THE FURMAN MAGAZINE


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COVERS
Poet Bennie Lee Sinclair and her husband, potter Don Lewis, both 1961 Furman graduates, enjoy the seclusion of working and living in the middle of a forest in the upper part of Greenville County. Front cover photograph by Glenn Gould. Photograph of Don Lewis pots on back cover by Jim Benton.

PHOTO CREDITS
Glenn Gould—front cover, pages 1, 2, 3, 9, 12, 14, 17, 21—27
Declan Haun—page 28, inside back cover
Jim Benton—back cover

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect University attitudes or policies.

Letters

Like so many who have written about the change in the magazine, I too find it much more interesting. I particularly enjoyed Jane Sampey's article—she is a great ambassadress, isn't she?

S. D. Ezell, M.D., '28
Salem, N. Y.

The spring issue of The Furman Magazine is terrific. The article about Dean of Women Marguerite Chiles proved to me again just how fortunate the student bodies have been to have someone with her insight, training, patience, and understanding during these years. All the parents, ministers, and leaders of youth salute her (and I have talked to many).

Frances Folk Rogers, '39
Walterboro, S. C.

Gould Leaving Furman

Glenn Gould, Furman University photographer and principal photographer for The Furman Magazine since 1970, will leave Furman in August to study for the Episcopal priesthood at the School of Theology of the University of the South. Glenn came to Furman as a student in 1967, after serving two years with the U.S. Army. He began working as a student photographer in Furman's Communications Office that year and, after graduating from Furman in 1970, became the University's full-time photographer. His photographs began appearing in the magazine in 1967 and since then they have contributed immensely to the magazine's effectiveness.

I try never to fail to express my thanks for a kindness received which yields what is for me new information or a new viewpoint.

However, in this instance I must extend my gratitude in the abstract to the person who so kindly had me sent the spring number of The Furman Magazine. I was totally unfamiliar with this beautiful magazine and its highly interesting contents.

Jane Sampey's article was beautifully written and interestingly illustrated and one could easily understand that it was a prize winner. She and her parents were long-time friends of mine.

I am not an alumnus of Furman. I was a member of the class of 1911 of the College of Charleston, so I am far behind in the thinking of the modern college student. "The New Adults," which quotes Dean of Women Marguerite Chiles, was very informative to one who has not kept up with the rapidly maturing youth of today.

J. Decherd Guess, M.D.
Greenville, S. C.

Last night I had the opportunity to read the article about Dean of Women Marguerite Chiles in The Furman Magazine, and I want to tell you I think it was great. I remember the long hours of counseling she put in with some of our campus problem children at the time I was attending Furman. Apparently since our generation, things have changed but students remain the same. And what is so remarkable and unchanged is her value of the individual student. This has always shone through in all her dealings with class after class of girls at Furman.

Bobbie Nuite Auld, '51
Mt. Pleasant, S. C.
History: Reports of its Demise....

In 1971, 2,300 historians were looking for work, but only 155 jobs were available.

Two years ago historian C. Vann Woodward of Yale University in his presidential address to the American Historical Association said that historians would probably be out of work within the next generation. He based his prediction on the facts that enrollments in college history courses were declining rapidly and many history teachers were already out of work. At that very convention in 1971, 2,300 trained historians were looking for jobs, while only 155 positions were available.

Since then the history profession has been in the throes of adjustment. Graduate schools have cut back on the number of history students they will accept, and fewer students are choosing to do graduate work in history. More historians are going into museum and archival work, some have gone into history-related jobs in government and some have been forced to take jobs outside their field. But history in our colleges is by no means dead, and there are a few cautious predictions of brighter days ahead.

To paraphrase Mark Twain, reports of its demise are greatly exaggerated.

Curiously, perhaps, history has continued to flourish at Furman. “Although there has been a national trend away from the humanities to the social sciences, we have been able to maintain our percentage of majors among the students,” said Dr. Albert Sanders, chairman of Furman’s history department. “In fact, this year we have 37 graduating majors.”

In the past few years approximately 1,050 to 1,125 students have
enrolled in history courses at Furman each year. Students are required to take one history course as a General Education requirement before graduation, but many students choose history courses as electives. "I am continuously amazed at the number of students majoring in other areas who take history courses," said Dr. A. V. Huff, assistant professor of history. "Maybe, it's because we're all gossips at heart, and we tell good stories," he added.

No one, however, claims to know exactly how to account for the continuing popularity of history at Furman. Traditionally, the department has always been one of Furman's strongest, and today's eight-man department enjoys an extremely good reputation among students. Many students, apparently, decide to take certain history courses based solely on what they have heard about particular professors.

Dr. Sanders likes to emphasize the "spread" and "balance" in the department. "A. V. Huff is an American colonialist," he said. "John Block is a Germanist; Bill Lavary, a Russian, East-Europeanist. Jim Smart has been primarily a French-emphasis man; Bill Leverette, a late 19th and 20th century Americanist, and Newton Jones is primarily a 19th century Americanist. Ed Jones is our Orientalist, and I'm an American generalist." By chance, he said, three men, Dr. Huff, Dr. Newton Jones and himself, are also South Carolina specialists. Next fall he hopes to "share" an Africanist with Erskine and Wofford, and next year Prof. James Smart will take a leave of absence to study South American history with the intention of eventually teaching courses in that area.

Dr. Sanders is also pleased that department members range in age from the late twenties to sixty,
which, he said, "gives students coming through a shot at enthusiasm and experience."

In addition to teaching, department members are involved in a myriad of special projects. This summer Dr. Edward Jones is serving as director of a travel-study program for American professors in India, sponsored by the South Atlantic Colleges Consortium for Asian Studies. Last spring Dr. Huff organized and directed a two-week series of free mini-lectures presented for the public in a local shopping center, made possible by grants from the South Carolina Committee for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Several members are working on books, including Dr. Sanders and Dr. Newton Jones, who along with Dr. Dan Hollis of the University of South Carolina, are completing a three-volume history of South Carolina.

Although many students continue to be interested in history, the focus of their interest has changed, said Dr. Sanders. "When I first came to Furman 21 years ago, there was more interest in American history. Today more students are enrolling in European and Asian-African courses, and—one of the most intriguing developments—students are showing more interest in ancient and medieval history. This particular generation just wants to go back into history a little further than their predecessors, maybe because the times were simpler."

The biggest difference between current history students at Furman and those of previous years is that the majority of history majors now go into law and other fields, rather than study history on the graduate level—probably because of the oversupply of history professors. "When I recommend that a student go to graduate school to work toward a Ph.D. in history, I try to be sure that he or she is absolutely suited for it," said Dr. William Leverette, associate professor of history. "They're going to have to put up with a lot of nonsense in grad school, there's very little financial support, it will be difficult for them to get jobs once they've finished, and it's going to be a long time before they can start their professional careers. But if, after teaching them, I can see that this is just what they've got to do—just like I had to do it—then I say, 'Go ahead. You'll make it eventually.' Because we want all the good people, the really alive, exciting people in education we can get."

There is usually a great deal of activity in the history department, graphically illustrated by this year's class schedule which occupies a blackboard in the history offices (opposite page, left). Department chairman Albert Sanders (opposite page, above) and professors Edward Jones, Newton Jones and James Smart (clockwise, above) are engaged in various projects which involve, among other things, a trip to India, study in South American history at the University of Alabama, and the publication of two books. To make things even livelier, Professor Emeritus D. H. Gilpatrick occasionally stops by the history offices to visit (right).
The Ironic Rivalry
Russia and the United States

By William J. Lavary

It is ironic that Richard Nixon, after zealously pursuing Communist goblins in our government during most of his public career, will be known as the president who achieved "the opening to the left" with Moscow and Peking. This irony has not been lost on Russian leaders. During Nixon's state visit to the Soviet Union in May 1972 he reportedly began a conversation with Premier Aleksei Kosygin by saying that over the years he had earned a certain reputation as an anti-communist, to which Kosygin mournfully replied, "We know, we know."

