

ART AS SOCIAL COMMUNICATION:
THE RIDGE COUNTY AMATEUR ART WORLD

Robert Steven Aibel


A DISSERTATION

in

Communications

Presented to the faculties of the University of Pennsylvania
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy.

1984


Supervisor of Dissertation


Graduate Group Chairperson

Dedicated to the Memory of

DR. RALPH B. LITTLE (1923 - 1984)

whose professional dedication and constant efforts on my
behalf made the completion of this work possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to the people of Ridge County, who gave of themselves in ways which not only made this research possible, but also made the research process a rewarding and enjoyable experience. I particularly want to thank the members of the Robinsonville Art Class Group and the Creek-Ridge Art League, all of whom cooperated with me in every way possible. Special credit and appreciation are due Marion Mertz, Geraldine Rickenbaugh, and Lillian Yohn, who were more than generous with their time, help, and concern.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Larry Gross, Ray Birdwhistell, and Amos Vogel for their generous assistance and thoughtful guidance through the research and writing process. I also want to thank my friends Mary Moore Goodlett, Chris Musello, and Jay Ruby for their friendship, and their intellectual and emotional support during every phase of this work. A special thanks is extended to Jay for his help in collecting much of the nineteenth century historical data used in this research.

My deepest and warmest gratitude is reserved for Emily and Lawrence Aibel, my parents, whose love and support has made this work and much more possible, and for my wife, Chris, and my daughter, Sarah, whose patience, sacrifice, love, and existence made the completion of this work possible and worthwhile.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	1
Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	3
II LITERATURE REVIEW	12
III METHODOLOGY	42
The Research Process	43
Research Role	44
Observation	45
Document Analysis	49
Background Questionnaire	51
IV RESEARCH SETTING	53
Demographic Features	56
Economic Features	57
Tourism and Recreation	58
Transportation	60
Public Communication	60
Education	62
Social Features	62
V AMATEUR ART AND ARTISTS IN RIDGE COUNTY	66
Painting Style	69
Use	73
Art vs. Craft	79
Profiles	81
Mary Weaver	82
Rebecca Freed	89
VI THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF ART IN RIDGE COUNTY TO 1979	94
Art Display, 1860-90	101
1900-1930 Artistic Activity	104

CHAPTER

Harrison Frerichs and the Resurgence of Painting in Ridge County	105
Ridge County Art Association	110
Art in Creek County	113
Steven Wagner and the Ridge County Art Association	114
The Creek-Ridge Art League	117
Formation of the Robinsonville-based Art Group	120
The Ridge County Art Association Re-forms	123
Arts and Crafts Village	125
Crafts Guild	129
Ray Barron and the League after 1967	132
Ridge County Fair	139
 VII THE RIDGE COUNTY AMATEUR ART WORLD	 142
Introduction	142
Membership	143
Robinsonville Art Class Group Membership	143
Group Composition	144
Creek-Ridge Art League Membership	148
League Composition	149
Profiles	158
Robinsonville Art Group Member Profiles	158
Margaret Shellenberger	158
Edna Leitzel	167
Creek-Ridge Art League Member Profiles	172
Ann Palmer	172
Pauline Benner	175
Classes	181
Robinsonville Art Group Classes	181
Class of July 17, 1979	183
Creek-Ridge Art League Classes	190
Class of July 26, 1979	195
Meetings and Trips	200
Robinsonville Art Group Meetings and Trips ..	200
Trip to Abner Zook's Studio	201
Creek-Ridge Art League Meetings	204
Picnic Meeting of August, 1979	206
Creek-Ridge Art League Trips	210
Trip to the Williamsport Art Show	210
Exhibits and Shows	213
Robinsonville Art Group Exhibits and Shows ..	213
April, 1980 Robinsonville Show	215
Creek-Ridge Art League Exhibits and Shows ...	220
April, 1980 Harristown Show	221

CHAPTER	
VIII SUMMARY	229
APPENDIX	238
BIBLIOGRAPHY	246
INDEX	256

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Despite the lack of serious study of the work of the amateur artist, it might well be the most pervasive and numerically dominant form of art in America.¹ Caught up in the elite art world, those of us with scholarly interests appear to have assumed that the study of art and society could neglect the efforts of the amateur, regardless of its possible significance in the everyday lives of large numbers of Americans. The huge body of amateur art in America, much of it produced and exclusively exhibited in small communities like the one which was the subject of this research, might well be more intimately related to American social and cultural structures than the work displayed in metropolitan art galleries and museums. While the "high" art world might be seen to have had significant impact on the "look" of work produced in local amateur art worlds, these visual influences may have been incorporated into local social and cultural patterns. The goal of this research was to observe and analyze these patterns.

This research was conducted in a small, rural county in central Pennsylvania, referred to as Ridge County throughout the body of this work.² Ridge County had come to forge

its own, self-contained art world which was totally divorced from the activities of the "high" art world of metropolitan America. Most painters in the county had never considered the notion of "making it" by going to a major art center like New York City, or even Philadelphia. A few painters expressed some interest in what was happening in the very limited art world of Harrisburg and its surrounding area, but expressed no interest in pursuing recognition outside this limited geographical area. Despite the fact that a few painters were supplementing their regular income through the sale of their paintings, none of the painters considered themselves to be professionals. Painting was thought of as a hobby, one which might provide "pocket money" under some circumstances.

The amateur art world of Ridge County was organized around two groups of painters. Originally a single association, they split apart in the late 1960s and each had developed its own classes, exhibits, and artistic social life. The split was ostensibly indicative of a rather hot and public debate over the values of abstract and realistic painting. The divisive qualities of this debate pervaded every aspect of the art world with rather strong feelings on both sides. While unaware of the specific significance of the oppositionally defined associations, it was clearly apparent to me that it was a rich area for research, one which would likely lead into the social patterns of the county as a whole. It was expected that the investigation

of these two groups of painters and their differing tastes would reveal a great deal more about the role of this form of visual communication in the county than would the investigation of semantic, syntactic or cognitive structures associated with the paintings (see Appendix A for a fuller discussion of the historical, conceptual, and methodological origins of this research).

Statement of the Problem

The problem with which this research began was, "What is the composition, structure and process of the Ridge County art world, and how is it related to the life of the general population of the county?" Essentially this was an attempt to understand who was involved, how they were organized and what they did. At the same time I was trying to see what, if anything, all of this had to do with the rest of the community. From the beginning, this research was conceived as the study of art as a social process, rather than of art as a ding an sich.

Most commonly, the major emphasis in the study of art has been on the product, divorced from the socio-cultural context in which it was produced and functioned. Further, the art work has been isolated from the process of production, exhibition, appreciation, evaluation, etc. Such "textual" analysis has clearly been of great value and interest in many fields of study. However, the analysis of a symbolic product as a ding an sich is seen here as a tentative stage in the development of the larger framework of the study of

art as communication, a processual orientation. Rather than isolate the art work from its social and processual context, the goal of this study has been to focus on the process in its naturally occurring socio-cultural context. While the art product is the event around which all activity revolves, the object is seen simply as a nodal point within a complex behavioral system. It is an event within an ongoing system of events, but as a material object and the apparent focus of activity it is easily isolated for study. For this research it provided a heuristic point around which to focus the investigation of social process. As cultural anthropologist Roy Sieber said about the study of art,

. . . art is a cultural manifestation finally to be understood (as distinguished from 'appreciated') only in light of its cultural origins. The work of art is both a point of departure and the point of return, but the search for understanding must encompass the various levels at which it functions . . . (In Jopling, 1971: 127)

Sieber's perspective is very much in accord with the orientation of this research. The product must be seen as a part of a complex socio-cultural process which involves the discoverable motives, behavior, historical, and social contexts associated with production and use.

From the perspective of this research, the very label "art" indicates a social act, rather than some inherent property of the object or event. The label is the result of a social agreement of a group of people to use the term "art" to refer to objects with formally or informally codified characteristics. As Michal McCall observed,

. . . things--for example, rectangles of canvas which have been stretched over wooden frames and painted on--are converted to "art" . . . by acts which require the joint and coordinated efforts of a number of individuals or collectivities. (1975: p. 4-6)

Such a conversion may be made with any object, as was pointedly demonstrated by the Dada and Pop Art movements. Art is never created in a social vacuum and the study of art as communication implies the study of art as a social act and process. As Christopherson so clearly articulated it in his discussion of photography,

The physical object itself, the piece of art, is completely dependent on what is said about it, where it is housed, the name of the person who created it and so forth. The meaning of the object, its very existence as "art" is external to the object itself, and is clearly the construction of the general culture and of the social situation we call an art world. (1974a: 8)

While the efforts of a particular artist or group of artists are necessary for the production of a particular material object or event, the object itself is shaped and defined by the social situation and process in which it is embedded. The social situation and process were the foci of this research.

In studying art in this way, I came to form the central proposition of this research concerning the role or function of amateur art in Ridge County. I hypothesized that the amateur art world as constituted in Ridge County played a role in the regulation of social relationships in terms of relating messages about social identity. The group with which one painted, the style in which one painted,

the paintings one hung in their home or business, the way one hung paintings, etc., were acts which carried messages about one's networks of association. As networks tend to be associated with systems of status, behavior, values and beliefs, one's network(s) indicates who one is in social terms. Such social identification then helps in the regulation of social relationships by making the behavior of those so identified more predictable. In the Ridge County art world it appeared that the central messages were about social status and orientation (local vs. cosmopolitan). In a sense one's art-related behavior could be seen as a "status symbol" in the way Goffman discussed it when he said,

By definition, then, a status symbol carries categorical significance, that is, it serves to identify the social status of the person who makes it. But it may also carry expressive significance, that is, it may express the point of view, the style of life, and the cultural values of the person who makes it . . . (His emphasis, 1951: 295)

In Ridge County, I felt that the categorical significance would, in fact, be seen in terms of social status, while the expressive significance would be seen in terms of local vs. cosmopolitan orientation.

The notion of local and cosmopolitan orientation is taken from Merton (1968). In his analysis of influence he derived his definitions from Zimmerman's treatment of Tonnies. While the present research is not particularly concerned with the issue of influence, his definitions of the local and cosmopolitan have been quite useful as ideal

types. While his definitions are phrased in terms of the community he was studying at the time, Rovere, and in terms of influence, they remain substantively useful.

The localite largely confines his interests to this community, Rovere is essentially his world. Devoting little thought or energy to the Great Society, he is preoccupied with local problems, to the virtual exclusion of the national or international scene. He is, strictly speaking, parochial.

Contrariwise with the cosmopolitan type. He has some interest in Rovere and must of course maintain a minimum of relations within the community since he, too, exerts influence there. But he is also oriented significantly to the world outside Rovere, and regards himself as an integral part of that world. He resides in Rovere but lives in the Great Society. If the local type is parochial, the cosmopolitan is ecumenical. (1968: 447)

I felt that one's art-related behavior would identify one's local or cosmopolitan orientation, and communicate that identity within the county.

Further, I hypothesized that the conflict of realistic vs. modern/abstract art would reveal a struggle in the community to maintain its identity as a separate socio-cultural unit in the face of continuing external influence. Art would be seen to be one of the areas in which the community could publicly and privately articulate its opposition to being increasingly drawn into the national mainstream, particularly by their rejection of modern/abstract art.³ In this sense the art process would be seen as a mechanism to aide in the negotiation of continuity and change. These hypotheses are directly related to the notion of art as social communication, drawn from the model of communication which has been developed in the theoretical

work and teaching of Ray L. Birdwhistell.

As I understand it, in the social communication model presented by Birdwhistell, ". . . communication is seen as a continuous structure with investigable but ultimately (as communicational) inseparable components. These component structures are then investigable as abstractions, or in their relationships to one another." (1968: 531)

He called the study of the isolated structures (variously referred to as sub-structures, components, channels and modalities in order to call attention to different features) infracomunicational research. The study of communication proper attends to the systematic interaction of the various infracomunicational systems, but the study of these systems is seen as a necessary step in the investigation of communication as a process. In fact, as he said, ". . . the disciplined investigation of the channel may, in the final analysis, be the only way in which communicational events as communicational events (as distinguished from channel events and structure) can become locatable and isolatable." (1968: 536)

Communication, then, may be seen as a structure which, ". . . precedes the components and gives continuity to the process." (1968: 529)

Birdwhistell essentially outlined this structure in the following:

As an anthropologist concerned with culture, social processes and social structure, I preempt COMMUNICATION as a technical term when I describe it as that aspect of culture which provides the dynamic aspect of social organization. That is, COMMUNICATION provides the SOCIAL

mechanisms for the through-time, multi-generational aspect of social organization. Communication is a term, then, relevant to the processes of stability and variability, of continuity and change which are discoverable through the comparison of social organizational forms in sequential "presents" or "nows" . . . From a related point of view--but seen from within time (and from above) rather than across times, communication might be described as the active aspect of the structure of social interdependence . . . Communication, as a structure, . . . provides regulation of the relationship between organisms. (His emphasis, 1968: 531)

In other papers he broke communication into its two main aspects, the new informational and the integrational. The above quoted description of communication displays a clear orientation towards the investigation of the integrational aspect, as does the whole body of his work, an orientation which influenced the research reported herein. Essentially, he saw the new informational aspect as " . . . the passage of new information from one person to another," (1970: 86) While it is "significant to human communication," he saw it as "rare and intermittent in occurrence." (1970: 75). The integrational aspect, on the other hand, is continuous and,

. . . includes all behavioral operations which: 1. keep the system in operation 2. regulate the interactional process 3. cross-reference particular messages to comprehensibility in a particular context 4. relate the particular context to the larger contexts of which the interaction is but a special situation. (1970: 86-87)

In this sense, then, art is seen as an infracommunicational or derived system which can be isolated for the purposes of research. As the study of social communication, this study is of the art process as one social mechanism

which aides in the regulation of ongoing "relationships between organism," (1968: 531) within time, as well as the negotiation of continuity and change, through time.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

¹See pp. 22-24 for a fuller discussion of this point.

²The names of many towns, counties and area residents have been changed in order to afford the community and its residents some anonymity.

³Discussing this in terms of fashion Simmel said,

Fashion, as noted above, is a product of class distinction and operates like a number of other forms, honor especially, the double function of which consists in revolving within a given circle and at the same time emphasizing it as separate from others. Just as the frame of a picture characterizes the work of art inwardly as a coherent, homogeneous, independent entity and at the same time outwardly severs all direct relations with the surrounding space . . . Thus fashion on the one hand signifies union with those in the same class, the uniformity of a circle characterized by it, and uno actu, the exclusion of all other groups. (1957: 544)

Recontextualizing this in terms of the status symbol, Goffman said,

Status symbols visibly divide the social world into categories of persons, thereby helping to maintain solidarity within a category and hostility between different categories. (1951: 294)

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins with a review of the literature related to the amateur artist. Following this is a discussion of literature concerned with the relationship between art and social status.

An intensive literature search in the fields of sociology, anthropology, psychology, folklore, art history and criticism, and communication reveals little about amateur art and artists or about art as a form of leisure. Rarely have scholars studying art or leisure made mention of the existence and efforts of the amateur artist. Considering the contemporary penchant for the simple dismissal and denigration of the amateur product as "kitsch" or "schlock," this neglect should not be surprising. Generally speaking, the literature demonstrates that the work of the amateur has been treated as if it were at best, irrelevant, at worst, an embarrassment. However, some scholars have recognized the existence of the amateur artist and a few have acknowledged the possibility that there might be value in paying some attention to amateurs and/or their art work. Still, as will be seen below, systematic, intensive study of the work and role of the amateur artist and the amateur product has yet to be undertaken.

In a 1902 Harper's Magazine article, Grace Brownell Peck discussed "Amateur Art in Early New England," based primarily on her "attic researches." She surveyed a wide variety of amateur efforts, all by women, including paper-cutting, painting, painted prints, needlework pictures, painted clock faces and panels, and painted mirrors. She traced amateur activity to mid-18th century America, ". . . when the first stress of hardship and poverty had passed, when Boston had become a thriving little city, when the plain Puritan dress had given place to furbelows and flounces." (1902: 987) Newspaper advertisements for amateur instruction and objects with a documented history led her to conclude that ". . . pictures of home manufacture began to make a place for themselves." (1902: 987) As Peck presented it, in every case these amateur or homemade efforts were the exclusive province of women, often as decorative adjuncts to the home.

In 1927, the decorative use of amateur art in America was noted in Harold Eberlein's "What Early America Had On Its Walls," when he said:

The Professional artist class was exceedingly small and, until well after the turn of the nineteenth century, average people of moderate means had to depend largely upon their own personal efforts or the handiwork of three-quarter amateurs to satisfy their pictorial aspirations. (1927: 53)

While Eberlein had little else to say about amateur activity, he displayed a keen awareness of the contributions of the amateur artist to the decor of the American home.

The decorative use of the amateur product was one which McClaugherty (1982) noted in passing in her review of the "household art" literature of the late nineteenth century. She reviewed twenty-three books and numerous articles which appeared between 1868 and 1893 in an effort to analyze the phenomenon of household art and to better understand the house interior of that period. In her opening paragraph she stated,

Household art was a distinct movement in middle-class home decoration in the late nineteenth century. It aimed, as the name implies, to bring art into the home. It was primarily disseminated through books and articles written by tastemakers who believed that the home interior could exert moral influences and be a place of optimizing individual, amateur expression. (1982:1)

A similar observation was made by Winkler and Moss in "Exploring Grandmother's Parlor," (1983) in which they looked at the decor of the nineteenth century parlor, and the role women played in home decoration. They indicated that women were responsible for the moral education of their families and this was reflected in their attention to the details of decor and the production of decorative accessories.

It was to strengthen domestic tranquility that the Victorian woman lavished great attention on her home . . . Women lavished on their homes an incredible diversity of handiwork items that were practical, decorative and meaningful. Design books such as the Lady's Book, Peterson's Ladies National Magazine, and Arthur's Home Magazine, assisted her . . . (1983: 49-51)

Evidence of the profusion of amateur arts during the nineteenth century is further provided by one of the more

popular art books of the time, Art Recreations. It was first published in 1859 and remained in print through 1884 as an instruction book for "teachers, amateur artists and the family circle." (1861: 3) The book provided detailed instruction for the amateur in the following "ornamental work": Drawing, Oil Painting, Crayon Drawing, Grecian Painting, Painting in Watercolors, Theorem Painting, Photography Painting in Watercolors and Oils, Oriental Painting, Sign Painting, Antique Painting on Glass, Papier Mache Work, Bronzing and Gilding, Leather Work, Taxidermy, Wax Work, Plaster Work, Moss Work, Hair Work, Feather Flowers, Cone Work, Shell Work, Wild Tamarind Seed Work, Paper Flowers, Potichomaine, Enamel Painting, Panorama Painting.

Nina Fletcher Little, writing for the antique and folk art market in 1975, made note of these amateur efforts, primarily by women, during the 1750-1850 period. However, in her look at the decorative arts of rural America she directed the focus to girls and women of wealth and status. She specifically referred to the work of the amateur artist as "Schoolgirl and Ladies Art," and noted that most of it was intended to function as "domestic accessories." (1975: 68-92) She indicated that these amateur artists practiced both painted and needlework pictures until the end of the eighteenth century, when most of their energy turned to painted work.

With considerably more scholarship to support his discussion of the amateur artist in America, Virgil Barker

made a similar association between art, women, and social status. He devoted a number of chapters of his 1950 American Painting: History and Interpretation to a discussion of amateur efforts, noting its importance in American art history and its earliest appearances in America prior to 1684. He cited the continued growth of amateur art through the mid-nineteenth century, when it reached its greatest level of activity. It was at this point that he found amateur art becoming a society activity and referred to, "the new prominence of the society amateur." (1950: 163) It quickly became a female hobby of the leisured class, and most of the painters were introduced to it at private academies. As Barker said,

The general concept of artistic amateurism as nothing more than a graceful adornment had the ultimate consequence in the nineteenth century that artistic accomplishments in the society were almost confined to the girls and women; but even during the half-century of colonial culmination this concept was perceptibly strengthened. (1950: 164)

While he noted that the amateur artist was a permanent fixture in American art history, he also demonstrated a primary interest in the study of "high art." For Barker the main reason to know about the work of the amateur was as a form of art which made more "sophisticated" efforts possible. Despite this bias, he devoted a good deal of space to a discussion of the amateur and is one of the few art historians to make more than a passing mention of the amateur. (cf. Greer, 1979 for a more international discussion of the amateur from a feminist perspective)

Some of the discussion of the amateur artist had been a byproduct of the ongoing debate surrounding definitions of "folk art." Art historians and folklorists such as Ames, Cahill, Flexner, Glassie, Vlach and Kubler have noted the existence of the amateur artist and cited the continuing confusion of the work of the amateur with what might more defensibly be called folk art. However, their motivation has not been to assess the role of the amateur, but to more strictly define the objects that they feel should be studied and valued as folk art.

Dreppard (1942, 1979) drew on census data, newspaper advertisements for art classes and art supply stores, and the sale of amateur art books to locate a flowering of amateur art in the nineteenth century. He discussed the itinerant art teacher who came and stimulated interest in a community. As he said,

Enough cases have been noted to establish a national pattern: after an instructor in painting and drawing had assembled a "class" in a community, either an art materials store was established or art materials were offered for sale by a shop or shops in that place. Paper, parchment, canvas, frames, brushes, oils, varnishes, and colors were offered by these stores. Instruction books and manuals, sketching books and other literature of the arts were, in most cases, also stocked . . . 1859 shows three times as many stores and shops selling artists materials per 1,000 of population as 1830! Thousands of men and women, boys and girls were painting. (1979: 12)

Dreppard was one of the earliest to recognize the confusion of much of this amateur art, produced by what he called the "pioneer amateur artist," with "primitive" and "folk art" in America, and indicated that,

Discriminating students and collectors now are defining as "primitive" only those expressions which are obviously untutored, crude and spontaneous. Between this form of art and the work of the professional artists stands a vast quantity of honest pioneer amateur effort--good, bad, indifferent. (1979: 11)

Flexner formalized this tri-partite categorization as the work of the artisan, amateur, and folk artist, in which the artisan was a professional craftsman "not dedicated to the fine arts," and the folk artists emerged from a European folk tradition. (1942: 248) Amateur painting he defined as, "Pictures created by non-professionals for personal pleasure, to earn a good mark at school, or to secure the admiration of their neighbor; but not primarily for sale." (1979: 16) While he noted the possibility of numerous borderline cases, he primarily wanted to clarify some of the issues which he felt should be considered in order to avoid the confusion of folk art with other forms of art and decoration.

This same confusion was the motivation for much of what Holger Cahill had to say in his "Artisan and Amateur," in which he attempted to clearly delineate the province of the folk artist. He drew a parallel between the "Sunday Painter Art" of the day as exhibited at the Art News' National Amateur show in 1950 and the amateurs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, noting that the fact that some amateur art was produced in early America didn't change its status to that of folk art. As he said, "What had been called folk art is the most ancient and pervasive form of art expression, and its earliest representatives

must have been amateurs . . . But not all amateurs are folk artists." (1979: 23)

Very much in accord with Cahill's perspective, Ames, writing in a 1977 publication which accompanied a folk art exhibit at the Brandywine River Museum, argued that it is necessary to look at the efforts of the amateur in the social context of their production and use if we are to be able to distinguish them from folk art proper. As he said,

Many other objects were made by people who were effected by or actively participated in the dominant culture of nineteenth century America. They dabbled in sewing, painting, and carving, for example, as hobbies. These activities provided an emotional outlet or offered a contrast to their daily work. These avocations of the past parallel tie-dyeing, macrame', weaving, surfboard painting, and china painting of today. (1977: 41)

Glassie touched on a similar point in his theoretical approach to folk art. (In Dorson, 1972) Glassie offered his tri-partite categorization of elite, popular, and folk arts, in which the work of the amateur was encompassed in the popular art category. Dealing with the differentiation of folk art from other forms of art, as a worldwide issue, Glassie noted that most of what is now considered to be folk art is actually popular, amateur art of the past which has a "charming" quality to it because of the substandard abilities of the artists. As he said,

Most of the naive paintings produced by the middle-class daubers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in Latin America, as well as in Europe and the United States were the same kind of Sunday painting that is popular among today's hobbyists. They copied landscapes from books . . . and simply did not copy them very well. (1972: 262-3)

Amateur art was noted in passing by another American folklorist in his analysis of the underlying assumptions of much folk art study. While attacking the "myths" of folk art he referred to the possible confusion of amateur and folk art, thereby burying amateur art in a rubric which hides its true nature. Speaking of contemporary painting he said,

Never is it suggested that excellent amateur artists just might be some of the best modern artists of the day; that would stun the elite art circles. Instead the term "folk art" (because the word "folk" remains generally ambiguous) becomes a dumping ground for all newly discovered talents who are found in every context imaginable. (Vlach, 1980: 354)

While little was available concerning the amateur art Glassie referred to from outside the United States, Greer (1979) does discuss it in relationship to women in the arts, and an article about the English amateur was published in the British publication, Antique Collector. This article indicated the numeric profusion of amateur art in England and provided a guide for art collectors. In order to organize the field of eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth century amateur art for the collector, the author offered his taxonomy of amateur artists. Discussing the field he said, "It is so extensive a field that some specialisation is desirable, and happily it lends itself to any number of sub-divisions." (Shearing, 1978: 86) The categories he offered were: "Titled Amateur," "Clerical Amateur," "Lady Amateur," "The Family of Amateurs," and "The Travelling Amateur." All categories were filled by people of inde-

pendent means. While some of what Shearing had to say about amateur art is arguable, no one in the United States has looked closely enough at the amateur efforts to begin to offer a taxonomy.

Sociologists have shown some interest in the amateur artist though generally in the form of very limited mention of their existence and activity. This is the case with the Lynds' work in Middletown where they found enough activity to warrant mention in 1929 and 1937. In Middletown (1929) they noted an active amateur art world which began in 1888, which was composed exclusively of women from the "business class" (the higher of the two classes identified by the Lynds), who went on to found the Arts Student's League in 1892. (1929: 248-250) However, by 1929 the production of art was no longer a component of the activity of the members of this "fashionable club," as they met only to listen to speakers and discuss art. In general, from 1890-1929 the Lynds found that "art as a leisure-time activity" was "an exclusively female accomplishment" which was "largely a social ritual of a small group of privileged women." (1929: 250) By 1937 amateur art production had made something of a comeback in the business class as a result of various efforts and expenditures by a wealthy Middletown family. In 1935 the Lynds observed a class which had been created by two women, "where two mornings a week a small class of women and children fifteen years old and above paint and sketch under their instruction. " (1937: 288)

In Eugenia Whitridge's 1946 study of the Chicago art world she also made note of the existence of an amateur component. Referring to the period 1833-71 Whitridge drew on various forms of data to conclude that in most areas of the United States, "Art was taught in private academies or by private teachers as a polite accomplishment, chiefly of women." (1946: 32) However, by 1920 she noted the proliferation of the amateur or hobbyist painter and the founding of numerous new art groups. She credited this growing activity to the increasing leisure time and spending power of the American public and to a change in their attitude towards art.

The appearance of the hobbyist or "Sunday Painter" on the Chicago art scene seems logically related to the freedom of self-expression claimed everywhere by artists in this period, and to the decline of the idea that art is the exclusive province of the professional artist. (1946: 148)

She cited an ever greater art boom in the late 1930s when the federal government and the Board of Education of Chicago sponsored art teaching centers in order to offer "opportunity for persons throughout Chicago to pursue fine and applied art as a leisure time activity." (1946: 185) In Chicago alone the Federal Art Project conducted 1,608 classes with 33,148 people in attendance. (1946: 185) In a footnote Whitridge referred to a common attitude towards amateur activity, one which continues to be expressed today. That is, the government felt that encouraging art as a hobby would lead to a wider and more appreciative audience for "high art." Amateur

activity was not seen as an end in itself, but was important primarily to help develop the "high arts" and to aid the economy through the sale of art materials.

Evidence of the amateur art boom of the late 1930s, one felt even in Ridge County, is also seen in the proliferation of publications directed to the amateur. In one notable example, Morris Davidson's Painting for Pleasure, he made note of this boom in his introduction.

Many more Americans than ever before, particularly in large cities, are taking up painting as a hobby. The ready inference is that this amateur activity in art is only a fad or fancy which will soon spend itself. (1938: 3)

He went on, of course, to argue that it was not a fad, but a hobby which would continue to grow.

In fact, there is much evidence to argue that the numbers did continue to grow. Lynes noted in 1949 that the number of amateur painters had been growing since the beginning of World War II. He cited Art News estimates of 300,000 amateur painters in America in 1949. (1949: 284) In a column that Art News ran from the summer of 1949 to March, 1961, "Amateur Standing," they said in 1952 that,

Reports from amateur groups throughout the country reveal that pastime painting is still the most rapidly growing hobby in America; that the amateurs like to form societies for mutual education, protection and, perhaps admiration; and most important, these community units work enthusiastically to spread interest in all forms of art in all strata of our society. (1952: 8)

Following this the editor published a "cross section of reports received by this department," including reports from art groups in Michigan, Arkansas, New York, Massachusetts,

Oklahoma, and Ohio, reports which provide some of the only information ever published about amateur art worlds across America. By 1960 Max Kaplan estimated that ". . . two million persons paint regularly in their leisure time," (1960: 207) and in 1964 Alvin Toffler cited an amateur movement that, "like the amateur movement in music, began a long, powerful upswing after the war and has not yet crested." (1964: 20)¹

However, rather than consider the benefits or significance of amateur activity Lynes noted that "many professional painters resent it." He went on to explain,

They reason that if people paint their own pictures they won't buy pictures by professionals, and instead of creating a body of informed dilettantes who might become eager and intelligent collectors the amateurs merely become a lot of half-baked, self-satisfied artists. (1949: 284)

While this might be a reasonable fear for people trying to make a living from their art (cf. McCall, 1975: 56-58), it is an attitude which was surprisingly supported by a scholar in the sociology of art, Adolph Tomars. In a 1966 article Tomars expressed his concern that amateurs would hang their own work rather than buying professional work, and he provided what he considered to be a disturbing example of such activity:

The writer himself observed a community in which a considerable number of men and women have become enthusiastic amateur painters and hold periodic exhibitions of their work. In recent years, they have gone one step further, putting price tags on their exhibits and offering them for sale. Quite a number are bought, mostly by other amateurs, a sort of taking in each other's wash . . . (1966: 52)

While Tomars saw the possibility of therapeutic benefits in amateur art activity in terms of sublimation and self-expression, he was concerned that it would compete with and endanger the development of professional art. As he said,

A serious concern with the arts means the view that sees the arts not as a minor issue or side-show of life but as an essential mark of a great civilization, as among the values that express great achievements of the human spirit, that enrich life and make it meaningful. From this point of view creative citizen participation in art activities - the citizen as amateur producer of art - is important solely in that it may make the citizen a better consumer of art . . . For the high development of a nation's art 10,000 cultivated consumers of first rate painting are more important than 100,000 amateur producers happily daubing on canvas. (1966: 46)

While Tomars stated his case in a somewhat extreme and derogatory fashion, it is an underlying attitude which pervades much of the literature. Sociologists rarely recognize the possible social significance of amateur art worlds and rarely treat amateur art as a meaningful phenomenon.

A few writers, like English art scholars John Willett and Simon Vaughn Winter, have been sympathetic to the possible importance of the amateur artist and have called for more knowledge about them and their work. After seeing exhibits of amateur art in a small California community, Willett found himself asking the following questions about amateur art:

Why, to begin with, does one find the same kind of bad holiday landscapes, sub-Tretchikoff portraits and gaudy abstracts in a Los Angeles art festival as in Heath Street, Hampstead or the Salon de la SNCF (the French railwaymen's show) in Paris? Why among the flood of books and articles on the arts, does nobody sit down to study the position and achievements of the amateur in one or more countries? Why do amateurs have to be

so generally despised by the professionals and the critics so that there seems to be a great curtain fixed between amateur and professional culture, reducing good art, in effect to a spectator sport. (1973: 776)

Winter, writing about an exhibit which was meant to explore areas of art previously neglected, noted the exclusion of what he called "the largest category of art produced in the country, namely amateur art." (1978: 42) He cited the pleasurable aspects of amateur painting, but also noted that the "amateur artists see themselves as continuing a tradition - a living tradition rather than one overshadowed by state schemata - which is part of the fabric of local life." (1978: 43) In characterizing their work he said,

Landscape is of course the most popular form of amateur painting, but seldom (in my experience) views that are the stuff of calendars, postcards and bisquit tins. These paintings are an expression of local and cultural continuity. When a person chooses to paint a particular scene, it is felt that a commitment is made to the memories and associations that particular scene has. The act of painting consecrates it . . . In still life, amateurs are mostly concerned with "getting it right." Lacking manipulative skills and a repertoire of techniques, getting it right is not merely a matter of concentration but a struggle against intractable materials. Countless times when discussing a painting with its amateur creator I have been told "that this bit wouldn't go right" or even "I couldn't get this bit to behave properly." The painted objects and the art materials are endowed with an inherent obduracy, resistant to the most sustained perseverance. (1978: 43-3)

He went on to call for the public recognition of amateur art and for the development of a "critical language" to talk about it, as he had found standard art terminology inappropriate to the amateur product.

A few sociologists have recognized the possible

importance of amateur art and have suggested that we put it into the proper social context in order to better understand its significance. Even fewer have actually made limited attempts to do so, usually as a byproduct of a more comprehensive sociological view of a particular art world or of leisure.

In Kaplan's classic Leisure in America: A Social Inquiry (1960) he devoted little space to art as a leisure time activity, but did offer a framework for its study. He suggested that art might be seen to function on two levels, the "aesthetic" and the "social," and he was interested in whether it could serve both functions as a leisure time activity. He subdivided these two functions into five patterns for the purposes of study:

- 1) Collective experience, as in folk art, which draws persons closer to their groups.
- 2) Personal experience, which supplies a means of fantasy or escape or brings one into contact with circles or historical periods other than one's own.
- 3) Social symbol, in which art represents an idea or a social relationship such as class position.
- 4) Moral value, or art considered good, decadent, inspiring, sensate.
- 5) Incidental value, in which art is used for purposes completely unrelated in any aesthetic sense: art for political purposes, as a commodity in business or to help fill a psychological void while one sits in a restaurant booth. (1960: 203)

In one of the classic community studies, Leisure: A Suburban Study (1934), Lundberg, et al had little to say about amateur art, but did propose to place leisure time art in its proper social context. They proposed that art must be seen as part of the social, cultural, and economic

activity of a community, rather than as a separate entity. As they concluded in their study, "The artistic aspects of everyday existence are, in Westchester as in every community, interwoven with every other strand of life." (1934: 257) However, they never took a close look at amateur art and offered no specific analysis of its role in Westchester.

In a similar vein, McFee and Degge (1977), art educators, recognized the need to place the amateur in the proper sociocultural context. They said,

. . . two contrasting art cultures are those of recreation artists and professional artists. They have different ideas about what art is for and different values about the processes of art. . . . Each art form can be evaluated in terms of the cultural influences on the artist, or it can be judged in terms of art generally. But the latter keeps us from seeing the value the work may have in the life style of the group. To judge a county fair exhibit by the same criteria as an international art show tells us how different the cultures are of two groups of artists but tells us little about the meaning the art has in either culture." (1977: 282 and 297)

Again, however, despite the lucidity of their remarks McFee and Degge offer no research in which they applied their ideas.

The few studies that have made some attempt to understand the significance of amateur artists and art have primarily done so as an adjunct to the primary goals of their research. In looking at art, artists, and art education they had to deal with amateur art, but they either failed to focus on its social significance, or simply treated it as tangential to the "real" art world.

