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Faculty Excellence

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Faculty Excellence

“THE STUDENTS HELPED ME TO ASK
THE QUESTIONS THAT LED TO ADDITIONAL RESEARCH.”

“IF WE DON'T HAVE CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS,
HOW DO WE KNOW THE MEANING OF OUR LIVES?”

“HE TELLS US THINGS THAT WE NEED TO HEAR ABOUT OUR COURSEWORK
AND OUR FUTURES, JUST LIKE A GOOD FRIEND WILL.”

“YOU WISH THINGS WERE UNAMBIGUOUS,
BUT I'M HERE TO HELP YOU LIVE WITH AMBIGUITY.”

“I SEE ONE OF MY ROLES AS CREATING
CHANGE AGENTS FOR THE FUTURE.”



UNIVERSITY *of* NEW HAMPSHIRE

“ONE YEAR I DID LET IT SLIP THAT I STUDY HITTITE.

AND THEN, MY STUDENTS WANTED TO LEARN IT,

SO I OFFERED A TWO-COURSE SEQUENCE.”

Faculty Excellence Awards 2003

“I BELIEVE TEACHING MAKES MY RESEARCH BETTER

AND RESEARCH MAKES MY TEACHING BETTER.”

“HE LIKES TO DISCUSS CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES AND

PRESENT UNUSUAL IDEAS TO SEE HOW PEOPLE REACT.”

IT’S A PRIVILEGE TO BE WITH THEM

AT SUCH AN IMPORTANT TIME IN THEIR LIVES.”

“I WANT THEM TO WALK AWAY WITH THINGS THAT MAY OR MAY NOT
AFFECT THEIR CAREERS, BUT THAT WILL HOPEFULLY IMPACT THEIR LIVES.”

“GOOD TEACHING IS ENERGIZING,
AND I GET ENERGY FROM MY STUDENTS.”

“I’VE ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN HOW
INDIVIDUALS MAKE HOUSEHOLD DECISIONS.”

“IF THE LECTURE IS AN HOUR AND 20 MINUTES, AFTER 20 MINUTES,
YOU HAVE TO TELL A JOKE, OR THEY WILL FALL ASLEEP.”

Welcome

WHAT BETTER endorsement for a career than recognition from one's peers—because who understands better than those who also share the intense pleasures and profound challenges of teaching, scholarship, and service?

Each year, the UNH faculty select outstanding members of the community who have demonstrated their excellence in myriad ways. All of those who are selected, whether for their contributions in the classroom, in laboratories and field sites, or through engagement with the public, reflect the most essential features of the University—the pursuit of knowledge, the joy of discovery, and the responsibility of teaching others. In interviews with these faculty, a common theme emerges. In any number of ways, they say, “I’m doing what I love.”

In his poem, “Two Tramps In Mud Time,” Robert Frost wrote:

BUT YIELD WHO WILL TO THEIR SEPARATION,
MY OBJECT IN LIVING IS TO UNITE
MY AVOCATION AND MY VOCATION
AS MY TWO EYES MAKE ONE IN SIGHT.
ONLY WHERE LOVE AND NEED ARE ONE,
AND THE WORK IS PLAY FOR MORTAL STAKES,
IS THE DEED EVER REALLY DONE
FOR HEAVEN AND THE FUTURE’S SAKES.

Here you will find the stories of seventeen faculty members. You will learn what they love and how they have united their avocations and their vocations. And you will discover how they have graced our community and shaped our futures with the spirit and passion of their work.



*Bruce L. Mallory
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs*

“I TRY TO INJECT HUMOR INTO MY CLASSES

WHEN IT’S APPROPRIATE—TO BE UNPREDICTABLE.”

“HE’S LIKE A SPORTS ALL-STAR MAKING HEADLINES

IN THE NBA, NFL, AND NHL AT THE SAME TIME.”

“JEFF IS A TRULY ENGAGED SCHOLAR.

HE IS ABLE TO PUT IT ALL TOGETHER.”

“YOU ALWAYS HAVE QUESTIONS FOR WHICH YOU DON’T HAVE THE ANSWER.

SO YOU INVESTIGATE, AND FOLLOW-UP IS IMPORTANT.”

Contents

University-Wide

John D. Aber

Distinguished Professor

PAGE 6

Karen S. Conway

Outstanding Associate Professor

PAGE 8

Sharyn J. Potter

Outstanding Assistant Professor

PAGE 10

Thomas R. Newkirk

Excellence in Research

PAGE 12

David H. Watters

Excellence in Public Service

PAGE 14

Jeffrey E. Sohl

*Alumni Association Award for Excellence
in Public Service*

PAGE 16

John R. Ernest

*Jean Brierley Award for
Excellence in Teaching*

PAGE 18

Mimi Larsen Becker

Excellence in International Engagement

PAGE 20

Excellence in Teaching

Igor I. Tsukrov

*College of Engineering and Physical Sciences
Department of Mechanical Engineering*

PAGE 22

Gregory McMahon

*College of Liberal Arts
Department of History*

PAGE 24

Stephen M. Trzaskoma

*College of Liberal Arts
Department of Languages, Literatures,
and Cultures*

PAGE 26

**Ruth M. Wharton-
McDonald**

*College of Liberal Arts
Department of Education*

PAGE 28

Jerry D. Marx

*School of Health and Human Services
Department of Social Work*

PAGE 30

Afshad J. Irani

*Whittemore School of Business and Economics
Department of Accounting and Finance*

PAGE 32

Gary S. Goldstein

*UNH Manchester
Department of Psychology*

PAGE 34

Ruth A. Reilly

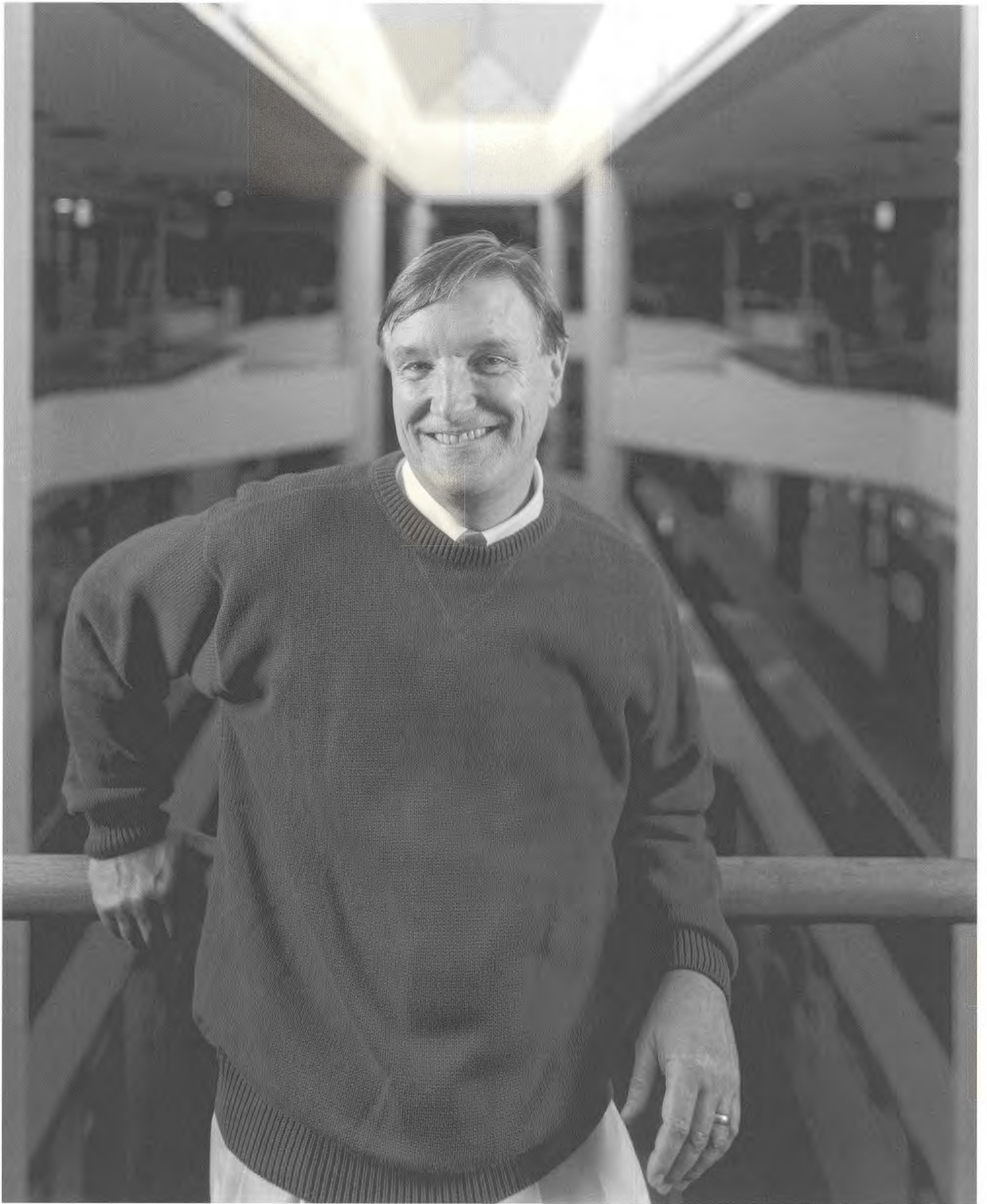
*College of Life Sciences and Agriculture
Department of Animal and Nutritional
Sciences*

PAGE 36

Dwight Barney

*Thompson School of Applied Sciences
Applied Animal Science*

PAGE 38



JOHN D. ABER • PROFESSOR OF NATURAL RESOURCES
VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND PUBLIC SERVICE

John D. Aber

Distinguished Professor

GROWING UP, John Aber rarely saw the mountains. The rounded slopes of the San Gabriel range loomed over his Los Angeles childhood home, but a heavy curtain of smog obscured the view. He remembers going to football games in the fall and returning home with lungs aching from air pollution. His concept of “nature” was defined by a two-week excursion to Yosemite National Park and occasional Boy Scout camping trips, during an era when the term “environmentalist” had yet to be coined.

That all changed after Aber attended Yale as an undergraduate in 1967. Hunting for “something practical to do in a liberal arts college,” he settled on computer science. Then, a few years later, along with 20 million other Americans, Aber was swept up in the tsunami of environmental consciousness that was the first Earth Day. “I had found an issue I could support by making a scientific contribution,” he says. “It’s ironic: unlike those who have a wonderful experience with the natural world and then seek to preserve it, I had a political experience and the aesthetic appreciation came later.”

In a gesture that would be echoed throughout his career, Aber did not abandon his computer studies. Instead, he integrated them into a study of ecosystems, exploring ways that technology could help define forest ecology. Over the years, his research has come to chronicle the work of a sort of forest futurist, one who combines data on climate

change, pollution, and the nitrogen cycle gathered by field research and remote sensing with computer modeling to predict the future of Earth’s ecosystems.

“Most scientists excel in one area of specialization, but you can’t study the earth that way,” observes Scott Ollinger, a research assistant professor who has worked with Aber since 1992. “You need an interdisciplinary approach to learn how one aspect of the environment interacts with another. John is at the forefront of several fields—he’s like a sports all-star making headlines in the NBA, NFL, and NHL at the same time.”

Aber published a groundbreaking paper in 1989, hypothesizing that excess nitrogen generated by auto exhaust and factory emissions could be harmful to the environment. “I felt we needed to know more about how nitrogen affected stream systems and forests,” he explains. “I didn’t want to wait for results to put the hypothesis out there, so I published the paper just as we began the research.”

The idea caught fire, and the paper has been cited more than 600 times by scientists around the world, generating a body of scientific investigation that Aber calls “very gratifying.” The response to his work prompted the Institute for Scientific Information to rank him as one of the nation’s top ten environmental scientists. In 1998 he published a follow-up paper confirming that excess nitrogen significantly slowed the

growth rate of forests and reacted with heavy metals to pollute streams and watersheds, which has led to a national reconsideration of the potential problems of nitrogen in acid rain.

Aber acknowledges that some of his research, especially the computer modeling, can be “difficult, even dull to talk about.” He brightens when discussing new ways to create learning opportunities—for the public, in the classroom, and as UNH’s newly-appointed vice president for research and public service. For example, he points to establishing the interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in Natural Resources and Earth System Science as one of the most satisfying things he has accomplished here. His passion for encouraging others to grow is evident in his attitude toward a project using remote sensing of foliage protein content to predict tree growth—he may have launched the NASA-sponsored research, but he is much prouder to acknowledge that his graduate students have taken this project to an international level.

“When you are research-oriented, teaching can be a distraction, but creating opportunities for learning is the most rewarding aspect of my job,” he says. “As parents we raise our children to be better than we are. I try to teach the same way—my students go beyond what I can do, and that is very satisfying.”

—Dolores Leonard

“HE’S LIKE A SPORTS ALL-STAR MAKING HEADLINES

IN THE NBA, NFL, AND NHL AT THE SAME TIME.”



KAREN S. CONWAY • ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS
WHITEMORE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

Karen S. Conway

Outstanding Associate Professor

“THIS IS the neighborhood baseball field,” says Karen Conway as she gestures out over the patio behind her Newburyport home to the grassy yard etched with baselines. The Whittemore School economist was working the numbers when it came to sports for her three children, ages 10, 7, and 5. “The baseball season is two months; hockey is ten months. We went for baseball,” she notes with a smile.

