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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HISTORY MUSEUM
AS A RESOURCE FOR ART APPRECIATION

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Cassandra Lee Tellier, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1984

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Dr. Kenneth Marantz
Dr. Barbara Boyer
Dr. Harry Searles
Dr. Gregory Proctor

Approved By

Advisor

Department of Art Education
Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts—the book of their deeds, the book of their words and the book of their art. Not one of these books can be understood unless we read the two others; but of the three the only quite trustworthy one is the last.

--John Ruskin
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The early American museum contained a motley assortment of treasures and trivialities. Charles Willson Peale's famous collection, for example, included the trigger finger of a convicted murderer, an eight-pound turnip, a five-legged cow with six feet and two tails, as well as portraits of American dignitaries.

Nathaniel Hawthorne successfully satirized this state of affairs in "A Virtuoso's Collection" (1865). He wrote as if he were touring the galleries of a museum containing "historical" objects: the skin of St. George's dragon, the sword that Dionysus suspended over the head of Damocles, Queen Mab's miniature chariot, and a pigeon from the belfry of the Old South Church. The collection included Joseph's coat of many colors, the philosophers' stone, Hebe's cup filled with an elixir of immortality, a letter from the flying Dutchman, water from the Lethe, the remains of the three-headed Cerberus as well as those of the wolf that devoured Little Red Riding Hood.

The whimsical combinations of unlabeled exhibit objects were confusing and wearisome. The sacred bull Apis was shown with the heifer of nursery rhyme fame commonly known as "the cow that jumped
over the moon." The lyre of Orpheus and those of Sappho and Homer were displayed with Benjamin Franklin's whistle. The Palladium of Troy was placed in apposition with the wooden head of General Jackson which had been stolen from the bow of the frigate Constitution. Although the museum contained objects of aesthetic value such as paintings by Zeuxis and sculptures by Phidias and Lysippus, the narrator found it impossible to appreciate them:

The deep simplicity of these great works was not to be comprehended by a mind excited and disturbed, as mine was, by the various objects that had recently been presented to it. I therefore turned away with merely a passing glance, resolving on some future occasion to brood over each individual statue and picture until my inmost spirit should feel their excellence. (Hawthorne, 1865, p. 294)

**Statement of Purpose**

In Hawthorne's fictitious museum, the visitor was not only at a loss in connecting objects with relevant information and events, but he was also unable to experience aesthetically what was displayed. Although the Virtuoso's cabinet of curiosities has been replaced by more specialized museums, the problems that Hawthorne satirized over a century ago are still of concern. The purpose of this study is to determine the significance of the history museum as a resource for art appreciation.

**Procedures**

Among the Virtuoso's melange of magical mirrors and wands, there may have been a talisman which would have provided instant
all-inclusive answers to the problem at hand. Without this resource at my command, I have no alternative but to pursue more traditional research methods.

Methodology refers to the "logic in use" of selecting particular observational techniques, assessing their yield of data, and relating data to theoretical propositions (Pelto & Pelto, 1978, p. 3). Appropriateness of methodology is related to the nature of the question. Determining the significance of the history museum as a resource for art appreciation is a complex problem which no experiment can "solve." It calls for a descriptive study concerned with finding out "what is" rather than an establishment of causal links between two or more variables. For this study I have chosen to use ethnographic research techniques.

Determination of the significance of the history museum as a resource for art appreciation is accomplished by (a) dividing art appreciation into categories to be used in ascertaining relationships between art objects and particular aspects of art appreciation, and (b) discovering the role of art objects in the history museum. In the first part of this study, categories of appreciation are determined from data collected through review of relevant literature. Literature review can be considered as an ethnographic technique and classified as an "unobtrusive measure." (See pages 72-73).

The second part of the study, the discovery of the role of art objects in the history museum, is accomplished by analyzing data found in the review of relevant literature and data generated
by focusing on four areas of inquiry at the site chosen for this study--The Ohio Historical Center in Columbus. This part of the study is based on the following questions:

1. What are the formal, group statements of attitudes regarding the role of art objects in the history museum. The museum's stated purposes are examined by document analysis to discover specific goals and objectives that relate to the role of art objects in this context.

2. What are the individual statements of attitudes regarding the role of art objects in the history museum? Attitudes of administrators and staff members towards the role of art objects in the history museum are examined through semi-structured interviews.

3. What are the characteristics of history museum exhibits containing art objects? Exhibit contents, frame of reference in which art objects are presented, exhibit form (including how the exhibit (a) attracts attention, (b) holds attention, and (c) flows), and exhibit environment are examined by direct observation.

4. What are the characteristics of the museum's educational program? The role of art objects in on-site activities and in materials designed for use at other locations is investigated through direct observation, interviewing, and document analysis.

Significance

Unfortunately, people do not have access to the Virtuoso's magic mirror which revealed visual forms and their meanings. As Chapman (1982b) emphasizes, the ability to see and decipher the
meaning of visual forms is an acquired skill which few will develop to any significant degree without formal instruction (p. 30).

Today there is general agreement among art educators that art education programs should incorporate art appreciation. In an outline of five major goals, the National Art Education Association Commission on Art Education (1977) states that art education is "A Means of Helping Students Understand and Appreciate Art" (p. 43). Other art educators not only advocate the incorporation of art appreciation, but they suggest that it should have a more central position in the curriculum.

