

# Rochester Review

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# Letters



## 'Freedom' Rings True

I WAS FASCINATED AND DELIGHTED WITH the article on Freedom Summer ("We Were Not Afraid," May-June 2014).

I was not a college student at that time but was the pastor of a black storefront church in Hamtramck, the largest Polish city outside Warsaw, completely surrounded by inner-city Detroit.

I was with the Delta Ministry in Hattiesburg, Miss., pinch-hitting for a seminary classmate, its director, for six weeks in Freedom Summer. My main function was to pick up volunteers at the Jackson Airport, settle them with housing volunteers, train, and support them during their stay.

My family was horrified so I simply stopped writing letters. I wish I had kept a journal!

It was a life-changing experience. Of course I did my share of scuffling down dusty, or muddy, back roads with those whose assignment was voter registration. I was somewhat shocked when one trip to the Jackson airport delivered an elegant looking older woman carrying two suitcases and two hatboxes. As we drove back to Hattiesburg she explained her very special "mission." She was, indeed, elegant and refined. She said that as someone "plantation

born and bred," she could do something the rest of us could not—visit town and county leaders, and especially their wives at their homes at tea time. And visit she did, attempting to educate, "nudge their values," and "remind them of God's love for *all* people." I have no idea whether she made any "converts" but as she said, "polite upbringing meant they *had* to hear her out, *could not argue* with or harm." She is surely, in my book at least, one of the unsung heroes of the movement.

I returned to my church, preached on Aaron, Moses, and a new Exodus. I led my summer volunteers to teach black history and the Freedom Road. I also began work with the Michigan Civil Rights Commission.

*Jean Dimond '50  
Rochester*

I ENJOYED THE EXCELLENT ARTICLE ON Freedom Summer in your May-June issue.

Did you know that U of R also had an NAACP support group on campus that organized Woolworth's sit-ins in 1960? I went to the first one with my roommate Caroline Farbman Norman '62. We took the bus downtown and spent a morning marching and chanting with signs in a big circle with about 20 other people outside the downtown Rochester Woolworth's.

I was profoundly shocked when we were surrounded by police with several growling dogs and the demonstration was broken up. The whole experience was something of a political awakening for me that changed my outlook, and perhaps ended a certain innocence. After I graduated in 1962, I went south and participated in the civil rights movement and Freedom Schools for the

**Did you know that U of R also had an NAACP support group on campus that organized Woolworth's sit-ins in 1960? I went to the first one with my roommate Caroline Farbman Norman '62.... I was profoundly shocked when we were surrounded by police with several growling dogs and the demonstration was broken up.—Helene Schell Lorenz '62**

next six years while getting a graduate degree in philosophy from Tulane.

As a result, during most of my life I was involved in community activism. I am retired now, but my last position was teaching a course on liberation arts and community engagement in a graduate program at USC in Los Angeles, where I live now. In 2008 I published a book at Palgrave MacMillan with a colleague, Mary Watkins, called *Toward Psychologies of Liberation*. It analyzes successful projects worldwide that have promoted social and economic transformation and contains a section on the civil rights movement which began for me in Rochester.

*Helene Schell Lorenz '62  
Los Angeles*

I HAVE JUST FINISHED READING KAREN McCally's excellent article on Matthew Zwerling '64 and the Freedom Summer of 1964. I would like to commend the editors, Ms. McCally, and Mr. Zwerling for bringing this event back into focus for the U of R community.

It was a story that has been told many times, and this is certainly one of the best that I have encountered. The immediacy of the relationships, both of Mr. Zwerling to the U of R, and of course, his relationship to Andrew Goodman, brings the story home to many who recall the era.

I went to Mississippi five years after this, as a young architect designing a community medical center for Fayette, Miss., where Charles Evers, Medgar's brother, had become the first popularly elected African-American mayor in Mississippi in many years. Although tensions had somewhat eased by then—due to the publicity given Freedom Summer, the Schwerner-Goodman-Chaney killings and the other key activities of groups active in the area—it remained dangerous.