The daughter of a theoretical physicist father and geneticist mother, Conway grew up in Charleston, Ill., where her father taught at Eastern Illinois University.

She went to undergraduate school there, beginning as a business major because she wanted to start her *own* business. “One of the first things you had to take was a course in economics. I always liked math; economics is the logic of math applied to decisions and choices,” observes Conway. “I rebelled against my father and wouldn’t take physics, but economics is sort of the physics of the social sciences.”

How things work fascinates her, especially how individual behaviors and public policy intersect and influence those behaviors. “I’ve always been interested in how individuals make household decisions,” Conway notes.

After completing her undergraduate degree, with a major in economics and a business minor, she decided to seek a master’s degree in her field. When she discovered only Ph.D. students received funding, she applied and was accepted for the doctoral program in economics at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

She had never been away from home before, but soon found a second family with her adviser, Tom Kniesner, who believed that a committee chair’s job was not done when his students finished their degree work, but continued as each made the transition to being a professor. A believer in social networks, Kniesner mentored his students as a family—fostering sibling relationships and encouraging them to help each other. As graduate director for the economics program at the Whittemore School, Conway draws on his example in counseling her advisees. “I’ve enjoyed being graduate director,” she says, clearly relishing the papers-in-progress that students bring to discuss with her.

Another influence was the role model offered by her econometrics professor, David Guilkey. “His lectures and notes were so clear,” says Conway. “I try to be like that; bring me an empirical problem and I enjoy solving it.”

Her entrepreneurial spirit craved freedom after graduate school, and while she considered think tanks and government jobs, she found herself drawn to academia. “I’m always amazed at how research and teaching complement each other,” says Conway. “I find research interesting because my knowledge in one area can apply in another area and I can see new links.”

Broadly speaking, she considers herself to be an applied microeconomist. One of her specialties is econometrics, using statistical

techniques to estimate and analyze economic relationships. Economics may be nicknamed the dismal science, but when you talk with Conway it is alive with real-life drama and complexity. The titles of some of her recent papers best reflect this: “Parental Effort, School Resources and Student Achievement—Why Money May Not Matter”; “Maternal Health: Does Prenatal Care Make a Difference?” and “Out with the Old, In with the Old: A Closer Look at Younger versus Older Elderly Migration.”

The Whittemore School of Business and Economics was Conway’s first faculty appointment and quickly became her professional family. During her 16-year tenure, she’s earned the votes of her colleagues for three Excellence awards: beginning with an award for Excellence in Research in 1994, the award for Excellence in Teaching in 2000, and this year’s Outstanding Associate Professor Award.

“It’s a lot of work, but it’s been fun going full circle—taking on my adviser’s role,” says Conway. “This is the best job there is—there are just so many aspects to it. No two days, two weeks, or two years are ever the same. You get to teach to all levels; you get to study whatever interests you. My research right now is the most fun it’s ever been; I get to think about the big issues. I like being my own boss.”

— Denise Hart

“I’VE ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN HOW

INDIVIDUALS MAKE HOUSEHOLD DECISIONS.”



SHARYN J. POTTER • ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Sharyn J. Potter

Outstanding Assistant Professor

REGARDING NUMBERS, Sharyn Potter, medical sociologist, not only crunches them, she makes them live and breathe with human stories. Students taking her statistics courses become involved with real-life issues at community agencies and University programs through service learning projects. Potter's students have helped the Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program (SHARPP) director at UNH with a survey to see what faculty knew about the program's services; they have worked with My Friend's Place, a Dover shelter for people who are homeless, to gather statistical information needed to obtain grants; and they have assisted Youth Safe Haven in Somersworth, a crime prevention after-school youth development program, with a longitudinal study assessing its effectiveness.

A passion for social justice. An infectious sense of the possible and the know-how to make it happen. An enthusiastic and positive outlook. A love of teaching. These are some of the ways she's described by the people who know her. When you talk with Potter, you can't help but become interested in the topics that matter to her, from internship projects and the role of for-profits in health care to restoring the eighteenth century Colonial home near Wallis Sands beach that she shares with her husband Mike Schwartz, three-year old daughter Mira, and Chloe, a bounding Wheaton Terrier. She moves quickly around the kitchen, offering coffee and responding to questions with a youthful voice, her petite frame draped in a cranberry sweater both

stylish and concealing, so at first you don't realize that she's due to deliver a second baby in less than two months.

"We're here to teach, but also to be sure that the students have a healthful experience," say Potter about her own service work as a member of SHARPP's advisory board. "I love the UNH students—they're fabulous. A lot of my former students stay in touch. It's a privilege to be with them at such an important time in their lives."

Volunteering for community service is like breathing for Potter. If you ask her who inspired her sense of social justice, her immediate reply is "my parents." Her mother, Audrey, worked as a counselor with underserved populations, while her father, Sheldon, worked for a manufacturing firm that later put him through college and was very involved in the Jewish community and served as president of their synagogue.

Potter became a certified public accountant working for one of the "Big Six" companies that she laughingly recounts soon became one of the "Big Four" accounting firms in the go-go economy of the '80s. One of her clients was a hospital in Connecticut, and as she assisted them, she became interested in the larger healthcare issues that impacted business performance. Eventually, she entered Emory University's Master of Public Health program.

At Emory, she became interested in quality of life research while working with Edmund R. Becker, a sociologist in the School of Public

Health. He became her mentor and later, the chair of her dissertation committee, as she researched and explored the role of for-profits in health care. Potter remains interested in how changes in health policy and legislation affect organizations and professional behavior.

With a grant from Student Affairs at UNH, Potter created an internship program as an upper level course for the Sociology Department. Each spring, students negotiate a learning experience and work in community agencies with Potter as their mentor, meeting every week as a class to develop assigned projects.

In her Research Methods course, each student conducts a project from the initial survey to policy recommendations. Students in her Honors Statistics and Analysis course, completing the second year of the longitudinal study for Youth Safe Haven, recently learned their research model was chosen to evaluate other youth programs nationally.

Former student Sarah Kelsea, '01 "would do anything for Professor Potter." Kelsea is the program support coordinator for New Hampshire Healthy Kids, the nonprofit where she did her internship placement.

"She was an inspiring teacher; she really stretches your mind and pushes you to think," says Kelsea. "She's just such a warm and friendly person—so positive—you can't help but like her. She's amazing—she still is my teacher."

—Denise Hart

"IT'S A PRIVILEGE TO BE WITH THEM

AT SUCH AN IMPORTANT TIME IN THEIR LIVES."



THOMAS R. NEWKIRK • PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Thomas R. Newkirk

Excellence in Research

AT THE VERY LEAST, there are two things that one must do well: swim and read. This was the advice Tom Newkirk received as a child from his father, an avid reader who attributed the maxim to the ancient Romans. Newkirk senior was given to quoting philosophy and literature, and to encouraging his sons to read widely from the Modern Library Classics that filled their home. Newkirk spent a good deal of his childhood poring over these volumes, reading the notes his father had scribbled on the flyleaves.

“Those books were an invitation to travel from small town life to exotic cultures,” Newkirk recalls. “School didn’t seem real to me at the time, but what my father said, what he read, that was real. He would pay us a penny a page to read classics like *Huckleberry Finn*, actually he paid us two cents to read the last page of that one twice, he liked it so much. He knew how to make a ritual of reading.”

That childhood ritual grew into a lifelong passion, and, ultimately, a career involving the study of reading and composition at all levels. Newkirk is a self-acknowledged expert on the wish lists children compile for the tooth fairy, yet he also designed UNH’s Ph.D. program in reading and writing instruction, and twice directed the Freshman English Program. He created—and, for the past 20 years, directed—the New Hampshire Writing Program, a set of summer institutes attended

by teachers from around the world, as well as the Learning Through Teaching Program, an in-service project that helps teachers in more than 25 N.H. schools meet individual goals related to the teaching of reading, writing, and literature.

Add to these achievements the authorship of several books and the review of many more, and you have the recipe for a focused and driven academic, one who began his career with a singular goal. In fact, Newkirk’s work has followed anything but a straight and conventional path. Rather, he is the man who will always say “can we think about this another way,” and his body of work reflects it.

“Tom doesn’t like order,” observes Louise Wroblewski, who co-coordinates the Learning Through Teaching Program. “He once told me that he visited a classroom so ‘perfect’ it made him want to throw a rock through the window. That’s how he works intellectually. He likes to discuss controversial issues, present unusual ideas to see how people react.”

If that makes Newkirk sound like an intellectual contrarian, that’s not entirely the case. Instead, the words “generous” and “inclusive” come to mind when reading his books. Take, for example, *The Performance of Self in Student Writing*. An analysis and tribute to students’ writing, the book postulates that a personal essay is a performance of self drawing on powerful traditions of

sentimental and motivational writing that, historically, have been out of favor in academia.

“I try to treat students’ personal essays as literature,” says Newkirk. “When a student writes about working in a maple syrup house with steam rising from it, that can be seen as nature writing in the tradition of Thoreau. I encourage teachers to explore biases that make them hypercritical of student writing and appreciate student work for the force and meaning it retains in the wider culture.”

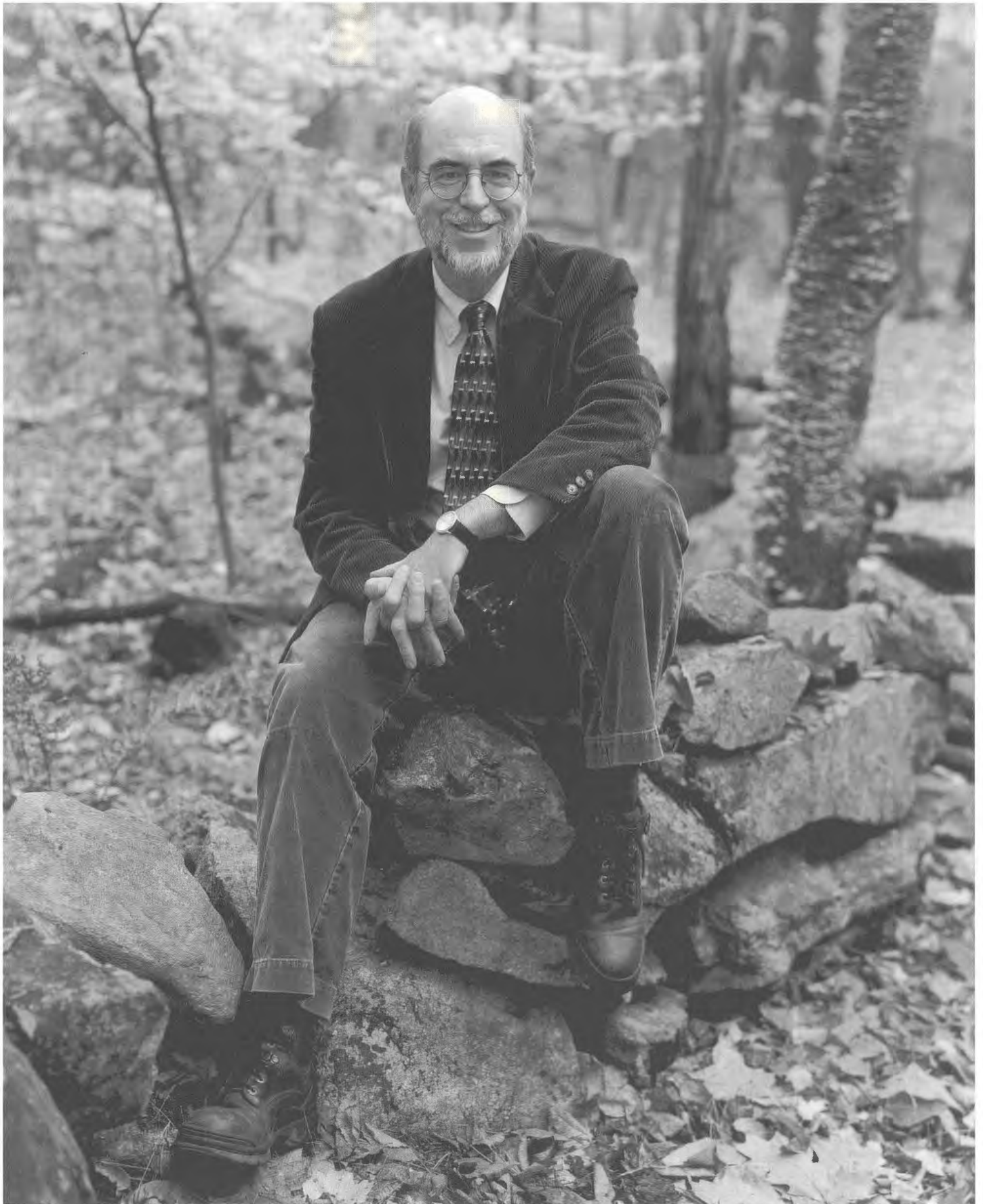
In *Misreading Masculinity: Boys, Literacy, and Popular Culture*, Newkirk tests prevailing opinions by proposing that sports, movies, video games and other venues of popular culture are powerful ways to encourage young boys to read and write. He argues against the simplistic stereotype that boys mimic violence found in these venues. And like *Performance of Self*, Newkirk’s theories in this book come straight from the source: 100 boys and girls in third, fourth, and fifth grades in New Hampshire schools.