It is also ironic that the visit of Communist party leader Leonid Brezhnev to the United States in June was a political blessing to President Nixon. Severely embarrassed by the Watergate scandal, the administration welcomed the visit of an important world leader—and the attendant press coverage—as a much needed respite for the President. The irony of a Communist leader providing political relief for an American president was heightened by the current Soviet attitude toward Watergate. Long critical of every real or imagined American sin, the Soviet press has been very silent on our administration's difficulties. Certainly Nixon cannot complain of hostile trial-by-press on the part of Pravda or Isvestiia; whereas The New York Times and The Washington Post may still induce a certain amount of indigestion. The current Soviet line seems to be that Watergate was cooked up by right wing circles in the United States expressly to thwart Nixon's new détente with Moscow.

Soviet-American relations have not always been so humorous. There have been, however, recurring notes of grim irony in the relationship between the two countries since the early 1900's.

After the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917, the revolutionary Soviet regime and the American government vacillated between conflict and limited cooperation for nearly 25 years. Lenin's new government was opposed immediately by a varied assortment of Russians, who were dubbed the "whites." The Whitist armies did not fight the bloody civil war alone, but received aid from a number of foreign governments. These governments intervened in the conflict with arms, money and military units. Although the United States did not contribute the largest number of troops to this venture, we did land
Relations between Russia and the United States have been both illogical and contradictory during most of the 20th century.

Some 7,000 troops in Vladivostok in Siberia and a smaller contingent at Arkhangelsk in North Russia. This Allied intervention began in the summer of 1918 during the dreaded German offensive on the Western front and was thus linked in the minds of Allied military planners to the defeat of the Central Powers. However, the Soviets did not and still do not interpret our intervention as part of the war against the Germans since we did not withdraw our troops from Russia at the end of World War I; in fact, we sent more troops.

It seemed natural and predictable to the Bolshevik leaders that the capitalist governments of France and England would seek to exterminate the Soviet experiment. Interestingly, Soviet historians do distinguish between the active political role played by the Anglo-French forces, who openly supported separatist governments, and the essentially non-political role of the American units which were sent primarily to protect vital military depots and transportation facilities.

Despite the political advantages which might have come from such a favorable distinction in the minds of the Russians, the United States was the last of the major powers to come to terms with the Soviet government. Although the British and French governments had an additional obstacle to contend with—the large number of financially outraged subjects who had lost property and investments in the Bolshevik coup, they did establish relations with the Soviets in the 1920's. But the United States—without the pressure of economically injured citizens, without a large and active communist movement—refused to grant recognition until 1934.

The period of the most sustained conflict between Russia and the United States occurred, ironically, after the two countries had fought successfully on the same side during World War II. Despite the victory, there was sharp bickering between Russia and the United States over the nature of Europe during the post-war era. Although the details of the major irritations to both sides were numerous, basically Soviet behavior in Bulgaria, Romania and Poland angered the United States, while the Russians considered our systematic exclusion of them from a role in occupied Italy and Japan a violation of the Teheran and Yalta decisions. The resulting state of ideological hostility between the
two superpowers has been called the "Cold War."

It is important to remember that despite our estrangement from the Soviets beginning in 1917, the tense period from 1946 to 1956 was not typical of all periods of our relations with the Russians. Moscow and Washington had emerged from the war as world leaders for the first time in the history of each country, and their responses to crises might charitably be explained as the mistakes—dangerous mistakes—of diplomatic rookies.

There were, in fact, brief flickers of cooperation before 1945. Although we had intervened in the Russian civil war and thereby had caused a certain degree of human suffering, we also aided the Soviets in overcoming the effects of the prolonged military struggle. Herbert Hoover's American Relief Administration actively combatted famine in Soviet Russia from 1921 to 1923 with foodstuffs and agricultural supplies. There is an element of irony here, too, since Hoover, as the American president from 1928 to 1932, refused recognition to a regime he had helped feed and sustain.

The lack of formal diplomatic relations did not deter many American businessmen from trading with the Soviet government in the 1920's. The huge Russian market was very enticing, and Ford, International Harvester and Sinclair Oil eagerly investigated the
Some of the most arresting paradoxes in the U.S.-Soviet relationship have occurred during the Nixon years.

As contradictory as our relations have been through the years, some of the most arresting paradoxes have occurred during the Nixon years. In 1968 we were bombing the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on the slimmest pretexts, yet the Soviets did little except send a steady supply of weapons and furnish the predictable diplomatic support. On the other hand, the Soviets conducted a major political and military operation in the very sensitive Central European area at about the same time. The August 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia could have done much to harden American attitudes toward any conciliation, but apparently it had no long-term adverse effect. Finally, the Soviet sponsorship of the Arab cause in the volatile Middle East, coupled with similar American support for the state of Israel, would not seem to bode well for a lessening of tensions between Moscow and Washington.

Ironically, this was precisely the time when the greatest advancements were made in arms control and political understandings. In the spring of 1970 the first of a series of Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) began in Finland. Alternating between Helsinki and Vienna, these negotiations were tough and arduous. The final agreement, signed in May 1972 during President Nixon's visit to Russia, did not go as far toward halting the production of nuclear devices as many had hoped it would. Each side was to retain two anti-ballistic missile sites with only 100 interceptors at each location. At this point there was no limitation of offensive missiles, but only a clause freezing the production of them for five years.

During the same visit Nixon also signed a series of agreements pledging the United States to a joint endeavor in space by 1976 and to a series of ecological and medical projects. In addition, we and the Soviets agreed to curtail the harassing of each other's ships on the high seas.

Chronologically the SALT agreements were not the first significant agreements reducing the scope and possibility of military conflict between the two governments. In February 1972, 63 nations signed the far-reaching joint Soviet-American accord which barred the placement of atomic weapons on the ocean floor.

After a long period of ideological hostility, punctuated by occasional times of genuine tension, with this series of agreements the United States and Russia limited their employment of the ultimate weapons. But why were these two powers interested in such agreements at this time?

For one thing, both governments had realized that their fiscal "pies" were not infinite in size; the weapons race had become enormously expensive. On one side, the Americans discovered that their economic and diplomatic position had eroded badly by 1972. The dollar was under severe attack in the world money markets, and the quagmire of Vietnam limited our ability to maneuver diplomatically in all other areas of the globe.

At the same time, the Soviet leadership also pragmatically assessed their position and decided that it would be to their advantage to accept nuclear parity rather than risk slipping into a position of nuclear inferiority in a research-and-development race with the United States.

In both countries there was tough internal opposition to these treaties of accommodation from the...
Neither the United States nor Russia has challenged the other in geographical areas considered vital to national security.

respective defense agencies. The Soviet equivalent of our vaunted “military-industrial complex,” dubbed the “metal-eaters,” led a determined political struggle to overthrow the SALT treaties, as did certain elements in the Pentagon.

