

**Gary Paul Williams**  
*The Unraveling of a Way of Life*

I did this piece, "The Unraveling of a Way of Life", several years ago while living in South Carolina, a state where the textile industry once dominated the regional economy. But time and newer technologies inevitably brought profound change to the industry and the people who depended on it for their livelihood. In the process, as the Washington Post reported in 1994, "A Way of Life" was unraveled and discarded.

I used computer edited copies of newspaper articles of that time as background, and personally more important, I used threads from my grandmothers' long forgotten and neglected sewing kit (my grandmother lived with us until she passed away when I was 9) to create this work. These colored threads were glued to the card stock and wrapped around images of discarded wooden textile industry bobbins and spools which I painted with walnut, maple, and oak wood stains. Industrially finished distressed wood is used to frame the art.

This piece conveys the passing of a historical era and a way of life. Today the abandoned technology depicted here is sold on the internet as "vintage" collector items. But I wonder how the lives of the mill workers who each day handled these bobbins and spools, as well as their children and grandchildren, were redirected by their plight. How were their lives rediscovered and re-purposed?