In a 1978 dissertation, Vera Webb developed and

tested A Model for Family Centered Leisure-Oriented Art Education. Her basic interest was in art education as a leisure activity and as family recreation in communities and vacation resorts, as a way to "encourage personal development and ability." (1978: 12) While her study contributed little to our understanding of the social and cultural roles of the amateur, she did offer a brief social history of amateur activity in America. However, it was a piecemeal history due to the dearth of social and historical data dealing with amateur art. As she found, "The background history of art as leisure in the United States is virtually non-existent except where it is an account of the work of a particular group or agency." (1978: 12)

In a 1982 publication Jeffrey Riemer and Nancy Brooks reported on their study of artists in Kansas. Seventeen percent of their sample was composed of amateurs, a sample of 180 persons which was drawn in a completely haphazard manner, forcing one to seriously question the validity of all of their data. In addition, the data was collected through mail questionnaires and a few in-depth interviews which concentrated on questions which do not allow us to form the "social portrait" that they proposed to draw. Indicative of the limited social depth of their work is the following conclusion concerning the amateur artist, a category which received very little attention throughout their report: "Art as a hobby appears to provide a great deal of personal satisfaction without the tensions and

compromises found in other artistic pursuits." (1982: 18)

One approach which has led to some useful data and analysis concerning the amateur artist is the "art world" paradigm developed by Howard Becker (1982). In this model the object of study is not the art work itself, but the "groups of people who cooperate to produce things that they, at least, call art." (1982: 35) Through the use of qualitative research methods the researcher observes the processes of that group of people, which he calls an art world, in order to analyze the coordination of activities which produce the works they call art. It has led Becker and others, e.g., Christopherson (1974a, 1974b), McCall (1975, 1977, 1978), Mulkay and Chapin (1982), to work concerned with the processes of production, editing, distribution, exhibition, criticism, and the social contexts and forces which shape these processes.

While her primary interests lie in an analysis of the "fine" or "high" art world, McCall's work offered some insight into the role and behavior of the amateur artist in St. Louis. In her analysis of the occupational status of the female artist in St. Louis she looked at the mechanisms through which material objects were turned into art objects and the way in which female artists built status within the St. Louis art world. Within this world she discovered an amateur art "enterprise" composed of women she referred to as "picture painters," who "sell decorative objects - pretty pictures - whose use is to brighten a wall and provide

pleasure." (1975: 53) In fact, because the St. Louis "fine art enterprise is marginal" the amateur and the fine artist compete for artistic status, in an art world in which the cheaper amateur product has a competitive edge. As she said, "Picture painters seek clients who want decorative objects and who are willing to pay a price which takes account of the painter's skill." (1975: 57) Most of their work was sold through art association shows, art fairs, and in frame shops or "galleries" in which their work was offered as a part of a line of decorative accessories.

McCall found that participation and artistic status in the "picture painting enterprise" were determined by one's membership in one of the St. Louis amateur art associations. Each association held its own "members only" shows, "contests" at their monthly meetings, and each named an "Artist of the Year." Comparing the status mechanisms of these artists to those of "fine artists" she said,

These awards--ribbons, monthly contest victories, "Artist of the Year" awards--are the picture painters credentials, i.e. the symbols of artistic status in the "picture painting" enterprise, just as reviews, purchase by museums and collectors, exhibition in prestigious places, faculty status, and so on are symbols of artistic status in the fine art enterprise. (1975: 55)

In describing their work she noted that amateur efforts were primarily landscapes, portraits, and still-lives (most commonly clowns and flowers) on which they spent about two and one-half hours each, relatively little time when compared to the fine artists of her study. In further

characterizing their work she noted that they "emphasize execution rather than ideas" and claim "to have a more or less unique skill rather than a new vision." (1975: 52-3)

Art and Social Status

The relationship between various forms of visual communication and social status has been noted in the literature under a variety of rubrics. For some it is discussed in terms of the "status symbol," for others as "taste," "fashion," "the visible symbolization of status," "symbols of class status," etc. Whatever label is applied, the notion that art and other forms of visual communication can and have functioned as components of social status systems has been repeatedly noted on a theoretical level and occasionally developed through research.

For some authors the notion of a "status symbol" is simplistically and derogatorially approached as a way in which people can intentionally demonstrate their social position and/or wealth. This was the case in Read's Art and Society (1966) when he said, "The elite accumulates power and wealth and leisure. It demands outward symbols of its position and above all those which reflect its pomp and glory." (1966: 70) This approach is demonstrated throughout much of the popular literature concerning status and prestige and was well represented by Packard's The Status Seekers. (1959) With respect to the use of art as a status symbol he related an incident which was revealed in an interview with Richard Doan, a former Connecticut antique

dealer. Doan told Packard of an interview he'd seen on Edward R. Murrow's "Person-to-Person" with a famous theatrical celebrity:

The camera came to rest on a pair of eighteenth century portraits. The Doans gasped in excitement. The portraits had, a few years before, hung in their own living room until they found a buyer. The theatrical celebrity modestly explained to Mr. Murrow, "Ed, those aren't my folks . . . They're my wife's ancestors." (1959: 67-8)

This type of approach to the notion of status and prestige is largely derivative of Veblen's formulations (1953). As Parsons observed about this approach and Veblen's and Packard's role in popularizing it,

The very ready tendency to derogate such symbolism often takes the form immortalized by Veblen in the phrase "conspicuous consumption," with the allegation that people lived in comfortable and tasteful houses, or wore attractive clothes, in order, for instrumental motives, to enhance prestige. This was then held to be a dishonorable motive with no "intrinsic" connection with the "real" functions of the unit . . . it has become tempting to allege that those who seek and use it are motivated "only" by prestige (cf. Packard, 1959). (In Laumann, 1970: 56)

Parsons attacked this position in the process of attempting to offer a more sociologically revealing view of what he called the "visible symbolization of prestige." He saw it as serving a "functional need" and indicated that such symbols are necessarily, and not usually intentionally, employed by "all societal units," familial and non-familial. He noted that "it arises wherever generalized media of interchange are involved in human action," (1970: 56) and argued that it had not received the "careful analytic attention it deserves." (1970: 55)

Goffman also called for studies which "trace out the social career of particular status symbols," (1951: 304) because they function as necessary components of human interaction. As he said,

Co-operative activity based on differentiation and integration of statuses is a universal characteristic of social life . . . Status symbols are used because they are better suited to the requirements of communication than are the rights and duties which they signify. (1951: 294-5)

In using the term "status symbol" Goffman broadened the conventional use of the term to include, "etiquette, dress, deportment, gesture, intonation, dialect, vocabulary, small bodily movements and automatically expressed evaluations concerning both the substance and details of life," or what he also refers to as a "social style." (1951: 300) In fact, he also recognized the possible role of "avocational pursuits" including "arts, 'tastes,' sports, and handicrafts" as "symbols of class status." (1951: 301)

Along these same lines, McFee and Degge, in dealing with "art as an integral part of people's lives and with the ways art enhances and influences the human experience," (1977: 2) addressed the issue of social styles and symbols. They said,

All people are walking information centers. The clothes they wear, the way they wear them, their grooming state, their use of body painting, their body movement, their choices of jewelry or ornamentation tell other people a great deal about who and what they are, the culture they come from, their values, their degree of acceptance of change, as well as their economic status, which, of course, influences their pool of choices. Styles and symbols are used to identify different ages, social roles, sex roles, occupations, and, in some cases,

ethnic and regional origins. (1977: 283)

They went on to discuss the importance of such symbols in making behavior predictable, a regulatory role of central importance to the conduct of social interaction.

The art of dress, the symbols used to communicate how the individual views himself or herself, the roles he or she expects to carry out, and arts in the environment provide predictability. Art communicates much more quickly than if we had to go around asking everyone who they were or what to do. With just a glance we get much more information; even subtle clues people could not tell us. If we could not predict behavior, our judgements would be slowed considerably. Each of us every hour of the day would be trying to figure out what the others were going to do. (1977: 286-7)

Discussing styles or symbols in terms of fashion, Sapir noted that " . . . fashion has always been a symbol of membership in a particular social class . . ." (1931: 142), and Simmel, addressing the same issue said,

Fashion . . . is a product of class distinction and operates like a number of other forms, honor especially, the double function of which consists of revolving within a given circle and at the same time emphasizing it as separate from others. Just as the frame of a picture characterizes the world of art inwardly as a coherent, homogeneous, independent entity and at the same time outwardly severs all direct relations with the surrounding space . . . thus fashion on the one hand signifies union with those of the same class, the uniformity of a circle characterized by it, and uno actu, the exclusion of all other groups . . . Fashion is merely the product of social demands, even though the individual object which it creates or recreates may represent a more or less individual need. (1957: 544)

Parsons, basically discussing the same process, referred to it as "matters of taste," during his effort to clarify Weber's notion of taste as social action. Parsons saw taste as a series of norms and standards which were

socially patterned. Speaking of this he said,

It is to be particularly noted that this element also involves orientation to norms. There are not merely factual regularities of action (as Weber's formulation could seem to imply), but standards of "good taste" in society. The factual regularities, so far as they obtain, are to be interpreted as arising from common (or like) orientation to common norms. Reflection will show that this element has an extremely wide application in social life. It applies not only in matters of food, dress, daily personal habits, etc. but is a very prominent element in "art," "recreation," etc. (1937: 678)

Here he specifically referred to the role of taste in art and later further argued that taste was a central component of artistic and recreational activity. As he said,

. . . there is a whole class of concrete acts that are spoken of normally as artistic creation and appreciation, on the one hand, and recreation, on the other, where the "taste" element becomes predominant. It is true that all these activities involve "techniques"; once given a certain norm of taste, there are right and wrong ways of going about achieving it. (1937: 679-80)

In the final analysis then, Parsons argued that the artistic style of a group emanated from common orientation to social norms.

Building on Parson's formulation, Cheek and Burch's The Social Organization of Leisure (1977) looked at taste as a social construct. Their review of the literature and their own research led them to see "taste as bound to matters of social inequality, social differentiation, and invidious comparison; that is, taste is seen as regulating social structural relations, interpersonal relations, and cultural relations." (1977: 135) They saw taste as the "property" of groups and as a potential indication of social solidarity

within groups and social boundaries between groups. They said,

Thus a purely social creation such as taste, in which standards ambiguously float without any objective means for testing and about which a range of professional tastemakers issue contradictory pronouncements as to the absolutely right standard, still becomes a creation which can erect the strongest boundaries for regulating social relations. (1977: 141)

In Mukarovsky's analysis of the social creation of what he called the "aesthetic function" of art he noted the role of taste, or the adoption of an "aesthetic canon," as a mechanism of social differentiation and mobility. As he said,

Every social stratum, but also many environments (e.g. city-country), has its own aesthetic canon which is one of its most characteristic attributes. If, for example, an individual moves from a lower stratum to a higher one he tries, as a rule, at least to find the superficial characteristics of the tastes of that stratum to which he wishes to belong (an aesthetically motivated change in clothing, housing, social behavior, etc.). He doesn't see this so much as a social activity, but a psychological one, but he and we can recognize a common occurrence in human behavior. People join new groups and take on their behavior. (1970: 47)

Little research has been done which looks at the way in which art actually functions as a part of a system of social status and position. As Kaviolis' comprehensive literature (1968) review demonstrated, most of the research that has been done was confined to attempts to find correlations between artistic styles and particular social classes and social structures. Rather than study the "origin, formation, and career of collective taste" (Blumer, 1968: 345) or the "social career of particular status symbols," (Goffman, 1951:

304), Kaviolis' analysis of these studies led him to construct a set of abstract relationships between premodern and urban social strata and artistic styles and preferences. He associated the premodern aristocracy with "Rigidly conventionalized hieratic 'Medievalism'; elegantly sensuous lyricism," and each of the other strata with equally abstract artistic features. The studies which led Kaviolis to these conclusions are of little value to the further understanding of the ways in which art might function in ongoing social systems.

One notable exception to the above type of research is a study done by Gerald Pocius (1979) in which he looked at the relationship between the social order of a Newfoundland community and the hooked rugs produced by the women of the community. He found that rugs with traditional, community-based designs--abstract and geometric patterns--were kept in the kitchen where egalitarian interaction with family and friends took place. Yet, rugs with individualistic, non-traditional designs--usually representational--were kept in the parlor where hierarchical interaction with those of higher status in the community--clergyman and merchant--took place. In this type of study we are thereby able to see the object and its design as they function within the ongoing social life of a community.

Another related form of research, emerging from the sociology of leisure literature, provides data about the relationship between art as a hobby and various social

variables. Using survey methods to locate correlations between leisure time activities and social variables, a number of researchers have found fairly consistent patterns with respect to art.

Burdge looked at how a "person's position in the occupational prestige structure is a determinant of how leisure is used." (1969: 262) Using the North-Hatt Occupational Prestige Scale as a measure of social class in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, personal interviews were conducted with 1,635 people. In the area of hobbies he found a correlation between the highest status level and participation in sketching and painting as a hobby.

In a collection of articles edited by Richard A. Peterson, he introduced the notion of looking for patterns of leisure activity and attempting to relate those patterns to classes of people. Based on the studies included in the volume, all employing survey data, his conclusion was that "Quite distinct sorts of people are found in each cluster, but they can only be partially ranked by social class or status honor." (1983: 434) Still, the studies that reported on patterns of involvement in arts activities did show some agreement with Burdge's findings.

Frank and Greenberg, using national survey data, isolated a leisure area called "Arts and Cultural Activities" which they found primarily associated with "highly educated women who either are themselves or are married to, a household head who is a manager or professional." (1983: 451) Hughes

and Peterson, also using national data, isolated a cluster or category they called "Arts Actives" who were most likely to be involved in amateur arts activities. Their analysis of "stratification variables" led them to conclude that Arts Actives ". . . have higher incomes, tend to be salaried (not wage) workers, not union members, to be professional, and not blue collar, to have more education, and to have been exposed to high culture as children." (1983: 473) Finally, Crowther and Kahn analyzed art and leisure activities in St. Louis. While they didn't break down their categories in much detail, all indications were that enjoyment of and participation in art activities were positively correlated with higher education and income. (1983: 516)

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

¹Toffler actually cited National Art Trade Materials data which indicated thirty million amateur painters in 1950 and forty million in 1960, but these figures are patently absurd.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted using that complex of research techniques generally referred to as ethnographic research methods. A review of the reasoning behind this methodological choice can be found in Appendix A. In order to collect the type of data that I required, I viewed ethnography as comprised of a combination of methods or techniques, each of which would be used as it was appropriate and efficient for the collection of various types of data. My approach to research methodology was not so chauvinistic as to have excluded survey methods at the outset as they perform certain tasks quite efficiently. However, they proved to be impractical and unnecessary for this research. Specifically, I employed interviews, observation, participation, document analysis and a simple self-administered questionnaire. This combination allowed me to employ the method or technique most appropriate to the circumstances and type of data sought. In addition, such a blend of methods allowed me to more systematically assess reliability, validity, and the quality of the data. The different types of data permitted me to assess my observations in relation to those of others, as well as to compare observations as my role shifted along the observer-participant continuum.

It was possible to systematically search the data for confirmation or disconfirmation from one type of data to another, allowing me to assess the adequacy and accuracy of my observations, as well as data gleaned from informants, respondents and documents. As one is constantly using the data to generate hypotheses, evidence to support or deny any hypothesis can only emerge from the systematic comparison and evaluation of data from multiple sources, through multiple methods.

Once hypotheses were formulated, it was then possible to intentionally and carefully observe and question in ways which would turn up contrary or confounding data. Further, if one is within a reasonable distance of the research site, as I was, it is always possible to return to the field to recheck any circumspect data, leading to greater confidence in the data and findings.

The Research Process

During my initial visits to Ridge County in the summer of 1978, I was able to make contact with the three women who were to become my primary informants. Throughout the following year I maintained a correspondence with them indicating my interest in studying art in Ridge County, and indicated that I would appreciate any help they could offer. In June 1979 my wife and I returned and moved to Robinsonville, a small town in the northeastern part of the county, approximately nine miles from the county seat, Pattersontown. Robinsonville was one of the centers of artistic activity

in the county, and the only town in which I was able to locate an apartment which could be rented for three months. As it happened, this situation facilitated a good deal of the research, while it did not have any dilatory effects of which I was aware. It did, however, force me to attend quite carefully to the possible geographical bias of my data.

I maintained residence in Robinsonville for a period of just over three months, carefully cultivating my research role and collecting data, while developing a level of rapport and cooperation which allowed me to return to the field for periodic observation and interviewing, during the eighteen month period following the initial full time residence. Follow-up visits lasted from one to five days and were planned to observe seasonal variation in painting and social activity and to attend events which I or my informants deemed significant, primarily art shows, classes, trips and meetings. During the initial stay, I was able to locate the groups to be studied, generate hypotheses, and conduct the bulk of the necessary observation, interviewing and document analysis. During the follow-up period I administered the background questionnaire, continued to systematically test the hypotheses developed earlier, and collected data which would allow for a fuller picture of the art world and community.

Research Role

In order to collect the kinds of data I felt were necessary to complete my research, I needed to observe,

participate and conduct interviews. The particular role which would permit me to do all of this was that which Junker refers to as "observer as participant." This term has been used by others as well, e.g., Gold (1958), Schatzman and Strauss (1973), but it was Junker's conceptualization of the role which was foremost in my thoughts. "This is the role in which the observer activities as such are made publicly known at the outset, are more or less publicly sponsored by people in the situation studied, and are intentionally not 'kept under wraps.'" (His emphasis, 1972: 37) During the research I moved along a continuum of observation and participation from passive observation (sitting on the periphery of an event, observing and taking notes) to active control (formal and informal interviews) to full participation (painting, eating, socializing, judging an art exhibition). (cf. Schatzman and Strauss, 1973: 58-63) This was a constantly shifting research role, one which I adapted to the social situation as appropriate. In this way I was able to function as a member of the group while I also observed all activities and asked questions which only a researcher would. Active membership also provided me with invitations to all relevant events and activities.

Observation

Observation provided the needed behavioral data which could not be gleaned through informant or respondent interviews. Equally important, my observation provided an opportunity to contextualize interview data and to compare

informant and respondent reports to my own observations. Some of the richest and most useful data emerged as a result of observing an event, interviewing an informant who was present, one who wasn't present, interviewing respondents, and reading local newspaper reports on the event. I was thus able to learn a great deal about myself, my informants and respondents, and the local press.

Observation, often combined with informal conversational interviews, was the method employed to collect data at all classes, formal group meetings, informal get-togethers, art fairs and competitions, and trips to art exhibits and museums. Observation was structured around the following list of topics: patterns of participation, activity and interaction; time, duration and location of meetings; topics and content of conversation; the nature of formal and informal criticism; the nature of formal and informal instruction; painting methods and materials; sources of imagery.

Interviews

In-depth formal interviews were conducted with thirty-two active members of the Ridge County art world. This included painters, teachers, exhibitors and patrons. These interviews were conducted in the home of the interviewee in order to observe the social, cultural and material surroundings of the interviewee. This also provided me with an opportunity to see and photograph the painters' larger body of work, and to observe how and whether it was ex-

hibited in the home. Each interview (sometimes involving two separate sessions) covered a specified list of subjects through an open-ended interview lasting two to four hours. The following is a list of subjects covered during formal interviews: social position and role of interviewee and family; location of interviewee activities such as shopping, visiting, work, and vacationing; interviewee and family members' hobbies, memberships, and friendships; what they do and don't do with members of their art group; when, where and with whom they paint; when and why they began to paint; history and content of their painting instruction; how and why they became or didn't become a member of an art group; opinions about their own and other art groups and artists; style and content preferences in art; sources of imagery for their work; final disposition of finished paintings; art competitions, prizes, and judges; methods and materials of painting; history of art in Ridge County; level and sources of knowledge about the history of American and world art.

Additionally, as I required photographs of the paintings of each artist as a mnemonic device and for gross stylistic comparison, I built this into the end of each interview if time and energy permitted, or returned at a later date specifically for this purpose. In this way I was able to engage the painters in conversation concerning each painting they had in their home. This allowed me to gather concrete data about: methods, materials and location of the paintings; how, why, and where they were done; where

they had been exhibited; what had been said about them by others; whether they had won any prizes. This provided additional and specific data as well as cross-validation of earlier interview responses. In fact, in many cases the abstract statements made during the formal interviews proved to be somewhat different from the statements made when confronting a specific painting and discussing the circumstances surrounding its production and exhibition. One striking example was from a painter who professed a deep commitment to abstract art, but, to her embarrassment, was only able to produce two examples of it in her entire collection. In this way I was sometimes able to confront the relationship between values, beliefs and behavior.

In addition to these formal interviews, numerous informal interviews were conducted with these same thirty-two people and approximately twenty-five others, primarily during the numerous events which I attended throughout the period of this research. During these informal interviews or conversations, I was able to clarify formal interview data and to probe immediately present and spontaneously voiced ideas, opinions and feelings. For example, during art competitions I engaged those present in conversations concerning reactions to the prize-winning paintings and painters and/or the judges critique of the paintings.

These interviews were conducted with two types of interviewees: informants and respondents. As noted earlier, during the summer of 1978 I began to train three informants.

Each was in a particularly advantageous position within the art world so they would be able to observe events of importance, and report to me concerning those activities and events which I was unable to attend. One informant was drawn from each of the art groups, and the third was aware of and particularly knowledgeable about the artistic activities in the county, though no longer an active painter. In addition, this third informant was particularly sensitive to and knowledgeable about the issues of my research. Through a series of in-depth interviews, discussions and observations I determined their roles in the community and art world and selectively sensitized them to the areas about which I wanted them to report. As I was able to compare their reports to my observations and to the reports of each other, and to the reports of other community members, I came to know how to treat their reports as useable data about the events and about them. In addition to their roles as informants, they acted as sponsors who were able to provide me with entrees to the various segments of the art world in such a way that cooperation and trust from others followed with relative ease. These "others" were then interviewed formally and informally as respondents, providing data concerning the interview topics listed above.

Document Analysis

During the informant and respondent interviews, an effort was made to locate relevant documents. This led to the collection of membership lists, organizational by-laws,

membership brochures, programs of events, schedules of group meetings, minutes from group meetings, guestbooks from meetings and other events, entrance and prize records from recent art fairs and competitions, newspaper clipping files, and scrapbooks. While some of this material went back to the early 1950s, the bulk of it was from 1967 onwards. The presence or absence of such documents and the social identity of the keepers of those documents that did exist was useful data in itself.

Throughout the research period the local newspapers were read in order to observe the presentation of the art world within the wider community. As most such articles were written with the cooperation of members of the art world, they were particularly revealing of the groups' presentation of self. Reaction to such articles was probed during formal and informal interviews, as appropriate. Newspapers were also able to provide indications of what activities and groups were given calendar listings and/or coverage, and in what geographical areas.

A great deal of historical data, particularly concerning the nature of and participation in the Ridge County Fair exhibits, was provided by Jay Ruby. During his archival research concerning the history of photography in the county, he kept records for me of art historical data prior to 1900. In order to fill in the post-1900 art activity in the county I searched local historical volumes and newspapers, though most of this tedious search was relatively unrewarding.

Analysis of all collected documents revealed historical developments and patterns, official rules and statements of purpose, patterns of participation, and publicly presented images of the Ridge County art world. In addition to its possible documentary value, all of this data was compared to data collected during interviews and observation, and provided indications of topics to be probed and developed during further interviewing and observation.

Background Questionnaire

In 1977 a Community Profile of Ridge County was prepared by Marilyn Jahn for the Rural Dental Health Program. This was drawn from census data and from a survey she conducted in 1976. While interview data offered some basis for comparison of the subjects of this study to the county population at large, a background questionnaire was administered to the subjects of this study to yield more complete data for comparison with the Jahn data. In this way I was able to combine interview and questionnaire data of this study and compare it to that reported by Jahn, thereby placing the subjects of this study in the social structure of Ridge County. In addition, I was able to compare and contrast the composition of the two art groups which were the focus of my research. The background questionnaire was drawn up in the fall of 1980, pretested with my informants, revised and distributed to all members of the art groups and relevant others during the winter and spring of 1980-81. In order to secure a high return rate I asked my informants in each

group to collect completed questionnaires at a group meeting. Still, the bulk of the questionnaires were returned in the return envelope provided with the questionnaire. The response rate was 86%, and much of the missing data was available through analysis of interview materials.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH SETTING

Named for the river which flows through the county, Ridge County was originally inhabited by American Indians of the Tuscarora tribe. The original inhabitants are still referred to in the names of geographical sites and regions, as well as in the names and symbols of local associations and businesses. The first white settlements were founded in the 1740s by Scotch-Irish and German settlers who engaged in violent struggles with the Tuscarorans through the 1770s. Originally a part of Spruce County, its population grew and it was separated as a part of Creek County in 1789. It was finally established as Ridge County in 1831.

The area now identified as Ridge County is in the Susquehanna River Basin, and is located in the ridge and valley section of the Appalachia Province of southcentral Pennsylvania. It lies within the depression bounded by the 1900 foot sandstone ridges of the Blue Ridge and Shade Gap Mountains to the north and the Tuscarora Mountains to the south, which parallel each other in a northeast-southwest direction.

One of the smallest counties in Pennsylvania, it is about fifty-five miles long and from eight to twelve miles

wide, covering an area of 387 square miles. It shares common boundaries with Pine County on the northeast, Creek County on the north, Oak County on the west, Ash County on the southwest, and Birch County on the south. Its major metropolitan orientation is to Harrisburg, forty-five miles to the southwest, though it is within 200 miles of Baltimore, New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C. by way of major highway systems.

Ridge County is composed of thirteen townships and four boroughs, Patterson, Pattersontown, Peterburg and Martintown. Pattersontown, the county seat, is the location of the county courthouse, jail, library, as well as most of the other county services. In addition to a variety of shops and services, it has the only supermarket, department store and State Store in the county. However, it is truly a small town and lacks many other goods and services, most of which are available in larger towns in contiguous counties. While a portion of the population travels to State College, Harrisburg, Selinsgrove, Chambersburg and other relatively nearby commercial centers, the large majority of the county is oriented for their "outside" shopping and services to Harristown, the county seat of Creek County, and of Ridge County prior to 1831. With a population of 9,830 (1980 census), it is a developed commercial center, a fifteen to twenty minute drive from Pattersontown. Due to its physical, historical, and psychological proximity, Harristown has come to play an active role in the lives of many Ridge County

residents as a commercial, economic, medical, political, cultural and social center. Many from Ridge County have been employed in Harristown, particularly in the now defunct Standard Textile Corporation and presently in American Steel. There are numerous Harristown-based bi-county associations concerning political, commercial, cultural, and social activities which have been active for long periods of time. Additionally, Ridge County residents depend on Harristown for hospital care, a daily newspaper, movie theaters, train and bus transportation, as well as other essential and non-essential services.

Despite this close association between Ridge County and Harristown/Creek County, the residents of Ridge County continue to see themselves as separate and apart from Harristown, Creek County, and all surrounding towns and counties. In fact, they are somewhat insistent about their separate identity and resent the encroachment of the illls of the "metropolis" as represented by Harristown. As was said in a research proposal for a visual ethnography of the county (See Appendix A), "A county is an arbitrary political unit. However, it is clear from the initial fieldwork that people in the county regard themselves as a cultural unit and see the county border as having significance." (Ruby, Aibel, Lynch, 1978: 18) This observation was clearly confirmed during the period of this research. People in the county have tended to protect and isolate themselves from the perceived dangers and difference of the "outside" despite,

possibly because of, their dependence on it.

Demographic Features

The 1980 census recorded 19,188 people living in Ridge County, a 14.8% increase in the 1970-80 decade. While this is considerably larger than previous increases, indicative of the rural growth trend of the 1970s, the county has continued to experience moderate population growth since 1930. This growth has been fairly even throughout the county, though it has tended to focus on the areas around the Ridge River, the railroad, and highway, as might be expected.

In total population, Ridge County is classified as 100% rural, though 90.6% of the 6,693 households are classified as rural nonfarm households. Average household size was 2.83, while average family size was 3.25. The make-up of the population remains as stated by Jahn in her 1977 Rural Dental Health Program report, "In race, religion and ethnic background, the county is remarkably homogeneous." (Jahn, 1977: 3) The population is almost exclusively white, 98.2% identify themselves as Protestant, and the population is overwhelmingly composed of people of Scotch-Irish and German descent, a large proportion of whom have spent numerous generations in the county and state. Stability is certainly a central feature of the population. Over 94% of the population is presently residing in the state of their birth, compared to 68% for the total U.S. population. (Jahn, 1977: 4) Comparing place of residence in 1980 to that of 1975, 99.6% of the population still resided in Pennsylvania, 87.5% still

resided in Ridge County, and 70% still resided in the same house. Almost 80% of all residents live in owner occupied housing units.

Economic Features

The relative homogeneity of the population can also be observed in the area of income distribution, as Jahn said, ". . . the rural U.S. population shows more low income families than does Ridge County, and also more high income families. Except for the low income minority in the county . . . Ridge is somewhat more homogeneous than national income patterns." (Jahn, 1977: 5) Average household income was \$13,883, with per capita income at \$5,711. Generally somewhat poorer than the country as a whole, 12.7% of the population was classified as poverty status. Only 19.8% of the population had an income over \$25,000. Eighty-six percent of the labor force worked for wages and salary, while only 12.5% was self-employed.

Of the labor force of 8,501, 7.5% were unemployed at the time of the 1980 census. The largest single employer was U.S. Kosher Poultry, Inc. in Pattersontown, and the Ridge County School District was the second largest employer. A variety of Ridge manufacturing firms accounted for over one-third of all jobs. Employment outside the county has been a significant factor in the employment figures, accounting for one-third of all jobs, primarily with American Steel in Harristown and the government in Harrisburg.

The major products of the county are orchard crops,

apparel, poultry, and lumber/wood products (The Sentinel, 2/27/82: 4A), as produced in the major industries of agriculture (farming and food processing), textiles and construction materials. Twenty-seven percent of the county's total land area is used for farming, with approximately 670 farms averaging 165 acres. Only two farms cover an area larger than 1,000 acres. The primary crops are hay, corn and oats, and dairy cows are the chief livestock. Sixty-five and a half percent of the county's total land area is forest, approximately half of which is actively worked by the eighteen county sawmills, sawing over four million board feet annually. (Ridge County Planning Commission, 1979).

Tourism and Recreation

Recreational facilities in the county are well used and include a variety of private playground and picnic areas, a number of community parks with numerous playing fields, a state park, five private campgrounds, two municipal swimming pools, tennis courts, an eighteen hole golf course, a bowling lane, a drive-in movie theater (summer months), and a skating rink. One of the more well-known facilities in the county is the Peterburg Fairground, the location of the Peterburg Speedway (a constant source of intra-county tension) and the annual Ridge County Fair.

The Ridge County Tourist Promotion Agency is responsible for selling the county as a recreational and tourist attraction. The major factors in the county tourist trade are its natural resources, particularly its forests and

streams. In 1980, camping, fishing, and hunting accounted for the large majority of the \$3,640,000 brought into the county through travel and tourism (The Sentinel, 2/27/82: 8b). Prior to the 1974 completion of the new main highway, Route 22-322, it was possible for the county to attract travel business from those passing through the heart of the county on old Route 22-322. Now, however, the generation of tourist and travel business requires a public relations effort as Ridge County is simply a series of exits on the new highway.

At these exits there are three restaurants which generate a portion of the travel dollar, while they serve as the only full service restaurants in the county. Kauffman's Country Restaurant is visible from the new highway and serves a regular trade of county residents and travelers. Ridge Stop, the only truck stop in the county, serves as a travel stop for many travelers, as well as a major restaurant for the county throughout the day and night. It has taken much of the Sunday supper, meal, snack and special occasion business once loyal to the third restaurant, Rennies. Despite this, Rennies (really a combination diner and restaurant on old Route 22-322), the oldest of the restaurants, continues to serve as a county landmark and the location of numerous social occasions and meetings. Regardless of quality or convenience, it continues to be the first place to be recommended by county residents when one asks where to eat.

Transportation

With almost no public transportation serving the county, the privately-owned car has become the only real form of everyday transport. Almost ninety-two percent of Ridge County households own at least one car. The only taxi service nearby is the City Taxi of Harristown which only provides service between Ridge and Creek counties, not within Ridge County. Bus service has been severely curtailed in past years with two infrequent stops in Ridge County on the Greyhound routes to Harristown, State College, Harrisburg and Pittsburgh. Rail service is available only in Harristown, since passenger service from Patterson was halted in 1961. Harristown service consists of two trains daily in each direction, east and west. Freight train service is available specifically to serve the needs of the few county businesses requiring it. A small rural service commercial airport is located outside Pattersontown, primarily to serve as a minor repair station, to offer student instruction, and to provide charter and sightseeing flights. The closest airport for travel is the Harrisburg International Airport, approximately a one hour drive from Pattersontown.

Public Communication

There are presently two weekly newspapers within the county. The Ridge Sentinel, with a circulation of over 7,000, is published in Pattersontown. It serves the entire county and tends to function as the more-or-less official form of county-wide information transfer. It is a small

town newspaper, firmly local on every level. Locally oriented in the same way is The Times, which is published in Petersburg with a circulation of 3,500. It tends to focus on news and happenings around the county, as does The Ridge Sentinel, but also regularly includes restaurant reviews, auction results, and editorials. One other paper which serves a significant portion of the Ridge population is The Sentinel, published in Harristown. It is a daily newspaper which attempts to provide continuous attention to information relevant and interesting to those in Ridge County.

The only other form of public communication based in the county is a radio station. Its programming deals with a wide spectrum including religious broadcasts, rock, easy listening, and country and western music.

In 1978, the Rural Dental Health survey included some questions concerning visual communication. While not definitive, this survey does provide some preliminary indication of the use of the visual media in Ridge County. Ninety-eight percent of all households surveyed owned at least one television set, which was on for an average of 3.6 hours each day. The six shows most frequently cited as favorite shows were: "Little House on the Prairie," "Grizzly Adams," "The Waltons," "Three's Company," "Sixty Minutes," and "Family." Moviegoing was a relatively limited activity for Ridge County residents with 34.5% attending once or more each year.

Education

Historically composed of one room schoolhouses and four private academies, the present Ridge school system has consolidated and now includes nine elementary schools, two junior and two senior high schools. Enrollment from kindergarten through twelfth grade is approximately 3,900 (Waters, 1983: 4). Private schools account for 150-200 students and are primarily in existence to serve the small Amish and plain Mennonite communities in the county. The census data from 1970 indicated that the average number of school years completed for those over twenty-five was 10.5, and that 42% of the population over twenty-five had completed high school. While 1980 census data for 1980 is not complete in this area at the time of this writing, the high school graduation figure had risen to 55.3% indicating a somewhat significant increase in educational attainment during the 1970-80 decade. At the time of the 1980 census, 6.7% of the Ridge County population twenty-five and over had graduated from college.

Social Features

Using data collected in the Rural Dental Health surveys, the 1980 census and the present research, it is possible to provide some indication of the social environment of Ridge County. A fuller picture of some aspects of the county will emerge throughout this dissertation. Here, however, I will provide a brief sketch of some central features in order to set the stage for succeeding chapters.

The intact nuclear family, with and without children,

is overwhelmingly the largest single category of family type. It accounts for 90.3% of all families in the county. While the extended family as a household unit accounts for only 1.8% of all families, it is a powerful force in the county. Almost eighty-seven percent of the families reported relatives living in Ridge County, and 59.4% reported living within walking distance of relatives. The single most common social event reported was visiting close relatives. Thirty-one percent reported visiting close relatives daily, 47.4% weekly and 11.4% monthly. This data provides some quantitative support for the centrality of the family in county life, as observed throughout every aspect of my fieldwork in the county. The family is the central social unit in the county and has maintained as a strong and influential unit through time. As was said in the earlier cited proposal for a visual ethnography of Ridge County, "It is an economic, religious, social, and probably, political focal point." (Ruby, Aibel, Lynch, 1978: 5)

Close, local family ties also relate to the overwhelming local orientation of county residents, which can be observed in almost every facet of life. As indicated earlier, the residents see themselves as living in a county with a separate identity, values and interests. Quantitative data concerning newspaper readership and organizational participation are further indices of this strong local orientation. Of the 86.5% who reported receiving a newspaper, 86.6% received a local paper, while 21.1% received a state

newspaper, and only 4.4% received a national newspaper. The local associational pattern can also be seen in that 55% belonged to a local group, while only 15% belonged to a non-local group. Further, these memberships display another important feature of Ridge County residents, which is linked to familial and local orientation, adherence to traditional values. Eighty percent of all local memberships are in social, religious, community service and farm organizations, a pattern which predominates in non-local memberships as well.