For although the productive act helps clarify the appreciative, it is the latter which must be our prime concern. In maturity the making of art is a result of specialized education and is either avocational therapy or a professional undertaking. In either case, a small number of people is involved. Appreciation (aesthetic consumption), on the other hand, must be part of general education and therefore it is the responsibility of all. (Marantz, 1964, p. 23)

Despite general agreement that art appreciation is important, many scholars feel that it has been neglected. According to Lanier, "Art appreciation in American secondary schools has been a neglected and unsuccessful part of the curriculum" (1966, p. 75). Chapman, who stresses that most art education programs are studio based, writes:

The current insistence that school programs focus on hands-on manipulative activities is an effective way to restrict opportunities for children to discover that art can be perceptually and intellectually challenging even if one has little interest or skill in creating art. It is an effective way to restrict the growth of childrens' appreciations--especially of art forms that do require study and a background of knowledge beyond that which children may acquire by making art. (1982b, p. 128)
Osborne (1970) also states:

It has frequently been remarked of recent years that the analytical habits of mind and the practical outlook fostered by our technological culture run counter to modes of awareness and attitudes of attention which are essential to successful appreciative commerce with the arts. This appears to be one reason why some of the most intelligent and highly educated persons today find themselves in adult life obtuse to the arts and without the aptitude to appreciate them. (p. 4)

Criticisms such as these have drawn art educators' attention to the problem of improving the teaching of art appreciation. It has been suggested that in order to learn how to appreciate art, one must become directly involved with the act of appreciation. Marantz suggests: "Where Dewey makes a case for art as experience, I would want to extend the case for art appreciation as experience" (1964, p. 23).

Hastie and Schmidt (1969) ask where one can find all this art that is to be appreciated (p. 362). Although this would not have troubled the Virtuoso, who may have donned the wishing cap of Fortunatas in order to transport himself to any destination, it does pose a problem for art teachers. Hastie and Schmidt encourage the utilization not only of art museums and galleries but of other often overlooked community resources (1969, pp. 366-374). Lanier also suggests that students should take advantage of the various visual art experiences available to them (1966, p. 99); he offers a model lesson plan on "Where to find the arts" in which students identify the locations of visual arts resources in their community (1966, pp. 102 and 103). Although these authors encourage the investigation of various community settings for visual art
experiences, Chapman (1982b) asserts that the largest single body of theory and research in art education deals with the psychology of creating art (p. 105); research has not been directed toward the study of the curriculum or the setting in which art education occurs (1982b, p. 107).

A possible setting for visual art experience is the history museum which, as Lindemer (1974) emphasizes, is not used to its full educational potential. Art is an integral part of a region's larger history, and history museums generally contain some kind of art, whether it is decorative art, popular art, or products by recognized masters. Although art educators have generated more theory and research about drawing and painting (Chapman, 1982b, p. 105), it is felt that curricula should provide for the study of other art forms:

The studio training of art teachers and their education in a fine arts tradition may well explain the general neglect in school programs of the public, collaborative, and technological arts, to say nothing of the popular arts that arise from mass-merchandising. In relatively few schools or teacher preparation programs will you find solid teaching about the aesthetic, metaphoric, or functional aspects of architecture; of urban industrial, or graphic design; ...or of the ceremonial arts in which visual forms are used to commemorate important life events. It is as if much of our own visual culture were alien territory to art teachers. (Chapman, 1982b, p. 36)

Broadening the scope of art history with studies of a variety of art forms in American communities may rescue artists and artworks from the oblivion imposed by the art world's "superstar" syndrome.
In addition, curators may recognize that artworks will enhance a historical museum's collection with images that interpret the local scene. According to Lindemer,

One of the most difficult problems in understanding and appreciating history...is to make the subject matter real, to make the past as immediate as the present. The challenge is to change the impersonal into the personal, the abstract into the concrete. (1974, p. 1)

Like the Virtuoso's magic mirror, art can provide direct evidence of individuals and events which otherwise exist only as abstractions. When documentary and physical evidence both exist about a certain subject, a coordinated study is nearer the goal of truth (Dymond, 1974, p. 9).

Richardson (1968) also emphasizes the importance of art as physical evidence of the past but feels that art educators do not understand the potential role of art in the history museum:

Since I include works of art within my sweeping claims for significance of museum collections as documents for the story of life, I must admit that many teachers of art are not only ignorant of the history of the arts, but also resist the historian's right to have any connection with them. They hold the arts to be a preserve for what is called creativity; within creativity's precincts only the values of artistic style, form, color and intuitive emotion are allowed. The holders of such convictions, reflecting the ideas of certain contemporary artists, ...feel that the true values of art are endangered by the rude touch of the historian--to apply knowledge to, or derive knowledge from, the arts is to do them violence. (pp. 13-14)

Although the editors of History News, the monthly publication of the American Association for State and Local History, use the role of art in the history museum as a major theme for their June, 1982, issue, there has been little research conducted on this topic.
Discovering the role of art objects in the history museum has significance not only for art educators who seek resources for visual art experiences in order to develop student appreciation of a wide variety of art forms, but it also has significance for educators in history museums who have the responsibility of interpreting cultural history for their visitors. Art is not a territory where historians should fear to tread. Art objects are part of the culture in which they were created and used. The one cannot be fully understood without learning about the other.

Limitations

Studies that yield replicable data are, in many cases the most trivial, having been derived from a small part of the tangled web of culture; as the questions of the study become more encompassing, seeking a more holistic view of the problem, the methodology of that research tends to become ideosyncratic and thus less replicable (Engel, 1979b, p. 17). Ethnographers acknowledge that their work is stamped with the researcher's personal imprints. The present ethnographic study is no exception.

The instrument developed in this study for exhibit evaluation is subjective. It calls for the differentiation of art objects from non-art objects; although these determinations are based upon specific criteria of recognition for art objects (see pages 20-22), this process involves personal decisions which unavoidably lead to subjective results. The exhibit evaluation also calls for examination of factors which enhance opportunities for appreciation. Here it is important to note Shettel's (1968) study regarding
unreliability of published criteria as guides to determining exhibit effectiveness; there was agreement that lighting and labels, for example, are important in exhibits, but those knowledgeable in the field could not agree upon the quality of the elements as they existed in specific exhibits. Shettel acknowledged the subjective nature of exhibit evaluation, and concluded that prescriptions for effective exhibit design could never be reduced to a particular set of specifications.

