem to be so many stumbling blocks inhibiting discussion between black and white women, I feel that understanding what had happened to women within SNCC might help us confront many of these obstacles.

There has been much debate as to the actual role and treatment of women in SNCC, as illustrated by the panel at the conference entitled "SNCC Women and the Stirrings of Feminism."

Indeed, there seem to be as many interpretations as to what actually happened to women in SNCC as there were people active in the organization. One thing is certain, however: It was their experiences in SNCC that empowered women to continue their struggle for liberation in many different movements. It is significant that the anti-racist

work of many white women active in the civil rights movement led them to question their identities as women and subsequently develop a feminist consciousness. It is equally significant that the feminist perspective they helped develop is now leading many white women like me to become active in the anti-racist struggles on our campuses today.

"Gunfire Broke Out"

Gloria House, now a humanities professor at Wayne State University, was a SNCC field secretary in Lowndes County, Alabama from 1965 to 1967. In August 1964, she was arrested for picketing a segregated store in the county seat. Eight days later, she and her demonstrators were released from jail:



GLORIA HOUSE

All of a sudden the guards came to us and said, "OK, you're going. We're releasing you on your own recognizance." Of course we were suspicious of this. No one from SNCC had been in touch with us, we had not been told that bail had been raised, we had no information from anyone and we thought, you know, this doesn't sound right. But they forced us out of the jail at gunpoint — yeah, being forced out of jail at gunpoint, right? If you know something worse might be waiting for you outside, you sort of hang in to that jail.

We were standing around on the outside of the jail, and they forced us off of the property there onto the blacktop, one of the county roads, again at gunpoint. And since we had been in jail and really hadn't had any treats or anything fun to eat or drink — I mean, we had been eating pork rind and horrible biscuits and whatever — some of us thought, OK, let's walk to the little store here and get a drink, have some ice cream, whatever. And we headed to a corner store.

Just as we turned onto the main drag of Hayneville, gunfire broke out, and we realized the gunfire was coming in our direction. The youngsters of course started running everywhere; some of us just fell on the ground. Ruby Sales and myself, who had been walking with Jonathan Daniels, fell there on the ground.

Jonathan was hit immediately, and we think he must have died immediately. Father Richard Morrisroe, the only other white member of the group, was also hit, but did not die immediately, and moaned and groaned and moaned and groaned and moaned and groaned in a horrible way that none of us who were there will ever forget.

It seemed to me that it was hours before anyone appeared on this road in Hayneville. Everyone had been informed of course that something was going to happen, so this curiously deserted highway or main road was silent because that's the way it was intended to be. We thought we were all going to be killed.

We later learned that the targets were Jonathan and Father Morrisroe, the two whites in the group, and that a marksman had been hired to kill the two of them, and had been deputized for that purpose. And this man got off scot-free at the trial. Most of us returned to the county for the trial and watched him get off scot-free.

“A Middle-Class Picnic”

Clayborne Carson is editor of the Martin Luther King Jr. papers at Stanford University and author of In Struggle, the definitive history of SNCC. He discussed how the group influenced his work as a black scholar:

To study SNCC's community organizers is to become somewhat like them. To do it well you have to come to where they are and listen patiently, without prejudging what is said. If you do that well, you finally begin to learn the right questions. As Bernice Reagon commented last night, “If you want to learn to organize people, ask them, and they will teach you how to organize them.” Studying SNCC was like that for me. They taught me how to study social movements, which is mostly to listen until you know the right questions.

I first met SNCC activists during the summer of 1963. I had just finished my freshman year in college and was attending a National Student Association conference. Stokely Carmichael (now Kwame Toure) and Bob Moses were among those attempting to convince the student representatives that the Southern black struggle was worthy of support. I vividly recall Stokely's outbursts directed against cautious white students who were reluctant even to support the March on Washington. I had just decided to join the March, which was to be my first step into the world of activism. I was somewhat deflated, therefore, when Stokely described it as a “middle-class picnic” that was far less significant than the work SNCC was doing in the deep South.