The clear indications of the quantitative data cited above are consistently confirmed by the qualitative data collected during my fieldwork. Ridge County is strongly traditional, familial and locally oriented. Directly complementary to this orientation is a generally conservative approach to most aspects of life. As noted in a 1983 Pennsylvania Heritage article by one of the more active, respected, and notable residents of the county, Ruth Cramer Waters,

Why hasn't Ridge County become urban? Why have Patterson, Pattersonstown, Peterburg, and Martintown remained small towns? Why has the population of the county remained practically one hundred percent German and Scotch-Irish? Many reasons might be given, but perhaps the most apparent one is that the residents want it this way. Every time a landowner decides to sub-divide his land for housing developments or every time a contractor decides to ask for government help to build low-income apartments, there is a public outcry against it. The local inhabitants even object to extending water and sewer lines which would make it easier for more people to take up residence. (1983: 6)

In her report for the Rural Dental Health Project in 1977, sociologist Marilyn Jahn precisely summarized the

nature of the county and its residents when she said, "The basic values and concerns of the county residents are focused on family, home, local associations, and economic stability." (1977: 12) Placing the county in the context of the world around it, she used the quantitative data collected to insightfully conclude,

On the one hand, one could propose that the county is an isolated rural enclave with few outside connections and with divergent or, at least, distinctively rural patterns. And, on the other hand, one could assert that there is a national homogeneity in social, economic and health patterns. The more moderate and realistic conclusion is that societal changes and problems impact upon the community and that the community's particular characteristics modify and redirect external influences. The characteristics of relative stability and local orientation buttress the conservative tendencies in the county, but the need to deal with external and internal changes requires critical perspective and actions that draw on other resources. (1977: 18)

The body of this work will allow us to see the way in which amateur artistic activity is integrated into such a community, and will shed further qualitative light on the details of county life. In order to do so I will first provide an overview of the role of art in the county and in the lives of its residents, followed by profiles of two representative residents who paint.

CHAPTER V

AMATEUR ART AND ARTISTS IN RIDGE COUNTY

If asked about those residents of Ridge County who paint, few who live there would hesitate to produce names and evaluations of their work. Amateur painting is an established and respected avocation, one which has been quite visible to the general public. Over the past forty years it has been repeatedly exhibited at a variety of locations including the annual Ridge County Fair, Ridge Stop, Rennies Restaurant, the only county supermarket, local banks, local businesses, and the homes of many county residents. Rarely does a county-based art exhibit or competition go unnoted in the Ridge Sentinel, with a follow-up story concerning the artists, judge(s), and winning paintings, including photographs.

Since the 1930s arrival of a New York City art teacher, Harrison Frerichs, the amateur art boom has made it virtually impossible for a person living in the county not to have seen a locally produced painting. Commission work has become a commonplace, especially around the Christmas season, with many requesting paintings of their past or present homesteads and/or particular county sites, e.g., one of the seven covered bridges or an historic home or site. Painters in the county report a great deal of

commission work for giftgiving for various holidays, weddings, birthdays and anniversaries. Such work is almost exclusively family, home and locally related.

Amateur painting is a relatively popular hobby in the county having attracted well over 200 adults, primarily through art classes, during the 1970-80 decade. Most amateur painters have been female, and while a few men have taken up painting as a hobby, few have stayed with it. The large majority of amateur artists have been or presently are members of one of the two art associations which are active in the county, the Creek-Ridge Art League and the Robinsonville Art Class Group.

The Creek-Ridge Art League is a bi-county association, though most activities tend to be based in Harristown. It is a formal association with annual dues of \$3.00 (though some who consider themselves members neglect to pay), and an annual schedule of meetings, events, and exhibits. It has a fluctuating membership of thirty to fifty members (of which twelve to twenty are from Ridge County), an active membership of fifteen to twenty, and a small coterie of six to eight people who keep it running. While the membership is primarily female, a few very active men are to be found among the administrative leadership. The paintings of the League are identified by themselves and others as "modern" or "abstract," though most of it might more strictly be classified as impressionistic. They are firmly committed to a "modern" style despite little sales success, and continue

to recruit teachers and judges with a modern/abstract orientation. They find little value in realism and discourage members from detailed, realistic paintings. As one new League member told me at his third League sponsored exhibit at an Arts Festival,

I really like to paint in a realistic style, but they keep telling me to soften it up, if I want to win prizes. Even my wife keeps telling me to paint more abstract stuff because they like it here, but I don't know. I won a ribbon on this one, my most abstract painting yet, but I sold five realistic ones already today.

The focus of much League criticism is the realistic work of the Robinsonville Art Class Group, referred to as the "Robinsonville group," "gang" or "bunch," and a variety of other realistic painters in Ridge and Creek counties.

A formal association prior to 1970, the Robinsonville Art Class Group is an informal association with no official name or structure. As some of the most prominent and active members are also active members of the Crafts Guild in Ridge County, the Group is sometimes associated with them as the formal nexus of Group activities. As Crafts Guild shows do allow the exhibition of paintings from these members, it is in some ways an arm of the Group. The Group is built around classes offered in Robinsonville and Patter-sontown, and bi-annual art exhibits in Robinsonville. Classes are offered on a year-round basis. They attract a regular annual membership, exclusively from Ridge County, of approximately thirty men and women and ten to fifteen children, with an active group composed of ten to fifteen

adults, primarily women. It is held together as a group largely through the efforts of the woman who teaches the classes, a small group of two to three women who have been active since the mid-60s (as will be discussed in the next chapter) and two to three newer members. The work of the Group is identified by themselves and others as realistic. They are firmly committed to realism and continue to recruit teachers and judges with a realistic orientation. They find little value and some offense in modern/abstract painting, and offer much criticism of the teaching, work and preferences of the League.

Painting Style

The overwhelming majority of county residents prefer paintings done in a realistic style, in which all of the aspects of the work are clearly recognizable. It would be exceedingly unlikely to see a painting displayed in a home in the county which was not realistic, with the exception of the homes of Creek-Ridge Art League members and their friends. Even League members, despite their avowed interest in and experience with modern art, hang realistic works of their own and of other artists in their own homes. Few members of the Ridge community tolerate the modern or abstract paintings of the League without denigrating comment. At the well attended Ridge County Fair art exhibit, "I wouldn't hang that in a chicken coop," is a common complaint heard upon encountering an abstraction from the League. The conservative tendency noted by Waters and Jahn in the previous chapter

is quite evident in this approach to painting. Modern painting has come to be associated with a constellation of threatening elements such as the breakdown of the traditional family, community and church, crime, drugs, pre- and extra-marital sexual indulgence, etc. It has come to represent the encroachment of a changing and confusing world, which threatens the maintenance of the community as it exists.

Further, many county residents feel that they have been attacked as ignorant, backward, simple, country folk because they don't understand and therefore, reject modern art. However, as one local businessman said to me when I asked him how he felt about people who said that he didn't like that "stuff" because he was "simple country folk," "Well, if that's what it takes to be disgusted by that stuff, then I'm happy to be simple country folk. I ain't stupid, but I may be simple, and I'm sure from the country and happy about it." Though they recognize that there may be some knowledge to which they are not privy concerning art, they reject modern art and the value of attaining the knowledge necessary to appreciate it. Few would argue with the statement of one informant who said, "I don't understand that modern stuff, and I don't want to," or the commonly heard "I don't know much, but I know what I like."

While most county residents recognize the adoption of the modern styles of art as representing knowledge and training of a specialized elite with obvious cosmopolitan connections, they firmly reject it in favor of their own

traditional values in life and art. The modern/abstract art of the outside world is ridiculed and rejected in favor of the county's realistic art. This may be seen as symbolic of their rejection of the values and behavior of the cosmopolitan world which threatens them. Those who paint in a realistic style represent the community to itself, asserting the central values of family, church, community, practicality, individuality and frugality in their painting style and subject matter. In addition, with very few exceptions, those who paint in a realistic style assert these values in their behavior as well as in their art. This brings them a great deal of respect and enhances their social status in the county.

As will be seen in the following historical chapter, painting itself has come to be an activity which is generally associated with people of relatively high status in Ridge County. It is a respected activity and, regardless of style, those who paint are accorded higher status for their involvement in it. For many it has become a component of social mobility as will also be seen in later chapters. Despite the condemnation of the work of the modern/abstract painters, their status is further enhanced by their association with an "imported fashion." (Simmel, 1957: 545) Their cosmopolitan values in art and life earn them hostility and ridicule at times, but still grant them exclusive status. Very much as Vidich and Bensman said about the Springdale high status professional class, "That is, their social

position in the community is not guaranteed by conforming to standards which are indigenous to the community but, rather, by imputed conformance to "alien" or "exotic" standards of urban life." (1968: 88)

The conflict over standards in art is most publicly and clearly enacted at the annual Ridge County Fair where a large section of the main exhibition hall, the Floral Hall, is devoted to an art exhibit and competition. The competition is open to painters from Ridge, Creek, and Birch Counties, though the entire event is sponsored and managed by residents of Ridge County. The judging is a publicly announced and accessible event which attracts a crowd of 150-200 people. While the public is cordoned off from the actual display during the judging, a heightened performance of sorts, a clear view is possible of all judging instruction, deliberation and ribbon hanging. The entire event is viewed with hushed whispers and rapt attention, providing overtones of a sacred ritualistic enactment. The final act is always the community's praise of the judge for his symbolic acceptance of their values (ribbons for realistic art) or their condemnation of him for his assertion of alien values (ribbons for modern art). After the judging the winners are identifiable from the ribbons and the exhibit is open to the public for inspection. During the fair, a large number of people pass through the exhibit giving fairly careful attention to the paintings, especially the winning paintings and those of friends and acquaintances. With

the exception of League members and their friends, the reaction of most county residents is to attack the modern and abstract paintings, and the judge if he or she should have chosen any as winners. It is also assumed that many League members who won ribbons must have known the judge prior to the fair. As the judge is always from a more cosmopolitan community, it is assumed that League members have had some social contact with him or her through past artistic events. Further, as the work of the League has come to be associated with the values of the world outside county borders, it is particularly revealing to note that it is usually attacked whether an "objective" eye would consider it realistic or not. Hence, the Fair is a place for all to see and participate in the conflict over standards, and to resolve this conflict by reasserting the values implicit in realistic painting.

Use

Even realistic painters in the county often complain that clients for commission work insist on "seeing every stone." One painter told of a house that he painted from a photograph, on commission. In order to get a clearer view of the house he made two visits to the hill site from which the photograph was taken, the vantage point from which he was to paint it. Upon completion of a firmly realistic rendering of the homestead, the client deemed the work unacceptable as it was not possible to see all the details of the house in the painting. He literally wanted to see

each stone in the facade of the house.

What happened here provides an opportunity to discuss the way in which paintings are used in the home in Ridge County. This was not simply a disagreement concerning style, but a misunderstanding which highlights the two primary manifest ways in which paintings are used in the home and in some public places. In all cases, a realistic depiction is a basic requirement, unless one is a member or friend of the League. The first use is of a painting as a form of decoration which is visually pleasing and complements the decor of the room, primarily in terms of color and the style of the frame. As one very successful painter said, "On commission work they often tell me what room the painting's going in and what colors they have in there. That way I can try to make it fit. Now I can't always do that with the colors, especially when they give me a special place to paint, but I wouldn't want to put an old barnboard frame on for a living room or a fancy gold one on for a kitchen." In this case paintings are seen as an adjunct to the decoration of a room in which one attempts to create some unity in the color and style of the objects in a single room. For example, one painter would redecorate her living room for each season, changing the color of the glass and small objects she collects, the color of the arm-rest covers and antimacassars, and the colors and subjects of the paintings she had on her walls. At the time of my July visit she was decorating with blue glass, objects and

paintings, but was planning for oranges and browns for the fall, adding black glass for Halloween and turkey related objects for the Thanksgiving season. In each case she planned to display paintings which would complement the decor in both color and subject. While not all women in the county would go to this trouble, her behavior is a heightened example of what I observed over and over again, and her taste and creative energy had helped to earn her great respect in the county.

It must be noted here, though, that having paintings hang on the wall is distinctly different from having a print or other form of wall decoration. As will be seen in the historical chapter, paintings have historically been associated with higher social and economic status. Just hanging a painting in one's home can be an indication of 1) high status; 2) association with a network of high status; and/or 3) social mobility. Which of these alternatives is appropriate, if any, would be determined by an examination of the particular circumstances of the family and home. This association of painting and status does not appear to be one which exists exclusively in Ridge County, as even a cursory look at the wider art world indicates. At both the higher (cf. the film "Robert Scull, Pop Collector") and lower ("affordable art") status levels this can be seen. An article from the New York Times about what has come to be known as "affordable art" or "sofa-sized art" quotes a woman at a motel sale in New Jersey who articulates this felt association quite

clearly. Having just purchased a large landscape to hang over her fireplace, "'I like beige,' she said, explaining why she chose it. 'We have a print there now and we like the idea of owning an original oil painting. We're trying to elevate ourselves.'" (Nov. 30, 1981) The relationship between painting and social status is one which was seen throughout the course of this research. While rarely a planned or manifest feature of painting in Ridge County, it emerged, nevertheless, as a central feature of the art world.

The second manifest use of painting in the home, that subscribed to by the disgruntled client, is a mimetic use in which the painting is meant to preserve an exact or acceptably exact memory of the subject. The painting is not valued as "art," but as a way of concretizing memories of a person, place or object. Painterly style detracts from the subject. The artist's intervention is meant to be relatively invisible so that the subject is the only focus of attention. Paintings of this type may, in fact, be hung in non-complementary locations (though the frame is usually meant to be appropriate for the location) in the home as their purpose is not primarily decorative. While some paintings can serve both the decorative and mimetic function, in this case the decorative aspect is secondary at best. The owner uses the painting as a kind of memorial and mnemonic device so that the only pleasant rendition is one which he considers to be an accurate rendition.

As I repeatedly observed, under these circumstances

the painting then becomes a component of social interaction in the home as it serves as a pretext for shared memories and storytelling. Once a painting is noted by a visitor or by the owner, the focus of discussion becomes the subject of the painting and those stories, memories and ideas it triggers, many of which become a part of the owner's regular repertoire. The painting itself serves to facilitate interaction when used in this way, and the details of the painting offer numerous opportunities for continued or renewed interaction through it. As such paintings are almost exclusively of family homesteads and sites of local value and interest (e.g., covered bridges, historic buildings), these paintings also serve to indicate and possibly lead to discussion of the owner's heritage and/or his orientation to the local community and values.

An additional common subject of such mimetic paintings is the new home. Much as one takes a photograph of a new car, many commissions are for paintings of a new home, to be hung in the new home. Not only can a family afford to have a new home built, which they can use, but they can also afford to spend money on a painting of it, which is, strictly speaking, useless. Building a new home is a clear indication of achieved status or active mobility in the county, and the commission of a "useless" oil painting to hang in it is an appropriate adjunct to and confirmation of that status. In a community such as Ridge County where frugality and practicality are central and respected values, sometimes

obsessions, such an "unnecessary" expense is not insignificant, even though paintings are rarely more than \$100.

A further use of such "new home" paintings is exemplified by a sixty-six year old retired man who commissioned a painting. After selling his highly respected and successful local business for a good deal of money, and building an expensive new home which would house this painting he said, "This painting is something I can pass on to my children. One of them can hang it in their home when they move out on their own." He was planning for the eventual memorialization of the tangible results of his accomplishments and the status accorded them. For his children the painting would come to function as a component of social interaction, much as discussed above, and as a display of family heritage, values and status.

In each of these mimetic cases one might ask why the owner didn't simply have a photograph taken, blown up to the desired size and framed. In some cases the answer is simply that the site is gone, or the owner wanted to remember it as it was, not as it is, and only a painter can restore the missing elements and eliminate the undesirable ones. In other cases, however, we must return to the earlier discussion in which we see that paintings have come to be associated with enhanced social status. A commissioned painting in this community indicates the taste to desire it, the money to pay for it, and a social network which makes it possible to contact a particular painter (as painters

are almost always contacted through one's friends, family or church). As painters are generally accorded relatively high status in the county, having a painting by a respected artist hanging in your home associates you with that artist and his or her social network. Therefore, in Ridge County a painting can tell people a great deal about who one is in terms of social position and social networks, whereas photography has not developed these associations on a community-wide level.

Art vs. Craft

Having established the special status of painting in Ridge County, it is important to note that it is also seen as one of a variety of handiwork skills which are part and parcel of county life. In this sense, painting is seen as special, but not separate from craft and homemaking activities such as gardening, weaving, tole-painting, woodworking, quilting, macrame, pottery making, making holiday decorations, etc. While none of these is accorded the same status as painting, each is discussed as an art form in which one can excel while they simultaneously perform a useful activity. In fact, in this context realistic painting is not seen as useless, but as a skill useful for gift-giving and decorating one's walls. In a community in which all time, including leisure time, is to be used productively, whether decorating, canning, making one's own cloths and curtains, or maintaining a productive flower and vegetable garden, doing things for oneself is a matter of course. On

this level, realistic painting is evidence of one's participation in the ethic of useful leisure, especially as much of it has been used in ways which make it a practical and semi-frugal hobby. Thus, a recent use of painting has been in the incorporation of ten paintings and thirteen sketches in a cookbook prepared to raise money for a new community pool in Robinsonville. In fact, while asked to do these illustrations, the painters themselves paid for the cost of reproducing their paintings of local sites. In this way they directly supported the fund-raising effort while making the book more appealing to the potential buyer, and, of course, brought their work to the attention of the community. The very use of paintings in this way demonstrates their special status, as well as their usefulness. As will be seen in a later chapter, the paintings of the Robinsonville Art Class Group will be seen to make reference to their "usefulness" in numerous ways, incorporating them into the mainstream of leisure time activities. Rarely does any of the work of the Creek-Ridge Art League make any such reference to usefulness, as they quite clearly assert the "art" rather than the "craft" of their efforts.

To summarize, amateur painting is a visible, respected and popular activity in Ridge County. Used for both decorative and mimetic purposes, the stylistic mandate for most county residents is realism, and the preferred subject matter is local scenery of historic or personal significance. This style and subject matter has come to represent the values

of the community to itself, and is adamantly supported in opposition to modern/abstract art. This may be seen as a tangible enactment of the conflict of local and cosmopolitan values and behavior. Much of this conflict is enacted through the work and activities of the Creek-Ridge Art League and the Robinsonville Art Class Group.

Due to the history and very public nature of painting in the county, it has come to take on additional status related significance. The style, use and context of a painting that one has made or hung can carry a great deal of social meaning. This will continue to be developed in greater depth and specificity as I turn to the discussion of the local art world. It is here that much of the significance of amateur activity and product is observable and most easily discussed, as it is all enacted on a heightened level.

Profiles

First, in order to further elucidate the way in which art is treated, viewed and incorporated into life in Ridge County, I will present brief portraits of two representative artists. During the period of my research they came to represent for me what I thought of as the "Ridge County Artist," as a kind of ideal type. My perceptions about their art, lives and behavior were formed by what I saw as well as from their reputations within the county. In one way or another, members from all factions of the art world as well as naive observers of county artistic activities

suggested that I interview Mary Weaver and Rebecca Freed if I wanted to know about a "real" Ridge County painter. Both were respected in terms of the ways in which they conducted their lives, as well as for their paintings. Even those few who rejected their realistic painting styles were willing to acknowledge their representativeness and their artistic success, in terms of sales and awards.

While not members of any art association during the duration of my research, both women had participated in the groups in the past and were still publicly visible through their commission work and art show entries. In this way they were peripheral to the two art associations, but still represented the art and values of the successful Ridge County artist, par excellence.

Mary Weaver

Mrs. Weaver was born on her parents' farm near Harristown over sixty years ago. Her father gave up farming in Creek County in the mid-20s and moved his family to Media and Malvern, Pennsylvania before permanently returning to Ridge County in 1927 where he opened a service station. Mrs. Weaver's husband was born in Ridge County over sixty years ago about six miles outside of Pattersontown on a farm which his family sharecropped. When the owner died his father bought the house and farm. It is this house in which Mr. and Mrs. Weaver lived, and this farm which they worked. They considered themselves to be "semi-retired," she from school cafeteria work and he from farming, but

they couldn't afford to retire completely until they were eligible for full social security benefits. While children and grandchildren helped out on the farm, none stayed on to farm it for a living. Of their four boys, two graduated from Shippensburg State College and two completed two year agricultural programs at Penn State University. Both schools were within sixty miles of the Weaver homestead. All four sons were married and living in Pennsylvania, three in Ridge County. Also close by were most of Mr. and Mrs. Weaver's brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, etc., who lived in Ridge and Creek Counties.

Mr. Weaver was an active member of a number of farm organizations, including the local Grange, and was on the board of a Robinsonville based insurance firm. Mrs. Weaver also participated in Grange activities, but her main involvement was with painting and the local Lutheran church. She was a regular churchgoer and participated in church activities on a regular weekly basis. She had been active in planning the annual church bazaar, where her painting exhibit was a main feature. In addition, she donated paintings to the church for door prizes to encourage attendance. These door prizes were noted in local advertising for the bazaar, occasionally leading to local press interviews with Mrs. Weaver. In some cases her paintings were raffled off, and attractively and centrally displayed to encourage ticket sales. In keeping with the crafts orientation of the bazaar, Mrs. Weaver exhibited paintings done on rough hewn boards,

shingles, and milk cans, as well as those done on canvas board. The church was a central aspect of Mrs. Weaver's life on many levels including her very first painting sales and commissions. As she said in an interview in The Times in 1978, "We hope whatever God-given talent we have can be used by the Lord to help our church."

While she had drawn from grade school through high school graduation, Mrs. Weaver didn't start oil painting until 1969 after she retired from the nearby school cafeteria. She bought a set of oils and an instruction booklet from Montgomery Ward. While she had little interest in taking painting lessons, and hated to drive anywhere, friends encouraged her to make the effort to develop her natural skills. With a friend from church, she attended a class in Robinsonville for two seasons, taught by a respected realistic painter from Creek County, Mark Reedy. She got some advice from Reedy, but felt that it wasn't useful enough to go to the trouble and expense and said that she figured, "What's the use, I'd rather stay home where I can be comfortable and paint." She looked at some art books for technical advice and looked at the work of other local painters, occasionally talking to them for advice or an exchange of ideas and techniques. Most of her contact was with other realistic painters in the county, as her work was firmly realistic. It was comprised exclusively of rural scenes--landscapes, farmscapes, covered bridges, farm buildings, homesteads, local historical buildings, and wildlife.

Initially her paintings were intended as Christmas and birthday gifts for her children, then as wedding gifts for her children's friends and other family members. After about two years she began to receive requests from close friends and church members for covered bridges, continually her most popular commission. She had sold over 100 paintings by 1979 and was almost constantly busy with commission work, receiving from fifteen to twenty orders each year, most for the Christmas season. During slow periods she could call Ridge Stop where they would take her work on a commission basis, where it was exhibited in the main dining room with paintings by two artists from the Robinsonville Group. When space was limited some were hung in the counter area with inexpensive velvet paintings from a wholesaler. She sold two paintings to Rennies Restaurant which were on permanent display in the main dining room, the Tuscarora Room. Most of her orders came from friends, relatives and people who had seen her work at the Ridge County Fair or her church. Some commission work had also come from her entries at the Creek Ridge Art League open show at the Ridge National Bank in Pattersontown, the only competition she entered, aside from the Fair. Some people, including the publisher of the local paper and a nephew's wife, became regular customers, having purchased "more than eight" paintings.

Much of her work was comprised of copies of her own paintings. Someone would see a painting of hers that they liked and request a copy for themselves. Only once had

Mrs. Weaver had any complaint about selling a painting which was not "one of a kind." In fact, she had done thirteen paintings of the Stone bridge by 1979, and did at least one a year of the Arch bridge. Her most common commission and sale was a Ridge County covered bridge, followed closely in popularity by paintings of local homesteads, generally a childhood home or a newly-built home. In such paintings she "will take a picture and paint from looking at the picture to get all the details." According to Mrs. Weaver her work was well-known enough that her orders generally come with the simple dictum, "Make it pretty." A 1980 Christmas note sent to me by Mrs. Weaver offered some sense of her activity: "I've been blessed this past year and since late August I have had eight orders for paintings for Christmas gifts -- two farms from old pictures, five buildings (newer homes and businesses) that took a lot of measuring--and one, thank goodness, was just one of nature, something lovely that man didn't make."

She painted almost exclusively from photographs, magazines, newspaper photographs and calendar art, all of which she cut out and saved for later use. In one case she was given a picture of a girl on a horse in the desert and asked to paint it, but it looked so much like a beach scene that she found a calendar picture with cactus and sagebrush so that she could put them in. She often changed things in order to make a better painting as in thinning trees so that they don't obscure the house in the background, or putting

a fence in the foreground when the scene was too plain, or recreating historical details of a house that had been modified. Generally she worked on more than one painting at a time, first "laying in the sky," on all of them. She photographed each of her paintings upon completion and kept these photographs in an album, and in each case Mrs. Weaver could reconstruct the process which she followed in the production of a particular painting. At the time of my visit she only owned eight of her own paintings, but knew the location of each of the ones she had sold. Most of her painting was done during the day while she watched soap operas or in the evening before she went to bed, though on occasion she would get absorbed and felt that she stayed up later than she should have. At the time of my visit she was looking forward to getting rid of the cows so that she would be able to paint late into the night and get up late in the morning.

Her frames were made by an elderly carpenter just down the road from her farm. For two to three dollars he made her frames from old barn wood with nail and worm holes, when possible. When requested she would try to supply the "fancier gold frames which people like in their living room." As these more ornate frames were more expensive to purchase she tried to buy old ones which she could repair without much trouble. When she couldn't get them she sold the painting unframed for a reduced price. In 1979 she charged from fifty to seventy-five dollars for a framed 18' x 24"

painting and sixty dollars and up if it was very detailed work. One of the main reasons that she gave for painting was to make extra money, which she used for presents and house things, as well as for the material she needed for the patchwork designs she did for quilts and other household items. Despite urging from friends and family, she hadn't been willing to increase her modest prices and felt that they were fair, and sufficient for her needs. As she said in a Times interview, "'In my earlier years, as is the case with most farm women, it seemed that all our money went for the farm, a new piece of machinery, etc. Now it's kinda nice . . . I use the money I get from my paintings for things I've always wanted for the house.'"

Over the years that she had been painting, Mrs. Weaver won a number of prizes at competitions she entered. Most notable was the year that she won the "Best of Show" at the Ridge County Fair. According to Fran McAlister, art supervisor of the Fair at that time, the judge, a Penn State University professor (Yar Komicki), told her that it was "kind of primitive, and showed a lot of thought and work." He also said that he expected to be "crucified" by the League as it was very realistic. Mrs. Weaver was bothered by the large percentage of judges who leaned to the modern and abstract, and wanted to see realistic and abstract categories for the judging, but said, "I'm not all that bothered, my paintings sell."

Rebecca Freed

Mrs. Freed was born over sixty years ago on her parents' farm in Adams County, Pennsylvania. Her father spent his life as a farmer, her mother spent hers as a homemaker. They moved to Ridge County when she was three years old, where she has lived since. Mrs. Freed's husband was born over seventy years ago in the farmhouse in which they lived, outside of Peterburg. He continued to work the land originally purchased by his father, though he considered himself retired. Their youngest son lived quite nearby where he owned a store and farmed the land just across the road from them. Their other two children lived and worked around Harrisburg. All three children graduated from high school in Ridge County and were married.

Mr. and Mrs. Freed were very active Grange members on local, state and national levels. They attended meetings and other functions on a regular basis and served as Grange officers. Mrs. Freed was also a member of the local Eastern Star chapter, meetings of which she regularly attended. She taught at her church and was an active Gray Lady in the past. While brought up attending a United Brethren Church, Mrs. Freed attended her husband's United Methodist church in Ridge County. They were very active in church activities and regularly attended services and other church functions. Through her painting she had served her church numerous times by donating paintings of the church for various fundraising activities. In one case she traded one of her

paintings of the church for the donation of church pews from a church member.

Mrs. Freed was very involved in handicrafts of all sorts throughout her life. She saw herself primarily as a seamstress, providing all members of her family with complete wardrobes, including her daughter's wedding dress and her husband's suits and ties. She also made jewelry, reupholstered furniture, baked wedding cakes, and did numerous other similar activities. She took classes in some crafts through the Penn State Extension groups in Patterson-town, and felt that she was always doing something for someone in the family. She was quite happy doing this and felt that she was somewhat more involved in family life than others who paint.

In her nine and one-half years of formal schooling she had no formal art training. She began to paint upon the urging of a Harristown art teacher, Orpha Brandt. Mr. and Mrs. Brandt lived nearby at the time and had known Mr. Freed quite well since childhood. Aware of Mrs. Freed's facility for making things, Mrs. Brandt suggested that she start to paint, to which Mrs. Freed responded, "I can't even draw a straight line." Mrs. Brandt told her that it wasn't necessary and gave her a painting set shortly thereafter. Mrs. Freed first painted some birds and sky on a pair of bookends, later trying snow scenes on canvas board. While she liked painting she felt that her work wasn't any good and wouldn't hang it up, or continue to paint. After some time she took

an art talent test from a magazine, and was judged good enough to take their correspondence course. As she couldn't afford it, she was offered the money for the course by her sister-in-law, but Mrs. Freed felt that farm work didn't leave her enough time to make it worthwhile. However, the following summer she saw an advertisement in the local paper for classes with a man by the name of Harrison Frerichs. They were to be half-day classes each week for eight weeks, with a twenty dollar fee. As she didn't drive, her husband took her to Frerichs' class, but she was only able to complete three of the five paintings Frerichs had assigned as her husband fell ill. She was given a great deal of encouragement by Frerichs and felt that she learned a great deal about color, perspective, contrast and other aspects of painting from him. A few years later she again attended a Frerichs' class where she learned more about painting, and began to try working in watercolors. She studied with Frerichs until he stopped teaching in the mid-1950s. At that time she was a member of the first county art association, the Ridge County Art Association, but was never able to keep up with their meetings. Sometime later she attended a Creek-Ridge Art League class taught by Steven Wagner in Harristown, but never joined that "club they had in Harristown." She found Wagner's orientation to painting (impressionistic/modern) quite opposite to that of Frerichs. Her work was consistently realistic, and she often painted from photographs and pictures of various types. Wagner was opposed to both

of these aspects of her work and refused to help her do what she wanted, leading her to stop attending his class. As she said, "When he painted flowers, you had to ask what it was."

At that time Mrs. Freed was already doing landscape scenes for wedding invitations, commission work she continued to do during this research (though her fee had risen from one dollar to six dollars). While she tried to paint portraits of family members and various other kinds of scenes, she felt that her best work was in landscapes, farmscapes, buildings, and still-lives. Her most popular subject was her church, which she had painted more than fifteen times, "each a little different." Generally her work sold for well under \$200, but one painting she donated to the church for an auction went for \$700. Her most unusual subject, she felt, was a thrasher she was commissioned to do by a man from a neighboring county. While she had no confidence that she could do it well she said that she would always try to do a difficult task as she remembered what her father taught her, "Nothing ventured, nothing gained." She completed that painting and sold it for fifty dollars. A few years later the man died and she attended the auction of his estate, at which she was introduced. The painting sold for \$355, after which she had a photograph made of it and had it framed as a keepsake. In her scrapbook of accomplishments she kept a newspaper article about the auction along with a story about the \$700 painting, and

various local newspaper interviews about her painting, wedding dress and cake making. Generally she did a few commission works each year, but most of her painting was earmarked for family, friends and church.

She painted by beginning with a sketch on the canvas, followed by a yellow ochre underwash, as Harrison Frerichs originally taught her to do it. Also in keeping with his teaching, she would only paint in bright light and liked to get up early and paint until the sun went past her window, "I completely loose myself in it, forgetting to eat." While she had many ideas for paintings in her head, she always kept a file of pictures from magazines, newspapers, and calendars in order to give her ideas and pictures to work from. While she owned a dozen or so art books to aid with technique she told me that she found that, "I just work at it. I know when a painting is right or wrong, but not why."

CHAPTER VI

THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF ART

IN RIDGE COUNTY TO 1979

The early history of "art" in Southeastern and Central Pennsylvania leans heavily on the objects created for use by the Pennsylvania Germans. In tracing the history of art in Ridge County it is important to note that most of the early products were made by artisans and craftsmen primarily for a practical purpose, and decorated in traditional patterns. In this category fall such objects as fractur, slipware, sgraffito, painted dower chests and furniture, wedding boxes, roof tiles, painted tinware, etc. Even though sgraffito plates were not heavily used, they were made so that they could be used (which clearly distinguishes them from the later "china painting"). The designs were produced on a redware plate, not on a canvas or paper surface. Even the most respected (by metropolitan art worlds) and seemingly useless of the Pennsylvania German arts, the fractur birth and marriage certificate, was a form of record keeping legally required in their native Germany. Further, it was never made for public display, and was kept in a family bible, or glued to the inside of a blanket chest lid. These decorative arts of the Pennsylvania Germans were known by many in Ridge County, but were

never invoked as stylistic precedents of their contemporary painting. In fact, stylistically there was no apparent similarity, and traditional art criticism and history would find no trace of traditional forms in the county, due to their almost exclusive focus on design rather than use. However, as indicated earlier, the relationship between art and usefulness is a relationship which finds recurring expression throughout their traceable art history, and helps us to distinguish between the local and cosmopolitan orientations to art in Ridge County. The "traditional" that folklorists seek in the present is not to be found here in style, but in use.

In discussing more direct historical antecedents of contemporary Ridge County painting it is extremely difficult to provide historical detail prior to 1940. The history of art is overwhelmingly that of amateur efforts, efforts which tend to be overlooked in Ridge County as they are in most of the world. Even with a greater interest in county accomplishments (due to the Sesqui-Centennial of the formation of the county), it was only with great prodding that interviewees felt that I really cared to hear about their great aunts and uncles who painted, even though they knew I was in the county to study its painters. It is a history which is neglected as it is an activity which is thought of in terms of leisure rather than art. Where art is a category of behavior which is thought to deserve a history, leisure is not. Therefore, it has been necessary to piece

together the history of painting in Ridge County prior to 1940 from old newspaper articles, county fair listings, anecdotal memories of local history buffs and skeletal memories of family and friends of deceased painters.

There is clear evidence of a flurry of painting beginning in the 1860s and on into the 1890s. Such a pattern of activity is one which is much in accord with patterns noted throughout the Eastern United States. In Ridge County it appears that painting activity, as public activity, was overwhelmingly the province of women, another common pattern during this period. As Jean Gordon noted in her review of the artistic activities of women in America,

. . . by the middle of the nineteenth century a series of developments had combined to open the field of art to women . . . the most self-respecting woman could call herself painter or sculptor without fear of unsavory connotations . . . Deprived of religious sanction and lacking any broad-based government support, the visual arts were thought of as a refinement and as such lay within the proper female sphere. While men concerned themselves with business, women could look after morals and culture. (1968: 67-68)

As discussed earlier this pattern of female participation was also noted by the Lynds in their Middletown study.

They indicated that there was a painting boom there in the 1890s which was "an exclusively female accomplishment."

(1929: 250) There is clear evidence of the same pattern in Ridge County based on an analysis of extant paintings and the records of the public art displays in the county, most notably at the Ridge County Fair. During these early years, men played a limited role as painters, but often

acted as judges and administrators. Those few men who did paint did so in a quasi-professional capacity, much the way it is today in Ridge County.

The earliest record of art instruction in the county comes from an advertisement placed in the Ridge Sentinel in 1866 for the Tuscarora Female Seminary. Considering the curriculum of female academies in the United States during the early 19th century (cf. Little, 1975: 68-92) and the large number of classes offered in American cities in the 1830s (cf. Lynes, 1949) it is highly likely that art instruction was offered at the Tuscarora Seminary since its inception in 1857. Motivated, most probably, by the loss of their Southern clientele in the aftermath of the Civil War, the 1866 advertisement offered their regular course of study and instruction with an ". . . extra charge for drawing, painting in watercolor and sketching from life - \$6.00, painting in oil - \$10.00 - Miss Fanny Patterson." (Miss Patterson was the wife of the founder's nephew and continued to be involved with art until her death. She appears as a judge at the Ridge County Fair, and from 1876 to 1890 she is listed in The Times as teaching in her home.)