Although it has been argued that due to the subjective nature of ethnographic research techniques, qualitative studies should involve at least two independent observers (Borg and Gall, 1971, p. 225), this study is conducted by only one person. It should be noted, however, that researchers such as Harry Wolcott regard fieldwork as an individual undertaking (1976, p. 26). One person research has the advantages of rapport and personalization of the research process. Further, key informant interviewing can reduce subjectivity of conclusions reached by the lone researcher. (See pages 69-70.)

In addition to this concern about subjectivity, the ethnographic study must be concerned with validity—the degree to which observations measure what they are supposed to measure and only what they are supposed to measure. Although one understands the validity of the measure of temperature as registered by thermometers or measures of distance as gauged by yardsticks, there is debate over
the validity of particular observations of culture (Pelto & Pelto, 1978, p. 33). But just as navigators determine a position from the bearings of several known points, ethnographers investigate a situation from many viewpoints. This multi-instrument approach tends to neutralize invalidating conditions such as response set (systematic ways of answering which are not directly related to the question content). By permitting the articulation of an attitude while correlating it to several other forms of behavior, the researcher achieves the cultural equivalent of a navigational fix.

As ethnographic inquiry often is focused on a single case or a limited setting, there are questions about the use of ethnographic data for generalizations. Although the ethnographic results may not be valid for all history museums, they are valid for the setting studied. Researchers such as Spindler (1982) feel that it is better to have in-depth, accurate knowledge of one setting than superficial and possibly misleading information about isolated relationships in many settings (p. 8). Kessler states that as ethnography derives data from uncontrolled situations, data cannot be replicated (1974, p. 5); but Boyer (1983b) points out that replication sometimes has been difficult with experimental research as well (p. 38). Pelto and Pelto (1978) recognize that data from a single setting can only be used to suggest higher order relationships (p. 6). Successful testing of hypotheses developed in this project can be carried out only if data from other studies conducted in
similar settings contain the same types of observations and
descriptive generalizations.

Because cultural complexity makes it difficult to describe
a cultural scene thoroughly the scope of ethnography must be
limited. It is important to note that the site for this project,
the Ohio Historical Center, is described as "unique among history
institutions" (Katz & Katz, 1965, p. 177). In addition to general
collections pertaining to the cultural history of the region, the
museum contains an extensive collection of Ohio prehistoric Indian
materials and an excellent natural history collection. For the
purpose of determining the significance of the history museum
as a resource for art appreciation, this study is limited to the
cultural history collection. As the exhibit area is divided into
three distinct sections, each housing a different type of collection,
it is not difficult to determine the boundaries of the cultural
history exhibits.

The researcher is confronted with the question of which group
members must be observed or interviewed to establish reliable in-
formation about cultural patterns. The number of group members
to be observed or interviewed is especially important when one
considers that subjects may unconsciously or purposely err in
answering interview questions, and that they may alter their be-
behavior when they are conscious of being observed. This study is
limited to those six museum staff members and administrators who
are directly involved in the planning and layout of the physical
setting within the museum and the planning and execution of the education program. Because of the small size of this group, data is based on interviews from a 100% sample.

Since its creation in 1970, the Ohio Historical Center has sponsored a wide range of educational activities. For the purpose of discovering the present role of art objects in the history museum, the study of educational programs is limited to activities of the museum's education department from January, 1983 through June, 1984.

As the appreciative experience varies with every individual, it is impossible to examine all elements which contribute to art appreciation. Of the factors that are examined, this study focuses primarily upon the analytic categories of appreciation: identification, description, and context. (See chapter 3.) The synthetic categories of appreciation are of equal importance in the appreciative experience, but these categories are based upon highly personal responses not discussed in depth here.
CULTURE, MATERIAL CULTURE, AND ART

Chapter II

Culture

The Virtuoso's collection contained a variety of relics related to the deities, demigods, monsters, and magicians of antiquity. It included Prospero's wand and the golden ring of Gyges, both of which had the power to make their owners invisible. Other talismans in the collection fulfilled a different fantasy: not to make the visible unseen but to make the unseen visible.

Such were the treasures of the golden bough and an hourglass containing the grains which had numbered the years of the Cumaean sibyl. According to Roman mythology Aeneas, accompanied by the sibyl, used the golden bough to gain entry into the underworld (Bullfinch, 1979, pp. 266-273). During his perilous journey he encountered snaky-haired Discord, pale Diseases, melancholy Age, Fear, Hunger, Poverty, and Death; he passed hissing Hydras and fire breathing chimaeras, but the sibyl was always there to assist and advise him. The prophetess drugged the three-headed Cerberus and led the Trojan hero past the terrifying region of the condemned. She described the laws and customs of Hades and explained how Charon, the ferryman, discriminated among passengers who at the
conclusion of their earthly lives were beginning a new existence. With the golden bough as his passport and the sibyl as his tour guide, Aeneas had few difficulties entering and understanding the way of life—the culture—of the realm of Pluto.

If one had access to the golden bough and the Cumaean sibyl, one could possibly embark on such a magical mystery tour in order to gain instant in-depth understanding of other cultures. Such a tour could provide additional insight into one's own culture as well. Unfortunately, without access to Aeneas's resources, developing cultural understanding is a more difficult process.

The term "culture" is defined so variously and so vaguely that some mention should be made of how it is used in this study. Dobbert's definition is especially useful:

A culture is an historically developed, patterned way of life which includes beliefs and ideologies; formally and informally established interrelationships between persons and groups; and material goods and technologies, all of which are systematically related as to form an integral whole. (1982, p. 10)

In brief, culture is the sharing of a distinctive way of living or a common view of life. Each person is born into a world already defined by existing cultural patterns, and the individual is conditioned from infancy to internalize these norms. One is not merely taught how to behave properly according to the cultural customs, but one is given a particular grasp of reality.