I recognized immediately that SNCC workers were a special breed of people — unlike anyone I had previously encountered. They were unforgettable role models for me, for their willingness to live experimentally expanded the range of conceivable choices that lay before me. They exemplified the power that can be unleashed in people living in ways consistent with their deeper feelings and higher values. I went South on only a few occasions during the next few years, but, as for many other students of the 1960s, SNCC inspired and guided my activism on the Northern fronts of the struggle.

At the end of the 1960s, when I decided to become a historian, my conception of that profession was affected by SNCC's example and by my own experiences as an activist. SNCC workers influenced me toward becoming a certain kind of politically committed black scholar.

Some academics have suggested that scholarship suffers when it is linked to a commitment on behalf of social change, but this erroneously assumes that commitment dulls rather than sharpens one's critical faculties. One of the best aspects of SNCC was the willingness of its staff to engage in the severest forms of self-criticism even in the midst of struggle.

No one symbolized SNCC so much as a person who was neither young nor a student. Miss Ella Baker, convenor of SNCC's founding conference in 1960, was in her 60s and at the end of an exhausting day in May 1972 when she patiently responded to my questions in her Harlem apartment. Baker's advice to the young people in SNCC was to develop their own leadership qualities — “I thought they had a right to direct their own affairs and even make their own mistakes” — and to have as their principal goal the development of the leadership qualities in other people.

Because of her influence, SNCC organizers, for the most part, resisted the tendency, common among activists seeking social change, to create unwittingly new sources of domination more subtle than those they sought to eliminate. Embedded in her words and her exemplary life were insights about social transformation that remain SNCC's most important legacy. They provide guidance for all teachers, writers, and activists who seek to pass on their political wisdom to a new generation.



CLAYBORNE CARSON

Once we realize that change is possible, the issue becomes how best to achieve our goals. This is more than a question of dealing with actual strategies; it is a question of dealing with ourselves. One of the key issues articulated by SNCC was that in order to change the world, we must first change ourselves. SNCC insisted that “you are what you believe.” The women's movement later translated this into “the personal is political.”

This personal change, however, is not something that occurs in isolation. As former SNCC members noted at the conference, the “beloved community” of SNCC and its egalitarian structure allowed for and nurtured their own sense of empowerment. The question for many of us now is, how can we as white students and students of color create a community in which our differences and our similarities are respected and embraced?

To answer this question, we must look not just at SNCC's obvious successes, but also at the sources of conflict and tension within the organization. It was out of these internal struggles that many crucial questions were raised, and that many subsequent movements emerged. It was because Mary King and Casey Hayden began questioning their role as women in SNCC, for example, that they were able to help plant the seeds for the women's movement of the 1960s. SNCC members like King and Hayden believed in questioning each other, as well as society at large. As student activists today, we too must continue to question everything — including SNCC. I feel that it is only in this way that we can advance our struggles.

As I heard former SNCC members talk about their experiences, I realized that SNCC has had a more far-reaching impact than I had originally recognized. Like other activists and scholars, I had turned to SNCC to answer some of the questions confronting us today. As a result, I now have more questions than I did when I began. But that, in a way, is the answer in itself. □

Stephanie Berger holds a B.A. in Afro-American and feminist studies from Hampshire College. She recently completed her senior thesis on the role of women in SNCC.

The Great Speckled Bird Flies Into the '80s

By Julie B. Hairston

Less hair, more children. The '60s generation has made its transformation from radical chic to left-leaning pragmatism. The temperature was over 80 degrees, but the air around Atlanta's Water Works Lodge was permeated with Big Chill.

It's been just over 20 years since the first issue of *The Great Speckled Bird*, Atlanta's own counterculture, alternative journal, the voice of Southern hippiedom, took wing on local street corners promising "to bitch and badger, carp and cry, and perhaps give Atlanta (and environs 'cause we're growing, baby) a bit of honest and interesting and, we trust, even readable journalism."