These strategic decisions were only the prelude to a series of far-reaching and politically important economic agreements concluded later in 1972. In July the two governments signed an agreement by which Russia would purchase $750 million worth of American grain within three years. In order to obtain this Soviet contract, we extended long term, low interest financing to them. Later in the year, in October, an extremely complicated financial agreement was concluded, in which the Soviets agreed to pay their debts to the United States left over from Lend-Lease Aid in World War II. The Russians agreed to pay more than $722 million by 2001 if the United States Senate will grant them “most-favored-nation” trade status. Thus, by the end of the 1972 the two rivals had signed a series of pacts designed to limit the possibilities of aggression and to encourage mutually beneficial trade. Surely it is ironic that it has taken more than 50 years to reach the current level of accommodation with the Russians.

As we approach the end of the last quarter of the 20th century, it is interesting to assess the chances for establishing a firm and stable relationship between the only current superpowers in the world. Historians take many of their models of international conflict from the 19th century, but the rivalry between America and the Soviet Union does not fit a standard model. For instance, we have not had a territorial dispute outstanding such as Alsace-Lorraine which bedeviled Franco-German relations for so long. Another typical 19th century conflict was the struggle for spheres of interest. In retrospect it is apparent that neither Russia nor the United States has challenged the other in those geographical areas considered vital to national security. The Soviets have not challenged us in Western Europe, the Pacific or the Caribbean. At the time of the October 1972 Cuban missile crisis the Soviets did not aim to replace American influence in Latin America with Soviet influence. We, on the other hand, have made no serious attempt to budge the Soviets from Eastern Europe or alter their long Siberian border.

The most serious zone of conflict between the two countries has been along the German borders. Here the agreements between the Federal German Republic and the governments of Poland, the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union from 1970 to 1972 make possible genuine optimism about the peaceful settlement of disputes in this area.

In another spot, the Middle East, the Soviets have acted with restraint in dealing with Arab governments which are their military clients. The Russians do not want another “Six Day War,” during which Israel captured millions of dollars worth of equipment. Finally, the Soviets will continue to expand their influence in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, the Persian Gulf and the northern Indian Ocean due to the recent departure of traditional British sea power from the area. We will have to learn to live with this expanded Russian naval presence, as they will have to learn to accommodate a growing American diplomatic presence in China and economic presence in Eastern Europe.

Apart from the obvious advantages of a stable military and diplomatic situation, there are tremendous potential trade advantages to a firm relationship with the Russians. Within the past few months the average American consumer has had to deal with shortages of high protein foods at reasonable prices, shortages of gasoline, fuel and timber. Trade with the Soviet Union could help alleviate all of these problems. Her fishing fleets are large, technologically advanced and efficient; we could purchase large amounts of Soviet fish. Siberia is a vast treasure trove both above and below the ground, and plans are already developed to pipe vast quantities of natural gas and oil to North America. Finally, importation of Siberian timber could help our own hard-pressed building industry.

We can only hope that future students of these times will not note that, despite obvious mutual advantages in cooperation, the two world powers ironically chose to maintain a state of ideological hostility.

A specialist in Russian and East European history, Prof. Lavary taught at Randolph Macon and U.N.C. and served as a political analyst with the U.S. Government before coming to Furman in 1968.

The Furman Magazine
William E. Leverette and A. V. Huff

Reflections on History and Historians...

BILL LEVERETTE:
More sophisticated students, I find, are bothered by the fact that interpretations of history are always changing. They say,  “Well, if history is just one continuing fiction after another which simply reflects the environment of the writer at the moment, why bother to study it at all? Let’s just forget it.”

My answer to them is that—for the most part—the facts are true. It’s how we understand the facts that changes. More importantly, I believe, this is the best way for us to understand that human life is complicated. There are no simple answers.

Actually the study of American history has been absolutely turned upside down since I entered graduate school in 1950. At that time a school of historians known as the Progressive historians, whose origins date back to the early 20th century and whose assumptions might be characterized as “liberal,” more or less dominated the profession. Now sometimes called the “Old Left,” they assumed that American history was basically a kind of continuing advance of democracy through struggle: there was always a power group running the country, while the common people were always rising up and reasserting the principles of the Declaration of Independence (the Jacksonian Period, Populist Revolt, Progressive Era and so forth), and America was progressing toward a grand and glorious destiny.

Historians interpreted almost everything in that framework without questioning it too much. We
assumed that economic factors were the main motivating forces behind political behavior, and we assumed that generally the economic motives operating for the in-group or the elite were vicious, whereas the underdog's economic motives were always noble.

Well, by the time I finished graduate school in 1963, two conceptual revolutions had taken place. The first one, which took place in the fifties, questioned the assumption that American history was primarily a history of conflicts between socio-economic groups. Some major historians maintained that the most important events, eras, even struggles, in our history were dominated by consensus, that we were essentially a conservative country in which the ruling class (and the followers who mattered) had always believed in the rights of property and a kind of Lockean atomistic society, minimum government, the value of private wealth, and so forth. The consensus historians said: Look at our great struggles; the contending forces were more agreed on the same values, but they argued on to different conclusions.

This point of view, I believe, helped sophisticate and refine our view of American history and make it much closer to reality. It stemmed not only from a different assumption about what reality was but also from a different approach. These historians were taking more notice of social psychology and other social sciences as insights into human behavior. In fact, concern with motivation has been one of the big things in history in the middle third of the 20th century.

Incidentally, we've just about given up the use of the word, "cause." We don't claim to be that scientific. We discuss origins, background factors, contributing conditions, motives, statistical data, but we don't say we have "causes" anymore.

In the sixties, with the Civil Rights movement, the New Left—probably representing a kind of young academic community across the country—began to affect the writing of history. They revived to some extent some of the assumptions of the Old Left in their concern with conflict and economic motivation. They maintained that America had been a land of some pretty real struggle, that there had been a struggle for greater human rights and so forth. They uncovered some things we had tended to ignore, including black history and the role of economic motivation in foreign policy.

With all of the conflicting theories and interpretations, the study of American history has become much more complicated—and much more exciting—than ever before. It has also become much harder for students, since instead of memorizing some basic facts they must become familiar with all the interpretations and reach some conclusions on their own, while not discounting the facts.

In the last 10 to 15 years the use of quantitative techniques—electronic devices, computer card analyses and so forth—has changed the way we look at history, at least in some areas. For instance, we've learned a great deal more about voting behavior. Now we can analyze how a particular district voted in an election in terms of racial and socio-economic factors and other conditions. I think this kind of methodological tool is very valuable and serves the need it was designed for. But I hope we will not begin to think that the only valid history is quantified history.

Actually, one of my main concerns both as an historian and as an individual is the trend in recent years to structure and evaluate everything in terms of "scientific" principles. Besides American history, my chief historical interest is what is called the history of ideas, especially the impact of science on Western thought. I became interested in this subject while reading periodicals of the 19th century at the University of London. I was fascinated by the way the Victorians tried to preserve their value systems and at the same time
"In education, I'm afraid the trend is toward the quantitative—the statistically proveable and designable."

accept the claims and importance of science. Since the time of Darwin there have always been people who advocated that our values—our ethical behavior—should be determined by what science tells us is true at the moment. For instance, during the 19th century some people concluded that, since Darwin had seemed to prove that life was a struggle for survival, rich men were the finest flowers of nature. The more philosophical and sophisticated scientists themselves, however, have said that we should not accept a value system based on what science currently says is true because ten years from now there will likely be a new theory about the nature of things. Yet at this moment we have a great many people in high positions in education, politics and so forth who would somehow force us into some sort of structure which is supposed to be scientific.

I know this is an old-fashioned idea in some circles, but I am very much concerned with the loss of human freedom and dignity. The followers of B. F. Skinner, as I understand it, maintain that we can control and direct people's behavior by various techniques similar to those he used on rats and pigeons. It may be true that people can be and are controlled or manipulated, but I think we can help prevent its being true by educating people to make their own decisions and determine their own lives. The point is not whether the possibility is there, but whether a controlled society is desirable. I think there are too many areas where human decisions still make a difference.

