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1997

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

EXCELLENCE



Teaching • Research • Public Service

Models for Excellence

This publication celebrates the richly diverse backgrounds and points of view that faculty bring to their students and to the university. Each year certain faculty members are singled out by their peers for special recognition.

What this publication makes clear is that there is no single model for "excellence" at the university, and that it takes a selection of scholars from different disciplines to represent our faculty as a whole.

It's that combination of excellence across the campus which makes this my favorite of the university's publications. Here faculty speak for

themselves about their work in the context of the lives they live. And what a rich variety of voices we hear.

At the heart of any university is the work of faculty centered on teaching and learning: The teachers are themselves active learners, sharing their discoveries with their students.

At New Hampshire's flagship university, with its land-grant, sea-grant, and space-grant charters, teaching and learning include service to the public. But within the three-part mission of teaching, research, and public service, faculty roles take on a life of their own.

This year we inaugurate a new award for service, sponsored by the Alumni Association. This award is an especially apt tribute by former students to their teachers. Let me express the sincere gratitude of the university for this continuing gift.

*Walter Eggers
Provost and Vice President for
Academic Affairs*

Excellence in their careers

Reaching a career pinnacle means a continued commitment to students, disciplines, and the university.

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Distinguished Professor

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Outstanding Associate Professor

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John Sasner

A wide perspective on the world

For John Sasner, education is continual exploration

JOHNSASNER IS A SPORTS ENTHUSIAST AND AN avid Wildcat fan. Has been since his days as a student, when he was a member of the UNH basketball team. An average player, he says, but not nearly as skilled as today's athletes.

Average on the court, maybe. But in his chosen profession, Sasner is MVP—Most Valuable Professor, according to his children Susan, Mike, and Julie. They called Dad to confer on him the “MVP” title after learning he had been named the university's Distinguished Professor for 1997.

From his corner office in Rudman Hall, Sasner says he feels honored and humbled to represent the outstanding faculty at UNH. He attempts to summarize 32 years of distinguished service at his alma mater—seven presidents have passed through the arches of Thompson Hall, the student body has increased threefold, and the campus infrastructure has grown beyond expectations. The biggest changes, he notes, have occurred in his field, where knowledge in biology has advanced at its fastest pace in history.

“I never imagined I'd be in one place all this time,” he says, surrounded by family photographs and stacks of books. “But my wife Joanne and I love New England, and this has been a great place to establish roots and develop a career.”

When he arrived at UNH in 1953 as a freshman student-athlete, the Lawrence, Massachusetts, native had no idea where the future might lead him. And certainly no idea that it would circle back around.

“For me, education was continual exploration,” says Sasner. “I went where the fire was lit, and hopefully lit some fires of my own along the way. Today's students are more goal oriented, more career driven than I remember being, but these are different times. We need to show students the job of learning for its own sake.”

Sasner went on to pursue a Ph.D. in physiology at UCLA and would do post-graduate work in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics at the University of Illinois, before serving in the Air Force. After taking preliminary flight training, he

expected to be assigned to jet pilot school. Instead, because of his scientific training, he was assigned to a research group in physiology and biophysics at the School of Aerospace Medicine in San Antonio, Texas.

When Sasner's military obligations were completed, a job opportunity in UNH's zoology department completed the circle back to Durham.

While he never got to fly top gun, Sasner has spent his career inspiring students to reach for the sky. Former student Tom Foxall, an associate professor in the Department of Animal and Nutritional Sciences, exemplifies what can happen when good teaching hits its mark.

“John is a true role model,” says Foxall, himself the recipient of a UNH Teaching Excellence award in 1995. “The ethical standards he sets are the ones he lives by. There aren't many like him in the world.”

Foxall remembers Sasner as “an engaging instructor who supported his students and allowed them the autonomy to discover their own expertise. His ability to see things from a wide perspective was something he tried to share.”

Outside the classroom, that wide-angle lens comes in handy. Sasner's research on aquatic biotoxins—naturally produced substances from marine red tides and freshwater cyanobacterial blooms—often produces complex results that illustrate the sometimes conflicting relationship between humans and nature.

“The excitement of working at a university stems from the opportunity to conduct basic research, which adds to new knowledge in a discipline, and to bring this information directly to students in the classroom,” Sasner says. “Teaching and research are what keeps me young.”

There's a pause, and then he continues. “It's nice to know there are people out there who I've helped educate. They're making their impact on the world, and that's my reward.”

—Sharon Keeler, News Bureau

SNAPSHOT

B.A., M.S., zoology, University of New Hampshire, 1957, 1959
Ph.D., physiology, University of California, Los Angeles, 1965

RESEARCH: Aquatic biotoxins
OUTTAKE: When Sasner began teaching at UNH in 1965 there were 4,000 students, the Spaulding Life Sciences Center was being built, and the library was in Hamilton Smith Hall.



Sheila McNamee

SHEILA McNAMEE STARTS EACH YEAR'S CLASS IN Psychology of Communication with a confession.

"I'm kind of crazy."

She follows that with an explanation of sorts.

"I love this stuff. . . . And I'm crazy enough to think that because you're here, you love it too!"

What follows are classroom experiences that for many students are among the most stimulating of their college years. For others, they can be a puzzle.

McNamee's work examines how what one considers an individual self is really an intricate web of relations among people, fictional characters, experiences—all changing and fluid.

It is these relationships, not objective "truth," that create meaning, McNamee says, and what we express in our language and culture is a product of those constantly evolving relationships.

It is not at all easy to understand, sometimes difficult to experience in class ("I tell students we're going to take apart their sense of self"), and it seems all the more challenging when some of the traditional elements of pedagogy are, shall we say, different.

The lecture, for one.

"Sometimes we'll be just talking in the classroom and some students will be upset—they don't know when to take notes. I tend not to lecture, but do when it's warranted. I teach that there is no 'one right way' to do *anything* and I try to illustrate that in my teaching style."

Grades, for another.

"I take grades seriously, but I tell students grades are not final until they say they are final. If they get a grade they don't like on an assignment, they can rewrite it as often as they want within a week, with a new grade each time. And they'll get the grade their work gets on the last effort."

As these practices indicate, McNamee seeks to put into her life all that she knows and believes.

"My life is seamless," she said. "I think of all my committee work, all that I do, as a lab for working through what I write about. To that extent, my colleagues are all collaborators."

McNamee's award this year as outstanding associate professor follows on a 1991 Teaching Excellence Award. This year's nomination cited her as "among the 7 or 8 leading pioneers of the social constructionist movement [theorizing that people create meaning together] in communication studies."

She is co-founder of the Taos Institute, a social constructionist think tank based in Taos, New Mexico.

Being a pioneer implies movement and exploration, and McNamee has been nothing but on the move. She applies her theories to psychotherapy, social services, and organizational development. She is a frequent presenter at international conferences, manuscript reviewer, and editorial board member. She is a ubiquitous, but hardly fleeting, member of departmental and university committees.

Perhaps her most challenging UNH role has been as chair of her department. She's been doing it for seven years (nearly half the time she's been a faculty member here) and it's one of those areas where her theories are most tested.

"It's never either/or to me," she said. "I have extremely strong opinions and I'll make a decision. But I am most interested in listening to my colleagues and, through their help, I may see alternatives that make me willing to reassess. For some, unfortunately, that's a failing, because I have 'changed my mind.'"

McNamee, who has one child, caused somewhat of a stir at this year's campus session on "Balancing Work and Family" by decrying the need for "balance."

"I get upset when people say 'society says that's the way it is.' I adore my son more than anything in the world. But I abhor that one is to 'balance' things. I think you can have it all."

McNamee sees value not only in having it all, but, with the assistance of husband John Lannamann, associate professor of communication, in having more than that.

"I love chaos and having too much to do. Having a son, starting Taos, traveling a lot more—it's the most productive I've ever been."

—William McDonald,
University Publications

SNAPSHOT

B.A., M.A., Ph.D, communication,
University of Massachusetts,
Amherst, 1978, 1980, 1983

McNamee was promoted to professor
in June.

RESEARCH: Social construction of
communication

OUTTAKE: While McNamee sees flexibility
as essential, she also insists on a spotless
house, hospital corners for the bed sheets,
and a yard free of fallen leaves.

Web weaver

Sheila McNamee says our lives are composed of interconnected relationships



Thaddeus Piotrowski

Remembering the vengeance of the swallows

A simple story conveys strength and sorrow

TED PIOTROWSKI QUIETLY TELLS A STORY ABOUT the vengeance of the swallows.

"Once, as the industrious swallows were building their muddy nests high in the eaves of our barn, a lazy, pretentious sparrow came to inspect the work. Finding one of the nests quite in order, she proceeded to occupy it with no thought of leaving. The next day, when the swallows resumed their work, they simply walled her in without leaving the usual opening for the entrance. Her fate was sealed."

For Piotrowski, this story serves as an allegory for the fate that befell the armies bent on occupying his province of Volhynia in eastern Poland (now Ukraine) during World War II. First subjected to Soviet, then German, occupation the Poles in 1943 were also targeted in a campaign of ethnic cleansing by Ukrainian Nationalists.

In 1943, the nine-member Piotrowski family (including 3-year-old Tadeusz) left Poland in three separate deportations and spent the remainder of the war in slave-labor camps in Germany. Some of his relatives remaining in Poland were killed by Ukrainian Nationalists; the family village was attacked and family home burned.

Various estimates for the number killed by the Ukrainian Nationalists range from 50,000 to 500,000. "I accept 100,000 as a minimum," says the associate professor of sociology, "and they perished in the most horrible ways imaginable."

He adds: "This genocide is no longer questionable, and when innocent people die, the truth must be told."

This is a part of the truth Piotrowski documents in his two major works: *Vengeance of the Swallows: Memoir of a Polish Family's Ordeal Under Soviet Aggression, Ukrainian Ethnic Cleansing and Nazi Enslavement, and their Emigration to America*, a 1995 work on publisher McFarland & Company, Inc.'s best-seller list, and the more recent *Poland's Holocaust: Ethnic Strife, Collaboration with Occupying Forces and Genocide in the Second Republic, 1918-1947*.

Together, these works represent a critique of radical nationalism and serve as a warning to countries with unresolved ethnic tensions. Since extreme factions have appeared in Ukraine once again in recent years, some of his minor works dealing with Ukrainian nationalism are being translated and published in Ukraine.

Both books are required reading for Piotrowski's "Sociology of the Holocaust" course. He also brings the lessons of history to students in his other courses.

"Professor Piotrowski's personal experience fit nicely with the wealth of information and facts he



provides," wrote one student in an evaluation. Another said: "He taught about the Holocaust, but he also taught about human resistance, strength, sorrow, and hope."

A living witness to history, Piotrowski researches, writes, and lectures in the hope that victims of World War II and their suffering will not be forgotten—or repeated. He wrote *Vengeance of the Swallows* because he didn't want his own three children to forget. It was a family memoir "that slowly became a work of history," says Piotrowski.

After the Allied victory, Piotrowski's three oldest sisters were repatriated. He, his parents, his two brothers, and his youngest sister spent five years in displaced persons camps before coming to the United States. It was another eight years before they learned the three older sisters were alive.

"Eventually, the Nazis were driven out of Volhynia," Piotrowski points out. "So were the Ukrainian Nationalists and recently, so were the Soviets. The vengeance of the swallows has overtaken them all."