Also in 1866, the first public listing of painting as a prize and display category at the Ridge County Fair appeared in the Ridge Sentinel. At this point the listing simply read, "Drawing and Paintings. For the best display of drawing and paintings - \$1.00." By 1870 the prize had

grown to \$5.00 and in 1872 they had elaborated the category so that there was a 1st and 2nd prize, as well as a prize for architectural drawing, a reification of the developing distinction between the utilitarian and fine arts. In the 1874 Ridge Sentinel-Republican the fair listings for painting fell into "Department V - Fine Arts, Penmanship, Photographs, Musical Instruments." The new categorical breakdown reveals what appears to be a true flowering of interest and activity in the arts in the county:

For the best display of oil paintings	\$2.00
Best piece of portrait in oil	1.00
Best landscape in oil	1.00
Best fruit painting in oil	1.00
Best animal painting in oil	1.00
Best display of watercolors	1.50
Best landscape in watercolors	.75
Best fruit in watercolors	.75
Best flowers in watercolors	.75
Best display of colored crayons	2.00
Best single specimen	.75
Best display of pencil sketches	1.00
Second best	.50
Best display of pen drawings	1.00
Best display of plain or colored photographs	1.00
Etc...	

Similar listings, as well as the names of judges and prize winners, were published in the Sentinel-Republican until 1876. From 1876 until 1891 similar listings appeared in The Times. A number of relevant facts emerge from study of these lists of judges and winners.

First, it is quite clear that painting in Ridge County during the period from 1860 to 1890 was almost "exclusively a female accomplishment." Men were involved in honorary capacities rather than as painters. Despite the overwhelming

female domination of the field, the chairman of the judging panel was always male. For example, in the 1888 county fair the judges in Department V, Section IIIa, "Paintings, Penmanship and Photographs," were chaired by Harry Moore, while the remaining twenty panel members were all female. This pattern consistently and overwhelmingly dominated all data, including the participants and winners noted in the newspapers.

Second, all available data leads to the conclusion that those involved as judges, participants and winners were of consistently high social status, and were amongst the wealthiest families in the county. The chairman of the judging panel tended to be a successful lawyer, gentleman farmer or an important merchant. For example, Noah Hertzler, chairman of the judging panel in 1876 and 1877, was a respected and prosperous merchant in Peterburg, owner of the second largest plot of land in Peterburg (192 acres) and was the only Peterburg resident to have his residence pictured in the 1877 Atlas of Ridge County, Pennsylvania. The December 15, 1887 edition of The Times reported,

A beautiful Quincy granite monument has just been erected in Church Hill cemetery to the memory of the late Noah Hertzler, Esq. The shaft is 13 feet high and with the bases the monument measures twenty-two feet in height. On the shaft is a wreath, on the front of one of the bases is the word "Hertzler" in raised letters, and on another side is the name and age of the deceased. It is a most enduring as well as a just tribute to the memory of a loving husband and father, and a noble-hearted friend and citizen.

The women who judged and participated were wives and daughters

of men such as Noah Hertzler. For example, one of the winners at the 1874 Ridge County Fair, Mrs. Jeremiah Lyons, was the wife of a prominent lawyer, formerly a district attorney and in 1874, a state representative.

The wealth and status of the participants in the fine arts at that time conforms to the national pattern described in the literature. As John and Katherine Ebert said of the amateur artists of this period,

Most numerous in this group were members of the wealthier families of the northeastern part of the United States, who prospered from the trade and commerce that gained momentum after the Revolution. This earlier "affluent society" included leisured married women, gentlemen dilettantes, and girls from private schools or academies who were taught music, dancing, painting, drawing, sewing and embroidery in addition to some academic subjects. (1975: 143)

In writing of the art boom after the Civil War in The Taste-makers, Russell Lynes states, "Genuine, hand-painted oil pictures or even chromos that had been touched up with thick varnish by unscrupulous auctioneers to make them look like the genuine article, were obviously out of the reach of most Americans and, indeed, outside their interest."

(1949: 66) What is of particular interest here is the association of oil painting not only with wealth, but also with interest. Such an interest might only be developed through acquaintance with metropolitan art worlds, available to those who traveled from Ridge County to eastern cities, or those who read newspapers and kept up on events and trends outside the county. In fact, all indications lead to the conclusion that many, if not all, of those

interested and participating in painting in Ridge County had significant economic, political, social and/or cultural connections to metropolitan centers in the northeast U.S. The participants in the fine art world of Ridge County at this time appear to be amateurs, primarily female, drawn from families of the highest socio-economic strata, with a cosmopolitan orientation. There were, of course, a few exceptions to this profile, such as spinster school teachers and the occasional male painter, but they do not appear to have been integrated into the amateur art world on a meaningful level. One such example is the only known professional painter living in the county during this period, Joseph Love (1844-1904). Love was born in Boston, lived in various cities, fought in the Civil War, taught painting in Philadelphia and Newport, Pennsylvania, and moved to Ridge County after he married a Peterburg woman, Elsie Robinson, in the early 1880s. He was never involved in the Ridge art world, though he was a successful professional painter, particularly noted for his Civil War paintings. He did teach Charles Rutherford (1878-1963) to paint while living in Peterburg, and Rutherford went on to become a successful commercial and fine artist in Harrisburg, but neither he nor Love had any meaningful contact with the amateur art world of the county during the years they lived there.

Art Display, 1860-1890

During this period the post war art boom also came to Ridge County in the form of art display, a national

growth industry at that time. (Lynes, 1949: 45) The higher, cosmopolitan strata displayed an involvement with the appreciation and display of oil painting (as well as production), while chromolithographs, lithographs and engravings were available to all, primarily as a decorative adjunct. For the wealthy, paintings were openly appreciated, discussed and evaluated as "art for art's sake," while "pictures" were appreciated, discussed and evaluated in terms of their value in enhancing the appearance of a room. Painting was a fine art with no need of a practical function, whereas pictures were manifestly acknowledged to function as a form of decoration. As noted earlier this decorative function is well documented in the "household art" books written for the middle classes in America during this period (cf. McClaugherty, 1983). As McClaugherty said,

Householders had not been educated in basic concepts of how to create harmonious rooms and often lumped a hodgepodge of colors and proportions into a single interior. It was to this problem that the writers of household art literature addressed themselves. Their professed intention was to educate consumers to tastefully select furniture, floor coverings, draperies, wallpapers, and other appurtenances used in the home, all of which were available in every style, size, and price imaginable. (1983: 2)

In one of the most popular and successful household art books, American Woman's Home, Catherine and Harriet Beecher Stowe suggested that, ". . . any woman who was decorating her living room set aside about twenty percent of her budget just for pictures, and they went on to suggest four chromolithographs (invented in 1858) which would bring the "charm

of color" into the room. (Lynes, 1949: 66)

In Ridge County, all forms of pictures were available during this period, though the most widely publicized and advertised were chromolithographs. During the 1860s numerous newspaper advertisements began to appear for chromolithographs, primarily available at furniture stores, a context in which they were clearly presented as decorative adjuncts. Still relatively expensive during the early years of the chromolithograph's introduction, people of more meager means could easily afford engravings or the very cheap lithographs produced by Currier and Ives, "Publishers of Cheap and Popular Pictures." The popularity of pictures in Ridge County is apparent in the ease of availability in centers of commerce such as Pattersontown and Patterson as well as in "backwoods" towns like Pleasant View.

During this period we see the identification of the upper classes with art for art's sake in the form of oil painting, and the identification of the middle and lower classes with art as a form of decoration, chosen and evaluated in terms of its ability to match and enhance the colors and decor of a room. Further, not only could the upper classes appreciate "real" art, but they were knowledgeable and wealthy enough to produce it and then display it at the County Fair for all to see. Historically then, it is possible to see the production and display of paintings develop their association with those of high status, and with those who have interests and contacts outside the county.

Throughout Ridge County history painting and paintings continue to be associated with high status. Moreover, the distinction between paintings made and/or displayed for their own sake as art (Creek-Ridge Art League) and those made and/or displayed as decorative or useful art/objects (Robinsonville Art Class Group and most of Ridge County) allows us to follow a further continuing distinction in social status and orientation.

1900-1930 Artistic Activity

After the turn of the century there are very few documentable traces of artistic activity in the county, until the 1930s. There appear to have been a few isolated painters, but the exhibition of art at the Ridge County Fair disappeared, and no instruction appears to have been offered for adults. As it was still possible to speak with numerous people who lived through the 1900-1940 period, it is possible to have a fair level of confidence that the lack of traceable art activity is due to truly limited public involvement. There were, however, some activities which indicate the continued existence of a small social circle in which artistic activity was maintained. Before the First World War, when much "useless" activity was halted, there were two sets of sisters from wealthy and socially prominent families who painted and taught painting. Lucy Muselman (nee' McClellen) and Mattie Swenson taught a class in watercolors and the "social graces." Annie and Bertha Scott, friends of the McClellen sisters, taught china

painting and met with the McClellens and others of similar status to socialize and paint in the afternoon. The activities of this period were still part of the active memories of a number of county residents, at the time of this research, primarily those of similar social status. A few members of the two classes were still living, but had long since stopped painting of any sort. From all indications, it appears that during this period most of the painters were girls who were privately schooled in the proper social graces, in the absence of a female academy or seminary, but there was no longer an institutionalized art world to publicly support or encourage the continuation of these activities.

Harrison Frerichs and the Resurgence
of Painting in Ridge County

A revival of painting activity in the county had to await the arrival of Harrison Frerichs in the early 1930s. Frerichs, now deceased, was supervisor of art instruction in the New York City school system and a professional painter. He came to Ridge County upon the suggestion of the family of his companion, Glenn Molloy, and bought a home in Patterson as a summer retreat. His life was an arena for constant speculation in the county fueled by three previous marriages, and his homosexual relationship with Molloy. Additionally, he painted three nudes while living in the county, at least one of which was thought to be a Ridge County woman, leading to endless speculation about

her identity and his sexual activity. All through his stay in the county he was very socially active within the most socially prominent groups of the county and his sexual preferences, while somewhat shocking, were appropriately exotic and apparently accepted, if not heralded, within this group. Essentially, Frerichs was the "rage" of the wealthy and prominent, what one interviewee called the "in crowd," and was quickly incorporated into this social group. He and Molloy constantly entertained in their home, inviting their circle of friends from Ridge County and New York City. Those interviewed especially remember the singers, artists and performers who travelled from New York City and the relaxed consumption of alcoholic beverages (a rare and somewhat risque activity in the county). All in all, the cosmopolitan and exotic atmosphere surrounding Frerichs attracted the socially prominent to him and his painting almost immediately after his arrival. As Simmel said, "Whatever is exceptional, bizarre, or conspicuous, or whatever departs from the customary norm, exercises a peculiar charm upon the man of culture, entirely independent of its material justification." (1957: 546)

During the initial years of his summer residence in the county his artistic activity was confined to his own work, and he didn't begin to teach in the county until the early 1940s. When he began to teach, his students were drawn, for at least the first three years, from the social group in which he was already embedded. These classes

were composed of both male and female adults who were exclusively from families of the highest status in the county. He continued to paint local scenery and building until the death of Molloy in the 1970s, and he taught on a somewhat irregular basis into the mid-50s. His most active period as an artist came after his retirement in 1954, when he moved to Ridge County on a year-round basis. At this point he recruited students from a less exclusive social circle through newspaper announcements, e.g., Rebecca Freed. However, his social life remained tied to his earlier students and friends. In 1952 he was instrumental in forming the Ridge County Art Association, the first art association in the county, and he helped them to mount art exhibits and continued to provide painting instruction for some members. It is to his painting, teaching and social activity that most residents of the county still credit the great boom in painting instruction, production and display in Ridge County. His work hangs in the homes of many of the most prominent residents of the county (despite their avowed commitment to modern/abstract art), in the local historical museum, in local banks, in public buildings and for sometime his work was the first and only paintings displayed in a restaurant. Despite his somewhat unusual behavior, in the socio-cultural context of Ridge County, he developed a countywide following which is widely believed to have greatly heightened the interest in painting throughout the county.

Of particular interest here is Frerichs' commitment to realism as noted by all those who knew him, and as exemplified in all of his paintings. Most revealing of all is the following excerpt from a 1961 letter written to Sarah Powell Levine, another committed realist painter and teacher, living in Harristown. He wrote, "I still think that the Realistic Art that you and I both do are (sic) what honest people really want. The Unwanted Abstracts will go the way that all the Insincere art movements have gone through the Ages." (His capitalizations) His classes reflected this strong commitment, as well as a meticulous approach to painting technique. Students always painted from life, primarily outdoors where there was good light, and they painted very specific subjects as exercises in form, color, perspective, etc., i.e., a field, a barn, an apple tree. Students were to first sketch on canvas, followed by a yellow ochre underwash, after which they would apply the oils. He expected rigorous attention to proper technique and would not allow beginners to paint outside of his class.

The reason that his commitment to realism and proper technique is of particular importance here is that his early students, with whom he shared his social life, initially painted in a realistic manner. Later, however, many went on to join and paint in the manner of the Creek-Ridge Art League. As discussed earlier, the League was a staunch defender of modernism/abstraction and also advocated a spontaneous non-technical approach to painting. As a first

teacher and good friend, it might have been expected that Frerichs would have wielded more influence over his students, as he did with Rebecca Freed. However, by the time the League was formed in 1962, some of the most prominent of Frerichs' original group had died or moved away, and the steady stream of New York friends had died down. Further, as Frerichs' letter to Levine indicated, abstract art was already quite well-known as the "new wave," even in this rural community. Hence, Frerichs no longer represented the exotic or exceptional of the "high" art world, and the prominent social group around him had begun to dissipate.

The original prominent group around Frerichs reaffirmed the historical association of painting and high status in the county. Painting in a realistic style with rigorous attention to technique further and publicly associated one with this group through its leader, an "eccentric" artist from the high art world of New York City. Painting was an activity around which to maintain a social group with high status and a cosmopolitan identity, but when the Frerichs group lost its prominent membership and its cosmopolitan association with the current fashion, it no longer served the appropriate status function. Membership and the status it maintained or conferred was apparently what drew people towards and then away from Frerichs. Artistic or philosophical commitment does not appear to have played a significant role in the formation and dissolution of Frerichs' group. The style and manner of painting were

matters of social, not artistic, necessity.

Ridge County Art Association

During the late 1940s, due to the upsurge of painting activity in Ridge County, the chairman of the Floral Hall exhibits at the County Fair decided to resume the exhibition of art. Frerichs had stimulated enough interest and product to warrant the renewal of such an exhibition and competition. By August, 1952, interest had reached a point which led a group of approximately twelve painters and other interested parties to meet in order to discuss the possibility of forming a Ridge County art association. The meeting was organized by Gertrude Baker who was an art instructor in the Ridge school system, and a member of the committee which wrote the course of study in art education for elementary and secondary art education (Bulletin 262) for the state of Pennsylvania. While planned by Baker, Frerichs, and an artist who had just married and moved from New York City to Harris-town, Sarah Powell Levine, appear to have been the prime movers in the subsequent activities of the association which was founded in the fall of 1952. Levine was trained at the New York School of Design as a fine and commercial artist. She continued her study at the Art Students' League in New York, but was primarily active and employed as a fashion illustrator and dress designer. As the Frerichs letter quoted earlier indicates, she and Frerichs shared a strong interest in realistic painting and rigorous technique. Others who attended the initial planning meeting were: Mrs. Robert

Banks, from one of the most prominent families in the county, trained at the Rhode Island School of Design; Dr. Faust, superintendent of schools in Ridge County; Mrs. Ann Palmer, wife of the county's most prominent lawyer, graduate of Bryn Mawr College and one of the most powerful and respected women in the county; General David Crawford; Mrs. David Crawford; Admiral John Crawford; Dr. Robert Mitchell; Mrs. Robert Mitchell; Nelson Morrison; Joseph Fournil. Many of those present had originally painted under the tutelage of Frerichs, and all of them were amongst the most respected and prominent members of the community. They decided to meet each week beginning in the fall of 1952 as the Ridge County Art Association. Initially free instruction was offered to the membership by Banks, Frerichs and Levine, these being the only members with formal art credentials. After the first year this free instruction was continued exclusively by Levine, until 1956.

The Association held its First Annual Exhibition in May, 1953, and its Second Annual Exhibition the following May in the new Ridge Joint High School. According to the article written by Dr. Harry Berlin in The Sentinel, the exhibit was accompanied by speeches by President Joseph Fournil, Harrison Frerichs, who was 'Flabbergasted at the progress made by the artists since the previous year,' Mrs. Robert Mitchell, Sarah Levine and George Miller, chief of Art Education at the Department of Public Instruction in Harrisburg. Miller spoke on the importance of art as an

expression of truth and beauty, and Levine, who received a gift for her teaching efforts, praised her students for their interest, zeal and progress. The exhibit was accompanied by classical music, and followed by a student ballet performance organized by Gertrude Baker. In 1955 a one man show was staged by an unusually talented 16 year old, Donald Gilbertson, a show covered by the local press as well as by the Sunday Harrisburg Patriot News. Press coverage clearly associated Gilbertson with his training by RCAA teachers and over half of the column space was devoted to discussing the history of the Association and the new interest in art in Ridge County. George Miller was again present and credited the RCAA with the upsurge of art interest in the area and particularly noted the efforts of Levine and Frerichs. Articles about the third and fourth Annual Exhibitions cite the exhibition of fifty paintings and 175 in attendance, and thirty-three paintings and 120 in attendance, respectively. Examples of the art displayed included covered bridges, a local church, a local railroad bridge, and "still life paintings and landscape scenes of Ridge County." Judging was eschewed for the adult exhibit, but General and Admiral Crawford acted as judges for the exhibit of high school paintings. Music and dance continued to accompany the exhibits.

The RCAA was very active and well received during the first four years of its existence. Classes and exhibits were well attended, and press reaction was very favorable.

The membership continued to be made up of a prominent group, and the realistic exhibits were contexted as "high" culture by the incorporation of classical music and ballet into the program, as well as by the invitations extended to representatives of the Harrisburg art world and press. At this point judging was limited to the work of high school students, as the adult membership was present, in their view, "for the sake and love of art," not for competition.

As was traditional, judging continued to predominate at the County Fair where painters from Creek, Ridge and Birch Counties were allowed to enter their paintings. Through a request to Gertrude Baker, the RCAA was asked to take charge of the Fair exhibit in 1952, which they elected to do. The exhibit was arranged so that the paintings of the Association were displayed and identified as a distinct unit, though all entered work was judged together. However, by 1956 the Frerichs group and the Ridge County Art Association had begun to fall apart.

Art in Creek County

Before the Frerichs group had even begun to show signs of decay, the seeds of the Creek-Ridge Art League were indirectly sown with the arrival of Robert McKinney in Harristown in 1948. McKinney came to Harristown from western Pennsylvania via Penn State University in order to fill the position of art supervisor in the Creek County school system. Soon after his arrival he contacted those who were painting and formed the Creek County Art Association,

and began to teach adult classes in painting for anyone interested. The Creek Association functioned smoothly for the six years that he stayed in the county, but fell apart when he left in 1954. After his departure to teach at Westchester State College, Foster Augustine and then Joe Worsinger filled his position in the school system and continued to offer adult art classes for a short period. During this period there was no contact between the art worlds of Ridge and Creek Counties. McKinney's influence was consistently acknowledged as formative in Creek County in that he renewed and extended the interest in painting in Creek County, leading S.A. Wagner and Ray Barron back into active roles in painting. As will be seen, both came to play critical roles in the modernization of painting in the Creek and Ridge County area, leading the Creek-Ridge Art League to fulfill the social function that had earlier been satisfied by Frerichs' group.

Steven Wagner and the Ridge County
Art Association

By 1956 the RCAA membership had become almost exclusively female, and it lost its most active teacher, Sarah Levine, who gave up teaching after going to New York City for an operation. After Levine's departure, Steven Wagner, an original member of the Creek County Art Association, was asked to teach the adult class in Ridge County. While the formal activities of the RCAA were non-existent at this point, interest in painting classes was high enough so that class

members were willing to pay Wagner, something Levine had never required.

Wagner was an engineer who had been employed in Harristown by American Steel in the 1940s and by Nabisco afterwards. Originally from Michigan, Wagner had earned an engineering degree and two fine arts degrees from Michigan State, University of Southern California, and the University of Maryland. He had been painting on an occasional basis for his own enjoyment since 1934. As discussed earlier, his interest and involvement in painting were renewed during McKinney's tenure in Creek County. His training and teaching concentrated on what is referred to in the Creek-Ridge area as modern or impressionistic painting. While the RCAA continued to exist in name after 1956, Wagner's class created the sense of an association and served to hold the Ridge County art world together during this time. He organized an annual exhibit of his student's work in a Ridge County bank, with a judge invited to award prizes and critique the paintings. He also took charge of the art exhibit at the County Fair in the name of the RCAA through 1964. His class in the county continued through 1964 as well, after which he moved to the Harristown and Ronham (Creek County) YMCAs. He stopped teaching in 1967.

Most importantly, under Wagner's tutelage painters in both Ridge and Creek Counties came to know a great deal more about the art world outside the immediate area. Wagner attempted to provide the trappings of a cosmopolitan art

world, and taught about and showed slides from the various national and international art movements, all the time encouraging a shift to a more impressionistic, spontaneous style of painting. On every level he demonstrated that he was very much in tune with the current fashion in metropolitan art worlds.

During the period from 1956 to 1965 a subtle, but crucial, shift in the membership of the Ridge art world had come about. Painting students were no longer exclusively from the prominent families of Patterson and Pattersontown. While the majority were still from that area, Wagner had managed to attract students from all over the county, some of whom were from upwardly mobile middle-class families. As painting had always been associated with high status and prominence, Wagner's class attracted some of those who sought to enhance their status, as well as their contacts. Of particular significance were five to seven women from the Robinsonville, Bellefield and Martintown areas. While these women expressed appreciation of Sherman's teaching with respect to color, there was a strong resistance to his non-realistic bent and the lack of instruction in rigorous technique. As with Mrs. Freed, his teaching actually forced these women to work against their own preferences, as he put a time limit on paintings in order to discourage realistic and detailed work. While all of the women from this group stayed in his class through 1964, these issues were a constant source of tension, to which they largely attribute

their search for their own realistic teacher in 1965. As we will continue to see, these stylistic conflicts were not simply about art, but were related to somewhat more complex social patterns.

The Creek-Ridge Art League

By 1961 the Creek County Art Association had reformed, and in early 1962 the painters from Wagner's class worked with them to form a bi-county association, the Creek-Ridge Art League. While the RCAA continued to exist nominally to run the County Fair exhibit until 1964, all of Wagner's students became members of the new League. Its formation is credited to the three active Harristown semiprofessionals--Wagner, Levine and Barron. Beginning in March, 1962, they began to meet in Harristown and after their first meeting announced in a press release that, "Membership is open and all persons who either paint or have an interest in a better understanding of art are welcome to join." It was the first association to encourage membership not only from painters, but also from those who wanted to understand art. It could be said that the League was actively in the business of acting as a conduit for social and cultural advancement, and making it publicly known.

By their second meeting in April, 1962 a number of patterns were already in place which would be maintained to the present day. Wagner conducted the critique of paintings, Earl Johnson, a Harristown school art teacher, showed slides on the individuality of artistic vision, Ray

Barron, a Harristown florist, was put in charge of the Harristown library exhibits of League work, and David Goebel, from Harristown, was to handle the League show at a Harristown bank. Therefore, while ninety-five percent of the members were women, all of those in managerial positions were men (a pattern noted throughout the art history of Ridge County). Also, while almost fifty percent of the members were from Ridge County, all League administration and activities were based in Harristown. The first League sponsored art exhibit in Ridge County wasn't held until April, 1963, and was an occasional rather than a regular event. Further, the institutional trappings of an art world were quickly put into place with critiques, lectures from school teachers on artistic vision, and exhibits at the library and banks (respected institutions).

By the time of the first League show in May, 1962 there were forty-nine members, with forty artists exhibiting work in a competitive show, judged by Robert McKinney, invited from West Chester State College. By the September, 1962 meeting the League had grown to fifty-six members, and at that meeting they held the first critique of abstract paintings. In the following year the League took art trips to New Hope, Pennsylvania, New York City, held a sidewalk art show in Harristown, and had two exhibits/competitions at a Harristown bank and one at a Pattersontown bank. Judges for the shows came from Penn State University, Lock Haven State College, Indiana State College and Susquehanna

University. Members' paintings continued throughout to be exhibited at the Harristown library and in Harristown banks. Beginning at the end of 1963 and through October, 1964 there were twelve one man/woman shows at the Harristown bank, all League members. The 1964 "Schedule of Events" was printed and distributed to the membership, and provides a clear overview of League activities during the first few years:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| February | - Discussion of 19th Century Artists (Bring things), Critique - Sara Beaver |
| March | - Slides of Impressionist Paintings, Critique - Sarah Levine |
| April | - Painting demonstration by Ray Barron and S.A. Wagner, Critique - Mark Reedy |
| Late April | - Trip to Millbrook Gallery |
| May | - Art History Discussion by Sarah Levine based on Ernst Gombrich's <u>Story of Art</u> |
| May 13-30 | - 4th Annual League Show, Members Only. The judge will be a professor from Dickinson College. |
| June | - Slides of Famous Paintings, Critique - S.A. Wagner |
| July | - Outdoor Meeting, Critique - Ray Barron |
| August | - Art History Discussion led by Sarah Levine |
| September | - Painting demonstration by Sarah Levine |
| September | - 3rd Annual Sidewalk Art Show |
| October | - Slides of Famous Paintings by S.A. Wagner |
| October | - Trip to the Barnes Gallery |
| November 11-28 | - 4th Annual Art Show, Open to all. The judge will be a professor from Penn State University. |
| December | - Film on art and Tureen Supper |

As can be seen from the above listing, as well as from all other League activities of this period, they had clearly articulated their interest in fine art with discussion and lectures on art history, famous painters, and impressionism, and trips to well known museums. Most of their activities were centered around Harristown, but contact with the art

world outside the area was maintained through the invitations extended to judges from Pennsylvania colleges and universities. There were approximately twenty League members from Ridge County at this point, for whom all activities led to contacts and travel outside the county.

Formation of the Robinsonville-Based Art Group

Shortly before Wagner stopped teaching in Ridge County, the women from Robinsonville, Bellefield, and Martintown began to look for a realistic teacher of their own. By the time Wagner left the county these women had found a teacher and discontinued their League membership. That is, the members who had come to Wagner's class and then joined the League, who were not yet of the wealth and status normally associated with painting, left the League and formed their own class in Robinsonville.

As mentioned earlier, they were bothered by the anti-realistic stance and instruction offered by the League. Rather than adapt to the style of the League, as most painters did, this group continued to paint in a realistic manner which they preferred. These women continued to maintain "traditional" values in all areas of life, i.e., art, family, religion, etc., and wanted to maintain their Ridge County orientation. While upwardly mobile, they were not simply in the group to extend their contacts to a high status group outside the county. As they saw it, to paint as taught and encouraged by the League was to court ridicule rather than respect in Ridge County. Sensitive to the dilemma,

the entrenched, high status members of the League felt that these women really didn't belong, they were "country folk," and treated them accordingly. Following are a representative sample of responses to this treatment, and reasons given for leaving the League and setting up a class in Robinsonville: "They never liked the way we painted."; "We could never win any prizes with those abstract judges."; "They had no time for me and showed no interest in me or my paintings."; "I helped them a great deal in setting up shows and other things, but I received nothing in return."; "They had their own little clique. We never felt like we belonged and never really felt welcome."; "I felt like a step-child. They never notified me of the picnics and other events."; "We just didn't like the way those people treated us. It was like we were country hicks and they were way above us, very 'uppity-uppity.'" In other words, the women who were to become the Robinsonville Art Class Group were firmly and locally rooted, and were unwilling to adapt to the requirements of League membership, and were denied social membership in an association with a cosmopolitan orientation and exclusive status.

By March, 1965 what was called the Robinsonville Art Class by its membership had begun to meet in the Robinsonville Community Building two nights each month, under the tutelage of Ray Yocum. Yocum, a Pine County resident (from Pinesgrove, one of the alternative commercial centers for the county), who was a woodcarver, art editor for a Pine County

newspaper, and an artist who painted on commission and for pleasure. They had learned of him from work he had on display in a Pinesgrove restaurant and church. His painting and instruction was realistic, and his philosophy about style was very much in tune with the sense of individual will advocated by his students. His former students still quote him as having often said, "Everyone has a style of their own, follow your own style," and "Paint what you know." His students felt that he tried to help them do what they wanted to do, as opposed to Wagner, and credited Yocum as the single most important influence on the painting they continued to do. In fact, they still copied paintings of his trees at some class meetings, which were exhibited at their annual show. During his first year in Robinsonville twenty-two women attended his class including women from Robinsonville, Martintown, Bellefield, Pattersontown, Petersburg and Cran--all over the county. Even two women from the League came out to Robinsonville for this first term. By the following year the geographic distribution of women attending Yocum's class sharply narrowed to the Martintown, Bellefield and Robinsonville areas, a shape it generally held during this research. While referred to as the Robinsonville Art Class in press releases and newspaper articles, the group had formalized itself in August, 1966 by electing a President, Secretary and Treasurer. At the same election meeting an Annual Art Show was planned for three nights at the Robinsonville Community Building,

during the annual local township carnival, the Franklin Carnival, at the Robinsonville Community Park. The formalization of their activities is reflected in 1967 newspaper reports on their activities which referred to them as the Robinsonville Art Club and the Robinsonville Club Ladies. During 1967 they held weekly classes, visited a church art class exhibit in a neighboring county, exhibited their arts and crafts by invitation at Harrisburg's Fort Hunter arts and crafts show, and visited an exhibit of the work of Pennsylvania artists at the William Penn Museum in Harrisburg. To celebrate the end of the 1967 class sessions they held a covered dish Christmas supper and party at the Robinsonville Community Building. While there were approximately twenty class members by this time, the seven or eight who had left the League still formed the active nucleus of the group.

The Ridge County Art Association Re-Forms

In 1966, while Yocum was teaching in Robinsonville and Wagner in Harristown, Ken and Janet Wetzel moved to Pattersontown from Washington, D.C. Ken Wetzel was trained as an architectural engineer at Iowa State and at the University of Minnesota, and had pursued this career until his retirement in 1961. In addition, he had sought instruction in painting beginning in 1920 at the Minnesota Institute of Art with Richard Leahy, and later at the Indianapolis Art Institute, the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C., and finally at Penn State while he was

living in Pattersontown. Upon his arrival in Ridge County he and his wife joined the Creek-Ridge Art League and actively participated in their activities until 1968. He had finally grown disenchanted with the condescending attitude of some Harristown members to Ridge members, and as a confirmed realist had never found a comfortable niche in the League despite his cosmopolitan worldview. Once Wagner stopped teaching altogether some of the Ridge County members asked Wetzel to hold a class in Pattersontown. In early 1968 Wetzel began what was referred to as the Pattersontown Art Group Class, which lasted into 1970. Wetzel primarily attracted the members of the League who were frustrated by the condescension and the preponderance of League activities in Harristown. The sophisticated and cosmopolitan Wetzel was an acceptable, even desirable, alternative. In January, 1968 the Robinsonville Art Class and the Pattersontown Art Class Group met in the Pattersontown high school to form a new Ridge County Art Association. The first official meeting of the new RCAA was held in the Robinsonville Community Building in February, at which time they instituted two dollar dues, planned to meet the first Tuesday of each month, and elected a President and Vice-President from the Robinsonville class and a Secretary and a Treasurer from the Pattersontown class.

The year 1968 was very active for the RCAA with many activities planned for the monthly meetings including films, slides of the White House, discussions and lectures

about the great American artists, critiques, a covered dish supper, and a trip to a nearby art exhibit. In June, 1968 they held the Ridge County Art Show, a clothesline exhibit, on the lawn of the Pattersontown courthouse. A popular vote was the vehicle used to select the Best Painting, which was to be displayed for a time thereafter in a local business.

Arts and Crafts Village

Shortly after the RCAA re-formed, two of the active Robinsonville members, Margaret Shellenberger and Mabel Graybill, opened a gallery and supply shop called the Arts and Crafts Village. They sold paintings and all forms of handicrafts on consignment from local painters and crafts-people, and a line of arts and crafts supplies. Essentially, they acted as a gallery for the newly formed association. Upon opening they sought the advice of the Penn State Extension director in Pattersontown, Ellen Branch, who had an advisor come down from Penn State to speak to them about running the shop. She suggested that they hold rigid quality standards in order to keep junk out, and to maintain a quality reputation for the shop. However, as Mrs. Shellenberger said, "You can't put their ways in a small community like ours." The shop was conceived to encourage people to try various arts and crafts and to serve as an arm of the RCAA. To reject work in a direct way would be to alienate members, hurt feelings, and create an exclusive art world which would run counter to everything these women had hoped to accomplish, and to the values of

their community. What Shellenberger referred to as "their ways" were the kind of art world conventions that would be expected in the League. The RCAA was formed directly in counterdistinction to that set of values, and the women running the Village were aware that such methods would alienate their community. Their solution was to have a "big showy display" for the best work and display the poorer work on a back shelf. After three months a card would be sent to consignees whose work had not sold, asking them to pick it up. According to Mrs. Shellenberger, most of the work that was sold was sold to other artists and craftspeople, many of whom could have made what they bought. In this way we can see that the Village served to affirm the existence of an art world distinct from the League, and controlled by the Robinsonville membership. In addition to normal sales activity, the Village would hold special "Crafts Days" with classes and demonstrations in painting, pastels, handbuilt pottery, thrown pottery, carving, weaving, etc., and food would be supplied by the Grove Church Friendship Class (Mrs. Shellenberger's church). Further, various crafts classes were offered throughout the year. However, business was never strong, and the RCAA never flourished. By the end of 1970 the Village had closed its doors, and the RCAA meeting attendance dwindled until the association simply faded away. It was the end of the RCAA, but not the end of the Robinsonville group. The RCAA may have disappeared in name, but the women who gave it its initial impetus in

the Robinsonville area continued to paint, hold classes and exhibit their work. The RCAA had affirmed the existence of a segment of the local art world which was tied to local activities and values--a group which could and would continue without the formal associational structure.

The years 1966-1970 were a time of transition for the Ridge County art world. The management of the Fair exhibit ping-ponged between Wagner for the League and Wetzel for the RCAA. In Robinsonville, Yocum stopped teaching in 1969, with Merle and Ben Boyer, school art teachers from a neighboring county, taking over for 1970. In Pattersontown, Wetzel taught through 1970, but found his class dwindling and stopped teaching. In Harristown, Wagner stopped teaching altogether in 1967 at which time Ray Barron became the primary teacher and shaker and mover of the League. At the end of 1970 the only teacher active in the area was Ray Barron, a painter who heavily favored the modern and abstract.

At this point, with the demise of Wetzel's class and the RCAA, the art world of the Creek-Ridge County area was firmly bi-polar with the League representing modern and abstract art, and the Robinsonville Art Class Group representing realistic art. While the actual product might not reflect such a diametrical opposition, this was the way the two groups viewed the situation at the time (and to the present day).

However, without a formal association or a teacher the continuity of the Robinsonville Group was relatively

unstable. They traveled to a Creek County YMCA during 1971 to study with Mark Reedy, a disenchanted League member and a respected amateur painter with a very realistic style. The following year they invited him to teach in Robinsonville, which he did. In this way the most active members of the group maintained their identity as a group by traveling for instruction, and then bringing the teacher back to Robinsonville to broaden their membership. After a two year hiatus, this same process was repeated with the active members spending 1975-6 in a class in nearby Birch County which was taught by another realistic painter, Jean McNaught, who traveled to Robinsonville the following year. Over and over again the art activity in Robinsonville was in danger of collapsing, actually doing so for two years, but the small group of women, now led by Margaret Shellenberger, who had originally joined Wagner's class, kept struggling to keep it alive. Finally, in 1978 some sense of continuity was assured when Shellenberger decided to teach the Robinsonville class herself.