For a generation whose expressed intent

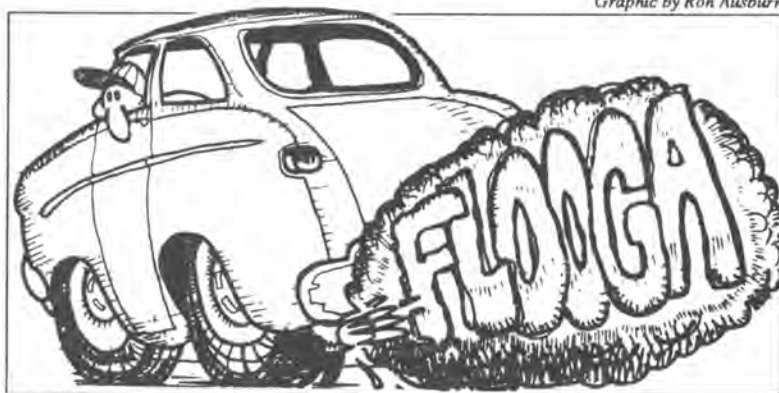
was to break down the Establishment and have a helluva lot of fun doing it, *The Bird* was, in retrospect, an amazingly intense and serious publication. But in 1988, at the *Bird*'s reunion, what they remembered was the fun.

This is a big year for reunions. God, could it really be 20 years since the heyday of the counterculture? A look around said, "You bet your ass."

Tie-dye is making a resurgence and the Grateful Dead are on the W "In" list. There were plenty of T-shirts (tie-dyed and otherwise) and Levis at the *Bird* reunion, but there were also gobs of Izods and Polo shirts, khaki slacks, designer jeans and eye shadow. But former *Bird* vendor Bongo still has his aviator cap full of buttons, even if he is riding a new bike. ("Hit a parked car

with the old one, Man, and there was this guy sitting in it. Whoa!") And the only thing that looks significantly different about Tom Coffin, one of *The Bird* founders, is that there's more gray in his generous beard.

Nobody looked TOO prosperous, but most were looking dangerously well-groomed. No discernible drug usage,



Graphic by Ron Ausburn

except for a little discreet strolling off into the woods. If the cops had busted this event, they probably couldn't have pulled together a decent lid. And where the hell did all those children come from? Guess the kids are teaching their parents' generation a whole new meaning for the expression "free love."

There were shrieks of delight and lots of unfettered hugging as the crowd filtered into the park. By the end of the day, some 350 or more had come to pay their respects.

"What ARE you doing now? Are you and Steve still together?"

The *Bird* reunion that took place Memorial Day weekend is one of many occurring this year. Earlier in the month, Columbia University held the 20th anniversary of its Class of '68 — the one that took over the institution and raised hell with the power structure in those heady days of revolutionary fervor. A very clear US against a monolithic THEM.

When the Class of '68 reunited to catch up and reminisce, unlike their classmates of earlier and later Ivy League vintage, they talked about community activism, organizing for self-determination and political involvement — not Wall Street, corporate boardrooms, and big-ticket law firms. So, too, *The Bird*. The buzz from the crowd spoke of labor organizing, community activism, and a host of causes that have occupied their energies for the last 20 years.

POLITICAL JUNKIES

A lot of former *Bird* staffers are still in Atlanta, while others are flung across the country. Reunion organizers took out an ad in *The Nation*, a liberal political weekly, to find the many whose whereabouts were long since unknown. Wherever they live now, former *Bird* staffers appear to have carried with them a bit of *Bird* consciousness from that bygone era.



"God, I never realized how good-looking everybody is," quoth Neill Herring, former *Bird* political writer turned gonzo state-level lobbyist, organizer, and pundit extraordinaire. He flipped a piece of barbecue chicken and wiped his hands on his apron, then waved his tongs. "I guess I never noticed, but look around.

This is a really good-looking bunch of folks."

Judging from the pix posted on the display at the center of the activities, attracting the faithful like an icon, the good looks would have been easy to

The Bird in 1970, "and generation upon generation of non-colored peoples from the West. Instead of millions of young individuals, what we have now is an entire generation heading into a collective consciousness in which every division, contradiction and polarization looms large."