—Carmelle Druchniak, News Bureau

SNAPSHOT

B.A., philosophy, St. Francis College, 1963

M.A., Ph.D., sociology, University of Pennsylvania, 1971, 1973

Piotrowski was promoted to full professor in June.

RESEARCH: East-Central European history; the Holocaust; Manchester's (NH) ethnic history.

OUTTAKE: One of original three faculty members hired by UNH for its Merrimack Valley Branch in 1972.

John Ernest

IT'S LATE AFTERNOON IN THE MUB AND JOHN Ernest is preparing for one of his favorite activities—talking to students. More than 25 are resisting the dinner bell as they take seats in the theatre to hear Ernest discuss “Learning to Read: Black and White in the United States.” It’s their votes that brought Ernest here to speak as part of the popular MUB Faculty Lecture Series.

Ernest is tall and slightly balding with round glasses that are classic academic. He looks at the podium and says, “I never know what to do with these.” His discomfort at being elevated to expert status is obvious. He prefers to think of his work as a collaborative process, one that includes the students, as well as the writers he studies.

“For most of the writers I spend my time with, literature was a life or death activity,” begins Ernest, assistant professor of English and coordinator of the university’s African-American Studies program. “African-Americans, in response to the degradation of slavery, responded in part by writing essays, novels, and poems. What an astounding act of faith that is!”

John Ernest dedicates his teaching, research, and university service to keeping this faith while embracing the complexities and paradoxes of discussing race in our culture. He thrives on the tension of discerning layers of meaning. He’s willing to place himself on the color line of experience that has traditionally divided Americans and engage in discussion.

Ernest walks this line daily as a white scholar who specializes in nineteenth century African-American writers. It is but one of the paradoxes he lives with. He notes with a touch of dry humor that he “spends most of (his) time in the nineteenth century,” yet what he talks about reaches deeply into the contemporary life of his students.

“He’s sensitive to the needs of people discussing racial reconciliation,” wrote one of the students who voted for him.

It was in graduate school during the '80s, when he was studying nineteenth century American literature, that Ernest noticed few African-American writers of that time were read.

“Slavery was not a topic of discussion in graduate school aside from a general presence in the writing,” he notes. “I think what I’ve done with African-American literature is a second graduate education I had to give myself after graduate school. For me, it was like discovering the missing center of what I had studied. Everything is involved in the system

of slavery in the nineteenth century. You can’t talk about the economic system, law, religion, or literature without talking about slavery.”

Ernest views the study of literature as a practical art, one that makes the complexity of life accessible. He passionately believes that our society will have difficulty moving forward unless we can learn to talk about the ways in which the system of slavery has shaped our world.

“What we call racism in the United States is a complex product of historical and social influences. It’s all around us and you can’t transcend this,” he says to the students. “We need to recognize the extent to which the past dwells in us.”

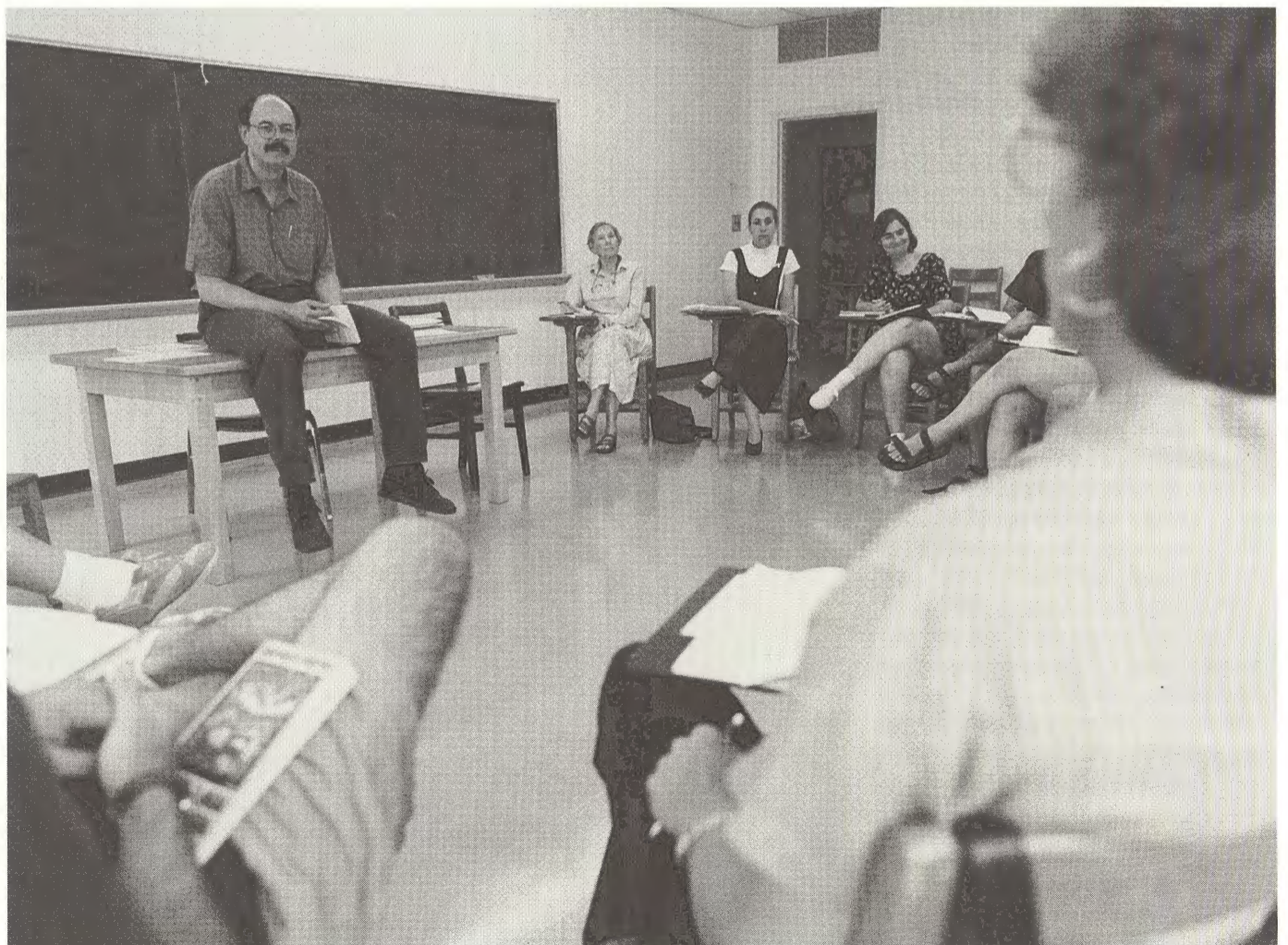
In his talk and in conversation, Ernest frequently cites the work of Harriet Jacobs, whose pivotal work *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* acknowledges the predominately white audience of her time by demanding that readers understand her experience while at the same time reiterating the paradox that they could not possibly understand her experience. For John Ernest, living this paradox is the work that shapes his life.

—Denise Hart



Reading black and white

John Ernest walks the color line



Taylor Eighmy

Casting for answers

No matter what the project, Taylor Eighmy is immersed in science



TAYLOR EIGHMY HAS A DOZEN FISHING FLIES scattered in his open palm. Blue-wing olive, March brown, pale morning dun—each one holds a different story.

“See this?” he asks, holding a giant gray mayfly between his thumb and forefinger. The two tail fibers, clear and fine, are nearly invisible against the light. “Trout are smart,” Eighmy says. “If you have the wrong number of fibers for the tail, they won’t bite.”

That’s part of the joy of fly fishing, according to Eighmy, research associate professor in civil engineering. There’s a science to it. You’ve got to consider the river itself, where you’re standing, the season, the time of day, the particular fly—even the perspective of the fish.

The goal is simple: get the fish to bite. But the method is complex, at once deliberate and

intuitive. “Catching a fish is like designing a successful experiment,” Eighmy says. “Both involve the notion of figuring things out. And for me, they both provide the same joy.”

Eighmy’s research, which combines his love for biology with his interest in applied engineering, has focused on finding solutions to a broad range of environmental problems, from drinking water treatment to municipal solid waste disposal. One project involves stabilizing hazardous waste headed for landfills by mixing it with phosphate to produce compounds that won’t leach into the water supply.

Another project is aimed at transforming mountains of industrial waste—4.5 billion pounds are generated each year—into roads. Eighmy and his colleagues are concocting environmentally safe recipes that reuse waste—blast-furnace slags, ash,

contaminated sediments, construction debris—as paving material, easing the strain on landfills and preserving valuable natural resources typically used in road construction.

No matter what the project, Eighmy finds that, like fly fishing, research is best undertaken with friends and colleagues. “Science isn’t just about solutions,” he says. “It’s about working collaboratively. And it’s interdisciplinary.” That vision of science as a collaborative process is demonstrated by the more than 75 co-author names on Eighmy’s many publications.

Collaboration is also the driving force behind UNH’s Environmental Research Group (ERG), which Eighmy helped establish in 1987. ERG is designed to foster interdisciplinary relationships among researchers, encouraging better solutions to pressing environmental problems. “It has also allowed us to be aggressive in marketing our expertise to federal agencies and the private sector,” says Eighmy, “and to pursue large federal

initiatives that demand cohesive, coordinated effort.”

Eighmy’s ability to organize researchers, both within and outside of UNH, has produced some remarkable research initiatives, collaborations, and institutions, according to Tom Ballestero, chair of the civil engineering department. “In particular, it is through his tireless efforts that ERG was created, and to him it owes much of its success.”

A decade after its founding, ERG is embarking on plans that include participation in an \$8.5-million environmental technology building, a place designed to promote innovative collaboration between industry and academia. “This is the future of the private sector-university relationship,” says Eighmy, “applied research that involves working closely with the private sector. The new building means we can all be in one place, and it will provide a real magnet to attract industry sponsors and state-of-the-art equipment.”

As he looks ahead at the possibilities, Eighmy sees more projects, more collaboration, more good science. “The larger goal,” he says, “is greater sustainability, more connected thinking, greater regard for our environment.”

Every project Eighmy undertakes is a step toward this goal, each success as satisfying as the graceful curve of a well-cast line on an early-morning river.

—Suki Casanave, College of Engineering and Physical Sciences

SNAPSHOT

B.S., biology, Tufts University, 1980
M.S., civil engineering, UNH, 1983
Ph.D., environmental engineering, ibid., 1986

RESEARCH: Waste characterization; surface spectroscopy; leaching modeling; waste utilization.

OUTTAKE: Eighmy loves sailing with his wife, Nancy Kinner, and their dogs Skipper and Spinnaker.

Barbara Lerch

SNAPSHOT

B.A., history, University of Maine, 1969
M.L.S., library science, University of Pittsburgh, 1972
M.A., history, University of New Hampshire, 1982

EXPERTISE: Lerch has procured more than \$250,000 in grants for and implemented Dimond Library's automated computer system, LS 2000, and coordinated its use among the members of the Seacoast Area Integrated Library System.

OUTTAKE: Lerch squeezes most of her recreation into lengthy adventures overseas. In recent years, she has traveled to the Soviet Union, England (seven times), Ireland, Denmark, Wales, Germany, and Portugal.

