1977

Volume 4 Number 2

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STUDIES in the
ANTHROPOLOGY OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION

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STUDIES in the
ANTHROPOLOGY OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION

A PUBLICATION OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION

The purpose of the Society for the Anthropology of Visual Communication (SAVICOM) is to bring together and support researchers, scholars and practitioners who are studying human behavior in context through visual means and who are interested in: the study, use and production of anthropological films, and photography for research and teaching; the analysis of visual symbolic forms from a cultural-historical framework; visual theories, technologies and methodologies for recording and analyzing behavior and the relationships among the different modes of communication; the analysis of the structuring of reality as evidenced by visual productions and artifacts; the cross-cultural study of art and artifacts from a social, cultural, historical and aesthetic point of view; the relationship of cultural and visual perception; the study of the forms of social organization surrounding the planning, production and use of visual symbolic forms; the support of urgent ethnographic filming; and/or the use of the media in cultural feedback.

The Society's primary tasks are coordination and promotion of interests and activities outlined above. To that end, it publishes *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication*, occasional Special Publications and a Filmography. (See inside back cover for a list of publications available from the Society and for Information to Authors.)

SAVICOM works closely with the Anthropological Film Research Institute, a committee of anthropologists concerned with the creation of a national anthropological film archive and research center at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC.

SAVICOM's annual business meeting is held during the American Anthropological Association meetings (usually held in late November). All SAVICOM members are encouraged to attend. During the AAA meetings SAVICOM sponsors a number of symposia and is responsible for the program of film screenings. Members are encouraged to develop symposia and to suggest films for screening at the annual meeting, and for review in the audiovisuals section of the *American Anthropologist* or in *Studies*.

The Society is open to all interested persons. To become a member write to SAVICOM, 1703 New Hampshire Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009 for an application form. For further information or questions concerning the Society, write to the President at the address listed above.

STUDIES in the
ANTHROPOLOGY OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION

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The Contribution of Sol Worth to Anthropology

Anthropology is a field which draws upon many other sciences, humanities, arts, and skills. Few of the founders of American cultural anthropology or British social anthropology were originally trained as anthropologists. They entered anthropology later, from other fields—psychology, physiology, European linguistics, marine zoology, psychiatry, etc. Sol Worth was an outstanding example of this relationship between anthropology and other fields. Originally an artist, he brought a new dimension to the facets of ethnographic filmmaking: a way in which people could document the world as they, themselves, saw it. Before the camera was put in the hands of those people who had previously been the subject of the anthropologist's investigation, we did not have an appropriate way of presenting their visual view of the world. Only the patient, highly trained specialist had access to verbatim translations of texts in unwritten languages. In the Navajo film, where Sol Worth, working in partnership with John Adair (a long time student of the Navajo), put the entire filmmaking process in the hands of the Navajo, we had a new breakthrough in cross-cultural communications. Particularly in the film *Intrepid Shadows* the effect obtained by the filmmaker moving with the camera which itself was moved independently through a windswept landscape, allowed me to·see the visual experience which we technically classify as animism, for the first time. The Navajo project was Sol Worth's principal contribution to anthropology. However, he carried the method, anthropologically informed, into all his teaching of communication skills. This is the two-way process between anthropology and other disciplines which is so enriching and fascinating. We are sadly bereft by Sol Worth's premature death.

Margaret Mead
The American Museum of Natural History

SOL WORTH (1922-1977)

Sol Worth died in his sleep of a heart attack, on August 29, 1977, at age fifty-five. In the weeks before his death Sol had been preparing an application to the Guggenheim Foundation and a pre-proposal for a large-scale research project he hoped to conduct with Jay Ruby. Sol wanted to devote the academic year 1978-79 to writing a book, *Fundamentals of Visual Communication,* which would weave together the conceptual and empirical strands of his previous work and serve as the theoretical ground for the ambitious new endeavor he was charting—the visual ethnography of an entire community.

The Guggenheim application requested a "brief narrative account of your career, describing your previous accomplishments," and a "statement of plans" for the Fellowship period. The requirements of the application prompted Sol to write an autobiographical sketch that is uncharacteristically lacking in modesty. Taken together, the two short statements for the fellowship application and the pre-proposal outline of the research project convey some sense of Sol's uniqueness as a thinker and as a scholar. They also illustrate with dramatic poignancy the loss we have suffered through his untimely death.

Since Sol was fundamentally interested in codes and style in various communicative modes, it seems particularly fitting that we print these three documents as an "autobiographical" obituary, as an acknowledgment of our continuing intellectual and personal debt, and as testimony to the richness and vitality of the legacy that Sol left for us to carry on. "Pictures can't say ain't but we can continue to say that Sol *is* through the ideas he gave us" (Umberto Eco, letter to Larry Gross).

I. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
FOR GUGGENHEIM FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION

My formal education was designed to educate a painter. I attended the founding class of the High School of Music and Art in New York City, and then received my Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the State University of Iowa in 1943, studying painting with Phillip Guston. At age fifteen, one of my paintings was selected for showing in a group show of young artists at the then new Museum of Modern Art. In 1945, after serving two years in the Navy, designing posters, painting murals in training camp, serving as a helmsman on the *USS Missouri* and working in Intelligence Headquarters in Hawaii, I decided not to accept a graduate assistantship in painting at Iowa and accepted instead a position as photographer and filmmaker in a commercial studio in New York. I worked there from 1946 to 1962 moving from employee to partner and owner, publishing photographs in most commercial magazines and producing and directing hundreds of films and commercials. By 1956, I had grown increasingly estranged from myself as both a creative and

intellectual being and from the Madison Avenue environment I was in. Therefore, I accepted a Fulbright Professorship to Finland to design their curriculum in Documentary and Educational Film at the University of Helsinki. I taught the first such course there and founded the Finnish Documentary Film Unit. As a teaching example of documentary film, I produced and directed the film *Teatteri,* which won awards at the Berlin and Cannes Film Festivals in 1957 and 1958 and has been chosen for distribution by the Museum of Modern Art.

In 1957, as a result of seeing *Teatteri* and reading a piece of mine in the *American Scholar,* I was asked by Gilbert Seldes, who was then founding the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, to consider coming there to help him design and then to teach and head what we both conceived of as a visual communications laboratory program. After trying this for several years as a part-time lecturer, I found that my interests in teaching and research overpowered whatever fears I had about leaving New York and my life there, and in 1964 I sold my business and moved to Philadelphia to devote myself to teaching and research in visual communication.

By 1965, based upon earlier research in New York, I had fully developed the research plan of teaching Navajo Indians—a people with very little exposure to or experience with film or picture making—to use motion picture cameras and to analyze the relationship between their language and culture and the way they structured their world through film. That work, which I started in 1966—working with the anthropologist, John Adair—was supported by the National Science Foundation in a series of grants starting in 1966 and continuing through 1971. This research resulted in six films conceived, photographed and edited by the Navajo students, several journal publications, many invited lectures here and abroad, and the book *Through Navajo Eyes* analyzing the films and the process by which they were made. These films have been shown at Lincoln Center, the Edinburgh Film Festival, the Festival de Popoli in Florence, the Museum of Natural History, several television programs, and are currently being distributed by the Museum of Modern Art in the United States and the British Film Institute in Europe. Susami Hani, one of Japan's leading filmmakers, has called one of these films the American film most influential upon his own work.

During this period I was promoted from Lecturer to Associate Professor, and in 1973 to full Professor of Communication. In 1977 I was appointed Professor of Communication and Education. In 1976 I was appointed Chairman of the Undergraduate Major in Communications, a program I designed and steered through the approval process of the University Committee on Instruction. I have been elected to the University Council (the governing body of the University), chair numerous departmental and University committees, and am a member of the Editorial Supervisory Board of the University Press. In 1970, in collaboration with Margaret Mead and others, I helped found the Anthropological Film Research Institute and continue to serve on its Board of Directors; the Society for the Anthropology of Visual Communication, of which I was the first president from 1972-74 and continue to serve on their Board of Directors; and *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual*

Communication, of which I have been editor since its inception in 1973. I am currently on the founding Board of Directors of the Semiotic Society of America, the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Communication* and the Board of Advisors of the International Film Seminars. In past years I have served as Chairman of the Research Division of the University Film Association and on the boards of a variety of other film and communication societies.

Beginning in 1970, and stemming from my studies of how peoples of different cultures and groups structured their world through film, I and my students have examined the filming and photographic behavior of such groups as the Navajo and working and middle-class teenagers (black, white, male, and female). In 1972, sponsored by the National Science Foundation, I organized and taught (along with Jay Ruby, Carroll Williams, and Karl Heider) a summer institute where we took 20 selected doctoral students and young faculty in the social sciences and helped them to learn how to use the visual media of still cameras, motion pictures, and television for research and communication. The major purpose of the institute was to teach these researchers both how to conceptualize research in visual communication and how to use the visual media themselves to report the results of research in all forms of behavior.

As a result of these researches, publications, and teaching activities over the past decade, I have been developing a theory of visual communication based on the studies described above as well as in the publications listed in the attached bibliography, and on more recent studies concentrating on interpretive strategies as applied to all visual events. I now intend to articulate fully a theory of visual communication and its consequences for future research. This book, which is described in the "Statement of Plans," will be written during a leave that I plan to take in the academic year 1978-79. I need to be able to devote myself fully to a concerted and undivided period of writing; free of teaching, dissertation supervision, committees, other people's research, and general university duties. I need time to grapple with a large-scale articulation of a theory of visual communication.

II. STATEMENT OF PLANS
FOR GUGGENHEIM FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION

The purpose of this fellowship application is to enable me to spend full time during the academic year 1978-79 completing a book, the tentative title of which is *Fundamentals of Visual Communication*. This book will present, within the context of a theory of communication, a framework through which the process and structures people use to make interpretations of our visual universe might be understood. This theoretical framework will distinguish between social communication and interaction, and between the various strategies used in the interpretation of visual events. It will present as fundamental analytic categories the concepts of the *assumption of intent* and of *existence*, leading respectively to strategies of implication-inference and attribution (Worth 1978; Worth and Gross 1974).

This book, a brief outline of which is presented below, will lead toward the description of a method of analyzing our

visual environment which I have called "ethnographic semiotics"—essentially the study of how actual people interpret a variety of actual visual events. These events range from painting through television and movies, including such rarely studied events as home movies, snapshots and photo albums, portraits, store windows, and other forms of everyday presentation of self through visual means. The concept of ethnographic semiotics departs from the customary methods of the study of meaning and interpretation practiced by critics, scholars and connoisseurs on "great works," either of "literature" or "art"—essentially the creation of *individual* interpretations of individual elite artifacts by the elite. The concept and methods I wish to explore seek instead to inform the reader that the *process of interpretation itself* as practiced by ordinary as well as elite persons and groups upon ordinary as well as "great" works could be a goal for the analysis of our symbolic world.

I shall argue that before "art" can be understood, symbolic behavior in general must be understood; that before painting, sculpture, and architecture can be understood in the contexts of both the social sciences and the humanities, pictures, statues and houses must be looked at and analyzed. In the same light, the book will develop methods of looking at "the movies" before analyzing the "art of the cinema." I shall also argue that the units of analysis of visual events, and the evidence for the formal structures of both "art" and "non-art," lack a descriptive, ethnographic, non-evaluative base, and that the fundamental concepts delineated in the proposed book are necessary for a new evaluation of art as well as all visual symbolic events in this and other societies.

Concepts such as the "language of art" or the "grammar of the cinema and television" cannot any longer be treated as metaphors vaguely describing some allusion to structures similar to verbal language. The proposed book will examine in detail the relation between units, methods and theories of linguistics and their possible application to visual media, codes, structures, and patterns.

At this point a brief outline might be helpful.

The book will be divided into four sections designed to provide the reader with the insights and fundamental concepts that might lead one to learn how people make meaning of visual events.

Part I is designed as an overall theoretical background developing a theory of communication and of visual communication which describes the process by which visual events are created, coded or produced and by which they are recreated and interpreted by viewers. It presents a theory of interpretive strategies for both "conscious" and "unconscious" articulation and interpretation in general, and shows how these processes can be applied specifically to the visual mode.

Part II is devoted to an analysis of some of the ways in which the term "art" has been used in the present as well as the past in a variety of contexts. The major problems connected with trying to define this term are presented, and I argue that definition is impossible for both logical as well as sociocultural reasons. The problems posed by the variety of definitions and usages considered form the basis for introducing and describing how the terms *mode, code, structure,* and *pattern* will be used as analytic units in the interpretation of visual events. Style is then considered as

code and pattern. Various contrasting definitions of style are presented, leading to a discussion of the need for methods to determine and to distinguish between significant and distinctive features of a style.

Part III is a discussion of the term "meaning" as it has been and can be applied to visual events. The usage of this term in various modes—verbal, musical, and visual—is discussed, and the concepts of grammars, schemata, and conventions are integrated into a theory of visual communicative meaning.

Part IV deals with specific methods that are used in interpreting visual events. Examples of these methods that are described in some detail are: semiotics (particularly film semiotics); perception (psychological and physiological); linguistics and sociolinguistics; content analysis as used in psychohistory, communication research, and psychoanalysis; and a variety of ethnographic methods. These include fieldwork, participant observation and the use of visual materials as elicitation techniques as well as research methods. The section will conclude with the integration of a variety of studies conducted by myself, my colleagues and my students—some of which have been reported in my book with John Adair, *Through Navajo Eyes* (1972)—stemming from the theories, concepts, and methods introduced and explicated in earlier sections of the book.

III. PRE-PROPOSAL FOR RESEARCH PROJECT

An American Community's Socialization to Pictures: An Ethnography of Visual Communication

SOL WORTH
JAY RUBY

A Pre-Proposal

Within the last several hundred years our search for understanding of the context and environment within which we live has moved from studies of our physical world to studies of the biological and social contexts with which we function. It has now become apparent that we live and function within the context of a fourth major environment— the symbolic. This environment is composed of the symbolic modes, media, codes, and structures within which we communicate, create cultures, and become socialized. The most pervasive of these modes, and the one least understood, is the visual-pictorial.

The visual symbolic environment—our vidistic universe— can be thought of as encompassing three possibly related domains. First is the world of "popular culture," the mass media and mass pictorial communication in general. Here we include such things as movies, television, advertising photography and television commercials, comic books, snapshots, home movies, graduation portraits, and even the new home erotica TV tape machines that are supplied by a growing number of "honeymoon hotels."

Second is the world of "high culture" and "art." Here we include paintings, sculpture and graphics in museums, as well as the works in galleries and lobbies of public buildings; art education from nursery school to the Ph.D. available from universities, in civic organizations and on television. We include under this "art" label some of the works that in other contexts are called "movies" and "TV." When included in this second category, "movies" becomes "the cinema" or "the art of the film," "television" becomes "video art," and "snapshots" becomes "photographs."

The third domain of our visual environment takes in our personal use of visual symbolic forms: our clothes, house furnishings, and the various ways we use the visual mode in our personal or professional presentation of self. This includes how we dress to teach, to sell, and to buy, as well as to marry or divorce. It includes our private as well as our public ways of decorating and presenting ourselves. It includes the look of our houses, offices, and workshops, as well as our gardens and our walls—the "urban design" or "public design" of our cities and roadways.

We suggested earlier that these three domains of our vidistic universe might possibly be related. There is, however, very little evidence to support this view. In fact, although the vidistic world is becoming more and more pervasive and influential in the formation and stabilization of culture—the dire predictions about the television generation that won't be able to read are only one example—our knowledge of the visual domains around us is sparse indeed.

For most of Western history, and most specifically for the past several hundred years, our visual world has been examined largely by looking at only one of the domains we have outlined—that of "high culture" and "art." Not only have we concentrated on examining the "masterpieces" of art but these have been analyzed and interpreted through the eyes and minds of the critic, the professor and the connoisseur. The world of the arts has in general been a world of elite artifacts studied by elites.

It is the purpose of this project to begin a study of our vidistic universe from a broader, and as we shall try to show, more fruitful perspective, using a variety of methods coming from both the humanities and the social sciences heretofore not applied to the world of culture and its art contexts and products. We are arguing that before one can understand "painting" one must understand "pictures," before one can understand "architecture" and "sculpture" one must understand "houses" and "statues." Questions about cinema, the art of the film and video, need prior understanding of movies and the tube. In a similar manner, past studies of the visual mode tended to concentrate upon interpretations advanced by critics and specialists rather than on studies describing the methods and strategies by which the "ordinary person," the user or spectator, learned how to and actually made meaning out of his visual environment.

What we therefore propose is a study of a vidistic environment as it occurs in a small American community in central Pennsylvania. We have chosen this particular community because it appears to be culturally homogeneous and stable. Such homogeneity and stability allow us to deal with the relation of their culture to their vidistic environment in a straightforward manner. The method we wish to employ in this study is one we have termed *ethnographic semiotics*: the study of how real people make meaning of specific aspects of their vidistic environment. Up to the present proposed research, studies of the visual symbolic aspects of American or Western urban cultures have used as their units of analysis the content of specific symbolic forms, either of specific programs, films, graphic

arts, urban design, or the content of specific time segments or taxonomic groupings—Saturday morning children's programs, situation comedies, documentary films, exploration films, and so on. What we are proposing is to use as our unit of analysis not the product but the *context—the community and the community members'* interaction with visual symbolic events. It is our contention that the three domains of vidistic life must be studied as one unit within the context not only of each other but of the community in which they function.

Step 1 in our research will be the development of a macro descriptive ethnographic account of the community starting with standard demographic descriptions but developing and concentrating on specific descriptions of television viewing and movie use—in schools, theaters, and libraries, as well as the new TV "home box office" recently available to this community. We will survey the uses of snapshots and home movies as well as portrait and wedding photographs made by professionals and amateurs. As part of this macro description we will survey the "art activities" of the counties, schools and art teachers, including the arts and crafts stores and craft activities in the community, as well as the work of local artists and craftsmen. As a final stage of step 1, we will produce a visual inventory using a variety of visual media which will record the look of the community, its houses, people, store windows, and home interiors. This visual inventory will be used as an elicitation device for further studies related to how vidistic meaning is learned and understood in this community.

Step 2 will concentrate on an intensive qualitative participant observation effort in three institutions. We will examine a sample of (1) families, (2) schools, and (3) commercial establishments within the contexts of our three domains: popular culture, art, and visual presentation of self. In this in-depth study of three institutions across three domains, we are concerned to find out how, for example, the uses of snapshots articulate with attitudes and uses of "art"; and how studying art in school relates to the kind of movies one looks at or the way one talks about film and TV. The school will be examined as a system of socialization toward symbolic use in general, fostering certain attitudes toward art, television, advertising, and so on.

Step 3 will introduce participant intervention and community participation. From preliminary work in the county we have discovered that the second most desired change (after "more jobs") was adult education. We plan, with the cooperation of community agencies, to set up two classes in visual communication—one for teenagers and one for retired individuals. We will teach them how to use a visual medium through which they can present their pictures and their structuring of their world to their peers, or to whomever they choose. The choice of medium—from closed circuit TV to still photos—will be left to the community group. The method of teaching and observation will be similar to that used by Worth and Adair in their research with the Navajo, with black and white teenagers and with adults (Worth and Adair 1972). The purpose of step 3 is to see if this teaching and use of a visual symbolic mode and medium to members of a community will have observable consequences in how they deal with other aspects of their visual environment in the future. Will they interpret movies

and TV differently? Will they demand different portraits or different decorations for themselves or their homes? Will they allow or suggest different values about their vidistic world to their friends or their children?

Step 4 will be an analysis and synthesis of the picture of an American community's picturing. By comparing the quantitative and qualitative data in steps 1, 2, and 3, it will be possible to generate an in-depth description of this community in terms of its various visual codes. We will attempt during the analysis period to learn whether each of the various domains and institutions of the vidistic universe under study relate to each other. We will attempt to articulate the ways in which human beings create, manipulate, and assign meaning to and through visual modes, media, and codes. The final product of the research will be to correlate and integrate the nine cells of our vidistic network of visual domains and institutions in a qualitative and quantitative description of how the various visual aspects of our environment relate and form a structural context for each other.

IV. PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER WORKS

Publications

1958 Letter from Finland. The American Scholar 27(3): 343-354.

1963 The Film Workshop. Film Comment 1(5):54-58.

1964 Public Administration and the Documentary Film. Perspectives in Administration, Journal of Municipal Association for Management and Administration City of New York, Vol. 1. Pp. 19-25.

1965 Film Communication: A Study of the Reactions to Some Student Films. Screen Education (July/August): 3-19.

1966 Film as Non-Art: An Approach to the Study of Film. The American Scholar 35(2):322-334. [*Reprinted in* Perspectives on the Study of Film, J. S. Katz, ed., Boston: Little, Brown, Pp. 180-199, 1971.]

1967 (with John Adair) The Navajo as Filmmaker: A Report of Some Recent Research in the Cross-Cultural Aspects of Film Communication. American Anthropologist 69:76-78.

1968 Cognitive Aspects of Sequence in Visual Communication. Audio Visual Communication Review 16(2):1-25.

1969 The Relevance of Research. Journal of University Film Association 21(3):81-84.

1969 The Development of a Semiotic of Film. Semiotica, International Journal of Semiotics 1(3):282-321.

1970 Navajo Filmmakers. American Anthropologist 72: 9-34. [*Reprinted in* Worlds Apart: The Sociology of Education, London: Cassell, Collier and Macmillan, 1975.]

1972 Toward the Development of a Semiotic of Ethnographic Film. PIEF Newsletter 3(3):8-12.

1972 Through Navajo Eyes: An Exploration in Film Communication and Anthropology. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. [Paperback edition 1975.]

1973 Toward an Anthropological Politics of Symbolic Form. *In* Reinventing Anthropology. Dell Hymes, ed. New York: Pantheon Books. Pp. 335-364.

1974 The Use of Film in Education and Communication. *In* Communication, Media and Education. D. R. Olson, ed. 73rd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Pp. 271-302.

1974 (with Larry Gross) Symbolic Strategies. Journal of Communication 24(4):27-39.

1974 Introduction to the Anthropology of Visual Communications. Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication 1(1):1-2.

1974 Seeing Metaphor as Caricature. New Literary History, Vol. VI. Pp. 195-209.

1975 Pictures Can't Say Ain't. Versus, Vol. 12. Milan: Bompiani. Pp. 85-108.

1976 Doing the Anthropology of Visual Communication. *In* Doing the Anthropology of Visual Communication. Working Papers in Culture and Communication 1(2):2-20. Department of Anthropology, Temple University, Philadelphia.

1976 Introduction to Erving Goffman's Gender Advertisements. Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication 3(2):65-68.

1977 Margaret Mead and the Shift from Visual Anthropology to the Anthropology of Visual Communication. Ruth Bunzell, ed. AAAS, Margaret Mead Festschrift (in press).

1978 Man Is Not a Bird. Semiotica, International Journal of Semiotics (in press).

1978 Toward an Ethnographic Semiotic. Paper delivered to introduce conference on Utilisation de L'ethnologie par le Cinema/Utilisation du Cinema par L'ethnologie, Paris, UNESCO, February 1977. (To appear in Proceedings, UNESCO.)

Films and Photographs

Still photographs appeared in all major publications such as *New Yorker, Life, McCall's, Harper's Bazaar, Vogue.*

Motion picture commercials and advertising films appeared on all major national TV stations.

Produced, photographed and edited four 20-minute films on art subjects.

Produced 50 documentary films.

Directed *Teatteri*, a 25-minute film on the Finnish National Theatre. Chosen for permanent collection of documentary film, Museum of Modern Art, New York, and cited at Berlin and Cannes Film Festivals, 1958.

Unpublished Papers

1977 (with Jay Ruby) Biography, Portraits, and Life History in Film. Paper presented at the 76th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Houston.

ANNOUNCEMENT
Papers in Honor of Sol Worth

Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication will publish papers honoring Sol Worth in Volume 5. We would like to receive papers for consideration in areas which reflect Sol's interests and contributions. In a real sense the statement of purpose of the Society for the Anthropology of Visual Communication—the study of "human behavior in context through visual means"—could be taken as a capsule description of Sol's interests. He was concerned with most of the wide range of perspectives and problems detailed in the charter of the society and of the journal. Prominent among these areas would be:

visual communications theory and research
visual anthropology and the anthropology of visual communication
ethnography of communication and the relationship among modes of communication
semiotics and ethnographic semiotics
art as communication
film as research and teaching tool
symbolic codes as ways of structuring reality

As always, and even more particularly in this instance, *Studies* encourages the submission of papers which utilize visual as well as written materials.

Papers submitted in honor of Sol Worth should follow *Studies* format, and should be sent to Larry Gross and Jay Ruby, Co-Editors, *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication,* c/o Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

Epilogue

Those blessed structures, plot and rhyme—
why are they no help to me now
I want to make
something imagined, not recalled?
I hear the noise of my own voice:
*The painter's vision is not a lens,
it trembles to caress the light.*
But sometimes everything I write
with the threadbare art of my eye
seems a snapshot,
lurid, rapid, garish, grouped,
heightened from life,
yet paralyzed by fact.
All's misalliance.
Yet why not say what happened?
Pray for the grace of accuracy
Vermeer gave to the sun's illumination
stealing like the tide across a map
to his girl solid with yearning.
We are poor passing facts,
warned by that to give
each figure in the photograph
his living name.

—Robert Lowell, *Day by Day*
[New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1977:127]

—age 3, Bronx Park, New York, 1925

—age 20, with his father, New York City, 1942
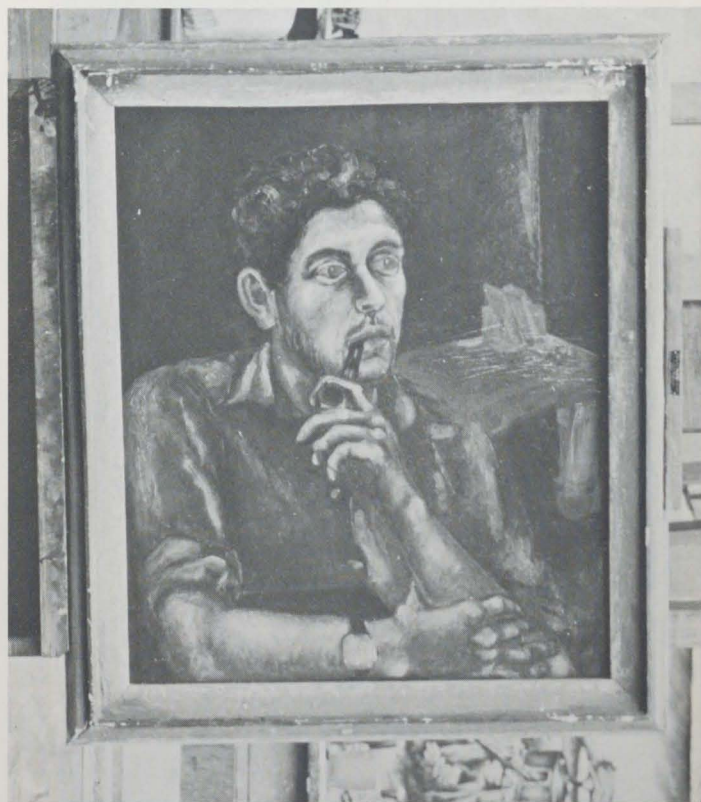
—self-portrait, Iowa City, 1941
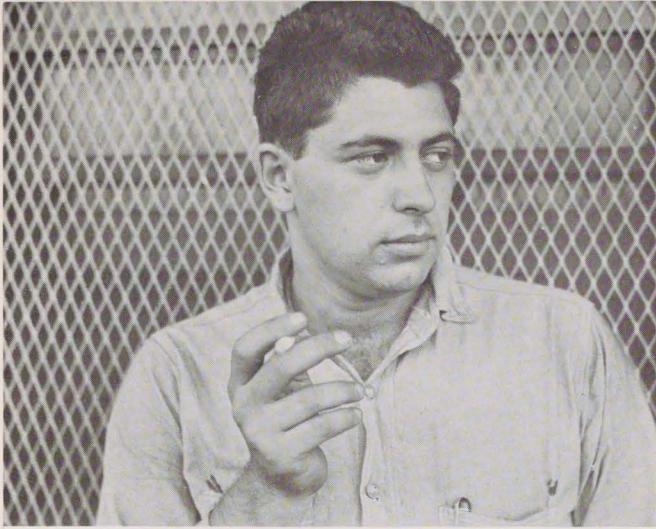
—in the Navy, Hawaii, 1945

—with Tobia on their honeymoon
Ossining, New York, 1945

—self-portrait, Iowa City, 1943 [photo by Joyce Wohl]

—Annenberg School, 1961

—Debbie Worth, age 6, by Sol

—Goold Studios, New York City, 1959

—with Susy Bennelly
[photo by Richard Chalfen]

PINE SPRINGS NAVAHO RESERVATION, 1966

—with John Adair [photo by Richard Chalfen]
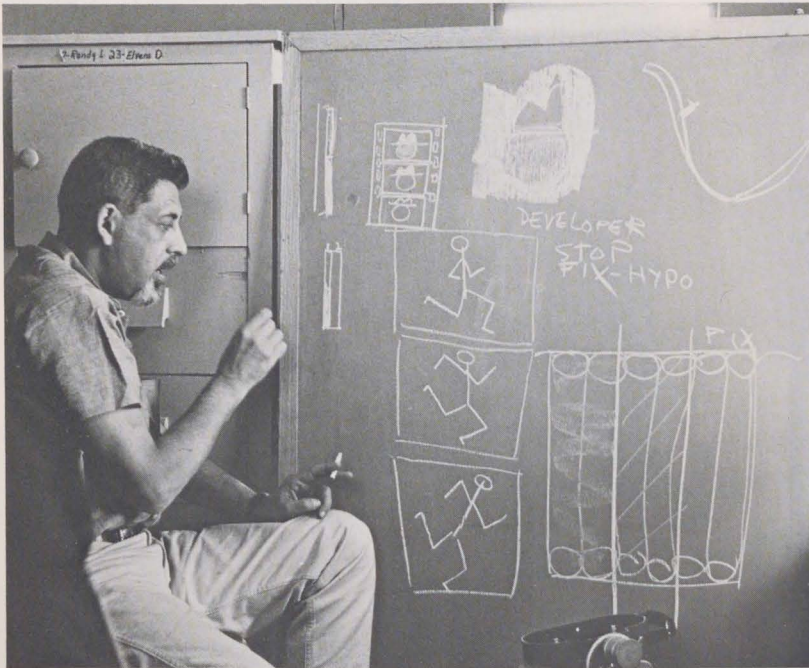
—teaching the Navaho the principles of filmmaking
[photo by Richard Chalfen]
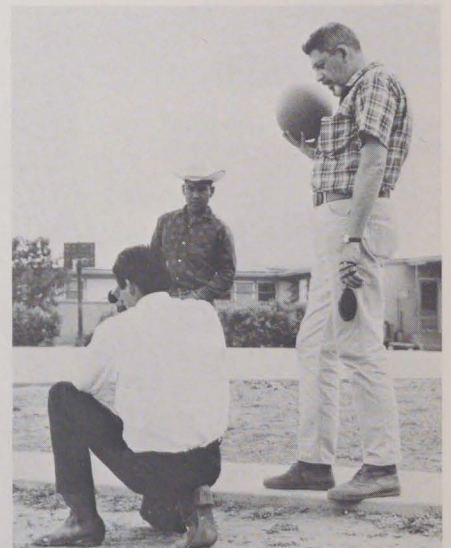
—with Al Clah and Mike Anderson [photo by Richard Chalfen]

—with Larry Gross, 1976 [photo by Jeff Slater]
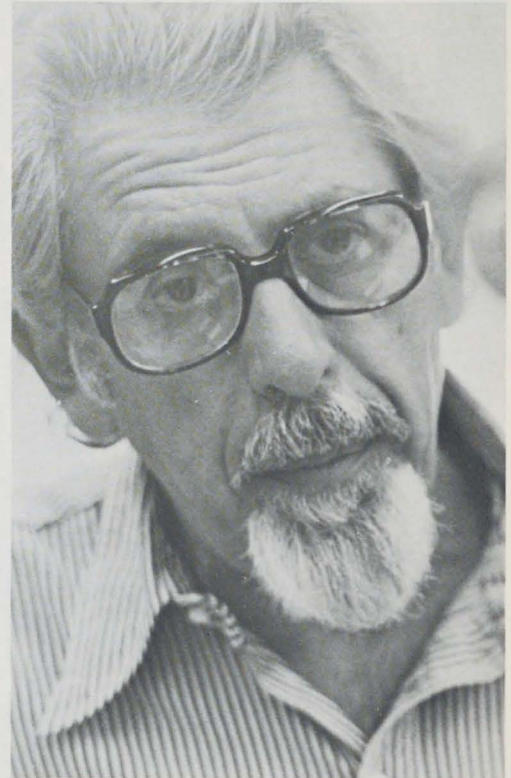
—at the Annenberg School, 1976
[photo by Jeff Slater]

photo essay
assembled by Jay Ruby

—at the 1977 Flaherty Film Seminar, August 29, with Bob Aibel,
Amalie Rothschild, and Wanda Bershan [photo by Susan Oristaglio]

MARGARET MEAD AND GREGORY BATESON ON THE USE OF THE CAMERA IN ANTHROPOLOGY
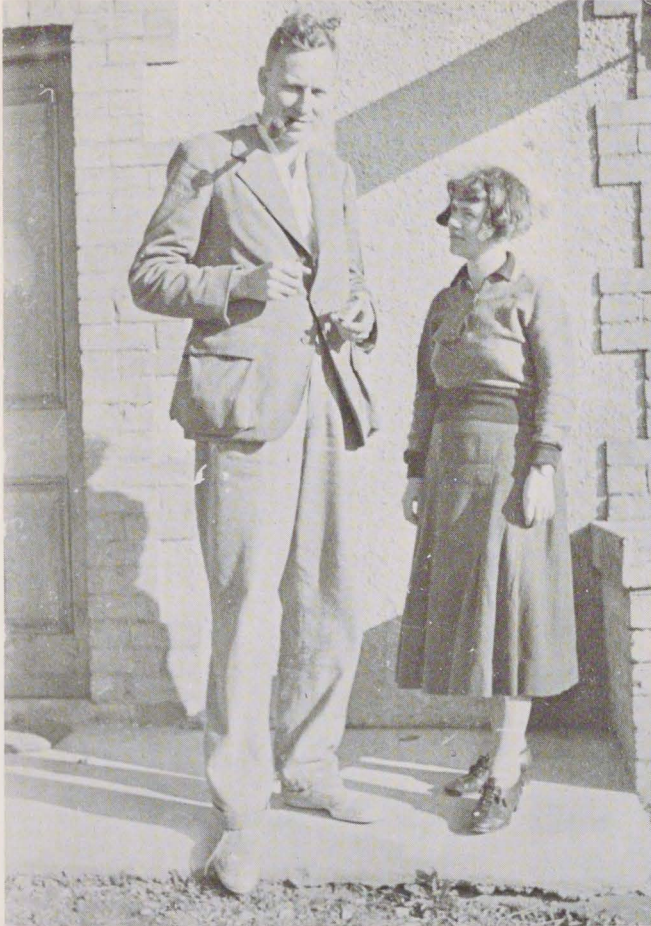
Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, circa 1938
[*photo by Conrad Waddington*]

[*Editor's note*: The following was excerpted from "For God's Sake, Margaret, Conversation with Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead," printed in *The CoEvolution Quarterly*, Vol. 10/21, June 1976.]