The Robinsonville Group had maintained an identity within Ridge County and Creek County during the 1970-77 period through the classes, shows, entries in the fair, and the exhibition of members' work in local banks and restaurants. Few outside of Robinsonville were even aware that there were no classes or shows for two years, and to them the Robinsonville Group was a continuing presence. Robinsonville painters had come to represent realistic painting and

traditional Ridge values, a positive appraisal to most of those who lived in Ridge County, and a negative appraisal to League members and others who shared their viewpoint. To some, "They paint the kinds of things we can understand and be proud to hang in our homes," while to others, "They're country people who paint pictures that belong on a calendar." As discussed in the earlier profile of art in the county, the realistic art and local values espoused by the Group were quite appropriate to complete acceptance within the county. While not all members of the Robinsonville Group were producing work of high enough quality to be asked to do commission work, they had come to be a respected group as a whole.

Crafts Guild

One further distinction between the Robinsonville Group and the Creek-Ridge League was the Group's work in various crafts. Through the Village the Robinsonville Group had encouraged crafts activity through classes, demonstrations and exhibits. Most members of the Robinsonville Group were at least minimally competent in at least one craft. Some of the more active members were able to produce good work in two or more crafts, in addition to their painting. One informant explained her constant activity in this way,

Well, you know that the Penn German's were always economical and knew how to stretch a dollar, we could always make our own things. I really don't have to stretch the dollar, but I still make my own wardrobe,

curtains and drapes, and lots of other things. It's gotten a lot more "crafty" around here in the last ten years since the Village closed, but the Penn Dutch were always like that. No one I know well enough to know sits in front of the "boob tube" without her hands busy.

This was a common attitude within the Group, one which was expressed by many other Ridge County residents in both words and action, as I observed throughout my fieldwork. The Group would never consider divorcing themselves from the crafts work which they and the community highly value. They see themselves as maintaining traditional crafts in their leisure time, so that leisure time is often spent doing something they consider useful and practical. Whether it is true or not that the work they do has traditional features is irrelevant. What is significant is that they see themselves as maintaining a traditional continuity and see this as an important feature of their lives. In fact, as noted earlier, the work they do is often both art and craft, and much of their painting can be seen to make reference to their practical and frugal attitude towards life by the materials which they use and the surface on which they paint. Rough hewn boards, shingles, slate, milk cans, horse collars, and other similar materials often serve as a support for paintings, creating a combination art/craft. One of the most respected and successful members of the Group has created "paintings" by using yarn, pine cones, egg shells, chicken pen wire, and just about every other kind of material she was able to save, scavenge or buy cheaply

at auction.

From the very beginning such work was outside the sphere of the League. Any such work was a wholly private matter, never publicly displayed or associated with the League. The League maintained its modern approach to painting and articulated a fine art context for their work. They continued the tradition of those earlier painters of high status in accentuating the "useless" aspects of their efforts and shunning "crafty" hybrids. The Group, on the other hand, saw themselves as maintaining a local approach in their efforts by accentuating the practical and craft references in their activities.

In 1974 the craft work of the Village was revived by the founding of the Crafts Guild. Founded by a Penn State Extension worker, some of the core members of the Robinsonville Group joined it, leading to a further association of the Group with crafts, in a more institutionalized way. In fact, while relatively few members of the Guild were from the Group, many county residents associated and confused the two. "The Arts Guild in Robinsonville," or "That Guild class out their in Robinsonville," were commonly heard confusions, which may be seen to express the view held of the Robinsonville Art Class Group by many in the county.

The Guild actually stood outside the activities of the Ridge County art world in terms of its membership and activities. However, as they held an annual show in the county at which some Robinsonville women exhibited their

arts and crafts, the Guild show came to be thought of as an extension of the Robinsonville Group, further accentuating the distinction between the values and activities of the League and the Group.

Ray Barron and the League after 1967

After 1967 the League continued to be active and maintain its membership under the energetic direction of Ray Barron. Barron was born in Harristown, leaving only to attend the Museum School of Philadelphia (now the Philadelphia College of Art) where he studied advertising art and illustration. Upon graduation he returned to Harristown where he became a florist while continuing to paint as a hobby. In his classes in the late 1940s McKinney pushed his students away from what he called "calendar art," and stimulated the already experimental Barron to investigate a more modern approach to painting. What appears to have been the most influential in Barron's painting modernization were the summers between 1960 and 1972 which he spent in Hobson Pitman's class at Penn State. Throughout his life Barron had been a prolific painter, knowledgeable about traditional and modern art history, and able to paint in styles which displayed an understanding of a variety of styles, including realistic and abstract art. However, while he could paint in a realistic style with great competence, he was strongly opposed to realism in art, and consistently denigrated its artistic value referring to it in passing as "ordinary painting" which "fifty billion people

can do." He realized and continued to realize that it was very popular in Ridge County, resulting in a relatively large number of sales for realistic painters, but as he said, "I like the modern manner, not the way a camera would take it - showing every blade of grass. I know Wyeth is good, but it simply doesn't excite me."

What Barron did like were "Spontaneous, rapidly done paintings, more emotional, not studied - a personal quality is necessary." He professed a particular interest in Impressionism, as many of his paintings and most of his teaching displayed. His abstract work leaned heavily on Abstract Expressionism, but he felt that abstract work need not be exclusively non-objective. In his teaching he encouraged "the spontaneous, the slap-dash, free work done rapidly. We like to do a painting in an evening, or at least get a good start." He encouraged his students to paint in a variety of different modern styles, all with "a colorful and soft touch." He felt that he and Steven Wagner had a great deal of influence on the League members as they wanted to paint in a modern style, but simply didn't have the right kind of instruction, with Frerichs, Levine, Worsinger and Augustine. According to Barron, Frerichs "hated modern art with a passion and only painted what they understood down there (Ridge County)." Levine had somewhat more positive influence in his eyes, but was "bogged down in draftsmanship and detail."

Barron was the single most important factor in the continued existence of the League. Even when not holding office, his activity and enthusiasm was the catalyst for almost all League activities since 1967. It is not that others weren't active, but Barron was the single thread of continuity which maintained when others grew apathetic or too busy to regularly participate. While he helped to recruit League teachers at various times, he continued to teach throughout each year, thereby offering instruction and social contact on a year round basis. He actively pursued new members and often bemoaned the lack of younger, new members to carry the League into the future.

Under Barron's leadership the League continued to maintain its reputation as a group devoted to modern and abstract painting. It was perceived as an elitist organization based in Harristown, standing very much in opposition to local preferences and the Robinsonville Group. Even the shows which they chose to attend were the subject of scorn by the Robinsonville painters. In one case, while the Robinsonville women were still in the League, Barron took the League to an International Surrealist Exhibition in Pittsburgh. The Robinsonville members reacted with outright disgust, and one woman who had brought her nephew along was outraged by the fact that she had not been warned that there would be paintings of naked women. Another viewpoint was articulated by the organizer of a short-lived group formed in Creek County in 1977. He summarized the

perceived nature of the League quite accurately, though somewhat ascerbically when he said,

It's a bunch of rich, upper echelon ladies from Harristown who have nothing to do but sit around and paint pictures. It's like a country club where they're all on the same level and they all paint the same . . . The people in the League don't want anyone to get an edge or any prestige over them, and they don't want any young people or new people because they don't want to change. They had it all tied up around here and shunned outsiders. They also didn't like us because we were trying to change the style around here from their impressionistic, drab, little flowers. People like things that look real, something they can relate to and that's what we were trying to do. They (The League) want everyone to paint the same way. Once you've seen one piece from the League you can pick all the others out real easily.

From 1967 on all League activities were centered in Harristown. They maintained classes on a year round basis, and only met in Ridge County for occasional "paint outs" and picnics during the summer months. As discussed above, Barron taught classes except when he found another teacher who he felt was worth bringing in or traveling to. Generally speaking they have traveled to teachers in the Penn State area, often after Barron made contact, as was the case with Hobson Pitman. Meetings in Harristown continued to take place on a regular monthly basis following the type of schedule noted earlier, still with the emphasis on the fine art context of their activities and interests. While their purpose was reworded in 1969 for their new annual membership brochure, it still reflected the original purpose and values. It read (and still reads today):

The purpose of the Creek-Ridge Art League is to stimulate

art appreciation and understanding by enriching this region of Pennsylvania, its public and its artists, both amateur and professional, through a constantly developing program aimed at encouraging creative talent by offering opportunities for exhibition, competition and study.

They also elaborated their membership structure by creating three categories of membership: active, associate and patron. Active membership applied to people who were regularly pursuing their painting. Associate membership applied to those still painting, but unable or unwilling to participate on a regular basis. Patron membership applied to those who had no interest in painting as a hobby, but wished to participate and support all League activities. In all categories the membership fee was two dollars, so that the new structure may be seen primarily as a way of defining the nature of the membership and the League. In reality, membership was handled in a very relaxed manner and many people participated over the years without ever knowing whether they had paid their dues or not. Membership hovered in the range of thirty to fifty, one-third of whom were from Ridge County. With very few exceptions, once the Robinsonville members had withdrawn, the original Ridge membership remained stable, conforming very much to the nature of the group as a whole, "upper echelon ladies."

They maintained an annual April and November show and competition in a Harristown bank, one of which was limited to League members' entries and, in 1975, began an open exhibit and competition in a Ridge County bank. In

each case the exhibit opened with judging by someone of some recognized status outside the county (a university professor or an artist with a minor reputation), followed by a reception. The exhibit would remain in the bank for two weeks, with many of the paintings for sale. In 1967 they began a sidewalk art show in Harristown which grew into the Creek-Ridge Arts Festival, now a recognized State festival held in Creek Park in Harristown. As the Festival it became an event sponsored by the American Association of University Women, under the auspices of the Arts Festival Council which was composed of representatives of the Art League, the Harristown Music Study Club, the Creek County Garden Club, the Arch Players, the Ridge Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, and the American Association of University Women, providing some sense of the company kept by the League. A full schedule of performing arts would run through the day and wide spectrum of arts and crafts would be exhibited and awarded ribbons by a judge with respectable credentials. The League was given its own roped-off area for an exhibit of their members' work, while all other artists and craftspeople exhibited en masse. In 1978 the League instituted an annual public art auction in the Harristown library at which they offered their work to the highest bidder, though most paintings had a reserve (minimum) bid set by the painter. Much of the work would go unsold, but it was an opportunity for the League to present their paintings to the public and to sponsor a somewhat exclusive

social event. In addition to the above events, the League exhibited its work for a number of years in a restaurant in Harristown, and were asked in 1972 to put almost one hundred paintings on display on a consignment basis throughout the Harristown hospital, where much of it remained as a semipermanent exhibit.

Between 1967 and 1979, the League continued to travel to exhibits in Harrisburg, State College, New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, etc. Many members entered competitions throughout the central Pennsylvania region, on occasion having their work exhibited at the gallery at Penn State University, at the William Penn Museum in Harrisburg, and in shows throughout the state. Barron encouraged the broadening of geographic involvement by exhibiting his own work at the Doschi Gallery in Harrisburg and by winning awards at many major Pennsylvania competitions.

Through his exhibits at the Doschi Gallery, Barron met David Still, a professional painter who left New York City to help found and run the Doschi Gallery. Throughout the 1970s Still had a significant influence on Barron, encouraging and exhibiting Barron's abstract work. He also had a continuing influence on the League and directly and indirectly on the Ridge County art world. He had been a judge many times over the years, strongly supportive of the work of League members, and staunchly advocating the continuing modernization of their work. Through Still,

Barron found many of the people who judged and critiqued their shows in both Creek and Ridge Counties. He also helped find some of the judges for the Ridge County Fair, and accompanied them to the judging. Hence, his preferences in and opinions about art had been given a wide audience, and had a significant impact on the League and on the prizes awarded in the Ridge County art world. Some of the conflict between the League and Robinsonville Group directly and indirectly focused on Still's influence in the area.

Ridge County Fair

Since the 1940s, the art supervisor of the Fair was recruited from one of the formal associations. First it was under the auspices of the RCAA, later in the hands of the League, then back to the new RCAA, and then back to the League in the early 1970s. Under the auspices of the League in the early 1970s abstract and modern art began to win, and then dominate, the awards. Barron, with Still, wielded great influence in the choice of a judge, most of whom came from Still's circle in Harrisburg. This led to an increase in the hostility between the League and the realistic painters who entered the Fair competition. The Fair officials finally asked Fran McAlister, a school art teacher and neutral party, to take over as art supervisor of the Fair. Though she made an earnest effort to find relatively neutral judges, with respect to style, her search for reputable judges often led her into a small world in which many knew

Still and/or Barron. For example, in 1978 she contacted a judge through the Harrisburg Art League, and she turned up at the opening with Still "in tow." Prizes were awarded to the most abstract work, angering all but the winners. The judge even declined to award all the prize money, money which had to be returned to the State. As McAlister said, "It was a rotten fish, and Ray Barron knew I was mad." Only an intense effort on her part to find a realistically oriented judge led to some sense of equity in the 1979 judging. She was aware of the general inequity with the modern and abstract paintings winning and the same people painting them year after year. She felt that it so alienated people that some of the women from the Robinsonville Group refused to bring paintings to the Fair from 1975 to 1978. Additionally, she felt that this modern/abstract domination irritated the many county residents who attended the Fair art exhibit, leading them to ridicule the work and the judge. As she said, "County people aren't geared to that, they want realistic art. They want to recognize it and say, 'Yep, it looks just like that.'"

Hence, as discussed earlier, the Ridge County Fair, overwhelmingly the single most widely attended art exhibit in the county, acted as a kind of public forum for the enactment of the conflict of local values and cosmopolitan values. It was here that the county residents not actively involved in art were privy to, and participants in, the conflict between the modern/abstract work of the cosmopolitan

Creek-Ridge Art League and the realistic work of the
localistic Robinsonville Art Class Group.

CHAPTER VII

THE RIDGE COUNTY AMATEUR ART WORLD

Introduction

This chapter will be devoted to a description of the membership and activities of the Creek-Ridge Art League and the Robinsonville Art Class Group during the period from June, 1979 to February, 1982. I hope to demonstrate, as an active and concrete process, much of what has been discussed in preceding chapters. I will begin by presenting a description of the membership of each association based on data collected through interviews, observations and the background questionnaire. In addition to an overall description of the central relevant characteristics of the memberships, I will provide profiles of representative members of each association in order to indicate the way in which the abstract data is concretized and enacted. Following this I will turn to general overviews and specific descriptions of the classes, meetings, exhibitions, and competitions of each group. This should make visible the mechanisms through which each segment of the Ridge County art world defined, promoted, and presented itself and its paintings, and the mechanisms through which members were socialized and integrated as a group.

Membership

Robinsonville Art Class Group Membership

Having no formally agreed upon name, nor formal structure or membership requirements, the Robinsonville Group is best classified as an informal association. It was referred to by the membership as an "art class" with a small fee for participation. Members also referred to themselves as a "group," particularly when planning exhibits of their work and field trips to art shows and galleries. Membership was informally accorded to those who regularly attended class or participated in structured activities of the group. It was indicated by statements such as, "She's in our art group," or "She shows with us," rather than by any formal membership process. Based on interviews with members concerning group "membership," and an analysis of observed patterns of participation, there were an average of twenty-seven members during the period of this research, all of whom were active participants on a regular basis for a period of at least twelve months. There was also a children's class, once combined with the adult class during the summer, but children were not considered to be members as their participation was tangential, sporadic and short-lived. However, their participation in the Robinsonville Group art shows was not at all insignificant as it was a distinctive component of Group exhibition events, as will be seen later.

As noted earlier, the Group was held together

primarily through the efforts of Margaret Shellenberger, the class teacher, two to three of the original 1960s members, and two to three of the newer members. These five to seven people were responsible for most of the planning and implementation of art exhibits and other Group activities.

Group Composition

Group membership was almost exclusively female, with male members tending to come and go relatively quickly. The average age of the Group was just under forty-nine, though most of the membership was under thirty-five or over fifty. Almost two-thirds of the membership lived in Robinsonville, Bellefield, and Martintown, while the remaining third lived in the tri-borough area of Patterson-town, Patterson, and Peterburg.

There were numerous indications of the familial, local and traditional orientations of Group members, all of whom were born in Ridge County and living there at the time of this research. With very few exceptions they reported close relatives living in Ridge County, four-fifths of whom lived within walking distance. With a single exception, members reported visiting close relatives at least once a week and many visited daily. Over three-fourths of the Group members were also members of another Ridge County association, while only two of them were members of any out-of-county associations. Ridge County memberships were in social, community service and religious organizations,

most of which were respected, but not exclusive, associations. All out-of-county memberships were job related, e.g., American Physical Therapy Association. Almost all members subscribed to the Ridge Sentinel, and just over fifty percent subscribed to The Sentinel. With the exception of two members who held jobs in Harrisburg and regularly received a Harrisburg paper, no one received any other state or out-of-state newspapers. Over three-fourths of the membership received magazine subscriptions, an average of 3.5 per family, which were overwhelmingly related to family, home, crafts and religion. Almost one-half of the membership subscribed to Reader's Digest, the single most popular magazine subscription.

Marriage and children were very much a part of the lives of Group members. All of those over twenty-five had been married, though a few had been widowed. All of those who were married and over thirty had children, an average of 2.5 each. Of these children, three-fourths lived in Ridge County, and the others resided elsewhere in Pennsylvania. Family life was clearly a central factor in the lives of Group members, as was church life. Almost all members attended church regularly, and participated in church activities on a frequent basis. All members were Protestant, of whom one-third were Methodist, twenty percent were Lutheran, thirteen percent were Presbyterian, and the remaining one-third were members of other Protestant churches in the county, e.g., Mennonite, Brethren, United

Church of Christ. All members were of Scotch, Irish or German descent.

Only one Group member did not graduate from high school. Almost half graduated from college. Of their children, over twenty-five years old, over three-fourths graduated from high school, one-third graduated from college, and two-thirds had some college education. Without exception, members and their children attended colleges and universities in Pennsylvania. Looking at the primary income earner of the members' families, one-half of them were professionals (occupational therapist, teacher, engineer, pastor, architect), one-fourth were skilled and semi-skilled workers (mechanic, carpenter, steelworker), and one-fourth were self-employed (building, farming, industrial machinery agent). The average family income for Group members in 1980 was \$16,900, over one-third of whom had an income of over \$25,000. Almost three-fourths of the members lived in a single home which they owned, and with the exception of a pastor's wife who lived rent free in a single home, the rest lived in rented apartments (exclusively the younger members). Residences averaged just over seven rooms each, and those which were owned were assessed for tax purposes at an average of \$6,485.

In many areas the make-up of the Robinsonville Group was very similar to that of the county as a whole. It was exclusively white, Protestant (with the same breakdown as the county as a whole), and of Scotch, Irish and

German descent. It was clearly locally, family, and traditionally oriented in almost every facet of life. However, there were some important differences in areas generally associated with status differentiation.

While Group members tended to own their own homes, as did most county residents, those members who did own, had homes with a tax assessed value of almost double that of the average county home (\$6,485 vs. \$3,332). Further, average family income for Group members was \$16,800 with 35% earning over \$25,000, as compared to an average family income of \$13,883 and 19.8% earning over \$25,000 for the county as a whole. Occupations of the Group were weighted to the professional classification, and the percent of those who were self-employed was double that of the county as a whole. One other area where there was a particularly large disparity between the Group and the county as a whole was educational attainment. While 55.3% of the county residents over 25 graduated from high school and 6.7% graduated from college, 96% of the Group and 78% of their children graduated from high school and 48% of the Group and 33% of their children graduated from college. Sixty-six percent of their children had some college education.

Hence, while Group membership was very similar to the population of the county as a whole in the areas of race, religion, and familial, local and traditional orientation, they differed in some important areas which have been traditionally related to social status: employment,

education, income and housing. In these areas the Group was clearly distinct from the county as a whole. All of this data supports earlier characterizations of the Group as composed of "respected" people who were integrated into the community, and, at the same time, of noticeably higher social status than the average Ridge County resident.

Creek-Ridge Art League Membership

The League was a formal association with three categories of membership (active, associate, patron) each requiring a three dollar dues fee. It had a full slate of officers including: President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Recording Secretary, Assistant Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Program and Publicity Coordinator. In addition it had six committees, each with a chairperson appointed by the President and a volunteer membership. These committees were: Exhibition, Creek County Membership, Ridge County Membership, Telephone, Property, Hospitality, and the Creek-Ridge Arts Festival Committee. The League issued an annual brochure with its statement of purpose (see pp.135-136), the yearly schedule of meetings and exhibits, a list of officers, and a list of "Rules Governing Exhibition Privileges." Classes were not offered as an official activity of the League, though instruction and advice were often available at League meetings. Informally, League members formed classes throughout the year which were instructed by Ray Barron, unless he chose to find another teacher who offered something he felt was useful and attrac-

tive to the membership.

Membership was officially dependent on having paid one's dues. During the period of this research average membership was 33, with 24 active members, 6 associate members, and 3 patrons. The Ridge County members accounted for 10 active members, 3 associates, and 1 patron. Four of the Ridge County members served as officers or committee chairpersons.

League Composition

This research has been concerned with the role of painting in Ridge County, and has been primarily interested in the way in which the League operated as a social force in the Ridge County social universe. Therefore, I will focus here on the composition of the 42.4% of the League that resided in Ridge County. In general, the Creek County membership tended to conform to the same demographic and social patterns as the Ridge County membership, but when they differ in more than a very minor way, I will make note of this.

League membership in Ridge County was almost exclusively female, with male membership as a rare and fleeting event. However, the Creek County membership was more than 20% male, men who tended to serve as League teachers, officers, and committee chairpersons year after year. The average age of the League member was just over 59, with most of the membership over 45. Almost 90% of the membership lived in the tri-borough area of Pattersontown

Patterson, and Peterburg, while the remaining 10% lived in Robinsonville and Martintown. The Creek County membership was exclusively from Harristown and its immediate vicinity.

League members tended to differ in numerous ways from their Group counterparts, especially in their relationship to the world outside the county. Only one-third of the League was born in Ridge County, while 42% were from other Pennsylvania counties, and one-fourth were from other states including New Mexico, Alabama, and New Jersey. None of the Creek County members were born in Ridge County, though 52% were born in Creek County. Just two-thirds of the Ridge members reported close relatives living in the county, though almost 90% of them lived within walking distance of a close relative. As with the Group, most of those who had a close relative in the county reported visiting them at least once a week, and many visited daily. Almost three-fourths of the League members were also members of another Ridge County association, but over two-thirds of them were also members of an out-of-county association. Ridge County memberships were dominated by community service and social associations, all of which were with respected associations. Many of these associations were exclusive, such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, to which one-third of the members belonged. Out-of-county memberships were exclusively social and arts related. While many Group members were eligible for membership in county and out-of-county

associations to which League members belonged, there was no membership overlap.

Most League members subscribed to a local paper, of whom four-fifths subscribed to the Ridge Sentinel, three-fourths subscribed to The Sentinel, and one-fourth subscribed to The Times. In addition, one-third subscribed to another state newspaper (Philadelphia Inquirer or the Harrisburg Patriot). While no one subscribed to any out-of-state newspapers, one-fourth of the membership reported that they regularly purchased the Sunday New York Times, and occasionally purchased the daily New York Times. Two-thirds of the members received magazine subscriptions, an average of 4.5 each, most of which were related to the home. One-fourth also subscribed to a news magazine, and one-half subscribed to magazines devoted to history, art and antiques. As with the Group, the single most popular magazine was Reader's Digest, to which one-third of the members subscribed.

Marriage and children had been very much a part of the lives of League members. All of those over 25 had been married, though 40% of them were widowed and a few divorced. With one exception, those members over 30 who had been married had children, an average of 2.0 each. Of these children, however, only one-third lived in Ridge County, while 40% lived in another Pennsylvania County, and one-fourth lived in other states and counties including California, Massachusetts, Ohio, New Jersey and Canada. In other words, while family life had been a central part of

the early lives of most League members, 40% of them were widowed, and two-thirds of their children had moved out of the county. Family life had become considerably less significant in their everyday existence.

Almost all members regularly attended church, and many participated in church activities on a frequent basis. Only one-half of the Creek County membership attended church regularly, and few regularly participated in church activities. With the exception of one Catholic member, all League members were Protestant, of whom one-half were Presbyterian, one-third were Methodist, and the remaining 17% were Lutheran. All members were of Scotch, Irish, English and German descent.

Every League member graduated from high school, and almost two-thirds graduated from college. Most of the rest had some college education. Of their children, 95% graduated from high school, two-thirds graduated from college, and most of the others had some college education. One-third of the college graduates went on to some form of post-graduate education, e.g., medical school, law school, business school, theological seminary. Two-thirds of the members and their children attended a college or university in Pennsylvania.

Looking at the primary income earner of the members' families, one-half of them were professionals (doctor, engineer, lawyer). One-third were self-employed (insurance agent, farmer), and the remaining one-fifth were in

executive and managerial positions. The average family income for League members in 1980 was \$19,600. One-third had an income over \$25,000, some of which was due to interest on inherited wealth. Every League member lived in a home which they owned, and with one exception they were single homes. These homes averaged 9.25 rooms each, and were assessed for tax purposes at an average of \$8,925.

Focusing on the Ridge County membership of the League, some aspects of the League make-up were similar to that of the county as a whole and to the Robinsonville Group. However, there were more areas in which the League differed in important ways, most of which are associated with social status and orientation. Like the Group and the county as a whole, the League was exclusively white and of Scotch, Irish, English and German descent, and almost exclusively Protestant. Family life had been an important aspect of their lives and the church was still an active aspect of most members' lives. However, other demographic characteristics of League members indicate a great disparity between the League and the Group. In turn, these were indicative of an even greater disparity between the League and the county as a whole.

The most obvious difference was that most League members lived in the tri-borough area of Pattersontown, Patterson, and Peterburg while most Group members lived in the Robinsonville, Bellefield, and Martintown areas. This was a geographic distinction which was understood in the

county as "town vs. country," hence the League's labeling of the Group as "country people." League members also displayed a broad range of geographic origins with only 33% born in Ridge County, as opposed to the Ridge origins of all Group members. This geographic difference was further evidenced by the almost one-third fewer League members who had relatives living in the county. Further, while three-fourths of all Group members' children lived in the county, two-thirds of the League members' children had moved out of the county, and one-third of them had moved out of the state. Overall we see that the Group was overwhelmingly oriented to Ridge County in terms of birth and patterns of family settlement, while the League displayed a much wider geographic pattern in both of these areas. This data is indicative of the non-local or cosmopolitan orientation of League members, and can be followed in much of the following data.

While approximately three-fourths of both League and Group members belonged to another Ridge County association (compared to 55% for the county as a whole), over two-thirds of the League belonged to social and arts related associations which were based outside of the county (excluding the League). Only 9% of the Group belonged to any out-of-county associations, all job related. While both League and Group members were in respected associations, League members tended to be in associations which were considerably more exclusive than

those somewhat egalitarian associations of the Group.

Most members of the League and the Group subscribed to a Ridge County newspaper, while three-fourths of the League and one-half of the Group subscribed to the Creek County daily newspaper. Revealing a somewhat non-local orientation of the League, one-third of its members subscribed to another state newspaper, and one-fourth purchased the New York Times. Only 9% of the Group received a state newspaper, and none reported purchasing any out-of-state newspapers. Reader's Digest was the single most common subscription for both groups, and both subscribed to a number of magazines related to the home, e.g., The Workbasket, Good Housekeeping, House Beautiful, McCall's. Most of the remaining Group subscriptions were to crafts, religious and family life magazines, e.g., Guidepost, Daily Word, Marriage, Marriage and Family Living, Creative Crafts, Needlecraft for Today. Most of the remaining League subscriptions were in areas generally neglected by the Group, i.e., news, history, art, antiques, e.g., Time, Yankee, National Geographic, American Artist, Smithsonian Quarterly, Antiques Magazine.

Another disparity between the League and the Group, and the League and the county, was in the area of church membership. While the overwhelming affiliation for all was with a Protestant church, the Group and the county were approximately one-third Methodist, one-fourth Lutheran, one-eighth Presbyterian, and one-third other Protestant

denominations. The League was one-half Presbyterian, one-third Methodist, and one-sixth Lutheran. At the very least this pattern clearly distinguished the League from the Group and the county as a whole, but further investigation during my fieldwork indicated an important status distinction between the denominations in the county. While numerous other factors might intervene to alter any status assignment made on the basis of a single characteristic, the accepted and enacted status hierarchy placed Presbyterians at the top, Lutherans and Methodists below them, and most other denominations below them.

While there was a great disparity between the Group and the county as a whole in the area of educational attainment, the League's educational level was even higher than that of the Group. The major difference was in the area of higher education where two-thirds of the League members and their children graduated from college, and one-third of their children went on to receive post-graduate degrees. Less than one-half of the Group and one-third of their children graduated from college. In addition, Pennsylvania was the location of all higher education for Group members and their children, whereas one-third of the League pursued degrees in another state.

The economic and occupational differences between the League and Group were not as large as the differences in these areas between both groups and the county as a whole. However, the League displayed a somewhat higher

economic and occupational status. League members had homes with an average tax assessed value which was 267% higher than that of the county as a whole and 38% higher than that of the Group. Average family income for the League was \$19,600 as compared to \$16,800 for the Group and \$13,883 for the county. Approximately 33% of both the League and Group earned over \$25,000, as compared to 19.6% of the county.

As with the Group, the occupations of the League were weighted to the professional category, but the League evidenced somewhat higher status professions in that one-half of its professionals were lawyers and doctors. In addition, one-third of the League's primary income earners were self-employed and one-fifth were in executive and managerial positions, while one-fourth of the Group was self-employed and the remaining one-fourth were skilled and semiskilled workers.

This data provides strong evidence that the League was clearly distinct from the Group and from the county as a whole in many ways, primarily related to their higher social status and cosmopolitan orientation. While the Group was of noticeably higher social status than the average county resident, the League displayed somewhat higher status than the Group in the areas of employment, education, income, housing, and institutional memberships (churches and associations). Further, while oriented to family and church, the League displayed little evidence of

the strong local orientation of the Group, and considerable evidence of a cosmopolitan orientation in the areas of birth, patterns of family settlement, associational memberships, newspaper and magazine subscriptions, and location of higher education.

Profiles

Robinsonville Art Group Member Profiles

Margaret Shellenberger

Mrs. Shellenberger was born over fifty years ago in Bellefield, nine miles northeast of Robinsonville, where her father worked in his father's butcher shop. When she was six years old her father bought a farm in Dale, a town between Bellefield and Robinsonville, which he farmed until she graduated from high school. She had planned to leave the area when she finished high school, but met Ronald Shellenberger in her high school class, married him two years after graduation and decided to set up house in Robinsonville. Mr. Shellenberger was born in Robinsonville where his father was in the plastering business, a business he was to join after high school and build into a considerably larger, very successful and respected construction firm. Mr. and Mrs. Shellenberger had three children who married and moved within two miles of their parents (one next door) in homes built for them by Mr. Shellenberger. One of the two sons joined his father's business, and the other son became a computer engineer in a Harristown firm. Their daughter became a housewife, mother, and beautician,

having taken over her mother's beauty shop in 1981 after spending many years as her assistant and partner. Her husband was an industrial draftsman with a Harristown firm. Both Mr. and Mrs. Shellenberger's parents lived in Robinsonville. Mrs. Shellenberger's parents moved there from Bellefield in 1981 so that she could more easily care for her ailing father. Family life was truly one of the centers of their lives with almost constant contact and activity on an everyday basis, with parents, children, brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews and nieces, who lived in the Robinsonville and Bellefield area.

Church life and religious commitment were threads which ran through every aspect of Mrs. Shellenberger's life. She and her husband attended a United Methodist church for services, Sunday school, and a wide variety of other activities, on a regular weekly basis. Their church was Mr. Shellenberger's family church, one which he attended throughout his life. Mrs. Shellenberger had periodically donated paintings to the church in order to help in fund raising efforts, and she and her husband committed themselves to giving at least one tenth of their income (tithing) to their church. Much of the money that she earned from selling her paintings and from teaching others to paint was devoted to "doing God's work." As she wrote to me in a 1979 letter following a conversation we had concerning her reasons for painting:

I know that God gave me my talent and about a year ago I gave it back to him. So any monies I acquire

from my art I use in furthering His work here on earth. Perhaps this is the greatest motivation I possess in trying to do a good piece of work and hoping to sell it. "Don't hide your light! Let it shine for all; Let your good deeds glow for all to see, so that they will praise your heavenly Father." Quote from the Living Bible, Matthew 15-16.

Mrs. Shellenberger began to sketch as a child, but didn't begin to paint until 1961. At that point she had three children between the ages of three and eleven and lots of housework and felt that she "needed an outlet." She felt that her husband was sympathetic, so she decided to make the time to learn to paint. She began by attending Steven Wagner's class at the Ridge Joint High School and then followed Wagner to the Harristown YMCA for two years. She felt that she learned a great deal about color values from him, and appreciated "the charm of his soft, fuzzy work," but never developed any interest in his "abstract leanings." While in his class she joined the "Harristown Club" (the League), and though she liked some of the people who were nice to her she never felt welcome and always felt that they wouldn't really let her be a part of their "clique." Because of this, and Wagner's emphasis on the abstract, she and others who shared her feelings sought a new teacher. They found J. Ray Yocum, a realistic painter, who "allowed each individual to develop her own style." He taught her for five years in Robinsonville and she felt that he was the greatest influence on her painting in terms of his technique and attitude (see p. 122). Following that she studied with Merle and Ben Boyer, Mark Reedy,

and Jean McNaught, all realistic painters.

In 1978 she decided to begin teaching others to paint in the Robinsonville Community Building and later in a Pattersontown arts and crafts store. During the winter months she was able to secure permission to teach her Robinsonville classes in her church. She had been asked by a number of different people and groups to do demonstrations at local fairs and carnivals and felt that there was a need for someone to teach on a regular basis in her area. She put advertisements and announcements in the Ridge Sentinel, told others in her group, and spread the word at art shows at which she exhibited. The response was enthusiastic leading her to teach two classes each week throughout the period of this research. In addition, she received many requests for a children's class, which she decided to offer each summer.

She felt that her teaching was primarily by "trial and error," as she didn't feel that she had any real formal knowledge of right and wrong in teaching. She taught her students to do something simple first, like a clown or still-life floral, and tried to get them to "get the personal touch in," discouraging them from exact copying. While they often copied paintings that she brought to class, she insisted that they "change things to suit themselves" so that it would be "their own individual picture." She felt that it was important to help students to develop their own style of painting while she worked at teaching them the

techniques that she knew. She was particularly interested in teaching students to mix paints and to develop a color sense which they could develop as they explored further. She chose to teach because, "I receive so much joy by seeing my students grow in their skills. It makes me feel as if I am contributing something to the building of each individual's character. This to me is worth much more than any kind of material gain . . . I want people to become aware of the beauty around them and to be able to capture it for themselves. In this way they will be able to gain self-esteem through their work. This is my way to enrich another life, to uplift others, to share with them and to help them turn another page in the Book of Life."

In addition to painting Mrs. Shellenberger considered herself, and most others of Pennsylvania German heritage, "hardworking, economical and very handy, very crafty." Until 1981 she maintained a beauty shop in her home (where she exhibited her paintings) with a loyal clientele. She made her own wardrobe, curtains and many other things, though she felt that this was no longer necessary as her husband's business had become quite successful. She was continually trying new craft techniques, especially for Christmas decorations of various sorts, some of which were photographed for publication in the 1980 Ridge Sentinel Christmas edition. Her most accomplished craft work was in what her business card referred to as, "Hand-Formed Clay Creations, Spinning, and Vegetable Dyeing."

In 1967 she opened the Arts and Crafts Village (see pp. 125-126) where she often taught classes in pottery and spinning, until it closed in 1970. She maintained her membership in the Crafts Guild (see pp. 129-132) since its formation in 1974, continued to attend meetings on an irregular basis, and regularly exhibited her crafts and paintings at the Guild shows. Despite her success in these crafts, she was considerably more interested in painting and spent most of her time working at it rather than at her crafts work.