LAST JANUARY STUDENTS AND FACULTY RETURNED from winter break to find Dimond Library surrounded by a chain-link fence, its grounds invaded by noisy construction crews. The renovation project had begun all too soon for them, and they dreaded the prospect of shuffling around campus for the next year in search of the right book.

Months earlier Barbara Lerch began working behind the scenes, anticipating this scenario. An associate professor of library science and the university's loan librarian, Lerch faced the daunting task of orchestrating the move of almost a million books from the library to temporary quarters in four different buildings.

To begin the job, Lerch had every stack in the library measured. She calculated each call number range by linear feet, studied floor plans, ordered compact shelving, and decided how the collection should be set up and managed in each building. After gathering circulation figures for the last two years, she used a spreadsheet to determine which books were checked out most frequently, and designated those volumes to the most accessible locations.

Her department's 17 staff and 90 student employees were then assigned to new locations. Finally, while most of the university community enjoyed a respite from campus life over winter break, Lerch directed the move of the Loan

Department offices, the music and micromedia collections, and some 19 1/2 miles of books.

"It was very satisfying to see that everything fit," says Lerch, who is quick to point out that she and her library colleagues worked as a team to accomplish the job.

Robin Lent, head of collection development, sets the record straight: "Many people have done a lot of complicated work for the library, but what Barbara has done is astonishing."

Before Lerch and her staff could celebrate their triumph, disaster struck. On the bottom floor of Dimond Library, a stack bearing heavy, bound periodicals collapsed and toppled onto other stacks, launching a domino effect that left twisted metal shelving and 35,000 books strewn across the floor.

Lerch coordinated the chaos, working 10- to 12-hour days that often extended through the weekends, until she became so ill that she had to stay home for a few days—her first sick time in eight years. Even then, she kept calling her staff to offer help.

"She was absolutely determined to get those stacks back into service for the students," says Deanna Wood, associate professor and reference librarian. "It was Barbara's energy that got them back up."

Lerch will probably never meet the student who, despite the construction project, finds that needed book, or the faculty member who is surprised to

learn the Reserve Desk remains open. And they, in turn, may never know her part in making their research successful.

Yet nearly a decade ago it was Lerch who engineered the library's first on-line system, and she also took part in recent efforts to install a newer, faster on-line catalog. It was Lerch who pushed the architects of the new library to design larger, more comfortable study spaces and easier access to the stacks and Lerch again who convinced construction supervisors to suspend blasting during finals week.

What drives Lerch to work tirelessly, year after year, is an elevated sense of purpose, she explains. "The library really is the soul of the university. Everything we do here, and every decision that affects the library, crosses the disciplines and affects all departments on campus."

—Kimberly Swick Slover,
Alumni Affairs

Working behind the stacks

Barbara Lerch puts the polish on Dimond Library



Bruce Mallory

Finding common ground

Bruce Mallory brings the conversation home

IN MARCH WHEN TOWN MEETINGS ARE HELD IN New Hampshire, it's still winter and as always the gathered neighbors commiserate about the weather. The difference today is that neighbors are often strangers.

These days people tend to face off on issues rather than discuss them. At one recent district meeting, school board members required a police escort. On the state level, the issues amass and become even more volatile as when the state school board rejected Goals 2000 in 1995.

In most communities, only about 20 percent of the population has children in school, according to Elizabeth Twomey, state commissioner of education. "More and more we need to bring people together to establish common values about education," says Twomey.

When state education leaders looked for someone who could find a way to do just that, Bruce Mallory was a natural for the job. "Bruce has a gift for creating an environment of trust," says Susan Franzosa, chair of the university's education department.

For more than 20 years, Mallory has worked on educational issues in the state—first as a VISTA volunteer in Suncook, then as project director for Headstart, and since 1979 as a professor of education with vital involvement in community and advocacy organizations. His vision of inclusion, partly the result of his work in special education, complemented the state's concerns. But Mallory claims lightly, "Hey, as a middle child I'm drawn to this. I'm interested in conflict resolution and in resolving diverse points of view."

In 1995 with funding from UNH and the N.H. Charitable Fund, Mallory formed an advisory committee, comprising liberals, conservatives, home schoolers, public school teachers and administrators, policy makers, representatives of the Christian Coalition, rabbis, and parochial school representatives. "From the beginning, I wanted this to be an inclusive conversation," says Mallory.

After researching several approaches, the committee decided to take a study circles approach, calling it the Public Conversations Project.

Here's how it works—several groups of 10 to 15 community citizens with a facilitator engage in discussion about education. Groups meet privately four times and then come together to share their experiences.

There are no right answers to the questions posed. The hope is that common ground will be discovered. "By working hard to express their

own views clearly, people begin to rethink their own ideas and gain more respect for other points of view," says Mallory. "In the process they may discover commonalities—that they both have grandchildren, for example. But finally, there is less name calling and more problem solving."

One of the first communities to try the project was Orford. The town had been wrestling with whether to close its small high school. Doug Tift, a parent who participated, says, "We didn't have consensus from our conversations. But we all came away with respect for each others' commitment."

Later that spring at a well-attended town meeting, Orford voted, overwhelmingly, to keep the high school open—since they valued it as a small community school—and to study ways to broaden the educational experiences of their students.

The conversations project is ongoing in Orford and has been effective in Concord, Manchester, Portsmouth, Durham, and Milford. And, it's getting off the ground in Conway, where this spring the school budget sparked a long, hard fight.

"Our task is to get as many different people to the table as possible," says one woman at a Conway planning meeting. "We want a myriad of perspectives," says another.

For Mallory, these meetings are what education is about. "The worlds that I study—early childhood and disabilities—present lots of moral and ethical challenges because the lives of those particular

populations of people are so complex," he says. "I struggle with that when I'm off campus, when I'm on campus, and in the teaching, research, and writing that I do. I can't think of doing it any other way."

—Carrie Sherman, University Publications

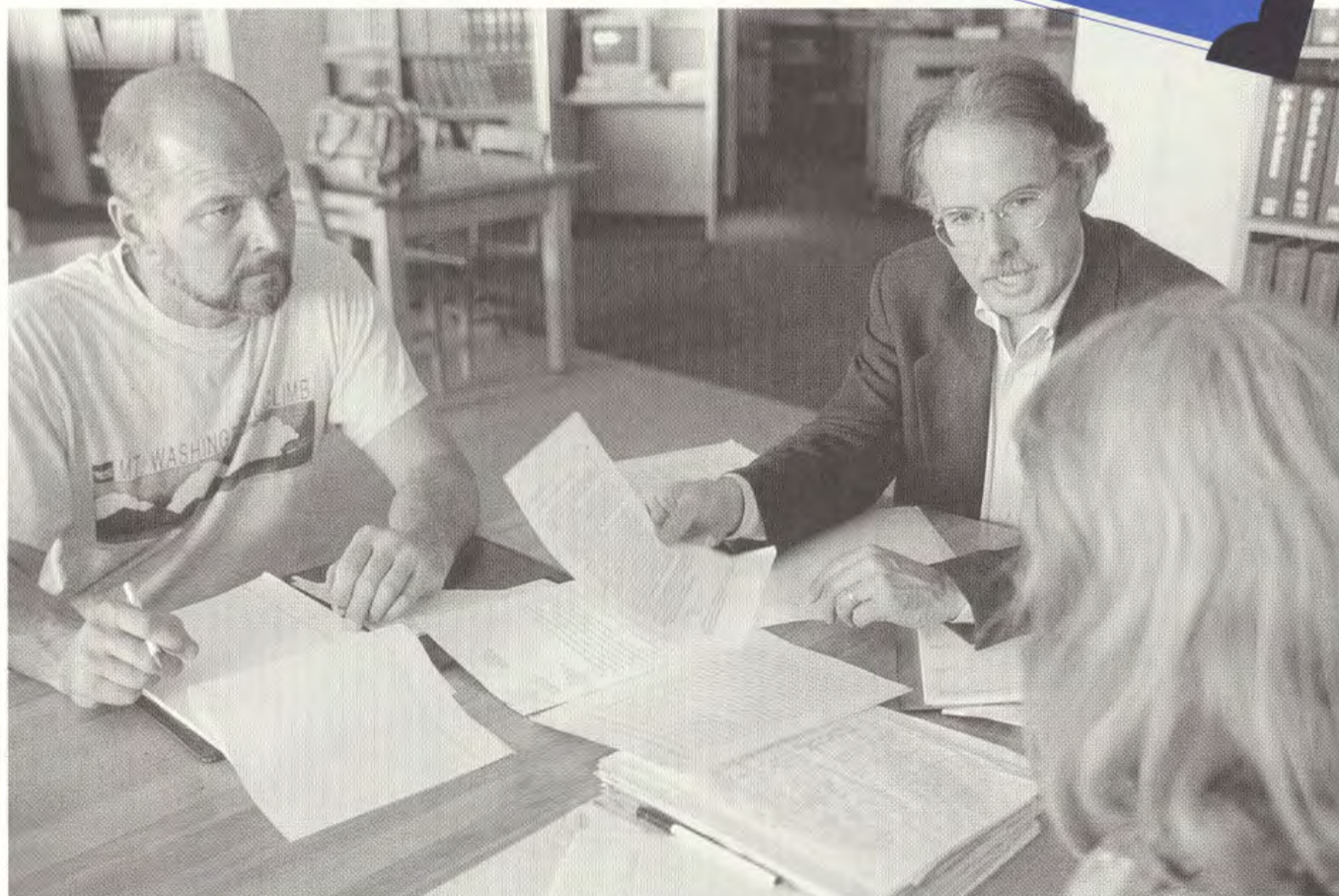
SNAPSHOT

B.A., American history, Allegheny College, 1971
M.Ed., *ibid.*, 1972
Ph.D., special education and community psychology, George Peabody College, 1979

In June, Mallory was appointed dean of the Graduate School at UNH.

RESEARCH: Cross-cultural studies of social policy, early childhood, and disability; reconceptualizations of early childhood and special education theory and practice; civic engagement in educational policy making; the design of early intervention programs for young children living in poverty.

OUTTAKE: Mallory once built a geodesic dome à la Buckminster Fuller in Gilmanton, N.H.



Bruce Mallory, center, meets with the Mount Washington Valley roundtable planning group.

Robert Kertzer

HE SURVIVES ON THREE TO FOUR HOURS OF sleep, returns every student's phone call, and volunteers for early morning classes.

Super Professor? No, just Robert Kertzer entering his 33rd year as a professor of kinesiology at the University of New Hampshire.

For Kertzer, that means getting to work early. He's up before dawn after a few hours of sleep, supplemented by two-hour naps in the evening. By 6 a.m., he is returning students' calls, by 8 he's teaching.

That's the way he likes it. "I'm a simple person," he says. "Most of the pleasure that I derive from life comes from work and my family."

Kertzer first came to UNH on a snowy day in March 1965. A native of Brooklyn, he'd never been to New England. "Durham looked absolutely pristine," he says. "I said to my wife 'I've found heaven on Earth.' And it's proven to be just that."

The match has been a good one for the university as well. Kertzer has made significant contributions here, in the classroom and out.

With his leadership, UNH was among the first universities in the country to create an exercise science major for undergraduates, when it did so in 1976. In recent years, Kertzer campaigned for an adequate exercise facility for students and staff, resulting in the Hamel Student Recreation Center at the Whittemore Center.