Bateson: I was wondering about looking through, for example, a camera.

Mead: Remember Clara Lambert and when you were trying to teach her? That woman who was making photographic studies of play schools, but she was using the camera as a telescope instead of as a camera. You said, "She'll never be a photographer. She keeps using the camera to look at things." But you didn't. You always used a camera to take a picture, which is a different activity.

Bateson: Yes. By the way, I don't like cameras on tripods, just grinding. In the latter part of the schizophrenic project, we had cameras on tripods just grinding.

Mead: And you don't like that?

Bateson: Disastrous.

Mead: Why?

Bateson: Because I think the photographic record should be an art form.

Mead: Oh why? Why shouldn't you have some records that aren't art forms? Because if it's an art form, it has been altered.

Bateson: It's undoubtedly been altered. I don't think it exists unaltered.

Mead: I think it's very important, if you're going to be scientific about behavior, to give other people access to the material, as comparable as possible to the access you had. You don't, then, alter the material. There's a bunch of film makers now that are saying, "It should be art," and wrecking everything that we're trying to do. Why the hell should it be art?

Bateson: Well, it should be off the tripod.

Mead: So you run around.

Bateson: Yes.

Mead: And therefore you've introduced a variation into it that is unnecessary.

Bateson: I therefore got the information out that I thought was relevant at the time.

Mead: That's right. And therefore what do you see later?

Bateson: If you put the damn thing on a tripod, you don't get any relevance.

Mead: No, you get what happened.

Bateson: It isn't what happened.

Mead: I don't want people leaping around thinking that a profile at this moment would be beautiful.

Bateson: I wouldn't want beautiful.

Mead: Well, what's the leaping around for?

Bateson: To get what's happening.

Mead: What you think is happening.

Bateson: If Stewart reached behind his back to scratch himself, I would like to be over there at that moment.

Mead: If you were over there at that moment you wouldn't see him kicking the cat under the table. So that just doesn't hold as an argument.

Bateson: Of the things that happen, the camera is only going to record one percent anyway.

Mead: That's right.

Bateson: I want that one percent on the whole to tell.

Mead: Look, I've worked with these things that were done by artistic film makers, and the result is you can't do anything with them.

Bateson: They're bad artists, then.

Mead: No, they're not. I mean, an artistic film maker can make a beautiful notion of what he thinks is there, and you can't do any subsequent analysis with it of any kind. That's been the trouble with anthropology, because they had to trust us. If we were good enough instruments, and we said the people in this culture did something more than the ones in that, if they trusted us, they used it. But there was no way of probing further into the material. So we gradually developed the idea of film and tapes.

Bateson: There's never going to be any way of probing further into the material.

Mead: What are you talking about, Gregory? I don't know what you're talking about. Certainly, when we showed

that Balinese stuff that first summer there were different things that people identified—the limpness that Marion Stranahan identified, the place on the chest and its point in child development that Erik Erikson identified. I can go back over it, and show you what they got out of those films. They didn't get it out of your head, and they didn't get it out of the way you were pointing the camera. They got it because it was a long enough run so they could see what was happening.

SB: What about something like that Navajo film, *Intrepid Shadows*? [see Worth and Adair 1972].

Mead: Well, that is a beautiful, an artistic production that tells you something about a Navajo artist.

Bateson: This is different, it's a native work of art.

Mead: Yes, and a beautiful native work of art. But the only thing you can do more with that is analyze the film maker, which I did. I figured out how he got the animation into the trees.

Bateson: Oh yes? What do you get out of that one?

Mead: He picked windy days, he walked as he photographed, and he moved the camera independently of the movement of his own body. And that gives you that effect. Well, are you going to say, following what all those other people have been able to get out of those films of yours, that you should have just been artistic?

SB: He's saying he *was* artistic.

Mead: No, he wasn't. I mean, he's a good film maker, and Balinese can pose very nicely, but his effort was to hold the camera steady enough long enough to get a sequence of behavior.

Bateson: To find out what's happening, yes.

Mead: When you're jumping around taking pictures. . .

Bateson: Nobody's talking about that, Margaret, for God's sake.

Mead: Well.

Bateson: I'm talking about having control of a camera. You're talking about putting a dead camera on top of a bloody tripod. It sees nothing.

Mead: Well, I think it sees a great deal. I've worked with these pictures taken by artists, and really good ones. . .

Bateson: I'm sorry I said artists; all I meant was artists. I mean, artists is not a term of abuse in my vocabulary.

Mead: It isn't in mine either, but I. . .

Bateson: Well, in this conversation, it's become one.

Mead: Well, I'm sorry. It just produces something different. I've tried to use *Dead Birds*, for instance. . . [see Gardner 1964].

Bateson: I don't understand *Dead Birds* at all. I've looked at *Dead Birds*, and it makes no sense.

Mead: I think it makes plenty of sense.

Bateson: But how it was made I have no idea at all.

Mead: Well, there is never a long enough sequence of anything, and you said absolutely that what was needed was long, long sequences from one position in the direction of two people. You've said that in print. Are you going to take it back?

Bateson: Yes, well, a long sequence in my vocabulary is twenty seconds.

Mead: Well, it wasn't when you were writing about Balinese films. It was three minutes. It was the longest that you could wind the camera at that point.

Bateson: A very few sequences ran to the length of the winding of the camera.

Mead: But if at that point you had had a camera that would run twelve hundred feet, you'd have run it.

Bateson: I would have and I'd have been wrong.

Mead: I don't think so for one minute.

Bateson: The Balinese film wouldn't be worth one quarter.

Mead: All right. That's a point where I totally disagree. It's not science.

Bateson: I don't know what science is, I don't know what art is.

Mead: That's all right. If you don't, that's quite simple. I do. (To Stewart:) With the films that Gregory's now repudiating that he took, we have had twenty-five years of re-examination and re-examination of the material.

Bateson: It's pretty rich material.

Mead: It is rich, because they're long sequences, and that's what you need.

Bateson: There are no long sequences.

Mead: Oh, compared with anything anybody else does, Gregory.

Bateson: But they're trained not to.

Mead: There are sequences that are long enough to analyze. . .

Bateson: Taken from the right place!

Mead: Taken from one place.

Bateson: Taken from the place that averaged better than other places.

Mead: Well, you put your camera there.

Bateson: You can't do that with a tripod. You're stuck. The thing grinds for twelve hundred feet. It's a bore.

Mead: Well, you prefer twenty seconds to twelve hundred feet.

Bateson: Indeed, I do.

Mead: Which shows you get bored very easily.

Bateson: Yes, I do.

Mead: Well, there are other people who don't, you know? Take the films that Betty Thompson studied [see Thompson 1970]. That Karbo sequence—it's beautiful—she was willing to work on it for six months. You've never been willing to work on things that length of time, but you shouldn't object to other people who can do it, and giving them the material to do it.

There were times in the field when I worked with people without filming, and therefore have not been able to subject the material to changing theory, as we were able to do with the Balinese stuff. So when I went back to Bali I didn't see new things. When I went back to Manus, I did, where I had only still photographs. If you have film, as your own perception develops, you can re-examine it in the light of the material to some extent. One of the things, Gregory, that we examined in the stills, was the extent to which people, if they leaned against other people, let their mouths fall slack. We got that out of examining lots and lots of stills. It's the same principle. It's quite different if you have a thesis and have the camera in your hand, the chances of influencing the material are greater. When you don't have the camera in your hand, you can look at the things that happen in the background.

Bateson: There are three ends to this discussion. There's the

sort of film I want to make, there's the sort of film that they want to make in New Mexico (which is *Dead Birds*, substantially), and there is the sort of film that is made by leaving the camera on a tripod and not paying attention to it.

SB: Who does that?

Bateson: Oh, psychiatrists do that. Albert Scheflen [1973] leaves a video camera in somebody's house and goes home. It's stuck in the wall.

Mead: Well, I thoroughly disapprove of the people that want video so they won't have to look. They hand it over to an unfortunate student who then does the rest of the work and adds up the figures, and they write a book. We both object to this. But I do think if you look at your long sequences of stills, leave out the film for a minute, that those long, very rapid sequences, Koewat Raoeh, those stills, they're magnificent, and you can do a great deal with them. And if you hadn't stayed in the same place, you wouldn't have those sequences.

SB: Has anyone else done that since?

Mead: Nobody has been as good a photographer as Gregory at this sort of thing. People are very unwilling to do it, very unwilling.

SB: I haven't seen any books that come even close to *Balinese Character* [see Mead and Bateson 1942].

Mead: That's right, they never have. And now Gregory is saying it was wrong to do what he did in Bali. Gregory was the only person who was ever successful at taking stills and film at the same time, which you did by putting one on a tripod, and having both at the same focal length.

Bateson: It was having one in my hand and the other round my neck.

Mead: Some of the time, and some not.

Bateson: We used the tripod occasionally when we were using long telephoto lenses.

Mead: We used it for the bathing babies. I think the difference between art and science is that each artistic event is unique, whereas in science sooner or later once you get some kind of theory going somebody or other will make the same discovery [see Mead 1976]. The principal point is access, so that other people can look at your material and come to understand it and share it. The only real information that *Dead Birds* gives anybody are things like the thing that my imagination had never really encompassed, and that's the effect of cutting off joints of fingers. You remember? The women cut off a joint for every death that they mourn for, and they start when they're little girls, so that by the time they're grown women, they have no fingers. All the fine work is done by the men in that society, the crocheting and what not, because the men have fingers to do it with and the women have these stumps of hands. I knew about it, I had read about it, it had no meaning to me until I saw those pictures. There are lots of things that can be conveyed by this quasi-artistic film, but when we want to suggest to people that it's a good idea to know what goes on between people, which is what you've always stressed, we still have to show your films, because there aren't any others that are anything like as good.

SB: Isn't that a little shocking? It's been, what, years?

Mead: Very shocking.

Bateson: It's because people are getting good at putting cameras on tripods. It isn't what happens between people.

Mead: Nobody's put any cameras on tripods in those twenty-five years that looked at anything that mattered.

Bateson: They haven't looked at anything that mattered, anyway. All right.

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FILMING COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR AND THE PROBLEM OF FORESHORTENED PERSPECTIVE: A CORRECTIVE METHOD

RONALD T. WOHLSTEIN

A number of critics (Blumer 1957; Milgram and Toch 1969:518; McPhail 1972:3; Fisher 1972:187; Berk 1974:15) note the lack of systematic descriptions of what is traditionally referred to as "crowd behavior." As Berk (1974:15) notes in summarizing the situation regarding descriptions of crowd behavior, "In contrast to the rich data on crowd preconditions and consequences, data on *crowd process* during collective behavior is sparse and largely inadequate." In addition, research strategies for filling this void have not been fully exploited (Pickens 1975:6).

Various suggestions have been offered for developing systematic descriptions of crowd behavior (Milgram and Toch 1969:518-536; McPhail 1972; Fisher 1972). The thrust of these suggestions, for students of collective behavior, concerns the observation and measurement of the elementary features of "crowds." We should observe and measure: (1) the spatial arrangement of participants across time and space; (2) the density of these assemblages with attention to its variation and change within and between events; (3) the frequency, initiation, and velocity of participants' locomotive behaviors which intermittently occur and changes in the direction of these locomotive behaviors; and (4) the growth and dispersal processes of such assemblages. In short, develop adequate descriptions of the formal and recurrent sequences of individual and collective behavior within assemblages (McPhail 1972:5).

Because these events may occur too rapidly (Berk 1972: 113; McPhail 1972:14) or involve numerous events going on simultaneously (Fisher 1972:201), filming "crowd" activity is one strategy which offers many advantages. First, by employing telephoto or zoom lens obtrusiveness is not a problem (see Smith et al. 1975). Second, film records are fairly permanent and can be repeatedly analyzed. Third, the film record can be accelerated or decelerated thereby controlling the velocity of the activity. Thus, the investigator has considerable control over the behavior under examination (McPhail 1972:14).

For illustrative purposes as well as making rough generalizations about "crowd" activity this strategy is adequate. However, students of collective behavior interested in making

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precise measurements directly from film records of such factors as the distance between crowd members or the velocity of their locomotive behaviors have found that filming these activities also has shortcomings—one of which is the problem of foreshortened perspective.

THE PROBLEM OF FORESHORTENED PERSPECTIVE

As Weick (1968:413) points out, one of the major difficulties with film records is foreshortened perspective. There are varying degrees of distortion evident in the film record. This is particularly true if the elevation of the camera position is low and a wide area is being filmed. When we view such film records, persons located closest to the camera may appear to be moving more rapidly than persons further away from the camera, when in fact they are moving at the same rate of speed. The same problem arises when trying to determine changes in the direction of locomotive behavior or the spacing between persons. For example, two persons may be located a considerable distance apart. But if one is a short person standing nearer the camera and the other is a taller person standing some distance to the rear, both may appear on the film record to be within touching distance. Obviously, if a small area is filmed, less distortion will be present in the film record. However, the larger the area filmed and the lower the camera elevation, the more the distortion in the film record.[1] Filming from directly overhead would probably correct this problem. However, this would generally be costly, it would be impractical in most situations, and some might consider it obtrusive as well.

To my knowledge, no method is currently available for correcting foreshortened perspective.[2] Thus, while filming collective behavior offers certain advantages, making measurements from film records of such factors as the velocity of participants' locomotive behaviors, the distance between members, etc., has not been feasible.

The purposes of this paper are threefold. First, I will present a method for correcting foreshortened perspective so that measurements of such factors as velocity, spatial arrangement, etc., can be made directly from film records. Second, I will indicate the procedures employed to verify this method. Third, I will discuss the practical implications of this method for students of collective behavior concerned with the task of precise measurement and description.

A CORRECTIVE METHOD FOR THE PROBLEM OF FORESHORTENED PERSPECTIVE IN FILM RECORDS

In order to establish comparable units of measurement for velocity or changes in direction of locomotive behavior, as well as the spacing of participants, the following set of procedures is advanced.

First, the following information must be recorded at the time of filming: (a) the zoom setting of the camera (i.e., the amount of magnification); (b) the angle of the camera with respect to the horizontal; (c) the distance from directly below the camera on the horizontal plane being filmed to some recognizable reference point within the observational field; (d) the height of the camera as measured from directly beneath the camera on the horizontal plane being filmed to the center of the camera lens; (e) it is also helpful to measure

various distances within the observational field (e.g., the width of a sidewalk). This information is sufficient to establish the standardized units of measurement for correcting foreshortened perspective.

Second, once the film record has been made, the next step is to develop a matrix for standardizing units of measurement. This is accomplished in the following manner: (1) With black tape, mark out a matrix of one-foot squares on the floor approximately 15 by 20 feet. (2) Film the matrix at the same angle and zoom setting as was used to produce the original film record. The best procedure is to use the information that was gathered when the original film record was produced and determine the dimensions of the triangle created by the position of the camera with respect to the observational field. Then, reduce this triangle proportionately. How far away from the matrix the camera should be and how high it should be from the ground can, thus, be determined before attempting to film the matrix. Make sure to locate the point in the matrix which corresponds to the known observational reference point (the reduced distance of the base side of the triangle—point (c) above) so that the film record can be synchronized with the matrix. (3) Project the developed film image of the matrix on a large white sheet of paper and trace the projected matrix on the paper with dark pencil or a marking pen. (The projector must be level and the distance from lens to the floor and to the paper must be recorded.)

Third, cover the paper matrix with a clear sheet of plastic. This serves as (a) a screen onto which the original film record can be projected, and, (b) as a surface upon which participants' locations can be marked with grease pencil, measurements can be taken, markings erased, the film advanced and the entire process repeated. It is very important to maintain the same distance from the projector lens to the matrix screen during the film projection as when the matrix was constructed. Similarly the projector lens must be the same distance from the floor. These are imperative if the image of the matrix is to correspond to the dimensions of the observational field as retained on the film record.

The original film is then projected on the matrix (see Figure 1), and participants' positions are marked on the transparency covering the matrix at the beginning and end of a two second period (frame 1 and frame 37 at 18 frames per second).[3] Draw a line parallel to each proximate line of the matrix (as shown in Figure 1). The distance between any two
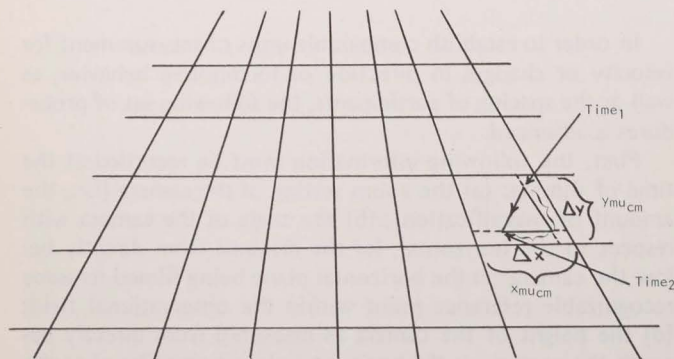
adjacent intersections of the matrix will be called a matrix unit (mu). The length of the vertical side of the triangle is called Δy. The length of the horizontal side of the triangle is called Δx.

The length of Δy and Δx in matrix units is determined by the ratio of Δy and Δx, as measured in centimeters, to the length of their respective parallel matrix unit lines in centimeters. This is accomplished by extending the sides of the triangle (as shown in Figure 1) and measuring the length of both Δy and Δx in centimeters and the total distance between the respective matrix lines and using this as the length of the matrix unit. This is expressed in the following scale transformations:

$$\Delta y_{mu} = \frac{\Delta y_{cm}}{y\ mu_{cm}} \qquad \Delta x_{mu} = \frac{\Delta x_{cm}}{x\ mu_{cm}}$$

Thus, both Δy and Δx can be determined, yielding a standard unit of measurement, regardless of the position of the participant's movement within the observational field on the film record, assuming there is no change in the position of the camera.

Given Δy_{mu} and Δx_{mu}, the total distance traveled in matrix units (d_{mu}) can be determined by the following Euclidean Distance formula:

$$d_{mu} = \sqrt{(\Delta x_{mu})^2 + (\Delta y_{mu})^2}$$

Distance between members can be determined in analogous fashion.

The velocity of movement is expressed as the distance in matrix units per unit of time, allowing rates of speed to be compared without reference to the actual distance covered by participants when they were filmed. Having determined the distance in matrix units, average velocity in matrix units is determined by the following:

$$velocity_{mu} = \frac{d_{mu}}{time\ in\ sec.}$$

The angle of the direction of locomotive behavior relative to the horizontal matrix lines is determined by the following formula:

$$angle = \tan^{-1} \left(\frac{\Delta y_{mu}}{\Delta x_{mu}} \right)$$

For determining changes in the direction of locomotive behavior a third measurement at time three is needed. Repeat the above to determine the angle of direction between time two and time three. Then, taking the difference of the angles yields the magnitude of the change in direction corrected for any distortion in the film record. This is illustrated in Figure 2.

Converting the distance traveled in matrix units and the velocity in matrix units to the actual distance and velocity of the persons in the observational field involves the following: the measurements have to be transformed proportionate to the actual dimensions of the original observational field which was recorded on film. The procedures for determining velocity, etc., once the conversion is made, are identical to those above since the principles of physics employed do not change. All that is being done is to convert the unit of measurement so that it is comparable to actual distances in
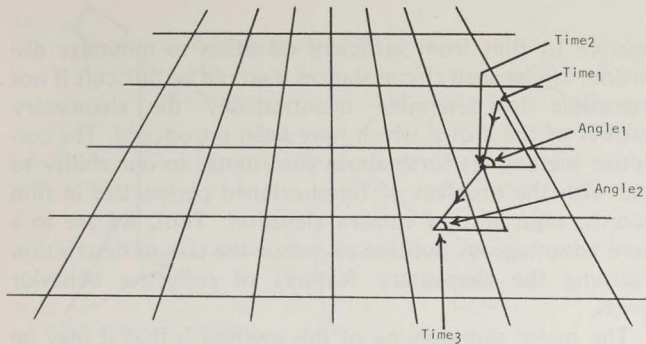

Figure 1

Figure 2

the observational field originally filmed.

Very simply, it is necessary to determine the multiplier which is a scale transformation constant (k) for converting matrix units to actual feet in the original observational field. For example, if you have the width of a sidewalk (d_{ft}) as measured from the observational field, determine the length of this in centimeters as it is projected on the matrix (d_{mu}). Divide the actual distance by the length in matrix units to get the multiplier. This is expressed as:

$$k = \frac{d_{ft}}{d_{mu}}$$

If the sidewalk was nine feet wide and it was 1.5 matrix units, then 9/1.5 = 6 feet. Each matrix unit is, thus, equal to 6 feet in the actual observational field. The measurements of distance and velocity can now be multiplied by the constant (k) to convert these measurements in matrix units to the actual distance in feet they were in the original observational field.

In sum, this set of procedures corrects the foreshortened perspective which may occur, especially, when filming a large area at low elevation. This distortion in the film record of the dimensions of interest can then be corrected and standard units of measurement developed with reference either to the matrix, or to the actual distances in the original observational field.

If any changes are made while filming, a tape recorder can be used to record the times when these changes occurred, and the changes in the parameters previously specified which are necessary to make the matrices for correcting fore-shortened perspective in the film record. It should be noted that the key to this set of procedures is determining the dimensions of the triangle created between the position of the camera and a reference point within the observational field.[4]

VERIFICATION OF THE METHOD

Theoretically, the method advanced for correcting the foreshortened perspective in film records provides a means for accurately measuring such factors as the spatial arrangement of participants, the density of the assemblage, and the like. In order to verify the method one camera was positioned at high and another at low elevation. These two cameras were used to simultaneously film the same observational field. A number of reference points were established in the observational field. These were measured, producing a set

of known coordinates. Employing the method for correcting foreshortened perspective, the same set of coordinates were estimated from the two film records. The verification of the method depended upon the degree of correspondence across these three sets of measurements, i.e., measurements of the observed field, of the film record from the high elevation camera, and of the film record from the low elevation camera. The details of the procedures employed in securing the information necessary for assessing whether or not this method is satisfactory will be presented followed by the results and an evaluation of the method.

One half of a basketball court was filmed simultaneously with the two cameras. Their exact positions in relation to the observational field are presented in Figure 3. The low elevation camera was mounted on a tripod at a height of 5'5" above the court. This was measured by a perpendicular line from the court to the center of the camera lens. The camera was a distance of 59'3" from the center of the court to the perpendicular height line. A clinometer attached to the camera was used to estimate the angle of the camera with the horizontal. An angle of 6° was registered. The high elevation camera was positioned on a tripod located on a balcony directly above and slightly to the rear of the low elevation camera. As indicated in Figure 3, the height from the court to the center of the camera lens was 16'8¾". It was 62'1" from the base of the perpendicular height line to the center of the court. The angle of the camera with the horizontal was approximately 16°. Thus, these two camera positions produced different visual records of the same observational field.

The layout of the observational field is presented in Figure 4. Each of the numbered positions was marked on the court with blue paper so they would be visible on the film records. These positions provided known reference points in the observational field. Connecting these various positions with positions labeled Center (C) and Left Center (LC) created a set of known angles as well. Comparisons were made between the known coordinates and angles and the estimates of these for both film records employing the method for correcting foreshortened perspective. The estimates were strikingly accurate.[5] For both film records, the greatest error in estimating angles was approximately three degrees. For both film records, the estimates of coordinates of positions were generally accurate within a foot. A few major errors of over three feet occurred, but these can reasonably be attributed to the grainy quality of the film, the size of the markings on the court (8x10 sheets of paper were
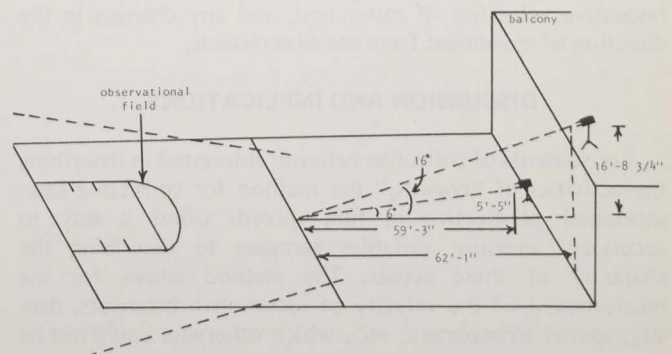

Figure 3

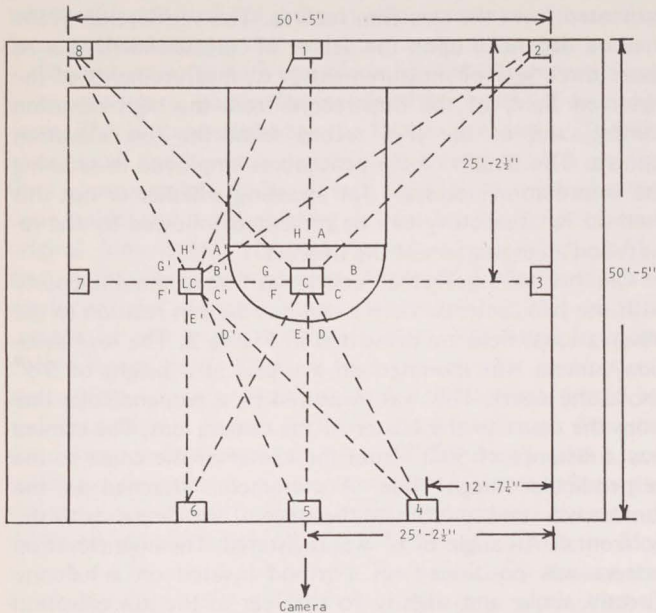| A' = 26.73° | E' = 26.57° | A = 45.00° | E = 26.57° |
B' = 36.70°	F' = 90.00°	B = 45.00°	F = 63.43°
C' = 45.00°	G' = 63.43°	C = 63.43°	G = 45.00°
D' = 18.43°	H' = 53.14°	D = 26.57°	H = 45.00°

Figure 4

used), and the glare of the court surface itself (these factors made locating the markings on the film records difficult for a few positions). Thus, these errors are regarded as well within the range of precision necessary for making judgments of such factors as directional change in locomotive behavior, velocity, spatial arrangement, and the like.

In sum, the method is verified and these findings empirically substantiate the theoretical argument: Foreshortened perspective in film records can be corrected for and accurate measurements can be made corresponding to the dimensions of the original or actual observational field.

Elsewhere I have advanced a set of theoretical instructions for determining a person's location and employed the method with actual film records of locomotive behavior (see Wohlstein 1977). I have examined film records of three segments of the following types of locomotive behavior: a marching band, movement of simulated marching demonstrators, and the movement of pedestrians. The film records were generated from varying camera elevations. In all three conditions, the method worked extremely well for estimating the actual spatial arrangement of the participants, their respective velocities of movement, and any changes in the direction of movement from the film records.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

For students of collective behavior interested in describing the activities of "crowds," the method for correcting foreshortened perspective in film records offers a way to accurately measure variables germane to describing the character of these events. The method allows for the measurement of the velocity of locomotive behaviors, density, spatial arrangement, etc., which otherwise could not be accurately measured if conditions were not ideal. Often ideal conditions cannot be achieved in the field. That is, it is im-

possible to film from sufficient elevation to minimize distortion. Under such circumstances it would be difficult if not impossible to determine quantitatively the elementary features of the crowd which have been introduced. The corrective method set forth above contributes to our ability to deal with the problem of foreshortened perspective in film records, regardless of camera elevation. Thus, we are in a more advantageous position to pursue the task of description regarding the elementary features of collective behavior events.

The major shortcoming of this method is that it may be time-consuming to code from the film record depending on the time interval chosen, the number of participants, and the number of behaviors considered. In short, the more precision desired for description the more time-consuming the method becomes. I am exploring the possibility of using a digitizer system for recording the coordinates of a person's location on computer tape. However, the only feasible solution at present is to sample selectively portions of the film record or reduce the time interval used for coding.

As Milgram and Toch (1969:584) recognize, "In the end, there is no substitute for direct observation and measurement of authentic crowd behavior." It is to this end that this effort has been directed. Only when we begin to develop and fully explore direct observational techniques for measuring and describing collective behavior will we be in a position to know what goes on in "crowds" and to establish the patterns and regularities of behavior which must be explained.

NOTES

[1] For instance, filming half of the quadrangle at the University of Illinois from a first story window would produce more distortion in the film record than filming from the top of the same building.

[2] Harrison (1974) and Scherer (1974) offer methods which, in part, are related to the problem of foreshortened perspective. However, neither method adequately deals with the problem. Harrison (1974: 269-270) suggests superimposing a rectangular grid on a photograph or scale drawing of the observational field. Evidently this grid is not adjusted to correct for any distortion in the film record. In addition, it appears that the location of a person's coordinates on the film record is estimated by reference to landmarks in the observational field although how this is accomplished is not explained. Scherer (1974) was interested in determining the distances between members of a dyad in natural settings. However, the method developed for determining the distances between members of a dyad depends on knowledge of how far the subjects are from the camera or an estimate of this distance.

[3] I have developed an elaborate set of coding instructions for determining the location of a person elsewhere (Wohlstein 1977). Although in this presentation of the method I have chosen a two second interval for coding purposes this can be varied. It depends on the degree of precision desired and the length of time participants are retained on the film record.

[4] Having gathered the information necessary for correcting foreshortened perspective, the dimensions of the triangle of the camera with the observational field are known as diagrammed in Figure 5.

[5] Tables presenting this data are available upon request.

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Making a film of the matrix
involves reducing this triangle proportionately.
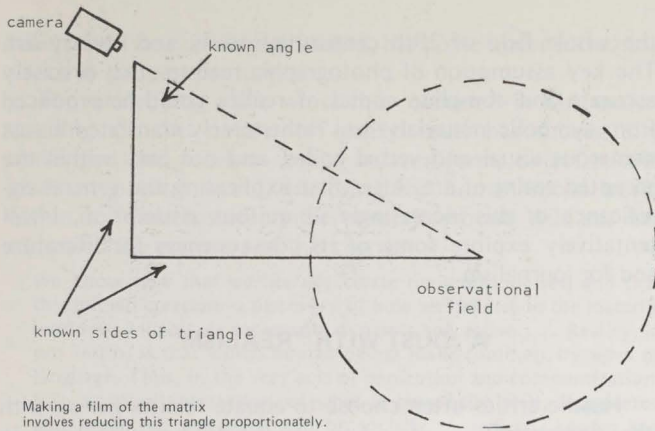
Figure 5

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REALISM, PHOTOGRAPHY AND JOURNALISTIC OBJECTIVITY IN 19th CENTURY AMERICA

DAN SCHILLER

When we commend a work of art as being "realistic," we commonly mean that it succeeds at faithfully copying events or conditions in the "real" world. How can we believe that pictures and writings can be made so as to copy, truly and accurately, a "natural" reality? The search for an answer to this deceptively simple question motivates the present essay.

I take it as axiomatic that languages, codes,[1] and conventions—the stuffs of competence in the active manipulation of signs and symbols—are material entities which vary across cultures and which change through time (Williams 1976: 505). Therefore I propose that the nature of belief in "realism" is a historical problem, accessible to empirical analysis within particular cultural contexts.

I intend to show that the reception of photography in 19th century America, and the cultural consequences attendant on that reception, are centrally linked to our conventional willingness to believe that artists can provide copies of natural reality.[2] Of course, we must underscore that "realism" long antedates photography. To take but one example, Ian Watt (1957) has persuasively demonstrated realism's defining hold over the novel in 18th century England. It would be more correct to say, then, that photography itself emerged out of artists' attempts to create *yet more realistic art*. Such attempts were probably motivated by expanding academic and commercial art markets. Daguerre, one of photography's inventors, hoped to fix images in order to reproduce scenes upon canvas without the labor of painting them. In this way his dioramas—large-scale sets of painted scenes passed before observers—might be made to take on an even more lifelike and illusionistic quality.[3] Joseph Niepce, the other major inventor of photography, was trying "to reproduce designs on lithographic stone without the necessity of actually copying by hand the design from the original" (Taft 1938:5). In short, photography was impelled by the commercial impulse to achieve labor-saving, exactly repeatable, and completely verisimilitudinous imitations of works of art and of nature.

Yet photography helped to accomplish a new sort of realism; and what I call "photographic realism" was animated by and in turn sustained a sweeping series of changes in the conventional design, execution and significance of virtually the whole field of 19th century painterly and literary art. The key assumption of photographic realism—that precisely accurate and complete copies of reality could be produced from symbolic materials—was rather freely translated across numerous visual and verbal codes, and not only within the accepted realm of art. After first explicating the general significance of this increasingly ubiquitous assumption, I will tentatively explore some of its consequences for literature and for journalism.

A JOUST WITH "REALISM"

Hostile critics often choose to equate realism *per se* with the demonstration of a few apparently basic qualities in works of art. Foremost among these is "objectivity." Wellek (1963:253), for example, defines realism as "the objective representation of contemporary social reality." Hemmings (1974:12), adopting Wellek's definition, explains that realism must be "undistorted by any subjective or partial vision." And Kolb—who, with Nochlin, seems unusually sensitive to the historical and cultural relativism of the style—states that conferees at a 1967 meeting of the Modern Language Association tended to define realism in terms of

> fidelity to actuality, objectivity (or neutrality—the absence of authorial judgment), democratic focus (particularized, ordinary characters), social awareness (and critical appraisal), reportorial detail, and colloquial expression [1969b:165].

Such definitions, despite their authority, seem only to echo what realist writers themselves claim they are doing. William Dean Howells, for example, in 1891 made reference to "the foolish old superstition that literature and art are anything but the expression of life, and are to be judged by any other test than that of their fidelity to it" (Becker 1963:133). And, in the first years of the 20th century, Theodore Dreiser stated the case even more bluntly:

> The sum and substance of literary as well as social morality may be expressed in three words—tell the truth... Truth is what is; and the seeing of what is, the realization of truth [Becker 1963:155].

The infinite regress which these explanations make no attempt to elude centers around an acceptably unproblematic definition of the nature of "fidelity" to "what is."

Clarence Darrow was an early and eloquent American advocate of a dynamic, active realism. In an article on "Realism in Literature and Art" (1893:113), Darrow emphasized that the realist

> must paint and write and work and think until the world shall learn so much, and grow so good, that the true will be all beautiful, and all the real be ideal.

Bertolt Brecht, a leading Marxist practitioner of realism in the 20th century, made a closely related point:

> We must not derive realism as such from particular existing works. ... Were we to copy the style of the realists, we would no longer be realists[4] [1974:50-51].

It is vital that we know that the problems which realism raises grow both out of art and out of reality. In fact, realism in general may be identified with the more or less self-conscious, conventionally coded belief that art and reality are not distinct nor, sometimes, easily divisible. And the belief in fixed standards, inherent either in art or reality, and capable of forging an immutable, natural and permanent bond be-

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tween the two equally rigid terms, has come under increasing attack in the past century.

The underlying shift which has occurred in our understanding of the nature of reality itself has successfully challenged the previous belief in a uniform, objective and invariant natural world, enclosing the human social world within it. With customary deftness, Raymond Williams has addressed the contours of this change:

> We know now that we literally create the world we see, and that this human creation—a discovery of how we can live in the material world we inhabit—is necessarily dynamic and active. . . . Reality, in our terms, is that which human beings make common, by work or language. Thus, in the very acts of perception and communication, this practical interaction of what is personally seen, interpreted and organized and what can be socially recognized, known and formed is richly and subtly manifested [1961:314-315].

