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Phone Books Identify South

by Janet Frye
UNC New Bureau

CHAPEL HILL--Can a telephone book tell you where the South is? A sociologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill believes it can.

In a recent study, John Shelton Reed, associate professor of sociology, used telephone books from 100 U.S. cities to identify the South. The study, which is forthcoming in Social Forces, a quarterly journal for social scientists, is based on the assumption that people identify with the region they live in. For example, the "South" includes those places where people consider themselves Southerners.

"Other things being equal," Reed said, "residents of 'Southern' areas should be more likely to use the word 'Southern' in the names of their businesses, voluntary associations and so forth, and we can use this fact to fix the points at which people stop thinking of themselves as 'Southern.'"

Telephone book entries beginning with "Southern," "Dixie" and "American" were counted, excluding

names of individuals and businesses obviously named for individuals. Reed used the number of "American" entries as standard, on the assumption that they would be roughly proportional to the total number of business entries.

Reed found "Dixie" was a far less frequent entry than "Southern." In particular, he said, there is little use of "Dixie" in Texas and Oklahoma, two states which have been included in some definitions of the South.

Although the plotting of "Dixie" points gave a less regular outline of states than "Southern" points, Reed found very high values for "Dixie" in the "Deep South."

"Alabama's claim on its license plates to be 'the heart of Dixie' appears to be valid," Reed said.

Both "Southern" and "Dixie" entries were highest, he said, in the subregion

stretching from eastern North Carolina along the Atlantic seaboard and then west through the "Black Belt" of the Deep South to the Mississippi River. This area is part of the "Cotton South," historically the area of plantation agriculture and largely black population.

Reed postulates that organizations are tagged "Southern" either because they are, or aspire to be, regional in scope or are a reflection of regional patriotism.

If his reasoning is correct, Reed added, "Southern" entries should be largely a matter of geographic location, but "Dixie" has more to do with "attitude than latitude." Thus, Atlanta has far more

"Southern" entries than any other city, but Birmingham has almost as many "Dixies." Kentucky has relatively few "Southerners," but is clearly part of "Dixie."

UNC Memorial Fund Setup

CHAPEL HILL--A memorial fund to benefit journalism students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been established in honor of the late Bloys Britt, veteran Associated Press (AP) newsman, who died Aug. 27 in Charlotte. He was 62.

Britt, AP auto racing editor and one of the world's most respected motor sports writers, was UNC alumnus.

In announcing the memorial John B. Adams, dean of the UNC School of Journalism, said, "We deeply appreciate this opportunity to provide a perpetual memorial to Bloys Britt, who is recognized nationally as 'the best in the business.' We feel that this kind of memorial is a highly appropriate reflection on his career as well as on his

University. The fund will provide an opportunity for his many friends to participate in a lasting memorial in his name."

Adams said contributions may be sent to the Bloys Britt Memorial, Journalism Foundation of North Carolina, Inc., UNC School of Journalism, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514. The funds will be used to provide support for undergraduate journalism students.

Britt, a newsman for 40 years, covered auto racing extensively for AP beginning in 1960. He was named the news service's first full-time auto racing editor in 1969 and since then had directed AP's worldwide coverage of the sport, from drag racing to motorcycles, covering the top events on the auto circuit.

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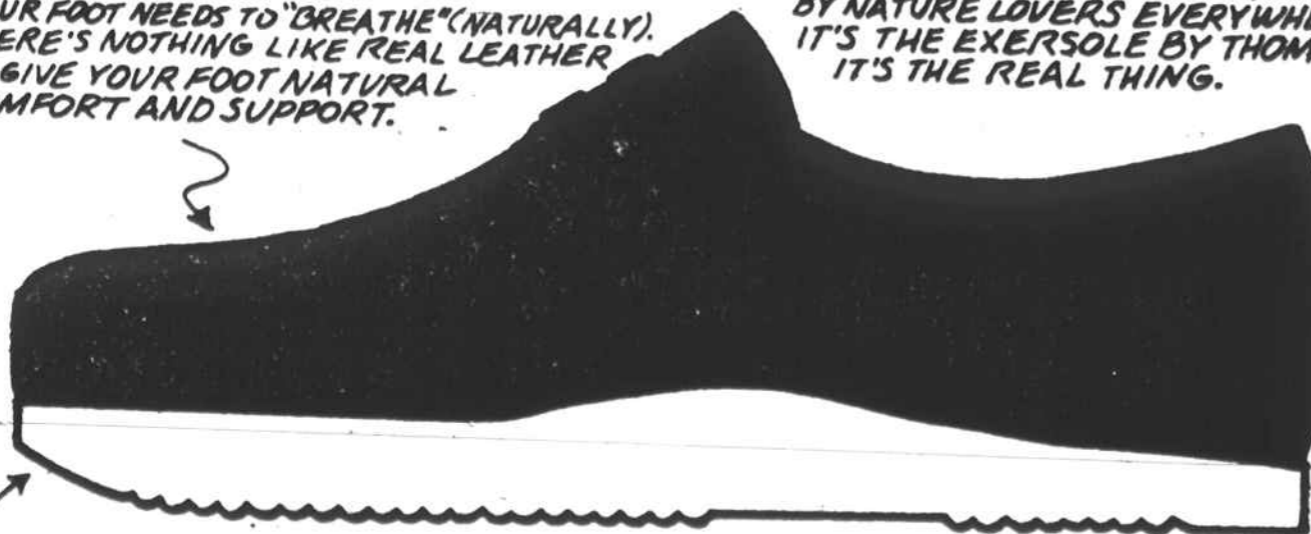
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