Although culture is transmitted more or less intact from generation to generation, it is never completely static. Variations in culture arise from both internal and external causes. For example,
a cultural variation might be caused by an influential person within the culture. External variations might arise from contact with other cultures or from changes in the environment.

The human race consists of hundreds of different, albeit overlapping, cultures. Although the assumption of a homogeneous human nature supposes that all thinking proceeds from the same premises and that all individuals are motivated by the same needs and goals, within the cultural framework one sees that thought processes proceed from radically different premises and that needs are satisfied in a variety of ways.

Those who study culture are concerned with three aspects of human experience: what people believe, what people do, and what people make and use. These are referred to as cultural knowledge, cultural behavior, and cultural artifacts (Spradley, 1980, p. 5). As cultural knowledge cannot be directly observed, inferences are made from cultural behavior and cultural artifacts; the invisible is inferred from the visible.

Material Culture

The sibyl and the golden bough enabled Aeneas to make direct observations of the way of life in Hades. But had he needed to acquire knowledge of the cultural past, his task would have been more difficult. Direct observation would have been impossible, for even the magical golden bough and the Cumaean sibyl could not empower him to travel through time. To embark on such a magical mystery tour of a culture no longer in existence, Aeneas would
have needed another treasure in the Virtuoso's collection—the magic mirror which would reflect whatever he wished to observe.

The study of history has been described as such a magical mirror: a glass through which one may behold all the deeds of the past. But perhaps it is more accurate to depict the chronicle of man as a shattered mirror. Unlike the Virtuoso's magic looking glass with its complete images, the mirror of history is fragmented and scattered throughout the world. And unlike the Virtuoso's mirror, the shattered mirror of history cannot offer direct answers to one's questions. When one wants to know what happened one must examine these fragments; one must put the pieces together in order to discern a larger area of reflection.

As cultural history has been divided into a variety of separate disciplines, historians tend to examine only certain fragments of this broken mirror. Historians in the nineteenth century were encouraged to adopt the "scientific method" of cultural history (Schlereth, 1982a, p. 13) and its underlying assumption that of all cultural artifacts, the written document was the only intellectually respectable source for research. It was assumed that the manuscript in the library could tell what happened, whereas the object in the museum could merely illustrate facts already derived from literary sources (Washburn, 1982, p. 103). There was little attention paid to "things" as evidence in historical inquiry.

But as verbal documentation has been preserved about relatively few of the earth's inhabitants, the greater part of cultural history
is "written" in the objects that people have created. Dymond asserts that when documentary and physical evidence both exist about a certain subject, a coordinated study is nearer the goal of complete truth (1974, p. 9). All of the fragments of the historical mirror are needed to form a complete reflection of the past. There is a growing number of researchers (Beckow, 1982; Ferguson, 1977; Kavanaugh, 1978; Palmer, 1978; Richardson, 1968; Schlereth, 1980a, 1982a, 1982b) who feel that as important as the ideas people write down are the things they leave behind.

What was once dismissed as "pots-and-pans history" is now known as "material culture" (Hume, 1978, p. 21). It refers to the totality of man-made objects in a culture. The study of material culture attempts to explain why artifacts were made, why they took the forms they did, and what social, functional, aesthetic and symbolic needs they served (Schlereth, 1980a, p. 3). Such study is based on the assumption that artifacts are cultural statements which can provide information about the cultural system in which they were produced and used. As cultural statements objects may be as revealing as written records. They can indicate the technological level of a culture, materials at its command, quality of craftsmanship, trade relations, popular enthusiasms, and life style (Fleming, 1974, p. 160). Material culture provides a source for gaining historical insight into the lives of those who left no other records. It provides direct three-dimensional evidence of individuals who otherwise exist only as abstractions (Hindle, 1978,
Material culture leads people to think about the past in ways that might never occur to them by studying written documents alone.

There are many perspectives on the past, each with its own distinguishing rationale (Carson, 1978, p. 41). But when one speaks of the history of science, of art, of philosophy, as though each area of inquiry could exist in isolation from everything else, one must keep in mind that the separation of human interests from one another is made for nothing more than facility of discussion (Boas, 1962, p. 334). The artificiality of disciplinary and institutional divisions should be recognized. Studies may ask different questions in different ways, but they have a common cause in interrogating an object as a manifestation of cultural history. The disciplinary perspectives of historical archaeology, social history, cultural and historical geography; architecture, history of technology, art and decorative arts history, cultural anthropology, and folklife studies all contribute to the study of material culture. Although it must be acknowledged that words are potentially more efficient and versatile vehicles of human thought, objects provide important historical evidence for those areas of human life where verbal documentation is thin or non-existent (Dymond, 1974, p. 20).
Art

Art Objects

Art objects are important components of material culture. In addition to their aesthetic function they are fragments of the historical mirror which can reflect the cultural system in which they were produced and used. The special distinction of art is that, whereas most artifacts were not meant as forms of conscious communication, art objects were deliberately made to communicate thoughts and feelings; they are therefore the most highly developed forms of physical evidence of the past (Dymond, 1974, p. 14).

Art as a universal cannot be successfully defined, for art does not exist as a universal "whole." Although major aesthetic theories (such as Formalism, Voluntarism, Emotionalism, Intellectualism, Intuitionism, and Organicism) attempt to enumerate the defining properties of art, Schorr emphasizes that one will never find grounds for grouping objects under the special heading of "art" by attempting to find a least common denominator among the qualities of these objects or by attempting to identify a distinctive function that all art objects fulfill (1967, p. 25). As art objects express a wide range of cultural beliefs and ideologies, their qualities and functions are too disparate to be categorized in this way. Although the assumption of art as a universal language supposes that art has become internationalized as unique cultural traditions are absorbed into a world-wide system, there are vast
differences in objects created by people whose interest in art has developed in different cultural traditions.