“Tom wants to be on the pulse, where education is actually happening,” says Louise Wroblewski. “He doesn’t want to hear it secondhand, and then write about it. That’s one way he has been able to have such an impact on the way writing is taught, and why teachers are embracing his research.”

—Dolores Leonard

“HE LIKES TO DISCUSS CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES AND

PRESENT UNUSUAL IDEAS TO SEE HOW PEOPLE REACT.”



DAVID H. WATTERS • PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

David H. Watters

Excellence in Public Service

EVERY JUNE, in the barn where Robert Frost once kept his horse, two-dozen award-winning poets read aloud from their work. They tell of “olden days and newer ways.” They celebrate the Karner Blue butterfly, the Old Man in the Mountain, changing seasons.

Fourth graders all, the poets come to the Robert Frost Farm in Derry, N.H., from every county in the Granite State. The man who calls them to the stage, encouraging them through their earnest and sometimes fumbling presentations, is David Watters, UNH professor of English.

“It’s a wonderful day,” says Laura Burnham, chair of the board of trustees at the Frost Farm. And it wouldn’t happen, says Burnham, if it weren’t for Watters, a long-time trustee and moving force behind the Youth Poet Program.

When Watters talks about the awards ceremony, he doesn’t mention the hours he spends copying, mailing, making phone calls. He talks instead about one of the defining ideas of his academic career: the importance of place, the power of landscape to shape perception. Robert Frost’s corner of New Hampshire included the “Mending Wall,” “Hyla Brook,” and “The Pasture,” places preserved in his poems. Every year, thanks

to the contest, hundreds of fourth graders have an opportunity to observe the landscape of New Hampshire, and, like Frost, shape their perceptions into poetry.

“As a faculty member at a land-grant institution, I feel a responsibility and a duty to work with the community,” says Watters, who draws a direct connection between his scholarship and his role as a citizen. “I love the opportunity to get out of my office and meet people.” Translation: David Watters has a calendar packed full of public service activities.

One morning finds him in the 18th-century Drisco House in Portsmouth participating in a small group launching the Center for the Study of Community at Strawberry Banke. Another day, he gives one of his famous “graveyard talks” at the Canterbury Historical Society. A week later he is in Concord at the N.H. Division of Historical Resources discussing preservation of the state’s architectural treasures. And then there are the libraries and historical societies around the state where Watters has given countless N.H. Humanities Council talks on New England literature and culture.

Watters is matter-of-fact about his public service. “It’s what I do,” he says. “Others raise

money to build new hospitals or connect industry with academia. I’m interested in culture—if we don’t have cultural organizations, how do we know the meaning of our lives?”

If Frost were describing Watters, the poet might point to his poem, “The Woodpile,” where he tells of a work well done: “. . . a cord of maple, cut and split/And piled—and measured, four by four by eight.” Watters has, in fact, built a host of well-stacked woodpiles through the years, but he spends little time admiring them. He is, as Frost suggests in the poem, “Someone who live[s] in turning to fresh tasks.”

When he spoke at UNH’s 2001 Honors Convocation, Watters left the students with Frost’s words, challenging them, as good citizens, to be ever “turning to fresh tasks.” This is, he explained, the New England way. “The authority conferred by honors today,” said Watters, “gives you the privilege of service tomorrow.” He spoke, of course, from experience. The true reward for success is simply more opportunity to serve: new projects to pursue, new people to bring together—more wood to stack.

— Suki Casanave

“IF WE DON’T HAVE CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS,

HOW DO WE KNOW THE MEANING OF OUR LIVES?”

Jeffrey E. Sohl

Alumni Association Award for Excellence in Public Service

PUBLIC SERVICE lives large for Professor Jeff Sohl. It's about wide-reaching research, creative teamwork, and sharing his work with undergraduate and graduate students. Sohl is committed to publishing his research (more than 25 articles in academic journals), is active in securing grants for the Center for Venture Research (18 since 1993, with sponsors such as the Kauffman Foundation, Lotus Development Corporation, and the U.S. Department of Commerce), and is an in-demand national and international speaker (48 academic papers delivered at research conferences since 1983; 63 speeches since 1995, and as either keynote or plenary speaker in 14). He has given 14 government briefings since 1995, six of them for the U.S. National Academy of Sciences to agencies in France, Sweden, and Germany. And—no surprise here—he is a one-person hotline for his undergraduate and graduate students to the real world of business in the courses he develops and teaches.

Yet Sohl maintains that his burgeoning reputation is not something he has sought. Rather, he says, "It is all driven by our work at the Center for Venture Research. You do the research, the research gets published, and people take notice."

As director of the center for the past nine years, Sohl's fascination is a perpetually moving target: business angels, those intriguing and

rather elusive private investors who back start-up companies.

"Think of two BBs in a boxcar, and it's rolling along, and those two BBs are bouncing around," Sohl explains. "One is an entrepreneur and the other is an investor. There needs to be a magnet to bring them together, and that magnet could be public policy. Or it could be the private sector, by the formation of visible angel groups. So we study policies and strategies, both for the public and private sector, to make that market more efficient."

Assisted by Laura Hill, who facilitates outreach to entrepreneurs, investors, and policy makers, Sohl has recently studied exploratory research on angel funding and the funding gap, the role of high net worth individuals in the equity financing of entrepreneurial ventures, and, currently, women entrepreneurs and private equity. Through this work, Sohl has developed relationships with a large pool of key players in the venture capital and private equity marketplace. His national and international connections have enabled him to bring an impressive list of guest speakers to his classes.

In the undergraduate High Tech Entrepreneurship Internship course that Sohl team-teaches with colleague Ross Gittell, senior undergraduate students are placed with high tech New Hampshire companies and also engage in team projects with other

area not-for-profit organizations, such as the Somersworth Chamber of Commerce, Leadership NH, and Shaker Canterbury Village.

Visiting speakers to Sohl's graduate course have included entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, private investors, the state's banking commissioner, and delegations from Japan, Korea, Europe, and Asia who are visiting the University.

At the Whittemore School, Sohl has also played a leadership role in the design and implementation of a new undergraduate option, Entrepreneurial Venture Creation. His service includes membership on the N.H. Governor's Advisory Board on Capital Formation, on the Vested for Growth Committee of the NH Community Loan Fund, and on the MerchantBanc Advisory Board, among others. He has been interviewed about his work by CNBC, MSNBC, National Public Radio, WMUR-TV, and Channel 11's *New Hampshire Outlook*.

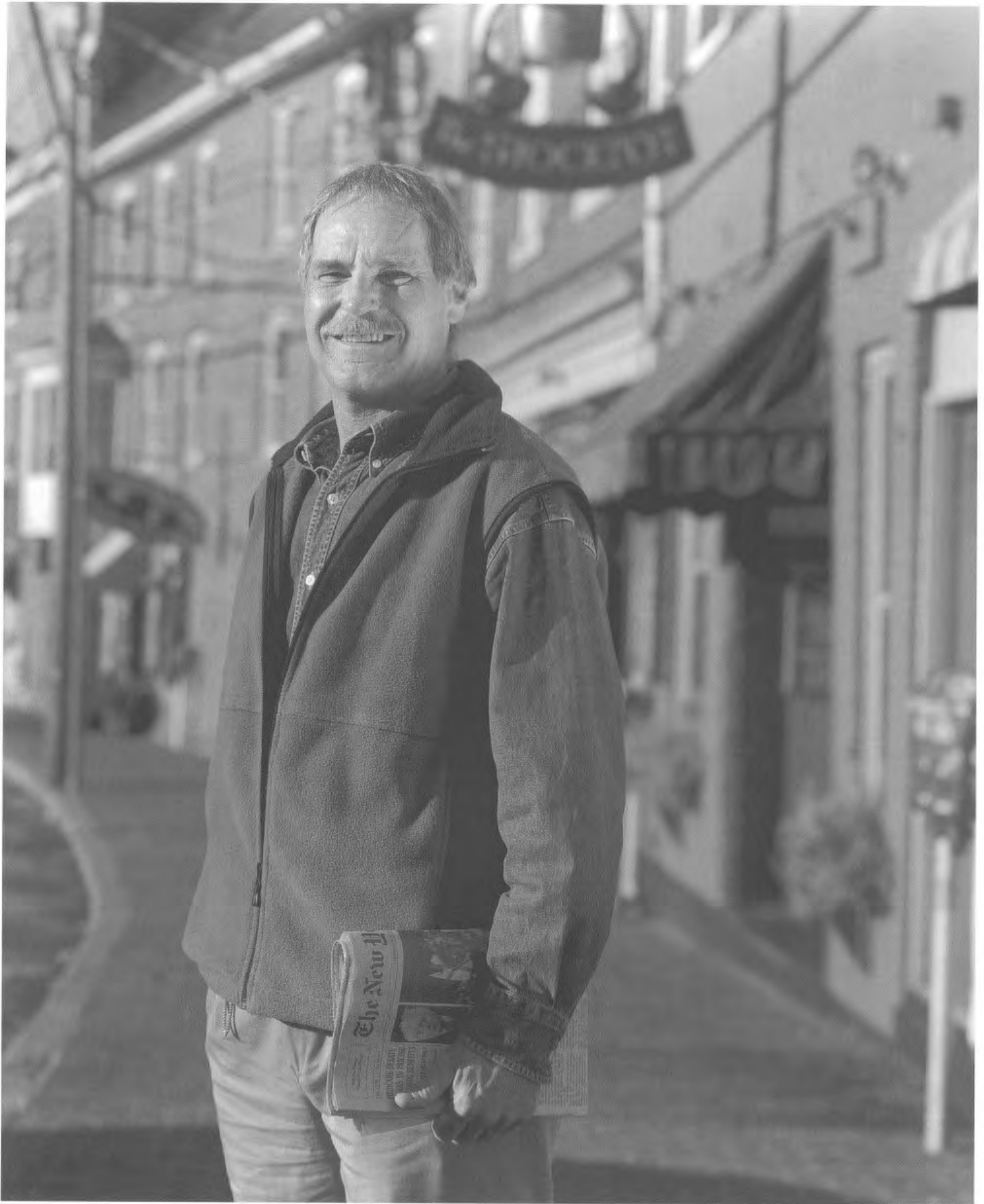
"Jeff is a truly engaged scholar," says Ross Gittell. "He is able to put it all together, bringing his research expertise, insights, and enthusiasm to his work with industry and government."

But when asked to comment about his work and his remarkable output, Sohl smiles and simply quotes his wife, Chris. "She tells me, 'I've never seen you so busy—or so happy.'"

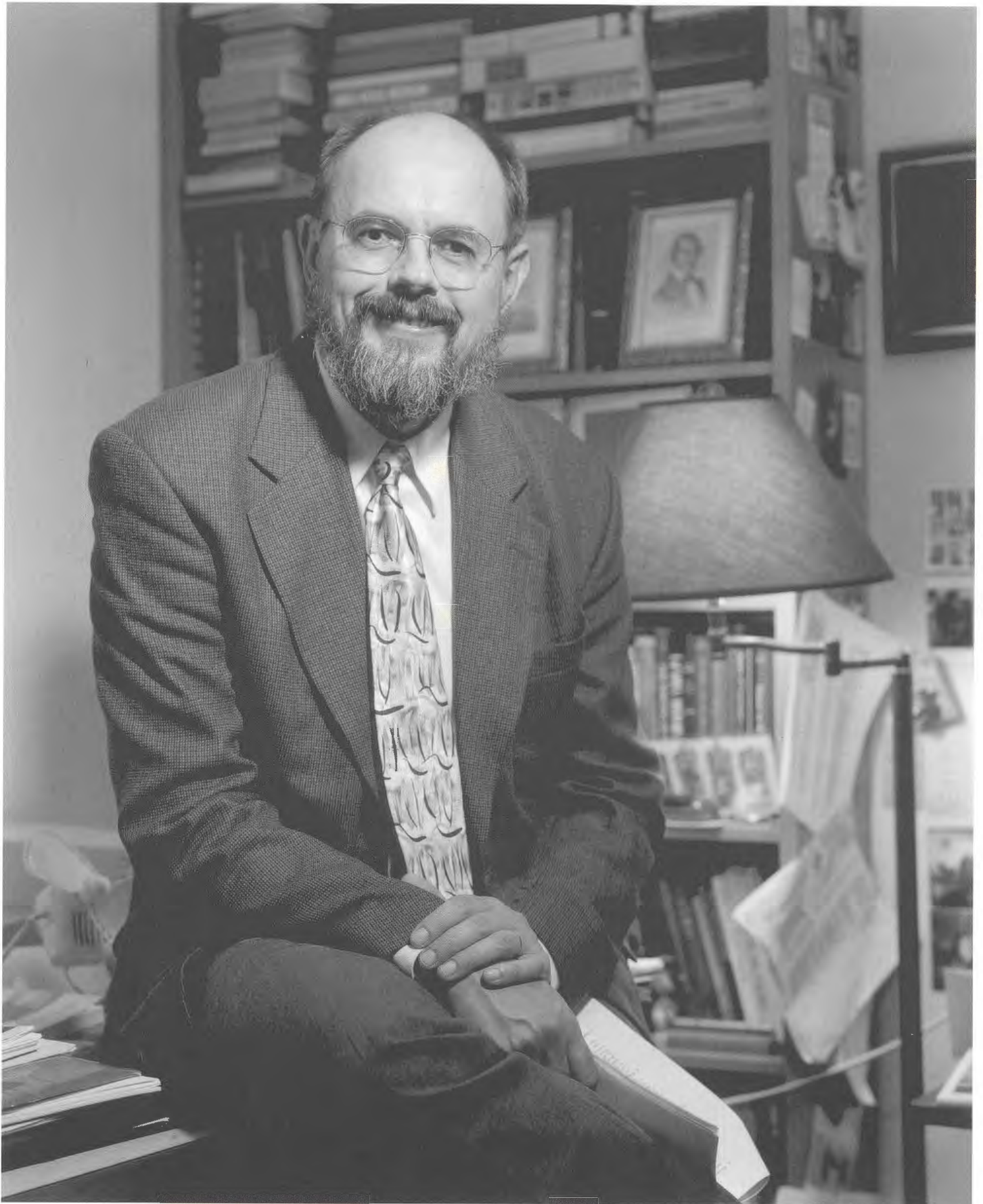
—Mary Peterson

"JEFF IS A TRULY ENGAGED SCHOLAR.