And, at the level of individual cognition, Ulric Neisser has persuasively argued that

> there must be definite kinds of structure in every perceiving organism to enable it to notice certain aspects of the environment rather than others, or indeed to notice anything at all [1976:9].

Significantly, Neisser asserts that the study of cognition must become more "realistic" if it wishes to triumph over currently dominant psychological theories. The latter, he protests, are "lacking in ecological validity, indifferent to culture, even missing some of the main features of perception and memory as they occur in ordinary life" (1976:7-8).

Perhaps the most compelling example of current thinking on "the social construction of reality" is given by Goffman—who has not yet himself responded to his own suggestion:

> Displays [ritualized behaviors] are part of what we think of as "expressive behavior," and as such tend to be conveyed and received as if they were somehow natural, deriving, like temperature and pulse, from the way people are and needful, therefore, of no social or historical analysis. But, of course, ritualized expressions are as needful of historical understanding as is the Ford car. Given the expressive practices we employ, one may ask: Where do these displays come from [1976:71]?

Where are we left, with regard to "realism," now that both art and reality have been unveiled as inescapably *cultural* constructions?

We must, I think, fashion a definition of realism which adopts and extends Worth's (1978:4) "ethnographic semiotic" through its emphasis on "how actual people make meaning of their symbolic universe" and "how this differs from group to group, from young to old, from context to context and from culture to culture."[5] Ian Watt argues forcefully for a "formal realism" which, I believe, satisfies Worth's requirement (albeit only for one genre, the novel, in one major context: 18th century England):

> Formal realism, in fact, is the narrative embodiment of a premise. . . which is implicit in the novel form in general: the premise, or primary convention, that the novel is a full and authentic report of human experience. . . [1957:32].

More generally, I define realism *per se* as the conventionally coded premise of belief in a correspondence between "work of art" and "reality." This avowedly formal definition has the merit of allowing us to avoid the typical confusion of historically and culturally specific *enactments* of realism with the latter taken as a whole. As Brecht (1974) has indicated, this confusion ordinarily results in *formalism*. For, to the extent that what are usually known as "formal" or "stylis-

tic" conventions—such as the employment by an author of an antiomniscient narrator or of commonplace detail—are thought to embody the full meaning of realism, such conventions are cut loose from their historical context and lose their relation to how actual people actually created a belief in realism. My formal definition, however, attends to how realism is accomplished by analyzing the temporally and culturally fragile answer(s) given by a society to the question: What is the nature of the correspondence claimed for the symbolically coded work in its relation to "reality"? In short, our subject can only be approached by inquiring as to the terms in which a given society poses and responds to the question "What is realism?" A useful consequence of this focus is that we need no longer look within the text alone for realism's essence. Rather, it becomes vital to study the full totality of social relationships, technologies and cultural patterns which motivate, animate and sustain the way of seeing that, then and there, is realism.

The correspondence between art and reality may be loose and lack clear or highly codified rules; and there is some evidence that in 18th century European realism this sort of loose congruence did obtain. The minor French novelist, Gaillard de la Bataille, wrote in 1744, for example, in such a way as to stress the unconfined, open-ended picture which realist writers were requested to paint: "People want speaking likenesses, natural relations of the truth or at least of what may be true" (in Hemmings 1974:11). Even a cursory comparison of Bataille with, say, Dreiser's "truth is what is," reveals that in the intervening century and a half, the nature of realism somehow began to be thought of as a settled question.

Or perhaps Howells was right to claim in 1891 (Becker 1963:136), that realism "is not a new theory, but it has never before universally characterized literary endeavor." As Nochlin put the case:

> it was not until the nineteenth century that contemporary ideology came to equate belief in the facts with the total content of belief itself: it is in this that the crucial difference lies between nineteenth-century Realism and all its predecessors [1971:45].

I hope to demonstrate that in fact it was photography which gave to 19th century American realism its special character. Concomitantly, it was photographic realism which insisted that the correspondence between art—indeed, between many visual and verbal codes—and "reality" become absolutely symmetrical. Profound consequences attended the accomplishment of photographic realism across various symbolic codes, and in the pages below I hope to outline a few of the most important.[6]

PHOTOGRAPHY AND PHOTOGRAPHIC REALISM IN 19TH CENTURY AMERICA: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Worldwide, the cultural impact of daguerreotypy, the first major photographic technology, was immediate and far-ranging. The French government's gesture of benevolence which freed daguerreotypy from most international patent restrictions was undoubtedly pivotal: before the end of 1839—the year which marked the consolidation of the technical achievement—Daguerre's pamphlet describing his pro-

cess had been published in 30 editions, "in nearly as many languages" (Rudisill 1971:48).

Daguerreotypy's entrenchment was nowhere else as quick and as general as in the United States. Newhall (1976:33), an authority on early photography, asserts that by 1845 "daguerreotypes were so popular in America that the word was assimilated. . . into everyday language." A best-selling periodical, *Godey's Lady's Book*, stated in 1849:

> A few years ago it was not every man who could afford a likeness of himself, his wife or his children; these were luxuries known only to those who had money to spare; now it is hard to find the man who has not gone through the "operator's" hands from once to half-a-dozen times, or who has not the shadowy faces of his wife and children done up in purple morocco and velvet, together or singly, among his household treasures [Rudisill 1971:70].

The same sort of ethnographic detail was repeated in 1853, when a New York *Tribune* article boasted tellingly of the stature of American daguerreotypy at the International Exhibition of Art and Industry, then underway:

> If there be any one department in the whole building which is peculiarly American, and in which the country shines preeminent, it is in that of Daguerreotypes. . . . In contrasting the specimens of art which are taken here with those taken in European countries, the excellence of American pictures is evident. . . . our people are readier in picking up processes and acquiring the mastery of the art than our trans-Atlantic rivals. Not that we understand the science better, but the details of the art are acquired in a shorter time by us, while the enormous practice which our operators enjoy combines to render the daguerreotype a necessary contributor to the comforts of life. Does a child start on the journey of existence, and leave his "father's halls"; forthwith the little image is produced to keep his memory green. Does the daughter accept the new duties of matron, or does the venerated parent descend into the grave, what means so ready to revive their recollection? Does the lover or the husband go to Australia or California, and not exchange with the beloved one the image of what afforded so much delight to gaze upon? The readiness with which a likeness may be obtained, the truthfulness of the image, and the smallness of the cost, render it the current pledge of friendship; and the immense number of operators who are supported by the art, in this country, shows how widely the love of sun-pictures is diffused[7] [Greeley 1853:171-172].

Rudisill (1971:198) estimates that by 1850 Americans spent between eight and twelve million dollars a year on photographs. One company, the Edward & H. T. Anthony photographic company, had sales of $600,000 in 1864 (Jenkins 1975:50). And in 1872 a massive collection of essays on *The Great Industries of the United States* calculated on the basis of figures gathered on the importation of special albumenized photographic paper, that 50,400,000 photographs were made every year (Greeley et al. 1872:880).

Daguerreotypes were no longer the only form of photography; even by 1851 they were being replaced by the collodion process. The latter, being a negative-positive process (daguerreotypy was a direct positive process, which meant that a single copy of each image was the limit for each exposure), offered the commercially enticing possibility of multiple prints together with lower costs (cf. Jenkins 1975:39). Also, in the late 1850s,

> one of the early major mass consumer items was born. The stereoscope viewer and box of view cards were as common a feature of the post-Civil War American home as is the television set, today [Jenkins 1975:50].

"Stereo views," which have faded almost completely from the contemporary scene, were vastly popular throughout the latter 19th century; in 1901, a single producer of stereo views (Underwood) manufactured over seven million of them (Darrah 1964:109). By the 1880s and 1890s the individuation of photographic picture-taking competence was well underway, as cameras began to be mass-marketed;[8] but, decades earlier, the diffusion of photographic images was already thorough.

Generated by a ubiquity of pictures, *the sign system of American photographic realism drew heavily on the unappealable, exclusive and universally recognizable accuracy attributed to these images*. Writing in 1840, Edgar Allen Poe stated

> In truth the daguerreotype plate is infinitely more accurate than any painting by human hands. If we examine a work of ordinary art, by means of a powerful microscope, all traces of resemblance to nature will disappear—but the closest scrutiny of the photographic drawing discloses only a more absolute truth, more perfect identity of aspect with the thing represented [Rudisill 1971:54].

As if to denote the mechanical certainty of the process and its result, daguerreotypists were commonly termed "operators."

The "accuracy" which earned Poe's wonderment has, until recently, reigned unchallenged as the dominant standard of interpretation for photography—indeed, it may still so serve. Ivins, for example, believed that photographs

> were exactly repeatable visual images made without any of the syntactical elements implicit in all hand made pictures [1953: 122].

This purported lack of syntax, this transparency of form, is obviously problematic. Throughout her remarkable book, *Visual Communication and the Graphic Arts*, Jussim convincingly demolishes such notions:

> If there is a possibility that "photography" can be *subjective*, that what it records can be manipulated by an individual or restricted either by the technological limitations of lens or emulsion or by "artistic", i.e., subjective, manipulations in the making of photographic positives on paper, then we must admit that the purely objective character of photography as posited by Ivins is a fiction [1974:298].

On the other hand, however, Jussim's refutation is in one important sense not really the point: for the illusion of photographic "objectivity" has certainly been *real* enough in American *culture* to assure even some of the most astute critics—Poe and Ivins, for instance—of its existence. The more vital issue, therefore, is why photography was and is so widely recognized as being without syntax.

A simple answer is possible.[9] In my judgment, the "subjective manipulations" which comprise any syntax in this case had to be discovered and systematically utilized by photographers in order to achieve foreseeable effects, and equally competently appreciated by the public, for an explicit belief in the existence of such a syntax to arise. Such a belief, however, is tantamount to admitting that photography must employ a style. And it is *this* notion, that photography has a style, that is consistently undercut by photographic realism.[10]

The blockage occurs for two reasons: (a) the general diffusion of photographic images and of photographic realism *before* most persons came to possess the equipment necessary to produce their own pictures; and (b) the existence of photographic realism in *verbal* codes both before and during

the 19th century. Verbal codes, whose practitioners were motivated for their own reasons to seek the easy "objectivity" claimed by photography, have thus come to be a chief regenerative source of the belief in photographic realism.[11] For both verbal and pictorial codes however, the only communicative intention which photographic realism allows is the intention to "mirror" the "natural" world. Such an intention, in its turn, generates a crucial contradiction: *the communication of meaning which, seemingly, is not created within the code, but in the natural world itself.*[12] The verbally and visually coded convention of photographic realism thus intervenes between competence and the explicit acknowledgment of communication within such codes.

From the very first, therefore, photographic accuracy was remarked upon and accorded the highest status. One must wonder whether this could have occurred if "accuracy" had not been motivated, in society, by the rationalization of production—by the simultaneous and intertwined needs for precise machine tools, for a labor force capable and willing to relinquish old procedures and tools and embrace new technologies, and for sales records and accounting procedures able to reliably itemize, record and justify incomes and expenditures to members of corporations, themselves a newly emerging legal entity. The concern for reliability certainly took on new importance in science at this juncture. Hobsbawm (1975:269), for instance, mentions that

> "Positive" science, operating on objective and ascertained facts, connected by rigid links of cause and effect, and producing uniform, invariant general "laws" beyond query or wilful modification, was the master-key to the universe, and the nineteenth century possessed it [1975:269].

It is vital, though, to qualify and perhaps to restrict somewhat the actual impact of scientific thought on the development of technology; for recent work seems to indicate that the function of science as a justificatory and explanatory belief-system may sometimes take precedence over its ability to engender operational technologies. Ferguson (1977:833) contends, for example, that "the organization of American technology in the first half of the 19th century tended naturally to follow the pattern set by the world of art." The reason he gives is that artists embodied the nonverbal knowledge which alone could guide precise and proficient construction of workable new technologies. Following the thought slightly further, Daguerre himself may be cited as an important example of the guidance by art of technology—in this case, of photography.

Samuel Morse, the artist, scientist, and inventor who did most to bring photography at once to the United States (B. Newhall 1976:15-27), provides another good instance. In a speech to the National Academy of Design in 1840, Morse asserted that daguerreotypes were

> painted by Nature's self with a minuteness of detail, which the pencil of light in her hands alone can trace, and with a rapidity, too, which will enable (the artist) to enrich his collection with a super-abundance of *materials* and not *copies; they cannot be called copies of nature, but portions of nature herself* [Rudisill 1971: 57].

Seemingly both of and about nature, both imitator and imitated, daguerreotypy drew a compelling force from its apparently effortless transcendance of the order of human fallibility. As Jussim observes:

The photograph unquestionably stood for the thing itself. It was not viewed as a message about reality, but as reality itself, somehow magically compressed and flattened onto the printed page, but, nevertheless, equivalent to, rather than symbolic of, three-dimensional reality [1974:289].

It should be evident that despite its central importance as a cultural construct, the notion that photographs are equivalent to reality itself is both mistaken and fundamentally misleading. In Worth's phrasing,

> it is impossible—physiologically and culturally—by the nature of our nervous system and the symbolic modes or codes we employ, to make unstructured *copies* of natural events [1976:15].

Nevertheless, photography's uncanny ability seemingly to re-present reality—to depict, without human intervention, an entire world of referents—apparently ensured its universal recognizability as a standard of accuracy and truth.[13] "The Daguerreolite," an article published in the Cincinnati *Daily Chronicle* on January 17, 1840, articulated these features in lastingly significant terms:

> Its perfection is unapproachable by human hand, and its truth raises it high above all language, painting, or poetry. It is the first universal language, addressing itself to all who possess vision, and in characters alike understood in the courts of civilization and the hut of the savage. The pictorial language of Mexico, the hieroglyphics of Egypt are now superseded by reality[14] [Rudisill 1971: 54].

Here, then, is the basis for notions of a universal language of art which Worth has rightfully attacked:

> the knowledge that there are many codes and languages of speaking—does not seem to extend to our understanding of visual signs. Somehow as soon as we leave the verbal mode we begin to talk about universal languages. . . . We seem to want very much to believe that by the use of pictures we can overcome the problems attendant to words and in particular to different languages. Somehow the notion persists that. . . pictures in general, (have) no individual cultures that "speak". . . in differing languages, or articulate in differing codes[15] [1978:1-2].

In the universality accorded to the language of photography was an exclusive standard of truth, as well. Scharf (1974:23) writes that

> the traditional concern with the camera obscura and other implements helped to prepare the way for the acceptance of the photographic image and accommodated the growing conviction that a machine alone could become the final arbiter in questions concerning visual truth.

As early as 1842 the 27th United States Congress had accepted daguerreotypes as "undeniably accurate evidence in settling the Maine-Canada boundary" (Rudisill 1971:240). And, in 1851, a panoramic series of daguerreotype views of San Francisco elicited the following comment in *Alta California*, a local paper:

> It is a picture, too, which cannot be disputed—it carries with it evidence which God himself gives through the unerring light of the world's greatest luminary. . . . (the view) will tell its own story, and the sun to testify to its truth. . . . [Newhall 1976:86].

The very word "daguerreotype" "soon came to be applied to any study of society which laid claim to sharp observation and total honestly [*sic*]"[16] (Wilsher 1977:84).

Photographic realism therefore posited that to the correspondence between the work of art and "reality," which earlier realisms had engendered, should be added a rigid belief in the scientifically symmetric and accurate, exclusive,

and universally recognizable nature of their relation. So empowered, photography would hold its creators to account by redefining the ways in which people saw. As Rudisill views it,

a common ground of trust was soon established which equated a picture made by the camera with the truth of a direct perception. Once this sort of reliability was attributed to the medium and it was placed into wide use, it was inevitable that national imagery should henceforth have to base itself on the evidence of the machine. Political candidates must "daguerreotype" themselves on the public imagination; popular portraiture of statesmen, entertainers, or criminals in the press had to credit origin in the daguerreotype when laying claim to accuracy [1971:231].

Photography paradigmatically revised the nature of "accuracy"; for, rather than merely manipulating symbols, photography appeared and claimed to reveal Nature. Thus, the major point: *photographic realism made it no longer acceptable for truth to be a visibly symbolic creation*. Art and science both had to depict *natural* truth or else renounce their claims to accuracy and, therefore, to truth itself.

Examples of the succeeding redefinition may be drawn from both enterprises. Edward Hitchcock, Professor of Geology (and President of Amherst College), wrote in 1851:

What new and astonishing avenues of knowledge.... (I speak) of those new channels that will be thrown open, through which a knowledge of other worlds and of other created beings, can be conveyed to the soul almost illimitably.... [Rudisill 1971:91].

Photography must be accorded a central place in the history of astronomy (Taft 1938:198-200); in geographic and other scientific exploration (Newhall 1976:84-91); and in cartography (Woodward 1975:137-155). In general, as Ivins tells us, photography, although not a perfect report, nonetheless "can and does in practice tell a great many more things than any of the old graphic processes was able to"[17] (1953:139).

Likewise in art, photographic realism redefined the nature of the endeavor. An example from a slightly later time may serve best: I offer Eadweard Muybridge's photographic studies of animal motion, conducted in the 1870s and 1880s.[18] His pictures of horses "contradicted almost all of the previous representations made by artists" in showing that the animals had all four legs off the ground during the trot, canter and gallop (Scharf 1974:213). Since photography had clearly exposed "the error of the old theory of the gallop," and since the technology's claim to accuracy was final and exclusive, a wide class of contemporaries insisted that "artists will no more be able to claim that they represent nature as she seems, when they depict a horse in full run in the conventional manner, or in the mythical gallop" (the writer is J. D. B. Stillman in *The Horse in Motion* [1882], in Scharf 1974: 216). Consequently, after Muybridge's photographs became available in France, for example, "figures of the horse in the conventional gallop no longer appear in the work of Degas" (Scharf 1974:206). To remain true to the new *form* of visual truth, the content of art and the practice of artists had to change.[19],[20]

The most crucial consequences of this shift for symbolic production and appreciation have been extensively studied by Gerbner and Gross (1976). Their "cultivation analyses" of television's impact on viewers reveal substantial differences between the social worlds which light and heavy viewers of this eminently photographically realistic medium will construct. As they put it,

The premise of realism is a Trojan horse which carries within it a highly selective, synthetic, and purposeful image of the facts of life [Gerbner and Gross 1976:178].

In other words, photographic realism permits (indeed, forces) "the social tasks to which presumably 'objective' news, 'neutral' fiction, or 'nontendentious' entertainment lend themselves" (Gerbner 1973a:267) *to remain hidden* behind the transparent cloak of the "natural world." Correspondingly, the more convincingly this world is enunciated according to realist conventions,

the nearer its approach to living reality, the more significant would the symbolic function of the picture become, because the observer could better respond to the picture as if to reality itself [Rudisill 1971:13].

When a culture both proposes and abides by a standard which, like photographic realism, is inescapable, universal and exclusive—then events which employ the conventional language of this standard become "true events" regardless of their actual truth value. In no other way, I think, can we explicate the relation signified by the thousands of letters written and sent each year to seek advice from the "fictional" Dr. Marcus Welby.[21]

On one hand, then, since photographic realism becomes historically ubiquitous to the extent that it is both accessible to and competently appreciated by the mass of the population, it harbors a growing capacity for presentation of "truths" which are unappealing to various groups or strata who nonetheless likewise employ the style of photographic realism. On the other hand, to the extent that the inevitably concrete content which forms the very *measure* of competent appreciation is provided by centrally produced, systematically selected, often iterative codes, the latter will tend, relatively autonomously, to cultivate hegemonic, institutionalized rules of social morality. It is, furthermore, vitally significant that these two fundamental aspects of photographic realism need not be, and usually are not, "in sync." This follows from the subordination of photographic realism to commercial endeavor—which may mobilize as *content* material which may offend or even alarm the stratum or class which patterns its specific symbolic form. Thus contemporary reformers are incensed over the depiction of televised violence *per se*, regardless of the symbolic functions served by constant repetition of scenarios in which the poor, the weak and the old are taught to be fearful of attempts to change their plight.

PHOTOGRAPHIC REALISM IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

Photographic realism extended the normative belief in a direct, completely accurate and universally recognizable symmetry between symbolic codes and all of reality. Let us now turn our attention to the impact of this standard on verbal codes.

Leon Edel (1974:177) believes that "novelists have sought almost from the first to become a camera"; implicit here is that the existence of photographic realism in verbal codes abstractly prefigured the development of photography itself. Wilsher confirms the subordination of the technology to the cultural form which preceded it:

The readers of Fanny Burney's romance *Cecilia* (1782) were delighted with the realism of her descriptions of London life; a friend, Mrs. Thrale, remarked that the novel was just like a "camera obscura in a window of Piccadilly" [1977:184].

Once again though, photography proper systematically extended its own unique form of realism as the dominant concrete standard of accurate and truthful description. The publisher of *The Daguerreotype, A Magazine of Foreign Literature and Science*, established in Boston in 1847, announced in his prospectus that the journal was

intended to supply, in its successive numbers, a series of striking pictures of the constantly varying aspect of public affairs, of the state of the public taste, and the bent of public opinion, in the most refined and intellectual countries of Europe; and is, therefore, not inaptly, called THE DAGUERREOTYPE [Rudisill 1971: 72].

In 1858, a book review in the *Atlantic Monthly* stated the case more generally:

To copy Nature faithfully and heartily is certainly not less needful when stories are presented in words than when they are told on canvas or in marble[22] [McMahon 1973:11].

The impact of photographic realism on American literature was immediate and enduring. Hawthorne in 1851 even employed the daguerreotype as a central plot feature in *The House Of The Seven Gables*. The most explicit and conscious utilization of photographic realism that I have found, testifies to its resiliency even long after our period.

H. P. Lovecraft published "Pickman's Model" in 1927 and, like many of his other stories, its most vital concern is the structure of proof and how best to make our naive knowledge of such rules of evidence shock and frighten us as readers.

Richard Upton Pickman, a painter whose "forte was faces," makes a terrifying specialty of "weird art." His unmistakable talent, manifested in works such as his horrific "Ghoul Feeding," has deeply impressed the narrator. Throughout the story the latter shares with the reader his continuously mounting fright, as he recalls the progression which led him to friendship and to increasing familiarity with Pickman and his work. Pickman eventually leads the narrator to his "other studio," located in the very oldest part of Boston. Inside are dozens of the painter's most ghastly canvases:

It was not any mere artist's interpretation that we saw; it was pandaemonium itself, crystal clear in stark objectivity. That was it, by Heaven! The man was not a fantaisiste or romanticist at all—he did not even try to give us the churning, prismatic ephemera of dreams, but coldly and sardonically reflected some stable, mechanistic, and well-established horror-world which he saw fully, brilliantly, squarely, and unfalteringly. God knows what that world can have been, or where he ever glimpsed the blasphemous shapes that loped and trotted and crawled through it; but whatever the baffling source of his images, one thing was plain. Pickman was in every sense—in conception and in execution—a thorough, painstaking, and almost scientific *realist* [1927:28].

The narrator actually screams when viewing one particularly loathesome unfinished canvas, whose subject is a dog-faced monster with scaly claws and half-hooved feet, drooling as it gnaws at the head of "a thing that had been a man." He sees a badly curled up piece of paper pinned to a vacant part of the canvas, and reaches for it, believing it to be a photograph of some background Pickman plans to paint. At this moment Pickman suddenly draws a revolver and motions

the narrator to silence—then steps out into the main cellar and closes the door behind him. The narrator is "paralysed"; strange scuffling noises are heard; six shots ring out; and Pickman reappears "cursing the bloated rats that infested the ancient well." The two men leave and return to well-lit, middle-class Boston.

The narrator then explains to us that he had "vacantly crumpled" the curled-up paper into his coatpocket during the shooting episode. The last two paragraphs in the story explain his motive in dropping Pickman from his list of friends and at the same moment *create* the real horror upon which the whole narrative is so carefully built:

Don't ask me, either what lay behind that mole-like scrambling Pickman was so keen to pass off as rats. There are secrets, you know, which might have come down from old Salem times, and Cotton Mather tells even stranger things. You know how damned lifelike Pickman's paintings were—how we all wondered where he got those faces.

Well—that paper wasn't a photograph of any background, after all. What it showed was simply the monstrous being he was painting on that awful canvas. It was the model he was using—and its background was merely the wall of the cellar studio in minute detail. But by God, Eliot, *it was a photograph from life* (1927:32).

Lovecraft has calculatingly inscribed into this story his knowledge of the reader's immediate and unreflecting belief in the natural truth of photographic realism. And, by animating our patterned expectations about photographic truth—by building these expectations into the story—Lovecraft renews and revivifies the larger pattern itself.

Yet the story may also demonstrate the distance which by 1927 a writer might find between photographic realism and his own narrative intentions. In the latter 19th century, by contrast, writers were more concerned over how best to create and structure photographic realism in verbal codes. Charles D. Warner discussed the problem in the *Atlantic* in April 1883:

We want to think that the characters in a story are real persons . . . We cannot do this if we see the author set them up as if they were marionettes, and take them to pieces every few pages to show their inner structure and the machinery by which they are moved [McMahon 1973:51].

American literary realism sustained its illusion by means of antiomniscience, a central narrative technique which

results in a twofold attempt to remove the external presence of the author through dramatic representation and through the effort to present description and summary, even when it is written in the third person (traditionally the territory of the omniscient author), from the angle of vision of the characters [Kolb 1969a:67].

In turn, the realist author's analyses of social and psychological phenomena had to be translated into action and dialogue (McMahon 1973:50). Or, as Lathrop put it in 1873 in the *Atlantic*,

This material should be employed out of sight, in the decoction of a rich vitality for the nourishment of the fictitious individuals, and its function should be hidden from the common eye [McMahon 1973:50].

Just as surely as the camera appeared to destroy the need for pictorial syntax, writers were called upon to eliminate any blatant traces of their own subjective presence within their work. In "The Art of Fiction" (1884), Henry James objected vigorously to Anthony Trollope's apparent unconcern over this issue: he

admits that the events he narrates have not really happened, and that he can give his narrative any turn the reader may like best. Such a betrayal of a sacred office seems to me, I confess, a terrible crime [Kolb 1969a:66].

Once the author's figure was no longer seen to visibly intervene in, interrupt or redirect the narrative, the reader could apprehend the story as an unmediated, natural progression of visual images, a series of verbal stereoscopic views. And indeed, Lathrop claimed in 1874 that realism "supplies the visual distinctness which is one of the great charms of the stage"; therefore, "where we thought nothing worthy of notice, it (realism) shows everything to be rife with significance"[23] (McMahon 1973:29-30). Such "significance" was of course written in so that readers could *infer* meaning in the frame provided by the text; but how could it be assured that, since the text was increasingly understood in terms of its photographic veracity, its meaning would not be *attributed* as if within the "natural" world? Thus how possible to make certain that the meaning put into the work by the realist writer would be certainly equated with that taken from it by readers? With photographic realism, the interpreter must either pierce the veneer of objectivity, or be content with *attributing* meaning to the text.[24] In turn writers may believe that they are creating "fictions" but, if photographic realism is successful, readers must think that what they are scanning is photographic truth.

The mimetic basis of photographic realism could create problems for writers on its own account. Dialect, for example, which was favored by realists to evoke specific geographical circumstances, might interfere with the illusion if not handled subtly. In 1895, Charles M. Thompson spoke to this issue:

Surely the proper course, in works not avowedly scientific, is to use only as much of local peculiarity of speech as will give proper dramatic value to the talk of a character, as will not confuse the eye with queer spelling, or render any remark unintelligible without special knowledge[25] [McMahon 1973:22].

Generally speaking, and probably as a defense of their prerogatives as artists, major American realists denied "the significance of mere details and a one-to-one correspondence between the subject and the representation" (Kolb 1969a: 28). William Dean Howells, a prominent American realist, was accused by a reader of "anachronism" for his reference in the first installment of *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (November 1884) to the novel *Daisy Miller* (by Henry James). His offense was to make a character in *Silas Lapham* date the action within the narrative to 1875—but *Daisy Miller* was published in 1878. Howells responded to the charge thus:

As I may hereafter repeat this cause of offense to accurate minds, perhaps it will be well for me to state the principle upon which I reconcile it to a conscience not void of the usual anxiety. It appears to me that I discharge my whole duty to reality in giving, as well as I can, the complexion of the period of which I write, and I would as lief as not allow one of my persons to speak of Daisy Millerism, even a whole year before Daisy Miller appeared in print, if it gave a characteristic tint in the portraiture. . . .

An artist illustrating my story would put the people in the fashions of 1884, though they actually dressed in those of 1875, and I think he would be right; for it is the effect of contemporaneousness that is to be given, and the general truth is sometimes better than the specific fact.[26] [Kolb 1969a:29].

Seemingly then, a symmetric correspondence between subject and literary representation was widely found to be forceful and compelling. However, photographic realism in literature extended and, I think, drew upon, the development of photographic realism in a more widely circulated and public genre—journalism. Hofstadter for example, has written that

With few exceptions the makers of American realism, even from the days of Mark Twain and William Dean Howells, were men who had training in journalistic observation—Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, Harold Frederic, David Graham Phillips. . . [1955:198].

He might have added that realist authors observed like journalists because they had been trained to write as journalists. And, as we shall see, to write as a journalist, even by the 1840s, had begun to require adherence to a steadily deepening conventional ethic of "objectivity" in news reporting.

PHOTOGRAPHIC REALISM
IN AMERICAN JOURNALISM

In 1848 an article comparing James Gordon Bennett, publisher of the *New York Herald*, with John Walter, proprietor of the London *Times*, gave the following description of their efforts:

The *New York Herald* is now the representative of American manners, of American thought. It is the daily daguerreotype of the heart and soul of the model republic. It delineates with faithfulness the American character in all its rapid changes and ever varying hues. The dominant character of European journals is Walterism—that of American journals is Bennettism. But not only is the *New York Herald* the daily portraiture of the mind, the imagination, the thought of the United States—it is the reflector of the inert mind of Mexico and the South American republics. It gives out the feelings of British America, too. It may be said with perfect justice, therefore, that the *New York Herald* is the face of the Western half of the earth, whose lineaments portray with fidelity the inward workings of this new world. . . [Pray 1855:412].

Such extravagant praise is revealing in several respects. Note, for instance, the accuracy or "fidelity" attributed to the *Herald*; also bear in mind the writer's probably wishful claim that the *Herald* manifested the "dominant character" of American journals. It is worth mentioning, too, that the *Herald* is here afforded the spoils of the recent victory over Mexico.

The journalistic embrace of photographic realism is made more explicit in the dramatic writing of the early *National Police Gazette*. This journal advertised its projected utility in detailing the apprehension of an absconded felon by a magistrate—who was informed of the crime by means of the "London Police Gazette." The magistrate, in the midst of reading about this horrible offense,

raised his eyes carelessly, as one will in cases of casual interruption, but was suddenly paralyzed by the appearance of the figure before him. It appeared as if the monster of his imagination had been suddenly conjured into life, and had slipped from the columns of the journal to glance upon him as a hideous reality [*National Police Gazette*, Vol. 1, Nos. 1-2-3-4, Oct. 16, 1845:53].

More sober, but equally emphatic, was the endorsement made by the anonymous author of *Asmodeus in New York*:

Contrary to what is observed in many other countries, magistrates and policemen admire the press, and extend to it their sympathy on every possible occasion. They regard it as the best detective at their command—the most reliable and efficient agent against evil-doers. When any offense or crime is committed, newspapers give such minute details, such complete information res-

pecting its circumstances and supposed authors, that the latter are soon traced and discovered by the aid of a people whose suspicions and watchfulness have been thus aroused. Though the passport system does not exist in the United States, and in spite of the republic's extensive domains, offenders seldom escape. The Press, with its Argus eyes, soon ferrets them out of their hiding-places, and notwithstanding their disguises [Anonymous 1868:15].

Finally, in the following passage, written in 1873, observe how the author extends praise to the *Tribune* by first rebutting what, he feels, will be the conventional interpretation given to his metaphor:

Whoever seeks a faithful daguerreotype of the progress of mankind during the years which have passed since the founding of The Tribune will find it in the columns of that newspaper. I do not here speak of the mere publication of events as they occurred; of mere journalistic enterprise. I mean to say that The Tribune sympathized with every advance movement, and was part and parcel of it; that the victories of philanthropy, of truth, of justice, of human rights have been also triumphs of the journal founded by Horace Greeley [Ingersoll 1873:483].

The widespread typification of the newspaper as a daguerreotype of the social and natural world extended to the active producers of news as well. Henry Clay, writing to James Gordon Bennett in June of 1841, concerning the admission of *Herald* reporters to the U.S. Senate, somewhat anxiously underscored the mechanism he expected the journalists to provide:

I should be glad that the reporters of your paper or that of any other could be admitted; provided always that whoever is received, in good faith, performs the duty of a stenographer [Pray 1855: 291].

Photographic realism was becoming the guiding beacon of reportorial practice. A classic statement is found in Isaac Pray's fascinating—and adulatory—biography of James Gordon Bennett (Pray himself worked on the *Herald*); here, a longstanding and vital link between photographic realism and professionalism[28] was clearly made:

Even the very reformers of the time, of every stamp and kind, are indebted largely to the *Herald* for the promulgation of their own words and thoughts, and usually they have been reported, as they always ought to be, without any running commentary or gratuitous abuse—a license that no reporter ought to indulge in; for a reporter should be as a mere machine to repeat, in spite of editorial suggestion or dictation. He should know no master but his duty, and that is to give the exact truth. His profession is a superior one, and no love of place or popularity should swerve him from giving the truth in its integrity. If he departs from this course, he inflicts an injury on himself, on his profession, and on the journal which employs him. Mr. Bennett's policy has ever been to report *verbatim*, if possible [Pray 1855:472].

The notion that reporters could and should transfer, automatically and completely, the reality of events into writing, is similarly evident in beliefs subscribed to by other reporters. Nathan D. Urner, a New York *Tribune* reporter, describes his reaction upon stumbling across a "story" in the form of a young girl street singer whose father will soon be executed for murder:

Here was a chance for me. I happened to be the only reporter present at the scene—"sensation" was my forte—a "beat" upon all the other dailies had come directly to my hand. . . . But the whole thing stood before me like a picture which it seemed a sacrilege to copy.[29] [Martin 1868:132].

Later, the muckrake journalist Ida Tarbell reminisced,

many years after her exposure of the Standard Oil Corporation had made her famous:

My conscience began to trouble me. Was it not as much my business as a reporter to present this (the favorable) side of the picture as to present the other? (Hofstadter 1955:194]

Her regret follows from the lack of "balance" which, in retrospect, she believes faulted her writing. An even stronger statement of proper reportorial practice may be found in Emma Ware's biography of Jacob Riis, another notorious muckraker:

His friends, trying to prod him loose from his reporter's beat, wanted him to develop his material into fiction; but he was not interested in playing up a story beyond its true implications. The real article was what interested him, he said. Furthermore, he did not believe he could invent fiction [1939:41].

As Tuchman (1972) has persuasively shown, this presumption (or intention) of "objectivity" pervades the occupational ideology of currently practicing journalists. Yet its roots, I am arguing, reach deep into 19th century American culture, where they are intertwined with those put down by photographic realism. For if, as Tuchman (1972) asserts, news objectivity is a "strategic ritual," then it is a ritual which was first performed in the mid-19th century. Moreover, rather than serving only as a defensive mechanism to shield professional newsmen against mistakes and criticism [Tuchman 1972:678], news objectivity may be viewed as the fundamental historical assumption of photographic realism in journalism, typically molding key elements of news form. Far from being *only* a functional aspect of newsgathering operations—and I do not denigrate its importance in this sphere—the claim of news objectivity permits, may even *replace*, the basic assumption of verisimilitude between newspaper and reality. In short, news objectivity allows the otherwise difficult belief that the newspaper "mirrors" or "reflects" reality.