I recall sitting in a Natchez restaurant with Evers the evening of my arrival, to talk about the clinic. As we chatted over plates of catfish, Evers's bodyguard, Al Deal, an ex-Philadelphia policeman, sat against the rear wall of the restaurant with his suit jacket open and a large pistol in a shoulder holster clearly visible for any passerby (or potential assassin of Evers) to see.

I agree with the editors, writer, and Mr. Zwerling that it remains important for younger U of R students and graduates to be reminded of what was occurring during those very critical years.

*James Hadley '62  
Providence, R.I.*

THE ACCOUNT OF MATTHEW ZWERLING'S EFFORT in the 1964 Freedom Summer brings to mind that courage such as his moved me, a timid guy, to show some support for the civil rights struggle. My cautious involvement, however, may have had far-reaching consequences.

In the fall of 1966 I took a job teaching science at Stillman, a small "historically Negro college" in my native Alabama. I was among about a dozen young white academics who were hired. I shared a rented house near the campus with Bruce, an energetic political activist from U. Cal. Berkeley.

Bruce began to use our house to encourage faculty-student contact and stimulate political consciousness. He was friendly with George, a black activist and member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

SNCC sent George to do voter registration

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in nearby Greene County, Ala. We occasionally extended hospitality to George and his two fellow organizers, Eric and Hubert, who were working under hostile and uncomfortable conditions. George and Eric seemed to enjoy these racially mixed gatherings; however, Hubert, the leader, accepted the hospitality in coldly polite silence. He would tell us that he was against white involvement in SNCC, saying that whites should reform themselves and not "mess around in the black community."

Nonetheless, he told me that he welcomed monetary support of their work. Thus, I began writing to friends in the Northeast to raise modest amounts for the West Alabama Support Project (WASP).

One day Eric phoned to say that Hubert and George had been arrested on a fabricated charge of attempting to steal a gun from a hardware store. He asked whether WASP could raise their bail of \$1,000 each. After several days of effort with all my contacts, I had raised only about half so decided to dig deep and furnish the rest myself. After release, the group came to our house one last time to say thanks.

Hubert later became infamous as H. Rap

Brown. In 1967, as the leader of SNCC, he led it away from its nonviolent stance. In June 1967, in Cambridge, Md., he told a crowd, "If America don't come around, then black people gonna burn it down." A school was burned, and he was charged with incitement to riot and arson. In Detroit, where a riot commenced later in July, he was widely quoted in the media as saying, "Violence is as American as cherry pie!"

Another Hubert, the 1968 Democratic nominee Hubert Humphrey, had defended rioting as an understandable response to ghetto miseries. "With rats nibblin' on my children's toes, I might lead a pretty good revolt myself," he had said. The Republican nominee, Richard Nixon, portrayed himself as the upholder of law and order. Nixon defeated Humphrey by a very narrow margin: 1 percent of the popular vote. Notably,

he won the electoral votes of three major states scarred by riots—Ohio, Illinois, and New Jersey—by less than 3 percent of the popular vote.

I wonder what really happened in the hardware store. In his 1969 autobiography, Brown denied the theft, writing, "Hell, I had an arsenal already. What did I need to steal a gun for?" As the book and later reporting tells, his is a dramatic story. The guy who, in my living room, seemed brave, sober, and committed to justice became a violent revolutionary, a robbery convict, and eventually a murder convict.

Of course, I wonder what would have happened had I left him in jail. Eventually, SNCC or his family would have bailed him out. But it may have taken a while, and delayed his "program." The other Hubert in the White House? No Watergate?

Do I give myself too much discredit, or was my idealistic fundraising just a puff in a whirlwind?

*Porter Anderson  
Key Largo, Fla.*

*Anderson is a professor emeritus of pediatrics and microbiology.*

## Better Baseball

AS SINGULAR AN ACCOMPLISHMENT AS TWO no-hitters on the same day may be in the annals of U of R baseball history (“Historic No-Hitters,” May-June), I believe an even more exceptional one occurred in 1973.