Social scientists may have proved in recent years that most men are conditioned by their environment, but we also have a tradition dating back to Socrates that is based on the belief that some men, at least, can analyze and understand and determine their own lives, and I think this is what education is all about. Furman claims to support this belief.

In education, I'm afraid, the trend is toward the quantitative—the statistically proveable and designable. We have gone wild on programs and procedures. We have become too preoccupied with raising money, with pleasing our various publics and making numbers come out right. I don't see the concern I think there should be with what we're doing for human beings. Of course, the other things are easier. You can always draw up reports, present analyses and make everything sound very elegant, and yet this can be the cover-up for some very hollow work. I don't think Furman is hollow. I think there's a good strong tradition here and a strong group of people working against the trend. And I'm thankful that they allow me to go on in my sort of sloppy, haphazard, non-quantitative way.

Actually—trite as it sounds—I believe the future of our nation depends on education. Our country has grown up so quickly and has been thrust onto the world scene so fast, we are besieged by all sorts of forces. I believe if we could become intellectually and morally sophisticated enough to have some national cultural value system that made sense we could deal with these pressures without losing our heads. By that I certainly don't mean I advocate one point of view, but surely we ought to have politicians who know something about logic, political history, economics, how to make ethical judgments.

And if more of us had the kind of education we should, we would be more skeptical, less subject to manipulation, less apt to be taken in by lie and smear campaigns or by the slick and phoney. Education teaches us to discriminate the real from the unreal, the genuine from the false. As a 19th century educator said, education should teach us to know what is best.

A native Southerner, Dr. Leverette has taught history at Furman since 1960. He received the A.B., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in history from Vanderbilt University. He studied a year at the University of London on a Fulbright Fellowship, 1952–53, and received a Ford Foundation grant for participation in a special program for future college teachers, 1954–56. His basic field is American history; his particular interest is the history of ideas.
A. V. HUFF: Until recent years we have overwhelmed generations of students with great piles of facts, but we never really got around to helping them understand the questions to which they had memorized the answers. I think we were going at it backwards. The Greek word historia means "inquiry," and historians spend their most valuable time asking questions. If we ask a question about who we are or where we've been and get all the material together and sift through it with this question in mind, then we come out with an answer. The question determines the answer.

The teaching of history today is consciously guided by this kind of philosophy. For instance, in my ancient history class a few weeks ago we studied various interpretations of Alexander the Great by three or four historians. One historian said Alexander was an almost insane individual whose lust for power led him to go out and conquer the world. Another historian, equally reputable, saw Alexander as the first person who had a vision of the world as one and who, inspired by this dream, went out to create a world in which all men were brothers. You see, you take the same facts, arrange them in two different ways and you come up with two different Alexanders.

Hopefully, a professor can help a student analyze material critically so that he won't do violence to it, but that final interpretation is up to the student. Sometimes this process frustrates him. He wants to know which interpretation is "right." But it is precisely this process that makes history exciting. I see myself, as I appraise historical situations, moving from one idea of how things happened to another. For example, there's the old controversy about how important a part slavery played in the coming of the Civil War. One day I'll think, "Yes, slavery was the key issue," and I can relate every other issue to it. Another day, I'll look at the events very differently and say: "There was a whole constellation of issues in the 1850's and slavery was only one—maybe not the most important one." This kind of thing keeps history alive. It keeps the historian from osifying because he can never reach a final answer.

This freedom of inquiry explains, of course, why there is no such thing as official history in a democracy. Only in a totalitarian state like Russia is there an official history and even that history changes when the regime changes.

The current popularity of black history, urban history and women's history demonstrates also that our perspective on history changes with the changes in our society. As the race problem became critical in the fifties and sixties, blacks and whites began to want to know "How did things get this way?" "What can we expect to happen?" and black history emerged. It simply gave us a perspective on history that we needed at that particular time. I suspect that as we work through some of the major problems in race relations, the need for black history will subside.

Even interest in national history rises and falls with the destiny of a particular nation. One of the most popular courses in American colleges in the early 20th century was the history of England. Today the history of England is a relatively unimportant field, which, I think, reflects the political fortunes of England, while the history of Russia or China is in great demand.

Actually, I think we are seeing a revival of interest in history in general. Television programs like the series about Elizabeth I and Henry VIII, based on Tudor and Stuart
Historians are asking themselves some soul-searching questions about their social responsibilities.

England, have been immensely popular. (Maybe white Anglo-Saxon Protestants in the suburbs want to affirm their own beginnings over against so much emphasis on ethnic and minority histories.) Americans have shown a great deal of interest in the bicentennial of the American Revolution, and elaborate preparations are being made for its celebration.

Many people have turned to an examination of American political history to help them understand the real significance of the Watergate incident. Historians are being asked, "How should Watergate be judged in historical perspective?"

My answer to this question is that the history of the United States has been riddled with scandal, both of a personal and social nature. People have scarcely been shocked, for instance, by Elliott Roosevelt's recent revelations about his father's love affairs while he was in the White House, and historians remember that Alexander Hamilton was accused of having a notorious affair in the early years of the Republic. This sort of thing has always gone on to some degree.

However, I think the Watergate is of a vastly different nature. Apparently, most of the men involved justified their actions on the basis that the ends justify the means—that the election of a certain candidate as president was important enough to justify any action. And in that sense, I think, Watergate is indicative of an attitude that is prevalent in our society. I don't think Watergate should be passed over lightly, nor should this attitude in our society. They both need to be dealt with.

Back in 1787, at the time he was writing The Federalist Papers, James Madison was very sure that men were corrupt and that corrupt men would run the government of the United States and so he proposed a government of checks and balances which would pit one interest group against another. With this sort of organization, he reasoned, the corruption of one group would be exposed by the other and a better government would result. I think we're seeing the results of that government in operation today. Some people say that Watergate should not be a partisan issue, but that's exactly what it is because this is the way our government operates. This is perfectly natural.

It is altogether proper, I believe, for historians to try to help people understand and evaluate current events. At this particular time historians are asking themselves some soul-searching questions about their social responsibilities. In the late sixties and seventies many historians felt honor-bound to leave the ivory tower, and go out into the market place and take part in political movements and demonstrations. However, in the disillusionment that followed the activism of the sixties, historians have been asking themselves what their role ought to be. And I think we are beginning to see that—although individual historians may differ—by and large the historian's place is not in the "front line," it's not in the political arena—at least in normal times—but it's in the classroom or the library, helping to raise the questions that underlie the controversy and helping people to understand what is actually going on.

The author of numerous articles about the South and a forthcoming book, Langdon Cheves of South Carolina, Dr. Huff has a special interest in the South before the Civil War. A graduate of Wofford College, he studied theology at the University of Edinburgh on a Fulbright Scholarship in 1959-60 and at Yale University on a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, 1960-62. He received the M.Div. degree from Yale in 1962 and the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in history from Duke University in 1968 and 1970. A Methodist minister, he served as pastor of churches in South Carolina and Connecticut before attending Duke. He joined the history faculty at Furman in 1968. Last spring Dr. Huff served as director of an experimental program of mini lectures for the public at a local shopping center, funded by the South Carolina Committee for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities.
THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER
ROBERT PAYNE
Power, violence, sex and perversion are all part of the story of the rise, rule and ruin of the great Fascist dictators, Hitler and Mussolini. This accounts, perhaps, for some of the prevailing fascination of students, historians and the general public with this subject. At any rate, there has been a resurgence of interest in World War II and particularly in Hitler and Mussolini, witnessed by the flood of material about these men and their period which has appeared on the market recently.