19th century critics often instanced this equation of news with photography in remarks which idealized an unbridgeable distance between works of literature and newspaper reports. G. P. Lathrop wrote in the *Atlantic* in March 1883 that the novel

will never become incorporated with the domain of art until the belief has been abandoned that a mere lumping together of material, with no more integration or meaning than satisfies newspaper reporters, will produce a genuine novel [McMahon 1973:77].

More generally, as McMahon reports, the *Atlantic* critics on the whole "fear that the novel, in becoming a literal recording of facts, may cease to become an art form and degenerate into mere report or journalism" (1973:25-26).

McMahon's charge is with us still. Wellek (1963:255), for example, writes that "in its lower reaches realism constantly declined into journalism, treatise writing, scientific description, in short, into non-art." William Ivins (1953:135-136) also apparently accepts this rigorous division of literature and journalism. Such acceptance indicates a continuity with beliefs evidenced as early as the mid-19th century, beliefs founded on the demonstration, by newspapers, of photographic truth. In 1845, the weekly journal *The Subterranean* published a poem by one James Montgomery, "The Press"; the third stanza of this poem reads:

What is the Press? 'Tis what the tongue
Was to the world when Time was young,

When, by tradition, sire to son
Conveyed what'er was known or done;
But fact and fiction so were mix'd,
That boundaries never could be fixed
[*The Subterranean*, Vol. III, No. 1, May 24, 1845:3].

Clearly, the author implies that the press permitted the separation of fact from fiction or, equally significant, that the press itself animates and therefore testifies to their disengagement.

However, the bifurcation of literature and journalism—despite its seeming rigidity in our culture—has never permitted the emergence of a clearcut boundary between the two (this, after all, is what the critics have been complaining about!).[30] An instructive passage from "The Decline of the Novel" in the *Nation* (Vol. VI, #150, May 14, 1868:389-390) takes its interest from the somewhat enigmatic kinship which it ascribes to literature and news:

The successor of the novel, in the chief of the literary places of power, will doubtless be the family of weekly and monthly journals. It is a family of respectable antiquity. . . . in the half-century since the novel attained the highest rank, (the periodical devoted to literary and social subjects) has gradually been drawing to its standard greater and greater numbers of the ablest writers, till now, in this age of business done by steam and telegraph; in this age, therefore, of news brought by steam and lightning from every quarter of the earth; in this age, therefore, of business newspapers read daily by millions who more and more insist that the daily newspaper shall more and more exclusively devote itself to news; in this age which naturally, then, makes of the newspaper a type to which literature naturally may, and, indeed, necessarily must conform itself if it is to reach the reader—in this age the quarterly, monthly and weekly press, aided by its kinship with its immensely powerful unliterary brother, seems destined to an easy conquest of the throne.

Similarly, David G. Croly, Comtean Positivist and editor of the *New York Graphic* (the first American illustrated daily), remarked in 1875 that "the modern novel and the newspaper are beginning to assimilate, and are becoming very much alike" (Wingate 1875:92). And, in 1906, James McCarthy's *The Newspaper Worker*, purportedly a manual for use by persons hopeful to become reporters, stated that after serving their apprenticeships, young reporters

unless restrained by good sense are in danger of running into the delusion that they are producing literature [McCarthy 1906:13].

One reason for the apparent difficulty of boundary maintenance between news-writing and "literary" writing may be that the newspaper was one of the few accessible and culturally sanctioned "schools" of writing—and only by *actually* writing could any individual attain competence in this code.[31] Or, as McCarthy put it, referring to journalism—and simultaneously buttressing the segregation of fact from fiction—"ability to write is not a birth gift like the divine lispings of the poet" (McCarthy 1906:8).[32]

Pretentious reporters articulated and impelled a more fundamental issue. They challenged the normally unspoken cultural consensus that news, like photographic realism as a whole, is *unselective and nonsymbolic*; and, in turn, that art which employs the language and style of news loses the very symbolic and selective features which define it as art. Actually, of course, the intricate patterning of *news is both symbolic and selective*. Correspondingly, the danger and the promise of photographic realism in literature is not that it may "degenerate" into "mere journalism" but, on the con-

trary, that it may reveal news as the *culturally structured and artistic creation that it is.*[33]

Helen MacGill Hughes (1942:11) pioneered discussion of the art of newswriting:

of all possible "facts", only some can be written as news, for the news is a relative matter. It depends upon the point of view of the reporter who writes it, and the reporter's point of view emanates from the job itself, from the nature of his assignment, and from the character of his newspaper.[34]

As we should be at pains to demonstrate, the newspaper and the assignments which comprise its "beats" change historically: thus the actual content of news objectivity itself also evolves. The course of its development is related to what various institutions, particularly those occupying what Gerbner (1973b and other works) has identified as "power roles" in regard to ongoing newspaper production, will accept as a suitable script for the presentation of the facts. For, as Taylor, Walton and Young have argued, facts

are a product of the work of those with the power to define what is to be taken to be "factual" and of the willingness of those without such power to accept the given definitions [1973:26].

In the culturally imposed hierarchy of genres, journalism is expected to be decisively marked off by virtue of its reputedly non-symbolic, objective character. In turn, once objectivity becomes the dominant convention in news reporting, the assumption or, at least, the ideal, of verisimilitude mediates and defines discussion and comprehension of news. Paraphrasing Geertz (1973:451), we may therefore say about the newspaper that, each day, it generates and regenerates the very objectivity which it pretends only to display.

CONCLUSIONS

Several major questions must be raised for future ethnographic-semiotic inquiries. If, for example, objectivity is culturally contrived, what are the historically changing limits of its embrace? What was and what now will be accepted as a "copy" *in situ*—by different publics and in different codes? May not "objectivity" (whose construction is manifestly supervised by carefully trained reporters) be imposed on particular classes of news for the benefit of a large, but nonetheless limited, social group? If so, how does this imposition register on other groups, themselves perhaps attempting to cultivate relatively distinct and dissimilar notions of what will constitute a suitable "copy"? How far, in short, does the convention stretch?

Despite all sorts of organizational constraints and precautions, the very need to produce an objective copy of reality for daily distribution to millions of viewers and readers inevitably can confront a heterogeneous people with divergent choices concerning the character of the social world. The knowledge that objectivity must be culturally imposed, therefore, may grow out of a more basic issue: fundamental, continuing disagreement over what can and should be accepted as "objective reality." At the heart of such a dispute is the nature of a culture.

Thus the growing body of theory and research which challenges unreflecting acceptance of "unstructured copies of events" may be merely a symptom of a larger conflict. What

are the sources of this disagreement and how may researchers isolate and appraise them?

If the true measure of a science lies in its ability to make valid and correct predictions, then the future of "objectivity" is of central importance. Finally, then, the most vital question: If it is decisively undercut, by what will "objectivity" be replaced? I hope that the emphasis I have given to the cultural structuring of all symbolic activities will help to show that this problem cannot be addressed without recourse to normative, as well as to empirical and analytical knowledge.

NOTES

[1] Following Gross (1973a:59), codes may be defined as organized subsets of "the total range of elements, operations, and ordering principles correlated with a field of reference that are possible in a given mode or family of symbol systems. In the simplest sense, then, any single language is a code existing within the verbal mode." I will employ "code" to describe much more limited cultural forms or patterns as well.

[2] This report forms part of a larger study-in-progress, called *Historical Origins and Symbolic Functions of Objectivity in American News Reporting*. It is a preliminary attempt to frame questions which will be addressed in much greater detail in the larger work.

[3] Earlier, Daguerre had pioneered the development of dioramas, which by the mid-19th century had come to be thriving businesses in France, England and America. Logically, if not technically, the diorama may be regarded as the predecessor of the cinema (Taft 1938:4). Dioramas are also discussed in Benjamin (1973:161-162), and in Gill (1977:31-36).

[4] Brecht here replies to Georg Lukacs, a formidable antagonist who, basing his arguments for literary realism on the works of writers such as Balzac and Tolstoy, underscored the need for contemporary writers to emulate this 19th century "high realist" school (see Lukacs 1971, 1972).

[5] It will, unfortunately, be evident below that Worth's ethnographic semiotic demands more than present historical evidence and technique can furnish in the way of detail. Recently, though, the "new social history" has begun its approach to precisely this level of problem, and I am confident that under its urging both evidence and technique will become available.

[6] Once again I must insist that this sketch cannot substitute for the more specific and thorough research which needs still to be done.

[7] As remarked in Taft (1938:69), the English press supported the belief that "the American process" yielded superlative results. Rudisill (1971:193) confirms this opinion.

[8] Leos (1977:27) observes:

A most egalitarian medium, (images can be made with little or no skill) photography, from the beginning, tends to place its serious devotees on the defensive. The first signs of popularisation evoke fears of the deterioration of quality, and the loss of public esteem.

In the case of photography, widespread appreciation certainly antedated mass competence in production of images; Jenkins (1975:20) remarks that in 1854 pictures sold for "as little as 25 cents each."

[9] My explanation here could not have been engendered without familiarity with Gross's (1973a, 1973b) discussions of communication, competence and appreciation. Communication then, may take place in several modes (e.g., lexical, pictorial-iconic, musical), when a skilled or competent interpreter correctly assumes another's *intention* to communicate within a shared culturally and historically specific code.

[10] Significantly, photographers have long considered themselves artists and, with a small coterie of admirers have competently appreci-

ated and communicated their art; yet photographers had to *battle* to achieve artistic status—as is evident in Nancy Newhall (1975). Furthermore, photojournalists are rigorously exempted from any explicit aesthetic, as is clear in Gidal: "unlike the area of art, photoreportage is not the expression of a projected inner vision, but a documentary report on reality. The 'personal touch' is not an integral part of genuine photoreportage; the statement is formed by experienced facts" (1973:5). Yet the process by which photography became an art deserves further study. Hobsbawn's significant comment on the French case (1975:292-293) is that an increasing prevalence of "pirate" photographic copies of celebrities

implied that the original photographs were not legally protected as art. The courts were called upon to decide. . . . In the course of 1862 the case went through all tribunals up to the Court of Cassation, which decided that photography was, after all, an art, since this was the only means of effectively protecting its copyright.

In 1899, the photographer Peter H. Emerson still found it necessary to explicate the English copyright law:

The hazy notions existing among many photographers as to how to secure the copyright of their photographs, and other details, has led us to make a few remarks on the subject. In the first place the student is cautioned to secure the copyright of every photograph worth keeping. . . [1899:175].

Finally, Jenkins seems to suggest that a similar, and equally intriguing pattern was emerging in the United States even during the 1840s and 1850s:

As the popularity of the daguerreotype grew, the number of urban galleries increased rapidly and the competition became quite keen. In response to the competitive price cutting certain galleries—some of the large ones on Tremont and Washington Streets in Boston and those on lower Broadway in New York—began to cater to a more elite clientele. Daguerreotypists such as Matthew Brady, Charles and Henry Meade, Martin Lawrence, and Jeremiah Gurney turned their galleries into elaborate parlors with plush furniture and elegant trappings. They featured the qualitative and artistic element in their work, thereby trying to differentiate their work from that of the "factories." Of course, this quality justified a higher price for their products (1975:19).

[11] Is "photographic realism," paradoxically, a style associated predominantly or even entirely with *verbal* codes? Is it not possible that photographic realism operates as a verbally coded *filter*, through, or against which appreciation and interpretation in various codes proceed? The verbal coding of photographic realism as an exclusive standard of truth seems to square well with Worth's (1975) illuminating discussion of our normal but naive refusal to concede that "pictures can't say ain't." Thus the statement that "X is not a true picture of reality" may be verbally *attributed* to the image depicted on a particular canvas or strip of acetate. Again, this is consistent with Worth's (1975:106) assertion of the hegemony of "linguistic rules for implication and inference." Verbal coding would also go far to explain the ease with which photographic realism underwent "translation" into conventions in verbal codes.

[12] Or, rephrased, the contradiction of photographic realism is embodied in its intention to communicate "interactionally"; a correct interpretive strategy for photographic realism thus begins communicatively but moves directly into the realm of *attribution*. Here, as Worth claims (1975:88), "the meaning is put onto the picture from *outside* the picture itself"—by means of personal and social stereotypy, for example. The attributor in this way may construct "half, three-fourths, seven-eighths or any and all proportions of any work. He may, if we do not constrain attribution by personality and culture, put *anything* into a work and happily extract *anything* out of it" (Worth 1975:97). Worth and Gross (1974) draw a critical distinction between *attributed* and *inferred* meaning. People *attribute* meaning in response to their assumption that a thing or condition simply exists. People *infer* meaning when their assumption of an intention to communicate is evoked by the thing or condition under consideration. Restated once again, the point I am making here is that photographic realism, if successful, invokes *both* of these interpretive strategies at once.

[13] I am all too aware of the gaps in the evidence which must support this claim. Indeed, I do not believe that it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that photography is universally so recognized; or

that there are not significant gradations and modifications of belief in photographic truth according to social group, stratum, or class, context and culture. Once again, clearly, systematic research must be undertaken before a fully valid assessment can be made.

[14] It seems that photography here merely concretized and, probably, vastly extended, a belief which had been available in certain philosophical circles at least, since 1709. In that year, George Berkeley produced *An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision* which, using vision throughout as an explicative metaphor, eventually succumbed to its power, referring to vision as the "Universal Language of Nature" and as the "Language of the Author of Nature." A significant *philosophical* treatment of the metaphor of vision in Berkeley is given by Turbayne (1970).

[15] Contrast Worth with Nochlin (1973:98), who continues to search—perhaps unknowingly—for some sort of universal visual language of realism:

From antiquity onward, the naive spectator has admired feats of verisimilitude. . . . As J. P. Stern recently pointed out. . . this issue of realism is "the creative acknowledgement of the data of social life at a recognizable moment in history." And this is true from antiquity on, despite significant differences in formal elements, content or syntax. Inseparably related to the insistence on the social data is the preponderance of metonymic rather than metaphoric imagery in realist structure: the veracity of the image is attested to by the authenticity of the contiguous relationships existing among concrete figures, costumes, settings, gestures, textures and substances at a specific time and in a specific place. This, not generalization, idealization or atemporality, is realist truth.

Or perhaps Nochlin searches only for the key features of Western realism. In any case, although she makes her case with sensitivity, it might be made stronger still by pointing to the really critical issue: how verisimilitude is to be recognized across time and culture. How is metonymy separated, in a culturally coherent manner, from metaphor? With this query we return to form and, specifically, to the form provided by photographic realism, which accomplished such a separation in an unprecedentedly effective way. Perhaps G. P. Lathrop, writing in 1874, had something similar in mind when he complained that "literalism" was precipitated when "the aesthetic balance between fact and idea is, from whatever cause at all, unsettled" (McMahon 1973:33).

[16] Henisch (1977:37) comments on the acceptance of photography in eastern Europe during the same period: "Paradoxically, and in the face of peasant prejudice, the word *daguerreotype* came to stand for truth and honesty wherever the new art made its appearance." By contrast, the new technology's reception in western European nations seems to have been more frequently uneven and mistrustful, due to photography's unartistic lack of selectivity (cf. Rudisill 1971:208). On the other hand, even such suspicion premised a similar belief in the capacity of photography to be realistic or objective.

[17] Rudisill writes:

many. . . saw directly, for the first time, some aspect of the universe otherwise impossible to apprehend immediately. . . . In such instances, the daguerreotype not only recorded reality acutely, but it added new dimensions to perceiving it [1971:85].

Again, the point is not that photography can copy natural events, but rather, that the belief in its objectivity both encouraged and allowed unprecedented human control of the natural and of the social world.

[18] Larry Gross made this example available to me.

[19] I do *not* mean that there were not dissenters to the standard imposed with photographic realism; on the contrary, there were many who fumed against photographic truth, and their sometimes acid comments lace many contemporary debates over art and aesthetics. And it is important to perceive, with Hobsbawm (1975:292) that realists *themselves* "resisted the simple identification of art with exact and naturalistic reproduction. . . . Photography was useful, because it could help the painter to rise above a mere mechanical copy of objects." Artists had to know, even if others too often did not, that their project rested on the competent exercise of technique and choice.

[20] I would suggest that this fundamental shift, by which verbal and visual symbolic styles were to be replaced by natural "reality," best

accounts for the protest waged more or less insistently since the 18th century (Lowenthal 1968) against what is now termed "mass culture." The English writer Steele complained as early as 1713 of

this unsettled way of reading. . . which naturally seduces us into as undetermined a manner of thinking. . . . That assemblage of words which is called a style becomes utterly annihilated. . . (Watt 1957: 48).

Style *is* the embodiment of competence, and to make exclusive a style whose most vital premise is that it is not a style, is to rebuff equally sharply the producers and appreciators of previous styles.

[21] My discussion admittedly hedges the question of limits within what are, after all, codes which frequently assert an explicit right to construct and manipulate "unreal" and "fictional" materials. Here, however, one must ask about what *is* conceded to be fictional in current literary and filmic productions, other than a bare, skeletal plot or narrative sequence—exactly that component, by the way, which can undergo translation without necessary and visible alteration. The boundaries of "fiction" and "reality" undergo continuous shifts; furthermore, our tacit knowledge that they do so can be played upon. A recently republished thriller by the spy-novelist Eric Ambler (1977) exhibits an advertisement on its final page: emblazoned in large boldface type above a brief title-list of paperbacks for sale the reader sees, "These books? Fiction. Keep telling yourself that as you read." It seems likely that the segregation in some bookstores of "fiction" and "literature" provides another clue to the going limits of the larger division.

[22] Hobsbawm therefore seems fundamentally mistaken when he says that "Words could. . . represent "real life" as well as ideas, and unlike the visual arts their technique made no claim actually to imitate it" (1975:299). In 1867 E. P. Whipple wrote that Trollope "will never fail for subjects as long as the kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland contains thirty millions of people, "mostly bores," and as long as he has his mental daguerreotype machine in order" (McMahon 1973:25). Helen McMahon notes that

The terms "daguerreotype" and "photography" are used frequently (by *Atlantic* critics) to indicate disapproval. Compare T. S. Perry's comment in his review of Theophile Gautier's *Captain Fracasse* (July 1880) that "in these days when writers of novels so often take photography for their model, it is agreeable to read the work of a man who has a real artistic pleasure in describing the adventures, as well as the surroundings of men and women" [1973:109-110].

[23] The explicitly visual frame created by literary realism is frequently remarked by *Atlantic* critics. In 1860: "The interest of the story is sustained by the distinctness with which the localities in which it passes are depicted" (McMahon 1973:12). In an 1862 review of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *The Pearl of Orr's Island*, E. P. Whipple noted the author's ability "to impress us with a sense of the substantial reality of what she makes us mentally see." He also commends her "foundation of the story in palpable realities which every Yankee recognizes as true the moment they are presented to his eye" (McMahon 1973:12). Even in terms of disapprobation (perhaps significant for the changed cultural status of photographic realism), visual interpretation persisted. In 1889 H. E. Scudder criticized *The McVeys* by Joseph Kirkland: it is only "a perishable photograph which may remind us of a phase of life but. . . has no power to reveal actual life" (McMahon 1973:31).

[24] The extent to which these two alternatives are actually mutually exclusive within a particular context or "reading" is of course still a matter of conjecture.

[25] This citation supplies an unwitting evidence of literary realism's underlying motivation. It was crucial that the author not assume "special knowledge"—either technical or geographical—on the part of his readers, because publishing was fast becoming a national, even an international, business. Photographic realism, by "opening up" literary works to the attributions of as many readers as possible, achieved a transparency unmatched by other styles.

[26] Howells testifies here to the greater manueverability granted to writers than to painters and graphic artists, with which to accomplish photographic realism. The cognitive dissonance caused by a picture even slightly out of fashion seems to have been capable of puncturing the illusion of contemporaneity. Perhaps this is a good place to mention that mixed codes—as in the combinations of pictures and verbal

narrative created in illustrated periodicals—could engender unique problems for photographic realism, in that the conventions used to evoke it might and did vary across codes and publics. Without addressing this issue directly, Fox (1977) has gathered some useful information on its manifestation in English periodicals in the 1850s. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, the fantastically successful weekly which launched American illustrated journalism in 1855, straightaway encountered this problem in its first years of publication. As Gambee reports, concerning *Leslie's* depiction of crimes: "It was when the *New York Times* attacked Leslie for publishing such material that he countered with straight-faced dignity that he failed to see why he should be condemned for illustrating the stories he copied from the *New York Times'* own coverage of the city's police activities" (1964: 15). Here, Leslie strategically employed the universality and supposed complete translatability of photographic realism to come to his own rescue. On the other hand, the fact that "pictures can't say ain't" (Worth 1975) helped to speed the adoption of written *captions* in illustrated journalism, "designed to determine the beholder's attitude" to the inevitably distinct class or order of information contained in the picture or later, photograph (Braive 1966:240).

[27] Is the writer commenting slyly on miscegenation in American society? His use of the verb "delineate" to denote the *Herald's* portrayal of the "American character in all its rapid changes and ever varying hues" certainly parallels the use of the same term, since the 1820's, in relation to blackface minstrelsy—the practitioners of which were frequently termed "Ethiopian Delineators" (Toll 1974:28).

[28] The connection between the two has, since this same period, been intimate and important; its force derived *not* from the *actual existence and practice* of photographic realism in journalism, but from the *normative acceptance of this standard as an ideal*, both by reporters and readers.

[29] Here, journalistic translation occurs photographically, while reality itself is no longer simply "natural"—for it has been culturally framed by Urner's use of "picture" to describe the raw event itself. Albeit probably an unselfconscious instance, such usage nonetheless may presage a most fundamental consequence of photographic realism: awareness of the cultural construction which mediates and defines the relation between society and nature.

[30] Three recent examples of critical anxiety over the difficulty of maintaining this boundary may be found in: O'Connor (1977a, 1977b), where a *New York Times* television critic explicitly addresses the "fact/fiction conundrum" which, he claims, arises in recent "documentary-drama" television specials; and in Waters et al. (1977:56), where it is stated that "by embellishing recent history with fictional dialogue and interpretative simplifications, the docu-dramas place a considerable burden on the viewer's ability to distinguish reality from fantasy."

[31] Thus the entrenched procedure referred to by Hofstadter above, of first becoming a reporter, then a "writer" (Hemingway is another, more recent instance).

[32] Since, concretely, "ability to write" *meant* "ability to write journalistically," the poet—whose competence was clearly different from that practiced by reporters—was quite understandably to become a mystified figure. For where was it possible to learn to write poetry? The obvious alternative was for poets to assert a somehow special, even divine, *experiential* "competence"—which indeed, they seem to do. I owe this observation to Larry Gross.

[33] My argument *in no way* implies that news, because it is art, is one iota less important or "real." To say that it is, is simply to once again mistake a cultural construction for a natural reality. Recall, too, that before photographic realism and its attendant utilitarian conceptions of art as unnecessary adornment, art was in all seriousness considered to be about the most important thing. As Ferguson (1977:835) has pointed out, this denigration of art has helped much in forcing us to be oblivious to the manifold influences of nonverbal thinking on our technological environment: "the tendency has been to lose sight of the crucial part played by nonverbal knowledge in making the "big" decisions of form, arrangement and texture that determine the parameters within which a system will operate."

[34] Spadework by Breed (1955, 1958), Darnton (1975), Gerbner (1964) and others has gone far to validate Hughes' statement. In general, such seminal works fall into what Wright (1975) has called the "sociology of the communicator."

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INTERPRETATIONS
OF A PHOTOGRAPHIC NARRATIVE
BY VIEWERS IN FOUR AGE GROUPS

PAUL MESSARIS
LARRY GROSS

A storyteller must be able to take for granted a certain amount of prior knowledge on the part of his audience. This prior knowledge usually pertains, ostensibly, to the real world (and not to that of fictional precedents and conventions), even though in fact such knowledge may have been derived from fictional sources. Equally important, however, to the interpretation of a work of fiction is the ability of the reader, listener, or viewer to discern which aspects of his prior knowledge are no longer valid within the confines of the special world which the storyteller erects before him. Lacking this ability, the viewer (or reader or listener) must be oblivious to all novelty, all nuance, and all deviation from stereotype.

More generally, it appears possible to distinguish between interpretations which are governed by the audience-member's beliefs about the types of situations referred to in a fictional narrative and those interpretations which are grounded in the narrative's structure and aim to correspond to the presumed intentions of that structure's author. Following the terminology of Worth and Gross (1974), who originally proposed this distinction, we shall refer to these two types of interpretation as "attributional" and "inferential." According to this distinction, attribution involves the application of personal and social stereotypes to isolated events or series of events in a narrative. Textual context is not considered, nor are assumptions about the author's intentions taken into account. Conversely, inference deals with the relationships between textual elements and sees them as manifestations of the author's control and as vehicles of his intended meaning. Worth and Gross have suggested that inference presupposes attributional ability and that socialization entails a progression from the exclusive reliance on attribution to the capacity for complex inference.

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The situation described in this report is one in which a simple conflict is created between a pervasive social stereotype and the implications of a brief fictional narrative. The stereotype in question is that doctors are always concerned with the welfare of others. Its violation involves a specific fictional doctor who, in the course of a picture-story about the end of his work-day, fails to help an accident victim he encounters on his way home. Thus, the evidence built into the narrative by its authors contradicts the assumptions with which certain viewers might be expected to approach this narrative.

This report summarizes the results of a series of studies dealing with how viewers of various ages interpreted the narrative in question. The aims of these studies, and of this report, were: to provide data which would allow the description of apparent types of interpretational strategies; to compare these types with those proposed by Worth and Gross; and, finally, to obtain some evidence on the extent to which there are age-related differences in the ability to use each of these strategies.

The method used in these studies was to interview viewers, individually, on the meaning of a brief sequence of slides, which had been arranged into what the researchers considered to be story form. All the studies used the same sequence of 21 slides, as follows:

(1, 2) The first two slides portray a young man in a white coat examining a bottle of amber liquid. The white coat, together with the background and the fact that the man has a stethoscope around his neck, are meant to suggest that the man is a doctor.

(3, 4) Next, the man is seen conferring with a woman in nurse's uniform. In the second of this pair of slides, the man is putting on a sport coat, and the white doctor's coat is draped over the nurse's desk.

(5) Here, the man is seen walking down what may be identified as a hospital corridor.

(6, 7) In these two slides, the man is seen conferring with a woman seated at a typewriter. He has an angry expression on his face, and, in the second of the two slides, he is seen dashing a piece of paper to the floor. The intention here, of course, was to portray ill-treatment of a secretary, and this episode was considered important for the purposes of the study, for reasons to be explained.[1]

(8) The man is now carrying a handbag (intended to represent a doctor's bag), and he is walking through an office area, presumably on his way home after having conferred with his secretary.

(9, 10) He emerges from a doorway, above which is a sign which reads, "University of Pennsylvania Medical Center."

(11) He is seen walking down a deserted street, next to a vacant lot.

(12) In the foreground of this shot, a few yards ahead of the approaching doctor, is a car, which was intended to look as if it had just been in an accident. The hood is up, the door is open, and a hand can be seen hanging limply below the door.

(13) A side view of the car reveals that a man is hanging out of the driver's seat. The doctor has stopped to examine the situation.

(14) The doctor is still poised next to the car, looking at the accident victim.

(15) The doctor is shown continuing his walk down the street, with the car now in the background.

(16, 17, 18) In a residential area now, the doctor is seen continuing his walk and arriving at an apartment building.

(19, 20) Inside the building, he walks down a corridor and into the door of an apartment.

(21) In the final slide of the series, the doctor is sitting on a couch with a young woman. They are both smiling broadly at each other, and she has a drink in her hands.

Viewers were shown this sequence of slides after a minimal introduction, in which it was explained that, following the presentation, they would be asked to talk about what they had seen. This discussion took the form of a tape-recorded, open-ended interview, arranged around the questions listed in Appendix A. Most of the questions were aimed at eliciting statements about what happened in the story, together with appraisals of its moral implications. In the following discussion of results, data will be drawn primarily from the following sources: (1) a study by Murphy (1973), comprising a sample of 12 children from each of 3 grades: grade 2 (approximate mean age 8 years), grade 5 (approximate mean age 11 years), and grade 8 (approximate mean age 14 years); (2) a study by Harlan (1972), from which the relevant sample contained 5 second-graders and 5 fifth-graders; and (3) a set of 16 interviews with college students (ages 17 and above) by Michael Pallenik. Additional material is drawn from interviews (some with younger children) by Gross and Messaris.

The sequence of questions in Appendix A was not always adhered to strictly in all the interviews. Rather, the interview schedule was used primarily as a check-list of points to be covered in each interview. Because of our interest in interpretational strategies, the more important questions for our purposes are the ones dealing with the reasoning behind an interviewee's response. These questions, which usually took the form of the "How do you know?" or "How can you tell?" indicated on the question-list, provided us with the information necessary to distinguish among the types of interpretational strategies used by the interviewees.

In this respect, the interviewees' handling of question 3
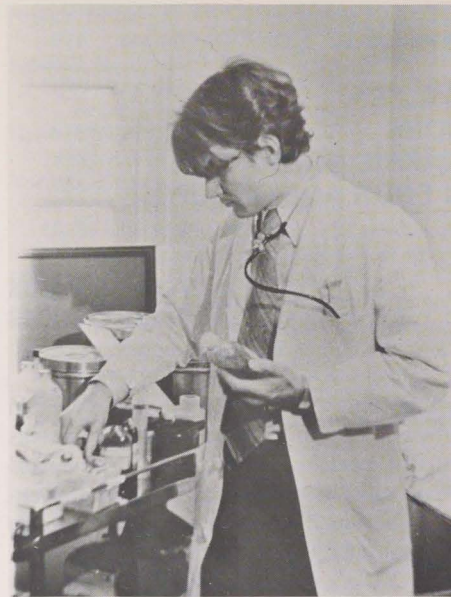
Slide 1
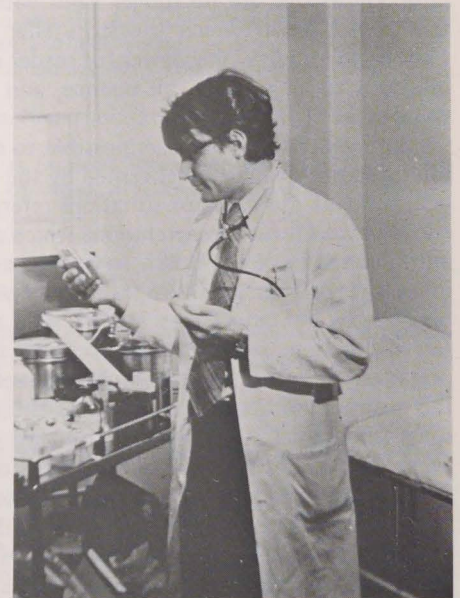
Slide 2

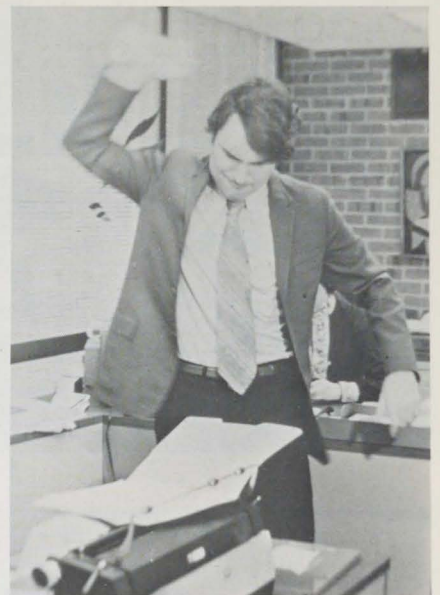*Slide 3*

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("What do you know about the man in the story?" etc.) is most instructive. We will begin our discussion of the data with this question, which was intended, first of all, as a check on whether or not the viewer had indeed identified the story's protagonist as a doctor. This was, of course, a crucial aspect of the story's intended meaning. As it turned out, almost none of the viewers, regardless of age, had any trouble identifying the "doctor" as such. The sole exception was a

second-grader who said that the protagonist was either a doctor or a scientist. (A small number of the older viewers identified the man as a "medical student," a category which the younger children may not have yet.) For our purposes, then, the answers to the question on the protagonist's identity were practically uniform. Their explanations, however, for identifying the man as a doctor were varied.

Consider, for example, the difference between the first

Slide 19

Slide 20

two and the third of the following three responses:

Q. What do you know about the man in the story?
A. That he was a doctor.
Q. How could you tell?
A. He had a thing that you check your heart—you make med-
icine—needles—and he wore a white suit like other doctors do.
(2nd grade)

Q. What do you know about the man in the story?
A. I think that he was a doctor.
Q. How could you tell?
A. First of all, he was going to give someone a needle, and usually
people who don't have a profession like that don't give people
needles. And he was looking at records and things, and he came
out of the medical center. (5th grade)

Q. OK, how do you know it's a physician?
A. Ah, obviously the work at the beginning, the doctor's coat, the
stethoscope. . . the surroundings and of course the, ah, sign
saying that it was a medical center. . . so it implies that it's
medically related and he's in the medical field. (college student)

In the last of these three examples, a catalog of cues is
held to "imply" that the protagonist is a "physician" or,
more generally, "in the medical field." The crucial aspect of
this response, which differentiates it from the other two, is
precisely this explicit recognition of implication: of a pur-
poseful concatenation of elements meant to convey a certain
meaning. In the responses of the second- and fifth-graders,
there is no such acknowledgment of intentionality. All three
responses contain enumerations of relevant cues (e.g., the
white coat, the stethoscope, the medical center, and the
imagined needle), but both of the younger viewers identify
these cues with *the typical behavior of doctors* ("usually
people. . . don't give needles"; "like other doctors do"),
rather than, as in the third case, *the deliberate choice by an
author*.

This general difference between modes of interpretive
reasoning is the core of what we have described as the
attribution-inference distinction. Equally clear instances of
this distinction arose in the viewers' responses to the other
"identification" questions in the interviews. With respect to
question 5, for example, regarding "the lady the man was

Slide 21

talking to at work," compare the following responses.

Q. How did you know that that woman was a nurse?
A. Well, the things that she wore. Nurses always wear those bands
around their head. (2nd grade)

Q. Who was the lady at the beginning of the series of pictures?
A. Looked like some kind of nurse.
Q. How do you know?
A. Well. . . she was in the hospital, she was wearing a white uni-
form. . . that would sort of imply that she was a nurse. (college
student)

Once again, the distinction here is between the explicit
reference to implication in the latter example and the sub-
sumption under the typical ("nurses always wear. . .") in the
former. Note that the responses which we have put forth
here as examples of inference all appear to *share* with the
attributional responses a sense of the existence of a stereo-
type. In this regard, the difference between them consists
only in the fact that the inferential responses posit an auth-
orial, implicational use of the stereotype in question. Thus,
as Worth and Gross have assumed, it can be said that infer-
ence "builds upon" attribution.