A soccer ball flew by with a shriek of stairstep children in hot pursuit. The generation who thought itself so different must now mold the world for a new generation that will, for a time, undoubtedly think itself also unique.

Herring, who has continued to write as a sort of polemic local columnist and political junkie, has a three-year-old daughter who occasionally accompanies her father to the Capitol. In the old days, he never used his own name to sign his

Photo by Jeff Slater/Creative Loafing



TOM COFFIN, ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF *THE BIRD*, READS A COPY OF THE PAPER AT THE MAY 28 REUNION IN ATLANTA.

miss 20 years ago. Buried under bushels of multi-directional hair, beards with their own personalities and hats with no names, hidden by placards with radical slogans, the "look" appeared to be no look at all. Identity was secondary to commitment. We were all part of the human family and just being Beautiful was enough.

"Our situation is different from that of our parents and their parents," said

work for *The Bird*. Instead he, and many of the other *Bird* writers, used a variety of pseudonyms to make it appear that the *Bird* staff was considerably larger than it actually was. Message was far more important than byline. In the art of politics, according to the creed of the counterculture, perception was better than reality.

UNDER THE DOME

Georgia native son Herring joined *The Bird* in 1969 and through it was introduced to legislative politics, Southern style. Lester Maddox was governor and just three years earlier the House of Representatives had refused to

seat Julian Bond because of his stand on the Vietnam War.

"I didn't know what to do, so I just sat in the press box day after day and wrote down speeches," Herring recalls.

He never left the Georgia General Assembly, even after the demise of *The Bird*. Herring has been in attendance at the Capitol every January since 1969. When he couldn't sit in the press box any more, he started pacing the halls with the lobbyists, agitating for consumers in utility matters, passenger rail service, and environmental protection. Hell, he even gets paid for it now.

And he's not alone under the Gold Dome. State Rep. Nan Orrock, a founding member of *The Bird* staff, is there to consult from her seat in the House of Representatives. A freshman legislator from an urban Atlanta district, she is running unopposed this year for a second term.

When not legislating, she raises and gives away money to good progressive causes as executive director of the Fund for Southern Communities, something of a United Way specializing in proposals and projects that make the mainstream philanthropies VERY nervous. A portion of the proceeds from the

reunion will benefit The Fund as well as WRFG (Radio Free Georgia), the city's alternative radio station.

Gene Guerrero is another of the former *Bird* staffers to have found a niche in the Georgia political establishment. He became involved with *The Bird* when he returned to Atlanta from North Carolina to face down the draft board in the town where he had attended high school and college. Guerrero's resistance to the draft on the basis of his objection to the Vietnam War was one of the *Bird's* earliest causes. A Supreme Court decision finally granted him conscientious objector status.

Some two dozen of the local Movement faithful ponied up a contribution

and became founding members of *The Great Speckled Bird* in 1968. And devotion to social change remains a strong bond among those who were in the group. Gene runs into Nan and Neill at the Capitol when he comes down to lobby on issues as executive director of the Georgia Chapter of the ACLU. He has become an almost ubiquitous commentator in the local press and even makes an occasional appearance in the national media.

At the reunion, there was lots of talk about the upcoming fall elections — who's in, who's out, who's got opposition, and who's got a fair chance of election. The bottom line: IT MATTERS.

Tom and Stephanie Coffin have also remained true to their commitments



GENE GUERRERO AT AN EARLY *BIRD* STAFF MEETING. TODAY HE IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GEORGIA CHAPTER OF THE ACLU.

from *The Bird* years. Still together, still in Atlanta, still tweaking the Establishment, they have become deeply involved in the movement to get the U.S. out of Nicaragua, as well as a host of other causes. They are doing what they can to make a better world for their two sons, Simon and Zachary.

