

**Margaret Freeman- The College of William and Mary
From Girlhood to Ladyhood: Sororities and “Women’s Culture” at Coeducational
Universities in the American South**

Greek-letter, social, sororities became important components of the fledgling women’s student culture at the newly coeducational, white, state universities in the American South during the first quarter of the twentieth century. In these previously male, homosocial spaces, sororities helped create a sense of community for the women students, while recreating the intimacy of the traditional family. The groups would become critical sites for the reinforcement of southern gender prescriptions and would provide arenas of display for women students’ femininity. My paper discusses the evolution of Greek-letter sororities from groups that fostered a supportive women’s culture on southern campuses to organizations that promoted heterosocializing as a key to social status. With an emphasis on popularity, attractiveness, and wealth, sororities chose members they hoped would appeal to male students and thus increase their campus standing. By setting women students off from one another, however, sororities had the negative effect of undermining the women’s-only culture. By the middle twentieth century sororities had helped to transform student culture for all women on southern university campuses, establishing a model of modern, white, southern womanhood. The restructured campus culture framed heterosexual dating as the norm and as an integral, even mandatory, part of college life. In the new iteration, the women’s culture no longer functioned to support women but in support of, and ancillary to, the university men’s culture of masculinity as women understood their social value in terms of their relation to men.

**Dean Bruno –North Carolina State University
“Once a Home, Now a Memory:” Dispossession and Remembrance of the Landscape of the
Former Seneca Army Depot**

The security fence runs for miles across the rural landscape. For as long I can remember it has been a formidable barrier, separating us from them, community from military, and the real from the imagined. But the fence has not always been there.

In the summer of 1941, the federal government came to Seneca County, New York and claimed 12,000 acres of productive farmland. More than 150 families from the small, rural community of Kendaia were dispossessed to make way for the Seneca Army Depot. Lands worked by families for generations were taken by the government to prepare for war. Homes, farms, churches, grange halls and graveyards were all taken in the name of national security.

But this was not the first time outsiders had descended upon these fertile fields. In 1779, the Seneca and Cayuga people of the Six Nations fled from their homes as General John Sullivan and his colonial troops marched across the same landscape, leaving a trail of smoke and despair. In upstate New York, few people recall the dispossession of 1941; fewer still the events of 1779.

In this paper, I utilize the historic landscape of the Seneca Army Depot as a lens to explore questions of dispossession, community, identity and memory. Beyond narratives of gain and loss, how are people and landscapes changed by dispossession? As historians, which stories about historical and cultural landscapes do we tell, and which lie beneath the surface? Through a

selection of oral histories, members of the Kendaia community of 1941 describe their traumatic experience and help us to remember a landscape they once called home.

Robert G. Barnes-Bowling Green State University
Life, Death and Rebirth of a Piedmont Mill Town: Ware Shoals, South Carolina

For nearly a century, the town of Ware Shoals, South Carolina was dependent upon the success of the Riegel Mill, the town's main employer. The mill provided economic, political and social stability to the people of the town. However, when the American textile industry began to move overseas in the 1980s, Ware Shoals, like other mill towns, suffered drastic economic and social consequences. Despite the success of economic revitalization programs specific to the town as well as the rebirth of the Upstate South Carolina region in general, Ware Shoals, more than 20 years after the closing of Riegel Mills, continues to suffer the effects of the loss. Included in this presentation will be a brief history of the town of Ware Shoals and Riegel Mill and the revitalization programs that promise future regional integration and economic welfare. This will be presented in a context of regional history of mill industry. More specifically, I will discuss the economic, political, social and psychological issues that permeate in the town among the citizens as a result of the closing of the mill. This presentation will be based on research of Ware Shoals and mill towns in general as well as interviews with citizens and officials of the town of Ware Shoals, South Carolina.

Thomas W. Goldstein-The University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
The Socioeconomic Interests of East German Authors, 1971-1990

Following the accession of the new East German dictator Erich Honecker in 1971, the SED (the ruling Communist Party), placed a renewed emphasis on providing material compensation to East German citizens in exchange for passive compliance with the regime. Particularly targeted were public intellectuals, a group which included writers. The primary vehicle for enhancing author's financial and professional success was the official literary professionals' organization, the Writers Union of the GDR (Schriftstellerverband der DDR). While the SED (East Germany's ruling Communist Party) also relied on more coercive measures to ensure ideological adherence (such as the secret police), through the Writers Union the Party provided a variety of everyday services and opportunities to its members, services all geared toward generating dependence and loyalty among East German authors toward the state. These benefits included mediating between writers and publishers, providing opportunities for new writers to publish, and helping members obtain loans. This paper will examine these professional and economic incentives through correspondence between the Writers Union leadership and its members between 1971 and 1990, using these exchanges to gauge which professional and material concerns ranked highest among East German writers as well as the degree to which they felt the state met those needs. Doing so reveals that these incentives engendered more complaints than devotion, but these complaints also indicate that writers wanted the state to do more than, not less. Hence while failing to generate strong loyalty to the dictatorship, the Writers Union's policies successfully fostered dependence among East German authors.