One thing which is not made clear in these examples, however, is whether there is any difference between the type of stereotype referred to. It is possible, but not necessary, to assume that attributional responses refer to stereotypes thought to hold for the "real" world, whereas inferential responses refer to fictional stereotypes. Lacking specific evidence, neither assumption is safe, because a "real-fictional" distinction may not exist for "attributional" respondents, and it is quite plausible that an inferential response may assume the deliberate use of a "real-life" stereotype. On the other hand, there *are* instances in our data when it is quite clear that an attributional response is referring to an aspect of the informant's real-life experience. This was particularly true of viewers with parents in the medical professions, as in the following case:

A. She must have been a nurse.
Q. How could you tell that?
A. Because doctors always go to see nurses when they see something. . . . I know, because my daddy's a doctor, and so is my mommy—she's a nurse. (2nd grade)

This example points to another aspect typical of many of the attributional responses, especially among the younger viewers: The request to justify a statement seems to be taken as a call to establish one's credentials as a real-life familiar of the type of situation at hand. These responses, in other words, appear to be attempts to establish the respondent's competence to identify the stereotype under consideration; the respondent must establish that he/she has had the real-life experience necessary to recognize a particular stereotype. Another example of this occurs in the following case, in which the respondent took question 5 to be a reference to the secretary, rather than the nurse.

Q. Who was the lady the man was talking to at work?
A. I think it was a secretary.
Q. How could you tell that?
A. 'Cause she was typing and she had a big cabinet with papers in it. 'Cause I went to my friend's father's doctor's office and I went to see the secretary and the secretary had a typewriter and she had a cabinet full of papers. (2nd grade)

The inferential respondent, on the other hand, is more concerned with establishing that he has properly accounted for all the cues in the story *itself*.

I'm not even sure he was a doctor. . . now I'm making all these assumptions. . . just what I could tell by the pictures. (college student)

I have very little idea what type of person he is. . . we're just, I mean you're inferring, I'm inferring from these pictures. (college student)

Naturally, not all responses can be clearly labeled as attributional or inferential, nor is it always the case that a response is uniformly consistent with one or the other of these hypothetical strategies. One of Murphy's fifth-graders, for example, says at one point: "He was supposed to be a doctor, I guess, because he went to the 'terian' (Presbyterian) Medical Center at the University of Pennsylvania." This initial, apparently inferential response is followed, however, by a fairly extended consideration of the probability that a person of a certain age would be a doctor.

He looked like he was about 23 or so, and when you go to college, you graduate from your four years of college, and then you'll be twenty-one, and then you have to take as many years—sometimes

seven, sometimes three. . . it depends what kind of doctor you want to be. And it would be kind of young to be a doctor. I think he was an intern or a student or something.

Because this segment of the viewer's response is concerned exclusively with the real-life contingencies of a medical student's attaining doctorhood by a certain age, we would classify it as attributional. It is possible, of course, to imagine an "inferential" respondent thinking in these terms, but it seems to us unlikely that an inferential respondent would actually expect, from the storyteller, such an extreme degree of adherence to the dictates of realism. In other words, it seems likely that an experienced viewer would overlook the relative youth of the "doctor," ascribing it to the lack of an older actor. (Instead of assuming that the storyteller must have *meant* to represent a medical student because of the actor's youth.)

The attributional respondent's inability to identify those aspects of the story for which the storyteller is not accountable is typical of a more general tendency observed among our "attributional" respondents: the tendency to concern oneself with events outside the narration, things about the characters and their lives which the storyteller has purposely omitted to create, since they were not essential to his story. This tendency was very much in evidence in some viewers' responses to the first part of question 6, concerning the identity of the woman at the end of the story. Here many viewers were unclear as to whether this woman was the doctor's wife or girlfriend. In most cases, the tentative response to this question was that the woman was the doctor's wife. In the following inferential response, for example, a deliberately-created (but vague) aura of domesticity is credited with this impression.

A. It was. . . his wife.
Q. How do you know?
A. Just. . . he looked like a married man. . . . Don't ask me what a married man looks like.
Q. All right, what does a married man look like?
A. No. . . it just looks like, ah, the typical story of a man going walking home from work to house. . . and I expected the kids and the dog to come running in afterward. . . it just seemed. . . it was posed that way. (college student)

The most typical reason for claiming that the woman was the doctor's wife was that he seemed to have his own key for the apartment.

Q. How do you know that was his wife?
A. You could tell because he was going into his house. He just opened the door. . . . He didn't knock or anything. (fifth grade)

However, there were also many responses in which elaborate conjectures were made about the plausible range of relationships between the doctor and the woman, as in the following example, in which—admittedly after some leading questioning—the respondent gives a rather complex set of reasons for his initial statement that the woman could be the wife of a sick friend.

Q. And how about the lady at the end of the story?
A. The one he was at the house with?
Q. Who do you think she was?
A. A friend. Maybe he was calling to talk to her about her husband or something. You know, he might be in the hospital.
Q. What would indicate that she was probably a friend of his.
A. Well they were laughing. . . she had a drink in her hand, I think. . . .
Q. Is it possible she could have been somebody else?

A. Yes.
Q. Who?
A. Maybe his sister, or an aunt or a cousin. Not an aunt—a cousin: they looked kind of like the same age.
Q. Is it possible that that could have been his wife?
A. Yes, maybe he doesn't wear a wedding ring. Some people don't do that.
Q. Is it possible that could have been his girlfriend?
A. Yes. If she's that kind of woman. . . .
Q. Was she married?
A. Yes.
Q. Oh.
A. That's why I say, if she's that kind of woman. . . .
Q. I see. (eighth grade)

The important characteristic of this response is that the respondent is creating for the doctor a background over and above anything specifically mentioned in the story or which the story might reasonably be expected to call for. In a similar vein, the respondent who argues that "she should have been in old jeans or something, but maybe the wife had to go out shopping or something" (fifth grade) is inventing a reality for these characters which goes beyond that explicitly demanded by the story. The same goes for the respondent who speculates on whether the couple had dinner after the story was over:

Q. How could you tell that was his wife?
A. Because she was in probably his house, and she probably got something for him to eat, and things like that. (second grade)

The critical "error," in all these cases, is not so much the assumption that the characters in the story lead lives beyond what the storyteller has explicitly presented. Indeed, it can be argued that the storyteller depends, for his effect, on the viewer's assuming that the characters have a past, which will, in turn, influence the effects of the story's events on their future. What is inappropriate, however, is the implicit assumption that it is valid to speculate seriously on the *particulars* of this background. Admittedly, this speculation was in all cases initiated by the interviewer's question. Still, the interviewee could always have responded, as in the following example, that: "whether it's his wife or his girlfriend or whatever is irrelevant. . . I guess to the main theme." (college student) As we shall see below, this whole issue is of critical importance to our viewers' interpretations of the doctor's behavior at the accident-site.

The most striking aspect of the data was the viewers' handling of the accident in their initial account of the story (question 1) and in the course of subsequent probing (especially questions 7, 8, and 9). The younger the viewer in our overall sample, the greater was the probability that he/she would *not* report that the doctor had ignored the accident victim. Among the college students (N = 16), only one failed to make such a statement at any point in the interview. The corresponding figure for the eighth-graders (N = 12) was, again, only one. However, 35% of the fifth-graders (N = 17) and the majority, i.e., 65%, of the second-graders (N = 17) failed, in one way or another, to confirm what had been intended as *the* crucial event in the story, i.e., the doctor's failure to help an injured man.

How, then, did the younger children deal with that segment of the story in which the accident was portrayed? Responses ranged from claims that the doctor actually *had* helped the accident victim to denials that there had been an accident or that the victim was present in the car. In the

following case, for example, the informant, a second-grader, has just said that the most important thing in the whole story is "to go to the doctor":

Q. So, what part of the story made you think that?
A. When the man got hurt and he needed a doctor.
Q. What did the doctor do then?
A. Helped him.
Q. He did?
A. Yes.
Q. How do you know that he helped him?
A. I saw him.
Q. What did he do?
A. I don't remember.

The emphatic tone of the above respondent, both in his assertion that he saw the doctor help and in his claim of lack of memory on the details, is actually rather atypical of this kind of answer. Much more frequently, respondents who did not report that the doctor had ignored the accident victim were either somewhat vague about what he *had* done, as in the example below, or, even more frequently, offered rather elaborate alternative versions of the story, as in the example following that.

A. He helped the guy that was hurt in the car.
Q. He did? I see. What did he do to help him?
A. Um. He I think gave him bandages.
Q. Gave him bandages.
A. Yeah.
Q. Anything else?
A. No. (second grade)

Q. Why did he act the way he did at the accident?
A. Well, cause he kinda had an expression that he really felt sorry for the person and he knew that he was very lucky to be alive 'cause he looked as though he was thinking about the person that was in it.
Q. Do you think he did the right thing?
A. Yes.
Q. Why do you think so?
A. 'Cause he thought about other people not himself, and some nonthoughtful people would say, "Oh, poor guy," and just walk off, but the expression on his face looked as if he was saying, thinking that he was lucky to be alive and not be hurt or anything.
Q. What did he do after he saw that?
A. He crossed the street.
Q. Did he do anything about the accident?
A. No, he had an expression on his face, but there wasn't much to do about it, 'cause he couldn't have done anything 'cause if the person was in it he would have probably called an ambulance.
Q. There wasn't anybody in the car?
A. No. (fifth grade)

Thus, not only is the doctor exculpated, but the whole incident is actually transformed into a demonstration of his compassion. What could account for instances such as these, in which the viewers appear so obtusely to misinterpret the central event of the story? As we have suggested in the introduction to this report, the explanation, we believe, lies in the kind of belief expressed in the penultimate statement of the viewer in the above example ("he would have probably called an ambulance"). There is every reason to believe that the viewers—especially, perhaps, the younger ones—had strong expectations that the doctor would help the accident victim in the story. Aside from the generally very positive image of doctors on which, as the reader will see, many viewers insisted, there is concrete evidence on this point in some supplementary data in Murphy's (1973) study: Eight "control subjects," who were given a verbal description of the

accident scene and asked to predict the doctor's response, all predicted that he would help; and a poll of 38 college students on the relative likelihood that people of a variety of occupations would help an accident victim had doctors in the "most likely" category, together with policemen and clergymen (Murphy 1973:44). A plausible explanation, then, for the frequent assertions that the doctor did help the accident victim or that no help was needed is that the viewers in question were reconciling their interpretations of the story with their prior beliefs about doctors.

Because in this case authorial implication is so contrary to the evidently prevalent social stereotype, the respondents who were swayed by the stereotype offer us some of the clearest possible examples of the nature of what we have called attributional reasoning. One aspect of this, as pointed out above, is the assumption of a reality independent of the way in which the storyteller has structured it, so that the narrative becomes subject to the addition of details absent from the text. In our data, cases of this sort involved claims that events had occurred "between shots" or that other circumstances, not present in the pictures, accounted for the doctor's behavior.

Q. What was the most important thing in the story?
A. When he called the ambulance about the killed man.
Q. . . . What did you see that showed you that he called the ambulance when he came to the accident?
A. Well, after one picture the man was not in the car any more. He must have been in the hospital. (fifth grade)

A. While he was walking down the road, he saw this guy in the car—I didn't know really what he was doing. The guy was laying in his car with the door open, and the trunk was open.
Q. What could possibly be going on—or what could have been going on—in that situation?
A. Well, that guy in the car—he could have had to stop to do something to his engine or something, and then he walked up there to do something, and he needed a screwdriver, and he went back in his car and he was getting it—and he was real tired and he fell asleep in the seat. (fifth grade)

Q. Was the man who took these pictures a good storyteller?
A. No.
Q. Why not?
A. Because that guy could have helped the man in the car and he didn't show it. (eighth grade)

You know, they didn't show everything—all the parts to it. Like what he did. . . if he just walked away from the guy, or if they missed it. . . missed a shot. . . . (eighth grade)

Other cases of this sort are summarized by Murphy as follows:

No help was needed because the doctor saw that the man was repairing his car—there had not been an accident. . . . Doctor took the victim back to the hospital in between shots. . . . The doctor went home to the nurse to tell her about the accident so that help could be called. . . . The doctor was blind so that he couldn't see the accident victim. . . . The doctor's help was not needed because an ambulance had already been called. . . . The story was about two men who looked alike (first man was a doctor, second was not). Existence of second man postulated because respondent could not believe that a doctor would ignore an accident victim as shown. . . . [Murphy 1973:58; all respondents second graders]

These statements may be contrasted with the following examples (all from interviews with college students), in which the assumption that one's interpretation is bounded by the authorially-chosen sequence is clearly spelled out.

Q. How do you know that he didn't go and get help?

A. Well this. . . I'm presuming that the pictures you showed me show a continuous story. . . and that nothing important was left out. . . that would have been important. . . specially since they spent so much detail showing him walking home.
Q. What else could he have done?
A. Well the main thing. . . first of all he could've. . . I think he could've. . . tried to. . . some sort of help. . . for the person. . . or called the police or something. I'm assuming though that this is what he did and that these are sequential pictures.
Q. How do you know? (after question about the story)
A. . . . the sequence of pictures is such that there's no shot of him calling, no shot of him calling for any help.
Q. And how do you know he did what you say he did?
A. That he did. . . ah, I mean the series of shots: he saw the accident, took a look at the victim hanging out the door. . . and the following sequence, just leaving the scene.

A distinction critical to the Worth-Gross model of interpretational competence and useful in the present context is that between sequence and structure. "Sequence" may be thought of as the relationship between contiguous story-elements; structure as the set of interrelationships among all the elements of a story. For Worth and Gross, the ability to base an interpretation on aspects of a story's structure (i.e., on the relationship among non-contiguous story-elements) marks the highest level of interpretational competence, to be distinguished from the level of sequence-based interpretation.

Two portions of the doctor story were explicitly designed to test the ability of viewers to handle structure: slide 6 and 7, in which the doctor is shown in a fit of anger, and slide 21, which concludes the story with a picture of the doctor cheerfully chatting with a young woman. Both of these story-elements were meant to corroborate the implications of the doctor's behavior at the accident scene. Thus, the doctor's explosive uncouthness with his secretary could be seen as a harbinger of his even more egregious behavior at the accident scene (and, at the same time, as a possible reason for this behavior: he had had a rough day at the office and was in a foul mood); while the absence of any sign of remorse amid the frivolity of the final scene could be taken as the ultimate confirmation of the doctor's callousness. (One could assume, too, at the end, that the doctor had just told the woman about the accident and that this was the source of their merriment; but none of our viewers appeared inclined to ascribe such a degree of perverseness to either character.)

The instances, in the data, of cases in which either of the above structural relationships was cited are very few. Furthermore, in no case did a respondent explicitly refer to these structural relationships as manifestations of an authorial design. Thus, the doctor's wrath at his secretary was taken not as a deliberate hint, by the author, at what was to come, but only as a possible explanation of the doctor's unwillingness to be bothered with the accident victim. The following two examples of such interpretations are by a fifth-grader and a college student, respectively.

Q. Why do you think the man in the story acted the way he did?
A. Well maybe he had a lot of patients that day and was tired and his secretary did something wrong and got him madder so when he was walking by the car he didn't want any more work that one day so he just walked by.
Q. Why do you think the man acted the way he did?
A. Ah. . . he probably was angry at work because of the picture right before that where he threw something down, because something wasn't right. When he left the hospital he was prob-

ably angry or upset or disgruntled or something... and that probably took over his logical reasoning so he probably walked by the guy and probably said well I'm not in the mood.

Mention of authorial intentions is similarly absent from the next two examples, in which the doctor's mirth at the end of the story is taken as confirmation of his callousness. Note that in both cases the concluding episode is judged to be the second most important thing in the story (after the accident). The first quotation is from a fifth-grade interview; the second from that of an eighth-grader.

Q. What else was important in the story?
A. That he didn't tell anybody about it.
Q. How could you tell that?
A. Because, well, his wife or girlfriend would act a bit different. Like if she heard it... her smile—she was smiling all the time when she was talking to him—and I think when she would have heard it her smile would have left her face, or some other expression would have come on it.

Q. What else was important in the story?
A. Well, he didn't even think that much about it. He went home and had fun.

It should be mentioned here that the viewer from whose interview the above quotation came did subsequently talk about the storyteller's intentions regarding the final scene. However, this happened only after the interview had moved to its last stage, in which the issues of ficticity and intentionality were introduced into the questions. Thus, the informant having said that the man who took the pictures was a good storyteller, the interviewer then asked him what the story would have been like if told by a bad storyteller:

A. Well, he might not have shown the man having a friendly evening... so you wouldn't know if he'd ignored it.
Q. Having what?
A. You wouldn't know if he'd ignored it like he did, or if he was still thinking about it.

This is also one of the very few instances in the data in which a viewer gives evidence of having considered the options available to the storyteller (in this case, whether to include the final scene or not). The ability to empathize with an author's decision-making can be considered a prerequisite for sophisticated interpretation; and, in this regard, it is significant that no informant raised this issue before the last part of the interview.

In concluding this discussion of how viewers treated the relationship between the story's ending and the accident scene, we should also mention the use, by some of the respondents, of the final scene as an *explanation* of the doctor's behavior. These viewers suggested that the doctor might have been in a hurry to get home to his wife/girlfriend, either because of a special occasion, or for some other reason. As the following example indicates, such an interpretation is not necessarily even an *implicit* structural inference.

Q. Why do you think the man in the story acted the way he did?
A. Cause he liked her and he didn't want her to worry. He didn't want her to call the police cause they would come and get him and well. . . .
Q. What?
A. She would get worried and she would send out the police and he didn't want them to do that.
Q. I see. How do you know that?
A. That almost happened to me. (fifth grade)

The only instance in our data in which a viewer took the aftermath of the accident scene as a comment, by the author,

on the doctor's emotional reaction dealt not with the closing slide but with a previous shot (19) of the doctor in a hallway inside his apartment building.

and then he got home and the one picture showed him... (incomprehensible)... getting out of the elevator thing, or walking down the hall. Looks like it's sort of blurred... so maybe... trying to show... caution, maybe he's questioning what he did or didn't do. (college student)

This example is of particular interest because it shows the dependence of inferential reasoning on a prior attribution of skill *to the author*. In other words, the use of any aspect of a narrative as evidence for an interpretation must depend on an implicit or explicit assumption that the author was in fact in control of that aspect of the story and was capable of making it serve his intentions. The shot referred to by the respondent above *is* in fact somewhat blurred. But the soft focus is due entirely to poor lighting, which the photographer could not control (and which forced the use of a large lens-opening). However, in basing an inference on this shot, the viewer in the above example is obviously taking the lack of focus to be deliberate and crediting the photographer with the ability to control it. (Incidentally, this example also illustrates the possibility that accurate interpretation may occasionally require technical expertise. The difficulty of getting sharp color slides in dimly-lit hallways would probably not have escaped the attention of a skilled photographer.)

Another instance, in the doctor story, in which inference was fairly obviously predicated on an assumption of adequate authorial control is the accident sequence itself. Those viewers who cited the *sequence* as evidence for the inference that the doctor didn't help must also have assumed that the sequence was an adequate reflection of the author's intentions (i.e., that it had not been botched in production or tampered with after the fact).

I'm assuming that the photographs follow a logical sequence of events. (college students)

I'm presuming that the pictures you showed me show a continuous story... and that nothing really important was left out. (college student)

You could have left out a whole sequence of pictures where he went over and tried to help the person in the car, but I didn't see that so I didn't have that impression. (college student)

To the paucity of "structural" inferences in our data we may contrast the abundance of attributional responses based on apparently quite commonplace social stereotypes. This was particularly true of the viewers' handling of three questions designed to test the presence of inferential reasoning, namely, questions 7 ("Why do you think the man in the story acted the way he did?"), 4 ("Do you like the man in the story?"), and 2 ("What was the most important thing in the story?"). We have already explained the structural ramifications of question 7: the earlier scene with the secretary and the final scene with the wife/girlfriend could both be taken as intentional clues to the doctor's personality. The other two questions, which we will discuss presently, are clearly ways of finding out about a viewer's ability to deal with structure as a whole: this is required not only in order to be able to select the most important feature of a structure but also in order to be able to extract an overall meaning from it (i.e., is the doctor, on the whole, likeable?).

Before discussing questions 2 and 4, a further note should

be added on question 7. As we have already indicated and as we shall see further below, many of the age-related differences in our data conform to a scheme of increasing interpretational sophistication such as that proposed by Worth and Gross: namely, a movement from reliance on social stereotypes to consideration of authorial design. The answers to question 7, however, are a striking instance of a different pattern. Here, the movement in our sample is not from attribution to inference but from one social stereotype to another, and the overall trend can be seen as one of increasing cynicism with age rather than an increase in interpretational competence. Thus, the younger viewers' faith in the benevolence of doctors is supplanted not by a realization that this stereotype was being intentionally exploited in the story, but by a different, less cheerful, stereotype. The following two examples are both from interviews with eighth-graders and are typical of many responses in this age-group.

Q. Why do you think the man in the story acted the way he did?
A. Scared he would be sued. It's happened before, like when a couple of years ago we were talking about this in sixth grade, some guy was beat up and thrown down the stairs and was killed. People just walked right by him and didn't care. Maybe somebody could've helped him and they did something wrong—like put a tourniquet on his arm—and he could have to have it amputated, he could sue the person.

Q. Why do you think the man in the story acted the way he did?
A. Well, if you're a doctor and you stop to help somebody—if they die or lose... have something amputated or something, they can sue you. So a lot of doctors don't stop for an accident because they might get sued.

The respondent in the example below was a college student.

Q. Why do you think he acted the way he did?
A. Well, you're sorta taught not to get involved. Doctors specifically... I don't think... would get involved with an accident, you know, where they weren't given charge.

Q. Why?
A. Well, he can get sued.

Unlike question 7, questions 2 and 4 gave rise to trends which appear to us to be clearly related to increasing interpretational competence. Question 4 ("Did you like the man?") may be examined in relationship to what we have already said about the interpretations of the accident sequence. We have suggested that the younger children failed to report the doctor's "undoctorly" accident-site behavior because of an inability to relinquish belief in a positive image of doctors. The answers to question 4 confirm the previous evidence that it is only after the fifth grade that this positive image can confidently be expected to succumb to the implications of the slide sequence. Of the second-graders (N = 17), 94% said that they did like the doctor. The corresponding figure was 53% for the fifth-graders (N = 17), 8% for the eighth-graders (N = 12), and 12% for the college students (N = 16). This trend is even more dramatic than the one observed on the issue of whether the doctor did help or not.

Characteristic of the attributional responses of the younger children is the fact that the number of children who said they liked the doctor is greater than the number who did not say he had ignored the accident victim. In other words, liking was not necessarily predicated on his behavior at the accident. This is precisely what one would expect of an attributional response, in which prior beliefs, and not the

internal structure of a narrative, determine interpretation. The following examples are arranged by age, the youngest being that of a preschooler, and the oldest that of a fifth-grader.

Q. How can you tell he's a nice man?
A. Because he helps people to get well.
Q. How do you know he helps people to get well?
A. Because he's a doctor.
Q. And that's what doctors do? Did you see him help people get well in the pictures?
A. I just know.
Q. I see.
A. We went to the doctor when.... my mommy... we went up to the lake, and she went waterskiing, she let go and she hurt her legs... you should have seen it.
Q. And the doctor helped her? I see. That's fine.

Q. Did you like the man?
A. Yes.
Q. Why?
A. He takes after my father. (Her father is a doctor.)

Q. Do you like the man in the story?
A. Yes.
Q. Why?
A. Well, he seemed like a person that was friendly, he had a good occupation...
Q. Well, was there anything that made you dislike him?
A. No.

As the figures for the two older age groups indicate, their evaluations of the doctor were overwhelmingly negative, in conformance with the intended meaning of the story. This is not to say, however, that intentionality was explicitly mentioned in these responses.

Q. Do you like the man in the story?
A. No, not really.
Q. Why not?
A. Because he didn't like help that guy like in the car, he just stared at him for a while and then he just went right by... he didn't do anything. (eighth-grader)

Unlike the questions we have discussed thus far, question 2 ("What was the most important thing in the story?") can be seen as an implicit, although weak, reference to the presence of a central design behind the story. As such, it serves as a bridge for the brief discussion, below, of questions 11 and 12, in which the issue was broached directly. Because of its implicitness, however, question 2 is more interesting than the other two.

The viewers' responses to question 2 exhibited an age-related trend similar to the one we have presented on question 4 and on the issue of whether the doctor ignored the victim or not. 71% of the second-graders (N = 17) did not cite the accident as the most important part of the story. For the fifth-graders (N = 17), the corresponding figure was 29%, and it was 17% and 12% for the eighth-graders (N = 12) and college students (N = 16), respectively. This trend can be explained, in part, by referring to the younger children's failure to report that the doctor had not helped at the accident. For those youngsters who did not see the accident as such, or did not think there had been a victim, a response such as the following, by a second-grader, is perhaps predictable.

Q. What do you think was the most important thing in the story?
A. I think he was gonna give a needle to somebody or cause they were sick or something.
Q. How could you tell that?

A. Cause I saw him. He had a needle in his hand, and he had this little jar that he was going to stick the needle in.
Q. OK, is there anything else that's important in the story?
A. I don't know.

The more interesting aspect of the data, however, and, in our opinion, the more convincing reason for the observed trend, is what these data reveal about the viewers' understanding of the word "important." For the older viewers, importance appears to rest on centrality to the story *itself*, i.e., an important part is one that is crucial to the story's main point. For the younger viewers, however, importance appears to be measured not in terms of the story but in terms of "life" in general. Thus, an important event is one of deep human significance, rather than one which contributes much to the story's message.

Q. What was the most important thing in the story?
A. He was helping somebody by giving that person a shot, so that he can't get sick. He can work and get enough money so that he can support a family.
Q. Why was that the most important thing?
A. Because he had a wife and people have to buy food to live.
Q. What else is important?
A. He liked helping people so they can't get sick. (second grade)

Q. OK, what was the most important thing in the story?
A. I think it was those chemicals.
Q. Why was that the most important thing?
A. I don't know, but it would make medicine.
Q. What else was important in the story?
A. I don't know. (second grade)

Q. What was the most important thing in the story?
A. . . . I guess to make the medicine to make people well.
Q. Why was that the most important thing in the story?
A. That more people would live.
Q. What else was important in the story?
A. I guess the nurse showed him the paper to make more medicine.
Q. Why was that important?
A. To make more people well. (second grade)[2]

We should point out, incidentally, that this notion of "importance" is not inconsistent with claiming that the accident was the most important part of the story. In the example below, such a response is justified by reference to the potential seriousness of an accident's results.

Q. What was the most important thing that happened in the story?
A. I think it was when that car crashed.
Q. Why?
A. Because it was more dangerous, you can get hurt in a car, or it can blow up or turn over, it could be on fire, and you couldn't get anyone to get you out. (second grade)

To these cases may be contrasted the following example of an eighth-grade response, in which it is clear that contribution to the story-line, rather than general social significance, is the criterion of importance, and the example after that, from a college student's interview, in which the accident is seen as the explicit focal point of an entire implicational structure.

Q. What was the most important thing in the story?
A. I guess it was walking home.
Q. Why would that be? I mean what happened?
A. He came across the guy in the car—the guy was just laying there.
Q. Why was that important?
A. Well, it showed that he didn't want to get involved.

Q. What's the most important thing in the story?
A. The accident.
Q. Why?
A. Because that's what most of the pictures are on and. . . it's also

the only thing that seems to hold the thing together.
Q. How do you mean?
A. It's the—it's what everybody should focus on because obviously his work at the office isn't that important. . . well, the whole point of it would be that he saw this accident and he passed it by. . . and he. . . your reactions to that.
Q. Why isn't his work in the office that important?
A. Ahm. . . because nothing is really shown.

The final two clusters of questions will concern us only briefly, because, by asking openly about intentionality, meaning, etc., they raise a different order of issues from the one discussed thus far. With respect to question 12, regarding the quality of the storyteller, we will confine ourselves to noting that, aside from considerations of technical expertise, clarity of presentation, and interest of subject matter, an additional criterion which occurred with some frequency among the responses of the younger viewers was that of importance or morality of subject matter.

Q. Was the man who took these pictures a good storyteller?
A. Yes.
Q. Why would you say so?
A. Cause he put in important things that were good.
Q. Any other reasons?
A. No. (second grade)

As for the second part of this question, on the author's intentions, we should note only that there was a predictable tendency on the part of the younger viewers to cite a moralistic message ("That you should help other people"—second grade) as the author's intention, whereas older viewers were more inclined to either cynicism or a statement such as: "That the doctor wasn't such a nice guy." (fifth grade)

Finally, we come to question 11, concerning the "reality" of the pictures. Considering the type of analytic scheme which we have applied to our data, the importance of this question should be evident. It was meant as the ultimate probe of the viewer's awareness of the intentionality behind the story. However, because the term "real" was left open to the viewer's definition, the criteria of reality were not always the same. Specifically, a large proportion of the second- and fifth-graders took "real" to mean "not a drawing," at least initially. More interestingly, it was found that, when informants *were* uniformly thinking in terms of stages vs. candid events, the criterion for making the determination was also age-related. The youngest viewers (second grade) were overwhelmingly inclined to consider *plausibility* as the criterion of candidness, as in the following examples, the first of which refers to the doctor's outburst of anger.

Q. What about these pictures? Do you think they're real?
A. No.
Q. Why do you think that?
A. Because a man wouldn't do that to a book. (second grade)

Q. OK, what about these pictures, do you think they're real?
A. Sometimes.
Q. Which ones do you think are real?
A. When the doctor gets the medicine and talks to the nurse and when the doctor walks home.
Q. Why do you think they are real?
A. Because the doctor does walk home.
Q. How do you know that?
A. Cause my uncle is a doctor and he does it himself.
Q. . . . . How can you tell where there is a fake picture?
A. A fake picture would be when the doctor would not care for anything. (second grade)

It appears from these examples that these viewers are not troubled by the question of how the pictures could have been obtained if the events had been real. Only one of the 34 second- or fifth-grade viewers raised this issue. On the other hand, this was the most frequent criterion of reality for the older viewer. It is important to note, also, that for these viewers it was primarily the unlikelihood of a candid *series* that determined their judgment.

Q. Any other indications that they were or were not real?
A. Well, a guy's going to think there's something wrong when every minute a guy pops in front of him and takes a picture. Like he was never looking down when they took the pictures; he was looking straight. (eighth grade)

A. Each one of these pictures separately. . . mmm, not so much the ones with the guy in the car, but, the other pictures separately, could possibly be candid shots, but taken as a whole, as a series. . . I don't think they could possibly be. (college student)

This age-related difference in criteria of reality may be taken as a capsule illustration of the central distinction between attributional and inferential interpretational strategies, to which distinction we now return, in order to summarize briefly the most important points made thus far. According to Worth and Gross, the governing difference between attribution and inference lies in the type of reasoning which is used to support interpretations in each case. Attributional interpretations treat the events in a fictional narrative as though they were subject to the rules of the real world. Consequently, attributional interpretations of these events are justified by appeal to the interpreter's beliefs about reality. Inferential interpretations, on the other hand, are grounded in the interpreter's assumptions concerning the author's intentions, since inference entails a presupposition that the narrative is a deliberately implicational construction. In the data presented in this report, clear cases of this aspect of the attribution-inference distinction occur in connection with questions 3 ("What do you know about the man in the story?") and 5 ("Who was the lady the man was talking to at work?"). In both instances, attributional responses were supported by reference to the characteristic appearance, behavior, or working environment of real-life doctors, nurses, or secretaries. Moreover, such responses were occasionally further justified by explicit accounts of the sources of the viewers' information on these aspects of reality (e.g., "I know, because my daddy's a doctor, and so is my mommy— she's a nurse."). In both instances, again, the accuracy of inferential responses was taken by viewers to depend on an adequate decipherment of the author's intentions; and, in a small number of cases, the obligation to confine one's evidence to the "text" was made explicit (e.g., "I'm making all these assumptions. . . just what I could tell by the pictures").

The responses to questions 3 and 5 also serve to illustrate another aspect of the relationship between attribution and inference. Worth and Gross assume that inferential reasoning presupposes attributional "fluency," i.e., that inference makes use of part of the apparatus of attribution. This dependence of inference on attribution is characteristic of the strategies used by viewers to identify the "man in the story" and the "lady the man was talking to at work." Attributional and inferential responses alike made use of sets of stereotypical properties of doctors, nurses, or secretaries; but, in the inferential responses, these properties were treated as deliberate fabrications. In this sense, then, inference is a more complex interpretational strategy than attribution. (Inference is also the more complex strategy by virtue of its ability to handle structural relationships in a narrative, rather than assigning stereotypical interpretations independently of sequence or structure. However, the data in this report contain almost no instances of "structural" inferences and only a small number of cases of inferences based on sequence.)

A corollary aspect of the attribution-inference relationship, according to Worth and Gross, is that inferential skills are learned later than attributional ones. The point is demonstrated most clearly, in this report, by the viewers' interpretations of the doctor's behavior at the scene of the accident. The large percentages of younger viewers (65% of the second-graders and 35% of the fifth-graders) who did not report that the doctor had ignored the accident victim are indicative of the primacy of the "good doctor" stereotype, in the interpretational reasoning of these viewers, and of the concomitant lack of a sense of obligation to conform to an authorial implication. No such tendency was found among the older viewers, who, almost without exception, did not fail to report that the doctor had not helped. These findings are strengthened by similar age-related trends in the viewers' responses to questions 4 ("Do you like the man in the story?") and 2 ("What was the most important thing in the story?"). In both instances, attributional reasoning on the part of the younger viewers appears to have exaggerated the applicability of the positive doctor-stereotype to this particular doctor, so that the majority of these viewers said that they liked the doctor and that the initial hospital sequence, rather than the episode at the accident site, was the most important thing in the story. Once again, no such tendency was observed among the older viewers.

The findings summarized above have implications in a number of areas. With regard to the nature of the interpretation itself (as distinct from its mode of justification), we would expect the results of the interpretation to be relatively independent of the type of interpretational strategy used, if the narrative belongs to one of the more convention-bound forms, such as television drama. We would expect considerable differences in interpretation between attribution and inference, together with considerable "incomprehension" on the part of attributional viewers, in the presence of narratives with a relative absence of strongly conventional components. And, as in the case of the narrative dealt with in this report, we would expect contradictory interpretations in cases involving the juxtaposition of a familiar stereotype and an authorial "comment" thereon. Among the viewers who used to object to television programs like "All in the Family," for example, were those who were responding to a stereotype, rather than to its ostensibly ironical treatment by the writer or the producer.

With regard to the aesthetic aspects of the experience of viewing (or listening to, or reading) a story, the attribution-inference distinction would lead us to expect the following. On the part of an "inferential" viewer, we would expect an awareness of the author's control during the course of the narration and, as a result of this awareness, a potential response to whatever skill is manifested in that control. We would argue—as Gross (1973) has argued elsewhere—that this

vicarious participation in the skillful performance of another is precisely what constitutes an aesthetic experience. Unlike the hypothetical "inferential" viewer, a "pure attributional" viewer would not be expected to be aware of the author's implied presence, and such a viewer should therefore be un-involved with the author's display of skill. (Instead, we would expect the "attributional" viewer to be a vicarious participant in the events depicted in the narrative.) Consequently, we would claim that a "pure attributional" viewer cannot, by definition, have an aesthetic experience (as a member of the audience of a fictional narrative). It is possible that this accounts for the considerable number of cases in our data in which younger viewers, when asked to evaluate the storyteller (question 12), did so in terms of morality rather than of skill.