One can scarcely pass any airport newsstand without seeing Duce! The Rise and Fall of Benito Mussolini by Richard Collier in paperback. Bookstores are currently displaying The Women in Mussolini's Life by his son, and both Robert Payne's The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler and Walter Langer's The Mind of Adolf Hitler are best sellers. Articles about the Neo-Fascist party in Italy, which is trying to rekindle the old spirit, appear almost weekly in The New York Times, while the new movie, Hitler: The Last Ten Days, is demonstrating that the Fuhrer can still draw a crowd.

Although authoritarian rulers of countless varieties have always dominated history (and continue to do so), there have never been any others quite like Hitler and Mussolini. These two men achieved supreme power in western industrialized parliamentary nations, nations with proud histories of intellectual, cultural and technical achievement. They did not come into power through divine right or any traditional claim to authority, nor were they military tyrants like Napoleon. They had nothing in the way of birth, education, training or abilities that would have marked them for greatness or even permitted them a flirtation with power in an earlier age.

Neither Hitler nor Mussolini gained supreme power like Stalin by becoming a bureaucratic boss of an already successful conspiratorial party. Instead they generated and guided their own mass movements which swept them into prominence as great leaders and men of action. They ascended to power legally, and they ruled successfully and popularly—if fiendishly—until they dragged their unwilling populations into the conflagration which destroyed them.

The 19th century had given little, if any, indication of what was to come during the first half of the 20th century. In Sicily Garibaldi had acted as dictator for a short time but quickly abdicated his power. Probably more than anyone else, Louis Napoleon (Napoleon III) of France could be considered a forerunner of the 20th century dictators. He was elected President of France by universal manhood suffrage and, after staging a coup d'etat, he used national military pride and economic and social security to divert the French people's attention away from the fact that they had lost their liberty. He used public opinion, plebiscites and popular, personal appeal to accomplish his goals. There was no genuine Bonapartist party until the Second Empire ended, and historians have yet to discover what his program or ideology was—beyond remaining popular and in power. Yet for all the similarities, Napoleon III seems very Victorian, benign, even beneficent, when compared with Mussolini and Hitler.

Hitler and Mussolini were unique demagogic leaders. Their power was based on a combination of factors, including a state of national emergency aggravated by mass political illiteracy and their own charismatic dynamism and popular appeal. They were men who succeeded in the new game of merchandising themselves to people who were free, if not adequately prepared, to choose their own government. They sold themselves as new, creative and necessary in times of political and economic crisis.

Although Mussolini has always received less attention and study than his German counterpart, he was more spontaneous, flexible and imaginative. He was, in fact, in many ways Hitler's inspiration. Also, because II Duce moved more cautiously and slowly, not having a model to follow, the period of Fascist takeover in Italy is clearer and the historical forces more easily defined and analyzed than in the same process in Germany. Mussolini, however, never pushed his totalitarian policies to the same horrible extreme as Hitler, and he could never wield as much power on a European stage.
because the state he ruled simply did not have the economic and military potential of Germany. An admiring Hitler once commented that it was a shame Duce had only the Italians to rule.

Mussolini preceded Hitler to power by over a decade. He gained prominence as a self-styled Marxist revolutionary but, like so many leftists, became a nationalist during World War I. He quit the Marxists and founded his own party because he realized that a successful Marxist revolution in Italy was highly improbable, in spite of rightists' fears that there would be one.

Mussolini had many talents, especially in the areas of journalistic propaganda and demagogic oratory, and he used these to shape the forces and passions of the time into a new movement, which he claimed as his own. He continued to make socialist promises while disassociating himself from Marxism. He promised repose to those suffering from social discontent and national frustrations. Although formerly a pacifist, he promised martial glory to the disgraced Italian soldiers returning from World War I. He promised law and order while his lawless Black Shirts incited and carried out violence.

Mussolini called his hodge podge party Fascist and, as more and more of the bourgeoisie and landowners supported him to protect themselves from potential working class and peasant violence (both physical and economic, real and imagined), Mussolini moved to the right. By 1922 Mussolini felt strong enough to demand power in a country suffering from chronic governmental instability. Almost to his surprise, he got it—not because he had a majority following, but because no one else did either and Mussolini appeared to be the most dynamic and forceful man in Italy, one who could relieve others from the burden of governing a multi-party state. Originally appointed Premier of Italy legally, he eventually became and remained a dictator of one of the world's major powers for more than 20 years.

Adolf Hitler was the greatest of all dictators. In 1933, like his Italian forerunner, he legally assumed the leadership of a parliamentary government because that government was paralyzed and he seemed a more attractive solution than the alternatives. He played the central role in all Nazi policies, practices, successes, and excesses. He held a powerful fascination for many people. Before 1933 he came close to gaining a majority for his party in free elections in Germany—something no other party leader could claim, and his popularity increased tremendously after he reached power, sometimes stimulating a religious sexual frenzy in his more devoted followers.

The factors involved in his success were legion, but one element was unique with Hitler: he could share the thoughts and feel the emotions of his political audiences and followers. He talked, thought and believed as they did. Many political leaders have been called common men because they have had a superficial identification with the masses. Hitler really was a common man in the sense that he had the same beliefs and prejudices as the beer hall crowd. His inspiration and direction came from his contact with the masses.

One of the reasons for Hitler's early success was that he did the things the irrational man in the street, the man who was unrestrained by knowledge or responsibility, would have done. He was bound neither by morals nor by the most generally accepted practices of statecraft. He followed unconventional risky policies that no trained statesman or diplomat would have dared attempt, and he met with success after success. And—rare among politicians—he carried out the promises he made to voters during election campaigns. None of the predictions about Hitler was less accurate than the expectation that responsibility would tame and civilize him.

Hitler's strength was not that he had an innovative mind; throughout the 1920's and 1930's he simply expressed in a more extreme form the same kind of racist arrogance and nonsense which had been expressed 30 years earlier by men like Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Count Joseph de Gibineau and even Rudyard Kipling. He had, however, an extraordinary confidence in these
ideas. The military establishment and conservative nationalists of Germany wanted to tear up the Treaty of Versailles, rearm Germany and claim the Fatherland's rightful place in the world. Hitler not only believed such a course possible, he navigated it while the timorous generals and Junkers looked on. So, too, did the Fuhrer take hate-filled racial doctrines to an extreme even their most zealous advocates could not have dreamed possible.

This confidence in these ideas and his destiny never left the Fuhrer until the day he committed suicide. Even in the closing days of World War II, with Berlin in ruins around him, Hitler still waited for the miracle that he knew was coming, and he was still able to convince others of its inevitability.

Because of war-time propaganda, movies like Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* and the fact that these dictators met inglorious ends, there is a tendency to credit their success to terror and treat them as buffoons or at best accidents of history. This view is a mistake, however, because it overlooks the fact that both dictators were incredibly popular and their careers were ended only by outside military forces.

Both Hitler and Mussolini seemed to solve many of the economic and political problems besetting their countries. Under their regimes both countries gained reputations as great military powers, which, in turn, restored people's confidence and pride in their own nation.

Both leaders convinced people that their governments were genuinely interested in their welfare and demonstrated this interest by sponsoring large scale leisure-time activities for all of the people. Hitler and Mussolini were master psychologists who knew how to use the fears of the masses to accomplish their own goals. They demonstrated that sometimes people are willing to give up their own personal freedom for comfort and security and that they may be willing to ignore injustices—even crime—if these acts are committed in a spirit of overzealousness to safeguard their well-being. Many Germans and Italians, in fact, were willing to excuse not only the denial of political rights but the most horrible acts of violence in the name of anti-communism.