Weitz (1956) also stresses that art cannot be defined:

If we actually look and see what it is we call "art," we will find no common properties—only strands of similarities. Knowing what art is, is not apprehending some manifest or latent essence but being able to recognize, describe, and explain those things we call "art" in virtue of these similarities. (p. 31)

Although one cannot define art, one can describe conditions under which the term is used correctly. Determining whether or not an object is an art object does not involve formal analysis concerning necessary qualities and functions, but rather a decision as to whether the work is similar in certain respects to other objects already called art objects, thus warranting the extension of the concept to cover the new case (Weitz, 1956, p. 32). In order to correctly describe an object as an art object, there must be strands of similarities or properties, none of which need to be present but most of which are; Weitz refers to these as criteria of recognition (1956, p. 33).

McFee and Degge offer the following criteria of recognition for art objects: "By art we mean all those human-made things that are done purposefully with some attempt to enrich the message, or enhance the object or the structure; to affect a qualitative and content awareness in the viewer" (1980, p. 276). None of these criteria is a defining one, because an object could be described as an artwork even though it does not meet one of these
conditions. For example, an artifact could be described as an art object even though it was the result of an accident. But to describe an object as "art" is to commit oneself to the presence of some of these conditions (Weitz, 1956, p. 34). According to the criteria of recognition for art objects used by McFee and Degge, a painting, a sculpture, and a photograph can be labeled as "art"—architecture, industrial products, and advertising also can be included as art forms.

Art is directed towards enriching the message of the object or enhancing the object or structure, thus communicating direct life experiences. Direct life experiences are conditioned by the artist's cultural background. The art form is a vehicle for communicating experiences; it is a distillation through the personality of the artist of the underlying cultural beliefs and ideologies.

Gombrich states: "The history of art is one strand in the seamless garment of life which cannot be isolated from the strands of economic, social, religious, or institutional history without leaving any number of loose threads" (1975, p. 9). Yet in the fourfold organizational pattern involved in the arts (concept, leading to behavior, resulting in product, which in turn feeds back upon the concept) only the product has been studied in detail (Merriam, 1971, p. 98). As a result, systemic, structural descriptions dominate the literature, leaving little room for behavioral studies which lead to an understanding of human actions and their
cultural contexts. This emphasis on the artistic product has encouraged the tradition of knowing everything about a work except its significance.

Several reasons have been suggested to explain this situation. Stokstad and Humphrey (1982) suggest that the isolation of art objects in museums may have led to an emphasis on the explication of the formal qualities of the artwork rather than the study of art in its full cultural context (p. 8). Richardson feels that art educators stress the purely aesthetic view of art objects.

Since I include works of art within my sweeping claims for the significance of museum collections as documents for the story of life, I must admit that many teachers of art are not only ignorant of the history of the arts, but also resist the historian's right to have any connection with them. They hold the arts to be a preserve for what is called creativity; within creativity's precincts only the values of artistic style, form, color, and intuitive emotion are allowed. The holders of such convictions, reflecting the ideas of certain contemporary artists, ... feel that the true values of art are endangered by the rude touch of the historian—to apply knowledge to, or derive knowledge from, the arts is to do them violence. (1968, pp. 13-14)

Chalmers states that as art history has become more independent as a field of study, the account of an object has become more specialized regarding the sources, stages, and influences leading to the creation of the object; cultural context becomes less defined (1978, p. 21). The study of art has depicted in detail the forms that art has taken in particular times and places; it has defined media, styles, and substyles. Perhaps analysis of form has been stressed because it has measurable dimensions. Dark suggests that it is easier
to focus on the process as an end in itself rather than on the concrete results of concepts engendered by reactions to social events and trends which are often not as clear (1967).

Behavior of the Artist

Art products do not take the form they do by chance. They are the result of direct and indirect forces acting upon the artist. Although key aspects of physical processes of creating art objects are similar wherever artists work, each cultural milieu provides a particular context within which the artistic act takes place (Goodale & Koss, 1967, p. 176). The art object is covered with cultural fingerprints.

The artist, having no access to the Virtuoso's magic mirror, is enmeshed in his or her own time and must communicate direct life experiences in a manner controlled in part by the patterns of the cultural environment. Certain themes, media, and styles of working are given higher value at certain times by the culture. These value ratings influence the kinds of art produced. The artist accepts or alters standard features of the arts, but uses modes of expression that fit within established patterns. "An artist cannot invent himself out of his time and, if he could, he would succeed only in making his work incomprehensible by abandoning the framework in which it might be understood" (Ackerman & Carpenter, 1963, p. 167). The artist is not always consciously aware of the underlying structure of the cultural system. The rules which are used to create art are not consciously formulated as a system of
rules by those who use them; this does not mean however, that the rules do not exist or that they cannot be inferred from behavior of participants in the culture (Miller, 1979, p. 143).

According to Layton (1981) style refers to the formal qualities of a work of art; it is characterized by the range of subjects it depicts, by regular shapes to which elements of these subjects are reduced, and by the manner in which components of the art work are organized into a composition (p. 134). However, style does not refer just to the differences that distinguish the products of an artist or group of artists from works of others, but to the conceptual system that underlies artistic production. Art styles are not random combinations of forms but a result of "lawful" behavior within the culture. Explaining the behavior of an artist is not a simple matter of examining stimulus and response in the process of executing an artwork, because decisions concerning the nature of the work were made before manipulation of materials began. The study of style has involved a taxonomic approach not compatible with the search for an explanation of the artist's behavior; studies have been little more than the search for characteristics which assist in recognition of a style rather than a search for concepts or "rules" that explain it (Miller, 1979, p. 145).

Although mass media may create an artistic environment less bounded by time, place, and the mediation of an inherited outlook, no artist is independent of cultural tradition. The artist's imagination may generate change, but the cultural community
in which he lives guides its rate and direction. Change occurs when new ideas, inventions or catastrophies alter people's way of life; resulting alterations in artistic style are visual time charts of cultural change.

