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Fred E. Schreiber
Professor, Biology



You, the students, are the heart and soul of California State University, Fresno. Along with your diverse bloodlines, you bring life to this campus with your endless inquiries and expressions of amazement. When you graduate, it is our hope that because of the people you have met here, your heart will be a bit bigger and your soul will be true to you.

And, if by chance you meet Fred Schreiber along the way, don't say we didn't warn you. He will challenge you, admittedly sometimes to the point of frustration. But he'll also get you to think for yourself — about the complexity of issues — and he won't give you a simple, one-sided view. It's just not his style.

"If someone proposes a simple, one-sided view of any issue, I automatically become suspicious," the biology professor says. *"It's a bias of mine. I have a hard time believing that any issue in the world is that simple. I don't care whether we're talking about pest control or chemical carcinogens, population or Third World hunger. They're all complex problems. And I think we should expect them to be complex. That's what I enjoy about teaching — analyzing the facets of an issue and getting students to do the same."*

If you're thirtysomething, you instinctively know that this guy is a Child of the Sixties. Sure, there are the telltale signs — his Martin Luther King poster and his view of education as a great way of unifying society

across some of the traditional divisions of race and ethnic backgrounds. But when he hits you with this Sixties adage — *"If you aren't part of the solution, then you're the problem"* — you know it's time to trust your instincts.

"I teach a human ecology course from the perspective of how problems can be solved," he says. *"How environmental degradation can be reversed, rather than simply presenting 'The sky is falling, woe is me' approach, where students end up feeling that things are so bad that there's nothing they can do."*

"I try to make them rational activists so they understand the nature and causes of environmental problems from a scientific standpoint ... rational, so they have some perspective on how to attack the problems and can participate in the solutions."

Fred Schreiber doesn't have to say he cares about his students. It's obvious when he talks about that one semester when three students either withdrew or took an incomplete due to a mother's death, a child molestation and a murder.

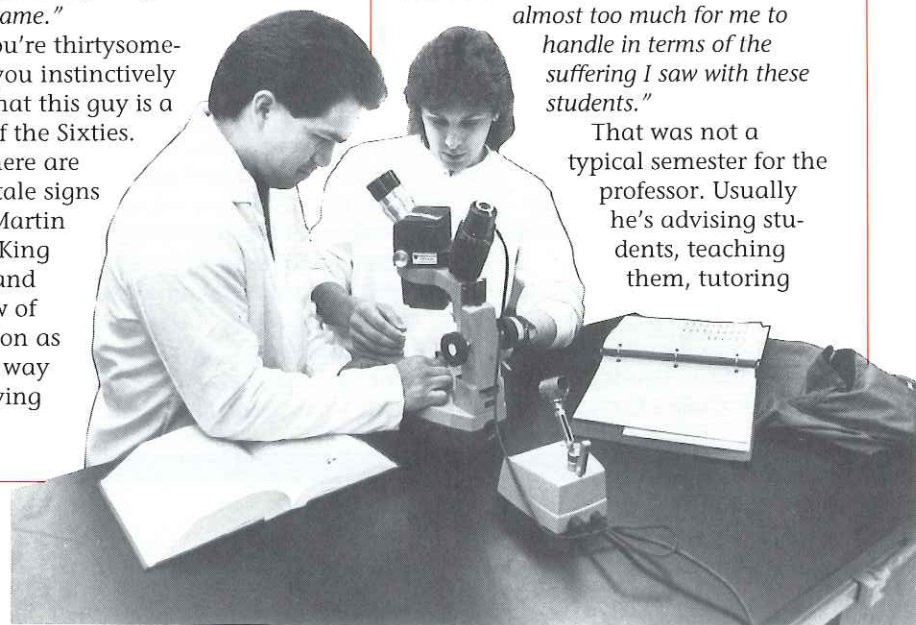
"When you teach a large number of students, it isn't surprising that you also run into some of the misery that life sometimes throws at us," he muses. *"But that semester I was overwhelmed. It was almost too much for me to handle in terms of the suffering I saw with these students."*

That was not a typical semester for the professor. Usually he's advising students, teaching them, tutoring

them, or providing guidance for career planning. *"This is a whole lot of fun for me as a teacher ... to help students plan for their future or to be able to connect with them on the level of amazement, of being able to say 'WOW' together."*

Fred Schreiber considers students who are unmotivated and uninterested a challenge. Despite the fact that they may be a frustrating and irritating challenge, he strongly feels that the responsibility for showing these students new possibilities rests with the faculty members.

"Once we show them the new possibilities, it's the students' responsibility to choose whether or not they are going to explore them," he says. *"And some students don't. They refuse. That's fine as far as I'm concerned. That's their choice, and I refuse to be discouraged by it. Rather, I take my encouragement from the students who do choose to explore the new possibilities, and there are always students who choose to explore."*



Freddie Cardenas (left) and Curtis Sisk collaborate on an entomology project.