Most important of all was the role played by these great charlatans themselves. They had the ability to tell their followers anything and convince them of its truth, and in the process they convinced themselves. They exuded confidence, and confidence is infectious.

Historical figures as colorful as Hitler and Mussolini would be widely studied no matter when they lived. Current students, however, are particularly fascinated by these two dictators because they are men of our own age (They used automobiles, airplanes and microphones; we can see them in films and hear their voices.) and because many of the problems and social forces which existed during their lives still exist today.

Certainly racial antagonism is one of the major problems in the world today. It was Hitler, of course, who took racism through its stages of discrimination and segregation to its logical conclusion, genocide.

Recently I asked a student who was obviously very interested in this period if she were enjoying her study. She said, “Well, frankly, it has shaken my confidence in human nature. I am just not convinced that something like this couldn't happen again.” None of us, I believe, should ignore this possibility.

A 1963 Furman graduate, Dr. Block received the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Modern European History from the University of Wisconsin. While attending Wisconsin, he held a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, a Wisconsin Fellowship and a Dissertation Fellowship. In 1967 he received a research travel grant from the University of Wisconsin to study in England. In 1968 he joined the Furman faculty as an assistant professor of history. A member of the varsity basketball team while attending Furman, Dr. Block serves as an analyst on radio broadcasts of Furman basketball games.
"A student will usually forget what he learns in the classroom, but he will never forget the teacher," said Dr. J. Albert Southern, professor emeritus of chemistry at Furman, recently. "This fact has haunted me all my life. I have always been aware that my influence—whether good or bad—would play a part in the life of every student I taught. Of course, some students are more affected by a particular teacher than others, but we never really know what our influence is."

"I hope I have never been a bad influence," he added.

Dr. Southern has been convinced of the importance of the interaction between students and teachers since his own days at Furman, when, he believes, his life was profoundly affected by a few men. He feels that the student-teacher relationship is probably the most important thing about a relatively small college like Furman. Certainly, he thinks, it is the vital element in "Christian education."

"I have never understood what people mean when they say a Baptist college should give each subject its 'Christian interpretation.' Do they mean there is a Christian chemistry or an unchristian chemistry? Science per se is neither good nor bad; it's what we do with it that makes it good or bad. But this doesn't mean we rule out Christian influence in the classroom: the greatest Christian influence is the life of a Christian professor—inside and outside the classroom."

As a chemist and teacher of chemistry for the last 46 years and as a spokesman for Christian education, Dr. Southern has literally devoted his life to science and religion. For him, science and religion are two different, but complementary ways of seeking truth.

"Everything we know in science is revealed in the natural world," he said. "All scientific knowledge comes through the senses. Through science we have learned many things. We know, for instance, that there is order in the universe. We know that if we perform an experiment today and then perform the same experiment tomorrow and next week and next year, we will always get the same results. Because of this orderliness, we can predict eclipses of the sun down to the very second hundreds of years in advance."

But science is not competent to deal with some things, he said. Science, for instance, cannot explain the meaning of life. "Science seeks to know the 'how' and 'when,' but Christianity answers the 'who' and 'why.' Science commits one to absolute honesty of mind and is concerned solely in finding the truth, while Christianity gives the meaning of the final truth about man."

Born and raised in the little town of Sneedville, Tenn., Albert Southern did not take any science at all in high school. He did, however, study Latin for four years, which he later found tremendously helpful in studying science. Entering Furman in 1923, he took all the chemistry and biology he could, with the idea that he would probably study medicine.

During the spring of his senior year (1927), while waiting to learn if he had been accepted in the medical school at Vanderbilt University, he was offered and accepted a job as head of the science department and teacher of chemistry at a high school in Salisbury, N. C. Although he learned two weeks later that he had been accepted at Vanderbilt, he had already signed a contract to teach and, he says, he never regretted his decision. While teaching in Salisbury, he became so interested in chemistry that he decided to study chemistry, instead of medicine, in graduate school. In 1930 he received the M. S. degree in chemistry from Vanderbilt and eight years later he received the Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of North Carolina.

After working as a research chemist in a steel mill in Birmingham for four years and with the Tennessee Valley Authority for a year, he returned to Furman as associate professor of chemistry in 1934. With leaves of absence for study and military service, he remained at Furman until 1947, when he became chairman of the Division of Science and Mathematics at Cumberland University. In 1952 he joined the faculty at Howard College (now Samford University) and later served as chairman of the chemistry department there for four years. In 1958 he returned to Furman once more as professor of chemistry and director of the Division of Science and Mathematics.

After carrying a full teaching load and serving as divisional director nine years at Furman, Dr. Southern resigned as director in 1967 in preparation for a sabbatical leave that fall. Instead of going to Europe as he had planned, however, at the request of the Furman administration he took a nine-week tour of 20 private,
liberal arts colleges throughout the United States to study their science curricula. The information he gathered was used in formulating the new calendar and curriculum which was put into effect at Furman in the fall of 1968.

For the past four years Dr. Southern has served as advisor to pre-med students at Furman, a job he found particularly rewarding, he said, because he could actually see some results.

"We guide them in planning their studies and make sure they know what they need to take. Eventually, one day, they come into your office walking on air to tell you that they've been accepted in med school, and you feel something of their elation."

Furman has an exceptionally fine pre-med program, Dr. Southern believes. Each year approximately 10 or 12 seniors go on to medical or dental schools. Eighty-five percent of Furman's pre-med students are accepted in med schools, as compared to the national average of 34 percent.

"This is always just the finest group of students," he said. "They're all motivated. They know they've got to have good grades. They're so responsive that it's a joy to work with them."

Dr. Southern's interest in science has led him into many activities which would not be part of the usual teaching career. During World War II he served four years in the Army chemical corps as a research chemist and became an authority on incendiaries, particularly napalm, for which he holds one of the basic patents.

Because of his knowledge of radiology, Dr. Southern has been active for many years in civil defense work in Greenville County. He has conducted seminars on what to do in case of an atomic war and has given talks about civil defense to many organizations.

For the past 17 years Dr. Southern has spent a great deal of time working with high school students and teachers in connection with high school science fairs. In 1957 he served as associate director of a fair in Alabama, and since coming to Furman he has directed the Western South Carolina Science Fair, which is sponsored by Furman, almost every year. As fair director, Dr. Southern worked with high schools throughout the region, in many cases helping to set up and judge preliminary fairs at the various schools. The Western South Carolina Fair, which is now held in conjunction with the Health and Science Fair of South Carolina, attracts approximately 300 to 400 student exhibits each year and involves a tremendous amount of work.

But Dr. Southern has never minded the work, he says, because the experience has always given him great pleasure.

"I think we accomplished what we set out to do," he said, "although I am not sure everyone would agree with my philosophy. I do not look on a science fair as a recruiting operation at all, as some people do. I think a science fair should serve as a means of encouraging a student's interest in science. It gives him an opportunity to show what he's done, and this is a tremendous encouragement.

"It gives you real satisfaction to talk to a youngster in the eighth or ninth grade and see how excited he gets just talking about his project. Some of them become very knowledgeable about what they're doing. If you don't believe it, just talk to one of them."