Mrs. Shellenberger felt that her painting gave her a great deal of satisfaction, so much so that she would often get lost in her work forgetting about all other responsibilities. While she heard that some people had said that she only painted "for the acclaim," she felt that this was not at all so and that much of her effort was simply for the satisfaction of a piece of work which she could feel was well done. In addition, she felt that there was a sense of discovery in painting and even when she painted the same scene over and over she would "find something different each time I painted it." In some ways she also felt that her painting was a way of coping with grown children and a husband who had long work hours on a regular basis.

She felt that she had been fairly successful in terms of selling her work, mostly for wedding and Christmas gifts. Her children often requested paintings for birthday and wedding gifts for their friends. Her largest sale was

in 1980 when she sold sixteen paintings for \$1000 for the dining room walls at the Pattersontown restaurant/truck stop, Ridge Stop. However, a great deal of her work stayed in her family as she often gave paintings to family members for holiday, birthday, and anniversary presents. One of her 1981 paintings was a request from her son for a four foot mural for over the couch in his home. She was very proud of this mural and while working on it she brought it to one of her classes for the class members to see. The class was so intrigued that four women asked her to get them a four foot piece of masonite so that they could copy it.

Her favorite subjects were historical objects and places, country scenes, and paintings with a "rural quality." She painted many covered bridges on commission and request, but found herself tiring of them as she had done so many. Most important, though, she felt that one should paint what one knew best. As she said, "You have to be in love with where you're at and want somebody else to enjoy what you enjoy - to give that feeling to somebody else."

On occasion she would go out to paint with the more experienced members of the Group, but generally painted alone as she felt more able to work seriously when not socializing. She had a studio in her home where she worked during the cold weather, but liked to work out on her back porch when the weather permitted. In order to get a variety of perspectives on the same painting, she liked to work in

different types of light throughout the day, but rarely "works well after God's light is gone." She only liked to work in oil as she felt that she couldn't make many changes in acrylics or watercolors. She used canvas board for much of her work, but also liked to work in shingles, old barn boards, rough hewn boards, masonite, and various kinds of scrap woods from her husband's lumber yard. This way she felt she could give the "crafty kind of feel which people like." One of her favorite Christmas pictures was a simple, white outline of the Madonna and Child on a lightly stained pine shingle; a gift she loved to give and others loved to receive. While she painted some scenes from life, she drew heavily on a collection of seed catalogues, coloring books, art books, postcards, greeting cards, magazines, newspapers and photographs. These sources would serve as springboards for her own interpretations and inspirations.

In her home Mrs. Shellenberger displayed her own paintings as well as those of Mary Weaver, J. Ray Yocum, Jean McNaught and members of the Robinsonville Group. Her favorite artist was Andrew Wyeth, and she particularly liked the realistic paintings of Harrisburg-based artists Ernest Rohrbeck and Nick Ruggieri. Her taste in art ran exclusively to the realistic and she found herself offended by some modern art and confused or put off by most of the rest. When one of her students decided to paint an abstract painting while cleaning out her brushes, Mrs. Shellenberger

told her that she "wouldn't hang that in a pig pen." She was especially bothered when her student entered the painting in a show where it was chosen as "Best of Show" by judge Steven Wagner (see pp. 114-117). Mrs. Shellenberger harbored a great deal of resentment concerning the way she was treated when she was in the League and about the overwhelming number of Ridge County Fair awards which were given to the abstract and impressionist paintings of League members, especially Ray Barron. She felt that Barron knew most of the judges and they were all predisposed to the "abstract and way out stuff" that the League members painted. As a result League members won a great deal of the prize money despite the fact that "some of us lean toward the realistic." She also felt that the women in the League never developed their own style of painting; "They all paint like Ray."

Though she felt that there were many nice women in the League, her alienation was so complete that she disregarded all League-run shows, and was considering discontinuing her entries in all local competitions due to League influence and domination. At one point she discussed the situation with others in the Group and considered joining forces with other realistic painters in and out of the county to form a new formal association which might be strong enough to neutralize the League. In the meantime, she decided to continue the Robinsonville shows and to wait for the calls she gets from school and church people who

like her work and ask her to prepare exhibits and demonstrations for their groups. As she considered her work "understandable," she felt that this was something she was asked to do rather than "Ray and his bunch."

Edna Leitzel

Mrs. Leitzel was born over sixty years ago on a farm outside of Martintown. She was one of eleven children. Mr. Leitzel was born over sixty years ago in Patterson where his father worked on the railroad. After high school they got married, had three children and moved just over the Ridge County border into Birch County. They moved to their Martintown home in 1949 where Mrs. Leitzel set up a one-woman beauty shop which she operated continuously through 1982. Mr. Leitzel was employed as an auto mechanic in Martintown. Their children all lived in Ridge County, two in Martintown. They were all married and visited their parents at least once a week for Sunday dinner. Their daughter was a homemaker, one son was an auto parts manager, and their other son worked for a building contractor.

While they belonged to Mr. Leitzel's family church (Lutheran) in Pattersontown, where Mrs. Leitzel used to teach, they were no longer active in church activities and attended services on an irregular basis. However, they considered themselves church members and maintained a strong belief in God and prayer. Much of their time was devoted to Grange activities on both local and state levels. Mrs. Leitzel was also active in the Business Women's Association

in Pattersontown, and in the Crafts Guild. However, her full commitment to such organizations and to painting had only been possible since approximately 1955. The early years of raising a family were consumed with "making ends meet." She operated her beauty shop while her husband maintained three jobs.

Mrs. Leitzel began to paint in 1960 in a class with George Marshall, a school art teacher in the Ridge County High School system. This lasted for a very short period, after which she went to Steven Wagner's class with Mrs. Shellenberger. She joined the League during the early 1960s, but left feeling that League members treated her like she was below them. She decided with Mrs. Shellenberger and other women from the area "to start a group in our own county to get us away from their uppity-uppity attitude." She also felt the need for such a group as, "Some people are more for going to Harristown, but the rest of us feel more at home in our own county." They found a series of teachers which she liked very much, especially J. Ray Yocum, and she helped to form the short-lived Ridge County Art Association in 1968 (see pp. 123-125). She was its first and only President.

She continued to attend classes in Robinsonville through 1978, but as she and Mrs. Shellenberger were on the same painting level she attended Mrs. Shellenberger's class on an irregular basis thereafter. As she said, "I like to go down there for the outing and to be with the

others, but I find that I don't get much done in class, except to get something started. Usually I take something to class for a critique, and if I agree with the criticism I'll change it." She continued to exhibit with the Group at every show, and when she came to class she worked a bit, helped Mrs. Shellenberger with the instruction and critique, and socialized.

She was firmly committed to realism in her painting, though she felt that after many years of working at it she still wasn't able to do what she considered to be realistic work. She wanted "to see what is on the canvas, the real thing. I don't want to have to guess or study it." She felt that the work of the League was "modernistic and abstract" and that "their mode of painting is different from ours in that they believe in modernistic and that doesn't go down over here. We're striving for the realistic." She shared Mrs. Shellenberger's irritation with the League and "their judges," as "the Harristown gang takes over, and it isn't what people around here even like." Also, she felt that they had no individuality in their work and said, "The more they are together the more they paint alike, even if they do get better at it."

She particularly liked to paint country scenes and historical locations, but didn't expect to have the time to do this from life until she retired. Until then she would continue to paint from pictures she collected or make up scenes in her head. She often found it hard to

part with her paintings, many of which were displayed throughout her home and beauty shop, and in a gallery she had set up in her attic. Also, many of her family members had her work throughout their homes. She sold some of her work at local fairs, shows, and at her biannual yard sale, but stopped doing commission work because it involved too much pressure. As she explained it, "I paint and do all sorts of crafts to relax and get enjoyment from the pleasure of creating, but commission work ruins all that."

Over the years she had attracted a good deal of local attention as evidenced by the prominent display of her work in the 1980 Christmas issue of the Ridge Sentinel. The following excerpts from 1979 and 1980 articles in the Ridge Sentinel and The Sentinel help to complete this profile of Mrs. Leitzel. These lengthy excerpts allow us to see Mrs. Leitzel as she is presented, and presents herself, to the local community.

Eggshells, bottle caps, empty pop bottles, scraps of wood and fabric - items that most people probably would throw away are used by Edna Leitzel as the basis for many of her artworks.

From the cornhusk wreath on her front door to the calico gingerbreadmen dolls strung throughout her kitchen, Mrs. Leitzel's home on Ridge Street in Martintown is filled with Christmas decorations that she has made.

Mrs. Leitzel's attic serves as her workroom and as a gallery where she displays most of her artwork. Wall hangings and paintings line the stairway and hall leading into her workroom, while shelves of dolls, wreaths and other creations fill most of the attic. "This is where I store most of my things," she said. "I just brought most of my fall things up here and took my Christmas things downstairs. I have enough decorations that I can bring a different set of things downstairs with each season."

Many of the themes used by Mrs. Leitzel in her paintings and wall hangings depict rural scenes that are familiar to her. Covered bridges, forest scenes, mills and barns are pictured in many of her works. One picture, which she said represented her with her granddaughters, is a mosaic made of eggshells.

Mrs. Leitzel has displayed her works at local fairs, the Martintown Fall Fest and the annual show of the Guild of Craftsmen.

"I just love to design and make different things," she said. "I think that it's a real challenge, and I thank the Lord for whatever talent I have." (The Sentinel, December, 1979)

Believing that time is precious and that nothing is a task to her, Edna Hockenbrock Leitzel of Martintown keeps house, runs her beauty shop in her home, and still finds time to make things.

"Creative" is the word for Edna, who paints and frames pictures, makes all kinds of wood carvings, uses corn and the cobs, too, stones, beads, odd pieces of wood and plenty of Elmer's glue to make scenes and all kinds of art forms.

Edna's home is full of her creative ideas, and yet she still finds time to bake, cook and freeze from the family garden. She is a collector of different colored dishes, as well as other things. Her kitchen, which she designed herself, is a show-place, where her family gathers each week.

Edna and husband Richard, a mechanic at Martin Chevrolet in Martintown, have two sons, a daughter and four granddaughters who come home each Sunday evening for a reunion.

The Leitzel family has known trouble. Husband Richard came down with a form of paralysis, when the last baby was one and a half years old, and it took months for him to recuperate. Then the youngest son, Randy, was involved in a serious jeep accident and was immobilized for months. But being great believers in prayer, both came through, so today they feel grateful for the blessings of health. Edna has five brothers and five sisters, who have almost all stayed in the area.

One event stands out in her busy life, a two-week trip to Albuquerque for a visit to her brother there. But mainly, her home and family and thinking of things to make keep her occupied. And there's the beauty shop, too, which she operates several days a week. She has shown her creations at the "Over 60 Club" as well as garden clubs.

Altogether, Mrs. Leitzel is a good example of one who budgets her time and uses it to good advantage to help people and make the world a little better as she goes on her way. (Ridge Sentinel, December, 1980)

Creek-Ridge Art League Member Profiles

Ann Palmer

Mrs. Palmer was born over eighty years ago in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. She and her two sisters attended Bryn Mawr College where she developed a keen interest in Republican politics. She later became the first woman on the Pennsylvania Civil Service Commission and Vice-Chairman of the Pennsylvania Republican Party.

Her mother was originally from Patterson and during one family visit Ann met Frederick Palmer, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Law School and a practicing lawyer in Patterson. He was one of the most respected lawyers in Ridge County, as was his father, and came from one of the oldest and most respected families in the county. After Ann taught school for three years she married Frederick and had three children. After graduating from college each of her children moved out of the county and settled in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Mr. Palmer died in the late 1940s and while Mrs. Palmer maintained an active social life thereafter, it was not with the very few family members who still lived in the county.

She continued to attend her husband's Presbyterian church when her health permitted and was an active member of numerous political associations, as well as the local DAR chapter and the Ridge County Historical Society. While not particularly active, she was also a member of a number of honorary genealogical societies, as her husband's family

was traced back in America to 1700. For many years she had also been the League chairperson for the Ridge County Membership Committee.

Mrs. Palmer learned to draw in the first grade and developed an avid interest in drawing and painting through high school instruction, fueled partially by her mother's china painting and the late 19th Century oil painting done by her mother's relatives, Rebecca Groninger Sieber and Belle Groninger Kepner (judges and participants in the 1880's Ridge County Fair exhibitions). During her years at Bryn Mawr she continued to draw, took art appreciation courses, and made visits to Philadelphia area art museums. Her first serious efforts in oil painting came with Harrison Frerichs' arrival in the county. She studied with Frerichs for over three years and became a friend of his, continuing to "paint out" with him after he stopped teaching. She was a close social friend, attending his "wild parties" where they socialized with many of his artistic friends from New York City. When I visited her in 1979 she still displayed one of Frerichs' covered bridge paintings despite the fact that her friends laughed at its incongruousness in the context of her impressionistic work. In fact, she displayed his covered bridge next to a covered bridge that she painted while studying with him, and many of her friends professed to liking hers better as it wasn't so detailed, so "busy." She was sad to see Frerichs and Molloy leave their county home as it "was a lovely home which the new owners can't

afford to keep the way Harrison and Glenn did."

After Frerichs' class began to dwindle, she decided to attend Steven Wagner's class in Ridge county, which she did for three to four years. During that time she developed a taste for impressionistic and modern painting, a preference she felt had been heightened by her study with Ray Barron. She expressed a "great affinity for the impressionists in general," but her strongest preference was for the work of Matisse, whom she tried to emulate in much of her work. She believed that one should "paint what you feel" and "always paint from life."

When she painted she liked to use a lot of paint and to be very "extravagant and what Ray calls 'gutsy,' getting the effect quickly, sometimes using a palette knife. I don't care to see the leaves on the trees." She was very enamored with the use of brash colors and a modern sensibility, though she was not "taken with abstract painting" the way that she felt Barron was. She did like it though, and felt that those who insulted the prizewinning modern and abstract paintings at the Ridge County Fair didn't understand "real art." She felt that most of the county didn't appreciate real art, and they still liked the kind of realism that Frerichs did and that the "Robinsonville club" continued to do. She realized that realism was the kind of painting that could sell in the county, but didn't care to sell her work. She said that she would rather paint what she knew was "fine art." She kept and displayed

much of her work and gave the rest to her children.

She felt that she had gotten lazy about painting as she got older and had to deal with medical problems. She was only able to push herself to paint when she was with other women, but found that carrying things all over the place was too much of a strain. In spite of this, she continued to attend classes, meetings, and picnics when she was able to get others to help her get around. Throughout the period of this research she was still an active and respected member of the League, chairman of the Ridge County Membership Committee, and an avid supporter and spokesperson for League activities.

Pauline Benner

Mrs. Benner was born over fifty years ago in Duncannon in Birch County, approximately thirty miles from Pattersontown. Her parents were both Hungarian immigrants who had moved from the Pittsburgh area to Duncannon where her father was a farmer and an employee of an oil company. She moved to Peterburg after she married Robert Benner who was the son of a Ridge County farmer whose family had been living in the county for many generations, and in the United States since 1710 when they came over from Wales. Mr. Benner was employed as the manager of a Peterburg feed mill and was successful enough to build a new home just across the road from their home of thirty years. He did this shortly before his death in 1982. Mrs. Benner graduated from high school as did her three children, two of whom attended Pennsylvania

colleges for two years. Her son lived in Peterburg where he was employed as a mechanic. One daughter lived in Peterburg where she was a bookkeeper, and the other daughter was a housewife who married a steel mill foreman and moved to Quebec, Canada. Mrs. Benner had a few other relatives living in Ridge County who she saw on occasion, and a number of other close relatives living in the Harrisburg area, Maryland, and Pittsburgh.

Most of Mrs. Benner's time was consumed by family activities, housekeeping and painting. Her associational memberships were limited to the Creek-Ridge Art League and the Central Pennsylvania Art Alliance, and she was an active member of her United Methodist church. In fact, her first painting classes were offered through her church in 1970 by a church member, Fran McAlister, who was the art supervisor of the Ridge County Fair and the Ridge County High School art teacher. Mrs. Benner had been quilting for many years and felt that she would enjoy painting as well. After McAlister's class ended she continued to take classes in Harristown with Mark Reedy and Earl Johnson, but never felt that she was really taking painting seriously during that time, "I was just goofing off."

She felt that it was difficult for her to take painting seriously as she never really liked anything she painted. However, she was invited to a League meeting and picnic in 1973 which changed everything for her as she felt welcomed by the membership and "really liked the group.

They got me all enthused about painting." Since that time she felt that she "had the painting bug," and would "miss a meal before an art class." She fast became one of the most active and aggressive members of the League offering to take responsibility for numerous League activities. She was present at almost every meeting, class, exhibit, and art trip since she joined the League and continually welcomed the many time-consuming tasks necessary to keep the League functioning.¹

Despite the fact that she "always thought that only the rich painted," in many ways Mrs. Benner's participation in the League and its activities made her an indispensable member. A great deal of her daily leisure time was consumed with formal and informal activities with League members, including frequent classes, trips to art shows, informal "paint-outs," picnics, and maintaining contact with some of the older and more established members in order to encourage their continued participation. In 1974 she suggested and followed through on a major project, a League sponsored art competition and exhibition in the Ridge Valley National Bank in Pattersontown. It became an annual event for which she maintained primary responsibility, placing her in a pivotal role in the League.

Originally Mrs. Benner's paintings were all done in a realistic style as she preferred realism and studied with realistic painters. However, once she joined the League she began to learn a great deal about art from

Ray Barron, the teacher who she felt had the greatest influence on her more recent work. She was later told that Barron didn't think that she "made the grade" when she first joined the League, but his opinion changed as she learned to appreciate impressionistic, modern and abstract art. She was a good student and learned a great deal from Barron's instruction and criticism, quickly becoming one of "Ray's favorite students." Over time she continued to appreciate a few realistic paintings, but began to feel that most of it was basically "unexciting." Her strongest stylistic interests turned to impressionism, though she did have some interest in experimenting with abstract forms. She felt that she knew little about abstract art, but was trying to learn about it by doing it as Barron told her that "you have to paint 100 of them before you know anything about it." She also learned a great deal about modern painting from the critiques which were a regular part of the numerous art shows she entered.

Mrs. Benner won many prizes at the Ridge County Fair and at other exhibits in and out of the county, but always felt that the critiques were more valuable than the ribbons. In fact, in many cases she said that it was better not to win, especially at the County Fair, as then the public didn't "pick it apart" with as much vigor. Yet, all in all she'd rather have won prizes and was disappointed when she went home empty-handed. One of the things she liked best was when her friends and acquaintances told her that they

"looked for my work and liked it."

She particularly liked to paint outdoors in various locations, though she felt that there was always too much to see and the temptation was there to put everything in a painting. She liked to paint buildings and street scenes when she was outdoors, and still life "set-ups" when she was indoors. To her it was "kind of cheating" to paint from secondary sources, but she had done it once or twice. She had been working hard at expanding her abilities by working in pastels and oil pastels, and by taking water-color classes with other League members in the State College area and in Harristown. She also looked for help with her painting in art books which she purchased and borrowed from the library, and through her subscription to American Artist. However, she never thought of herself as trying to become a professional as she primarily painted for "the pleasure of the work and company." She'd given most of what she felt was her best work to her children and kept a good deal for display in her own home. While she hadn't sold much of her work, she was quite happy with the few sales she had through the Harristown Hospital, at local art shows, and at the League's annual Art Auction. She continued to have her paintings exhibited at the Harristown Hospital and in Hidley's Restaurant in Harristown, and truly enjoyed taking her work to various arts festivals and shows across the state with other League members.

During 1980-81 Mrs. Benner became increasingly

disturbed by the League's serious neglect of the Ridge County membership and other Ridge County artists. They completely neglected to advertise the Harristown bank shows in Ridge papers, leading to few Ridge entries and poor attendance. In addition, they had neglected to plan any meetings or activities in Ridge County except when one of the Ridge members offered her home for a League picnic. Further, Mrs. Benner felt that the judging was increasingly oriented to the abstract and that they should "make room for everyone." All of this led to discussion between some of the Ridge County members concerning the possibility of raising the issue of Ridge County neglect and the increasingly abstract bias in judging. Mrs. Benner even considered the notion of starting a new League in Ridge County, but finally abandoned the idea as the heat of anger passed. She realized that it would be hard to make a new League work as the "Robinsonville people" shunned contact with League members and, as she perceived it, "they're not too paint happy. Mostly they do craft things and a lot of demonstrations at churches and the like. They're alot for selling." Instead she decided to try to work on the League from the inside, and nominate a Ridge County president who would help make the necessary changes. As her anger dissipated and she reflected on her time with the League she said, "After all, they've been good to me."

Classes

Robinsonville Art Group Classes

During the period of this research the only classes offered, the structural backbone of the Group, were taught by Mrs. Shellenberger. Classes were offered in eight to ten week blocks, meeting for approximately three hours on weekday mornings, afternoons and evenings. The time and day changed with the season. Summer classes were held outdoors on weekday mornings under the Robinsonville Community Park Pavilion. While there was a combined adult/child summer class in 1979, adult dissatisfaction with the situation led to separate weekday classes. During the fall, winter and spring, classes moved into the Robinsonville Community Center Building or into Mrs. Shellenberger's church. Until Mrs. Shellenberger was able to secure space in her United Methodist church, classes were limited to weekday afternoons in the fall and spring as there was no heat in the Community building. However, once they moved cold weather classes into the church they were able to have winter afternoon classes and evening classes throughout the year. In this way they were able to accommodate those who worked during the day, and to maintain fairly constant Group activity. In addition to these Robinsonville classes, Mrs. Shellenberger began to offer a class in Pattersontown at an arts and crafts store that opened in 1980. While not all of those attending the Pattersontown class participated in other Group activities, some did and

became active Group members who participated in Group trips and exhibits.

All classes were approximately the same size, running from twelve to twenty, with six to fifteen attending on any given day. Classes conformed to a fairly standard pattern with little variation except for special holiday and "end-of-term" classes. At these special classes the social and gustatory aspects of a celebration precluded serious painting and instruction. The standard class pattern which will be exemplified below was as follows: 1) Set-up paints and easels; 2) Set-up critique; 3) Group prayer; 4) Critique; 5) Painting with teacher instructing and advising as she circulated; 6) Break to stretch, socialize and look at each others' work; 7) Pay for class; 8) Painting with emphasis on social aspects of class rather than on instructional aspects; 9) Pack up and leave. In general, formal instruction in the form of lectures and demonstrations was a rare occurrence. Instruction was woven into the process of critiquing the work of each painter and offering advice and criticism on an individual basis throughout the class. In addition, some instruction was provided by example when Mrs. Shellenberger brought her paintings to class, or worked on a painting of her own during class. Following is a description of a representative class which, by and large, provides a picture of the standard class pattern noted above.

Class of July 17, 1979

The fifth class of the current term was called, as usual, for 9:00 A.M. in the Robinsonville Community Park Pavilion. Mrs. Shellenberger and most of the class members began to arrive at 8:45, though three of the sixteen women who attended this class arrived between 9:15 and 9:45. Some women arrived with two or three to a car, and others arrived alone. As they arrived, each painter pulled her car up to the pavilion, unloaded her painting materials, and set up a spot at which to paint on one of the picnic tables under the pavilion. Having done this, each painter selected their present work-in-progress and other recently completed works and put them against the front wall of the pavilion in preparation for Mrs. Shellenberger's critique. During this time Mrs. Shellenberger took three of her paintings and two empty frames out of her car and set them up against the front wall as well. One of the paintings was an 18" x 9" old plywood board on which she had painted four baby birds perched on flowered branches. Instead of a frame, the edges of the board had been blackened and an eye screw was affixed to the top in order to hang it. She passed this painting around to "show you what you can do with an old board." She noted that it was cheaper than canvas and didn't need a frame and laughingly said, "and this kind of thing sells well at our shows."² All throughout the set-up period there was a general greeting period with women exchanging news

and events of the past week.

After the paintings were set-up for the critique most of the conversation turned to appraisals of the paintings displayed against the front wall. Most comments were complimentary though some were suggestions for how to improve a painting. In the midst of this, at about 9:10, Mrs. Shellenberger interrupted to tell everyone present to form a circle and join hands at the front of the pavilion. Still talking, all present formed a circle and Mrs. Shellenberger called the class to order with "Good morning everybody," to which all responded "Good morning Margaret."³ At this point the class members bowed their heads and Mrs. Shellenberger improvised the following prayer:

Good morning Lord. We praise You for this beautiful day, for the beauty of Your creations, and for Your strength. We ask You to forgive us for our sins in our deeds as well as in our thoughts. We are so joyful to be here and ask You to bless the work that we are about to do. Also, Lord we ask you to help President Carter and his cabinet in all they have to do in the coming days. Amen.

Just as they finished the prayer Mrs. Varner arrived, exchanged greetings with all present and set up her painting area at one of the picnic tables. Until Mrs. Leitzel's arrival, just after the critique ended at 9:45, Mrs. Varner was the only class member present, other than Mrs. Shellenberger, who had been one of the original Robinsonville Group members in the 1960s. Shellenberger, Leitzel, and Varner still formed the primary nucleus of the Group, having been active in it since its inception.

Mrs. Shellenberger began to critique the paintings while class members stood around the paintings at the front of the pavilion. Each critique followed a similar pattern beginning with a positive comment followed by some suggestions for improvement. About a still life of a basket full of apples, painted on a wood board she said, "That's pretty good, now all it needs is a dark line on the bottom to make it sit down and some more highlights on the apples." One painter asked about the hills in her landscape to which she responded, "I like them, but they are too uniform, you need more variation in your strokes." Other suggestions that she made included, "Put some white in the blue sky to make it look more natural."; "Lengthen the shadows."; "Make things larger, you work too small."; "Put a flame on that candle, it'll make it show up better." Looking at one still life of a fruit bowl she advised the painter to "Soften the top edge with blue or lavender, but other than that it's fine." At this point she turned to Mrs. Varner and asked, "What do you think Ellen?" Mrs. Varner agreed with her and from that point on began to offer her opinions and suggestions. Turning to another painting which Mrs. Shellenberger encouraged the painter to change she said, "Don't hesitate to experiment," to which Mrs. Varner added, "You can always paint over it."

Coming upon a cabin surrounded by trees and a road, Mrs. Shellenberger suggested some changes in the road and referred to one of the paintings that she brought in order

to show how the road could be made to show up better. Referring to her own painting by its title, she advised the others to give titles to their paintings as some places where they might exhibit would require a title to be eligible for a prize. She noted, "Of course, we're not going for prizes at our show, but it's still nice to have a title," and continued on, "Speaking of our show, you will need to frame your paintings so that we can hang them, so we'll take a break a little later and I'll talk about framing. Also, I was able to buy a bunch of frames the other day and if you need one I got them for fifty cents off the usual price." At this point one of the newer members asked, "Should we bring these kinds of paintings on wood boards, which don't really need frames?" Mrs. Shellenberger responded with an emphatic "yes" and others chimed in noting that they wouldn't have anything to show if they didn't bring those.

The critique continued with comments about color, shading, and suggestions for more or less painted detail. In one case Mrs. Shellenberger suggested that one woman was spending too much effort on getting every detail, to which the woman responded, "I don't like paintings which are just sort of impressions of things. If it doesn't look like it's supposed to, what's the use of painting it." Mrs. Shellenberger said that she wholeheartedly agreed, but "Still, you can't get hung up on every detail. If you want to be really precise get a pencil and draw. Otherwise, loosen

up and have fun. It can be realistic without being precise." The critique ended with a bit of advice concerning the use of copal varnish, the mixing of paints, and the types of brushes best for different types of tasks.

Shortly after the critique, while the painters picked up their paintings and returned to their easels to work, Mrs. Leitzel arrived, exchanged greeting with all present, set up her easel and materials and displayed two of her paintings against the front wall. She had brought an oil painting of a horse and a scene of her grandchildren which was made out of egg shell pieces which had been glued to a board and painted with acrylics. While the class expressed awe over the egg shell painting, Mrs. Shellenberger admired the horse painting and said, "Isn't that something, I'll never get animals like Edna can." Mrs. Shellenberger asked Mrs. Leitzel to help some of the ladies if she had the time to which Mrs. Leitzel responded, "You know I always have time, I can't really concentrate on my own work in class."

Everyone got down to work, first laying in the background. With the exception of Mrs. Leitzel, who was laying out a still life in acrylics from a reproduction in a folk art magazine, everyone was working in oil. Most of the women worked on still lifes and landscapes, most on wood boards of one sort or another, and a few worked on canvas board. One woman was painting a dog for a friend, based on an illustration she found on the back of a comic book. Other sources for paintings included photographs, magazine

clippings, greeting cards, postcards, an instruction book in landscape painting, and Mrs. Shellenberger's seed catalogues which were "useful for fruit illustrations."

As the women worked, Mrs. Shellenberger started to make her "rounds" moving from one painter to the next, first praising the work, then indicating problems and suggesting solutions; all very much like the critique. During her rounds, though, at times she would actually pick up the brush or guide the painters' hands to make some change she felt advisable. While a few women resisted her advice and changes, most welcomed her help and attempted to execute whatever she suggested. During her rounds Mrs. Varner and Mrs. Leitzel offered help to those around them and responded to requests for help from those who asked. As the class was fairly large on this day, Mrs. Shellenberger had more requests for help than she could handle personally, so Mrs. Varner and Mrs. Leitzel were quite busy assisting the painters. In fact, neither of them was able to do more than a preliminary sketch for a painting.

During the first hour of work there was little overt social interaction between class members outside of discussions of each others' paintings. At one point a canvas was blown over by the wind, obliterating much of what the painter had done. She was very upset and those around her were consoling her and indicating ways in which she might be able to salvage her work. Still quite upset

she said that this was why she hated painting outdoors, to which Mrs. Shellenberger responded with firm warmth, "Oh, the rest of us love it, you have to love it too." The episode concluded with a laugh all around when one of the members said, "Don't worry about it, just mess it up some more and sign it Ray Barron. You'll probably win Best of Show at the Fair."

At 10:45 Mrs. Shellenberger called for a "seventh inning stretch," and suggested that they all go around and look at "what your neighbors are doing." This began a period of active social interaction and conversation, some of which was about the paintings, but most of which was about the weather, television shows they had seen, President Carter's speech, and what each of them had done during the past week. After fifteen to twenty minutes of this a few women began to pack up to leave, explaining that they had something to do and couldn't stay until 12:00. At this point Mrs. Shellenberger passed around a plastic cup to collect the one dollar fee for class. One class member asked Mrs. Shellenberger what time they would paint until, to which she jovially responded, "Whenever you want, now that they changed the time of The Young and the Restless, it doesn't matter to me."

The general social atmosphere continued until 11:30 when Mrs. Shellenberger called the group together to talk about framing. Using the paintings and frames she brought with her, she first showed what she considered to be the

proper way to put the painting into the frame and then how to prepare it to hang flush against the wall. She then discussed the notion that the frame should match the color of the picture or it would overpower the painting. She suggested that they buy unfinished frames and then stain or paint them as they pleased to "blend" with the picture. She noted that often a little gold paint on the inner edges of the frame made for a better blend. Then she picked up a white frame which she brought with her and put different paintings in it in order to demonstrate how a frame could enhance or overpower a picture. All of this was accompanied by general discussion and questioning, after which they all went back to their paintings.

At this point most of the women tried to finish up whatever aspect of the painting they had been working on and then began to pack up their things. One by one they left, bidding goodbye to one another until the next class. At 12:00, when the church bells rang, Mrs. Shellenberger started to pack up her things, precipitating all of the remaining eight women to pack up and leave.

Creek-Ridge Art League Classes

During the period of this research there were three different classes offered which were associated with the League. However, only one of the classes was composed exclusively of League members and was truly considered to be a League sponsored activity. This was the class taught throughout the year by Ray Barron.

Summer classes were held on a somewhat flexible schedule changing times, days, and locations each week depending on the weather and the vacation activities of class members. Each week Barron, with the help of class members, would arrange a different outdoor location to serve as the class site in order to offer varied subjects for study and "pleasant surroundings where we can enjoy ourselves." Generally, the class met from 5:00 P.M. until 7:30 P.M. in the backyards of class members or their friends and acquaintances. For the most part classes met in the Harristown area, though on occasion they would meet in a Ridge County location, usually after Ridge members had registered some dissatisfaction with traveling to class each week. With very few exceptions, classes which met in non-members' yards, met in the yards of some of the most prominent and wealthy, or socially mobile, families in the area. While Barron and others sought out new locations each week, the class was apparently welcomed by most families and Barron and others were often invited to bring the class to paint in a particular yard. As summer classes were times to paint and socialize, more so than other classes, Barron refused to charge for instruction and encouraged the class to meet even if he couldn't be there.

During all other seasons Barron's class met in the building which once housed the Harristown Sentinel or in a Harristown Lutheran church. These classes were held on weekday evenings until they were rescheduled for mornings

so that some of the older members wouldn't have to drive after dark. As the only members attending class were non-working women or women who could make their own work schedule, the class was free to adjust its meeting time. While still seen as a social event, Barron took class instruction and regularity a bit more seriously during the year and charged a one dollar fee per class. He felt that by charging a small fee during the year and none at all during the summer he had the freedom to paint in class when he liked without "cheating" class members. Additionally, he professed little interest in teaching for the money, but rather, "To be amongst painters is what makes me happiest and keeps me going."

Barron's teaching consisted primarily of informal instruction provided by going around to each painter and discussing the work they were doing. Also, in the end-of-class critique he critiqued each painting, explained his criticisms, and discussed various aspects of painting as they were stimulated by the day's work. In his critiques he tended to explore ways to correct specific problems of each painting without being particularly critical. He attempted to encourage painters in their explorations without inhibiting them through harsh criticism. However, in his critiques and throughout his classes he firmly pushed the painters to work freely and spontaneously in a modern or impressionistic style. As discussed earlier (p. 132) he did not think much of realism and tried very hard to

teach his students not to be concerned with accurate representation. He advocated a "colorful and soft touch" with little attention to draftsmanship and detail and encouraged class members to work freely and rapidly, finishing, or almost finishing, a painting in a single class. Class was also an opportunity for him to coach class members on how to win prizes at the local competitions. Here he was able to discuss the preferences of the judges, as far as they were known, and to suggest paintings that each student might want to enter in each show.

Barron's classes tended to be rather small considering the size of the League. Generally there were fewer than ten women in a class on a regular basis, though others would drop in from time to time. Those who did attend his classes tended to be the most active painters in the League and often carried their knowledge and enthusiasm to others in the League. Of the active painters five traveled with Barron to other art classes during the period of this research. For example, in 1980 Barron decided to seek further instruction in watercolor and he and a few others from his class attended a Central Pennsylvania Art Alliance class in the State College area. After this ten week session they asked the instructor, Maxine Burkholder, to come to Harristown to teach a six week session for the entire League class. This instruction in watercolor led Barron and his class to a much greater interest in watercolor work, resulting in the League class turning, for

the most part, to watercolor work and instruction.

In 1980, John Crouse, an amateur painter and painting teacher, moved to Harristown due to his employment situation. He had studied art while in the army and continued to paint as a hobby for over twenty years. When he came to Harristown he joined the League and was an energetic member with a great deal of interest in League activities. Shortly after his arrival he was elected President. He then offered a painting class through the adult education program at a Harristown high school, which was attended by Barron and some of the League class members. Also, he taught a series of Sunday afternoon watercolor classes in the Ridge Valley National Bank for the convenience of the Ridge County members, after a request by Mrs. Benner and another Ridge member. However, his position with a large pharmaceutical chain led him to move out of the area in 1982, leaving Barron's class as the only instruction for League members. In fact, Barron's class functioned as one of the main threads of League continuity for over ten years. The standard Barron class pattern which will be exemplified below was as follows: 1) Set up paints and easels; 2) "Serious painting"; 3) Painting with teacher instructing and advising as he circulated; 4) "Serious painting"; 5) Set up for critique; 6) Critique; 7) Pack up and leave. Following is a description of a representative Barron class which, by and large, provides a picture of the standard class pattern.