His contributions extend beyond those to the university community. In 1978, he helped open the first cardiac rehabilitation center for heart-attack patients in New Hampshire, located at UNH. While exercise for cardiac patients is commonplace now, the concept turned heads in the 1970s.

"No self-respecting physician would have dreamed of exercising a cardiac patient," he says. "More likely they would put them to bed."

Kertzer and others like him determined that bed rest hurt more than helped and that exercise was the right prescription for recovery. Convincing the doctors wasn't easy. In the first six months the center was open, it took in one patient. Eventually the results won over both doctors and patients, and the UNH center became a model for nearly every cardiac rehab program at community hospitals statewide.

His teaching has been recognized before, with a Teaching Excellence Award from the School of Health and Human Services in 1995 and a Distinguished University Faculty award in 1982. Even after 32 years, he loves the classroom, and the students respond to that devotion.

"He brings to every class a dedication and level of enthusiasm that is truly motivational," student Christine Levesque wrote in nominating Kertzer for this award. "He never let me get away with performing under my potential nor has he let me find the easy way out."

Kertzer says he holds a sincere affection for his students, who know the consequence of leaving a message for their professor may be a 6 a.m. return call.

"The best of them challenge you to continue to learn more, because a good portion of them are significantly brighter than we are," he says. "They push us to the limit, and if we're serious about our teaching we need to extend our knowledge so we can serve them better."

—Barbara Metzler, University Publications

Making his contribution simply

Bob Kertzer accepts another honor



SNAPSHOT

B.S., physical education, Brooklyn College, 1960
M.S., health education, University of Illinois, 1961
Ph.D., exercise physiology, Michigan State University, 1965

OUTTAKE: Kertzer's undergraduate education at free Brooklyn College cost him \$6 a semester—for the registration fee. In his senior year, the fee was raised to \$8 "and we were livid!" he says.

Joan Churchill

Backstage with Joan Churchill

The drama begins before the curtain rises

THE STAGE IS SET: AN EIGHTEENTH-century theatre rises within Johnson Theatre's twentieth-century walls. Panels, pillars, fleurs-de-lis, crossed swords and sabers, masks of comedy and tragedy, two theatre boxes, and a curtain borrowed from Bayreuth, all painted in shades of blue and gold and white.

Opening night for UNH's production of *The Rivals*, Richard Brinsley Sheridan's 1773 comedy of manners, is just four days away. Joan Churchill and the students in her scene-painting class are putting the finishing touches on the set, glazing the floorcloth to enhance the illusion that the painted panels are wood parquet.

"It's so beautiful," says senior Keri Thibodeau, looking up from her glaze pot. "I can't believe we did all this. I've learned so much about research and theatre and design from Joan."

Thibodeau is among dozens of UNH students who have learned from Churchill a new appreciation for the art that goes into a play before the curtain rises. In the three years since she came to UNH as director of design for the Department of Theatre and Dance, Churchill has taught courses in costume and scene design, stagecraft, stage-lighting design and execution. She's introduced courses in rendering and scene painting because students asked for them.

Thibodeau and other students in Churchill's scene-painting class learned basic techniques: how to mix paint and create effects—tree bark, skin, marble, wood grain—then put those techniques into practice on the set of *The Rivals*. Thibodeau is also the lighting designer for this play, and other students have served as costume designers for other productions. "I like to include students who've shown interest," Churchill says. "Being a lighting or costume director for a play is the culmination of what they've done here."

The backstage process begins long before the actors are cast. Churchill, director Pam Chabora, and Thibodeau first met to talk about *The Rivals* in November. Churchill brought a stack of notes and sketches on eighteenth-century furniture, architecture, and clothing to that initial meeting, but she came without preconceived ideas. The director creates the artistic vision, she says, but in the most successful collaborations, designers are encouraged to contribute too. "We're an ensemble, going about the same goals but from different points of view," she explains. "I'm not a self-expressive artist who sits in a studio and creates what I want."



They began by discussing the play's premises and problems. How could they relate a 200-year-old play to a modern college audience? "I came up with the idea of a theatre and boxes," Churchill relates. "Pam got excited because she could use the boxes to put spectators whose asides could help explain the action."

Churchill also designed the costumes, which had to convey meaning and relationships, not just reproduce eighteenth-century clothing. The pretentious Mrs. Malaprop wears "a bilious maroon with pink and green."

Churchill approaches every production as though it were the first time she had ever worked on it, even when she's done it before. "I try to come at it from a fresh perspective. You can't go in with preconceived notions. I try to approach every class that way, as well."

Churchill had known since childhood that her life would be in the theatre, but until her freshman year in college, she assumed she'd be on the stage, not behind the scenes. "I discovered acting terrified me," she says, "and I liked the camaraderie" of the technical and design staff. In the thirty years since, she's been helping others discover that there's a lot more to the dramatic arts than acting.

—Maggie Paine, University Foundation

SNAPSHOT

B.A., drama, Ripon College, 1966
M.F.A., drama department design
option, Carnegie-Mellon University,
1968

OUTTAKE: Joan is a superb chef who often invites students for a feast to celebrate the completion of a class. She has taken courses with John Clancy in New York, with Marcella Hazan in Italy, and with LaVarenne at the Greenbriar in West Virginia. She has an advanced studies diploma from the Wilton School of Cake Decorating.

Edward O'Neal

EDDIE O'NEAL OPENS HIS CLASS ON MUTUAL funds with the basics: two ways to buy shares, through a broker or directly from the fund. He describes the types of funds available, then closes in on the details: discount brokers, 12b-1 fees, returns on multi-class shares, exclusivity arrangements.

It's a complex subject made clear by O'Neal's teaching technique: start simply then add layers of information as the students grasp each new detail.

They take it in and ask for more. A hand goes up, then another. The students are obviously at

ease asking questions, and they try their best to stump the professor.

"If he doesn't know, he admits it," said Richard Flimel, a M.B.A. student who was among those nominating O'Neal for the Teaching Excellence Award for faculty at the Whittemore School of Business and Economics. "But it doesn't end there. He comes back the next class with the answer."

O'Neal, an assistant professor of finance, came to UNH in 1993 after receiving his Ph.D. in finance from the University of Florida. He was

drawn to UNH by its emphasis on both research and teaching.

A native of North Carolina, O'Neal studied electrical engineering as an undergraduate, choosing the subject area in which his father, a long-time North Carolina State University professor, held his doctorate. But O'Neal and the subject didn't click. Finance did. In his master's studies, he discovered mutual funds—a subject he's stuck with since, publishing articles and teaching from his own research.

That research has won him the opportunity to participate in a yearlong exchange with the Securities and Exchange Commission, beginning this September. His work will involve researching potential policy regulations for mutual funds and their potential economic impact. He will return to UNH in fall 1998.

In class he tells the students he has sampled 125 growth funds, all of them load funds, which impose a fee for purchase. He hopes to determine whether the commission structure encourages brokers to steer investors toward funds that pay higher commissions, rather than higher rewards for the investor. To date, O'Neal concludes the commission structure holds potential for concern and suggests the industry scrutinize broker arrangements.

"We know the incentive exists for brokers to sell this way," he tells the students, "but we don't know that they do."

Among students, O'Neal has a reputation for giving difficult exams, for being fair, for keeping his office door open, and for teaching from the basics up. "The best thing about him is that he creates a relaxed environment," says Jason Hanley, O'Neal's research assistant. "You learn better in a that kind of atmosphere."

Where some professors begin with the details, O'Neal begins simply, then moves on to the broader issues of finance, says Martha Shattuck, an M.B.A. student.

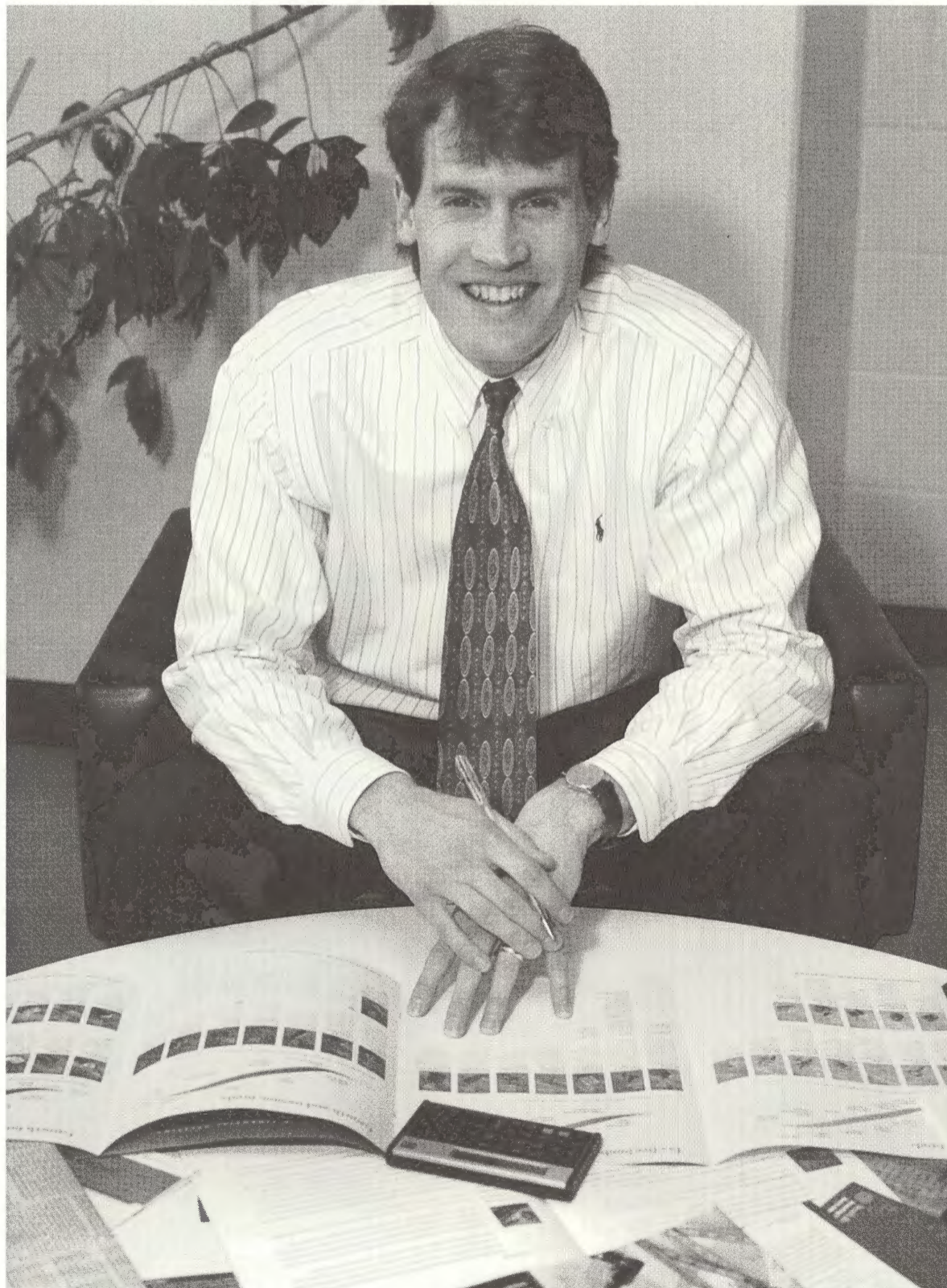
"It's always valuable in these classes to take a step back to see the big picture," O'Neal says. "You can get so involved with the small quantitative details that 20 minutes later the students will say: 'Why are we doing this? What does this mean?'"