HE IS ABLE TO PUT IT ALL TOGETHER."



JEFFREY E. SOHL • DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR VENTURE RESEARCH
WILLIAM ROSENBERG PROFESSOR • WHITTEMORE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS



JOHN R. ERNEST • ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

John R. Ernest

Jean Brierley Award for Excellence in Teaching

EACH SEMESTER, as a new group of students poses new questions, Associate Professor of English John Ernest rereads Frederick Douglass and others, framing new questions of his own.

"I've read these texts so often that it can be difficult at times to actually get myself to see them in a new way," says Ernest of his life's work in 19th Century African-American literature. "But the students...they will come in and ask fundamentally different questions.

"All the things we say about the importance of research and teaching together really are true," he says. "If I weren't constantly engaged in research, then I might be tempted to come in and teach [Douglass] the same way.

"I have strong memories of bad teachers from the past. I remember one professor who, as he talked to us, would turn his textbook to the side. He was clearly reading marginal notes that he had left there some 20 years earlier."

Ernest recalls the many influences—both good and bad—on an academic career that brought him to Durham in 1993, following stops in a New York machine shop, aspirations of a career in music, and a Ph.D. at the University of Virginia where he discovered a passion for teaching. He remembers a sixth grade teacher who taught him how to write a good

response to an essay question, a skill he passes along today as director of composition at UNH; his boss at the machine shop where he worked for a time when he dropped out of college; and a class of mostly black students at Virginia that prompted him to take another look at his education.

"I guess one of the main things that they taught me was that my own education was inadequate," Ernest says of that early classroom experience. "I realized that by the time I got my Ph.D. I had been asked to read very little African-American literature of the 19th century. I couldn't tell you much beyond the few greatest hits."

This realization led Ernest to what he considers his second graduate program, "the one I tried to do myself."

"I just started reading African-American literature constantly...eventually it became the only thing I was doing because it answered so many questions that had not been answered otherwise."

Today, he still credits students as a major influence in his work. Recently, a couple of graduate students, both interested in religion, led him to expand his research in black theology as he worked on his upcoming

book, *Liberation Historiography: African American Writers and the Challenges of History, 1794-1861*.

"Because of those students, I started asking different questions about the text that I was reading. I was already recognizing the ways in which religion plays a central role in the historical understanding of these writers. Early African-American literature is influenced by black liberation theology that has become a major theoretical framework. The students helped me to ask the questions that led to additional research."

Ernest was recognized for Excellence in Teaching previously in 1997 and says he is much less concerned with recognition and would prefer to concentrate on the challenge of teaching.

"In graduate school I discovered I had a real passion for teaching. It was the first job that challenged me at every level—intellectually, emotionally, spiritually. Very few jobs give you the kind of feedback that you can hardly miss when you are teaching. If you are not doing a good job teaching you know it right away."

—Michael Jones

"THE STUDENTS HELPED ME TO ASK THE
QUESTIONS THAT LED TO ADDITIONAL RESEARCH."



MIMI LARSEN BECKER • ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF NATURAL RESOURCES
COLLEGE OF LIFE SCIENCES AND AGRICULTURE

Mimi Larsen Becker

Excellence in International Engagement

THE GREAT LAKES system encompasses 10,000 miles of shoreline, the drinking water for 30 million people, eight states, and two provinces. It was an area of the country with the largest concentration of paper and pulp factories when Mimi Larsen Becker was growing up, and one of her earliest memories as a child is the way the rivers looked as a result of the manufacturing process.

"I remember walls of soapsuds 10 feet high," she says. "Towns would send bulldozers down to the beaches to clean up the millions of dead fish. One year the Cuyahoga River in Ohio caught fire three times. There was no way people could not see that."

But instead of shaking their heads and walking away, the public started pushing for a solution in the late 1960s, and Becker, a stay-at-home mom, quickly added full-time citizen activist to her résumé. She brought women together to found a regional chapter of the League of Women Voters and when scientists pronounced the lakes threatened and at least one as dying, they focused their attention on pushing the United States to make cleanup a priority. That meant involving the Canadians under the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty.

Becker was at the forefront when they crossed the border and got Canadian citizens involved in the effort. She was eventually elected president of a new bi-national citizen organization called Great Lakes Tomorrow.

"Our primary agenda was to foster public education and encourage citizens on both sides of the border to participate in decisions made by the two countries," she said. A lesson was learned, too. "The concept of an ecosystem approach to achieve restoration of the Great Lakes Basin was unknown territory for scientists, policy makers and citizens alike." A formal education process was needed to train leaders for the restoration initiatives, so they set out to create one.

"The people we involved in Decisions for the Great Lakes were in a position to make a difference," she says. "It was often the first time polluters met environmentalists face to face outside of the courtroom, and it was an education at the ground level on how citizens could make a difference. That's when I learned how collaborative international problem solving could succeed."

Becker hasn't looked back since. "We had to deal with the consequences of the Lakes' contamination. You don't just stop polluting and everything is fixed. We needed to learn to do restoration within an ecosystem, using geographical rather than political boundaries, but no one really knew what that meant."

Determined to find out, Becker took on the challenge formally after her sons graduated from college. Awarded a Ford Foundation fellowship, she was the first nontraditional doctoral student at Duke's Nicholas School

of the Environment, and the first to cross disciplinary lines at that level so she could move into areas of sustainable resource management.

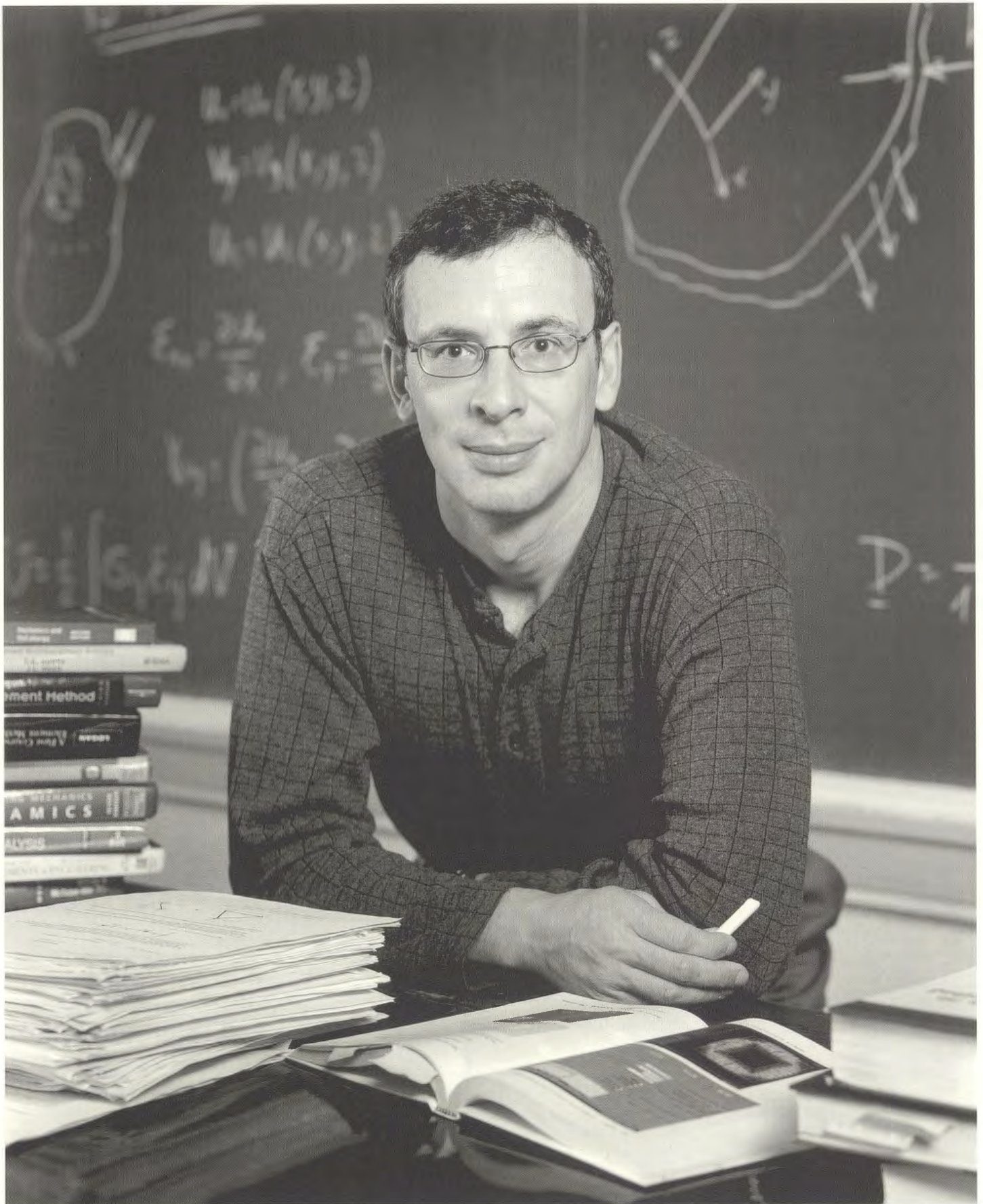
"It was the last thing I expected to do at that stage of my life, but I knew that to make change it has to come from the bottom up and the best way to do that is to impact the next generation," she says. "I see one of my roles as creating change agents for the future. I believe it takes a lot of effort, but I refuse to believe the myth that single individuals can't make a difference." The UNH-EcoQuest New Zealand field studies semester is just one initiative Becker helped found and foster to develop a new generation of catalysts in the evolving global shift toward more sustainable management of the world's resources and habitats.

Decades after what she calls "backing into" her field, it's clear Becker doesn't belong anywhere else. "This is what I'm meant to be doing. The only way our world is going to survive is if we learn to think what it might be like to wear other people's shoes. And to cooperate." To this end, she now serves as chair of the board for Sustainable Harvest International, an organization that enables farmers in Central America to acquire the tools they need to reforest the land and engage in sustainable agriculture.

— Erika Mantz

"I SEE ONE OF MY ROLES AS CREATING

CHANGE AGENTS FOR THE FUTURE."



IGOR I. TSUKROV • ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES

Igor I. Tsukrov

Excellence in Teaching

THE SILENCE in Igor Tsukrov's classroom is punctuated only by the staccato sound of chalk on blackboard as he quickly jots down the solutions for simultaneous linear equations. It is just after 8 A.M.—early for college students, and early for Tsukrov, too. Still, he keeps the class of more than 40 engineering seniors and graduate students engaged in the difficult task of learning complex algebra, and the chalk is one of his tricks.

Tsukrov doesn't need to get his hands covered with chalk dust. He could easily prepare PowerPoint slides instead, but he says nothing beats the old-fashioned blackboard. Students have to copy the lesson quickly before he erases to make room for yet more complex equations. It's early, but the adrenaline is flowing as the students race to keep up. And, because they have to write the material down, they will remember it later.

"I did try PowerPoint, because it would be so much easier," said Tsukrov, a 39-year-old engineer originally from Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine, a military-industrial center considered so top-secret by the Soviets that it did not appear on published maps. But, he continues in an Eastern European accent, "I found that when I have it on the PowerPoint, they fall asleep and they don't get the material. Everything is nice, until they have to do the homework. This way, they work with me and see me sweating and it's kind of an interaction."

While these sleepy looking students might not yet realize it, in the coming years they will come to appreciate Tsukrov's style. "Igor is certainly an outstanding professor. His enthusiasm is inspiring and contagious," says former student Aaron Sakash, now a mechanical design engineer at Heidelberg Web Systems in Durham. "He has this ability to maintain the attention of the class. He doesn't just lecture. He gets the class involved and ensures that everyone understands the material."