"I'm only sorry I wasn't old enough to understand what was going on at *The Bird*," said 19-year-old Zack, the elder, whose squalling face emerging from between his laboring mother's spread thighs graced the cover of the Mother's Day issue of the 1968 *Bird*. "My generation is evolving...with virtually no political consciousness."

Now a promising photographer for a



local weekly paper, Zack says he reads old copies of *The Bird* and admires his parents even more for their willingness

Photo courtesy Tom Coffin

to buck the establishment and speak, without trepidation, their unvarnished perception of the truth.

"I work at a newspaper, and I see people all the time engaged in self-censorship."

And he sees in the yellowing pages of *The Bird* a consciousness, a sense of community he misses among his peers today.

"I hate to say this, but I think the best thing for a movement in my generation would be a war — unfortunately, because

that's something I do not want."

GET HIGH, GET BUSTED

Particularly in the early issues of *The Bird*, there is a personalism to the writing that underscores the tight sense of community that existed in Atlanta's 10th Street hippie community. Those were the days before The Strip turned mean and capitalism began to push the flower children out of Midtown.

Use of nearby Piedmont Park for free concerts was an ongoing issue in the early days of *The Bird*. And there were lots of stories about the "pigs" busting yet another communal pad and harassing the kids on the street. Many of

the stories didn't even use last names for those arrested in the busts, assuming that the readers either knew these cats or ought to and anyway getting busted is a drag so why don't they just leave us alone.

Of course, there is the infamous bust of *The Bird* itself for its "obscene" cover showing a military-clad, machine-gun-wielding revolutionary under a Coca-Cola logo screaming about the m—f—s. In 1972, *The Bird* office was firebombed, a vicious act of vandalism for which no perpetrator has ever been arrested.

Jerry (not his real name), now a freelance writer in Atlanta, was 17 and a regular visage on 10th Street when *The Bird* was born. The paper, for him and many others like him, was not only a source of information about their friends and a tonic for their political consciousness, it was a livelihood of sorts.

"You'd go down and pick up a couple of bundles of *Birds* to sell. And that would bring in enough money to buy some dope and a couple of burgers at the Krystal. Then, you could spend the rest of the day just hanging out."

Until the last year of its life, *The Bird* was sold on the street by vendors who, in the good years, could make a few bucks on the deal. A portion of the purchase price, which varied through the years, would go to the vendor, while the rest came back to pay production costs. Folks like Jerry and Bongo, now the proprietor of a local tree service who also teaches a course in Recreational Tree Climbing ("It's safer than mountain climbing and more convenient"), became familiarly attached to *The Bird* as its vendors. Even if you didn't need the money, you hawked *Birds* for the attachment, counterculture credentials, if you will.

BEDTIME FOR BIRDIE

It was that strong sense of community, in part, that gave *The Bird* its unique Southern brand of journalism and activism. People who worked on the paper felt they *belonged*, felt they were part of a close-knit family. That feeling kept them together through years that saw many other papers and movements divided by bitter factionalism.

Slowly, however, the times began to catch up with *The Bird*. After five years

of Movement news, most of the nationally oriented stories had been played out. The Vietnam War was winding down and most of the issues surrounding black political power (like desegregation, voting rights, and equal opportunity) were at least symbolically decided.

So, as the peace and love of the '60s began to wane into the neighborhood turf wars of the '70s, *The Bird* began to turn its attention to the workings of the local power structure — City Hall, the power company, the state department of transportation. Many of the stories that appeared in the later issues of *The Bird* now make headlines in the mainstream press — Does Atlanta need a second airport? Are consumers getting a fair shake in utility rate hikes?

there. Although *The Bird* agreed to run the series, staff members began to have some doubts about continuing it when it dragged on longer than originally anticipated. (It eventually ran 28 consecutive weeks.) It was Malloy's introduction to the infighting that finally killed *The Bird*.

"Everybody would show up with an article in their hand," he recalls. "Then you would have to fight for your faction — which might be a faction of one — against all the other factions and that's how they decided what would be in the paper. It would go on for hours."