"So I try at least once during the class to take a step back and see how the specific topic that we're covering that day fits into the overall picture."

—Barbara Metzler, University Publications

Building on the basics

Eddie O'Neal takes a clear look at the complexities of finance



SNAPSHOT

B.S., electrical engineering, North Carolina State University, 1986
M.B.A., Auburn University, 1989
Ph.D., finance, University of Florida, 1993

RESEARCH: Mutual funds

OUTTAKE: O'Neal's Alabama-born wife Varina was named after the wife of Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy. (The couple has a 3-year-old daughter, Ivey, and 1-year-old son, Benjamin.)

Christine Bean

Change and challenge

Christine Bean never stops learning



they come to me motivated," Bean says. "And, if they begin to fall off a bit, they motivate each other."

The laboratory, Bean says, is the best place to stimulate students. Here, they can use what they've learned in the classroom in a practical setting. Applying the latest techniques and equipment in biotechnology, they put their investigative and technical skills to work on realistic patient case scenarios. Their coursework culminates with semester-long internships at clinical sites such as Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Hanover and Maine Medical Center in Portland.

"This is where you see the greatest change take place," says Bean, remarking on her students' progress. "I love watching them transform into professional people. They gain a level of confidence that prepares them for their career."

Bean sees positions in medical laboratory science increasing as the field of biotechnology continues to grow. The health-care industry's turn toward managed care, means new challenges for teachers.

"The evolving field of health care is definitely affecting lab science. Patient-focused health care teams are being created, and lab scientists are being pulled out of the lab to contribute to patient care," she says. "Our curriculum is always changing, and this is particularly so right now in the area of lab management."

Bean believes the field is moving in a positive direction, and most students are enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute directly toward patient care. But learning to work as part of a team can be challenging.

"Scientific people are typically individualistic," she says, with a laugh. "But the patient brings it back home. They're why we're doing our job."

—Sharon Keeler, News Bureau

FOR AS FAR BACK AS CHRIS BEAN CAN REMEMBER, she has been drawn toward math and science. Perhaps she inherited her chemist father's analytical genes. Or maybe it's the result of a naturally inquisitive mind.

In either case, it is apparent that Chris Bean loves to learn.

"You can never *stop* learning in this field. I guess that's what drew me to it," Bean says. "There are new and emerging infectious diseases. Technology is always changing. It's challenging, and it's what I enjoy—finding new ways to identify and treat these diseases."

When she's not wearing her teacher's hat as an assistant professor in the Department of Medical Laboratory Science, Bean is hitting the books herself. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in microbiology, focusing her research on water-borne illnesses. There is no doubt the advanced degree will help her

professionally, but she says the personal challenge was enough to motivate her return to the classroom.

Bean has been on the UNH faculty since 1990, but that wasn't her first encounter with the Durham campus. She was also a student here, earning her bachelor's degree in 1982. She departed that year to pursue a professional career that would take her to Path Laboratories and then to Beverly Hospital in Massachusetts.

It was at Beverly Hospital that Bean became involved in teaching student interns. She says this opportunity sparked a new interest for her and, when she saw a faculty position at the university open, she decided to apply. She got the job, and went on to chair UNH's expanding medical laboratory science department.

In the classroom and laboratory, Bean tries to transfer her enthusiasm for discovery to her students. She teaches courses in subjects like microbiology, parasitology, and laboratory management, and finds a devoted audience.

"My students are juniors and seniors who have already completed their basic science courses, so

SNAPSHOT

B.S., medical technology, University of New Hampshire, 1982
M.B.A., New Hampshire College, 1993
Pursuing Ph.D. in microbiology at UNH

RESEARCH: Water-borne illnesses

OUTTAKE: Bean was spelling bee champion of Rye Elementary School. She's not sure which word won her the title, but she does remember getting this one right: *syzygy*.

Jeffrey Klenotic

JEFFREY KLENOTIC'S STUDENTS SOMETIMES TELL HIM:

If you don't like it, turn it off.

They're talking about television and the media images he encourages them to analyze and approach critically.

Klenotic is an assistant professor of communication at UNH Manchester and winner of the college's 1997 teaching award, the result of his enthusiastic engagement with his students and his love for gently prodding them to think.

Klenotic teaches classes in film and television. In his Introduction to Mass Communication class, he mixes studies of early 1900s film with images from 1990s television, showing his students that a 1996 music video by The Smashing Pumpkins is actually a remake of a 1902 silent film by George Méliés and part of MTV's relentless need for new images to attract viewers and satisfy advertisers.

He encourages students to approach the media analytically and critically, and finds that some resist his critique if it is directed at familiar media such as MTV. They usually tell him that people should simply turn off the programs they don't like, but Klenotic tells them the argument doesn't work.

"We've become as dependent on the media as we are on the air," he says. "Our whole experience of the political process is derived through our consumption of the media. To say 'just shut it off' is like saying 'If you don't like the air, don't breathe,' which you know, you can't do. You have to participate in it."

To help his students learn more about their own participation with the media, Klenotic asks them to study film audiences of the past. In his senior-level course Critical Perspectives in Film: Film Historiography, students pick a city or town and time during the silent film era for research on film audiences of that place and era. The question to answer is "who saw films, how, and why?" It means going through ancient city directories, historical records, and scanning miles of microfilm. The students often find the assignment is one of their most challenging and their most rewarding, he says. "You're trying to have a conversation with people who have left precious few traces of their moviegoing existence."

For many years, Klenotic's own conversations were internal. As an undergraduate, he says he was painfully shy and rarely participated in class discussions. His heart raced at the idea of speaking in class. "I didn't say much more than a few words throughout my whole collegiate career."

And then he entered graduate school and received his first teaching assignment: public speaking. "I knew that if I could survive that course that teaching was for me."

He did, and teaching was for him. He learns along with the students, he says. "I look at it as more of a dialog. I tend to encourage a lot of participation. I tend to encourage original student research work."

Two of his students have had papers accepted for national undergraduate honors conferences. Cate Potter, a senior majoring in communication, says Klenotic's encouragement convinced her to submit her work, about fan culture on the Internet for the TV comedy *Mad About You*.

"One of the things Jeff is known for is the extensive comments he writes on papers," Potter says. "I think sometimes he writes as much back to us as we write to him."

For Klenotic, the comments and praise written in the margins, the questions, the playing of devil's advocate are all part of the dialog he has with students and an effort to continue their learning outside the classroom.

"Teaching enables me to participate on a regular basis in a world of ideas and to exchange ideas with students . . . Everything is admissible into the debate, and you're going to discuss things thoroughly. I find that endlessly exciting."

—Barbara Metzler, *University Publications*

SNAPSHOT

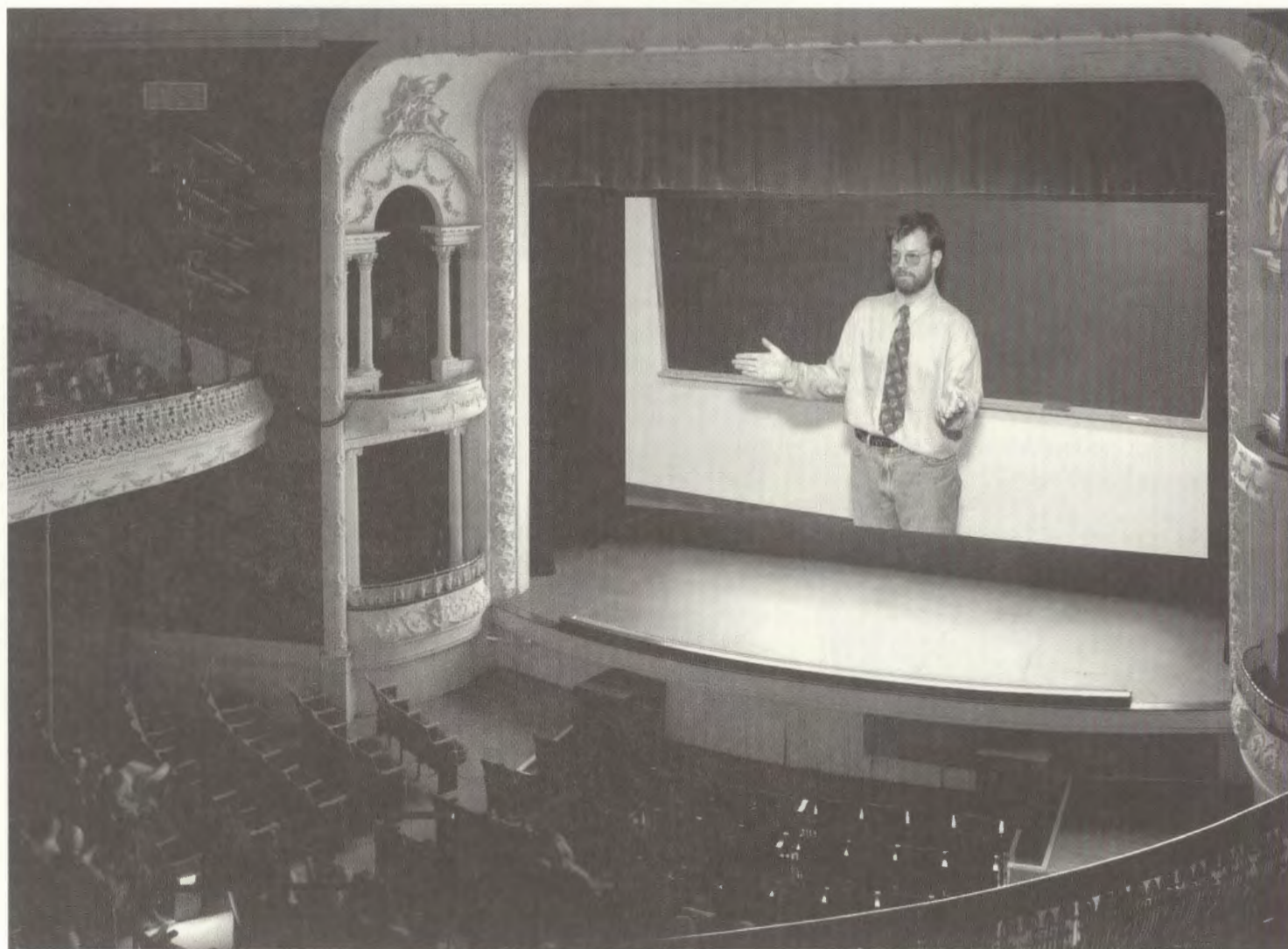
B.A., speech communication,
Pennsylvania State University, 1985
M.A., Ph.D., communication, University
of Massachusetts at Amherst,
1988, 1996

RESEARCH: Social and cultural history of the
media and film history

OUTTAKE: As a child baseball player,
Klenotic's Little League team had a record
of no wins and 24 losses.

Making the camera blink

Jeffrey Klenotic takes a critical look at the media



Lisa MacFarlane

Life, liberty, and the pursuit of play

Lisa MacFarlane combines a little fun with a lot of learning

LISA MACFARLANE SPENT her childhood traveling the world, moving every two years as her engineer father was transferred to posts throughout Europe and the Far East.