Class of July 26, 1979

Summer classes had begun in early June, though rain had led to the cancellation of many classes. This class had been rained out the day before, but as the class had been invited to paint in Mrs. Rogers' backyard, reputed to have the nicest landscaping and flower gardens in the area, Barron rescheduled the class. It was an invitation they were very pleased to have and they did not want to risk future scheduling conflicts which might cause them to lose this opportunity.

Class members began to arrive between 5:00 and 5:30 in groups of two. By 5:30 eight women had arrived, unpacked their folding chairs and painting materials, and set up their palettes and easels in Mrs. Rogers' yard. Two of the women began to paint immediately after their arrival, but all the rest engaged in small talk concerning their activities of the past week. Shortly, the overwhelming topic of discussion turned to the beauty of Mrs. Rogers' garden, a topic which became the unified focus of the group when Mrs. Rogers came out to greet them. As she was offering the women cold drinks Barron arrived with the last two members of the class and further complimented Mrs. Rogers for her gardens and thanked her profusely for her hospitality. Mrs. Rogers returned to her house while Barron unloaded his painting materials and set up his easel. Once set up he told the class to "Get to work," in a tone which mocked his authority and the seriousness of his order.

Painting began at a very leisurely pace with a great deal of discussion of what each painter was considering painting; each trying to paint something at least slightly different from the others. Other topics of conversation were the annoying knats and mosquitoes buzzing about and the 80-90° heat. However, by 5:45 most of the women were intently painting in silence. With the exception of one painter who was trying to finish a painting she had begun the week before, all present were working on Mrs. Rogers' garden. Of the ten women present, six were working in oil, one in watercolor, two in pastel, and one in oil pastel; all on canvas board, watercolor and pastel paper. All work began with an immediate concentration on the main subject of the painting with no attention whatsoever to an underwash or "laying in a background." As Barron indicated, the class members were interested in working freely and quickly, leading three-fourths of those present to complete or nearly complete their painting, watercolor or pastel by 7:20.

At about 6:15 Barron stopped working on his pastel of the garden in order to visit each of the painters and give advice and instruction. From this point onwards the silence was punctuated by conversation about various topics including the imminent death of one of the member's husbands, the PBS special on Miro that most class members had seen that week, the visit planned to a deceased member's daughter's home where they were invited to see a display

of her work, the upcoming sidewalk art show in Harristown, and the lack of interest and involvement of many League members in League activities.

Barron made his rounds during which time he encouraged each painter with positive comments about their work and offered some criticism concerning color, perspective, and the softening of the image. In many cases he actually picked up the brush or pastel crayon in order to alter the image while he explained what he was doing and why he was doing it. While most class members welcomed his intervention, his extended effort on one pastel was met by the painter with the taunting complaint, "Soon it'll be a Barron." This comment was indicative of the constant tension during class between the desire for constructive criticism and instruction and the resentment of this criticism. This ambivalence was evident in a constant verbal parrying between Barron and the class members. all contexted as "joking" and "having a good time together."

This was most obviously manifested during class when Barron called one of the paintings "charming and primitive." This led to an immediate, somewhat bittersweet, response from the painter who wanted to know if this was a "compliment or an insult." Barron said that he intended it as a compliment, but was roundly attacked by the entire class through a variety of jokes and taunts about "Ray's critiques." When the group had quieted down Barron took the opportunity to try to explain the notion of "primitive" as a positive quality

Matisse, Klee, Milton Avery and other painters who he felt had intentionally employed a primitive style when they felt it was appropriate. While this quelled most of the initial repartee, some class members continued to express some reluctance to accept Barron's comment without insult. With the exception of Barron's short "lecture" all of the discussion was carried out through humorous barbs, digs, and taunts.

In this class Barron's teaching and criticism was clearly aimed at educating the class members in various aspects of modern art and in encouraging them to explore color and form in a non-representational manner. However, he was careful to use criticism to encourage their efforts rather than to dampen their enthusiasm. After his first round of instruction he returned to his easel to complete his pastel and the rest of the class continued to work in silence for about thirty minutes. Work was rarely interrupted with talk at this point, and the few conversations that began were "shushed" by Barron and other class members who indicated that it was time to get some "serious work done." During this period of serious work two painters called for Barron's help. One wanted to repair her "cockeyed" perspective and the other wished to make her colors "stand out" against her background. At 7:20 Barron walked around to look at each painting and suggested that they appeared to be ready for the critique. Most class members put some finishing touches on their work in

preparation for the critique and then moved their easels up to the front of the group for the critique.

The critique was the aspect of the class which was most anticipated and valued by those present. As one member said, "Ray doesn't really teach much, in a formal way. The best part of class is his critique, even though he's not really tough enough. That's where I can really learn something from him." During the critique Barron discussed each painting, first citing its positive qualities in terms of "charm," "finesse," "sensitivity," and "simplicity." He often noted that one of the paintings would look even nicer in a frame, and in many cases he suggested the type of frame that would most enhance its qualities. His substantive criticisms were delivered with great care for the painter's feelings and were framed in terms of specific changes that might be made, primarily in terms of proportions, color and composition. In addition to these suggestions, Barron referred to well-known painters and styles for guidance in general approaches that might be beneficial, i.e., Impressionism, Abstract Expressionism, Picasso, Avery, De Kooning. Barron's comments were welcomed and generally precipitated specific questions from the painters about their work. In addition to Barron's criticism, most class members offered their own opinions and suggestions, but always deferred to Barron for final judgment.

At the conclusion of the critique Barron announced the time and location of the next meeting, reminded the

class of the upcoming sidewalk art show and the visit to the deceased member's home. As it was almost 8:00 P.M. at this point, they all packed their things quickly and decided to eat dinner together at Hidley's, a Harristown restaurant where League work was on permanent display.

Meetings and Trips

Robinsonville Art Group Meetings and Trips

The Robinsonville classes actually functioned as classes and group meetings. Since the 1970 dissolution of the Ridge County Art Association and the Arts and Crafts Village, the Robinsonville Group weekly classes were their only regularly scheduled meetings. During class time plans were made for shows and trips, and decisions were made concerning future classes.

In addition to these class meetings, the Robinsonville Group met once or twice each year for art-related "fieldtrips." Over the period of this research the Group traveled to the William Penn Museum in Harrisburg to see two arts and crafts exhibits entitled, "Women in the Arts," and "The Pennsylvania Artist," to the studio of local artist, Henry Moist, and to the studio of a Myerstown, Pennsylvania artist, Abner Zook. Trips were generally planned by Mrs. Shellenberger after seeking the advice and opinions of others in the group.

The trip to Moist's studio grew out of Mrs. Shellenberger's respect for Moist's work and the feeling that

others in the group would appreciate his work and enjoy hearing what he had to say. Moist, who lived just over the Ridge County border in Birch County, taught art in the Birch Continuing Education program, and was a former printer who quit in 1975 to devote full-time to painting. Since then his realistic still life, wildlife, and landscape paintings sold extremely well and his success and talent engendered great interest on the part of the Group. In addition his criticism of the League for their abstract work and cliquey behavior led Mrs. Shellenberger to feel that he was the kind of painter to whom Group members could and should relate. In fact, during the visit to his studio he and the Group explored the possibility of forming a new formal association which would speak to the interests of the realistic painter in Ridge, Birch, and Pine Counties.

Fieldtrips were welcomed by the Group members and were a source of anticipation, excitement, and pleasure. They saw the trips as opportunities to spend time together and to be exposed to art experiences of educational and moral value. They were planned two to six weeks ahead and were attended by fifteen to twenty members who traveled in four or five cars. Following is a brief description of the trip to Abner Zook's studio.

Trip to Abner Zook's Studio

Mrs. Shellenberger met Zook while visiting friends in Myerstown, Pennsylvania. She was attending church with

her friends, where she met Zook, an ex-Amishman. During her conversations with him she learned that he was a successful artist/carver who credited his talent to God. She felt that he was the kind of person with whom a field-trip would be appropriate and valuable. He agreed to meet with the Group sometime in the future, and Mrs. Shellenberger told him she would call to arrange it.

Upon returning to Robinsonville she found that other Group members were interested in a fieldtrip to Zook's studio. She called him and arranged a visit during the July 4th week, when most of the Group members would be on vacation and available for a trip.

Plans for the trip were made during class and over the phone. Fifteen members took the two hour drive in four cars. The drive was an opportunity to talk about local events, TV shows, painting, and the beauty of the scenery seen during the ride. They arrived at Zook's studio at 9:00 A.M. and Mrs. Shellenberger went in to speak with him in order to find out how and where he wanted to proceed. As it turned out, Zook had completely forgotten that he had made plans with the Group and was busy working. While not pleased with the circumstances, he agreed to set his work aside and accommodate the Group.

Once inside his studio, he delivered a lecture to the assembled group, one he had apparently delivered many times before. He told them that he had grown up in a poor, Amish family and was never able to have any toys as his

father was saving all his money to purchase his own farm. However, when he was eight years old his father gave him and his twin brother whittling knives in order to carve their own toys. They created some very elaborate toys, very few of which survived childhood. The experience of carving helped them to develop an interest in art, leading him to try painting as an adult. He later combined his painting with his carving to create three dimensional works with carved foregrounds and painted backgrounds. He explained that this led to his success as an artist, but he noted that his talent was God-given and that it had only been through God's help that he was able to develop and extend it. He concluded his lecture by reminding the Group members that they should always credit their talent to God and that those who create art for their own glory, rather than God's never succeed. Following the lecture he answered a few questions about his work and then took the Group into another room where he had a display of his work.

The Group members marveled at the work, but when he dimmed the lights and illuminated the black lights the dramatic effect of the same scenes as night scenes led to an audible response of awe in the room. Following this he led them into one last room where he screened a series of slides of his work and answered questions about his methods and subjects. He explained that he primarily created work based upon his own experience, as with farm scenes, but had also researched historical subjects in order to create

accurate scenes of old railroads, ships and conestoga wagons.

At the conclusion of the presentation, at approximately 11:30, all present expressed their gratitude and pleasure to Zook, and left for Brickerville, a nearby "historical" village filled with gift shops and boutiques. Mrs. Shellenberger had planned the day to conclude with lunch and shopping in Brickerville as she felt it would make a "lovely day out of it," and because "the girls love to shop." The rest of the day was filled with talk about Zook and his work, socializing, and shopping. When they all reassembled to leave at 2:30 the pleasure of the day was the overwhelming topic of conversation, with great interest expressed in future Group trips. Many expressed pleasure at having had the opportunity to "get to know each other better." One member noted that such trips were important as they were the only times, other than shows, that members of the various classes could actually get together. Following this reassemblage the four cars formed a caravan and drove back home.

Creek-Ridge Art League Meetings

Since its formation the League held monthly meetings for the membership and their guests. During the period of this research they held their spring, fall, and winter meetings in a Harristown church on the first Thursday evening of each month from 7:30-9:30 P.M. During the summer and warmer spring months one of the League members held a

picnic meeting in their yard on a weekend afternoon. The only exception to this pattern was the "Christmas Party" meeting which was held at a location with banquet facilities. Meetings were attended by twenty to forty people, with picnic and Christmas meetings attracting the larger numbers.

The 1979 "Schedule of Events" listed slide and film programs, painting demonstrations, painting to music, sketching, and, for one meeting, a "Guest artist to do a critique of members' paintings." While the guest artist was a special event of sorts, a critique by one of the more knowledgeable and respected League members was a regular conclusion to most meetings. The basic content of the summer "picnic meetings" is indicated in this brief article from the Ridge Sentinel in July, 1980.

The Creek-Ridge Art League held its July meeting recently at the home of Mrs. Sara Beaver in Patterson-town. Members enjoyed painting the lovely flowers and greenery in Mrs. Beaver's yard. Afterwards a "bag lunch" picnic was held.

The next meeting will be held Thursday, August 5. There will be a tour of the Percy Duncan home in Sieber Valley.⁴ Members should come prepared to paint or sketch. All are asked to meet at the Creek County Library parking lot at 2:00 P.M. to carpool. A Dutch Treat dinner will follow the meeting.

All meetings were organized around a similar pattern of activity: 1) Arrival; 2) Business meeting; 3) Main activity (painting, film, etc.); 4) Refreshments; 5) Critique; 6) Departure. Following is a description of a meeting which, by and large, provides a picture of League meetings. I have chosen to describe one of the "picnic meetings" as they tended to foreground the central aspects of normal

League meetings.

Picnic Meeting of August, 1979

The meeting was called for 2:00 at the Ridge County home of Dr. and Mrs. Mitchell. Traditionally, they hosted at least one picnic or "paint out" each year in their backyard. This was always a source of pleasure for most League members as it was considered to be a "thoroughly pleasant spot."

As only ten members had arrived by 2:15 those present decided to paint before they held the business meeting, especially as there was little business of importance. By 3:00 there were twenty-five people present, eighteen women and seven men (all members' husbands except Barron). Each individual or couple brought a salad, entree or desert for the "covered dish supper" which was to be the centerpiece of the meeting. Three additional members, who were unable to stay for the meeting, dropped off a dish for the supper as a gesture of their support of and commitment to the League and its membership. Each stayed long enough to greet those present and explain their reasons for leaving.

Three-fourths of the painters spent the first two to three hours painting scenes from the Mitchell's yard. The other women had brought finished paintings with them in anticipation of the critique, and spent their time actively socializing and preparing for the supper. The husbands formed a group around one of the picnic tables

and talked amongst themselves, occasionally wandering off to observe their wives' activities or to get a soft drink. While much of the time between 3:00 and 5:00 was devoted to serious painting, it was constantly punctuated by conversation and appraisals of each others' works.

By 5:00 most of the paintings were complete or nearly complete, and the meal was set out on a picnic table so that everyone could serve themselves. Eating was a busy affair with a great deal of talk, laughter, getting up and down for each new course, and general praise of every dish served. The members were careful to individually comment on the excellence of each dish, but were careful not to single out any particular dish for special praise. Conversation revolved around discussion of local events, family events, League activities, and the upcoming Ridge County Fair. There was a great deal of informal speculation concerning the stylistic preferences of the judge.

When desert was brought out those who had not finished their painting took some desert and returned to their easels. By 6:45 most people had finished their paintings and encouraged Barron to begin the critique, even though he hadn't finished his work. Each painter set up their painting(s) in the front of the group and Barron proceeded to critique them in much the same fashion as at the conclusion of classes (see p. 199). However, in this case Barron's opinions were supplemented by those of Sara Levine, the first art teacher for the original Ridge County Art

Association and a founding member of the League (see pp. 110-111, 117). At first she volunteered her comments, but despite her realistic preferences her opinions were then solicited by Barron, apparently as a diplomatic recognition of her past roles. In many cases they voiced differing opinions about a painting, though members tended to more carefully attend to Barron's remarks. By and large, members' work was complimented and supported by all present.

At the conclusion of the critique the League business meeting was held. All agreed that it should be as brief as possible as it was already 7:30. Generally speaking, all business meetings were short for one reason or another, and often avoided altogether unless there were pressing issues.

The meeting was conducted by President Snyder who announced that the next indoor meeting would be in October for a framing lesson at Hummel's, the only Harristown frame shop and art gallery. She also reminded the membership that they would be holding their annual art auction in October at the Harristown Library. She solicited suggestions from the members about how to make it more successful than the year before. The only suggestion was that the members should not sell their unsold work privately, directly after the auction. It was felt that it tended to lead buyers to believe that they could buy cheaper if they waited until after the auction to purchase those works which did not reach their minimum reserve bid. Snyder noted

that as it was many paintings didn't reach their minimum and the League's share of the auction revenues would keep shrinking if people sold their work privately after the auction.

Following this discussion, Mrs. Benner reminded all the members to bring their work to the Ridge County Fair. Barron added that they should remember that they could bring three works in each category and should take advantage of the opportunity. He then asked if anyone knew anything about the judge's preference as he only knew that he was from Mechanicsburg, a town just outside of Harrisburg. One of the members said that she was originally from Mechanicsburg and that all the artists down there were realists. Another member said that she had heard that he taught commercial art in a vocational high school. With this information they decided that he must be a realistic painter and Barron suggested that they all bring their realistic work to the fair. Levine disagreed with him and said that they should please themselves, not the judge. Barron light-heartedly responded, "Well, okay, please yourself first, but if you want to win a prize be sure to please the judge second." With no other business they adjourned the meeting at 7:45.

As they packed their materials and retrieved their serving dishes, there was lively social interaction and numerous complimentary appraisals of the food and the paintings. By 8:15 all members had thanked Dr. and Mrs.

Mitchell for their hospitality, packed up and left.

Creek-Ridge Art League Trips

On both a scheduled and spontaneous basis the League held special meetings in the form of trips to art exhibits, museum, and local homes of special interest. During the period of this research this included trips to two homes, art shows in Lewisburg, Chambersburg and State College, a watercolor demonstration in Harrisburg's newest, posh mall where they also watched an award ceremony in which Barron received a third prize in a statewide competition, and a two-day trip to the Picasso exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Attendance varied from seven to thirty for these trips with most trips primarily attracting Barron's regular class members plus three to four others. When they were assured of a large enough group they chartered buses for the trip, but when attendance was small or unpredictable the members drove their own cars. As one member aptly summarized the League's attitude to such trips, "Well, it's such a great group of people and we've been painting together for years. We're really old friends. It's just a lot of fun to get together for a trip. We have such a good time, and it's good for us to be exposed to art from other places." Following is a brief description of one of the trips.

Trip to the Williamsport Art Show

Barron and two other members had decided to enter

their work in the 1979 Williamsport Art Show as Barron felt it was a good way to look at how their work compared to other work going on in the state. In addition, it was one of the most prestigious exhibits in the state and there was a great deal of prize money involved. This year a curator from the Whitney Museum in New York City was to be the judge. As there was only one member able to drive up to enter paintings Barron decided not to spread the word throughout the League as the car only had room for a few paintings. A few weeks later Barron was informed that one of his paintings was one of the 119 works chosen for exhibition, out of over 500 paintings which were entered. At this point he decided to go up to the judging and suggested that it might be a good trip for the League, especially as the judge was from the Whitney Museum. Others expressed interest in the show and rented a minibus for the ten to twelve members expected to take the trip.

The judging had been announced for 8:00 P.M. so the group, Barron and eleven women, assembled at 4:30 for the two hour drive. This allowed them to stop for dinner on the way up and still arrive by 7:30. The atmosphere of the trip was one of a social outing with little social formality of any sort. It was an opportunity for everyone to "let their hair down and have a good time," as one member explained it. As another member said, "We're bus happy." Except for discussion of the fact that the judge was a "big time curator," there was little talk of art or of the

show until they arrived.

When they arrived they were somewhat overwhelmed by the size of the crowd, and spent one-half hour trying to see some of the paintings on display. They stayed together as a group and at 8:00 listened to the results of the judging, with Barron winning ninth prize for a watercolor. While he was not initially pleased with this standing, he later told the others that once he'd seen all of the other work exhibited he felt that it was the best show he'd ever seen of this type, and he was proud to have even been chosen to exhibit. In fact, he had won a prize over some nationally recognized artists leading one member to say, "So it must be good," despite her doubts about Barron's watercolor.

Following the judging most of the group followed Barron around while he commented on and explained the art works exhibited. Most of the members did not like most of the very abstract work, leading Barron to spend a great deal of time trying to help them better understand them. As one member said, "Ray can really make a painting make sense once he gets started talking." There was great interest in Barron's comments and many members expressed a desire to have more time to really look at the paintings in order to develop a better understanding of them. In the end, the approach of most League members present was that they didn't like many of the paintings, but they felt that they were probably very good and that the fault lay with their

limited understanding. "I should really learn to like them more. I wish we had more time to look at them longer and harder," was a comment made on the bus trip home; one which met with general agreement.

After Barron's guided tour of the exhibit the group reassembled at about 10:00 P.M. for the trip home. It was a trip during which most of the talk was devoted to thoughts about the show, the judge, and the other works exhibited. Everyone expressed their pleasure with the outing, and they encouraged one another to plan another trip in the near future.

Exhibits & Shows

Robinsonville Art Group Exhibits and Shows

The work of the Robinsonville Group was seen in a variety of locations in and around Ridge County. These included the Ridge County Fair, the Buck Fair (nine miles from Robinsonville in Pine County), the Ridge Stop dining room in Pattersontown, the annual Pattersontown exhibit of the Crafts Guild, Mrs. Leitzel's biannual yard sale, and local churches and schools where Mrs. Shellenberger and Mrs. Leitzel were invited to do painting demonstrations. During the period of this research Mrs. Shellenberger, Mrs. Leitzel, and Mrs. Varner were the members most commonly represented at each of these locations, though the Ridge County Fair attracted much broader Group participation.

The primary showcases for the work of the

Robinsonville Group were the two member's exhibits held each year in the Robinsonville Community Building. The shows were held in April and in August. The April show was a one night event accompanied by the critique of an invited judge, usually a past Group teacher or respected local artist.⁵ No prizes were awarded, but in some cases the judge selected the best ten paintings and began his critique by explaining these choices. At other times no selections were made, and the critique was begun on one side of the room and completed when the judge had discussed every painting exhibited. The April show was announced to friends and family, but rarely announced in the local papers as the Group was afraid that too many people would attend. It was accompanied by refreshments prepared by the Group members and their families, including deserts and soft drinks.

The August show was a part of the Franklin Community Carnival, an annual four day event held in the Robinsonville Community Park, adjacent to the Community Building. In addition to Group work completed since the April show, Mrs. Shellenberger's children's class was invited to show their work in a "Children's exhibit" section. With no judge and no critique the August show was simply an exhibit of Group work, much of which was for sale. It was announced in the Carnival advertising and open for visitors between 6:00 and 10:00 P.M. each of the Carnival days. During this time a large number of community members, many of whom knew the painters, browsed through the exhibit, though

fewer than ten sales were recorded.

Below I will describe the April, 1980 show as it provides a somewhat fuller and more dynamic view of Group activity than the August shows. In addition, its structure is similar to League shows, and it therefore offers a clearer comparison of Group and League activity.

April, 1980 Robinsonville Show

The show was announced in Mrs. Shellenberger's classes as a display and critique, followed by refreshments, and was to be held in the Robinsonville Community Building. Viewing was to begin at 6:30 P.M., the critique at 8:00 P.M., all followed by refreshments until 10:00 P.M.

On the day of the show Mrs. Shellenberger and five other members arrived at 1:00 P.M. in order to set up the peg boards, hang the paintings, clean and decorate the Community Building for the show. Between 1:00 and 2:00 P.M. most of the Group members came to drop off their paintings. They were permitted to exhibit as many works as they wished. Many had not framed their paintings and had come to ask Mrs. Shellenberger's assistance in framing them properly. While she helped with framing the others covered the wood tables with cloths, placed floral arrangements on each table, hung some of the paintings on the peg board displays, and placed the others on table-top and freestanding easels throughout the room. Though Mrs. Shellenberger was busy framing, she continued to direct the other women in their

arrangement of the paintings. Her basic guidance was to "mix them up," so that each table and pegboard had paintings of different subjects, by different artists. She wanted to be sure that each painter's work was spread throughout the room, and that similar subjects by two or more painters were not hung side by side for comparison. In addition, they tried to hang paintings with white or light frames against dark pegboard and paintings with dark frames against white pegboard.

When completed the display of eighty-four paintings, signed by twenty-two painters, covered the entire 100' by 40' room. Over one-third of the paintings were landscapes, many with buildings, but still lifes, animals, clowns and religious scenes were numerically well represented. A number of the painters exhibited versions of the same still life and landscape scene, ones which had been done in class. All of the works were painted in a realistic style and done in oil on a variety of surfaces including canvas board, shingles, rough hewn boards, and masonite. Most of the paintings were framed in inexpensive wood frames, many of which were stained and/or trimmed in gold or white by the painters. A few paintings on wood board were unframed, but could be hung from an eye screw on top. Only Mrs. Shellenberger had indicated that her paintings were for sale. She did so by putting prices on business cards which she placed in the corner of each painting.

Mrs. Shellenberger opened the Community Building at

6:30 and by 7:30 there were fifty-five people in attendance including thirteen men and eleven children and infants, all from Robinsonville, Martintown, Bellefield, and Pattersontown. As one of the painters said, "It's just like a high school musical, everyone's family and friends are here." At 7:50 the editor of the Ridge Sentinel arrived in order to take a photograph of the Robinsonville Group for publication. At that point nineteen painters were present, four of whom were men.

At 8:00 P.M. Mrs. Shellenberger called the noisy, jovial crowd to order for the critique. She introduced Mr. Merle Boyer of Buck Springs (nine miles from Robinsonville in Pine County) as a past Group teacher, an artist, sign painter, and chair maker. Boyer had arrived alone at about 7:30 dressed in a sport jacket and slacks. His appearance, speech, and manner clearly evidenced his local origins. As there were to be no prizes, Mrs. Shellenberger announced that Boyer would pick out the "ten most interesting ones" to begin his critique, but would then critique each of the other paintings. As the critique began those in attendance sat in chairs as Boyer critiqued the paintings in the front of the room. At 8:40 Boyer had to move off to the sides where many of the paintings were displayed, and the crowd stood up to follow him around. Throughout the critique there was a great deal of talk and audience interaction, but once the structure of the event was altered by the crowd standing and walking, it became even

more informal. Many people continued to attend to the critique, but with the refreshment table now covered with homemade deserts, the focus of the event widened to encompass eating and socializing.

As the critique continued, conversational groups formed around the room, leaving the painters and their families as the primary group following Boyer. By the time Boyer finished discussing all of the paintings his audience was reduced to those few painters whose work was still being critiqued. The focus of the event had slowly shifted from art to food and informal interaction, with no formal juncture to mark the shift.

The critique itself was fairly informal with Boyer often making jokes and seeking the involvement of the audience through their comments and questions. Those women who had been his students in 1970 were particularly vocal, enjoying a humorous verbal repartee with him. His first act upon encountering a painting was to ask, "Who did this one?" He then followed this by asking the artist (a word he never used) one of the following questions: "Where is that?"; "Where did you paint that?"; "That's over _____ isn't it?"; "Is it a scene you know?"; "Was that from a picture?" This led to a discussion of the location or source, all of which were local scenes and/or painted from photographs, calendars, and book illustrations. Boyer suggested other sources which they might draw on, ones he'd found particularly useful himself. Having established the

identity of the painter and the source of the image he proceeded to make some positive comment about each painting (something Mrs. Shellenberger suggested to the judges they had). He followed this with comments and suggestions for improvements, dealing exclusively with ways in which the paintings could be made to be more accurate renditions of their subjects. He discussed "shading and modeling," the lack of "dimensions" in paintings that were "too flat," color, perspective, and the need for more detail. In one case he referred to the work of "that guy who cut off his ear" as someone who could get away with simply providing the outline of a figure, but went on to say that the painter whose work he was critiquing needed more detail. This was the only reference made to the "high art" world, one in which Boyer confused Van Gogh with Matisse and then proceeded to say that he didn't like his paintings anyway. He specifically indicated that he would not discuss the frames and never commented on the technical aspects of paints, brushes, mediums, etc.

Boyer finished his critique of the last painting at 9:10 P.M., after which he and the few painters still listening to him joined the festivities. People ate, talked, and continued to look at the paintings until about 9:45 P.M. when the painters began to dismantle the show in order to take their paintings home. By 10:30 the show was dismantled, the Community Building cleaned up, and the last few people were getting into their cars to go home.

Creek-Ridge Art League Exhibits and Shows

The work of the Creek-Ridge Art League had been given wide exposure in the Creek and Ridge County areas, and limited exposure in other Pennsylvania towns and cities within a 100 mile radius. This included Harrisburg, Chambersburg, State College, Williamsport, and Buck Springs. Within the Creek-Ridge area their work had been primarily exhibited in Creek County locations. The only Ridge County exhibits of League work took place at the week long Ridge County Fair, the League-sponsored October show at the Ridge Valley National Bank in Pattersontown, and the occasional one man/woman shows at the same bank. Shows and exhibits at the Ridge Valley National Bank remained there for a period of one to two weeks.

In Creek County there were: 1) semi-permanent exhibits at Hidley's Restaurant, and in the Harristown Hospital; 2) annual exhibits at the July Harristown Summer Sidewalk Art Sale, the May Creek-Ridge Arts Festival, and the October Creek-Ridge Art Auction in the Harristown Library; 3) bi-annual exhibits at the Creek-Ridge Member Shows at the Harristown Trust Bank in November and April. In addition, two League painters had their work for sale at Hammel's Gallery in Harristown.

The only League-sponsored, judged exhibits in the area were held at the Ridge Valley National Bank and at the Harristown Trust Bank where the exhibits were accompanied by opening night critiques and receptions. The judge awarded

first, second, and third prizes, and six or seven honorable mentions. This was followed by a critique which included discussion of every painting entered. Judges were either professionally accomplished artists or college professors associated with fine arts or art history departments. In many cases the judge held both professional and academic credentials. During the period of this research judges were either artists from the Harrisburg area or faculty members from Pennsylvania colleges and universities, e.g., Penn State, Bucknell, Shippensburg State, Dickinson.

These shows were always announced in The Sentinel, and occasionally announced in the Ridge Sentinel. However, such announcements were primarily seen as reminders to League members as the critiques were rarely attended by people other than League members and friends, and the artists whose work was exhibited. The critiques were accompanied by refreshments prepared by League members, and included cheese and crackers, deserts, and soft drinks. In the two weeks following the critique the exhibits remained in the banks where they occupied central locations. While most of the work was for sale little of it was ever purchased.

Below I will describe the April, 1980 show which provides a clear contrast, on many levels, with the April, 1980 Group show discussed above.

April, 1980 Harristown Show

The opening of the show was announced in The Sentinel

as a preview, critique, and reception to be held in the Harristown Trust Company Bank from 8:00-10:00 P.M. Following the opening, it was to remain at the bank for two weeks. According to League rules each artist could submit works in any medium, with the total number of entries limited to three. According to the League "Rules Governing Exhibition Privileges" the following rules applied to this show, a show open to entries from members and non-members: "All work must be original."; "Wet paintings will not be accepted."; "Work previously shown in competition at an Art League Show may not be re-entered for competition in a later League Show."; "Work must be properly framed, should not exceed 40 inches in overall size, labeled at left hand corner of back of work with title, price or not for sale, artist's name and address. Screw eyes should be properly affixed about three inches below top of work, properly wired for hanging."; "Work is submitted at owner's risk, but every effort will be made to avoid loss or damage."

Four members of the League Exhibition Committee arrived early on the afternoon of the show to accept entries, hang the show, set the refreshment table, and make the necessary arrangements with the bank for the evening event. The paintings were hung on both sides of white pegboard displays which were set up in the middle of the bank. The paintings were grouped by artist, as was traditional at League shows, so that most artists had all of their entries hung on a single pegboard section. Attached to one pegboard

section was a list which included the title, price, and the artist's name and address for each painting on display.

When completed the display included four to six paintings, signed by twenty painters, all but three of whom were League members. Eight of the painters were League members from Ridge County. Over two-thirds of the paintings were landscapes, many with buildings. With the exception of one human figure and one animal the remaining paintings were still lifes. The paintings ranged in style from soft-line realism to non-objective abstraction, but were primarily soft-line realist and impressionistic as was typical of League work. Two-thirds of the work was done in oil on stretched canvas or canvas board, and the rest was done in watercolor, pastel, or pen and ink on quality art paper. All of the paintings were framed according to League specifications, many in what Barron called "heavy, ornate frames" painted white and/or gold. Some frames were simpler, but almost all were painted gold and/or white. A few paintings had been expensively and elaborately framed at Hummel's Gallery.

A representative of the bank opened it at 7:30, and by 8:15 there were thirty people present, including eight men. No children attended League shows. Eighteen of the painters attended, seven of whom were from Ridge County. With the exception of the "judging contingent," all others present were the friends and spouses of the painters. The judge, a Harrisburg artist, had arrived with

his wife and four other people from the Harrisburg area. Most notable was David Still, from the Doschi Gallery in Harrisburg, who had recruited the judge upon Barron's request, and then decided to accompany him to the show. Still was accompanied by a friend from the Doschi Gallery who had acted as a judge at a past League show. The judge also invited a friend and his wife to accompany him. His friend was an art history teacher at a central Pennsylvania university.

The judge arrived at 7:45 and Still introduced him to Barron and the League President. They instructed him about the number and types of awards to be given. He then proceeded to view the exhibit and award the ribbons. During this time those present maintained a constant level of social conversation, but were keeping a close watch on the judge's actions. After each ribbon was awarded the winning painter was congratulated by those around and discussion turned to an appraisal of the judge's preferences. He awarded six honorable mentions and first, second, and third prizes.

Following the judging the judge was introduced by the League President as Roger Johnson, a Harrisburg artist who had "Twenty-seven one-man shows and numerous prizes to his credit from galleries and shows in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York." Johnson was in his early thirties, dressed in blue jeans and a plaid shirt. He clearly evidenced his cosmopolitan orientation in his appearance, speech, and manner. In addition, his critique clearly indicated his

facility with the language and concepts employed by metropolitan art worlds.

As the critique began at 8:20, those in attendance followed Johnson from one end of the display to the other and then around to the other side. Though the refreshment table was already prepared all of those present followed him around until he was finished at 9:20, and the only focus of activity was the critique itself. At the conclusion of the critique the League President invited everyone to help themselves to the refreshments and to "stay with us until 10:00." In other words, the painting and critique were the sole focus of the somewhat formal event until the President's formal demarcation of a shift from critique to reception.

The critique itself was a formal event with the judge attempting to engage the painters in serious dialogues about their work. Everyone was attentive to his critique, though he had a great deal of trouble knowing what to say. His contact with the amateur art world had been severely limited and his critique evidenced a great deal of difficulty in dealing with the painters and their work in a serious and helpful way. Still, seeing the problem, stepped in to help Johnson by offering his own comments as models for Johnson. Once this had been done, Johnson continued to depend upon Still for aide, and Still easily slipped into the role of co-judge.

Johnson's first comment upon encountering a painting was to ask, "Where is the artist?" At first he tried to

skip over the work of absent painters, but was told that those present were to report back to the absent painters as they very much wanted to know what he said. He followed his first question by asking those artists who were present, "What were you trying to do?" For the most part he received little or no response to this question, giving him no clue as to how to approach the painting in his critique.⁶ After receiving very few answers, Still stepped in and attacked the painters for their lack of responsiveness. Mrs. Levine countered that, "A painting is supposed to speak for itself if it's any good." Still responded that, "As you've heard me say here before, you've got to get involved with the literature of your painting and not just the plastic forms. You've got to get away from the Grandma Moses kind of thing."

Due to Johnson's difficulty in dealing with the paintings as art he turned to critical appraisals of the frames and materials used. While he did spend some time discussing composition and color, always encouraging a "more experimental effort," he primarily attended to technical issues, where he apparently felt safe. Understanding the decorative use of these paintings in the home, Barron attempted to soften Johnson's stringent attacks on the frames by suggesting that the painters use the "heavy, ornate frames" at home, and use simpler frames when they exhibited at shows. Still suggested that they use stretched canvas and not canvas board, in simple frames, at all times. He told them to "look in museums and see what they do with framing."

Johnson also criticized some painters for using cheap paints and turpentine rather than copal varnish as a medium. Still suggested that they read a particular book on the use of medium, and he later expanded on Johnson's criticism of a "labored, overly realistic" painting. Johnson attacked a painting which imitated a Picasso and another which was based on an Ansel Adams photograph, prompting Still to deliver a short lecture on the importance of originality and the improprieties of copying, concluding, "You are all too good to copy the work of other artists." Composition, color and perspective were the formal issues that were discussed, primarily to answer specific questions posed by the painters.

Upon Johnson's completion of his critique, Still concluded the proceedings by insisting that the painters learn to respond to questions about their work because, "triangulation offers us a great deal more." One League member responded that they weren't ready to respond as they "feel inferior" to their judges and are "afraid to be put down." Still answered her by saying, "You don't all have to remain amateurs or Sunday painters, and talking about painting would help a great deal. Talk with each other at least, if not with us. You do some very good work. I'm always impressed with the quality, so you must push yourselves."