The Bird finally flew the coop in 1976. Short of money and torn by internal strife, what remained of the staff closed up shop. An attempt to revive *The*

Photo courtesy Tom Coffin



NAN ORROCK, A *BIRD* FOUNDER, USED TO SELL THE PAPER ON THE STREETS OF ATLANTA. TODAY SHE IS A GEORGIA STATE REPRESENTATIVE.

But *Bird* readers either didn't care as much about local issues or they just didn't care anymore, period. Its circulation began to decline and the *Bird* organization began to fracture into clashing ideological camps. By the mid-'70s, the collective consensus of *The Bird* staff began to break down. Monday staff meetings, where stories and layout were approved by the entire staff, turned lengthy and acrimonious. Some of the rifts that formed then have not yet healed.

Mike Malloy, now a popular radio talk show host in Atlanta, joined *The Bird* in 1974. He had just returned from Los Angeles and had an idea for a fictionalized series about his experiences

Bird in 1984 was short-lived. Too much had changed and a newspaper can't live on nostalgia alone.

By the appointed hour, *The Bird* reunion drew to a close. The food was gobbled up, the crowd thinned, and reunion staff began packing up the memorabilia. It was a great success, they agreed, a big turnout and a happy day for all who came, but it's 9 p.m. now. Time to get home and put the kids to bed. □

Julie B. Hairston is a free-lance writer in Atlanta. She was a staff writer for *Southline*, an alternative weekly, until it folded last spring.

Can the Jazz Fest Give the New Orleans Sound a Home?

By Richard Boyd

NEW ORLEANS, LA. — If the late poet Carl Sandburg had listened a bit more carefully when he heard America singing, he would have realized that what America was often singing during the 1950s and '60s was being sung by someone from New Orleans.

From the time the rich baritone smooth jump shouter blues spouter Roy Brown hit number one on the old Billboard R&B charts in 1950 with his version of "Stack O Lee," this city has produced thousands of hits now considered classics by music historians.

Most of the recording was done in the French Quarter at the small, one-mike studio of Cosimo Matassa. Matassa only got into recording as a hobby because his dad ran an appliance and radio store. Yet out of that primitive studio came the New Orleans sound — one that captivated the nation and brought major labels and independents flocking to the city.

"We didn't really know what we were doing," Matassa is fond of saying. "We were having fun. We didn't think of it as history."

A few artists managed to cash in on the sudden gold rush. Fats Domino, who hit the charts the same year as Roy Brown, went on to write chapters of rock and roll history with song after song, hit after hit. He still lives in his sprawling,

pink-trimmed, pale-brick, ranch-style house just off St. Claude Avenue below the Industrial Canal that connects Lake Pontchartrain with the Mississippi.

But hundreds of singers and songwriters and musicians from New Orleans never made it as household names, and many were cheated out of royalties by hotshot producers. City fathers placed a low priority on rhythm and blues, and recording studios failed to evolve in New Orleans. The city never became the Nashville of rock and roll. By the mid-60s, most artists had to either flee the city or fade into obscurity.

Most of the city's early pioneers of rock simply drifted out of the music scene and into memory — that is, until Quint Davis began the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival 19 years ago.

WORLD'S BEST WEEKEND

It was 1969 and Davis, the son of world-famous New Orleans architect Arthur Q. Davis, wanted to have a good time. He also wanted to showcase the scores of all-but-forgotten giants of American rhythm and blues he knew were still alive and well in New Orleans. He had already produced an album by blind guitar

master and blues singer Ford "Snooks" Eaglin, and he was particularly interested in finding a new audience for the poor and ailing Professor Longhair (Henry Roeland Byrd), a founding father of rock and roll who was known better in Europe and Japan than in the states.

So the young Davis organized a modest little music event in the old Congo Square, the site of early slave trading and African dances. It was a small gathering, but it was a start, and as the years passed the festival began to grow.

This year, the final day of the New

Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival drew a throng of 65,000 to the infield of the New Orleans Fairgrounds (second oldest horse track in America), where the Festival has pitched its tents annually on the last weekend in April and first in May. The total attendance of 305,000 set an all-time record.