Finally, a brief word of caution should be added on the issue of whether and how a storytelling medium such as television may contribute to its audience's beliefs about the real world. Since "attributional" respondents operate on an implicit assumption of continuity between the world of a fictional narrative and the real world, it may seem reasonable to speculate that such respondents are more susceptible to having their notions about the real world shaped by fiction. Conversely, an inferential viewer's awareness of authorial control should, perhaps, create a resistance to such influence. Furthermore, extrapolating from the findings of the present report, it could be argued that attributional viewers are much more susceptible to the reinforcement of stereotype than to the assimilation of novelty. Because, as this report has indicated, younger viewers tend to be attributional in their approach to fiction, such speculation becomes particularly intriguing. Therefore, it must be pointed out that there is no evidence for any of these three points in the data.

NOTES

[1] In an alternative version of this pair of slides, the conference with the secretary is conducted without the angry exchange. The use of this version with some of Murphy's interviewees did not generate any discernible differences in viewers' responses to the remainder of the story.

[2] The fact that the hospital scenes mentioned in these responses occur at the very beginning of the story raises the possibility that there is also a "primacy effect" operating here, for the younger viewers.

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APPENDIX A
THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

(1) What was the story told in the pictures? How do you know?
(2) What was the most important thing in the story? Why? What else was important in the story?
(3) What do you know about the man in the story? How can you tell? What else do you know about the man in the story? How can you tell?
(4) Do you like the man in the story? Why? What made you like him? Why? What made you dislike him? Why?
(5) Who was the lady the man was talking to at work? How do you know? What were they talking about? Who was to blame for the mistake? How do you know?
(6) Who was the lady at the end of the story? How do you know? Did you like the lady? What made you like her? Did you dislike the lady? What made you dislike her?
(7) Why do you think the man in the story acted the way he did? Why do you think so?
(8) Do you think that was the right thing? Why was that the right (wrong) thing to do?
(9) What else could he have done? What would you have done? What would another person have done in that situation? How do you know?
(10) Is there anything else about the story that you remember which we did not discuss?
(11) What about these pictures? Do you think they are real? How do you know? How do you think they got these pictures? How do you know?
(12) Would you say that the person who took these pictures was a good storyteller? What was he trying to make you think? How do you know? What was the meaning of the story?

THE POTTERS AND THE PAINTERS: ART BY AND ABOUT WOMEN IN URBAN AFRICA

BENNETTA JULES-ROSETTE

Art, like other cultural products, reflects the hierarchical structure and division of labor in society. The history of women in Western art from the 16th century to the present has been characterized by both cultural and social structural barriers to the mainstream of art production (Tuchman 1975:171-202). While the limitations are not as rigid in the West as they have been in Central African traditional and popular art, the gender-linked distinctions in the African case provide fundamental insights for a cross-cultural understanding of the changing position of women in the arts.

The variety of cultural forms found in popular African art offers a key for deciphering the relationship between social life and symbolic behavior. The characteristics of art by and about women will be approached through linking cultural perceptions to the process of art production. Therefore, I shall discuss both images of men in women's art and the portrayal of women in popular African carving and painting.

The contemporary artists of Lusaka, Zambia, are a diverse group ethnically and economically. One of their major characteristics is differentiation along sexual lines. These distinctions have their roots in traditional African art and in the ritual requirements and prohibitions placed on women in this domain. Traditionally, in Central Africa, women worked with soft materials such as clay and textiles. Figures 1-3 contain examples of women's pottery found among the Bemba of Zambia.

Much of the traditional pottery production of the Bemba and other Zambian artists was associated with young women's initiation rites generally termed *chisungu*. The pottery emblems or *mbusa* (Figure 2) were figures used by the older women to instruct the initiates in familial and household responsibilities. Only women were allowed to see these figures. Carved figures that played important roles as symbols of political and social solidarity were, on the contrary, intended to be made and viewed only by men.[1] The segregation of the sexes in work and ritual life in many African societies has markedly influenced not only traditional African art but also the newer art forms.

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Figure 1 —*A Bemba* nacimbusa *or head initiator displays a crocodile figurine, symbolizing male domestic power and the secrets of the household, during the* chisungu *initiation ceremony (Richards 1956:80, 102).*

This analysis does not make a strong distinction between popular and "airport" art. Rather, it includes in the category of popular art a broad spectrum of works produced for tourist and community consumption in the urban sector. I shall not focus on a classification of artistic styles, but instead shall examine the process of artistic production as a structured activity, as a vehicle of individual creativity, and as an indicator of broader social relationships. This work varies in terms of the level of expertise possessed by the artists, their training, which ranges from informal apprenticeship to government schooling, and their target audiences. The popular artists of Lusaka are in search of an audience. They often have mixed outlets, including African proletarian, local elite, and tourist groups.

My research on African art began as a larger study of social networks in the shanty areas surrounding Lusaka, Zambia's capital. Initially, I was interested in small cottage industries and self-employment. The artists appeared among the most visible and creative members of the self-employed population in several shanty areas. Almost immediately, I noticed the absence of women among the more lucrative commercial artists, despite a definite emphasis on images of women in their art. Women, however, were prominent among the producers of pottery consumed within the shanty communities. This difference led me to an interest in the ethnographic and symbolic differences between women's and men's art in urban Zambia. The strongest distinction emerged between artworks by women and artworks made about women by men. Men have made a more radical transition in the social organization and style of art production, while women have remained more limited by existing definitions of accepted activity. However, despite male artists' attempts to define new cultural goals, their images of women remain rela-

tively static and do not portray the contemporary woman's experience.

Over the past three years, I have interviewed 65 artists in Lusaka's shanty towns. Among them, I have worked in depth with four principal informants, including three painters and one potter. These artists have spent long hours discussing their métier with me and have allowed me to experiment with using their materials. During the course of this work, the importance of gender-linked distinctions in African art
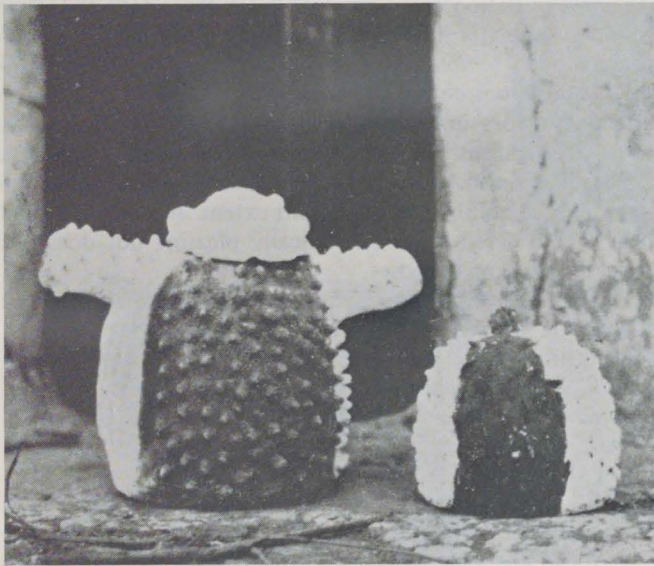

Figure 2 —*Two* mbusa *or pottery emblems used in the* chisungu: *the lion (left), blown to make a roaring sound and symbolizing the courage of the husband, and helmet (right) called the Plumed Husband. This helmet is worn during the ceremony and represents chiefly deference to the husband and to female elders (Richards 1956:80, 104).*
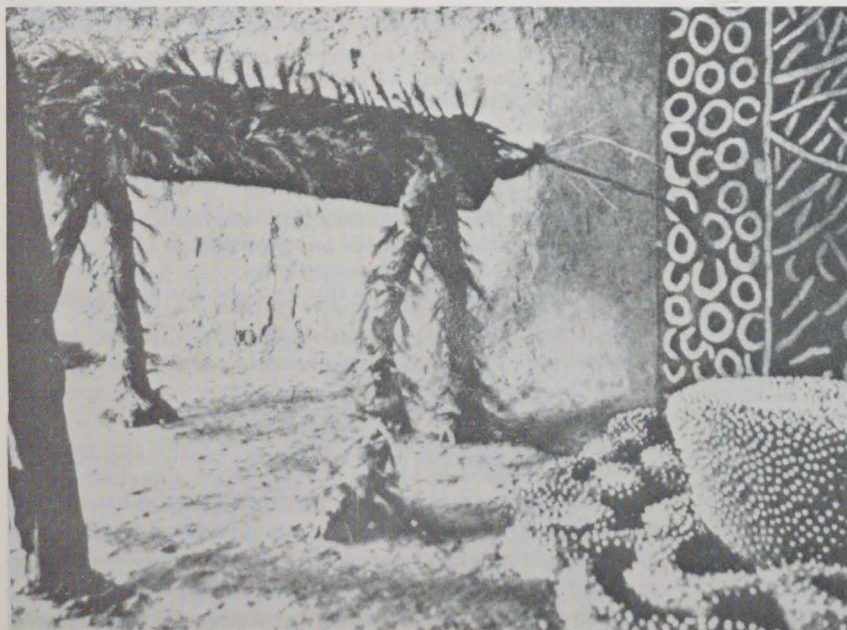
extending across traditional and contemporary popular forms constantly resurfaced as a focal point of study. The potting arts, as we shall see later, are the most apparent source of continuing artistic traditions for women in the Lusaka area. Historically, the potting arts were a source of ceremonial expression and the affirmation of womanly identity. At present, they provide a means of skilled livelihood and economic mobility among urban women. The historical and present status of art by women as a sacred form and source of communal subsistence contrasts with the predominance of men in the commercial sector of popular Central African art. Men in the commercial arts were able to make a much sharper break from tradition while women build upon and are confined by it.

In this article, my interests turn to the explanations offered by the artists of the meanings and rationale behind their networks. I compare gender-linked forms of expression in terms of culturally imposed symbolic constraints and changing types of imagery that emerge in response to the reinterpretation of conventionally accepted genres and artistic techniques. I present the artists' own interpretations of these genres and contrast gender-linked limitations on artistic expression, creative individuation, and the use of specific techniques and materials in art by and about women.

THE TRADITION OF POTTING AS WOMEN'S ART IN CENTRAL AFRICA

The background of traditional art bears directly upon the work of the women potters in the contemporary urban setting. In order to understand this relationship, it is necessary to regard potting as a basic expression of womanhood, especially in initiation rites. During the *chisungu* or women's initiation sequence among the Bemba, a series of pottery emblems are shown to the young woman over a three-year period. These emblems represent sacred embodiments of the young woman's duty as a wife and mother. They also depict prototypical maleness as symbolized in the lion emblems (see

Figure 3 —*Two other Bemba* mbusa: *a lion (left) and snake (right). The lion is used to represent the danger of the initiation ceremony as well as the husband's courage. The snake is a male symbol and warns against deceit (Richards 1956:87, 97).*

Figures 2, left; and 3, left), as juxtaposed to ideal womanly characteristics. It is important to note that in the traditional context, men may represent women directly and explicitly, while women depict men only through veiled symbolism.

The small ceramic pots (Bemba: *tulongo*) are important sacred symbols in the young woman's marriage (Richards 1956:31). At the time of marriage, each bride is presented a small pot by her paternal aunt. The vessel must be kept hidden and is used in a purification rite conducted by the husband and wife.[2] The couple places the water-filled pot on a fire, holding it by the rim. The wife then pours water over her husband's hands and the fire, after which she relights the fire. This ceremony purifies the young couple so that they can enter their new home and light its hearth fires. It is said that this ceremony is also to be performed after each sexual act in which the couple engages. The pot, which contains purifying elements, is the woman's responsibility and ceremonially unifies the nuclear family. Audrey Richards' Bemba informants described the traditional importance of the pot to her at length (Richards 1956:30-32). My Bemba informants in town confirmed these explanations by emphasizing the traditional significance of ablutions often ignored by contemporary couples.

The *mbusa* or emblems of initiation are varied in form among the Bemba. They include symbols of fertility, such as the crocodile and the snake, and other animal figures intended to teach young women family responsibilities. Men are not allowed to witness the making of emblems and are mocked and verbally abused if they happen to do so by accident. Uniform ritual directives form the guidelines for making *mbusa*. Even experienced potters must follow a strict ritual format for art production, and they are not allowed a great deal of individuation in their work. While the lack of individuation is characteristic of traditional ceremonial artifacts, it is also preserved as a major feature of contemporary women's potting.

Among Central African groups such as the Ndembu of Zambia, distant neighbors of the Bemba (Turner 1967:151-277), male initiation is similarly associated with a variety of plastic art forms, including raffia weaving and wood and raffia masking. These arts are held in strict secrecy from women, who may die if they see certain masks or witness their production.[3] The sacred value of art forms and their sex-based differentiation is so extensive that it creates virtually autonomous spheres of knowledge (D'Azevedo 1973:322-326). One ethnographer described this gender-linked barrier in art production with respect to the deference accorded to male carvers by the Gola women of West Africa when they commission special dance masks:

> The carver demands that they [the women] treat him with all the respect due the creator of an object of such importance. They must humble themselves by disrobing and must utilize an elaborate language of deference. Furthermore, they must carry on all negotiations with him in secret tryst, pay an initial and final fee without fail, and provide good food and other comforts for him and his guardian spirit during the entire course of creation [D'Azevedo 1973:324].

The women are ritually and politically prevented from making their own wooden masks and carvings and must rely on the male intercessor in order to obtain them. The power of artistic production is placed in the hands of men. In addition, creativity for men is treated as an idealized individual activity. While carvers' societies do exist in West and Central Africa, carving is regarded as an individual activity passed from *one* male teacher to his apprentice. It is seldom executed in cooperative groups. The act of individual creativity for carvers reinforces social hierarchy rather than equalizing it through group activity.

BEMBA WOMEN CARVERS IN URBAN AREAS

The women potters in an urban environment rarely participate in initiation ceremonies. Instead, they make the squat rounded pots for the storage and consumption of home-brewed beers (*chibuku* and *kachiasu*). These pots have standard decorations consisting of small hatch marks in cross or diamond shapes under the lip of the pot. After the pot is fired, it is burnished with a small stone, which gives it a pewter-like finish. Only one tint of burnish is used, but the pots may be polished to a different extent. A highly polished pot is considered more aesthetically pleasing but does not excel for brewing purposes.

The village techniques of pottery making are also used in town. The women collect clay and work on their pots in a social atmosphere. The homes of the Lusaka potters in Marrapodi, a shanty area four miles north of the capital, are located adjacent to each other along the banks of a small stream. From the stream, they draw both the clay and burnishing stones used in their potting.

Mrs. Kave, my main informant among the potters, was a woman in her early fifties trained as a *nacimbusa* or Bemba initiator in her youth. She developed potting as a marketable skill in town and maintained her ritual duties in the urban community. She stated that she and her colleagues were able to make approximately ten pots each in a two-day sitting. On the third day, they fired the pots and on the fourth, they burnished them. The pots were then ready for use in the weekend beer brewing celebrations. Beer is brewed Friday afternoon and Saturday morning for consumption in the evening. Mrs. Kave explained her production and marketing methods to me:

Interviewer: How many do you make per day?
Mrs. Kave: Sometimes we make five per day if they are small; if they are large, we make three.
Interviewer: If you make a hundred and take them to town to sell, can you sell them all in one day? Do you usually sell on credit?
Mrs. Kave: No, we just sell them here. We don't have any clients who resell them either.
Interviewer: Can you ever have a client who resells your pottery in town or in a store while you go on working?
Mrs. Kave: No, we don't have even one.
Interviewer: But if you see a client, you can give him a good price so that he can buy many?
Mrs. Kave: Yes, we can give him a good price so that he can buy.
Interviewer: Can you find a child to help you with the work or to bring you water or wood?
Mrs. Kave: Yes, there are children, there are many of them.
Interviewer: What do you pay them?
Mrs. Kave: I don't pay them, because they are my children.

In this excerpt, Mrs. Kave indicated that she has no paid employees for production and no middlemen for urban marketing. She retains a traditional pattern of family apprenticeship and engages only in face-to-face cash sale. Although the location of her home on the path between two shanty areas

Figure 4 —Mrs. Kave, an urban Bemba potter, shapes a stem pitcher. Already finished pitchers, tulongo (small all-purpose pots), and large water pots are displayed for sale, while others await firing and burnishing.

Figure 5 —A corncob is used to shape the surface of the pot, which is turned slowly by hand without a potter's wheel.

made it possible for her to display the pots and sell them to passersby, the majority of her clients were personal acquaintances.

The beer brewers are known as *shebeen queens*. Historically, their activities developed during the early days of migrant labor in Central and Southern Africa, when men often left their wives and children at home to work on an extended contract basis in town. The *shebeen queens* are the women around whom a male friendship group centers (Mayer 1971:298-300). They stand in complementarity to a recently emerging category of *shebeen kings*, the popular term for men who transport and distribute illicit brews of their "queens" in the shanty areas. The *shebeen queens* generally live alone, and receive several male clients. The outsider might see them as "prostitutes." However, they are not viewed in this way by the community and must be distinguished from "modern" prostitutes or "call girls." The *shebeen queen* organizes the weekly parties, and her pottery is sold along with the beer. Her work is valued only in terms

of the social context in which it is used. It is both made and handled in large groups. The pots themselves are intended to be so uniform that only the keenest eye can distinguish between the marks of one woman and another. The pay received for the pots is low: about $0.50 for the small pots and $1.00 for the large ones. The women set their own market rates and seldom break their solidarity to increase profit.

A major distinction among the women potters is that between the traditionally and more recently trained women. Some of the potters received their training in the traditional milieu and functioned as *chisungu* elders, while others were trained in town by older women. The *chisungu* elders have a larger repertoire that includes initiation figurines. They possess a sense of artistry, working on each pot or figurine until it has, in their estimation, reached a point of perfection. These women learned their craft through years of arduous apprenticeship to elders. As a result, they practiced their art forms until an accepted standard of excellence was achieved.

Mrs. Kave is an excellent example of a *nacimbusa* who

continues to view her artistry as the foundation of her potting. She takes time to teach her colleagues skills and is proud of the perfection of her works. In contrast, the young women who learned to pot in town were less aware of aesthetic conventions and utilized only a limited repertoire of standardized patterns. They had not had direct contact with the meaning or stylistic format of traditional ceramic and *terra cotta* work. When their pots were cracked or punctured by inept firing, they became functionally useless as well. Hence, although artistry by women is basically standardized in format and production procedure, there are differences in the training, skill, and dedication with which the women approach their art.

On several occasions, Mrs. Kave emphasized that her training differed in its extent and detail from that of her colleagues. Holding an ornamental vase in the air, she stated: "Many of them do not know how to make these." Her pride in her art was clear. The cultural reason for this difference in representation rests on the relationship between art and social hierarchy. In traditional African sculpture, naturalistic figurines of ancestral spirits may be made commemoratively by the carvers who serve or are ceremonially linked to those spirits (Willett 1972:224). Naturalistic representation presupposes that the artist occupies a specialized, often aristocratic, position in relationship to other members of the society. He is, therefore, privileged to represent individuals (whether living or dead) in a life-like manner. Women, on the other hand, rarely attain such status and represent "male forces" in an indirect way in both the plastic and verbal arts.

Only with this background is it possible to understand the topics selected by contemporary carvers. Many of the commercial carvings fall into the idyllic landscape genre (see Figure 6). They portray villages and landscapes intended for a tourist audience. The theme depicted is "Africa as it was," showing the untouched countryside and peaceful portrayals of happy villagers. Szombati-Fabian and Fabian (1976:5) have subsumed these types of Zairean paintings under the genre of "things ancestral." Indeed, an ideal of life in a glorified and romanticized past is presented. In these scenes, male artists may depict women with considerable individuation.

They are shown pounding maize, lighting fires, cooking, or passively awaiting the victorious return of their husbands and sons from the hunt. The women appear happy or expressionless. They are performing the duties expected of them in an idyllic world. However, whether ritual elders or neophytes, the women potters share a common orientation toward the primacy of the social as opposed to the aesthetic components of their work.[4]

REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN IN MEN'S ART: THE COMMERCIAL CARVERS

While women represent men only in abstract ways, men represent women directly as female figures in both traditional and contemporary carving (see Figure 6). These relief carvings are similar in theme to the repousse copper work done by artisans. The repousse copper is, however, a more limited medium in which fewer items can be placed in a single plaque. Two women pounding maize in front of a grass house or the encounter between men and women on returning from the hunt might be portrayed on a single copper frieze (see Figure 7).

The woodcarvings, however, contain continuous narratives in which the history and daily life of a single family is portrayed, or, alternatively, a set of autonomous friezes is presented with a unifying theme, such as the aging of the individuals within the family and the multiple responsibilities that one assumes at different phases in the life cycle. The artists assert that these stories are drawn from traditional myths, particularly those of Kuba origin. However, these myths are reinterpreted in a contemporary cultural context. One of the copper workers, Kabela, explained that he had drawn topics for the friezes from village life in the Kasai area. The woodcarvers claimed to have been directly influenced by a missionary school opened in the West Kasai with the specific intent of preserving Kuba art forms.

Table 1 compares the subjects and interpretations found in carving and repousse copper work. The women in these scenes assume either a passive position, watching or awaiting the successful activities of men, or engage in peaceful and

Figure 6 —Apprentice carvers highlight the figures in a domestic scene on an ornamental cabinet. Women are depicted working in the midst of the family group.

Figure 7 —A repousse copper plaque portraying women in domestic activities.

productive labor as primary food providers in the rural milieu. As such, they represent a high degree of male nostalgia.

Although the images of women portrayed in these friezes use traditional symbols, they may be better understood with the help of contemporary theories about the position of women in urban life. Hansen (1975:777-799) and other researchers have suggested that women living in shanty towns have lost some of the traditional value vested in their work and are, instead, viewed as economic noncontributors to the household. As a result, fertility rates rise in urban areas as part of the woman's attempt to redefine her identity and importance. As the sacred symbolism that surrounds the traditional woman's associations is transformed, women are represented in popular artwork as domestic figures, whose existence becomes meaningful only in their relationship to men. Their traditional productivity is shown as belonging to the past. This contemporary redefinition of the position of urban women becomes particularly evident in the paintings of "elegant" or frivolous women that will be discussed below.

IMAGES OF WOMEN
IN CONTEMPORARY OIL PAINTING

Contemporary oil painting is at the opposite end of the art continuum from traditional potting. The earlier contrast between the hard and soft materials used in traditional art does not apply directly to painting. Painting is a new art form introduced through the influences of art academies supported by European colonialists. The artists have, nonetheless, attempted to technically combine painting with the traditionally high art of carving by using the palette knife and literally sculpting thick layers of paint onto the canvas.

Many of the popular painters of Lusaka are Zairean, Rwandan, or Kenyan. There are three main genres of painting that contain their own substyles: the *mami wata* or *mambo muntu*, the idyllic landscape, and the portrait (see Figures 8-20). The most striking of the genres is the *mambo muntu*, a half-woman, half-fish accompanied by a snake. This figure is the product of extensive cross-cultural sharing that draws upon traditional West and Central African, Indian, and European art forms. The mermaid is typically shown in large scale. The background of water is not heavily emphasized, but the figure appears in careful detail. Each *mami wata* repeats the standard symbolic elements pertaining to the folk belief in her powers: a wristwatch that is set to the traditional witching hour, a modern necklace that functions as a charm, and a snake, held in her hands, into which she can transform herself when seeking vengeance for betrayal.

As an image of woman, the *mami wata* is both voluptuous and dangerous. A popular Nigerian song invites males to approach and make use of her powers ("If you ever see *mami*

TABLE 1
WOMEN IN THE IDYLLIC LANDSCAPE: CARVING AND REPOUSSE COPPER

Subject Variations	Images of Women	Audience and Interpretation
Domestic scenes	Women cooking or preparing grains or foodstuffs (passive)	Tourist ("the ideal Africa") and African elite ("Africa as it was")
River scenes (women watching)	Women watching men in pirogues or carrying water (passive or productive)	
Hunting	Women watching the return of hunters (passive)	

wata, oh, never, never run away'') (Drewal 1977). She is to be exploited for her ability to produce riches. Yet, like the image of the harping wife, she is also to be placated and avoided lest ultimate ruin result. Following in the tradition of her European predecessors, the siren and the mermaid, she attracts men and thereby gains the power to destroy them.

An unmistakable cultural borrowing has occurred in the development of the *mami wata* figure across subSaharan Africa. Some scholars trace her to the Portuguese colonial importation of the mermaid to West Africa on ship figure-heads and to contact with other Mediterranean sources during the colonization process. She has also been related to the pantheon of female snake deities in Hinduism (Drewal 1977; Dimock 1961:307-321). Above all, she unifies a broad spectrum of traditional African religious beliefs that associate water spirits with fertility and womanhood on the one hand

Figure 8 —*The mermaid figure (*mami wata *or* mambo muntu), *symbolizing rapid wealth and power. The snake denotes punishment of those unfaithful to her.*

and wealth and power on the other.[5] The *mami wata* is a mother figure employing the creative female element with counterbalancing destructive features. The *mami wata* expresses the traditional African segregation of gender-linked activities, already emphasized in our discussion of initiation. In addition, she retranslates this traditional avoidance into the enticement and danger that women represents in contemporary urban life.

While the idyllic landscape depicts the domesticated women, the *mami wata* throws the woman back to a natural or brute form.[6] She is part fish or animal. She is also part *anima* or uncontrollable spirit. And she is, pictorially, part woman in raw flesh. The *mami wata* is seldom copied as a portrait of a living individual.[7] Although a personalized *mami wata* may be painted to order, this is rare. She is, instead, a representation of individualistic appearance that represents the general principles of feminine power, creativity, and destructiveness. In this sense, the symbolism of the *mami wata* is not unlike the biblical figure of Eve or the contemporary Western "femme fatale."

The *idyllic landscape* follows the same pattern that it does in reliefs and decorative carving. A set of grass houses before which contented women await the arrival of men from the hunt is most often depicted. There are also idyllic portrayals in which unisex figures are presented. These sticklike silhouettes may be shown in the foreground of a village clearing or crossing a river in a pirogue. The helmsman is always implicitly but never unambiguously male. These figures are decorative and depersonalized. The artists emphasize the prevailing powers of nature and its magical properties by deemphasizing the presence of human beings in the setting and minimizing the appearance of their control over natural forces. As such, the idyllic landscape consoles the viewer through nostalgia and redresses the human destruction of nature associated with modernization. The landscape not only affirms the things of the past but also revitalizes the past for the present.

The artists stated that the landscape painting is attractive to a generalized tourist audience of both sexes and less to African elite buyers. Its appeal is based upon the ambiance of

Figure 9 —Mami wata *figures by the same artist, showing iconic similarities.*

TABLE 2
TWO PORTRAIT GENRES

1. Fictive portraits	Men: old chiefs and warriors	Women: young and nubile
2. Actual personages	Heads of households, heads of state, important figures, whole families	Wives and mothers, whole families

Figure 10 —A forest scene by the Zairean lead painter, Diouf.

Figure 11 —Etienne fills in the velvet portrait of a ten-year-old girl, based on a photograph.

the scene, not the specific activities of the figures depicted. The figures are portrayed in a "neverland" of dreamlike ease, regardless of their activities.

Portraits contrast with both the idyllic landscape and the *mambo muntu* genre in terms of their lifelike characteristics and the directness with which the painter expresses his individuality. There are two major types of portraits: those of actual individuals painted from photographs and those of fictive personalities dressed in traditional garb.

Figure 12 —"L'Elégante," by Diouf. Note the silky materials and expensive jewels in the portrait.

The former type of portrait consists of realistic representations of individuals based on live subjects. The fictive portraits may be either veristic or abstract in execution. There are, thus, stylistic variations as well as content differences in the portrait genre. The black velvet portrait, whether of an actual or a fictive subject, employs hyperrealism as a guiding technique. Eyes glisten, skin appears vibrant, and teeth sparkle. This approach contrasts with what the Zairean painters of Lusaka refer to as figurative *art moderne*, that is, stylized angular drawings in which certain characteristics of an individual's appearance and body proportions have been exaggerated. The *art moderne* portraits are done on canvas with oil or acrylic paint. Subjects generally *do not* pose for such portraits. In this case, the artists consider their aesthetic goals to be experimental rather than photographic. Both the

veristic and the more abstract styles stand in a self-conscious relationship to traditional forms of representation in carving. The photographic image is a progressive response. Traditional themes, e.g., a portrait of a village "doctor" (nganga) or a warrior, are presented as contemporary pieces. In the angular portraits, traditional conventions of proportion and contour are evoked through painting.

The velvet portrait accentuates the individuality of the client. It is painted from a snapshot, with details of clothing and jewelry added, as markers of the client's desired social and economic status. The face is highlighted from the black or blue velvet background with strong chiaroscuro that implies a direct and personal, even intimate, perspective. The figure seems to come to life and appears as if seen indoors by lamplight, a setting that conveys personal familiarity. The highlighting accents the face, emphasizing the eyes that seem to look directly at the viewer. The purpose is to lend power to the subject through enlivening the portrait itself. The portrait is not a charm or magical object that lends power to its owner as the mami wata does. Instead, the portrait is a "meditation piece" and a means of "concretizing" the imagination. In the case of photographic portraits, the depiction allows the client to project herself into an ideal economic and social setting, a painted "dream world." Two types of African women are represented alone in portraits: the elite woman and the elegant woman (also, implicitly, a frivolous woman or a prostitute).

The portrait of an "elegant woman" appears in the two figures above. In the figure on the right, the portrait is juxtaposed with the "Mother of Twins." The maternal image forms a direct contrast with the free woman. The mother with child headed for work in the fields and even the elegantly dressed mother with silks and parasol (see Figures 14 and 15) tie the more liberated woman back to her conventional role.

Diouf quickly drew the young town woman in Figure 17 while I videotaped him. In this image, he represents the ambivalent combination of her freedom, calculated elegance, and vanity.

In other black velvet portraits, women are depicted with children and are dressed in village attire or are barebreasted. These are idyllic images. Older women are seldom shown in the fictive portraits, whereas elderly male sages, warriors, and chiefs are. In a manner not unknown in the West, the man gains dignity and respect as he ages, while the woman becomes a haggard, undesirable, and often a frightening figure. Lusengu's and Kayembe's paintings below (Figures 18-20) demonstrate the differentiation between the wise old warrior and the young nubile woman ready for marriage. Note that the warrior in Figure 18 still carries his spear and shield, while the woman is more profusely adorned with traditional jewelry.

While paintings of old men and young women are common, those of older women are not. Post-menopausal women possess mystical power in Central African societies, and for this reason, it may be difficult to portray them in popular paintings without arousing considerable emotion. Female elders are respected and feared, but they are rarely if ever portrayed. During the three years that I have studied popular African art, I have not yet encountered a single figuratist painting of an old woman, although some of the more

Figure 13 —Left: "The Reception of the Mother of Twins." Right: "L'Elégante."

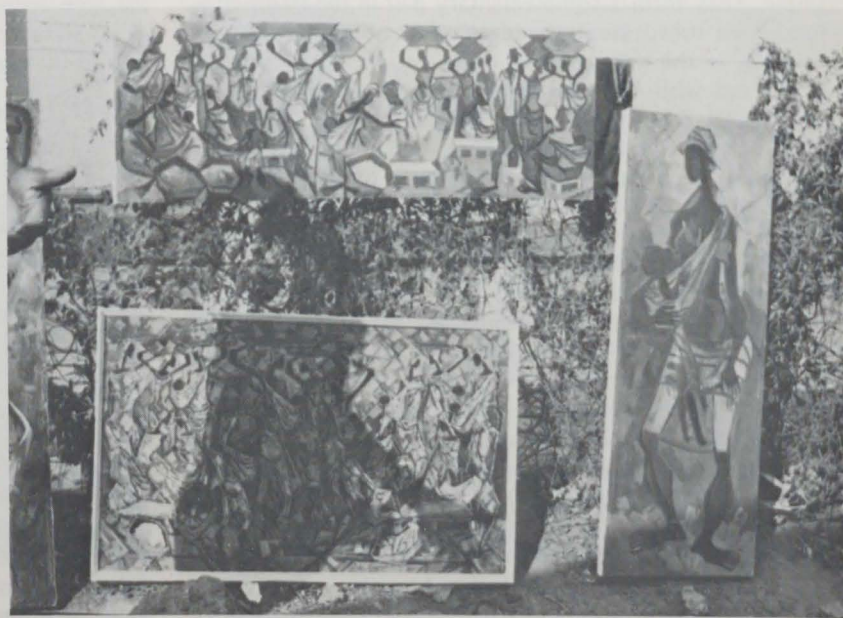Figure 14 —Center: Untitled. Right: "Woman with Parasol and Silks," by Diouf.

Figure 15 —An untitled mother with child, headed for work in the fields, by Diouf.

Figure 17 —Sketch of a young town woman executed rapidly by Diouf.

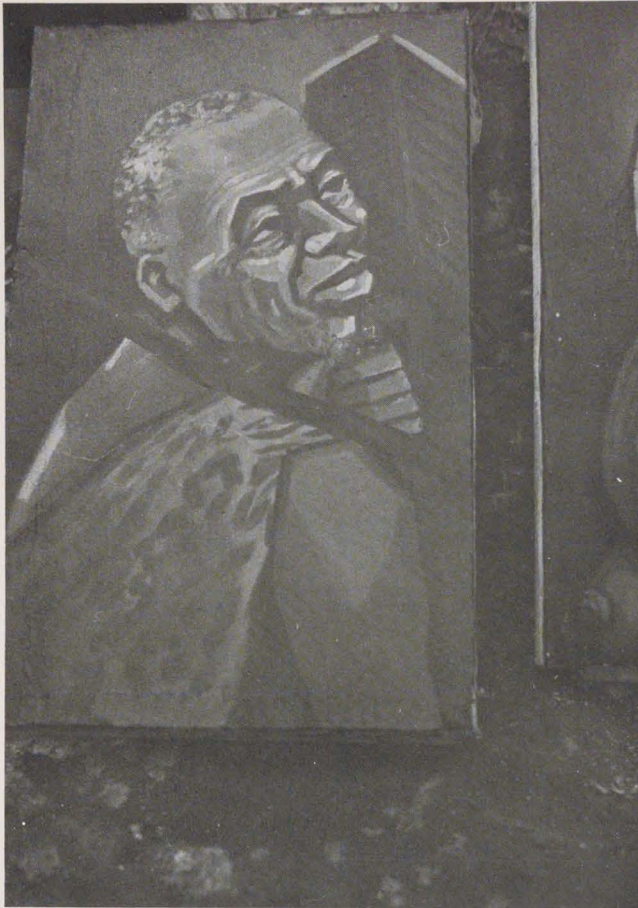Figure 16 —Three of Diouf's paintings: two market scenes and "The Woman in the Field."

Figure 18   —Fictive portrait of an old warrior, by Lusengu.

Figure 19   —Fictive portrait of a young woman, by Lusengu.

abstract painting has been interpreted as representing older women.

By contrast, the old man/young woman form a culturally synthetic unit. They are considered eligible to marry, for example. They form a complementary pair in the traditional milieu. Their substitute in the black velvet portraits of actual individuals is the monogamous couple. Upper-class women are depicted with their husbands at some significant milestones in their lives, for example, at their marriage ceremony or when they completed European schooling. The elite woman may also be portrayed at the birth of her first child, with the mother seated, holding the child in the foreground. Mother/child is also treated as a complementary unit in the fictive and traditionalistic portraits.