Tsukrov came reluctantly to the United States in 1990 at the urging of his wife, Inna. He had nearly finished his Ph.D. studies in solid mechanics, but Inna, a computer programmer, thought that they would find more interesting professional opportunities here. They immigrated to Rhode Island and he started over again at Tufts University; in five years he had completed an M.S. and a second Ph.D., this time in micromechanics. Afterward, when the chance came to teach and do research at UNH, he took it.

Tsukrov's research is in three areas: the micromechanics of composite materials, such as those found in airplane wings and satellites, and how they behave under stress; fish cages used in the open ocean, which must be strong enough to withstand nine-meter waves, but not too rigid, or the fish will be smashed against the netting; and the phenomena involved

in the manufacture of the tiny copper electrical connectors used in microchips.

"He is very prolific in his publications, which span several areas," says mechanical engineering chair Barbaros Celikkol, "and he's able to bring this research home to the students."

There are some basic rules to teaching, says Tsukrov. "If the lecture is an hour and 20 minutes, after 20 minutes, you have to tell a joke, or they will fall asleep." Telling jokes comes easy for Tsukrov. While at the Institute of Geotechnical Mechanics in Dnepropetrovsk, he competed on a comedy team. At the time, competitions akin to *Whose Line is It Anyway?* were hugely popular and Tsukrov's team made it to the nationally televised finals twice. While it may be hard for Americans to imagine a team of engineers and scientists winning a comedy contest, Tsukrov said that in the U.S.S.R., scientists were the only professionals who could be truly funny, because the creativity of writers and performers was stifled by the scrutiny of Communist officials who ensured they toed the party line.

Tsukrov stresses, however, that following the rules does not guarantee successful teaching. "The rules are not enough," he says. "You have to like it."

—Robert Emro

"IF THE LECTURE IS AN HOUR AND 20 MINUTES, AFTER 20 MINUTES,
YOU HAVE TO TELL A JOKE, OR THEY WILL FALL ASLEEP."

Gregory McMahon

Excellence in Teaching

WHEN GREGORY MCMAHON enters the classroom, he seems to be in a bit of a hurry. Before looking up, he begins the day's lecture in Introduction to Western Civilization with a pleasant greeting: "Lovely to be with you today . . ." and that quickly runs into his assertion that "today we will finish the Greeks, because next week we begin the Romans." Then, he hesitates and adds, "Unless, we really need to talk more about the Greeks."

Remarkably, in "Western Civ," McMahon covers 4,500 years of history, from the beginnings of Sumerian civilization to the Byzantine Empire, in 45 classes. The pace is about 100 years of history per class. But, all centuries are not created equal.

For example, the Golden Age of Greece (the dazzling fifth century) and maybe only just 30 to 40 years of that period, created the foundations of modern thinking—philosophy, science, theater, history, architecture, and democracy. So, McMahon has allocated four class periods to the Greeks.

Here in this class, his students pay rapt attention. It's interesting to learn about a thalassocracy (an empire built by extension overseas). And, as McMahon lectures, he throws out questions.

"More recently, who established a thalassocracy?" he asks. "Yes, that's right. The British." Salted in this discussion are short

discourses on the ancient rationale for capital punishment by stoning: "They all shared the responsibility and the guilt." Or, an aside, "Where would Cameron Diaz be without the invention of comedy?"

His advanced course on the Roman Republic, covering a mere seven hundred years, allows for more in-depth discussions and for the reading of more primary sources. In all of his courses, McMahon requires that students read primary sources.

When he came to UNH in 1988, the advanced study of Greek and Roman history was offered as a two-course sequence. McMahon expanded that to a four-course sequence. He also teaches a new history course, The Ancient Near East.

By the numbers, student evaluations rate him in the high range, always, with an occasional perfect score. And, he is one of the department's most popular advisers for majors.

But, none of the above courses are in McMahon's actual academic field, which is the Hittites of Anatolia or ancient Turkey. Specifically, Hittite writing, a.k.a. cuneiform.

"I teach my own field for about a week every other year," says McMahon matter-of-factly. "Although one year I did let it slip that I study Hittite. And then, my students wanted to learn it, so I offered a two-course sequence. By the end of the year, they

could translate a simple Hittite document. That's pretty good."

During the summers McMahon does focus on his field at an archeological dig in Turkey. And, because he is fluent in Turkish, French, German, Italian, and Spanish, he also serves as the team's international interpreter.

Originally from Kansas, McMahon "fell in love" with the Hittites when he visited their ancient capital in Turkey. The Hittites were the first people to write and to record their annals or yearly records. "They kept the records that would allow you to write history," says McMahon, who, in a scholarly article, refers to that era as "the light of history."

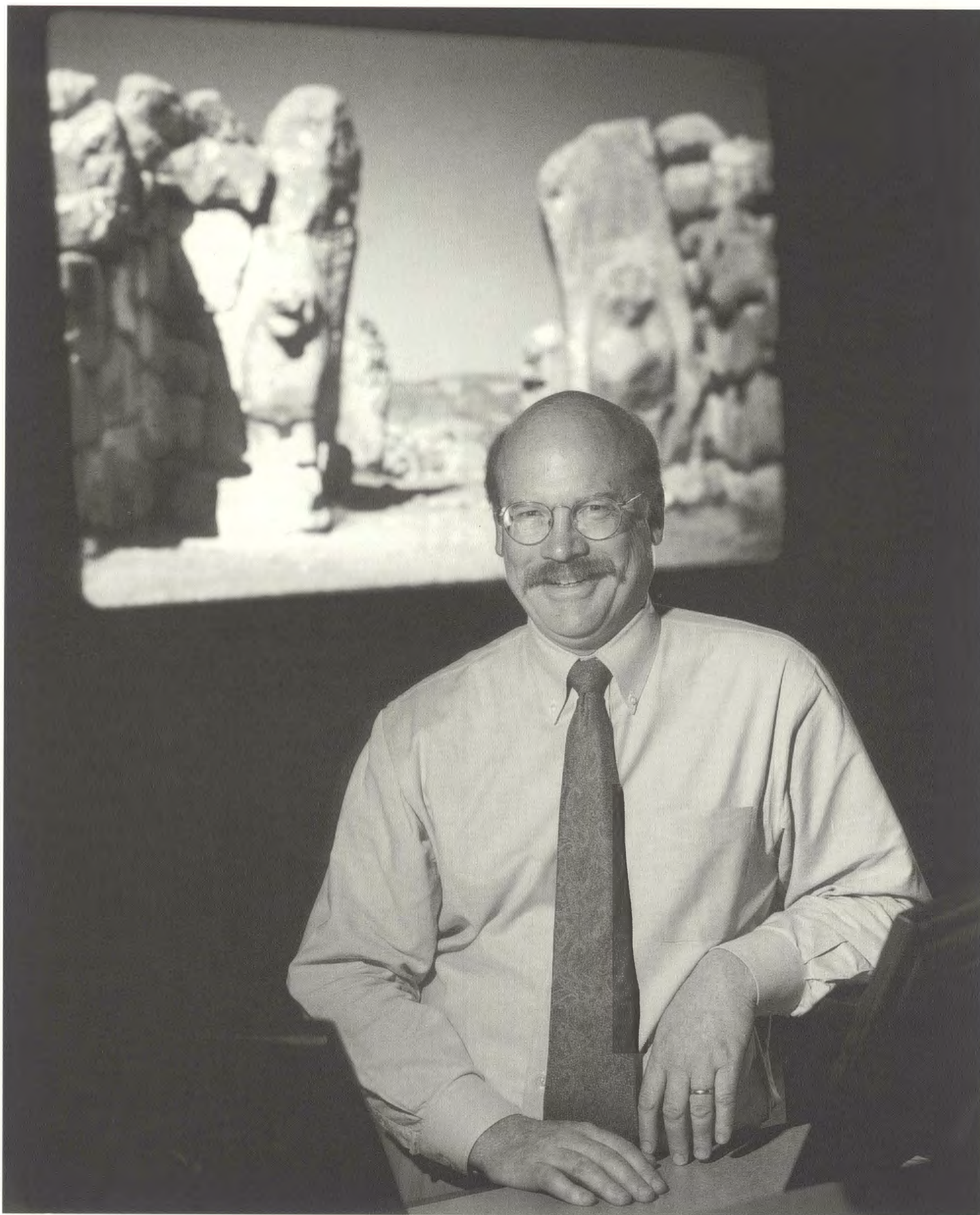
For Tom Leary, now a master's student in history, taking Introduction to Historical Thinking as an undergraduate with McMahon convinced him to study history. "As a high school student in Rochester, [N.H.], I had no thought of majoring in history," recalls Leary. "But, now I study both ancient history and early American history. Recently I wrote an article on how the founders of the American constitution applied their knowledge of ancient civilizations to that document."

—Carrie Sherman

"ONE YEAR I DID LET IT SLIP THAT I STUDY HITTITE.

AND THEN, MY STUDENTS WANTED TO LEARN IT,

SO I OFFERED A TWO-COURSE SEQUENCE."



GREGORY McMAHON • ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Stephen M. Trzaskoma

Excellence in Teaching

TONY DOUCET learned the hard way just how well Stephen Trzaskoma knows his students. A bit behind on some sentences he was to have translated from ancient Greek, Tony decided he would “sleep through” the morning class, not expecting to be missed. His roommate still vividly recalls the phone call that woke them both. It was Professor Trzaskoma, and he wanted Tony to translate his sentences over speakerphone for the entire class. Tony’s attendance was stellar from that point on.

The story is but one example of how Trzaskoma combines his sense of humor and genuine concern with his worry that students not fall behind in the challenging subject of a dead language.

“Classics is never a default major,” Trzaskoma says. “Our students have to be genuinely interested and committed.” That’s one of the reasons he loves teaching. “It’s boring just to do research because you miss a lot of the interaction. When students respond to the ideas you’re presenting they’re expanding your way of thinking about it. I’m constantly honing the way I think and present. I believe teaching makes my research better and research makes my teaching better.”

He is currently working with his colleagues on an anthology of texts for teaching classical mythology.

“I’ve been teaching mythology since I was a graduate student,” he says. “It’s the class I know best, but one of the subjects I know the least about. There is a certain body of knowledge you need to teach it, but there is a wealth of information I’ve never had a chance to delve into. Doing the research has already allowed me to expand what I teach.”

And lest you think that dead languages equals dead subject matter, stop right there.

“At Stanford I had a double major in classics and anthropology, and I always thought I would end up an anthropologist studying Native Americans on the West Coast,” he says. “I loved the classics, but worried it might be too limited of a field. When I think about that now, I realize it was an unfounded fear. You can do anything with a classics major that you can with any other liberal arts degree.”

Trzaskoma likes to remind people that during World War II some of the best code breakers on the Allied side were classicists because of their experience deciphering Greek and Roman texts.

“The field is constantly changing,” he adds. “This is a subject that covers from as early as you can find until the end of antiquity. Notions that have been unchallenged for a long time are being overturned every day. It’s a vital field, not at all static. The days of the classics professor as a curmudgeonly old guy

surrounded by books and not interested in the world around him are long gone.”

Trzaskoma is in his fifth year at UNH, certainly not curmudgeon material. And certainly in touch with the world around him. In many ways it is difficult to find the line between Stephen Trzaskoma the person and Stephen Trzaskoma the classicist. He readily confesses—even though it drives his wife nuts—that he is compelled to correct people’s grammar and that it’s nearly impossible for him to watch a television show or read a book without finding the connection to those early centuries.

“Just about everything in the past and from other cultures is relevant,” he says. “That world equals a huge body of evidence that has very directly influenced who we are today. Our ancestral societies, even the U.S. constitution, are heavily influenced by it.”

That includes our novels of today. Trzaskoma’s area of specialty is ancient fiction written in Greek and Latin during the era of the Roman Empire.

