

# WOOD AND FIBER

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## AN EDITORIAL ON EDITORIALS

No one asked me to write an editorial. No one even hinted at the idea. In fact, when I send it to Professors McGinnes and Murphey, they may reprimand me and say, "Writing editorials is not in the purview of an editorial assistant!" I hope not, however, because I do have something to say, although it is far from world-shaking. And perhaps the Editor-Past and Editor-Present will be willing to indulge me because of the fact that I am now in my fourteenth year as editorial assistant. So here goes!

It seems that we are doing quite well as far as a supply of articles for *Wood and Fiber* is concerned. But when it comes to editorials, there is always a dearth. Frequently when I send Allen Press the contents for a given issue, I say "editorial to come." I have been puzzling about this state of affairs for some time and have decided to take matters into my own hands, E. A. McGinnes and Wayne Murphey willing.

An editorial is defined in part as "a statement of opinion," and we all have opinions, don't we? Furthermore, I submit that most of us are not only willing but downright eager to share our opinions on a considerable variety of topics, sometimes in spite of our listeners' reluctance to hear these opinions! I can think of a number of possibilities for *Wood and Fiber* editorials. Perhaps one of you could contact a recent graduate, for example, and have him/her write a guest editorial on "Why a student should (or should *not*, heaven forbid) join the Society." Or you could contact a consumer of wood products (after all, this *is* the era of the consumer) and ask the individual to write on how he/she views the use of wood in buildings, how a person feels when a real estate developer bulldozes a beautiful clump of birches to put up a condominium, and so on.

Or you could write an editorial on *Wood and Fiber* itself. What features do you like about it? What would you change if you could? And of course, you certainly must have opinions about your own particular specialty in the wood science field. The technical articles that appear in *Wood and Fiber* are of interest to your colleagues because of the findings they describe, but the editorials can attract even a layman (layperson?) like me.

It seems to me that the possibilities for editorials are endless. So why the shortage? I can only conclude that it must be because we are dealing with written editorials—and writing takes some effort. Furthermore, when one commits himself on paper, his opinions are there for all to see. The spoken word is evanescent and usually spontaneous. We seem less accountable for our spoken words, and certainly they require less effort on our part. But we are now finishing our thirteenth volume of *Wood and Fiber*, and even though I have met only a few of you, I am well aware that your talents are many. So how about sharing some of your opinions with the readers of *Wood and Fiber*? Professor Murphey will expect a flood of editorials over the next few months and both he and I (and even Allen Press) will thank you!

CAROL B. OVENS, *Editorial Assistant*

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