During the summers of 1969 and 1970 Dr. Southern...
served as a consultant with the U. S. Administration for International Development to help upgrade science education in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). He and 29 other professors from the United States taught the most up-to-date scientific developments and procedures to science teachers from all over East Pakistan who attended institutes at the University of Rajshahi. Although classes were conducted in English, Dr. Southern said, frequently those who were most proficient in English explained difficult points in Bengali to their colleagues who did not understand English very well.

“Each summer I took over a large quantity of books, and we gave books as prizes to those who made high marks. The Pakistanis have no books. They use no books at all in their classes because they are too poor. The teacher lectures from notes and students take notes and that’s all they have to go by.

“The second summer we also took slide rules. Nobody had ever seen a slide rule before, so I taught a course in slide rule and we gave them all slide rules. They were just like a bunch of children with Christmas toys.”

Although Dr. Southern enjoyed the experience of teaching in Pakistan, he was shocked and depressed by the deprivation of the masses of people. “Reading in newspapers or magazines about Pakistan just does not prepare you for the social shock. You’ve got to be there and smell the atmosphere. You couldn’t believe some things unless you see them.”

Dr. Southern was asked to return to Pakistan in 1971 for two years in a follow-up program to visit the various schools and determine what sort of equipment they needed. He had tentatively agreed to return for 18 months when the war in East Pakistan broke out and the program was cancelled.

Throughout his entire career Dr. Southern has been an ardent spokesman for Christian education, which he believes has an important role in higher education. “Of course, Christian education—education of students in the environment of Christian values—can take place at any institution,” he said. “However, I think there is something inherently good about a school which is sponsored by a Christian organization, as Furman is sponsored by South Carolina Baptists. I can’t quite put my finger on it, but I think the interaction between the faculty and the students is the key factor.”

Besides speaking on literally hundreds of occasions—at meetings, seminars and conventions, Dr. Southern has served the Baptist denomination in many ways. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Southern Baptist Foundation for several years, president of the Alabama State Brotherhood and for nine years served as the South Carolina representative on the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. From 1966 to 1969 he served as chairman of the commission.

Dr. Southern officially retired as a member of the Furman faculty last spring. In retirement, he says, he hopes to have more time for some of his other interests, including hiking and glass blowing. He is a charter member and enthusiastic supporter of the Greenville Natural History Association, which sponsors many hikes. A ten-acre tract of land, which was recently acquired by the club, is named the Albert Southern Nature Trail in his honor. Dr. Southern is also a skilled glass blower, having become interested in blowing glass for the laboratory and later studying decorative glass blowing at Penland Crafts School and at Arrowmont Crafts School in Gatlinburg, N. C.

He is especially looking forward to being able to travel more. In addition to his trips to Pakistan, he and Mrs. Southern have been to Europe several times. In September they plan to go to England and the Scandinavian countries again, and next January they hope to go to Israel with a group from Furman.

In his vitality and wide range of interests, in his concern for other people—especially young people—and his desire to communicate to them his own knowledge and understanding, in his devotion to the pursuit of truth intellectually and spiritually, Dr. Southern exemplifies a certain kind of teacher who has literally made Furman the school it is. Inside and outside the classroom he has influenced countless students who will in turn reflect the same values in their own lives. Surely, this is the finest kind of education.
The first day that we walked our land, measured the acres, crossed a strand of fence into this world of trees and field . . .

So begins a poem I’ve never finished, may never finish. There’s a special difficulty in trying to write about the life Don and I have here in our forest home, because once we did cross into this world of trees and field 14 years ago something magical happened—is still happening—and magic is always elusive to words.

Our home is a small cabin surrounded by woods, located a half-mile from a road and neighbors, and miles from any town. We built it ourselves, and also Don’s pottery workshop and my office for writing.

We began the house back in 1959 as a sort of temporary one-room shelter, but it has evolved into a roomy, wonderful home. Its special features, to me, are the large glass sections that open directly into the forest, and the screened-in sleeping porch we use year-round. The cabin is so inconspicuous a part of the surroundings that most of the wildlife has learned to accept and ignore its presence. The creatures who visit our feeding station, or simply pass by the glass in their daily wanderings, are always interesting to watch. In addition to dozens of familiar species of birds there are hummingbirds in a tiny, walnut-shaped nest outside my office window, glimpses of a snipe and her ridiculously long-beaked biddies; a punctual oven-bird who goes walking past each morning as we’re eating breakfast; and the magnificent pileated woodpecker, his intensely red head as visible through the greenery as day-glo paint. There are friendly squirrels whose faces and personalities we’ve learned, skunks and possums and rabbits, numerous types of snakes (seen as often in the trees as on the ground) and occasional visits from our special friends, the foxes.

Often, the animal sagas we observe reappear in our work as decorations or forms for pots, or the subject of poems. Here, there is always something happening to marvel at and learn from—a bat, startled out of its daytime roost, becoming red and translucent as it flies between us and the sun; a rabbit playing tag with a pine seedling; crows having a joyous communal bathing party in the creek.

Since their marriage in 1958, Bennie Lee Sinclair and Don Lewis have lived and worked in the middle of a forest—with animals as friends and neighbors.
How did we come to be here? Don and I met as freshmen at Furman in the winter of 1957, and were married six months later. The decisions we made—to both continue our educations, to move to two acres of cutover timber land in a remote area and build our house ourselves—may have seemed “unconventional” to others, but made good sense to us. We were both working and Don, an ex-Marine Corps sergeant, was drawing the GI Bill. We were both from “broken” homes and distrusted marriage as we had seen it. I had a horror of debt, having watched my mother and grandmother struggle to make mortgage payments over the years, while Don, who had always lived in rented houses (and, as a child, spent several years in orphanages and a crippled children’s home) wanted to own his own home, even if it had to be a shack. We both loved the out-of-doors and solitude: we felt that we were moving toward the good life, not away from it.

Our cabin grew slowly, as we bought only small amounts of materials as we could afford them. We camped out the first year—looking back, I’m not sure how we managed, but I remember being more invigorated by the elements than discouraged. Our second summer here, we elected to work on neighboring farms rather than take jobs in town. Though the pay was less (only 75 cents an hour!), we had more time to work on our home, and fewer expenses. And we enjoyed the considerable side benefit of endless tall tales spun by the old timers we worked with. We picked grapes and peaches, drove truckloads of produce to the farmers market, and did whatever other odd jobs occurred at harvest time. By autumn, the basic structure of the house was complete. We had no electricity, water, or driveway, but we could keep warm enough with our woodstove, the creek water in those days was pure enough to drink, and we did our studying by kerosene lamps. Our garden that year was so successful that we not only canned enough (only 75 cents an hour!), we had more time to work on our home, and fewer expenses. And we enjoyed the considerable side benefit of endless tall tales spun by the old timers we worked with. We picked grapes and peaches, drove truckloads of produce to the farmers market, and did whatever other odd jobs occurred at harvest time. By autumn, the basic structure of the house was complete. We had no electricity, water, or driveway, but we could keep warm enough with our woodstove, the creek water in those days was pure enough to drink, and we did our studying by kerosene lamps. Our garden that year was so successful that we not only canned enough for ourselves but sold bushels of surplus vegetables. We had our own fresh eggs and honey and goatsmilk, and pork that we raised and cured.

In 1960, the potter Charles Counts came to Furman to teach a two-week workshop. We had seen a small showing of Charles’ work and been quite impressed with it. Though we knew nothing of the techniques involved, Don enrolled in the course. As it turned out, he had
a natural talent and was able to center the clay and throw a pot the first time he sat down on the wheel. When he came home that day he greeted me with, "I'm going to be a potter!" and, though I had no idea, really, what a potter was, I knew it had to be right because he was so happy.