Portraits of women made explicitly for sale to Europeans often present the nubile, barebreasted, frequently smiling image (see Figures 19-21). These portrayals, unlike the Latin American black velvets, are meant to be more sensuous and sensationalistic than erotic. A mother and child or a barebreasted girl in initiation headdress are highly characteristic of the fictive portraits. Figure 19, a charcoal drawing made by Lusengu from an old photograph, sold very well at his exposition. He was obliged to make several copies and expressed interest in learning to make prints in order to service a larger clientele with a single drawing.

In the fictive portraits, the artist generally focuses drama-

tically on one or two subjects, even showing tears in their eyes for maximum emotional impact. For background, there is, at most, a stylized surface of leaves, or voluptuous curtains. The individual subject, whether real or imaginary, is the sole focus of attention. One artist of the black velvet genre stated that his goal was to make the painting "more beautiful" than life through its vibrant presentation.

Such richness of realistic detail is confined to the velvet portrait genre alone. Kavolis (1967:76-91) links this style to a proletarian clientele and claims that it arises with urban industrial society. However, it is important to note that the very same male artists may paint in a contrasting genre intended for a different target audience.

In the *art moderne* paintings, realism is replaced by the elongation of features and angular contours. This is a form of revitalism in art. Traditional notions of aesthetics are evoked within these art forms. Several of the painters mentioned Picasso's art as an inspiration, both for changes in representation and for universalizing personal experience through art. The fact that Picasso drew ideas both from traditional African sculpture and from his own Iberian traditions, though not explicitly mentioned by the painters, adds an overtone to this revitalization process.[8] The individuation of the black velvet realism is replaced by a modified form of representation, stressing the qualities of form and movement. This

sense of motion enhances the themes that the modern artists wish to portray.

One of the major images, as illustrated above, is found in the modern paintings of the African peasant woman (see Figure 16, right). She is physically strong, carrying her baby and her work tools. The arm and leg muscles are exaggerated, and the head is small. The overall effect is an abstracted version of "socialist realism," elevating the hard work of the woman in the traditional milieu. Like many of the women in the black velvet portraits, the women are portrayed on canvas as mothers and epitomize the creative aspects of traditional concepts of womanhood.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ARTIST INFORMANTS AND THEIR IMAGES OF WOMEN

Diouf Moussa is a Zairean painter who was trained at the Academy of Fine Arts in Lubumbashi, Zaire. Among the artists whose studios are based in Lusaka's shanty areas, he has been exposed to an unusually high level of formal education. He became a professor of fine arts in Kinshasa and subsequent to that, he worked as a graphic artist for UNESCO. He had been sent by the Zairean government to do several expositions abroad in Rome, Paris, and Canada. His collection of personal art was extensive, including over 80 paintings. On several occasions when I interviewed him, Diouf was preparing for expositions. These paintings included several angular portraits of women and of settings like the marketplace in which women predominate. There were also portraits of raw peasant figures who stand in contrast with the elegant town women.

Gradually, Diouf has established himself as the central figure in the circle of Lusaka painters. The others look to him for the introduction of outside techniques and the transmission and interpretation of conventional, more Western notions of art. The statements of Diouf and his colleagues below, therefore, contain an exceptional self-consciousness and an attempt to fit themselves to an international frame-

work of contemporary art. Diouf contrasted his portrait entitled "Woman in the Field" (Figure 16, right) with another called "*L'Elégante*" (Figures 12 and 13, right). *L'Elégante* is dressed in diaphanous evening wear and carries a parasol. In another portrait, an elegant woman is depicted preparing for an evening soiree. She is barebreasted and is combing her hair. While the peasant woman labors, *l'élégante* has been transformed by urban life into a frivolous symbol of feminine beauty. She is to be appreciated and worshipped by men, but her contribution to the sustaining of daily life is small.

In the portraits of *l'élégante*, stylistic distortion and elongation are used to denote self-assurance, subtle arrogance, and grace. Another painter, *Mutwale*, also depicts freedom from the traditional way of life through this genre. He has manipulated certain painting conventions and ideals to create an air of mystery. The arms of his *élégante* are long and wiry (see Figure 22), conveying freedom of movement. Her face is merely a rude sketch. She appears as a generalized figure, not as an individual portrait. Her body is elongated and in a moving balance, with trunk angling left from the upright thighs, arms and head compensating to the right, both knees bent. Her feet are long and firmly planted. Her stance resembles the ideal of split-trunk body movement that appears in Central African dance and sculpture. However, unlike traditional sculpture, which is angled forward and back but remains upright, not leaning to left and right, Mutwale's figure angles along both axes, suggesting both movement and rest simultaneously. His *élégante* is both active in urban life and a fragile figure possessing merely ornamental properties.

Santos is an older portrait and landscape painter located in Chawama, a shanty area some distance from the new figuratist circle in Kanyama. He makes portraits of women that might be referred to as "primitive," using traditional canons of portraiture that seem to be drawn from mask carving. His relative, *Christophe*, who works primarily in the idyllic landscape genre (Jules-Rosette 1977), also paints portraits in this masklike style, which was not seen elsewhere among the

Figure 20 —Fictive portraits of an old warrior and a young woman, by Kayembe.

Figure 21 —Charcoal drawing of a woman fishing, by Lusengu.

*Figure 22
—Portrait
of a
young
woman,
by
Mutwale.*

Lusaka artists. An older brother, now deceased, is said to have worked in the same style. Santos explained that Figure 24 was a portrait of Miriam Makeba. As such, both it and the Catholic "sister" portrayed in Figure 23 fit into the category of the African elegant or urban woman, but the imputation of frivolity is removed. Santos' style, transmitted through a single family, is unique.

Western and indigenous interpretations of womanhood are combined at times, in the portraits as they are in the *mami wata* paintings. *Lusengu*, another member of the *art moderne*

school, made several nude portraits of *l'élégante* in a figuratist style. He had two years of academy training in Lubumbashi and had been in Lusaka for only six months at the time of the interview. Between 1976 and 1977, Lusengu put on two expositions at a major urban hotel, one using the moderate abstraction that he described as the "new figuratism" and the other in pastels. His audience gradually broadened to include a varied expatriate and an African elite group. Much of Lusengu's work consists of images of women as mothers, companions, and elegant models. He attempts to apply the more Western convention of the nude to the new African figuratism that he developed. The results are often baffling to both the African and expatriate customers that he tries to reach.

One of Lusengu's compositions consists of four nude women reclining. These nudes are painted in the contemporary style that Lusengu refers to as examples of figuratism (see Figure 25).[9] The abstract manner of painting combined with the nude convention confused many African proletarian customers. The following exchange developed between one field informant, who was an art buyer, and Lusengu:

> *Interviewer:* And what does this represent?
> *Lusengu:* There—
> *Interviewer:* It's a woman.
> *Lusengu:* Yes, a nude woman, that represents nude women, in a style of figuratism and of modern art.
> *Middleman:* She is about to give birth?
> *Lusengu:* Excuse me?
> *Middleman:* She is about to give birth?
> *Lusengu:* Ha. Well, that's not the story, you see. Because if she was about to give birth, for a woman about to give birth never holds herself in that position. That is, there must be a matter of rest, finally repose, something in that sense, or maybe—and again, above all, it's not to give birth.

Lusengu was both puzzled and embarrassed at the middleman's request for information about what he had come to take as an artistic convention. He fully understood the rela-

Figure 23   —Portrait of a Catholic nun, by Santos.

Figure 24   —Portrait of Miriam Makeba, by Santos.

Figure 25   *—Reclining nudes, by Lusengu.*

tionship between *l'élégante* and a Western ideal of femininity. Implicitly, he was critical of this ideal. He accepted, however, its stylistic conventions as constituting an acceptable artistic code and an inspiration for his painting.

Similarly for Diouf, who has introduced the ideal of the elegant woman into the circle of Lusaka painters, this figure portrays women in an allegedly universal manner. For these painters, universality means that the content of the paintings can be equally understood and accepted by persons from diverse cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the image of womanhood portrayed is intended to touch upon some transcultural aspects of creativity, beauty, and ornamentation. Diouf explains his ideals with considerable sophistication:

> Painting should not be limited to a closed audience. Painting should be broad, painting should be human, painting should be international. The problem isn't one of the vision of the country-side of Kenya, or the vision of here. For example, Picasso. I cite someone who is well known and who has achieved a great deal. He painted Guernica, which is in a certain way, a manifestation that he wanted to constitute for all the atrocities of war. But the problem of war isn't a Spanish problem or a Zairean problem, or a problem—I don't know, of Australia or Europe. It's an international problem, that involves all humanity. And I think that painting should change more and more toward such a vision of things, that it should become universal, that it won't limit itself to a purely local audience.

> For example, the ceremony of the mother of twins here. That ceremony comes from an African milieu, very precisely; it's that which has pushed me to realize it. It's a Zairean milieu, a given tribe, but the one who says a cultural problem says a universal problem because culture is universal. Even though we come from such-and-such a milieu, it comes to be universal [Jules-Rosette 1977].

Thus, despite his emphasis on universality, Diouf often draws women in specifically traditional contexts engaged in culturally conventional behaviors. The painting referred to here, "The Reception of the Mother of Twins" (see Figure 13, left), shows a traditional twinship ceremony from Zaire. Diouf remarked that only a few of those who viewed the painting would actually have the knowledge to understand it completely. Through these highly stylized and delimited means, he hopes to convey universal feelings about motherhood and fertility. In order to evoke these feelings, he has opted in many cases for a traditional "timeless" view of

women. Few of the painters depict women individualistically in specifically modern contexts. New conventions of abstraction are paradoxically used to reinforce and express on canvas existing cultural and aesthetic ideals that are applied to the social and cultural place of women. Diouf's work here foreshadows that of his colleagues, who idealize their images of women as mothers, wives, and symbols of sensuality and beauty, just as both he and the traditional Central African carvers that were discussed above have already done.

INDIVIDUATION IN ART:
A MIRROR OF SOCIETY

Earlier, it was noted that pottery is characterized by a lack of individuation. Artists are encouraged to make their pieces blend with those of every other woman who worked with clay. This is less the case for the carvers. While the oil painters are engaged in a learning process during which they copy each other, their emphasis is on the uniqueness of each art work. In particular, their portraiture of women is individualistic, demonstrating both stylistic innovativeness and the distinctiveness of the subjects that they paint. However, this individuation occurs within the context of specific artistic genres. The black velvet portraits share similar contours and conventions of color and texture that contribute to their veristic qualities. The "modern" portraits are less distinctive in terms of the subjects painted. Yet, in each case, a particular woman can be recognized.[10]

Both male and female figures are represented in uniform and nonindividuated ways in women's pottery. In carving and painting, individuation increase. This growth of individuation is accompanied by more pride in artistry and training. Both the traditional and the contemporary carvers consider themselves as privileged and influential members of the community. The contemporary painters of Lusaka intentionally cultivate an image of themselves, by virtue of training, workshops, and marketing, as a cultural and intellectual elite. They distinguish their work from conventional art forms and attempt to create a social status that sets them apart from their shantytown neighbors. The women artists, conversely, do not develop themselves as an autonomous community marked off by virtue of their creative work. Their art is part of larger community process from it emerges as secondary. By being socially pressured to assume a particular image in the community as a result of the waning importance of their traditional positions, the Bemba women potters have not yet developed a sense of collective identity as urban artists.

THE PROSPECTS OF WOMEN
IN CENTRAL AFRICAN ART

As women's only major art form, the potting arts, though offering them financial independence, do not provide women with a corresponding means of full aesthetic and personal expression through which the qualities of their lives may be explored. Thus, their limited financial autonomy is not always accompanied by a broad-based set of cultural transformations that would allow women as artists to define their positions in a transitional society.

Carving is solely a male activity and, as stated, depicts women in "safe" traditional attitudes. Its treatment of men,

while equally static, shows more variety in image and social status. The all-male carving studios offer women no scope for participation. Painting, the most active of the Central African arts, and the one showing the most variety in views of women, nonetheless does not hold forth much immediate prospect for their participation. As yet, there are, to my knowledge, no women painters in the Lusaka artists' circle, and all the young apprentices currently undergoing training are boys. The painters profess not to know why women do not paint. One reason may be found in their background in Zairean primary schools, where European teachers steered young women away from acquiring intellectual and artistic skills in favor of domestic proficiency, once again linking the artistic inhibitions of the West and Africa. The failure to encourage women falls more exclusively on colonial attitudes than on the painters themselves, for the pattern of autonomous self-employment for women is well-established in agriculture and small trades.

Although women are topically important and are given an "authentic" perspective in the newer painting genres, no attempt is made to portray them as other than passive victims of culture change (viz., the frivolous woman). Despite their sympathy and awareness of cultural nuance, many of the painters are unwilling to express the hopes and frustrations of women. In Diouf's words, "Who says a cultural problem, says a universal problem." In their leap to the universal, they substitute a new ideal for women, less rigid and more reflective than the old, but still far from showing contemporary women in actual situations. Unless a way is found for women to participate in artistic professions, this pattern is likely to continue.

CONCLUSIONS:
ART AS A REFLECTION
OF WOMEN'S STATUS IN SOCIETY

Each of the artistic genres portrays women in a different social persona. The Bemba initiation figures stress the active role of women as wives and mothers. The women of the carvings and idyllic landscapes are diligent, peaceful, and domestically oriented, the male ideal of the rural wife. The mami wata, adventurous and exotic, reflects male ambivalence toward urban women. The black velvet portraits subject men and women alike to the flattering mirror of hyperrealism, but the fictive portraits turn this mirror toward traditionalistic appeal. Even the modern figures, sensitive to movement and to existing sources of vitality, remain empathetic rather than conveying the full experience of women, and for that matter, of men, in complex urban life.

The contemporary artists of Lusaka are still in the process of defining an audience. They orient toward both nonAfrican tourists and Africans of certain social classes. The work of the painters, in particular, is influenced by this ambivalence in determining its target group. As a result, the strains that both women and men experience in redefining their cultural positions are not expressed. The fact that art by women has difficulty attaining recognition by men compounds these problems of definition.

It is only when the legitimacy of art by and for women emerges that the aesthetic images of women will change. The process of developing individuation in women's art is slow

and indirect. The fabrication of animals and birds for popular sale is the first step among the contemporary Bemba potters. Further innovations may also arise in textiles and painting. As a nontraditional art form that uses symbolically "female" or soft materials, painting may be an area into which the newly educated women of Central Africa will move. The promise of one Lusaka artist to train his daughters in his own profession may begin an experiment far beyond the limits that he anticipated by opening up a new dimension of self-expression in popular painting. These changes, however, will only occur on a larger social and cultural scale once Central African societies openly acknowledge an increasing diversity in the public images that women may come to assume. A broader awareness of the gap between popular arts by and about women in Africa should provide a stimulus to re-examine the gender-linked themes and barriers in art production cross-culturally.

NOTES

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[1] Cf. the studies of traditional carving and male political power in Fraser and Cole (1972).

[2] The shape of the pot as a rounded container might be viewed as an archetypal women's symbol.

[3] See Turner (1967:151-277). This sexual segregation is reciprocal. Women's arts in general are guarded with equal secrecy from noninitiates and males in general. However, selected men must make women's masks and emblems among the Bemba, whereas the opposite is less frequently the case.

[4] Here I am using aesthetic in the narrow sense as distinguished from the instrumental purposes of the object (Maquet 1971:6-9). However, the character of all the contemporary art products as self-expressions, often with revitalized ritual intent, suggests that this Western definition of the aesthetic be reassessed.

[5] Cf. Szombati-Fabian and Fabian's characterization of the *mami wata* as a "totalizing symbol" (1976:5). Totalization, as used by Sartre, refers to the transcending of conflicting tendencies by including them as elements in a new whole. The *mami wata* is a totalizing symbol, because it transcends the contradictions between African, Asian and European cultural traditions to make a unifying statement that is relevant for the present, because it combines contradictory views of womanhood, and because it unifies the appreciation of itself as an art object with the broader purposes of the client.

[6] A structuralist analysis might thus see them as representing the opposition between nature and culture (Lévi-Strauss 1966:135-136). But this opposition only appears when considering the paintings as a whole. It might not be noticed by the individual client.

[7] In this sense, the *mami wata* does not involve sympathetic magic that operates to destroy an individual. However, the possession of the painting is virtually the possession of a magical charm or amulet.

[8] Daix (1975) examines the historical evidence regarding the putative influence of African sculpture on Picasso in 1905-06. He concludes that both a return to Iberian traditional forms and exposure to West African sculpture contributed sources of inspiration to Picasso at that time.

[9] Borrowing the generalized term "figuratist," denoting any portrait or realistic rendering in which figures are still visible, the Kanyama art circle dubbed themselves the New Figuratists.

[10] The black velvet painters were concerned with making even their fictive portraits almost personally identifiable. As portrait painters, they stressed individuation of content, though not of style.

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In Memory of Sol Worth

PIDGIN LANGUAGES AND TOURIST ARTS

PAULA BEN-AMOS

As in all fields of inquiry, emotional climate and cultural preconceptions have affected scholarly research into the problem of artistic change. This has been most notable in the study of tourist art, that is, art forms which are created for sale to outsiders as souvenirs. Bascom (1976:305-307) has recently shown the extent to which scholars from the 1920s through the 1960s viewed West African tourist art as a degeneration from pure tribal forms, and thus, by implication, unworthy of investigation. Typically, it was characterized as a kind of "anti-art that emerges insidiously with the rapid fading of ways of life that generated the famous traditional African art" (Stout 1966:1). Hymes' characterization of attitudes toward pidgin languages can equally describe the approach to tourist arts:

> Because of their origins, however, their association with poorer and darker members of a society, and through perpetuation of misleading stereotypes—such as that a pidgin is merely a broken or baby-talk version of another language—most interest, even where positive, has considered them merely curiosities. Much of the interest and information, scholarly as well as public, has been prejudicial. *These languages have been considered, not creative adaptations, but degenerations; not systems in their own right, but deviations from other systems.* Their origins have been explained, not by historical and social forces, but by inherent ignorance, indolence, and inferiority [1971:3; italics mine].

Recent research, however, has begun to point out the necessity of looking at the phenomenon of tourist arts as a "creative adaptation." Thus, Bascom (1976:317-319) discusses some of the "redeeming features" of African tourist art, particularly the stress on innovation, and Graburn (1969) points to the important acculturative value such art production can have for colonially dominated peoples. In this paper, I will suggest some of the ways in which tourist art productions can be considered systems of communication.[1] I am utilizing the concept of communication here in the sense proposed by Worth and Gross (1974:30) as "a social process, within a context, in which signs are produced and transmitted, perceived, and treated as messages from which meaning can be inferred."

The similarities between pidgin languages and tourist arts are not limited to the negative attitude toward them. Both

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phenomena originate in the same types of circumstances and must meet similar functional requirements of communication. It seems logical, then, to follow Hymes' (1971) lead here and ask the same types of questions. That is, if we start from the premise that tourist art is not the visual equivalent of "simplified foreigner talk" but is a communicative system in its own right, then we are led to ask questions about how and why these forms arise, what are the patterns of development, how is communication accomplished and what are the rules governing the creation and acceptance of new forms within the system. In attempting to answer these questions, I will discuss some of the general processes of change and then analyze one specific body of sculpture—Benin ebony carvings—to show how a tourist art system operates.

SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Both tourist arts and pidgin languages arise in the primary stages of culture contact and develop hand in hand in response to the same economic and social forces: expanding commerce, colonialism, and, now, industrialization. While, as Bascom (1976) has shown, the impact of European cultures on African arts has been going on for centuries, clearly the major changes have occurred within the period of colonialism and its aftermath. These general trends have been discussed elsewhere[2] so that here I propose mainly to outline a few of the major developments.

As Trowell suggests:

> Local art is affected by the foreigner in three ways: it may be affected by the introduction of fresh techniques and materials; its form of expression may be altered by the adoption of new idioms or the turning out of new types of applied art; or, most fundamental of all, its whole context of ideas may be changed [1954:33].

Trowell's suggestions for possible directions of change can in fact be viewed as a chronological summary of the development of tourist art forms, from the introduction of a few aspects of European technology through a gradual transformation into a full-fledged communicative system. The end result of this process is the creation of a "contact" art which is not (to paraphrase the linguist usage) the native artistic language of either participant.[3] The linguistic concept of "interference" is particularly relevant here.[4] The formal and symbolic structures of both art traditions (looked at in the broadest sense) are different enough to be mutually unintelligible. It has been pointed out by Trowell and others that Europeans may have had difficulty understanding African art:

> the [European] patron will almost certainly have no understanding of the psychological approach to the art of a people other than his own, and will seldom have the artistic sensibility to appreciate formal values which are different from his own artistic tradition [1954:32-33].

But it is equally plausible, I would suggest, that Africans might have had little comprehension of that art tradition being presented to them as superior. Unintelligibility works both ways. If we look closely at the types of situations in which European artistic values might have been transmitted to African artists, we find that they were probably quite limited in terms of numbers affected and extent of influence. The schools and missions were undoubtedly important transmittors of Victorian aesthetics, but the total number of Afri-

cans who came under their influence was not uniformly large (in Benin, in fact, it was quite small; see Ben-Amos 1971:28-31), and, among those so educated, the number who went on to become artists was further limited. In the actual face-to-face contact situations between artist and customer, I would suspect (based on my experience in Benin) that the communication of artistic ideas was based on verbal critiques of existing pieces and equally verbal explanations of what is desired. Occasionally photographs and books may have been utilized. But in either case, both of these communications devices (printed as well as verbal) were totally removed from the established pattern of learning aesthetic values in Africa—watching a skilled senior at work. In short, the probability that tourist art is a straight visual copy of European artistic tastes is highly unlikely. What seems to be happening on a visual level is not the taking over *in toto* of another aesthetic but the gradual evolution of a system which can meet the minimum requirements of both producer and purchaser.

The major characteristic of tourist art is that it is critically restricted in its communicative function. As Samarin describes for linguistic phenomena:

The fundamental characteristic of pidginization is reduction or simplification. . . . With reference to the various uses to which language is put, this characterization means that a language is used to talk about less topics, or in fewer contexts, to indicate fewer social relations, etc. [1971:126].

Indeed, tourist art, as a system, has both a reduced semantic level and a limited range of possible subject matters—both of which will be discussed in the following section—as well as a reduced range of uses in comparison with the wide religious, social, political, and decorative uses of traditional arts. Tourist arts do not replace these multiple uses (although they indeed may replace a few limited ones), but remain marginal to the "parent" traditional system. The parent system, however, may cease through loss of patronage. These new forms may have no function at all within the culture of their producers (that is, they are made totally for export), or may have a limited use, copying that of the purchasers (for example, Bini give ebony carvings to European friends returning home). However—and this is a crucial area for investigation—the functions of tourist art may expand. In Benin, for example, tourist art has begun to replace one minor aspect of traditional art—prestige display. Chiefs now purchase modern carvings in place of traditional ones to exhibit in their parlors as signs of their sophistication and wealth. More important, just as pidgin languages can come to provide a sense of prestige and unity for colonized peoples (Kay and Sankoff (1972:4) give the example of New Guinea Tok Pisin), so can tourist arts perform important identity functions, as Graburn (1969) has well described.

Although tourist arts are capable of rapid development, they are contact-dependent and can, like pidgin languages, die as easily as they can expand. Thus, there were no more ivory salt cellars produced by Bini or Sierra Leonean carvers after the Portuguese trade died down. Undoubtedly it would be possible to document other instances of tourist arts that have died out because of the withdrawal of the dominant culture (due to war or cessation of trade) or because they never fully established themselves as effective communicative systems.

SOME PARAMETERS OF CHANGE

The processes of change occur along several parameters. Not all systems change at the same rate and in the same manner and it would be most fruitful to look at the process as a kind of continuum, varying from what Graburn (1969:3) has termed "functional arts" ("that is, those contemporary arts which perform traditional functions within the society where they are created, although changes may have taken place at the level of medium or techniques") and "commercial fine arts" ("these are produced to satisfy their creators. . . but must also appeal to the buyers of primitive arts around the world") through various intermediary stages to the creation of a totally new system (new materials, techniques, forms, and meanings) such as can be found among the Makonde of Tanzania, the Kamba of Kenya, and the Bini of Nigeria. The introduction of new media and techniques and/or the making of art forms available to outsiders are the prerequisites for transformation into a tourist art, since they constitute the initial sanctioned violations of the traditional system.[5]

As we have seen, both tourist arts and pidgin languages originate and function in situations of contact between mutually unintelligible communicative systems. The changes which result are not arbitrary but reflect the needs of the new situation. As Hymes points out regarding pidgin languages, the specific changes that occur

all have in common that they minimize the knowledge a hearer need have, and the speed with which he must decide, to know what in fact has grammatically happened. They minimize the knowledge a speaker need have, and his task in encoding, to say something within the rules of the code being used. . . *Given the circumstances of use, the purpose is to make what means of communication are shared or sharable as accessible as possible* [Hymes 1971:73; italics mine].

Tourist art also operates as a minimal system which must make meanings as accessible as possible across visual boundary lines. The potential for unshared interpretations clearly exists. While the creators of the objects may have certain ideas about their meaning, the purchasers may hold entirely different notions. In the terminology of Worth and Gross (1974), the purchasers' interpretations may be "attributional" rather than "inferential." The formal and semantic changes that occur in tourist art are aimed precisely at bridging that gap and creating shared meanings. These changes are: standardization, changes in scale, reduction in semantic level of traditional forms, expansion of neo-traditional and secular motifs, and utilization of adjunct communicative systems.

Standardization

Next to shoddy workmanship, the standardization of forms is the most bitterly criticized characteristic of tourist art production, for it violates Western canons of individual creativity. Standardization, of course, simplifies production for the artist, leading to obvious results, as in the case of the Indian painters:

The demands of the market for efficiency, haste, and a product saleable to tourists have put an end to individuality and creativity in the painting of all but a few courageous painters devoted to working within the old Mewari styles. Artistic sterility, conventionalism, and frozen styles characterize the new wave of folk paintings from Rajasthan [Maduro 1976:241].

In the traditional art context the limits of the system were known; however, in the case of arts undergoing transformation, the situation is in flux and the limits and rules of the system are continually being formulated through trial and error. In these cases, standardization operates as a codification device for both the producer and the purchaser. For the artist, it establishes guidelines for production; in other words it tells him how to go about carving specific forms in a situation in which he is attempting to establish a repertoire of meaningful items. For the purchaser it performs a similar service. In a well stocked showroom, such as is common in large workshops, creative individuality would be chaotic for the person entering the new situation (faced with an unfamiliar code) and standardization minimizes his choice by giving him a set of formal and easily observable guidelines (size, subject matter) to operate with.

Changes in Scale

The demands of the new situation bring about changes in size: objects get larger to generate higher prices (Bascom's "gigantism" in 1976:314) or become smaller for increased portability (such as the Laguna pots described by Gill 1976:

Figure 2   —A contemporary plaque representing a Benin chief and his wife illustrating the modern naturalistic canon of proportions. Carver: P. Igiehon.

108). Traditional forms also had to meet spatial requirements of altar placement or portability and these current transformations can best be viewed as accommodations to new kinds of uses.

But changes also occur in the formal relationships characterizing traditional art styles and, as a result, a new set of structural rules begins to emerge. What Bascom (1976:314) has characterized as "grotesqueness" in regard to Makonde *shetani* carvings constitutes in part a rearrangement of forms in violation of traditional African norms of rigid symmetry and frontality. Similarly, Abramson (1976:257) found in Sepik art that rigid bilateral symmetry was being abandoned in favor of "striking visual effects." One of the main developments in African tourist art is the gradual replacement of the African canon of proportions (Fagg 1963:24), whereby the head constitutes one-third to one-quarter of the total height of the body, by the natural proportion of one-sixth to one-seventh (see Figures 1 and 2). In Benin, this formal change is accompanied by a rationalized and verbalized norm of proportions used as a guideline in creating and judging sculptures. Thus, when carving human figures Bini attempt to make the length from the underarm to the elbow equal that from the waist to the neck, and from the thigh to the knee equal that from the knee to the ankle. Whether or not these proportions actually exist in nature, they do constitute a set of rules, a cognitive system of what the Bini carvers think is a code of naturalistic proportions.

Figure 1   —Detail from an ivory tusk on the king's ancestral shrine, Benin City, Nigeria. The figure, representing a king, illustrates the traditional Benin canon of proportions. Carved by members of the wood and ivory carvers' guild.

Reduction in Semantic Level of Traditional Forms

According to Lévi-Strauss (Charbonnier 1969:60) the transition from primitive to modern art (and I include tourist art as well) is characterized by the "diminution of the function of art as a sign system." Thus we find for shields from the Sepik area:

> where once utilization of design elements was conditioned by facts of kinship-group affiliation and, probably, by the ritual or mythological connotations of the design elements, now aesthetic considerations (always present to some degree) oriented around the desire to sell the object seem to be paramount [Abramson 1976: 257].

The subordination of meaning to "direct visual effect" in design systems is paralleled by the reliance on naturalistic detail in representative art systems. In the latter case, as Lévi-Strauss (Charbonnier 1969:61) explains, "the semantic function of the work tends to disappear to be replaced by an increasingly closer approximation to the model which the artist tries to imitate instead of merely signifying it." The contrast between a highly symbolic traditional code and a modern semantically restricted one is brought out in this comparison by Samson Okungbowa of an ancestral commemorative head and a modern ebony bust (Figures 3 and 4):

> To make a proper commemorative head it is necessary to get all the patterns right. Someone who doesn't know how to make it

Figure 4 —Modern ebony bust of a chief. Carver: D. Omoregie.

> will lose parts of the pattern. Or he may say: "A real mouth is not like this" and he will try and make it in another way. He may try to make it more beautiful. The Igbesanmwan [traditional guild] are not interested in realism; they are making a commemorative head for a shrine. The modern carving is exactly like a person and so is not made for a shrine. The commemorative head represents the head of a spirit not a human being. Its purpose is to instill fear and it is made for a shrine. No one was ever afraid of an ebony head!

Figure 3 —Ancestral commemorative head made by the carvers' guild. Shrine of Chief Ihaza.

Such a reduction in semantic level is necessary, as Maquet (1971:32-33) points out, because

senders of messages cannot rely upon signifiers whose meanings are traditionally known by the members of a society. Their representations thus have to reproduce appearances as the eye sees them when looking at the signified. Representations are imitative so as to diminish misunderstandings.

Although the Sepik and Benin systems constitute different types of visual codes, the basis of their accessibility to the outsider lies in their low semantic level. In either case the referent is not to mythological or other shared symbolic systems but to immediately perceivable qualities—formal arrangements in the one case and photographic likenesses in the other.[6] The art object must now stand on its own so that, in modern parlance, "what you see is what you get."

Expansion of Motifs

Within this new framework, the motif vocabularies are capable of great expansion (the limitations of which will be the subject of the next section). This expansion can occur in a number of ways; for example, items can be introduced directly from the dominant culture, such as salad bowls or paper knives. These are the visual equivalents of loan words. Another possibility is the introduction into the visual arena of imagery from other spheres of traditional or contemporary life previously not given visual embodiment. Makonde *shetani* carvings may be an example of the utilization of a demonology, previously in the realms of folklore and religion, for modern artistic representation (Stout 1966). Scenes from everyday life (a woman carrying a baby on her back, an antelope or other typical safari fauna) are obvious choices for subject matter because of their ease of identification for the purchaser, who, indeed is looking for something typical, from everyday life, as a souvenir (see Figure 5). Innovations like these are also easily incorporated because they carry a light semantic load. The animals used in traditional Benin ebony carving, for example, are generally not those used in traditional Benin art for symbolic purposes. I never saw an ebony leopard or chameleon, instead, there are crown birds and lions (representing the lion of Nigeria).

Expansion is most operable—and even considered desirable—in those sectors of the "vocabulary" considered "secular" or "commercial" as opposed to "ritual" and "traditional." Perhaps as a kind of middle stage in the process of semantic reduction it is common for the producers to distinguish between the "'sacred" or "traditional" objects which maintain meaning value for them, and the "commercial" forms, which are produced strictly for sale.[7] The former (see Figure 6) are carved despite their potential inaccessibility to the customer, although in some cases the gaps in communication are bridged by recourse to external explanations (as, for example, the printed crib sheets provided by Dahomean tapestry appliquers). In effect, this development represents a kind of stratification within the visual communication system which expresses social as well as cultural differences between the participants. This situation may parallel the usage of proverbs by African pidgin speakers with European or other tribal groups. The listener may or may not recognize the utterance as a proverb, but, if he is European, he surely will not realize its social value, indicating that the speaker is a man of status, education, and intelligence. Similarly, the maintenance of traditional motifs and forms provides the artists with a strong sense of self-esteem. As one ebony carver

boasted to me: "I can carve every detail of an Oba's dress and I know the name of every single piece. If there is a contest in all Benin I couldn't get less than third for knowledge of traditional carving."[8] In this case the prestige derived from the creation of "traditional" art (as opposed to "commercial" forms) operates both vis-a-vis the other carvers (proving he is better than they) and the Europeans (providing a more positive self-image as Graburn (1969) has described). However, in order to accomplish this latter objective, it may be necessary to go outside the visual system.
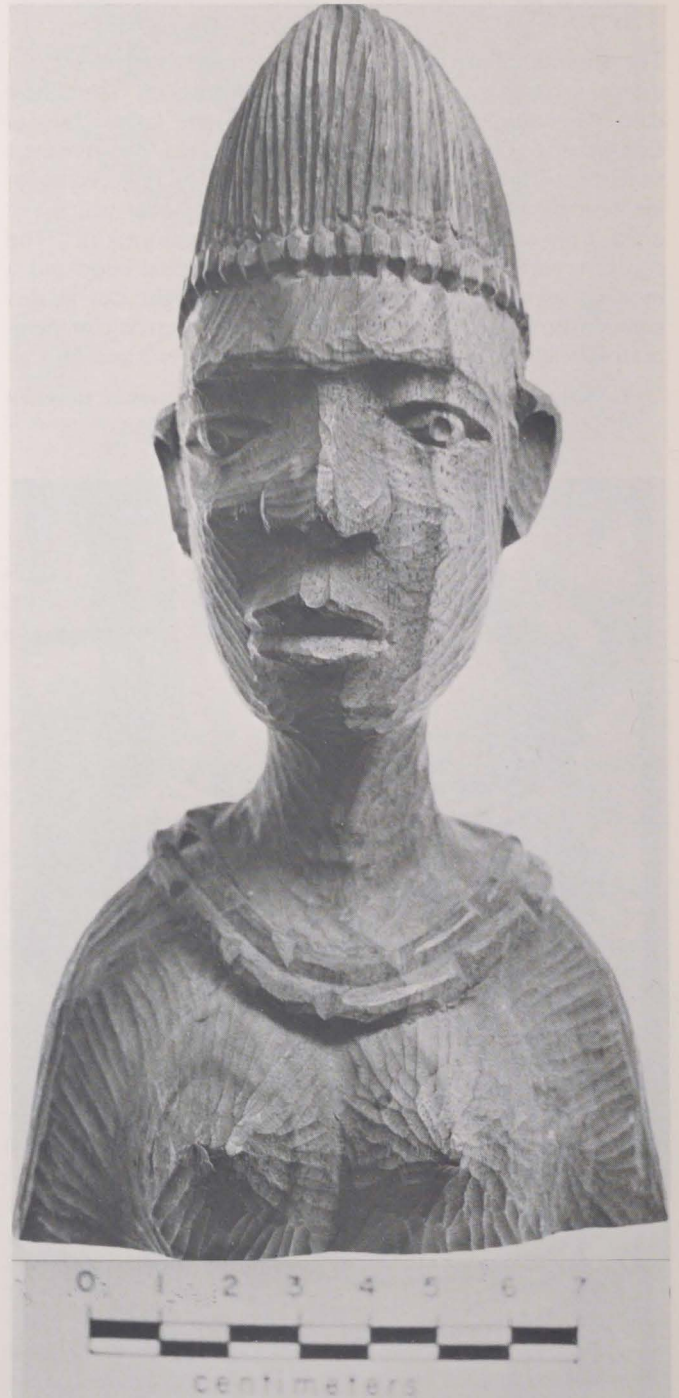
Figure 5 —*Ebony bust of a bare-breasted Bini woman made as a "commercial" object. Carver: R. Amu.*

Figure 6 —A "neo-traditional" ebony carving representing the messenger of the god of death. This figure also appears in traditional art in wood, mud, and brass. Carver: R. Amu.