**Behavior of Viewers**

Discussion of creative process is incomplete without consideration of ways in which the activity is reinforced by norms of expectation and evaluation in a given cultural setting (Goodale & Koss, 1967, p. 187). Not everyone receives the same message from the art object; one's cultural background contributes to the object of one's experience. Just as the artist operates under the influence of traditions over which he or she has no control, viewers also come to the work of art with preconceived ideas. People are born into a culture, they learn the values of that culture, and their expectations and approvals generally conform to the cultural pattern. Since the individual's approval tends to follow the cultural traditions, these traditions are used as criteria for good and bad for the culture concerned. There is more agreement between what the artist has intended and what spectators have received when there are common elements of association in the artist's work and experience with that of the audience; this is the case when the artist has chosen to make his work consistent with the values of his cultural group and used images common to his own and his viewer's experience (Hastie & Schmidt, 1969, p. 331). McFee & Degge (1980) express this view as follows:
Art communication is clearest when both artist and viewer share the same values, have similar life experiences, and have similar modes of attending to those experiences. But as we learn the languages of other people's art, we learn to understand their experiences and their ways of viewing the world. (p. 10)

Feedback Upon Concepts

There has been relative unawareness of artistic phenomena as a powerful influence on cultural concepts and behavior. In addition to enhancing the environment, art objects play an important role in groups whose cohesion depends upon widely shared conceptual systems. Art provides a feedback system that helps keep social organizations going. Vermeersch states:

There are a lot of things that are rightly considered as cultural items, which we do not and often cannot learn from others. We learn them through our contact with other cultural objects. In this way, a great part of our perceptive as well as our mental "world" is not taken over from others but directly built up under the influence of...cultural items surrounding us. (1967, p. 57).

The arts reflect cultural values and evolve the "value image" that culture has of itself; that image can become objectified so that it is a symbolic reinforcement, confirming the legitimacy of the values it reflects (Sieber, 1971). This is exemplified by the medieval cathedral which presented in its architecture and decor major areas of knowledge, history, and dogma. In addition art can have political impact. Kavolis writes:

The power of line, form, and color to influence political behavior has never been satisfactorily assessed. But the evidence of linkages between art styles and political structures and processes strongly suggests that art, regardless of its content, does indeed to varying degrees at different times, perform potentially significant political functions. (1968, p. 40)
The visual arts are a means of teaching cultural concepts, thus maintaining the concepts and the behavior associated with them.

Aesthetic products and actions can help perpetuate a particular set of cultural values or they can urge change and improvements in the cultural system (Chalmers, 1978, p. 22). Art may perform an innovative function by modifying value patterns and intensifying socially-produced tensions. For example, art can be used to change political or religious beliefs. The advertising industry depends on the communicative function of art which is manipulated to alter people's ideas (Alland, 1980, p. 494). Thus art is shaped by the culture that produced it and shapes it in return.

Because of similarities in developmental stages and expression of common human experience, one can respond to some degree to artwork created by people in other cultures. "But we can only understand their art in the degree we can learn their culture" (McFee & Degge, 1980, p. 279). One cannot fully understand the cultural context of art unless one examines the cultural concepts and behaviors leading to the production of the art object and the impact of the finished product on the cultural concepts. Like mirrors, art objects can reflect different facts about the culture. What they reflect depends upon the way one turns them.
CHAPTER III
ART APPRECIATION

Visitors to the Virtuoso's collection were entangled in a labyrinth of cluttered confusion. The tub of Diogenes, Medea's caldron, and Psyche's vase of beauty were placed one within another; the girdle of Venus was carelessly flung into Pandora's box. Whimsical combinations and ludicrous analogies pervaded the museum. Pythagoras's golden emblem which had so divine a meaning was shelved with Peter Stuyvesant's wooden leg; among Caesar's mantle, Joseph's coat of many colors, Thomas Jefferson's scarlet breeches, and the rags of the "man all tattered and torn," were an old pair of shears which the visitor mistook for the memorial of some famous tailor, until they were identified as the scissors of Atropos. Although Hawthorne's Virtuoso had devoted considerable time and expense to the acquisition of objects for his collection, he was not concerned with exhibiting them in a manner which would promote interaction between the object and the viewer.

The Dual Nature of Appreciation

There are a variety of words and phrases to describe the interaction between the art object and the viewer. These include art appreciation, art awareness, aesthetic experience and aesthetic
education. Uncertainty about terminology is discussed by Ecker in Improving the Teaching of Art Appreciation:

A word, here, about the phrase "art appreciation." Nobody liked it for one reason or another, but perhaps mostly because of its slightly pejorative ring, at least in the art world if not among laymen. Yet after numerous attempts at replacing it, we all agreed that it covers the territory which we felt must be covered. So we stuck with it. (1966, p. x)

"Art appreciation" is the term which I chose to use in this study.

In a practical way, everyone knows what appreciation means—or everyone seems to know until the question is asked. The nature of the appreciative experience has been debated for centuries. It has been enveloped in mystique and subject to arbitrary definitions.

According to Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1981), to appreciate is 1) "to comprehend with knowledge, judgment, and discrimination;" and 2) "to be critically and emotionally aware of delicate subtle aesthetic or artistic values." These definitions reflect two widely differing approaches to art appreciation. The latter definition is advocated by those (Knobler, 1966; Osborne, 1970; Pepper, 1949) who feel that the act of appreciation is the aesthetic experience; the object is perceived in itself with no external references. Others (Boas, 1962; Chapman, 1982; Gealt, 1983) feel that anything that can aid in the comprehension of a visual form is relevant to the act of appreciation; the more one knows about the object, the greater one's potential for appreciating it.
The Aesthetic Experience

According to Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1981) aesthetic means "involving pure feeling or sensation."