We both graduated in June of 1961 and left immediately for three months in California, where Don received advanced training under Marguerite Wildenhain at her Pond Farm Workshop. Marguerite is a Bauhaus master-potter, a fine and demanding teacher, and after Don studied with her he was ready to strike out on his own and become a professional potter.

And we were more than ready to settle, at last, into our cabin and our own work. In California we held three full-time jobs between us to pay our way. Don had supported himself since he was 16 and wanted to adjust life to his own schedule instead of someone else's. I know that most people resent punching a time-clock, but there are some who find it unbearable and I guess they're the ones who go out and find a different type of livelihood. Here, a 12 or 14 hour work day is common, but we can arrange the schedule to suit ourselves—take off when we want to and make up the time later—and that element of freedom seems to be essential to our creative work.

Those first years out of school, all our income came from the sale of Don's pots. We did not sell from his studio, preferring as we do our privacy, so we traveled to craftsman's fairs and shops throughout the Southern Appalachians. I helped with potshop chores and merchandising, and on my own time worked at learning how to write. We continued to try and live as self-sufficient and debt-free an existence as possible, and so it was years before we finally had a driveway and electricity and running water. My poems and short stories began appearing in print in the late 1960's, and in 1971 my first book of poems was published. Now, poetry is responsible for part of our income. I suppose that our income is derived from two of the most precarious professions there are, but we enjoy the work we do.

Though we do spend much of our time in this rural area, 20th century urban life is also a part of our thought and work, and it too becomes subject matter. We don't try to be "rustic," to run away from problems we all share, or live in the past. We do, however, find that a life close to nature helps us get through difficult times. Nature is so self-evident and rejuvenative—a solitary walk in the woods seems to help put any human problem in perspective.

On occasion, we have raised orphaned animals until they were old enough to go back to the wild: a newborn squirrel whose nest blew down in a windstorm; a rabbit whose burrow was plowed up; and, of course, our fox. It is a wonderful experience to have a fox for a friend—or any wild animal, I think. When I was a child I read a statement by Albert Schweitzer—something to the effect that life is a precious gift and we have no right to take it from anything, not even an ant—and at the time I thought it exaggerated if not bizarre. But I see the wisdom in that statement now, as we have learned here that each creature has his place, and the things we are taught to fear—snakes or spiders or whatever—wish us no harm. We aren't always able to co-exist in harmony—once, a skunk wandered in and we had to vacate the house for two weeks; and each spring a swarm of bees tries to settle in the attic; and now and then a snake or lizard gets in and causes some panic—but we do evict trespassers humanely. Even our domesticated animals have learned tolerance. There is a wild rabbit who eats with the geese, and an owl who roosts in the chicken pen, and a possum who visits under the house with no objection from the cats and dogs.

Don and I both thrive on privacy. I don't quite know why—I suppose we see enough of people through all the business of shows and readings and such that we don't get lonely during the long stretches when we just like to stay home and work. We understand each other's long silences and vacant stares when we're thinking about new projects. Maintaining our privacy through all the publicity that accompanies creative work is not always easy for us. In 1964 our friend, Life photographer
"I suppose that our income is derived from two of the most precarious professions there are...."
"We have learned here that each creature has his place."

Declan Haun, did a pictorial essay about Don's work for a national trade magazine, and accompanying Dec's fine photos was a short article about our "pioneering" way of life that pictures us, rather romantically, as "frugal, independent, and free." I suppose it coincided with the new movement back to the land, but to our dismay we were overrun with visitors who wanted to emulate our "lifestyle" or simply look at us. Since then, we are wary of anyone writing about our way of life—straight news stories and reviews about our work say what needs to be said. What really counts is word-of-mouth—pottery and poetry enthusiasts are evangelical people, and if they are moved by your work they will tell others, and the word spreads.

With all the current talk about impending ecological disaster, I spent some time recently thinking to see if, from the vantage point of 14 years on these two acres, I could cite any causes for alarm. I found some disheartening examples. Spencer Creek, which runs behind our house and was once so pure, is now littered with garbage and soap-suds. Though it heads only a half mile from here, drainage ditches and trash from new houses are ruining it. The small, solitary bee that so fascinated us when we moved here (resembling in flight and appearance a minuscule hummingbird) has all but been killed by the overuse of pesticides on fields and orchards, and even domesticated bees are being weakened. But most spectacular and frightening is the four-year-old pollution problem called "inversion" that so layers the air from June to September that we lose completely our view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Five years ago I would have thought it impossible that those mountains, so close we could see individual trees and rock formations, should ever be inundated by smog—but it has happened.

Once again, it is summer. The potshop and kilnshed are filling with pots as Don gets ready for fall shows. I am finishing up a long poem I've been working on for months, encouraged now that the completion of a series, a new book, is in sight. For both of us the pressures of our work have changed. Instead of a struggle to find acceptance for our pots and poems, now

Bennie Lee and friend, a "tame" damsel fly.
"Right at dusk, if I am very still and quiet, I can hear magic happen...."

it is a matter of keeping our standards immune to demand. The important thing, we remind ourselves, is to try and make good pots and poems, not to appear in every exhibit or magazine.

In the evenings, we garden: since early April we have had fresh vegetables every day. As usual, we have taken in a stray to recondition and find a home for—this time a shaggy, square-chinned dog with a comical under-bite, and he goes with us on a walk up the driveway. When we found him in the woods he had curled up to die, so weak from malnutrition and mistreatment that he couldn't walk. Now, he is a happy little dog, running to tease the cats, able to keep up with our big sheepdogs. Life here has been good for him, as it has for us.

One part of life that I find especially beautiful here is the night. Away from the world of streetlights, after all the motorcycles have gone home, rural America becomes a proper setting for darkness. Now, in summer, there is the music of owl and fox and raincrow, the sweet forest smell of pine and perfumes as small and subtle as partridge-berry blossoms. I know our paths and I like to walk without a light, twirling a spider-stick before me to catch webs. Sometimes I slip away from the dogs and sit under a huge old oak up the driveway. Right at dusk, if I am very still and quiet, I can hear magic happen: as the first stars appear and bats begin flying, the old tree comes to life with a surprising rustle and chirrup and patting of tiny feet. I don't know what nocturnal creatures large and small live there—I suspect flying squirrels, among others—but whoever they are, they are busy and surefooted and musical. And when the moon is full, I get as restless as the mockingbird that sings all night. This spring, I knew I couldn't sleep through the first full moon, so I took a sleeping bag outside and lay looking at stars and watching our kitten dance for moths in the moonlight. It was so beautiful—a way of life that gives one the wonders of the forest and the night simply can't be judged by material values. In the years we've been here we haven't thought much about what belongings we do or don't have, but of the privileges that are ours. And we try to share those privileges with others, through our work.

Bennie Lee Sinclair, who writes under her maiden name, is the author of a collection of poems, Little Chicago Suite, and her poems and short stories have appeared in literary journals, magazines and anthologies. She has received numerous poetry honors, including a Stephen Vincent Benet Narrative Poem Award. She is a contributing editor to Appalachian Heritage magazine, and one of her short stories, which originally appeared in The South Carolina Review, was selected to be included in the Distinctive Stories Listing of Best American Short Stories 1972. Her husband, Don Lewis, is a professional potter whose work has been exhibited in national and international exhibits sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution, the American Craftsman Council, and the American Federation of Arts. He is president of Twelve Designer-Craftsmen in Gatlinburg, Tenn., and a participant in Hampton III Gallery in Greenville. In 1970 he received Furman's Distinguished Alumni Award. Both Bennie Lee and Don are native Greenvillians and 1961 Furman graduates.