When she was 11 and living in London, she announced she didn't want to be an American anymore. She wanted to be English, she said, because the British had a history filled with royalty and beheadings, romance and scandal.

"My mother was amused," she recalls. Her father was less than amused. To convince her that being an American was exciting, he bought her a book on American history. "We read a chapter a week, and then talked about it," she says.

Her parents also took her to see the stage musical *1776*, a colorful and somewhat fanciful chronicle of the American Revolution playing in London at the time.

She was hooked.

"It made that history book come alive," she says. "It was fun."

MacFarlane still thinks American history and literature are fun, and to convince her American studies students likewise, she emphasizes the importance of intellectual play. "People don't give enough credit to being playful," says the associate professor of English. "Play lets you intuit possibilities that may not always be rational, but can cut to the heart of human experience. Play can be very sophisticated."

One playful approach is asking students to formulate their own exam questions. One student suggested that his peers invite historical and/or literary personages to a dinner party, come up with a theme and imagine how guests might comment on that specific issue.

This spring, two students presented their oral report as a radio call-in show called "Secular Chatter." The topic: the feminization of the ministry in 19th century literary works, or, as the students called it, "Girlie Men: What's the Deal?"

"It was very funny, but it was right on target," says MacFarlane. The callers—a variety of literary characters and authors—remained true to form, and the result was a focused look at the topic.



"That combination of close reading and imaginative connection is what I mean by play," says MacFarlane. "Just as there are rules to any game, there have to be rules about classroom play." Those rules involve being responsible to people who lived in the past, and knowing what they did, reading what they wrote, uncovering what they thought.

In the classroom, MacFarlane emulates her college adviser, "a great teacher, who asked really, really simple questions—but asked a lot of them. The more you probe those simple questions, the more complicated they become."

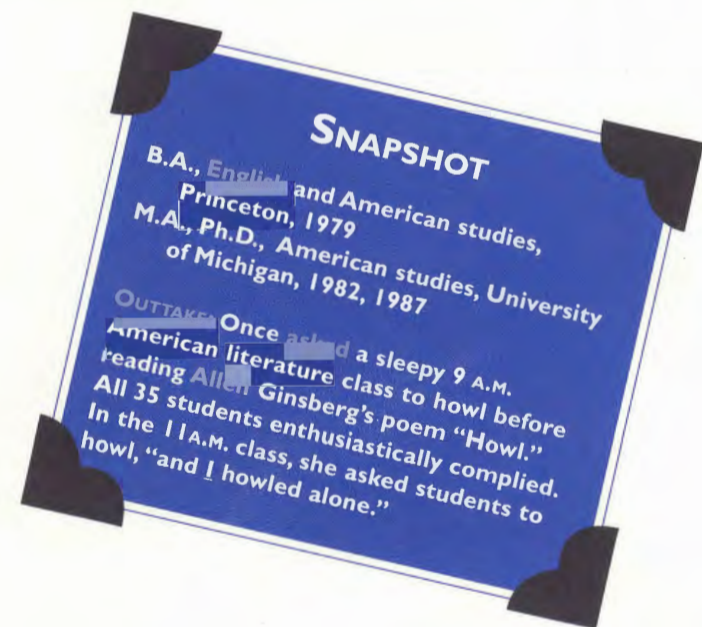
To cope with the complexity, MacFarlane uses the blackboard to "sketch" classroom discussion. Themes, characters, metaphors, and images collide with solid lines, arrows, dotted lines, circles, you name it. The result: diagrams that look meteorological.

The sketches not only help MacFarlane keep track of the discussion, they allow students to see how seemingly unrelated, simple details can reveal sophisticated theories.

"There's a tension in teaching," she explains. "You're trying to illuminate, to clarify, but you're also trying to capture the complexity of our experience."

That tension also might help students realize that learning can be fun, a lesson MacFarlane learned in a darkened theater in London, watching John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson sing about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

—Carmelle Druchniak, News Bureau



P.T. Vasudevan

“WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF TAKING A shower?” the professor asks.

It is the first day in Process Dynamics and Control, a course about controlling the various elements of industrial chemical processes. The 24 chemical engineering seniors know this course will challenge them to make use of all they've learned about thermodynamics, mass transfer, and other mathematical concepts. They are poised to begin.

“To maintain a given temperature,” a student volunteers.

“No,” replies the professor, “it is to become clean!”

Everyone laughs. In this highly technical course, the blackboard usually is filled with complex mathematical equations. But today the class begins its discussion of feedback loops with the simple example of taking a shower. And the student was right—maintaining a comfortable temperature will be the goal of controlling this process. The setpoint is 85 degrees, explains P.T. Vasudevan, associate professor of chemical engineering. The sensor is your fingertips; the controller, your brain. With feedback from the sensor, the controller can determine when the final control elements—hot and cold faucets—need to be adjusted.

“I always find it useful to introduce the concept first,” says Vasudevan, “then the math.”

As a college professor, Vasudevan is part of his own feedback loop. Since he came to UNH nine years ago, the feedback he's received on his teaching has been overwhelmingly positive. Each spring, the senior class in the department votes on the outstanding teacher of the year. Seven out of the last nine years, Vasudevan has won that honor.

“Dr. Vasu,” as his students call him, gets high marks for his attitude toward students. “He really seems to care about us,” says senior Katherine Wallace. “If he knows you had a job interview he asks you how it went. And in class he will not go on until he makes sure that everybody understands.”

Vasudevan helps students understand in part by grounding abstract mathematical concepts in the real world. Many of his examples come from industry.

“He has an industrial background, so he really knows what he's talking about,” says Darleen Pike ('91). Pike took Vasudevan's course on biochemical engineering—and his advice to get her master's degree. Now she's a biomedical engineer at Lonza Biologics in Portsmouth.

Before he moved to the United States in 1983, Vasudevan helped

design, construct, and operate a massive petrochemical complex in Baroda, India. More recently he has worked on industrial catalysts in Madrid and with local industry in plastics processing and development.

Vasudevan has many tales to tell. Pike remembers one of his stories, about a monkey that got into some wires and knocked out power at a petrochemical plant in India. Without power, the controllers could no longer monitor the status of the hazardous hydrocarbons throughout the plant. The class then discussed how a plant can be designed to shut down safely in a such an emergency.

For the students, Vasudevan's emphasis on safety simply completes the loop in his caring attitude toward students and others. “He reminds us that what we're doing involves human life,” says Wallace, “and we don't want to make a mistake.”

Whether he's providing examples of practical applications for a mathematical model or taking students on a tour of a biotechnology plant, Vasudevan is always thinking of his students' future on the job—where they will need to know much more than just math.

“You may be smart and you may be able to do calculus, but if you don't know anything about

how a chemical plant runs,” he says, “you will not get respect.” Whatever industry his students choose, they must have practical know-how, he says, “or else they are just engineers on paper.”

—Virginia Stuart, College of Engineering and Physical Sciences

SNAPSHOT

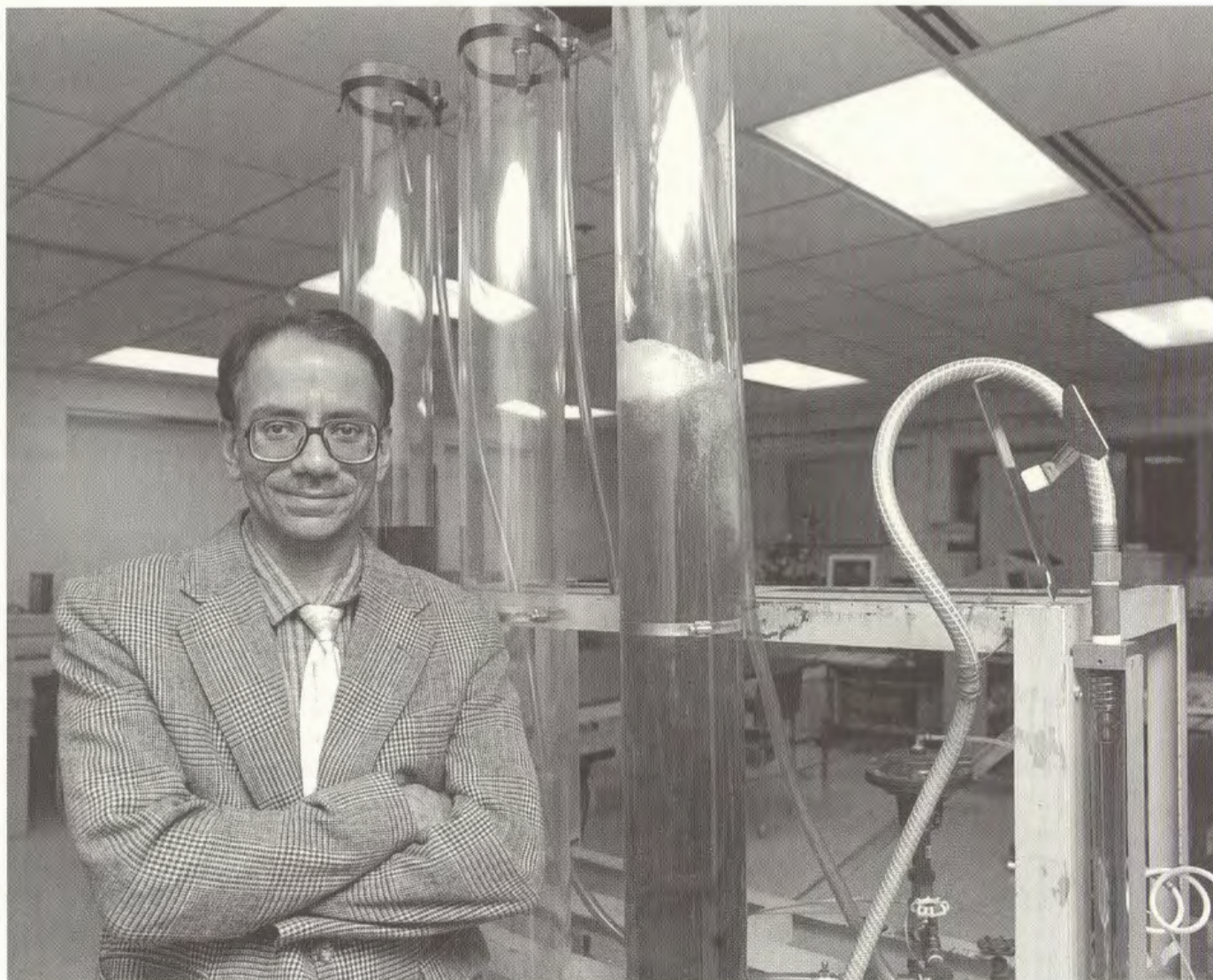
B.S., chemical engineering, University of Madras, India 1974
M.S., chemical engineering, SUNY at Buffalo, 1984
Ph.D., chemical engineering, Clarkson University, 1988

RESEARCH: biocatalysis: purification of proteins, enzyme deactivation studies; heterogeneous catalysis: hydrodesulfurization

OUTTAKE: He plays cricket, in Boston, and at home in the backyard with his 14-year-old son, Ajay, and his 10-year-old daughter, Anu.