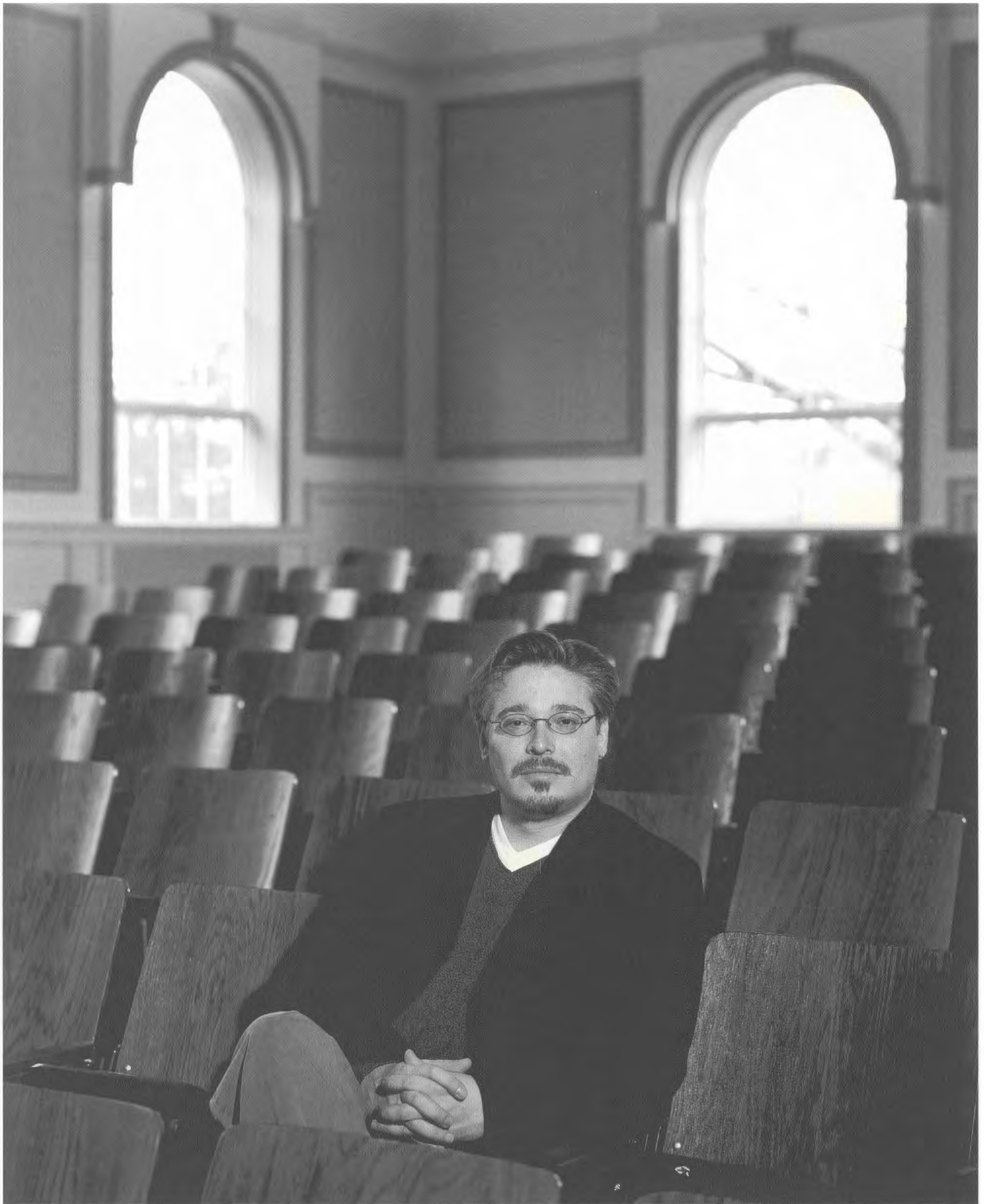
“It fascinates me that even though the Greeks had no word for the novel, any student reading one of the translations today would immediately identify it as that,” Trzaskoma says. “There is still so much to learn about these sophisticated people.”

And you can bet Trzaskoma, and his students, will be at the forefront of that discovery.

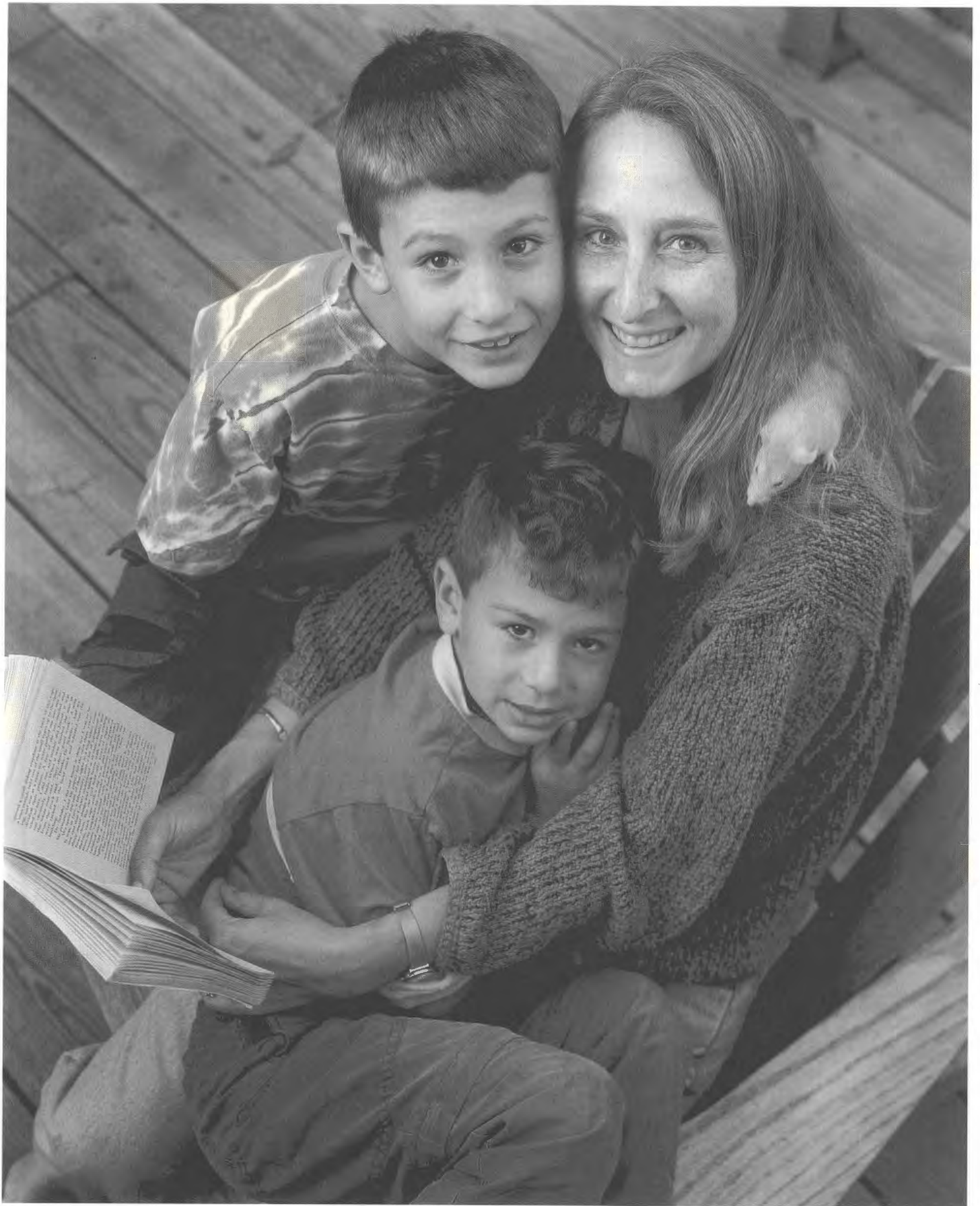
— Erika Mantz

“I BELIEVE TEACHING MAKES MY RESEARCH BETTER

AND RESEARCH MAKES MY TEACHING BETTER.”



STEPHEN M. TRZASKOMA • ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CLASSICS • DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURES, AND CULTURES
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS



RUTH M. WHARTON-McDONALD • ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Ruth M. Wharton-McDonald

Excellence in Teaching

NEARLY EVERY ADULT remembers a special teacher who brought an excitement to his or her life that is still palpable when memories of elementary school flood thoughts about childhood.

For Ruth Wharton-McDonald, whose research area is early literacy, that passion is discovering how great teachers create environments where students learn enthusiastically and become readers and writers.

“Good teaching is energizing, and I get energy from my students, from the interactions we have, the things *they* teach *me*. At the same time, they describe being invigorated by my courses so there is this ongoing cycle of energy that sustains all of us and, hopefully, moves us forward,” says Wharton-McDonald, who has taught at UNH since 1997.

“Student learning—whether we’re talking about first-graders or graduate students—is fascinating to me. Why *do* some students ‘get’ a concept and others don’t? Where is the point of understanding—or confusion?” she says. “The greatest thing about teaching is that it’s always changing. Even if I were to stay exactly the same—although I hope I don’t—my students are always different. So the processes we share in the classroom will always evolve differently.”

Wharton-McDonald was hooked on teaching from the moment she stepped into

her first classroom at the Jampa Ling Tibetan Settlement in Jampa Ling, Nepal. After graduating with a bachelor’s in psychology from Brown University, she had moved to the foothills of the Himalayas to teach English and science to elementary-age children of Tibetan refugees for a year.

“I came back from there and I thought, ‘If you give me a light bulb and three books, I can teach anything to anybody,’” she says.

But it was an experience at a Boston residential treatment facility for children with emotional and learning difficulties that crystallized what has become Wharton-McDonald’s passion. While trying to teach a student with dyslexia to read one day, she heard herself say:

“Jimmy that’s an a. It says ‘aye’ so that word is *lake*.”

“A minute later I hear myself say, ‘That’s an a. It says ‘ah’ so that word is *hat*.”

“Then I hear myself say, ‘That’s an a. It says ‘uh’ so that word must be ‘*was*.’”

“The third time I stopped and thought, ‘My God, Ruth you have no idea what you are doing!’”

She earned a master’s in education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, focusing on reading, language, and learning disabilities, followed by a Ph.D. in educational psychology and statistics at University of Albany, State University of New York. Her

doctoral research focused on the characteristics of exemplary literacy teachers in first grade.

“It turns out that if you are a poor reader at the end of first grade, you are at significant risk for being a poor reader at the end of fourth grade. And if you are a poor reader at the end of fourth grade, you are also at increased risk for a whole host of negative life outcomes—from dropping out of school to being on welfare—even being in prison. So it matters—it matters a *lot*—what kids learn in first grade with respect to literacy,” she said.

Unfortunately, many people have come to believe that the most important factor in developing readers in elementary schools is having the right set of materials. According to Wharton-McDonald, this belief is misguided. “The single most important factor in predicting whether kids will learn to read and write in elementary school is the teacher.” Her goal is to help her students become great elementary teachers who use literacy to make the world a better place.

“Good teaching is a balance of teaching students the skills and attitudes that they need, providing them opportunities to learn *why* you use the skills—the motivation to want to use them—and opportunities to discover their passions,” she says. “All good teachers should have passion.”

—Lori Wright

“GOOD TEACHING IS ENERGIZING,

AND I GET ENERGY FROM MY STUDENTS.”

Jerry D. Marx

Excellence in Teaching

TEACH BY INSPIRATION, NOT INTIMIDATION.

THAT'S NOT JUST A GOAL for Jerry Marx, that's the way he does it; it's his teaching philosophy in a nutshell. And it isn't difficult for Marx to provide the inspiration social work graduate students need to persevere in the School of Health and Human Services' most popular area of graduate study. Until a decade ago, he was one of them. A social worker, and then a graduate student, too.

"I follow some pretty simple but very important guidelines," Marx explains when asked why he thinks his teaching was singled out for recognition. Marx thinks it's important for a teacher to know the material, set clear expectations for students, be organized, and set ground rules for class discussion that stress respecting other's opinions.

When those things are in place, Marx believes, the fun can begin. "I try to inject humor into my classes when it's appropriate—to be unpredictable. I let them know *I know* they're in class with me. I don't do it to put them on the spot, but to keep them engaged."

The most amazing thing about teaching for Marx is that people actually listen to him. This might not be remarkable if not for the fact that he and his wife have two teenage children. "No really," he says. "Not only am

I doing what I love, but at home no one listens to me. I come to UNH, and every time I say anything, 20 students write it down!"

All joking aside, Marx's reasons for entering the teaching profession were a bit more weighty. He was running a church-based mission in Portland, Maine—the first layperson hired to develop services for needy teens in an area hit hard by urban renewal. First there was an adventure-based program for teens with a history of abuse and neglect; the program allowed them to set their own behavioral goals and work on achieving them while doing activities like canoeing the Saco River, skiing at Sugarloaf, and hiking in Tuckerman's Ravine. Then, he started an infant/toddler childcare program for low-income moms trying to finish their educations.

Marx says he was happy and felt that his efforts to empower the downtrodden were making a difference, but then something happened that pushed him to bring a long-time dream out of the back of his mind.

"I was diagnosed with curable lymphoma more than 15 years ago, and after six months of intensive chemotherapy, my wife and I decided that if I really wanted to go back to school and get my Ph.D., now was the time," Marx says. So Marx commuted back and

forth from Portland to Boston several times a week, working on his Ph.D. part time. "When I went for an interview at Boston College it was the first time I thought I might be discriminated against as a white man," he adds. "I was bald from the chemotherapy, but no one said a thing." And to keep himself awake, he says he tried coffee for the first time—when he was in his 30s.

Marx combined his work experience with his education. As at any nonprofit, he was responsible for a lot of fundraising. In fact, he wrote more than 40 successful grants for the agency. He did his dissertation on corporate charitable giving to health and human services organizations, conducting a national survey of more than 200 corporations on their philanthropy decision-making.