One fine spring day over 40 years ago, my former roommate, Howie Stein '75, hurled back-to-back four-hit shutouts to win both ends of a doubleheader against Hobart College. As I recall Howie telling it, the pitcher who was slated to start the second game came up lame during warm-ups, and the manager asked Howie to “go as long as he could.” He certainly did. I doubt that this achievement will ever be duplicated, given the current fixation on pitch counts and overprotectiveness toward fragile young arms. Fortunately, no such concerns kept Howie from his date with immortality. His extraordinary feat of skill and stamina landed him in the “Faces in the Crowd” section of *Sports Illustrated* in the June 1973 issue, which happened to feature a cover photo of another superb competitor: the immortal racehorse, Secretariat.

*Robert Greshes '75  
Mamaroneck, N.Y.*

## Paying Tribute

THE TRIBUTES TO WALTER OI AND DAVID KEARNS '52 brought back a flood of 1960s memories.

“Uncle Sam” had been drafting 100,000 young men every month for years and sending home some 100 body bags a week. Chatting with classmates after our 1967 graduation ceremonies, those men who did poorly on the “War Boards” exam said they were already scheduled to report for induction physicals. My chemistry education allowed me to get a “defense job” making munitions. I remember watching from my office window, incredulous as thousands of irate women marched, some carrying plastic representations of “male chauvinist pigs,” and chanting “Equality Now!” Equality?

I applaud David’s support of affirmative action, but struggle at thoughts of how one could “right past wrongs,” and “level the playing field” to compensate men for stolen years, to say nothing about lost limbs, bullet wounds, and insidious Agent Orange poisoning. I guess you must stand in front of the stark black granite of the Vietnam memorial, searching for the names of your buddies, to comprehend such thoughts.

*Darryl North '67  
Edison, N.J.*



**STORIED CIRCLE:** Alumni readers identified former history faculty member Christopher Lindley with students.

## More Memories . . .

THE “PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES” (CLASS Notes, March-April; Letters, May-June) made me nostalgic for two reasons—I went to the U of R primarily because my cousin, Susan Andrew Sweet '63, went there, and this picture was from her era. Secondly, Christopher Lindley, the assistant professor in the photo, taught one of the best courses that I took, in fall 1965, Recent American History.

His lectures were stimulating, his reading list was excellent, and my seminar TA in the course, Kenneth Yellis '76 (MA), was the best TA I encountered in my four years at the school. The time period of the course, 1920s to WWII, remains my favorite class in my own 40-plus-year career of teaching American history at a community college.

*Richard Sorrell '66  
Lincroft, N.J.*

*The writer is a professor at Brookdale Community College.*



**MORE PEP:** Susan Schroeder '95, '02 (PhD) added to the collection of pep band photos.

AS IT RELATES TO THE “WELL-DRESSED” students overlooking Fauver Stadium, the gentlemen at the top left of the circle are two of my Kappa Nu, later Phi Ep fraternity brothers—first Len Strickman '63 and the next is Bernie Cantor '63, '68M (MD), '73M (Res).

*Don Warner '64  
Brookfield, Conn.*

## . . . and More Pep

I’M GLAD TO SEE THE PEP BAND ACTIVE AND successful (“Pep in their Step,” March-April; Letters, May-June). I also have many fond memories of pep band fun at UR. I’m sending more photos from spring 1994 and 1993 to add to the pep band archives and alumni records. Go, UR!

*Susan Schroeder '95, '02 (PhD)  
Norman, Okla.*

## Department of Corrections

SEVERAL READERS GAVE US A FAILING GRADE for our translation of a headline in the May-June issue. The title of the Master Class story about John DiBartolomeo '13 and his new career as a professional basketball player in Spain should have read “Jugando al Baloncesto Profesional.”

*—Scott Hauser, Editor*

*Review welcomes letters and will print them as space permits. Letters may be edited for brevity and clarity. Unsigned letters cannot be used. Send letters to Rochester Review, 22 Wallis Hall, P.O. Box 270044, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY 14627-0044; rochrev@rochester.edu.*