In the loop

'Dr. Vasu' wins a shower of feedback in the chemical engineering department



Matthew Chagnon

A fine sense of balance

In teaching and sport, Matt Chagnon is a step ahead

ASK MATT CHAGNON ABOUT TEACHING, AND he'll likely say it's as easy as falling off a log. As one of only two professional log rollers in New England, he has had plenty of practice at working his way around a log and has learned in the process how to keep his balance. Yet it's the courses in forest ecology he teaches that show Chagnon's true understanding of and respect for the woods, whether he's instructing a class how to measure a tree's girth or standing astride one in the water.

Chagnon is quick to note that the best part of teaching at the Thompson School is that it literally represents "a job in the woods."

He learned the business side of forestry first, working in a lumberyard, after spending five semesters as an undeclared liberal arts student at UNH. Later, he returned to UNH to earn an associate's degree in forestry, and took a job with a surveyor. Within a year the Thompson school had an opening for someone to teach labs in tree identification and work in a technical position in the forestry department. Says Chagnon, "It turned out to be the best job I've ever had."

The students apparently agree. Thompson School teaching award winners are chosen in secret ballot by the entire student body. Students in forestry turned out in force and lobbied students in other disciplines—as one member of the award committee put it, to ensure that Chagnon, who is a "very natural teacher, extremely honest and sincere," would have the lion's share of the votes.

Chagnon balanced his early years at the Thompson School with completing a bachelor's degree in forestry at UNH in 1986 and a master's in 1988. Being a teacher and a student at the same time has given Chagnon tremendous perspective.

"I find it very important to hit the students' level of understanding when teaching a course," he says. "As you get more degrees and become involved in higher-level projects it would be easy to forget that the freshmen you teach are just having their first exposure to the subject."

A "freshman" at the Thompson School can mean anyone from ages 18 to 70. "I have one student in my forest ecology class who is in his early 70s," says Chagnon. "I love the diversity of ages in my students. Many are between 25 and 30. Because I worked while I was a student, I know they often have spouses, kids, and jobs. It's important to know school isn't their whole lives, that they have other priorities too."



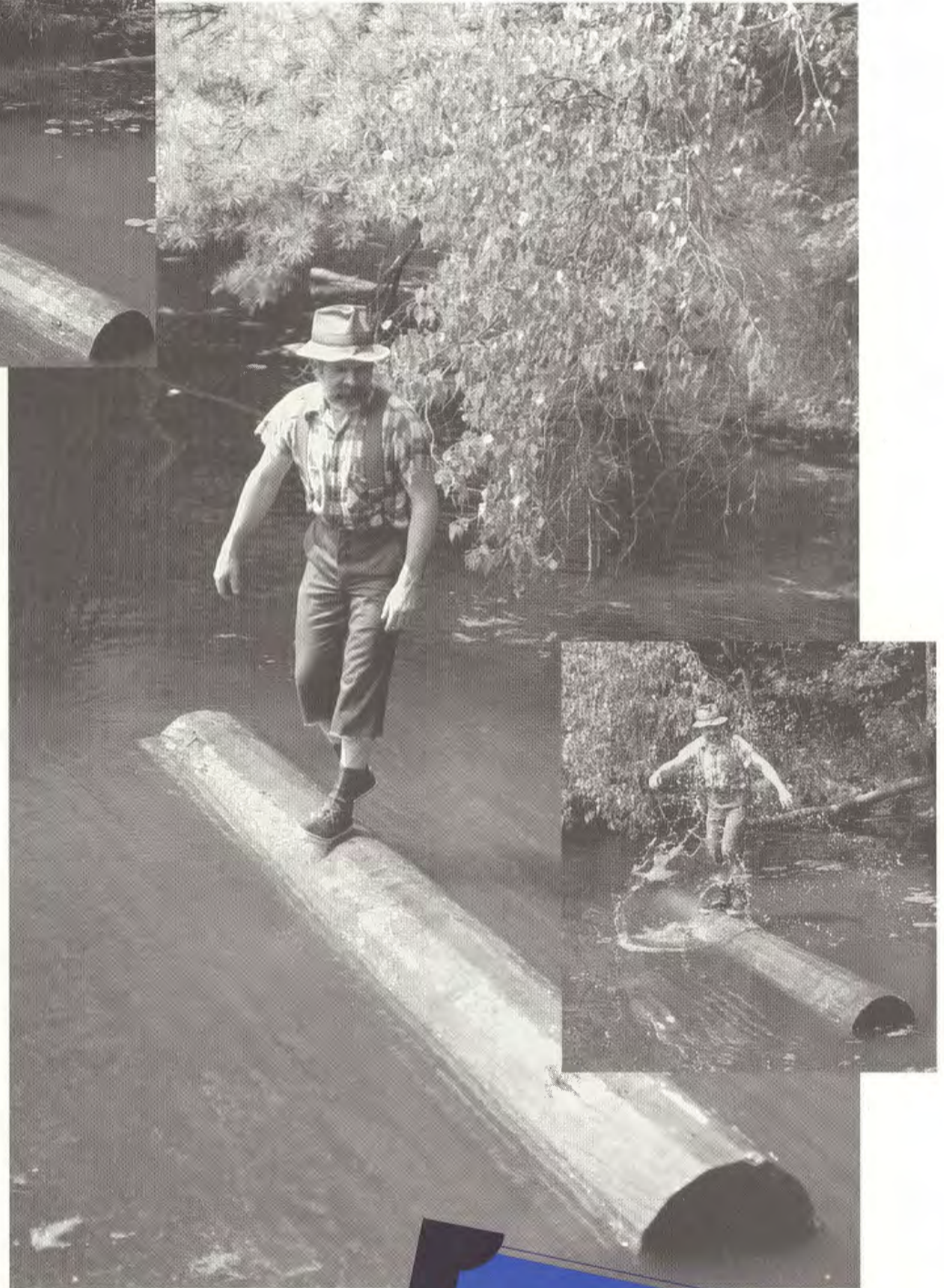
One of Chagnon's other priorities is his role as coach of the UNH lumberjack team, a club team that travels around New England competing in such traditional lumberjack skills as ax throwing, pole throwing, log rolling, and the two-man saw.

"Lumberjack sports are like rodeo," he says. "Nobody uses axes and crosscut saws anymore, but it's part of the tradition and now part of the sport."

"My great grandfather was from Canada. He worked as a lumberjack on the river drives, used horses to take the wood out in the winters, and worked his farm during the summers. I come by my interest in forestry and the lumbering trade from him, I guess."

Chagnon's interest in lumberjack skills caused him to start a small company to demonstrate and compete in the sport, Granite State Lumberjack Shows, Inc., which he formed with two partners. While the winter finds him in the classroom or the woods teaching the students the fine details of forest ecology, the summers find him competing around the country and performing with the Lumberjack Shows. Throughout it all he maintains his perspective, his love for teaching and the woods, and his balance. "If you were to call for someone to demonstrate log rolling," he says, "I'd be your man."

—Susan Warner Smith,
University Publications



SNAPSHOT

B.S., M.S., forestry, University of
New Hampshire, 1986, 1988

OUTTAKE: Every spring, second-year students in Chagnon's Industrial Management class sign the "conk," a gigantic fungus taken from the side of a tree. "Conks" in his office literally map out who was in each class dating back to the 1970s.

Todd DeMitchell

HIS MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES AREN'T MEANT TO frighten his students. But it can be quite a shock when Todd DeMitchell transforms from mild-mannered professor of education to irate parent unloading on the principal.

Students literally wear the title of school principal in DeMitchell's self-designed graduate course, The Principalship. DeMitchell begins his charade by placing the cardboard "principal" banner over the head of an unsuspecting student.

Without warning, they're on.

The exchange can be anything from a playground mishap to a child's grades. The situation can change in a split second, and the student/principal must react to gain control.

"They have to learn from scratch the steps they take to get ready to run a school," DeMitchell says, untangling the mass of personalities from his office file cabinet: clergyman, parent, school board chair. "There are all these people that appear."

The role-playing method has earned him the "Sybil Award" from last year's class. The framed honor hangs on his wall with a cast of cut-out faces peering through the glass, appearing to jockey for position.

"I push them hard; I'm not a gentle person when I play a character," he admits. "We address free speech, curriculum, unions, discipline, homosexual teachers . . . Personal interaction can make or break a principal."

DeMitchell knows first-hand the dilemmas his students will face in the public school arena. It's where this college professor got his start as a fourth grade teacher in Pomona, Calif., a suburb of Los Angeles. He later became a principal and superintendent in other districts.

He has also served as director of school personnel and labor relations, focusing much of his research on education law, including collective bargaining. With that background, chances are good some of these staged ambushes play on past experience.

"You want to make a connection, not seem like some sort of passive receptacle disseminating information," he says. "I change my classes and constantly analyze what works. If I'm up and feel good about what I'm doing, chances are good my students will too."

The verdict from his students: It's working.

"The role play situations provided plenty of opportunity to implement theory and strategies for handling the many difficulties faced by a principal," says one student evaluation. "I cannot say enough about how much (DeMitchell's) instruction has helped me in my day-to-day functioning as an educational leader," says another.

DeMitchell's teaching techniques include writing a lesson plan on the board and starting each class with a review. "It comes from my roots in the public school system." The difference today, he says smiling: "I don't have near the discipline problems or the parents coming in."

Instead, he enjoys the camaraderie of students. Class sizes range from five to 25 students, giving them the opportunity to work together, even on issues as divisive as collective bargaining.

One particular scenario puts students in the heat of teacher contract negotiations. The class is split—one side management, the other side union. Conditions are created for a contract, and the two groups hammer it out for three days of intensive bargaining. "They have to figure out what they need and come to me for information," he says, introducing yet another personality. "I am Oz—that person who has what they need."

He's been giving students the knowledge they need for almost 30 years now, the last seven at UNH. And his students—grammar to graduate—have always given something in return. Whether

it's their energy or enthusiasm, an opinion on collective bargaining, or a note of appreciation—each student provides one more reason why playing the part of professor has always been his favorite role.