Harold Osborne describes the aesthetic experience:

Our interest "terminates" in the object and our concern with it goes no further than perceiving, bringing it more fully and more completely into perceptual awareness. When our attention is set into this posture and we look at things for their own sake, the vague and indeterminate qualities which we habitually see become more precise and determinate. (1970, p. 21)

This description reflects the original meaning of aesthetics: it is derived from the Greek word aisthesis which means "perception" (Webster's New World Dictionary, 1966).

There are several characteristics of the aesthetic experience. When one perceives an object aesthetically, one's attention is centered upon it; it is isolated from the rest of its environment. Devices such as picture frames and lighted screens and stages in darkened theaters facilitate this isolation (Osborne, 1970, p. 28). Implicit to the isolation of the object is the fact that one does not conceptualize about it; interest and attention are arrested by the inherent qualities of the object. In contrast with one's usual experiences which are affected by expectations for the future and associations from the past, the aesthetic experience involves concern for the here and now (Osborne, 1970, p. 29). The aesthetic experience may be described as satisfaction in contemplation. Practical considerations are suspended unless they are useful in clarifying present perception. This is exemplified by turning a
painting to take better advantage of a light source or walking around a sculpture to obtain a complete view. Moments of aesthetic vision may be encouraged deliberately or they may happen unexpectedly. Although the aesthetic experience may be initiated by natural or man-made stimuli (Knobler 1966, p. 7), not everything can sustain aesthetic attention; moments of aesthetic vision in daily life are generally sporadic and fleeting. It is important to note that this list is not all-inclusive, nor are all of these characteristics necessarily present in a single aesthetic experience.

The Cognitive Experience

Aesthetic qualities typically are seen as having more to do with form and feeling than with content and understanding (Chalmers, 1982, p. 3). Aesthetic studies stress contemplation rather than cognition. Dislike of cognitive approaches to art is reflected in reluctance to speculate about its cultural ramifications (Hobbs, 1983, p. 32).

But people do not exist in a vacuum; they experience, organize, and respond to artworks within a cultural milieu. As was discussed in chapter 2, art is more than the simple product of an artist—it is a complex human activity which is interdependent with other aspects of culture. Boas emphasizes:

To separate one aspect of a work of art from all its others is a falsification of what one has before one. There is nothing in a picture or a poem or what you will which does not contribute something to its nature. (1962, p. 295)

The more one knows, the greater one's potential for appreciation.
Emotional and Cognitive Dimensions of Appreciation

Emotion versus intellect is an important issue in "The Virtuoso's Collection." For example, the museum contained a variety of items relating to the life of Hercules: his ponderous club, his statue, and monsters—the Stymphalides, the Erymanthean boar, and Cerberus—which he mastered during his twelve labors. It is surprising that the Virtuoso who openly scorned emotion should collect objects relating to a hero who was noted not only for his physical strength but also for the depth of his personal reactions. Intellectual facts did not figure largely in anything Hercules did—in many stories reason was conspicuously absent. Once, when he was too hot, he threatened to shoot the sun; on another occasion he threatened to punish the sea (E. Hamilton, 1942, p. 160). The raging emotion which led him to kill his music teacher and his servant were matched by his regret and deep personal response. Whereas the Virtuoso was limited by his inability to respond emotionally, the man so widely represented in his collection was limited by his inability to respond intellectually.

Differences in describing the interaction between the art object and the viewer can be traced to different viewpoints regarding the roles of intellect and emotion in the appreciative experience. I feel that these dimensions are equally important. An artwork can be valued for its aesthetic qualities and for the cultural insight it yields (Barkan, Chapman, & Kern, 1970, p. 8). Cognitive
and affective dimensions are interdependent and complementary; they may both be present in the response to a single object.

According to Chapman, "We become heirs to a vocabulary and outlook that splits reason from feeling—and places each in a special domain—one labeled 'cognitive,' one 'affective''(1979, p. 6). One polarizes intellect and emotion, convinced that a clear distinction can be made between facts and feelings about an object. An occasional person of aesthetic sensibility may fix his attention on an artwork so that its meanings disappear and only its aesthetic qualities are immediately felt. An occasional scholar may gaze upon the same object and experience complete identification with its cultural context. But more commonly, as one looks at museum objects, one has neither an emotional nor an intellectual experience in absolute purity. The experience of the ordinary viewer is mixed: the object holds the attention and its forms and colors create an impression, but these impressions are mixed with others derived from the individual's experience and knowledge. (Redfield, 1971, p. 45). Young (1982) suggests that all experiences include both emotional and intellectual dimensions, but the ratio between the two may vary, depending upon the situation (p. 7). For example one's response to color is more likely to be affective, one's response to symbols is likely to be primarily cognitive.

Dividing the Act of Art Appreciation

Appreciation encompasses critical and emotional awareness of aesthetic values and comprehension with knowledge, judgment, and
discrimination. This was recognized by authors such as Mormon (1978) and Clark and Zimmerman (1978) who developed holistic approaches to the interaction between the object and the viewer. However, as it is difficult to comprehend all of the aspects of appreciation at once, I find the concept of art appreciation as an act which can be divided, to be useful. Marantz feels that a viewer can attend to different aspects of appreciation at different times for different purposes; one can be concerned with the work of art as a whole, but one can appreciate it in terms of a series of additive parts (1966, p. 151).

There are many useful ways to categorize the relationship between an object and a viewer. One could follow Fleming's (1974) model of artifact analysis which includes a five-fold classification of basic properties of the artifact (history, material, construction, design, and function) and a set of four operations to be performed on these properties (identification, evaluation, cultural analysis, and interpretation.) Or one might use Pepper's four modes of organization in art—design, pattern, type, and emotion—which take on importance only if details in these categories are relevant to the perception of an artwork (1949). Gaitskell and Hurwitz, who define appreciation as the critical stages which precede judgment, divide the appreciative experience into categories of description, analysis, and interpretation (1970, p. 415).