Utilization of Adjunct Communicative Systems

Due to the limited vocabulary, communication can break down between pidgin users, in which case they must resort to hand gestures, pictures, and other nonverbal means of expression. A similar situation obtains with tourist art where the producer is often required to go outside the system, that is, to verbally explain what the object represents. This is particularly true in the previously described cases of forms termed "traditional" since their higher semantic load makes them partially inaccessible to the purchaser. Under these circumstances, narration becomes a key element in the communication process, as exemplified in the following comment by James Abudu, an ebony carver:

> When I make my plaques [considered "traditional"] I am trying to educate the public; for instance, they can learn the traditional ways of hunting in the olden days. When I start to make something I remember that what I make will get questions. I must be prepared to convince people.... Someone who has never seen traditional hunting will believe that this is the way they used to hunt.

TOURIST ART AS A SYSTEM

By using the example of Benin ebony carving I hope to demonstrate that tourist art does indeed constitute a system, that is, that there exist clear markers distinguishing ebony carving from other carving productions in Benin as well as rules of operation governing what constitutes an acceptable artistic form.

A series of contextual markers differentiate between modern and traditional (guild-produced) carving in Benin (see Table 1).[9] The guild carvers utilized wood from the iroko tree (which was believed to contain a powerful and dangerous spirit) as well as other restricted woods which they obtained by permission of the Oba. Members of the carpenter's guild (*Owina*) went to the forests to cut down and bring in the wood, which was then purified ("to erase the unclean handprints of the Owina") and carved by Igbesanmwan members. Ebony, the distinguishing mark of modern carvings, was not used traditionally. In fact, its use was initiated only in the 1920s and 30s when Bini carvers sojourned in Lagos, far from the impact of traditional sanctions. Modern carvers obtain their ebony, walnut, and mahogany from special contractors who actually work principally to supply this new industry.

Modern carvers work almost exclusively in ebony, with an occasional usage of mahogany and walnut, while traditional carvers continue to make commemorative heads, rattle staffs, and so on, with iroko. There is minimal overlap. In an attempt to "modernize," four guild members actually went to learn tourist art production in the 1940s and 50s. Now, when called upon to carve for the Oba (which rarely occurs) they expect him to provide the materials, but when producing tourist art, they obtain wood from the Forestry Department or occasionally from contractors.

All artistic production related to the Oba—not just carving—took place in ward guilds near the palace. Igbesanmwan members did their actual carving in the yards behind their houses or in a special room within the palace. Modern carvers have created the institution of the workshop (*isiwinna*) as a place separate from one's residence where it is possible to store tools and display objects. These workshops are located

along commercial arteries far from traditional areas. Only a minority of modern craftsmen choose to work at home. Modern carvers, in fact, often change location in search of better possibilities, in sharp contrast to traditional values of permanence and stability. Ebony carvers, no matter where they might move, would hardly consider renting a shed anywhere near Igbesanmwan ward (for more than commercial reasons) and members of Igbesanmwan have steadfastly refused to rent workshops outside their area, even though their street is far from the commercial center. In addition, it is common for the Igbesanmwan to carve their traditional work in the yard behind their house and their modern carvings in a special showroom they have opened up on the street.

Members of the guild received a sense of worth from being "servants of the Oba." Although he reimbursed their work according to an established system of equivalences, these were euphemistically viewed as "gifts" from the king to his faithful servants. Today they continue to receive goats, yams, and other traditional payments, although it is now necessary for the head of the guild to admonish the younger members about to start a commission for some villagers not to "shame themselves before the Oba" by accepting money. Modern carvings are obviously for financial gain and the offering of a goat as reimbursement would not be acceptable. But even more, one carver complained to me that he used to pay calls of respect to the Oba but stopped when to his astonishment the Oba actually expected him to offer some of his carvings as gifts. While the "violation" was on the part of the Oba, nevertheless, the carver could not see any legitimacy in his expectation.

The guild was by definition a closed system and theoretically anyone caught carving outside it would be punished by death. Learning was informal, from father to son, with the possibilities of assistance from other guild members. Igbesanmwan carvers believed that carving was "in the blood" of those born into the guild and actual training only brought out the inborn potential. Ebony carving can be learned only through an apprenticeship, which is highly modern in its own organization. Apprentices sign written contracts which specify the length of the learning period and the various mutual obligations of teacher and pupil. At the end of the training there is a formal party where the apprentice is endorsed as a skilled practitioner. In fact, when ebony carving was first brought to Benin from Lagos, Aifesehi, the local carver who initially wished to learn it, paid the returning carver, Ihaza, for his instructions, thus acknowledging that he was entering a new system. Indeed, when the members of the guild wished to "modernize," they went to this same Aifesehi for training.

Traditional carvings were made for the Oba and, with his explicit permission, for members of the nobility and some commoners. The modern carver sells to visiting Europeans, Nigerian civil servants, and a few chiefs, as well as utilizing the Hausa traders and other middlemen. In terms of purchases within the context of Benin culture, the two systems are minimally co-extensive. A traditionalist would scorn an ebony carving ("No one was ever afraid of an ebony head!") while a modern civil servant would disdain traditional art as "primitive, if you will excuse the expression." Yet, an individual might, under very limited circumstances, utilize both systems: (1) A traditionalist might give an ebony carving to European or local dignitaries who are temporary residents or are in the process of departing (i.e., gifts to those higher in status who are not permanent sharers of the same culture) in consideration of the receiver's possible aesthetic tastes. (2)

TABLE 1
TRADITIONAL AND MODERN CARVING IN BENIN

	Igbesanmwan Guild Carving	Modern Tourist Carving
Materials	*Iroko* (*Chlorophora excelsa*) *Obobo* (*Guarea Kennedyi*) *Evbee* (*Cola acuminata*) Obtained from Oba via Carpenters' Guild	Ebony, mahogany, and walnut Obtained from contractors or Forestry Department
Types of objects made	Wooden commemorative heads, ancestral rattle staffs, shrines of the hand, kola nut boxes, stools, doors and beams, and ivory pectoral masks, staffs, armlets and tusks	Busts of kings, chiefs, warriors, and young ladies, lamp stands, ash trays, salad bowls, paper knives, and book ends, figures of lions, elephants, antelopes, and snails
Location of production	Igbesanmwan ward or palace	Workshops in commercial zones, often separate from residence
Goal of production	Service to Oba	Financial remuneration
Training of carvers	Father to son inside guild	Contractual apprenticeship
Function of carvings	Commemoration Contact with supernatural Enhancement of status, etc.	"Decoration"
Distribution of carvings	Regulated by Oba along status lines. For nobility and restricted use by commoners	Directly to Europeans, and Nigerian civil servants and via Hausa middlemen and Nigerian government

Although their numbers are dwindling there still are a few chiefs in Benin who maintain their ancestral shrines. At the same time, they are modifying the prestige uses of art and it is conceivable for them to purchase expensive modern carvings to decorate their residences. Even then, the ancestral objects are kept in a special shrine room (*ikun*) while the modern art is on display in their parlor for the admiration of guests.[10]

Ebony carving, then, is set apart socially from other carving productions within Benin culture. But it also constitutes a distinct system of artistic communication with its own criteria of correctness and acceptability and its own rules for generation of innovations. The organizing principle of this new system is naturalism. According to Osborne, naturalism is

the habit of mind which deflects attention from the artwork as such and looks through it, as if through a mirror or transparent window, toward the slice of reality which it "imitates" or reproduces, assessing the artwork either by the natural standards applied to its subject or by the standards of accuracy, skill, and vividness with which it reflects its subject [Osborne 1970:79].

Traditional visual codes, such as in Benin, operate with a system of conventional representations:

Thus, for example, in the representation of animals the primitive limits himself to the enumeration of such creatures as limbs and organs and uses geometrically clear-cut shape and pattern to identify their kind, function, importance, and mutual relationships as precisely as possible. He may use pictorial means also to express "physiognomic" qualities, such as the ferocity or friendliness of the animal. Realistic detail would obscure rather than clarify these relevant characteristics [Arnheim 1969:103].

Traditionally, the major criterion for Benin carvers was "getting the patterns right," that is, knowing the explicit conventions needed for each type of representation. As Lévi-Strauss (Charbonnier 1969:84) points out, the lack of interest in realism in systems like these is at least in part related to the type of subject matter: "Being supernatural, it is by definition non-representable, since no 'facsimile' or model of it can be provided." When I asked guild members if they had ever seen a spirit in order to know how to represent it correctly their response was laughter.

In modern representational tourist art systems schematization gives way to stress on naturalistic detail. Thus, Graburn (1976:52) found Eskimo carvers hesitant about whether to portray a polar bear with the conventional four canines or to accurately reproduce the actual number of teeth. This is precisely the dilemma of the system in transition. The "patterns" that modern Bini carvers now attempt to "get right" are no longer conventional representations but exact replications of the natural world.[11] Thus, Albert Osayimwen queried me:

Do you know how to tell the best carver in Benin? Has any carver ever given you a description of every detail and how he arrived at it? (Pointing to a "greedy hunter," a statue referring to the parable of a successful hunter returning with an elephant on his head, an antelope over his shoulder, and game birds under his arm, who is so greedy that he cannot resist trying to kill a cricket with his toe [see Figure 7]). When you see someone carrying a heavy load, he'll be bent. You should note whether the hand is placed loosely on the load or not. . . . Note how firmly he grips the gun. Someone who uses his toe to dig the ground won't have both legs the same; one must be lifted. . . . I don't allow the neck to be long when carving olden days people because their necks used to be short because they carried loads; I know because I have seen necks of old men.

As this quote illustrates, observation is the source of formal arrangements and, in fact, Albert and others claimed to spend time observing people in order not to make mistakes. In contrast, in traditional systems, "in order to communicate messages effectively, apprentices look at effigies carved by their masters and not at the human beings the statues are supposed to represent" (Maquet 1971:32). As discussed earlier, the utilization of natural models is essential for minimizing the knowledge necessary for decoding.

The major aesthetic criterion utilized by Bini carvers in evaluating their work is realism; as exemplified in this statement by Albert Osayimwen:

If something is smooth it doesn't mean it is good. You must examine it carefully to see if what the person has said he has carved is the real thing. The aim of the Oba, whose name I don't remember [!], who started carving was to carve what you have in mind, the real object. Past carvings were like photographs; they were for remembrance. People nowadays buy carvings for decoration and because of the history behind it. When I make a carving, I want people to feel pity for the slave, to believe that the hunter is really greedy; that is, I want them to feel that what I have depicted is really true.

The importance of carving the real thing, of maintaining the details which prove authenticity, are all part of the naturalistic aesthetic which stresses, as Osborne (1970:21) points out, "correctness, completeness, and vividness (or convincingness) of representation."

As a system, Benin tourist art operates with a set of boundaries which determine acceptability and provide the limits for innovation. To demonstrate this, I will present three anecdotal scenes from my fieldwork which illustrate violations of the code in the direction of (1) improbability; (2) idealization; (3) system interference.

(1) The carving of the "greedy hunter" described previously has been modified by Albert. Whereas he used to carve it in the conventional manner, by depicting a hunter returning with an elephant on his head, he began to come under criticism from his friends, who claimed that in real life no one could do such a feat. He changed the elephant to a bundle of firewood, thus bringing the carving outside of the range of the very traditional meanings he wished to impart (Figure 8). Events and scenes which could not really happen are now violations of the system.

(2) In criticizing another workshop, Osula, one of the senior craftsmen, explained their major fault:

In the [competing workshop] they don't know how to make a real lion; for example, the mane of a real lion is uneven, the belly smooth. . . They want to make the lion more beautiful than it really is.[12] I myself cannot get it exactly as in nature but I can come close.

Osborne (1970:82-83) points out that naturalism can be both realistic, as in the Bini system being described, or idealistic, as in the example of the Ife heads. In ebony carving, idealism is a violation of the canon of realism and the major goal is, as Osula claims, "to copy from real life exactly—not better and not worse."

(3) Benson Osawe, a carver who had studied art in England for ten years, returned to Benin, and when rumors began to circulate that he was receiving £700 commissions for his modernistic sculpture, ebony carvers became envious and curious. The head of one of the large workshops began to

Figure 7 —The greedy hunter carrying an elephant. Carver: A. Osague.

Figure 8 —The greedy hunter carrying a load of firewood. Carved A. Osayimwen.

pay social calls on Benson (using the social visit as a pretext for copying ideas is quite common in Benin because of the premium on innovation) and finally attempted to copy one of Benson's sculptures (Figure 9). Since Benson had been influenced abroad by European artists like Brancusi and Lipchitz (who themselves, of course, had been influenced by African art), he was producing semi-abstract forms (at that point mainly masks that looked Congolese via Modigliani; see Figure 10) which the workshop leader could hardly comprehend. When I asked him about his newest production, he explained that Benson was a "real artist" and that by copying him the first time he would learn how to do it so he could do it on his own the next. I asked his good friend, sitting alongside, what he thought of the new carving and, after first protesting that he really liked it, he finally admitted that in fact he did not care for it at all, but "if Europeans value it, it must be allright."[13] The problem with the piece was that he could not figure out "what the thing is supposed to represent." His own work, he claimed, is just like a photograph. But if anyone asks him what the leader's work is he cannot answer them. When I asked him if he is an artist, he responded that "I don't know; I am just doing the work I know." He then proceeded to tease the head of the workshop, claiming that his innovation looked like a gorilla (quite an insult since the gorilla is the ultimate in grotesqueness). Finally, the head admitted that it was indeed "a funny thing" but insisted rather sheepishly that he still liked it and that he would sell it for £12 (a considerable sum since most ebony carvings of that size sold for £4-6). Apparently he never did, since he presented it to me as a going away present, thus killing two birds with one stone.

This carver's violation of the system is not on the same order as the one committed by Albert. When Albert replaced the elephant, he was still working within a system of realism and simply conformed to its rules of probability. The workshop leader, however, in creating this new object (without
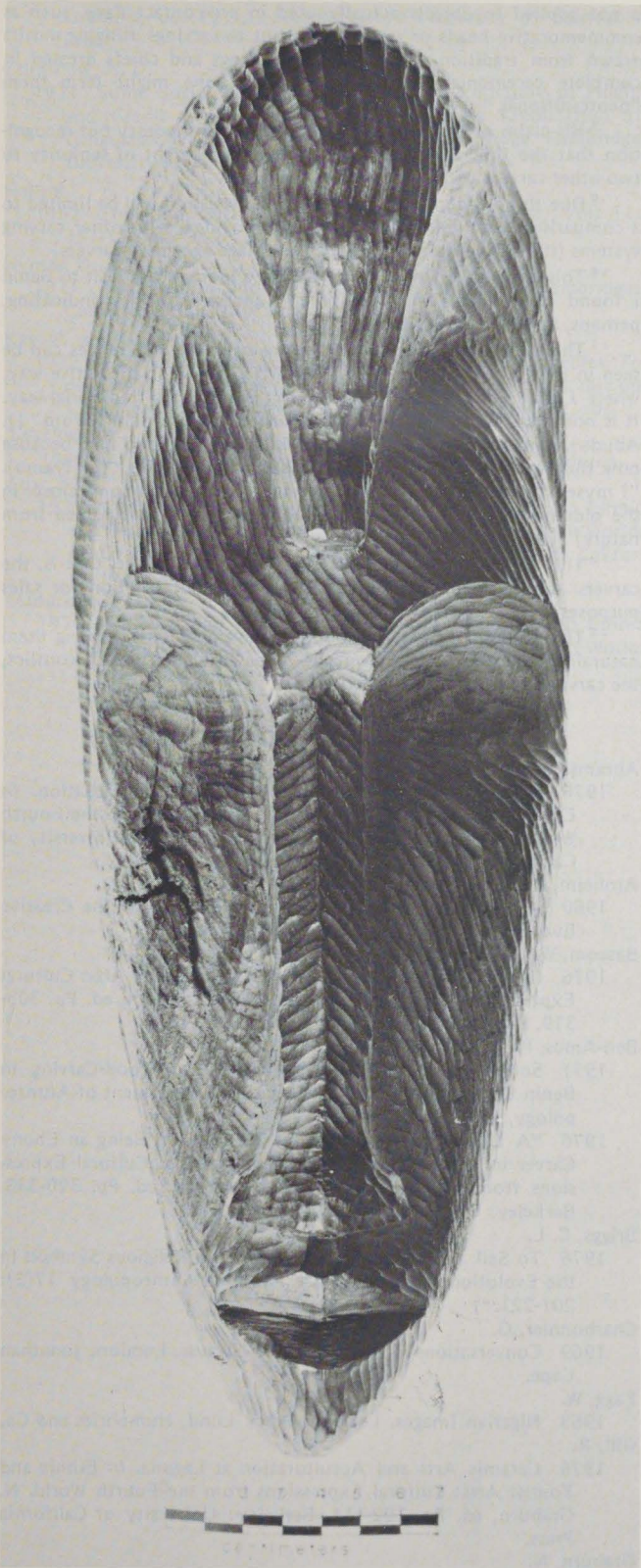
Figure 9 —An ebony mask made as an attempt to copy B. Osawe's abstract carving.
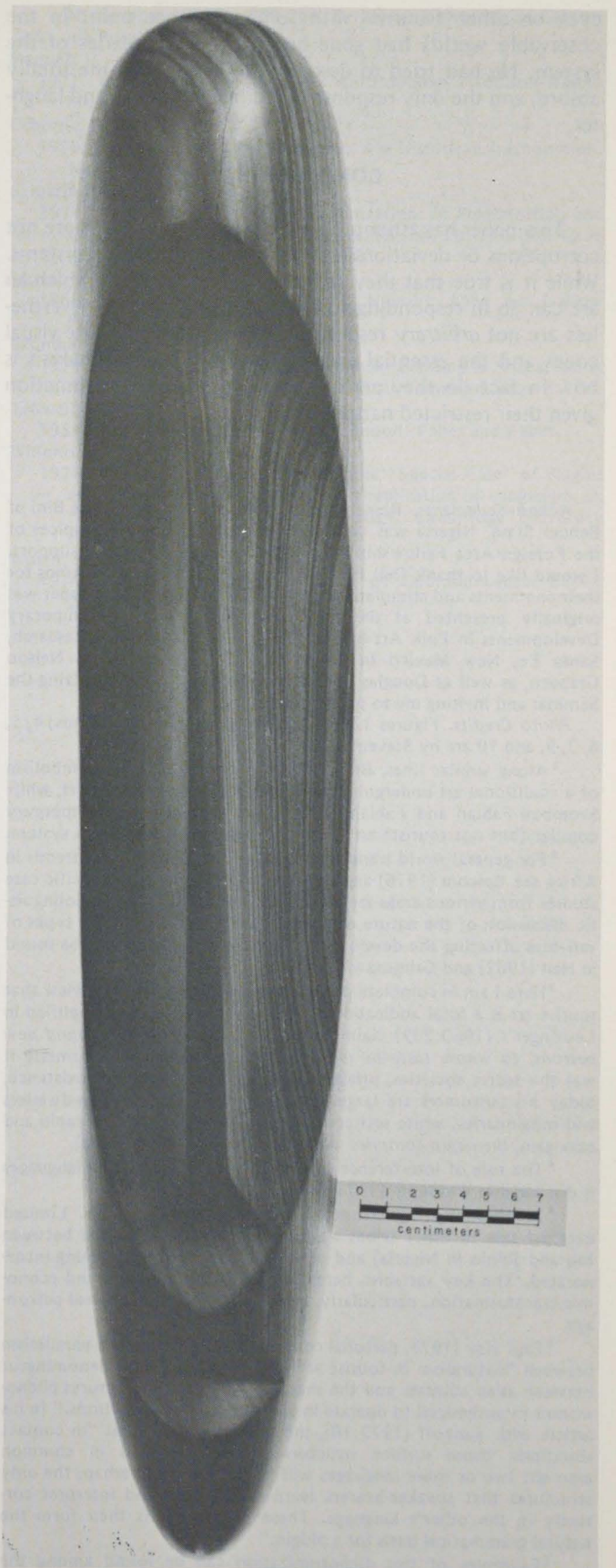
Figure 10 —Abstract carving made by B. Osawe.

eyes or other features with some reference point in the observable world) had gone beyond the boundaries of the system. He had tried to describe the impossible, the totally absurd, and the only response could be incredulity and laughter.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has attempted to show that tourist arts are not corruptions or deviations but visual communicative systems. While it is true that they represent the extremes to which an art can go in responding to economic forces, they nevertheless are not *arbitrary* responses. Tourist arts constitute visual codes and the essential question underlying their analysis is how in fact do they perform their communicative function given their restricted nature.

NOTES

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Photo Credits. Figures 1, 2, 3, and 8 are by Dan Ben-Amos; 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 are by Steven Gaber.

[1] Along similar lines, Briggs (1976) has discussed the symbolism of a traditional art undergoing transformation into a tourist art, while Szombati-Fabian and Fabian (1976) have analyzed a contemporary popular (but not tourist) art production as a communicative system.

[2] For general world trends see Graburn (1969;1971), for trends in Africa see Bascom (1976) and Ben-Amos (1971), and for specific case studies from various areas see articles in Graburn (1976). Sociolinguistic discussion of the nature of the contact situation and the types of variables affecting the development of a pidgin language can be found in Hall (1962) and Grimshaw (1971).

[3] Here I am in complete disagreement with the common view that tourist art is a total abdication to Western tastes, as is exemplified in Leuzinger's (1960:209) claim that *"the negro artist has found new patrons, to whose taste he is bound to conform.* Where formerly it was the secret societies, priests and kings who assured his existence, today his customers are largely to be found amongst town-dwellers and missionaries, white settlers and tourists. In the hope of rapid and easy gain, *the negro complies with their wishes"* (italics mine).

[4] The role of interference in the development of pidgin languages is discussed in Whinnom (1971:66).

[5] Traditional arts were not completely closed systems. Limited external sale to other tribes was possible (such as occurred between Ibo and Ibibio in Nigeria) and new ideas were constantly being incorporated. The key variables here are political domination and economic transformation, particularly the withdrawal of traditional patronage.

[6] Paul Kay (1973, personal communication) suggests a parallelism between "naturalism in tourist art as a lowest common denominator between alien cultures and the matching of surface structures phenomenon hypothesized to operate in language contact situations." In his article with Sankoff (1972:10), the authors suggest that "in contact situations, those surface structures which are held in common amongst two or more languages will be the first and perhaps the only structures that speaker-hearers learn to produce and interpret correctly in the other's language. These constructions then form the natural grammatical basis for a pidgin."

[7] Examples of this dichotomization can be found among the Benin carvers (Ben-Amos 1976:326), Brahmin painters (Maduro 1976:242) and Ainu carvers (Low 1976:222), etc. The term in Benin

is not applied to objects actually used in pre-contact days, such as commemorative heads or rattle staffs, but to carvings utilizing motifs drawn from tradition such as busts of kings and chiefs dressed in complete ceremonial regalia. In this case, one might term them "neotraditional."

[8] His claim of third prize is not a display of modesty but recognition that the first and second places belong by right of seniority to two other carvers within the Benin community.

[9] Due to considerations of space, the discussion will be limited to a comparison with guild carving and will not deal with other carving systems (the palace-trained pages or the village age-grade carvers).

[10] This paper was written in 1973. On a more recent visit to Benin I found ebony busts in a few chiefly ancestral shrines, indicating, perhaps, a kind of "creolization."

[11] That the carvers are clearly aware of these differences can be seen in the following statements: "I started carving in the native way, where a hand is not like a real hand but is made in a traditional way. It is not neat. It is primitive, if you pardon the use of the word" (J. Abudu). "In the olden days, the work did not look so nice because now they carve a face that is exactly like a human being" (D. Iyamu). "I myself cannot get it exactly as in nature, but I can come close. In the olden days they did what came to their minds (not copied from nature)" (S. Osula).

[12] The notion of beauty referred to here is cosmetic, that is, the carvers are attempting to enhance the appeal of the lion for sales purposes.

[13] The system operates according to several criteria, among them naturalism but also what Europeans value. In a situation of conflict, the carver opted for the latter criterion.

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REVIEWS AND DISCUSSION

Young Filmmakers. Rodger Larson with Ellen Meade. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1969. 190 pp., photographs, index. $5.95 (cloth); paper by Avon, 1971. $.95.

Make Your Own Animated Movies: Yellowball Workshop Film Techniques. Yvonne Anderson. Little Brown, 1970. 100 pp., photographs, index. $6.95 (cloth).

Children as Film Makers, John Lidstone and Don McIntosh. New York: Van Nostrand, Rinehold, 1970. 112 pp., photographs, index. $7.95 (cloth).

Young Animators, and Their Discoveries. A Report from Young Filmmakers Foundation. Rodger Larsen, Lynne Hofer, and Jaime Barrios. New York: Praeger, 1973. 159 pp., photographs, index. $6.50 (cloth).

Video and Kids. Radical Software/Changing Channels. Peter Haratonik and Kit Laybourne, eds. New York: Gordon and Breach, Science Publishers, 1974. 72 pp., photographs, $6.95 (paper).

Reviewed by *Brian Sutton-Smith*
University of Pennsylvania

Although this group of books has a mainly *How to Do It* emphasis, it represents the first accounting of a recent major event in the history of modern American culture. These are the first book-length reports of the movement to put modern media techniques (filmmaking and videotaping) into the hands of children. In general it has been the practice to leave the less sophisticated cultural functions in their hands (games, dominance hierarchies, etc.) and to keep the more abstract functions in the hands of adults (schooling, arts classes, etc.). Perhaps we are indeed arriving at Mead's third stage of "prefiguration," where children teach adults.

Although the varieties of emphasis in this cultural movement (film, videotape) is much wider than is represented by these books, a few of the major figures are indeed represented here. Thus Rodger Larsen graduated from the Art School of Pratt Institute and was running arts programs (drama, dance and art), when he happened on the notion in 1963 that children could also make films. His efforts took off as a result of the War on Poverty, and funded by the Department of Labor became an important happening in New York political life of the late 1960's. As his book so clearly shows, filmmaking became a social elevator for a select few children, who otherwise would probably not have made it into the higher rungs. What is argued by Rodger himself is whether he thus contributed opportunity to the poor or contributed to the cooling of crisis in the streets. Did he do something radical or did he do something conservative? It's an important point because many of those who have worked with children's filmmaking, like Dee Dee Halleck (not represented here by a book), worked largely with delinquent or migrant groups with the aim of bringing beauty, as well as voice to the invisible poor. Like Rodger, she wanted them to be able to find symbolic expression for their needs

as well as to be able to command the respect of others. The new film techniques were to be instruments of radical liberation.

Yvonne Anderson's motives seem to have been both more conventional and more intrinsically related to technique itself. In the sixties she established a non-profit school in Lexington, Massachusetts, and proceeded to support herself from tuition. The tradition here was that of the specialized teacher of the arts. The characteristic kinds of animation produced by her pupils with cut out animations and bright primary colors have become known throughout the States and in Europe. In this, perhaps the most elementary of the books in this group, she explains how it is done. The motive is the familiar Rousseauian thesis that children are "new people" and can see things "in a new way." Children of this age (from five to eighteen years) have special qualities. They can work directly and simply without too much premeditation, making interesting and important social commentary. So she says, as have thousands of other educators before her. Haratonik and Laybourne's *Video and Kids* on the other hand is strictly post McLuhan happening and reflects the considerable influence at one time of John Culkin and the Center for Understanding Media. What is most interesting in this work is that by now the pentecostal fires of the tribal village have pretty much departed for the older contributors although there are still others who feel that children working with videotape machines can change the face of schools, as well as of their perceptions of the world. By and large, this particular book begins with the cynical contributions and moves later to the enthusiastic ones, representing perhaps the "experience" of its editors.

Although, as we have said, the books (with the exception of *Video and Kids*) do not give much sense of the very considerable passion in this cultural happening of film and video for children, there are glimmers of it here and there. (For another view of this "passion" see Richard Chalfen's review of a recent conference on children's filmmaking [1977].)

Apart from the above mentioned orientation of these outstanding teachers towards the *message*, or the *art form*, or the *media* itself, there are many other issues. For example, is it better to approach filmmaking through art forms (Yvonne Anderson), through literature (as in the Teachers and Writers Collaborative in New York City), through drama (as in The Loft at Bronxville), through directorial requirements (as in The Young Filmmakers), or directly through camera work (as in the book by Lidstone and McIntosh in the present group). Unfortunately there is little clarification of these differences in any of these works, and even less attempt to take a point of view. Only Lidstone and McIntosh argue for the superiority of their method, that is, of getting children first into camera work, and only later into editing, shot lists and narrative, which is the reverse way to that chosen by the more adult filmmaker and by Larsen, Hofer and Barrios. In part, at least the difference reduces to a concern for teaching in schools, versus a concern for the production of gifted filmmakers in workshops.

A point that worries all these teachers and artists, however, and many others in the field, is the apparent contradiction between the belief that filming and videotaping give a child great scope for creativity, and the very clear evidence that the films and animations coming out of a particular

school always bear its brand so clearly. As Phillip Lopate (a contributor to *Video and Kids*) says, "The question of manipulation won't go away. The truth is that teaching almost always involves manipulation." But still there are enormous differences in this field. There is the "manipulation" of some of the country's filmmakers, where the teacher is more like a coach and the "children's films" often Disney-like, clearly his own; there are the manipulations of those who under the guise of leaving children to their own naive view have them intrusively filming the activities of others with little ethical concern for their interference. There is the intrusion occasionally of the teacher's own Freudian sophistications. As Michael Rubbo has stated it in another context, film teachers in England tend to have children who make films about how children turn the tables on authoritarian adults; whereas in Czechoslovakia the children make films of their own special and innocent view of the world—both groups of teachers indulging in some indirect way their own nostalgia.

It is a very special pleasure in this respect to record that the two books from The Young Filmmakers score a particular success because they have chosen the biographical approach to their accounts. Despite any significance that they might have wished the activity to have for their East Side children and despite their use of narrative, to story board, to shot list, to camera, to editing approach, there is clear evidence in these two books (Larsen and Meade; Larsen, Hofer and Barrios) of a great openness and sensitivity to the directions taken by the children. We get the techniques, but we also get much more of the life of children that comes pouring through those techniques. The basic folk themes of deprivation and villainy are everywhere in these animations and live films as well as the life-long mythic attempt to make sense out of unhinged fate. More importantly, one senses that for some of the children described, the sequencing of images through filming is their first adequate conceptualization of the matters at hand and does indeed precede verbalization. They do not first talk about it (as you and I would) and then film it; but in the filming they discover what it is. Their filming appears to be a first realization—not an embodiment of some other medium. For a psychologist this is perhaps the most important hint conveyed by all these books about the "cognitive" nature of films. While the books are explicit on technique, and often enthusiastic about the way of life, they are remarkably inarticulate about what it does to a human being to have that kind of experience and skill.

We suspect that this inarticulateness, or should we say, unreadiness to do analytic research on the matter at hand, has led some of the earlier protagonists to a too early defeat and belief that the God of media has failed. Hoping for too much of a paradigmatic shift, they have not been ready to look for the more micro-level adjustments in terms of which most human learning actually occurs. Thus, in *Video and Kids* George Gordon speaks scathingly of "The faded Toronto guru, McLuhan, who liked to fancy himself a 'sparkplug of intellectual electricity,' and turned out, in the long run, to be an embolism in the bloodstream of the serious study of communications" (p. 8)... "How come a zillion (or more) studies show that kids in general do no better (or as badly) in their schoolwork when taught by television than when given old fashioned textbook, chalk and blackboard instruction" (p. 9)... "Why did the Ford Foundation and Uncle Sammy have to spend billions to find out that video education cost many, many more billions? Who goofed? Are they still goofing?" (p. 9). Or Phillip Lopate opines: "The portopak as it has been used so far, has a pro visceral and anti-intellectual bias" (p. 19)... "In portopak circles the deferral of responsibility for artistic quality is subtler. It goes under name of videotape as 'process,' videotape as 'behavioral feedback,' videotape as the 'People's Medium,' videotape as 'folk art,' videotape as 'experience,' or videotape as 'training people to operate videotape.' All alibis. Just many rationalizations for mediocre tapes" (p. 21).

In sum, the cultural movement to put film and video into the hands of children is with us, but judging by the voices in these books, whether enthusiastic or pessimistic, what we have is a movement and not yet the muscle. We have the phonics and the syntax. We are speaking. But in the midst of all this melody of speech, there is not as yet much certainty as to the meaning. We do not yet know what the metacommunications of filmmakers and videotapers sound like.

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PUBLICATIONS

The following publications are available from SAVICOM, 1703 New Hampshire Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009. Payment must accompany orders.

Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication

Studies is a publication of the Society. It is published two or three times a year and contains verbal and visual material describing and analyzing research in the areas of interest described under the purposes of the Society. *Studies* also publishes reviews of relevant books and larger review articles of groups of related books and other publications. It contains a section of correspondence and brief communication. The publication committee encourages members as well as non-members to submit written and visual materials for publication. Write to the *Studies* editor for additional instructions for submission.

From time to time SAVICOM will publish special publications related to the interests of its members. The following is a list of current publications:

SAVICOM Newsletter

The Society's newsletter is published three times a year. It is available free of charge to all SAVICOM members and can be subscribed to by non-members for $3.00 per year. Send subscriptions and items intended for publication to: Jay Ruby, SAVICOM, 447 E. Mt. Airy Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19119.

Handbook for Proxemic Research

Edward T. Hall, author of the *Silent Language*, *The Hidden Dimension* and other works, is allowing SAVICOM to publish this new handbook detailing his methodology for proxemic research. The *Handbook* includes computer programs, illustrations about the placement of cameras and observers, and an extensive bibliography. It is available to members at $3.00 per copy and to non-members and institutions at $5.00. In order to keep the price down for teachers, students and active workers in proxemic research, Hall is not accepting royalties on sales to SAVICOM members. Bookstores, teachers and others wishing to place bulk orders should write to Sol Worth for special instructions. All others wishing to obtain copies should write directly to SAVICOM.

News, Notes, Correspondence and Brief Communications

In addition to the section of correspondence and brief communications which appears in *Studies*, the Society is responsible for a section of news and notes in the *Anthropology Newsletter* of the American Anthropological Association. All interested persons are encouraged to contribute news of fieldwork, announcements of conferences, festivals, training opportunities and any other pertinent news and notes to Jay Ruby, News and Notes Editor, Temple University, Department of Anthropology, Philadelphia, PA 19122.

Gender Advertisements

Volume 3(2) of *Studies* was devoted to a full length study by Erving Goffman. This issue containing the 500 photographs of the study is available for $5.00.

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