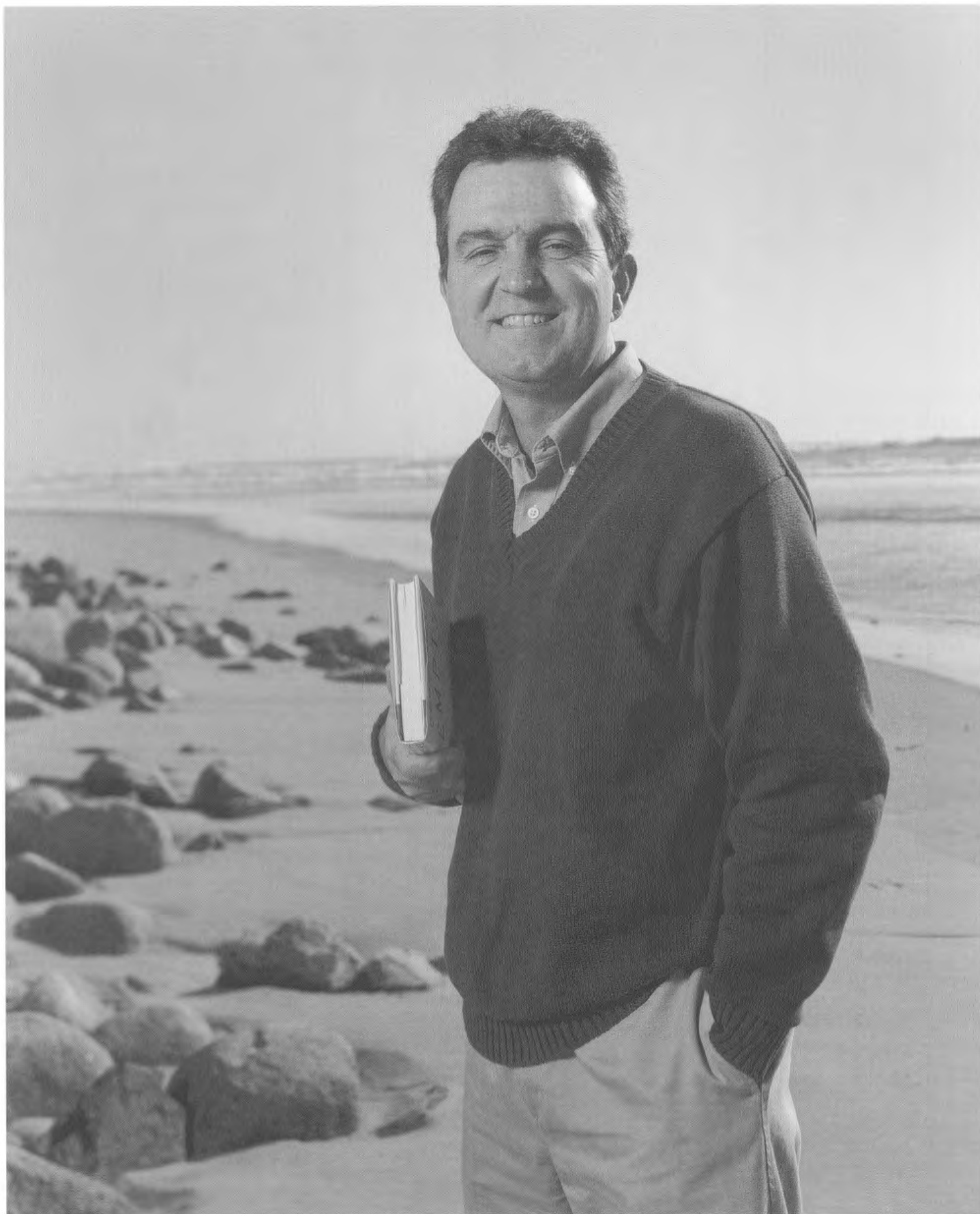
Now he has taken his experience full circle, teaching a graduate-level class on program and resource development at UNH. The final project for the class is to write a grant. Three of the 10 students in the first class had their grants funded, raising thousands of dollars for area organizations.

Marx smiles and quietly says he is pleased to still be making a difference in the lives of others.

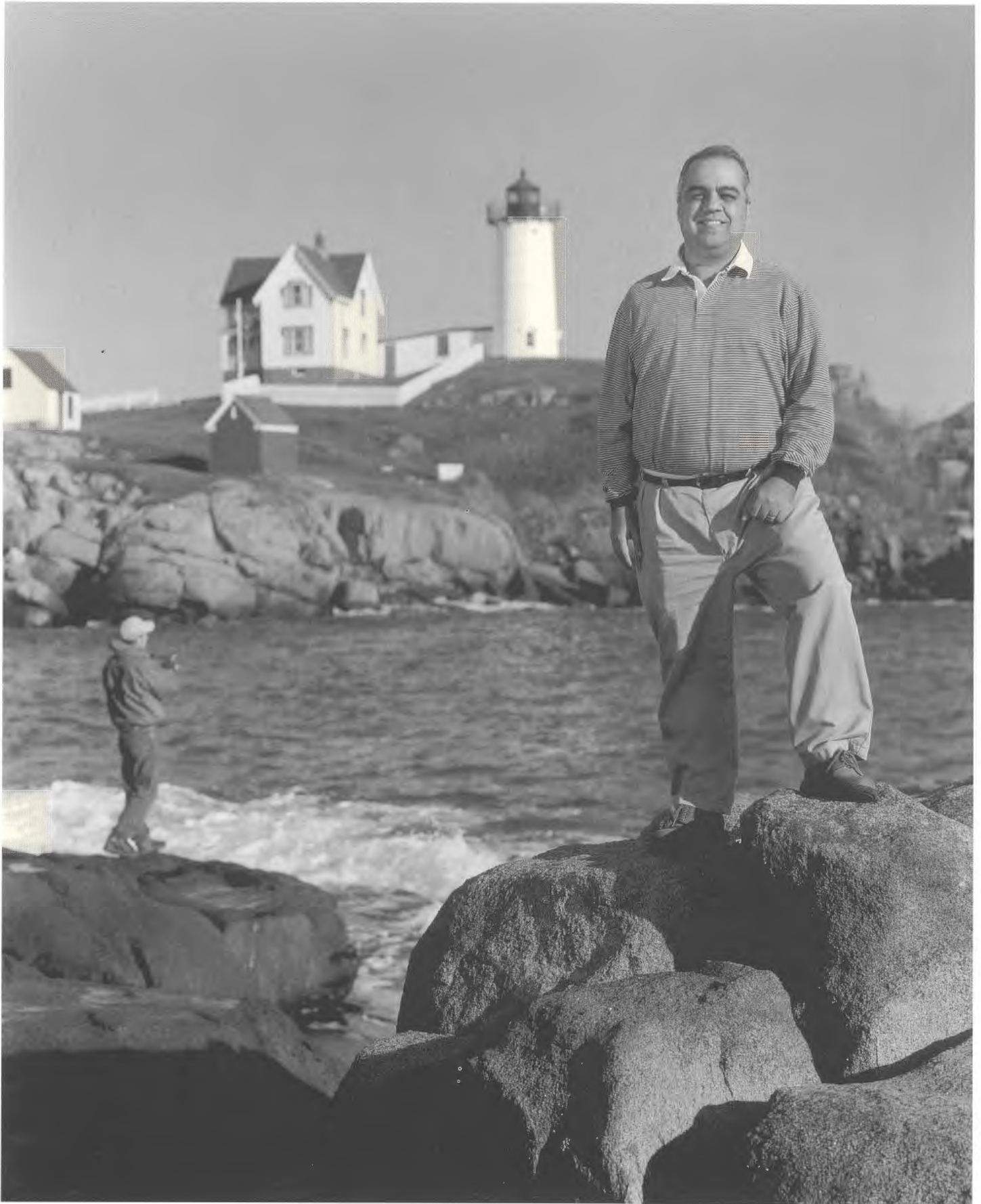
— Erika Mantz

"I TRY TO INJECT HUMOR INTO MY CLASSES

WHEN IT'S APPROPRIATE—TO BE UNPREDICTABLE."



JERRY D. MARX • ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL WORK
SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



AFSHAD J. IRANI • ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE
WHITTEMORE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

Afshad J. Irani

Excellence in Teaching

ON SUNDAY AFTERNOONS last spring semester, anyone looking for Afshad Irani could find him at the Bagelry in downtown Durham, talking with his students about everything from the latest episode of *Survivor* to regulation fair disclosure.

“Many of my students wanted more than I could give them in the time allotted for class, and for some reason I could not come up with office hours to suit everyone, so I said, ‘Fine, Sunday afternoons at the Bagelry’—somewhere outside the University where we can talk,” says Irani. “They would work or chat about different things, and it was just a fun time. Those students were amazing.”

The gatherings typify Irani’s teaching approach—an indisputable respect for students and willingness to adapt. According to Irani, “I go back after every class and reevaluate how the class went. I’ll send students an e-mail to clarify something or bring up something that I didn’t mention. You always have questions for which you don’t have the answer. So you investigate, and follow-up is important.”

Irani spent the first sixteen years of his life in Pakistan, where the tenth grade signifies the end of high school. At graduation, he learned of a country-wide search to select three students to represent Pakistan at three of the six United World Colleges. “At that time, Prince Charles was the president of the

UWC movement,” he relates. “I was fortunate to be picked as one of the three students and was given a full scholarship to study for two years at the United World College of the Adriatic in Duino, Italy.”

After returning home to Pakistan, Irani spent a year taking accounting classes, and quickly discovered that he had found something interesting. He came to the U.S. to study business economics at The College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio, passed his C.P.A. exam in 1992, and subsequently pursued his Ph.D. in accounting at Pennsylvania State University.

At the introductory level, Irani provides his students with a framework they can use to read financial statements, as he puts it, “teaching them the language of business.” In the second, intermediate, course, he focuses more on accounting standards and how they are applied. In his graduate course, Irani says, “I take a decision usefulness approach. I ask them to take a step back and question how a certain accounting regulation affects market behavior. I force them to question what they learned in their earlier classes.” He keeps charts of the results of student evaluations and modifies his teaching, in part, based upon student feedback.

Graduate student Scott Berube ’03, a staff accountant with Howe, Riley & Howe, PC in Manchester, N.H., has taken several

courses with Irani. “He has a true devotion to students,” Berube recalls. “He cares about their success and it shows in everything he does. I consider him to be not just a professor and a mentor, but a friend.”

Irani teaches all his classes using PowerPoint slides, made available to students in advance through Blackboard. “It provides me with a structure to proceed. For the students, the note-writing is done, and I get more discussion.” But he does not give them all the material in PowerPoint. Using a trick he picked up in his study for the C.P.A. exam, “I leave part of my PowerPoint notes blank, so they have to come to class—to complete their notes.”

Today, Irani says, “Accounting students need to keep up with regulatory standards, and the changing world sometimes influences standards. Also, emphasis is toward fair value accounting.”

His diligence not only helps students to keep up, but to find work after graduation. “Professor Irani took an active interest in our future careers,” says Hannah Marston ’02, a staff accountant with Nathan Wechsler & Company, PA, in Concord, N.H. “His assignments and exams were tough, but fair. He wanted to prepare us for the C.P.A. exam that he knew we’d be taking in the near future.”

—Mary Peterson

“YOU ALWAYS HAVE QUESTIONS FOR WHICH YOU DON’T HAVE THE ANSWER.
SO YOU INVESTIGATE, AND FOLLOW-UP IS IMPORTANT.”



GARY S. GOLDSTEIN • ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
UNH MANCHESTER

Gary S. Goldstein

Excellence in Teaching

AT THE BEGINNING of a new semester Gary Goldstein stands before his adult psychopathology class. He has spent the better part of an hour carefully explaining the subtle differences among social phobias, personality disorders, and acute shyness to students who may some day need to know how to tell them apart in clinical situations.

In summary, he poses a question to the class. "How useful is it to categorize people, versus appreciating their uniqueness?" he asks. Silence. "Not very," says the teacher. "So-called 'textbook' cases don't often show up in clinical practice. You wish things were unambiguous, but I'm here to help you live with ambiguity. Just remember one thing when you get out there. Try not to say, 'Man, are you nuts!'"

The class bursts into laughter. "I try to teach upper level courses at two levels," the associate professor of psychology explains later in his office at UNH Manchester, where he has taught since 1987. "One level presents relevant knowledge of the field. The other introduces students to the reality of professional life."

In addition to citations from scholarly and professional studies on mental illness, a Goldstein lecture on phobias may pull in references to autobiographies of Freud and

Jung and the Ken Kesey novel or the film version of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. A lyric from Bob Dylan, anecdotes of a famous athlete's fear of flying, and Goldstein's own fear of flying all find their way casually into the presentation.

Humor is a central ingredient of Goldstein's repertoire, but his far-ranging references and quirky humor serve a deeper purpose: conveying the richness and diversity of the human condition; and reminding students of the need to be open to their own, and others', experiences. The point is not lost on one of his most perceptive students.

"Gary ties psychology to every aspect of our lives," says Cathy Overson, a mother of three and nurse at Manchester's Elliot Hospital. Overson is exploring possible careers in counseling or teaching and has taken several courses with Goldstein. "He brings his personal life into the classroom. It makes him more accessible and helps me think about how my personal values and goals relate to my studies and career choices."

Overson has learned her lessons well; though hardly by accident. Goldstein is an adviser to the University's Teaching Excellence program. As such, he helps keep future and current faculty, as well as himself,

on the cutting-edge of effective college teaching strategies.

"Gary's scholarly interests related to teaching and learning have reflected issues that concern him as a college teacher," says his colleague, psychology professor Victor Benassi. Goldstein and Benassi have co-authored a study linking teacher self-disclosure—the kind that so impresses students like Overson—with enhanced classroom participation.

A self-described "product of the Sixties," Goldstein is very clear on the values *he* chooses to model. The Brooklyn-born transplant says the posters of Mickey Mantel and Bob Dylan adorning his office door "signify a journey from childhood nostalgia to political awareness. They represent the values of autonomy and self-examination that are essential to learning and growth."