—Tracy Manforte, News Bureau

SNAPSHOT

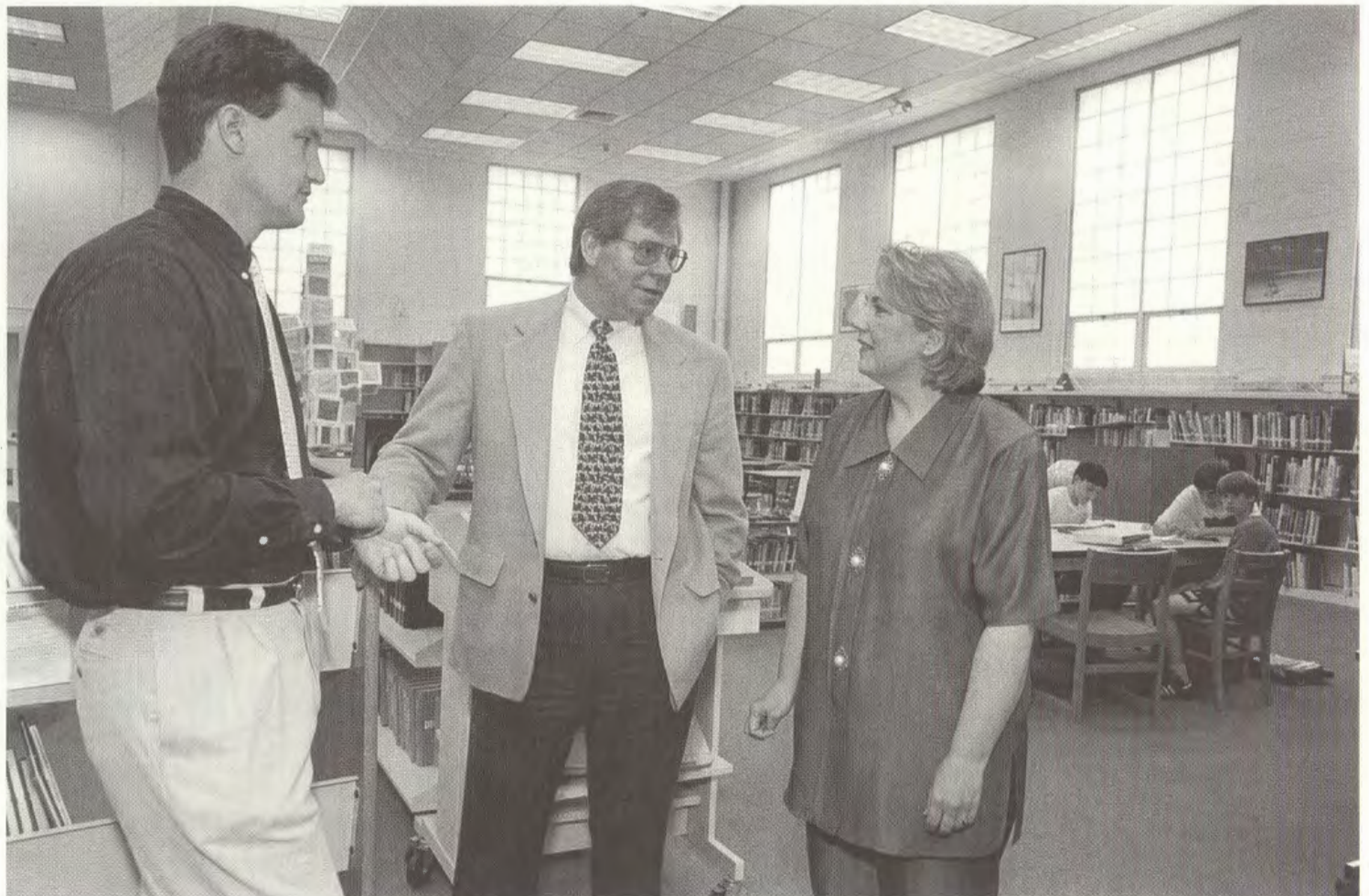
B.A., M.A.T., history, University of
La Verne (Calif.), 1969, 1973
Ed.D., educational administration,
University of Southern California,
1979
M.A., philosophy of education,
University of California at Davis, 1990

RESEARCH: School law, particularly the liability of schools in cases of employees sexually abusing children; collective bargaining and its impact on local education reform

OUTTAKE: Todd was team captain and MVP of his college football team, a two-time all-conference line backer, and AP Small College All-American.

Todd DeMitchell's award-winning role

Professor fits him best



Todd DeMitchell (middle) discusses the rigors of leading a school with former students Chris Pollet (left) and Pat Cushing, both assistant principals at Oyster River Middle School.

William Condon

An inspiring change of heart

Bill Condon shares 'the immediacy of learning'

CORPUS LUTEUM. FOLLICLE-STIMULATING HORMONE. To the uninitiated, the subject matter in Bill Condon's class looks anything but stimulating. Yet this group of 50 undergraduates is riveted to Condon's every word. He is, after all, talking about sex.

More specifically, he's exploring with his endocrinology class the process by which preovulatory eggs mature. Though millions die off, Condon assures the class that, as prospective parents, they'll only need a few of the 400 ovulations that do occur, over a lifetime.

"I know," Condon says, "you're thinking: 'Get those brats away from me.' But you'll have a change of heart someday."

Condon, a professor of animal science, knows a thing or two about having a change of heart. An indifferent student who worked only for grades good enough to get him into dental and law school, he saw college as a "nuisance." Then he took a cell physiology class his senior year.

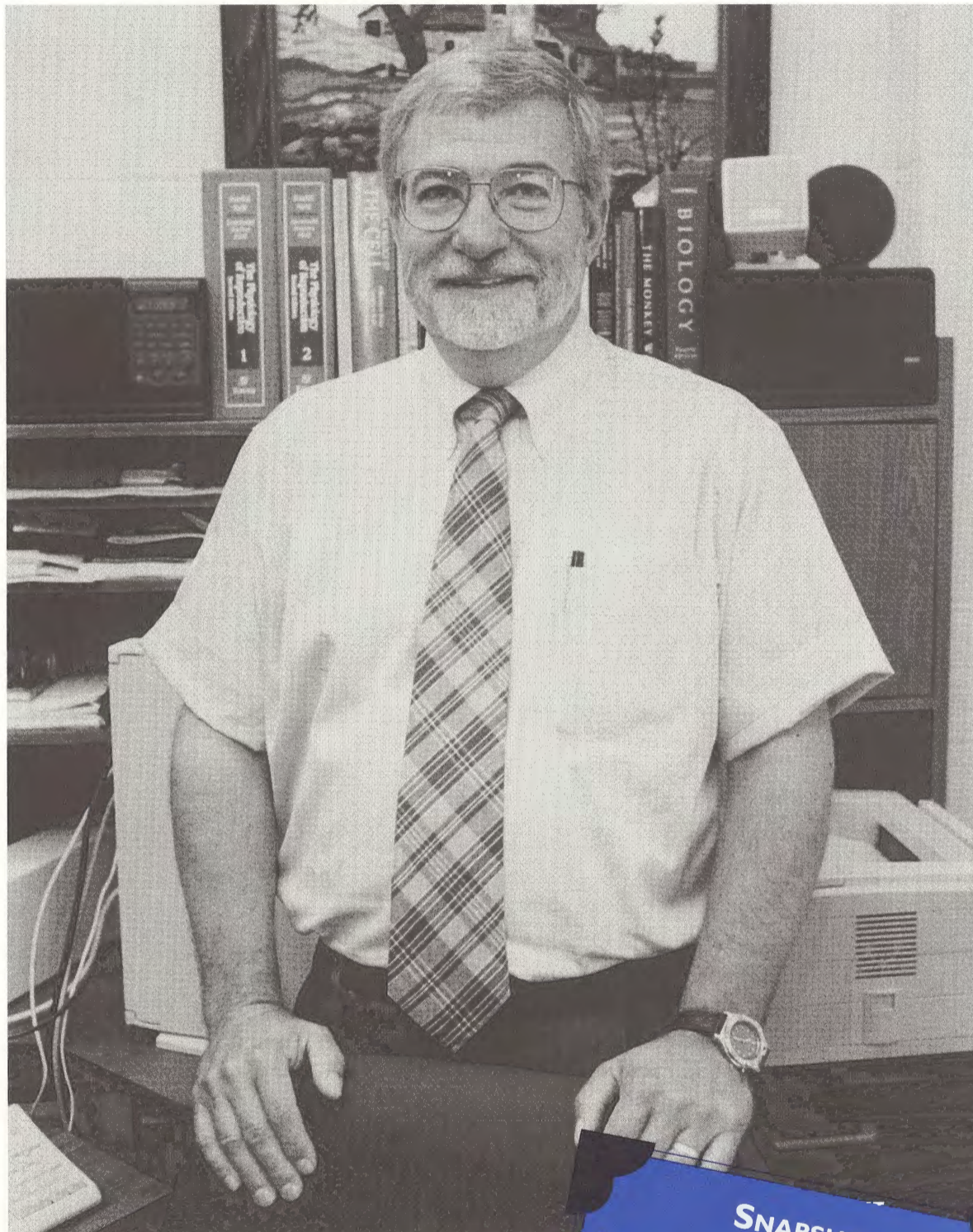
"Only one of my parents graduated from high school," he says. "When I went home and told them I was turning down dental school and law school to study cell physiology, they thought I had just gone off the deep end."

To keep Condon hooked and in graduate school, his adviser arranged a lecturer's position for him in cell physiology. Condon found himself in front of a classroom filled with other potentially indifferent students.

"I challenged myself to find other people who needed the inspiration that had made me interested in studying. I would hit a topic and be asked to explain something that I, myself, only figured out a second ago. It forced me to share the immediacy of learning. I love that moment. And I've loved it from day one."

Twenty-one years have passed since Condon's day one at UNH. He has proved a demanding teacher whose use of diagrams versus textbooks in his upper-level courses ensures that students learn the theory in class rather than by memorizing it from books. In another turn of events, Condon recently began a course titled Animal Rights and Societal Issues that is the complete opposite of his physiology courses. Here he coaxes students into arguing the contrasting views, most of them extreme, that lie at the core of the animal rights debate. Emotions often run high but Condon makes the students apply cool logic to both sides of each issue.

"Getting students to think critically is the hardest thing I've ever tried to do," he says. "They automatically believe whatever they see on TV or read in print. With less than two percent of our people involved in agriculture, and the country having the highest science illiteracy rate of any developed nation, anything can be said on TV and most people will believe it. I once had a group of students watch a show like "20/20" and remark that it was wonderful that this esteemed doctor from the University of Illinois Medical School stated that you could catch cancer or AIDS from



drinking milk that contained recombinantly produced bovine hormones." (This doctor is supported financially and backed philosophically by animal rights activists and associations.)

His fury at the incident propelled Condon into creating the Animal Rights course. And though his students aren't compelled to change their minds, they never leave without at least questioning the basis for these beliefs. "It's the only one of my courses where I tell them I hope they're more confused at the end." Clearly though Condon's goal is not to confuse: it's to inspire, inform, and set in motion students' critical thinking—a process that often leads, magically, to a change of heart.

—Susan Warner Smith,
University Publications

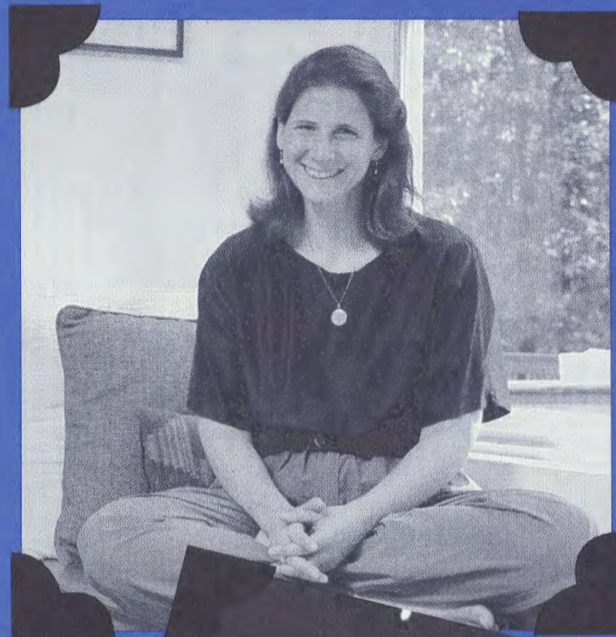
SNAPSHOT

B.A., biology, Merrimack College, 1965
M.S., Ph.D., reproductive physiology,
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, 1968, 1975

RESEARCH: reproductive endocrinology

OUTTAKE: While the cloning of Dolly the sheep seems far-fetched in human terms, Condon has used in more than 20 years of research with cows "most notably in vitro fertilization (IVF)" have long since crossed over to the human population. Condon cautions that IVF is only the beginning.

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