With this comment the critique was concluded and the League President invited everyone to "enjoy the

refreshments and the company until 10:00." People ate, talked, and continued to look at the paintings. Discussion focused on the paintings and the critique. As many of the painters were more willing to discuss their work in a semiprivate conversation, Johnson and Still were asked many specific questions about the paintings. At 9:45 people began to leave and by 10:00 all but those responsible for cleaning up had left. By 10:15 everyone had left and the show was ready for its two week tenure at the bank.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

¹As Meeker observed in Jonesville,

The upper-middle-class members in these associations perform an important function. They admire and envy and emulate the upper-class group and thus express the superiority of the latter group. For the most part the upper-middle-class men and women hold a subordinate position and follow the leadership of the upper class. In their respective roles of leaders and followers the members follow patterns of behavior which govern the relationships between the two classes and express the dominance of the upper class. As compensation for playing a subservient role, the upper-middle-class members, through affiliation with those of higher status, may gain an increment of repute and increase their own prestige in the community. (Warner, et al, 1949: 132)

²I later saw her sell two of these paintings at their show. One was for a bathroom and one was "just the right size for a spot in my hallway." Many other people commented on how cute they were.

³Later I was to attend church school with Mrs. Shellenberger where the opening of class was signaled by the teacher of the day saying, "Hello class," to which they responded in unison, "Hello Mr. or Mrs. _____."

⁴A Ridge County home owned and used on weekends by a wealthy Baltimore banker, and decorated with museum quality antiques by two Ridge County men who lived in and cared for the house.

⁵In 1982 Henry Moist cancelled, leading Mrs. Shellenberger to ask me to be the judge for the show. I reminded her that I was not a painter to which she responded, "You don't have to be a painter, you have an opinion like everyone else and that's all we expect. Anyway, you know all of us so you'll know what to say."

⁶His question implied an approach to art which was alien to most of the painters in the League. He was implying that the painting was simply the final product of an ideational process, in the exploration of some set of artistic concepts. For almost all of the amateur painters in the area the main goal was to paint an attractive picture in a particular style. The painting and process of its creation was an end in itself, albeit a social end in many ways, as I have been trying to demonstrate. However, he and many other judges who came to League shows were teaching them how to think about art from the perspective of the cosmopolitan "high" art world.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to analyze the composition, structure and process of the Ridge County amateur art world, and to trace some of the ways in which the art world was related to the social life of the general population of the county. As such it was conceived of as a study of art as a social process in which the art object, while the event around which all activity revolved, was treated simply as a nodal point within a complex behavioral system. It was this art-related system and its role in Ridge County that were the foci of this research.

Ridge County, a rural county of 19,000 in central Pennsylvania, was chosen as the site of this research due to its relative homogeneity and stability. These features made it an ideal field laboratory for research employing ethnographic research methods. In addition, it had an amateur art world of approximately 150 painters, primarily women, most of whom were members of one of two art groups. The Creek-Ridge Art League was a formal association which advocated painting in a modern style, often referred to as an abstract or impressionistic style. The Robinsonville Art Class Group was an informal association which advocated painting in a realistic style. Each group firmly rejected

the activity and products of the other group. Insofar as I could tell, the general population of the county valued art primarily as a form of decoration and/or mimesis and supported, purchased, and exhibited the work of those identified as realistic painters.

The hypotheses of this study were that the amateur art world as constituted in Ridge County played a role in the regulation of social relationships in terms of relating messages about social identity, and that the conflicts of realistic vs. modern/abstract art would reveal a struggle in the community to maintain some aspects of its identity as a separate socio-cultural unit in the face of continuing external influence. During the course of this research both of these hypotheses were confirmed, leading to the conclusion that amateur art in Ridge County was a mechanism which aided in the regulation and maintenance of social relationships and the social system. As social communication, art can be described as an infracommunicational system which can be seen to contribute to the regulation of ongoing relationships between people of a community, within time, as well as the negotiation of continuity and change, through time.

On a less abstract level, these conclusions can be translated into a series of concrete findings. First, art was seen to help maintain a set of social relations through the articulation and affirmation of group bonds as expressed through shared conventions, values, beliefs and behaviors,

and to integrate new members within this group through their participation in group activities. Art group activities such as meetings, classes, trips, and shows were mechanisms which taught members how to paint in an "appropriate" manner, and how to think, talk, and act in relation to art. In addition, such group activities functioned to "teach" the membership a set of "proper" rules, values, beliefs, and behavior in social, moral, and economic realms. Membership in what was ostensibly a "taste group" was membership in a social unit with a highly formalized and rigid set of socio-cultural characteristics. Further, due to the oppositional definitions of the two art groups, realists vs. abstract/modernists, art provided a visible indication of social solidarity within groups, and social boundaries between groups. In other words, painting in a particular style was treated as a visible symbol of social bonds with some and social differentiation from others.

Second, through their art and art-related activities, each group had come to be publicly associated with a set of distinctive values, as well as a painting style. The realistic art of the Robinsonville Art Class Group and others in the Ridge community was associated with local and traditional values, while the modern art of the Creek-Ridge Art League was associated with cosmopolitan and modern values. Further, while artistic activity had come to be associated with relatively high status for all painters,

the Creek-Ridge Art League was considered to be significantly more exclusive than the Robinsonville Art Class Group, and composed of members of higher social status. In fact, an examination of the socio-economic status of realistic and modern/abstract painters confirmed this status differentiation. Therefore, one's membership and/or painting style could help to identify one in terms of social status and to associate one with an associational network with a local or cosmopolitan orientation. In this way, art helped to delineate the social identity of the painters, thereby making their behavior more predictable, and facilitating interactional processes. That is, as with other infracommunicational systems, e.g., kinesics, proxemics, paralanguage, smell, touch, clothing, cosmetics, etc., art can be seen as a mechanism for the regulation of human interaction due to its patterned relationship with particular social attributes of the painters. Due to the expected relationship between these attributes and behavior, interactional patterns of the painters can be predicted, thereby fostering orderly interaction.

Further, as paintings and particular painting styles had come to be associated with social status, orientation and networks of association, it was also possible for non-painting members of Ridge County to identify themselves socially by displaying paintings in their homes and businesses. In this way members of the Ridge community could enhance, affirm, or reaffirm their social status and social

orientation through art, even if they had never painted. As with the painters, this social identification could then make the behavior of those displaying art more predictable.

Third, realistic painters and paintings had come to represent the Ridge County community to itself, asserting the core values of family, church, community, practicality, frugality, individuality, and economic self-reliance in their paintings, and their lives. With the exception of the few Ridge County residents whose social lives and influence reached into a cosmopolitan arena (especially the Creek-Ridge Art League members), Ridge residents overwhelmingly professed their preference for paintings done in a realistic manner and rarely tolerated modern or abstract work without denigrating comment. Modern painting had come to be associated with the encroachment of a changing and confusing world which threatened the maintenance of the Ridge community as it existed. Through their public and private rejection of modern/abstract art, Ridge County residents articulated their opposition to what they perceived to be a constellation of threatening elements of the national mainstream, e.g., breakdown of the traditional family, community and church, crime, drugs, pre- and extra-marital sexual indulgence, sloth, indolence, loss of individuality, wastefulness, etc. In this way they attempted to maintain their identity as a separate and traditional socio-cultural unit by publicly repudiating

all aspects of modern/abstract art. Public art displays, especially the annual Ridge County Fair, allowed for the ritual enactment of the conflict of local and cosmopolitan values and behavior, with the Ridge community reasserting the values implicit in realistic art and spurning the values implicit in modern/abstract art. Art, then, served as a social mechanism through which the community could negotiate the dual processes of continuity and change through time.

Therefore, the study of the amateur art world of Ridge County indicates a number of ways in which the amateur art process was of social and cultural significance within a community. It demonstrates that the study of the amateur arts may be as relevant to the understanding of socio-cultural systems as the study of the "high" arts are usually felt to be. It also provides evidence of the value of the study of art within the behavioral context of the community in which it was produced and functioned.

However, while the literature indicates some similarity between the findings discussed above and those of other studies, especially those related to social solidarity, boundaries and status, there is no basis at this point for the generalization of the findings of this research. At this point it can only be said that the findings of this study are due to the particular socio-cultural configuration of Ridge County and its amateur art world. Future research should be directed to the analysis of the art worlds of other

communities, and the analysis of other amateur endeavors. Research should also be directed to all forms of "high," "low," "popular," "folk," etc. art in which the focus of the research is to probe the problem of art as a social mechanism performing the communicational tasks of maintenance, regulation, and the negotiation of continuity and change. These kinds of studies would provide comparative data for a more comprehensive analysis of the role of art and amateur activity as social communication.

Based on relatively brief and superficial observations of the art process in a number of other rural, suburban and metropolitan communities, I would speculate that art, as a "matter of taste," would perform social tasks, similar to those observed in Ridge County, in most American communities. In fact, I would expect that one's appreciation of an object or event as art might be seen to be related to experiences of predictability and solidarity in relation to the artist(s) and others who value the object or event as art.

Of particular interest and value would be future research directed to the re-analysis of the Ridge County amateur art world after a number of years. At the time of this research most members of the art world were over sixty years old, especially the membership of the Creek-Ridge Art League. As very few replacements were filling those positions vacated by death, it is unclear how and whether the art world will be organized in the future, and

how and whether it will serve a social role or function within Ridge County. Hence, an analysis of the art world and community in five, ten or more years might well offer an excellent opportunity to study the processes of change and adaption in an art world and in a community.

APPENDIX A

The research which is discussed in this dissertation initially grew out of a project conceived by Sol Worth and Jay Ruby in 1976. They had proposed a large scale research project which was to have resulted in the ethnography of visual communication of a small American community in central Pennsylvania. Through the intensive analysis of a community and its visual communication systems they would, ". . . attempt to articulate the ways in which human beings create, manipulate, and assign meaning to and through visual modes, media and codes." (1977: 71) The final goal was to have been a ". . . qualitative and quantitative description of how various visual aspects of our environment relate and form a structural context for each other." (1977: 71) It was to be an attempt to understand the ways in which all of the visual communications systems were structurally related to one another in a single community.

Due to Worth's untimely death in 1977, a full Worth-Ruby proposal was never completed. As I had been a student of Worth's and shared his interest in the study of the visual symbolic environment, Ruby asked me to collaborate with him in the design and implementation of the project. A full proposal, never funded in toto, was completed in 1978 in which we were committed to the analysis of visual

communication within the context of a community, in a wholistic manner. However, we continued to accentuate the search for the interrelations of textual and cognitive structures in the five "domains" we identified: television, film, photography, the visual arts, the built environment and performance. Fortunately, the socio-cultural orientation of the proposed research provided a framework for the discovery of interrelations which were unrelated to visual and cognitive structures proper. While not anticipated, the original conceptualization of the problem and the concomitant ethnographic approach to the community, allowed for the discovery of relationships between the domains and social structural issues, such as status and position.

The search for a site had begun with the original Worth-Ruby proposal, leading them to a county in central Pennsylvania where the dental school of the University of Pennsylvania was conducting research concerning rural dental health care. Aaron Katcher, the psychiatrist in the dental research, strongly recommended Ridge County as a site for research in visual communication. The dental research group had excellent experiences both personally and professionally, and had already completed the necessary demographic surveys of the county. Ridge County was a socially and culturally stable and homogenous community and was clearly identified as a bounded community by those within and without its borders. Additionally, it had been a suitable research site for the dental group in terms of the

style of life and the relative ease of data collection. During the summer of 1978, Ruby and I spent two weeks in Ridge County in order to verify these preliminary indications that the county would be an appropriate field laboratory for our research.

During our evaluation of the site for the full ethnography of visual communication, I was also to try to focus on a piece of research which would be appropriate for my dissertation. As most of my scholarly and non-scholarly work had focused on film, both Ruby and I assumed that this would be the area of my responsibility. However, at the very outset of our stay, it became clear to us that the study of film viewing and/or making would be a somewhat minor aspect of the full study. Activity in this area was simply too scarce and peripheral. On the other hand, by the end of the first week it was quite clear that the activities and products of amateur painters in the county were considerably more important than we had assumed. Everywhere we turned we were to learn that amateur painting was a respected and popular avocation. The discovery of a visibly prominent and productive art world in a small, rural county in central Pennsylvania came as something of a surprise to me. Personal stereotypes had led me to expect a few homey "folk" artists at best. As I saw it, amateur art was a recreational pursuit of the urban and suburban middle classes, of little interest from the point of view of art or communications research. Despite my avowed interest in visual communication,

this predisposition was evident in my immediate failure to take note of the six paintings prominently displayed at the entrance/exit of the only supermarket in the county. I had learned to look "through" art displays in supermarkets, department stores, banks and other commercial institutions, especially when it was unrelated to what I thought of as the "real" art world of the city.

As one interviewee after another made reference to local painters, exhibitions, classes and associations, it became apparent that this was a phenomenon which could not and should not be dismissed or ignored. Whatever a serious student of "high culture" might think of these paintings as art, they were being painted and exhibited and appeared to be serving some purpose in the lives of those who painted and/or displayed them, and possibly in the community at large. At this point during my initial visit to the county, I began to look at what was hanging on all walls with a great deal more interest, and to interview with special attention to the local art world. Paintings were turning up all over the place, in local restaurants, banks, businesses, and homes. I was finding out that people noticed and remembered these paintings and generally had something to say about them, the events and places they depicted, and the people who painted them. It was increasingly clear that these paintings were indicative of a well developed and highly visible art world in Ridge County.

While I was not initially intrigued by the objects

themselves, I was fascinated by the social system in which they were embedded. With this in mind I returned to Ridge County for a second week-long visit, during which time I was able to more thoroughly investigate the shape of the local art world in pursuit of a researchable problem. During this time it became increasingly clear to me that the best way to make a contribution to the understanding of this form of visual communication in Ridge County was to study its role in the social life of the county, to see art as a social process and as social communication.

Contributing to the nature of this research was the fact that I had selected the research method which I would employ prior to the selection of the problem of the study. Whatever area of visual communication and whatever problem I would pursue in that area, I was committed to the use of qualitative research methods. In particular, I chose to employ that "blend" (McCall and Simmons, 1969: 3) of techniques, methods, tactics and strategies (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973: 7) which may be referred to as fieldwork, field research, ethnography, or participant-observation, depending on one's training and disciplinary orientation (though recent renewed interest in these methods had led to a more productive and cooperative disciplinary cross-pollination). This methodological preference was the result of a variety of factors, most notably: 1) my serious doubts concerning the validity of the data collected for my Master's Thesis, collected purely through the use of in-

depth interviews; 2) the richness of the data and findings of the work employing ethnographic methods; 3) a period of study with Professor Ray L. Birdwhistell, during which time I was instructed in the theory and practice of ethnographic research methods.

I had come to feel frustrated by and suspect of the contextually bound and limited results of experimental and pseudo-experimental methods in the social sciences. While leading many researchers to hypotheses which required further study through somewhat more naturalistic methods, it appeared to me that these hypotheses were often not actually tested in this way. This is particularly disturbing as such research is generally carefully presented as contextually limited, at the time of its publication, but over time we see an insidious sleeper effect in which the methods are forgotten or discounted, while the findings are treated as truisms.

I noted that survey methods had led to numerous important and intriguing correlations, but the observed patterns tended to be general relations between classes of things, rather than detailed analyses of these relations in terms of the complex inner dynamics of specific social settings. For example, in a series of research reports in the American Behavioral Scientist concerning patterns of leisure activity (Peterson, 1983), each using survey methods for data collection, the researchers were able to isolate relational patterns between types of people and

types of leisure activities, but were unable to enter the behavioral context in which these patterns emerge. Therefore, we are unable to explain how these patterns developed, why they developed, and how they are presently enacted in a naturally occurring environment. Explanation is replaced by conjecture, until these patterns are investigated through other means. As Peterson said in the introduction to the reports, "Much exciting work remains to be done in accounting for the patterns of taste that have been identified." (my emphasis, 1983: 434) However, as with experimental results, most of this "exciting work" is never done and rather than accounting for patterns, providing explanations for behavior, we come to treat conjecture as truth.

A further problem is that patterns which emerge from above through survey data are not necessarily the same patterns that will be observed from within. A view from within may allow us to see patterns that are invisible from above. This is especially true when the categories of the survey have been formulated without regard to the particular social setting under investigation. For example, based on accepted definitions of "style," derived from researchers' cultural expectations, painting style might not be seen to vary with social status, based on an analysis of survey data from a particular community. However, first-hand investigation in the particular community might lead the researcher to better understand the features upon which stylistic assessment is made in that social setting. In

this way the researcher would be able to distinguish between styles that do not appear to be different on the surface, possibly leading to the observation of strong correlations between style and status. In this case, only a method which involved genuine social interaction with the people and processes under study would lead one to discover the existing correlations.

Therefore, in order to discover patterns and to account for and describe them, I felt it was necessary to employ a research methodology which would allow me to observe and analyze the communication process chosen for study in its naturally occurring context. As I saw it, the ethnographic method was the only one which would allow me to understand the patterns from within the community in which they existed, and to explain how and why they developed, and how they were enacted in that particular setting.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abell, Walter
1966 The Collective Dream in Art. New York: Schocken Books.
- Adams, Marie Jean
1973 "Structural Aspects of Village Art." American Anthropologist 75: 265-279.
- Adler, Judith, E.
1979 Artists in Offices: An Ethnography of an Academic Art Scene. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books.
- Albrecht, Milton C., James Barnett and Mason Griff, eds.
1970 The Sociology of Art and Literature: A Reader. New York: Praeger.
- Ames, Kenneth L.
1977 Beyond Necessity: Art in the Folk Tradition. Winterthur, Delaware: Henry Francis Winterthur Museum.
- 1980 "Folk Art: The Challenge and Promise." In Perspectives on American Folk Art, Ian Quimby and Scott Swank, eds. Pp. 293-324. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.
- Art News.
1952 "Amateur Standing." Art News 50(10): 8.
- Babchuk, Nicholas and John N. Edwards.
1965 "Voluntary Associations and the Integration Hypothesis." Sociological Inquiry 35 (Spring): 149-162.
- Barker, Virgil.
1950 American Painting: History and Interpretation. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Baxandall, Michael.
1972 Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Becker, Howard.
1983 Art Worlds. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Blumer, Herbert G.
1968 "Fashion." International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences. Pp. 341-345. New York: The Free Press.
- Burdge, Rabel J.
1969 "Levels of Occupational Prestige and Leisure Activity." Journal of Leisure Research 1 (Summer): 262-274.
- Cahill, Holger,
1979 "Artisan and Amateur in American Folk Art." In Folk Art in America, Jack T. Ericson, ed. Pp. 22-23. New York: Mayflower Books.
- Cheek, Neil H., Jr. and William R. Burch, Jr.
1976 The Social Organization of Leisure in Human Society. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers.
- Christopherson, Richard.
1974a "Making Art with Machines: Photography's Institutional Inadequacies." Urban Life and Culture 3 (April): 3-34.
1974b "From Folk to Fine Art: A Transformation in the Meaning of Photographic Work." Urban Life and Culture 3 (July): 123-157.
- Crowther, Betty and Alfred Kahn.
1983 "Arts and Leisure Activities in the St. Louis Region." American Behavioral Scientist 26 (4): 509-520.
- Davidson, Morris.
1938 Painting for Pleasure. Boston: Hale, Cushman and Flint.
- Dickie, George.
1974 Art and Aesthetics: An Institutional Analysis. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Dreppard, Carl W.
1942 American Pioneer Arts and Artists. Springfield, Massachusetts: The Pond-Ekberg Company.
1979 "What is Primitive and What is Not?" In Folk Art in America, Jack T. Ericson. Pp. 11-13. New York: Mayflower Books.
- Dulles, Foster Rhea.
1952 Americans Learn To Play: A History of Popular Recreation, 1607-1940. New York: Peter Smith.
- Eberlein, Harold E.
1927 "What Early America Had on its Walls." International Studio 88 (September): 52-56.

- Ebert, John and Katherine Ebert.
1975 American Folk Painters. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Ericson, Jack T., ed.
1979 Folk Art in America. New York: Mayflower Books.
- Flexner, James Thomas.
1942 "New Bottles for Old Wine." Antiques 41 (April): 246-249.
- 1970 Nineteenth Century American Painting. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.
- 1979 "What is American Folk Art: A Symposium." In Folk Art in America, Jack T. Ericson. Pp. 14-21. New York: Mayflower Books.
- Gardner, Howard.
1973 The Arts and Human Development. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Geist, William E.
1981 "A Picture Over the Sofa: Art With the Right Price and the Right Size." New York Times, November 30.
- Goffman, Erving.
1951 "Symbols of Class Status." British Journal of Sociology 2 (December): 294-304.
- Gold, Raymond L.
1969 "Roles in Sociological Field Observations." In Issues in Participant Observation, George J. McCall and Jerry Simmons. Pp. 30-38. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.
- Gordon, Jean
1968 "Early American Women Artists and the Social Context in Which They Worked." American Quarterly 41: 65-71.
- Gouldner, Alvin, W.
1957 "Cosmopolitans and Locals: Towards an Analysis of Latent Social Roles-I." Administrative Science Quarterly 2: 281-306.
- 1958 "Cosmopolitans and Locals: Towards an Analysis of Latent Social Roles - II." Administrative Science Quarterly 2: 444-480.
- Gowans, Alan.
1981 Learning to See: Historical Perspectives on Modern/Commercial Arts. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green Popular Press.

- Greenberg, Clement.
1969 Art and Culture. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Greenberg, Marshall G. and Ronald E. Frank.
1983 "Leisure Lifestyles." American Behavioral Scientist
26 (4): 439-458.
- Greenhalgh, Michael and Vincent Megaw, eds.
1978 Art in Society: Studies in Style, Culture and Aesthetics. New York: St. Martins Press.
- Greer, Germaine.
1979 The Obstacle Race. London: Secker and Warburg.
- Harap, Louis.
1949 Social Roots of the Arts. New York: International Publishers.
- Harris, Neil.
1966 The Artist in American Society: The Formative Years, 1790-1860. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Hausknecht, Murray.
1962 The Joiners. New York: The Bedminster Press.
- Hedges, Elaine and Ingrid Wendt, eds.
1980 In Her Own Image. New York: The Feminist Press and McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- Helm, June, ed.
1967 Essays in the Verbal and Visual Arts. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Hughes, Michael and Richard A. Peterson.
1983 "Isolating Cultural Choice Patterns in the U.S. Population." American Behavioral Scientist 26
(4): 459-478.
- Jahn, Marilyn, J.
1977 "Sociological Report 1: Community Profile of Juniata County, Pennsylvania." Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, School of Dental Medicine, Rural Dental Health Program.
- Johannis, Theodore, S., Jr. and C. Neil Bull, eds.
1971 Sociology of Leisure. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Jopling, Carol F., ed.
1971 Art and Aesthetics in Primitive Societies. New York: E.P. Dutton and Company.

Juniata County Historical Society

1981 Juniata County: A County for All Seasons. Mifflintown, Pennsylvania: Juniata County Historical Society.

Juniata County Planning Commission

1979 Overall Economic Development Program for Juniata County, Pennsylvania. Mifflintown, Pennsylvania: Juniata County Planning Commission.

Junker, Buford H.

1960 Field Work. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kaplan, Max.

1960 Leisure in America: A Social Inquiry. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Kavolis, Vytautas.

1968 Artistic Expression - A Sociological Analysis. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

Kouwenhoven, John A.

1967 The Arts in Modern American Civilization. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

Kubler, George A.

1980 "The Arts: Fine and Plain." In Perspectives on American Folk Art, Ian Quimby and Scott Swank. Pp. 234-246. New York: W.W. Horton and Company.

Kuper, Adam, ed.

1977 The Social Anthropology of Radcliffe-Brown. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Laumann, Edward O., ed.

1971 Social Stratification: Research and Theory for the 1970s. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

Laumann, Edward O., Paul Siegel and Robert W. Hodge, eds.

1970 The Logic of Social Hierarchies. Chicago: Markham.

Little, Nina Fletcher.

1975 Country Arts in Early American Homes. New York: E.P. Dutton and Co.

Lundberg, George A., Mirra Komarovsky and Mary Alice

1934 McInerney. Leisure: A Suburban Study. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lynd, Robert S. and Helen Merrell Lynd.

1929 Middletown. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

- 1937 Middletown in Transition. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.
- Lynes, Russell.
1949 The Tastemakers. New York: Grosset and Dunlap.
- Mann, Dennis Alan, ed.
1977 The Arts in a Democratic Society. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green Popular Press.
- McCall, George J. and Jerry Simmons.
1966 Identities and Interactions. New York: The Free Press.
- 1969 Issues in Participant Observation. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- McCall, Michal.
1975 "The Sociology of Female Artists: A Study of Female Painters, Sculptors, and Printmakers in St. Louis." Unpublished Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- 1977 "Art Without a Market: Creating Artistic Value in a Provincial Art World." Symbolic Interaction 1 (Fall): 32-43.
- 1978 "The Sociology of the Female Artist." Studies in Symbolic Interaction 1: 289-318.
- McClagherty, Martha Crabill.
1983 "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893." Winterthur Portfolio 18 (Spring): 1-26.
- McFee, June King and Rogena M. Degge.
1977 Art, Culture and Environment. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Mead, George Herbert.
1934 Mind, Self and Society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Merton, Robert.
1968 Social Theory and Social Structure. New York: The Free Press.
- Minnis, Mhyra S.
1952 "Cleavage in Women's Organizations: A Reflection of the Social Structure of a City." American Sociological Review 18 (February): 47-53.
- Moore, Joan W.
1961 "Patterns of Women's Participation in Voluntary Associations." American Journal of Sociology 66 (May): 592-598.

- Mukarovsky, Jan.
 1970 Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts.
 Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Slavic Contributions.
- Mulkay, Michael and Elizabeth Chapin.
 1982 "Aesthetics and the Artistic Career: A Study of
 Anomie in Fine Art Painting." The Sociological
 Quarterly 23 (Winter): 117-138.
- Packard, Vance.
 1959 The Status Seekers. New York: The David McKay
 Company.
- Parsons, Talcott.
 1937 The Structure of Social Action. New York: McGraw-
 Hill Book Company.
- 1971 "Equality and Inequality in Modern Society, or
 Social Stratification Revisited." In Social
 Stratification: Research and Theory for the 1970s.
 Edward O. Laumann, ed. Pp. 45-60. Indianapolis:
 The Bobbs-Merrill Company.
- Peck, Grace B.
 1902 "Amateur Art in Early New England." Harper's
 Magazine 54 (May): 987-994.
- Peterson, Richard A., ed.
 1976 The Production of Culture. Beverly Hills: Sage
 Publications.
- 1983 American Behavioral Scientist 26 (4): 417-552.
- Pocius, Gerald L.
 1979 "Hooked Rugs in Newfoundland: The Representation of
 Social Structure in Design." Journal of American
 Folklore 92 (July): 273-284.
- Quimby, Ian and Scott Swank, eds.
 1980 Perspectives on American Folk Art. New York: W.W.
 Norton and Co.
- Radcliffe-Brown, A.B.
 1965 Structure and Function in Primitive Society. New
 York: The Free Press.
- Read, Herbert.
 1966 Art and Society. New York: Schocken Books.
- Redfield, Robert.
 1960 The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture.
 Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Richardson, E.P.
1963 A Short History of Painting in America. New York: Thomas Crowell.
- Rierner, Jeffrey W. and Nancy A. Brooks.
1982 Framing the Artist: A Social Portrait of Mid-American Artists. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America.
- Ruby, Jay, Robert Aibel and Barbara Lynch.
1978 "Made to be Seen." Unpublished grant proposal, Philadelphia, PA.
- Sapir, Edward A.
1933 "Fashion." Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Schapiro, Meyer.
1953 "Style." In Anthropology Today, A.L. Kroeber, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Schatzman, Leonard and Anselm L. Strauss.
1973 Field Research. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Shearing, Graham.
1978 "Amateur Artists: Spare Time Pictures by the Talented." Antique Collector (U.K.) 49 (March): 86-89.
- Sieber, Roy.
1971 "The Aesthetics of Traditional African Art." In Art and Aesthetics in Primitive Societies, Carol F. Jopling, ed. Pp. 127-131. New York: E.P. Dutton and Company.
- Simmel, Georg.
1957 "Fashion." The American Journal of Sociology 42 (May): 541-558.
- Smith, Constance and Anne Freedman.
1972 Voluntary Associations. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Smith, David Horton.
1966 "The Importance of Voluntary Associations for Society." Sociology and Social Research 50 (4): 483-494.
- Sorokin, Pitirim A.
1937 Social and Cultural Dynamics: Fluctuation of Forms of Art, Volume 1. New York: American Book Company.

- Sorokin, Pitirim A., Carle Zimmerman and Charles J. Galpin,
eds.
1965 A Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology. New
York: Russell and Russell.
- Stebbins, Robert A.
1979 Amateurs. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Steiner, Jesse Frederick.
1970 Americans at Play. New York: Arno Press.
- Toffler, Alvin.
1973 The Culture Consumers: A Study of Art and Affluence
in America. New York: Vintage Books.
- Tomars, Adolph S.
1966 "The Citizen in the Roles of Producer and Consumer
of Art." Art in Society 3 (1): 45-55.
- Tompkins, Jean Beattie.
1955 "Reference Groups and Status Values as Determinants
of Behavior: A Study of Women's Voluntary Associ-
ation Behavior." Unpublished Dissertation, University
of Iowa.
- Tonnies, Ferdinand.
1963 Community and Society. New York: Harper and Row.
- Urbino, L.B., Henry Day, et al.
1861 Art Recreations. Boston: J.E. Tilton and Company.
- Veblen, Thorsten
1953 The Theory of the Leisure Class. New York: The New
American Library.
- Vidich, Arthur J. and Joseph Bensman.
1968 Small Town in Mass Society. Princeton, New Jersey:
Princeton University Press.
- Vlach, John Michael.
1980 "American Folk art: Questions and Quandaries."
Winterthur Portfolio 15 (Winter): 345-355.
- Wall, Mann and Hall.
1877 Illustrated Atlas of Juniata County, Pennsylvania.
Philadelphia: Wall, Mann and Hall.
- Warner, W. Lloyd, et al.
1964 Democracy in Jonesville. New York: Harper and Row.
- Warner, W. Lloyd and Paul S. Lunt.
1941 The Social Life of a Modern Community. New Haven:
Yale University Press.

- Warner, W. Lloyd, Marchia Meeker and Kenneth Eells.
1960 Social Class in America. New York: Harper and Brothers.
- Waters, Ruth Cramer.
1983 "Juniata's Hills: Rolling Over Crags to Woodlands." Pennsylvania Heritage 9 (Spring): 2-7.
- Webb, Vera.
1978 "A Model for Family Centered Leisure-Oriented Art Education." Unpublished Dissertation, Florida State University.
- Whitridge, Eugenia Remelin.
1946 "Art in Chicago: The Structure of the Art World in a Metropolitan Community." Unpublished Dissertation, University of Chicago.
- Willett, John.
1973 "Viewpoint." Times Literary Supplement 72 (July 6): 776.
- Wilson, Robert N., ed.
1964 The Arts in Society. Englewood, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Winkler, Gail Caskey and Roger W. Moss.
1983 "Exploring Grandmother's Parlor." Historic Preservation 35 (March/April): 49-51.
- Winter, Simon Vaughan.
1978 "Popular, Professional and Amateur." Artscribe 15 (December): 41-44.
- Wolff, Janet.
1981 The Social Production of Art. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Worth, Sol and Jay Ruby.
1977 "Preproposal for Research Project." Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication 4 (2): 70-71.
- Yoder, Don, ed.
1976 American Folklife. Austin Texas: University of Texas Press.
- Zabor, Margaret Ruth.
1978 "Essaying Metacommunication: A Survey and Contextualization of Communication Research." Unpublished dissertation, Indiana University.
- Zimmerman, Carle C.
1938 The Changing Community. New York: Harper and Brothers.

INDEX

Ames, Kenneth, 19
Art News, 18, 23-24
Art worlds, 31-32
Barker, Virgil, 15-16
Becker, Howard, 30
Birdwhistell, Ray L., 8-10, 243
Blumer, Herbert, 38
Burdge, Rabel, 39-40
Cahill, Holger, 18
Cheek, Neil and William Burch, 36-37
Chicago art world, 21-23
Christopherson, Richard, 5, 30
Crafts Guild, 69, 127-29
Creek County Art Association, 112-113, 115, 117-120
Creek-Ridge Art League, 68, 70, 80, 85, 92, 102, 108, 110,
117-120, 129, 131-137, 140, 145-154, 169-177, 186-192,
201-208, 216-223, 226-232
Crowther, Betty and Alfred Kahn, 40
Davidson, Morris, 23
Dreppard, Carl, 17-18
Eberlein, Harold, 13
Ebert, John and Catherine, 100
Fashion, 35-37
Flexner, James Thomas, 18
Folk art, 15-19, 91-92
Frerichs, Harrison, 66, 104-112
Glassie, Henry, 19
Goffman, Erving, 6, 11, 34, 38
Gold, Raymond, 11, 45
Gordon, Jean, 96
Greenberg, Marshall and Ronald Frank, 40
Greer, Germaine, 16, 20
Hughes, Michael and Richard Peterson, 40
Informants, 43, 48
Integrational aspect of communication, 9
Jahn, Marilyn, 51, 56, 60-61, 63
Jopling, Carol, 4
Junker, Buford, 45
Kaplan, Max, 24, 27
Kavolis, Vytautas, 37-38
Little, Nina Fletcher, 15, 97
Local and cosmopolitan orientations, 6-9, 70, 100-101, 103,
225-231
Lundberg, George, et al, 27-28
Lynd, Robert and Helen Merrell, 21, 96
Lynes, Russell, 24, 97, 100, 102

- McCall, George and Jerry Simmons, 242
 McCall, Michal, 4-5, 24, 30-32
 McClaugherty, Martha, 14, 102
 McFee, June and Rogena Degge, 28, 34-35
 Merton, Robert, 6-7
 Middletown, 21
 Mukarovsky, Jan, 37
 Mulkay, Michael, and Elizabeth Chapin, 30
 New informational aspect of communication, 9
 Packard, Vance, 32-33
 Parsons, Talcott, 33, 35-36
 Peck, Grace, 13
 Peterson, Richard, 39-40, 243-244
 Pocius, Gerald, 38
 Read, Herbert, 32
 Ridge County Art Association, 91, 107-113
 Ridge County Fair, 72, 88, 97-100, 126-128, 213
 Riemer, Jeffrey and Nancy Brooks, 29-30
 Robinsonville Art Class Group, 68-69, 80, 85, 121-132, 136
 141-143, 145-150, 144-167, 182-191, 201-204, 210-216,
 213-219, 229-235
 Ruby, Jay, 47, 50, 238-240
 Ruby, Jay, Robert Aibel and Barbara Lynch, 56, 63
 Rural Dental Health Project, 51, 57, 61-62, 64
 St. Louis art world, 30-32
 Sapir, Edward, 35
 Schatzman, Leonard and Anselm Strauss, 44, 242
 Shearing, Graham, 20
 Sieber, Roy, 4
 Simmel, Georg, 11, 35, 71, 106
 Social communication, 8-10, 230, 234
 Social status, 6, 7, 32-40, 72, 75-76, 77-79, 80-81, 104,
 228-234
 Sociology, 25-27
 Sociology of art, 24-25, 31-32, 38
 Sociology of leisure, 39-40
 Status symbol, 6-7, 34-35, 38
 Taste, 35-37, 231
 Toffler, Alvin, 24, 41
 Tomars, Adolph, 24-25
 Tonnies, Ferdinand, 6
 Urbino, L.B., 15
 Veblen, Thorsten, 33
 Vidich, Arthur and Joseph Bensman, 71-72
 Vlach, John Michael, 20
 Warner, W. Lloyd, 228
 Waters, Ruth Cramer, 62, 64, 69
 Webb, Vera, 29-30
 Weber, Max, 35
 Whitridge, Eugenia Remelin, 22-23
 Willett, John, 25-26
 Winkler, Gail Caskey and Roger Moss, 14

Winter, Simon Vaughan, 25-26
Worth, Sol, 238-239
Zimmerman, Carle, 6