Today, this ex-child of the 1960s turned passionate gardener cultivates the best of one age's wisdom for a new generation—one that, if Goldstein has any say in the matter—won't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.

—David Moore

"YOU WISH THINGS WERE UNAMBIGUOUS,

BUT I'M HERE TO HELP YOU LIVE WITH AMBIGUITY."



RUTH A. REILLY • ASSISTANT CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF ANIMAL AND NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES
COLLEGE OF LIFE SCIENCES AND AGRICULTURE

Ruth A. Reilly

Excellence in Teaching

“YEAR AFTER YEAR, COOKBOOKS AND DIET BOOKS ARE THE BIGGEST SELLERS. HOW NOT TO EAT IT ONCE YOU’VE LEARNED HOW TO COOK IT.”

— *CBS News Correspondent Andy Rooney*

ROONEY WAS RIGHT on in his *60 Minutes* commentary about America’s obsession with food and dieting. Never before has food been so plentiful, nor the variety so enticing. And never before have Americans been so overweight. Lack of information, decreased physical activity, and misconceptions about proper nutrition are the reasons for this major public health problem.

It’s what keeps people like Ruth Reilly, assistant clinical professor of animal and nutritional sciences, in business. Atkins, The Zone, Scarsdale, the South Beach diet. Reilly has seen them come and go. But grandmother’s advice is probably still the best: “everything in moderation.”

This is the message Reilly teaches students in her Nutrition, Health and Well-Being class. A general education science elective, as well as a requirement for students entering the health care profession, the course has been re-tooled from the legendary Foods and People and attracts 1,000 students a year.

“I want to teach them the life skills to be healthier people,” she says. “We focus on the science of nutrition, how poor eating habits contribute to disease, and how to be better consumers of nutrition information. I want them to walk away with things that may or may not affect their careers, but that will hopefully impact their lives.”

Prior to joining the Department of Animal and Nutritional Sciences in 1996, Reilly worked as a registered dietitian. What she enjoyed most was teaching people, so she returned to college for an advanced degree. After completing her master’s and Ph.D. at UNH, she joined the professional staff and then the faculty.

For a reason she finds difficult to express, Reilly fell in love with large classes. Perhaps, she says, it’s the challenge of facing 270 students at 8:10 A.M. and capturing their attention.

New technology has made faculty more effective teachers in large classes, Reilly says. She uses PowerPoint, Blackboard, and the Classroom Performance System (CPS) software to present information in a more lively way.

The topic for a Thursday morning class is vitamins. Reilly begins with a series of questions aimed at waking up this early morning audience, which packs the seats of the Philips

Auditorium in Spaulding Hall. “Do you think you can meet all your vitamin needs by consuming a balanced diet?” she asks.

Students point their CPS “clickers” at the screen at the front of the room and press in their answer. One hundred eighty-five say “yes” and eight-five say “no.” By the end of next week’s lecture, they’ll know who is right.

CPS allows the teacher to get immediate feedback from her students, but also takes the anonymity out of the classes. Because the system knows which students are responding, it knows which students are in class. And part of their grade is based on showing up.

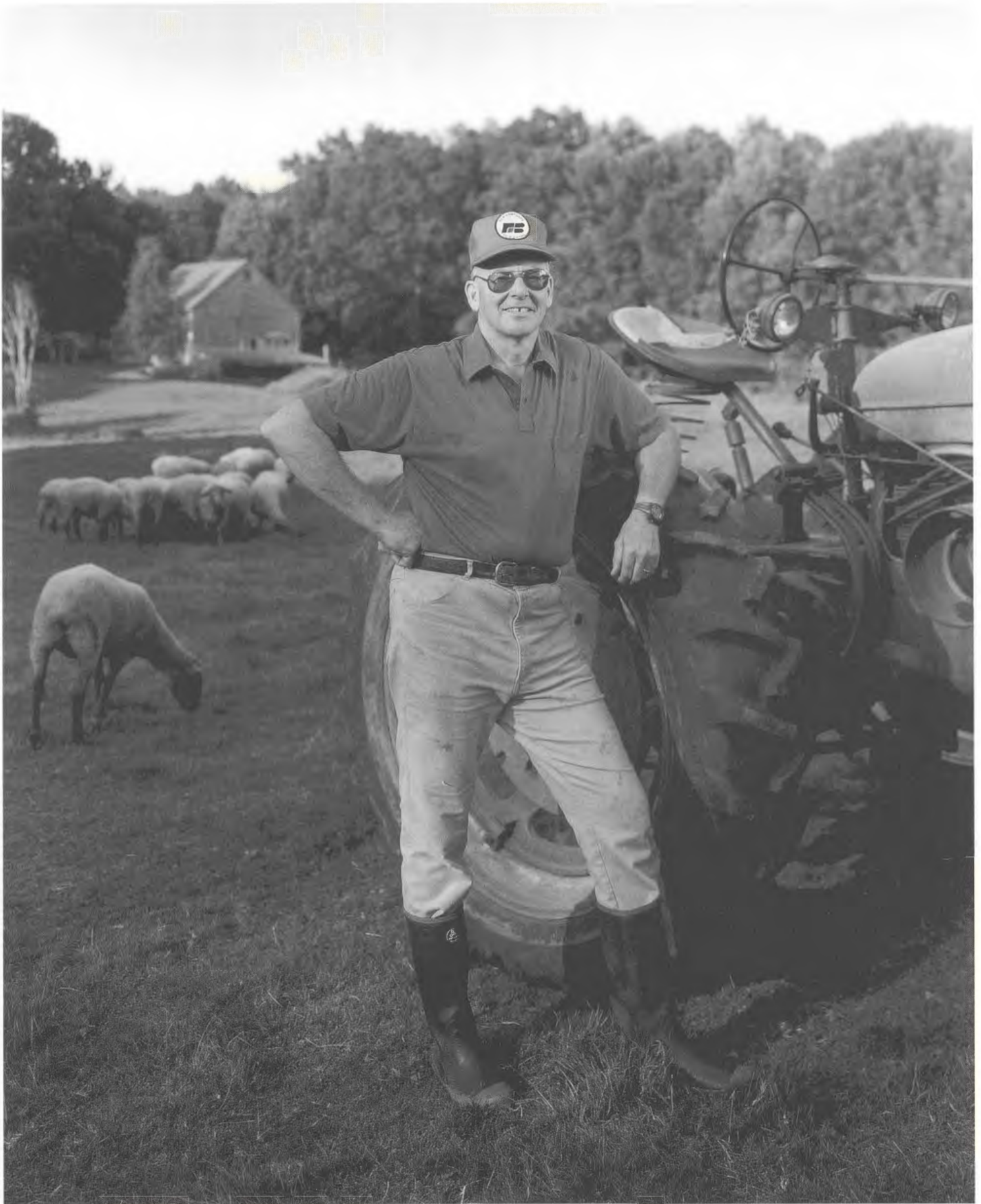
Today, Reilly’s charges learn about the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K. They learn how Vitamin A works in vision, that bone disease can result from vitamin D deficiency and the relationship between heart disease and vitamin E.

“I tell them I have seen people over 80 who are active and healthy because they have spent their lives being proactive about their health,” Reilly says. “Good nutrition is a big component of this. It permeates every aspect of our lives and it is a choice that most people have. By educating this age group, I can hopefully change future habits.”

—*Sharon Keeler*

“I WANT THEM TO WALK AWAY WITH THINGS THAT MAY OR MAY NOT

AFFECT THEIR CAREERS, BUT THAT WILL HOPEFULLY IMPACT THEIR LIVES.”



DWIGHT BARNEY • ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF APPLIED ANIMAL SCIENCE
THOMPSON SCHOOL OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Dwight Barney

Excellence in Teaching

THERE IS A LOCAL SAYING at the Thompson School that goes, “if you want to see Dwight Barney, you have to take a number.” That’s because on most days, a line of students is waiting outside his office in Barton Hall. Each one wants to touch base with the animal science professor who, since 1970, has instilled generations of students with a respect and reverence for all things agricultural.

A tall man with a classic Yankee accent and a no-nonsense manner, Barney can be an imposing figure. Yet, despite the fact that the New Hampshire native is known for giving some of the most difficult exams in the Thompson School, his students soon learn that he is also deeply compassionate and thoroughly invested in their success.

“He tells us he’s there for us, that his door is always open for us, and he means it,” says dairy management major Anna Pape. “He tells us things that we need to hear about our coursework and our futures, just like a good friend will. He sets a very high standard for us, and then helps us meet it.”

Barney, who earned his B.S. from UNH in 1967, has seen many changes in the animal science program. When he joined the Thompson School as a graduate teaching assistant, Barney’s area of expertise was in large animals—beef, sheep, and swine—but as the program evolved over the decades, his

interests became focused on animal nutrition and genetics. Despite these changes, he knows that many of his students will become tomorrow’s farmers, and his instruction combines the knowledge and practical experience they’ll need to sustain themselves and their families.

“The Thompson School is a unique breed of animal,” says Barney. “We’re a two-year tech school that is part of a land-grant university, in which the students are integrated into a four-year campus. We are able to set a foundation so our students can go out and be more employable or they can go on to further education. To me, that’s an ideal opportunity.”

Through lectures and labs, Barney’s students learn with their heads and hands; they also learn with their hearts. His instruction is marked by thoughtful consideration of the difficult issues surrounding the humane treatment of animals—domesticated and wild—and the natural tension that exists between them, now stressed even more by the state’s rapidly expanding population.

Barney’s agricultural interests extend beyond the classroom to his own farm in Lee, where, with his wife, Sally—his “partner and CEO”—Barney raises award-winning Tunis sheep. And, as a town selectman for the past 16 years, Barney has helped pioneer the use of land conservation policies that he hopes

will keep as much of the town’s open land as possible free from future development.

Through the years, Barney has exerted his quiet influence on thousands of students. One of them is Drew Conroy, now a fellow Thompson School animal science professor. “The greatest thing Dwight Barney did for me was to encourage me to write down everything I knew about oxen when I was his student back in 1985,” he says. “I took his advice and finished a project that I had been working on. I was a junior at the time and it was a huge surprise to me that I was able to publish and sell 5,000 copies of my first book. That early success changed my life and turned what might have been a passing interest into a lifelong passion. Dwight was very influential in my life, as my editor and my mentor.

“But you know, it doesn’t always start out like that,” says Conroy. “A lot of students don’t know what to make of him. He’s big and he wears those aviator glasses, and he looks like a police officer as he patrols the aisles of his classroom during exams, but by the end of the year, they know that he is as soft-hearted as they come. At graduation time, it’s usually Dwight Barney who gets the biggest hugs. He sets the highest standards and he gets the biggest thanks.”

—Sarah Aldag

“HE TELLS US THINGS THAT WE NEED TO HEAR ABOUT OUR COURSEWORK
AND OUR FUTURES, JUST LIKE A GOOD FRIEND WILL.”

PAGE 6

John D. Aber

Photographed on Nov. 18, 2003, in Morse Hall, University of New Hampshire.

PAGE 8

Karen S. Conway

Photographed on July 28, 2003, in her backyard with her children, Keith, Pete, and Kelly, in Newburyport, Mass.

PAGE 10

Sharyn J. Potter

Photographed on Aug. 14, 2003, at Wallis Sands, Rye, N.H.

PAGE 12

Thomas R. Newkirk

Photographed on Aug. 28, 2003, at the Durham Pool, Durham, N.H.

PAGE 14

David H. Watters

Photographed on Oct. 15, 2003, at the Robert Frost Farm, Derry, N.H.

PAGE 16

Jeffrey E. Sohl

Photographed on Nov. 25, 2003, in downtown Portsmouth, N.H.

PAGE 18

John R. Ernest

Photographed on Nov. 14, 2003, in his office, Hamilton Smith Hall.

PAGE 20

Mimi Larsen Becker

Photographed on Nov. 6, 2003, at Oyster River Landing, Durham, N.H.

PAGE 22

Igor I. Tsukrov

Photographed on Nov. 6, 2003, in Kingsbury Hall.

PAGE 24

Gregory McMahon

Photographed on Nov. 18, 2003, in Richards Auditorium, Murkland Hall.

PAGE 26

Stephen M. Trzaskoma

Photographed on Nov. 3, 2003, in Richards Auditorium, Murkland Hall.

PAGE 28

Ruth M. Wharton-McDonald

Photographed on Oct. 8, 2003, at her home with her children, Andrew and Ben, and their pet rat, Rosie, in Durham, N.H.

PAGE 30

Jerry D. Marx

Photographed on Oct. 7, 2003, at Ogunquit Beach, Ogunquit, Maine.

PAGE 32

Afshad J. Irani

Photographed on Oct. 30, 2003, at Cape Neddick ("Nubble") Light, York, Maine.

PAGE 34

Gary S. Goldstein

Photographed on July 25, 2003, in his garden, Kittery, Maine.

PAGE 36

Ruth A. Reilly

Photographed on Oct. 30, 2003, at DeMerritt Hill Farm in Lee, N.H.

PAGE 38

Dwight Barney

Photographed on Sept. 10, 2003, at his farm in Lee, N.H.

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