Cash Box magazine last year cut through all the temptations to serious analysis and rendered perhaps the most eloquent summation yet. "It's the best time to be had on a weekend in the world," the magazine said. "The best. Period."

With 11 stages and tents going simultaneously, eight hours a day for six days, it was impossible to stay in one place. On the Congo Square stage alone, one could have heard the legendary Hugh Masakela of Africa, the jazz and rock fusion of Santiago from Chile, the reggae band Creole Wild West, the colorful Mallick Folk Performers from Trinidad, Malavoi of Martinique, Tabou Combo of Haiti, and the Killer Bees.

The Festival featured the long-awaited reunion of Little Feat, one of the pivotal integrated Southern rock bands of the 1970s with millions of loyal fans worldwide. It brought the rhythm and blues of Hank Ballard and The Midnighters — the first to sing the dance song "The Twist" — back to New Orleans for the first time in 27 years. It also brought the Latin-driven rock of Los Lobos, the cool jazz of Dave Brubeck, and the harp of Alice Coltrane.

Sandwiched between the two weekends were evening concerts at area nightclubs and on the *Riverboat President* meandering up the Mississippi. The always sold-out affairs featured the jazz of Hank Crawford, the blues of B.B. King, and the gospel of the Rev. James Cleveland.

And that's just the music. The Festival served up every type of Southern food imaginable, from po-boys to

alligator, and displayed the work of dozens of talented artisans from across the region.

"We celebrate music first and foremost," Quint Davis said, "but we try to celebrate the completeness of

than \$35 million a year into the local economy. This year the city's hotels gleefully reported near-maximum bookings for the two-week Festival, a bright spot for an economy still reeling from the collapse of the oil industry.

As vital as it is, though, the Jazz Fest has not yet provided a new day for New Orleans musicians. Even with the success of the Festival and renewed national interest in New Orleans music, no record labels have offices in the city, and there is no major recording activity except for Toussaints Sea-Saint Studio in Gentilly.

What's more, no more than half a dozen clubs offer regular chances for the city's music pioneers to perform. Instead, they cater to modern jazz or new bands popular with college crowds.

The enduring interest in the city's music rests mainly with the legions of devout worshippers of New Orleans R&B in Europe and the Orient. Each spring hundreds of fans from England, Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Japan flock to New Orleans for the Jazz Fest, many scheduling their vacations to coincide with the event. And despite the recent welcome production of a series of new albums by New Orleans stalwarts like Irma Thomas and Johnny Adams on Rounder Records, the best collections of New Orleans

music are to be found on expensive albums imported from Japan, England, Germany, and Sweden.

Just as city fathers never really embraced the New Orleans sound in its heyday, it has taken the city almost two decades to officially recognize the Jazz Fest for something more than a weekend diversion for a few. The city let a huge industry slip away in the '50s — and some feel that even the success of the Jazz Fest can't bring it back. □

Richard Boyd is a staff writer with the Times-Picayune in New Orleans.

Photo by Alison Jones



Southern culture; the integral relationship between music, food, and making things with the hands." That relationship may be best illustrated by famous Cajun musician and songwriter D.L. Menard, who is as well-known for his handmade furniture from his south Louisiana plant as he is for making music.

BUSINESS IN EXILE

The success of the Jazz Fest has meant big bucks for New Orleans. A 1987 study by business researchers at the University of New Orleans put the Festival second only to Mardi Gras as a major tourist attraction, pumping more

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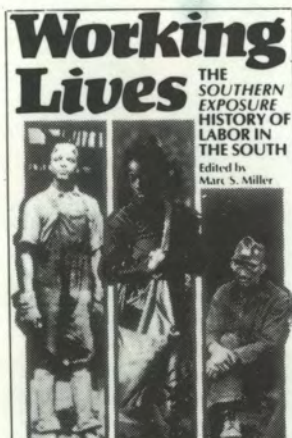
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