In dividing the act of appreciation it is important to recognize all major factors which influence the individual's response. For
my purposes I chose the basic categories devised by Marantz (1966). He divides the act of art appreciation into two major classifications: the analytical and the synthetic. The analytical categories indicate what qualities might have gone into the work of art and what events might have affected its creation; the synthetic categories depend upon the individual's capacity to get something out of the work of art other than the analytical facts (Marantz, 1966, p. 152). This model points out relationships between art objects and specific aspects of appreciation. Although aspects of appreciation do not always fall neatly into specific categories, communication is facilitated if one can use these concepts to estimate which responses are more analytical and which are more dependent on individual experience and sensitivity.

Analytic Categories of Art Appreciation

The Virtuoso lacked sympathy with the emotional or the spiritual: "You are welcome to your visions...; but give me what I can see and touch, and understand, and I ask no more" (Hawthorne, 1865, p. 297). He was interested only in that information covered by the analytic categories of appreciation which indicate what qualities might have gone into a work of art and what events might have affected its creation. These categories include identification, description, and context.

Identification

Identification begins with the question, "What is it?" (Fleming, 1974, p. 156). Facts of identity are fairly obvious; they refer to
information which often has been classified and labeled. They include the title of the work, the artist, the date of manufacture, the medium and technique, the place of origin, and the historical style. Often identification of an art work reminds a person of other information, providing data for other aspects of response. For example, knowing the painting is a Renoir and knowing that his work contains strong elements of Impressionism, one may become more attentive to the use of color as a formal quality (Lanier, 1966, p. 94). These facts of identity can aid in the comprehension of a work of art and are important when they are regarded as a means to this end and not an end in themselves.

Description

Description, a factual inventory of the physical qualities of the object, can be divided into three areas: literary, technical, and formal. The observer is encouraged to notice things which otherwise may have been overlooked.

Literary description. At the beginning of the twentieth century emphasis on aesthetic form played havoc with the "reading" of subject matter in art (Lee, 1978, p. 25). But recognition of objects, people, places, and incidents is often important in appreciation. Failure to recognize the subject can detract from the observer's comprehension of the artwork. For example, medieval art has a complex system of symbolism, and failure to comprehend the subject or symbols lessens one's understanding of the object.
Technical description. The observer's attention is focused on the artwork's technical aspects which can be just as expressive as the forms one sees. In technical description one examines the way in which an art object was made and draws comparisons between similar works. One might analyze the way the paint was applied or the kinds of materials and tools used. Hastie and Schmidt suggest that knowledge of process contributes to the observer's involvement with a work of art (1969, p. 355). After working in a medium one becomes conscious of the problems that have influenced one's own expressive acts, and one knows what to look for in similar works of others (Gaitskell & Hurwitz, 1970, p. 417).

Formal description. Attention is focused on the physical structure of the work of art. Formal description deals with the elements of design: line, color, texture, shape, light and dark, mass and space; and the organizing principles of design such as balance, rhythm, repetition, unity, and proportion. It is assumed that the amount and clarity of information one has about how artworks are put together will influence how one looks at them (Lanier, 1982, p. 79). Formal description is especially useful in dealing with contemporary abstract and non-objective artworks which are created in an environment in which the importance of design elements and principles is stressed (Marantz, 1966, p. 154). Although some believe that these formal qualities
are the most important parts of the artwork, response to formal qualities is only one aspect of the appreciative experience.

**Context**

In addition to focusing on the object as an isolated entity (what is it, what is it made of, how was it made, how does it work, what skills were needed) the object can be placed within its context of time and place (Booth, Krockover, & Woods, 1982). Context goes beyond description to explanation of the interrelationship of artifacts and culture. This underlying structure is as important for understanding art as is an analysis of the item itself.

As was previously discussed art products do not take the forms they do by chance. Art is shaped by the culture that produced it and shapes it in return. Of the four-fold organizational pattern in the arts (concept, leading to behavior, resulting in product, which in turn feeds back upon the concept) only the product, has been studied in detail (Merriam, 1971, p. 98). As a result the study of art has involved perception of form rather than perception of meaning (Chalmers, 1982, p. 6). This has encouraged the tradition of knowing everything about a work except its significance.

Knowing contextual facts about the visual form makes a great deal of difference in the way one looks at the object. According to Lanier (1982), "What little we know about how we see things,
that is, perception, suggests that the more we know the more we see" (p. 20). For example, the engine of an automobile is almost a blur to many people, but to the mechanic it is a clear picture of discrete but related parts; the mechanic perceives more because he knows more about that at which he is looking (Lanier, 1966, p. 94).

If context is ignored, one can lose meanings by not understanding the symbols; one can also read unintended meanings into the work. In discussing the importance of context Marantz states:

Every light that we can bring to bear on the work of art relating to its use, its influence, the role of the artist in society, its reception by its contemporary society, and other qualities ought to make our appreciation of it the brighter. (1966, p. 155)

Cultural history should be used not only as a general screen behind the artwork, but as a specific and detailed part of the work. These contextual references can take many forms, and it is important to distinguish those that are relevant in aiding our comprehension and enhancing the quality of the appreciative experience.

According to Fleming (1974, p. 159) two procedures for discovering the interrelationship of an artifact with its culture are product analysis (the ways a culture leaves its mark on an artifact), and content analysis (the ways in which a particular artifact reflects its culture). From the standpoint of product analysis every man-made object, in its material, construction,
design and function, is a product of its culture. Product analysis includes consideration of human behavior associated with the creation and use of the artifact.

From the standpoint of content analysis, every artifact is a document providing information about its culture. Art is an expression of a people's sense of reality. The subject matter of art illustrates the status and roles of people, what is important to observe in nature, what critical ideas need to be considered; the style of art tells whether people are more objective or subjective in their view of the world; the setting and condition of art tell how it is valued (McFee & Degge, 1980, pp. 7-8).

Although the same ordering processes are found in art forms throughout the world, and there are common human experiences that are expressed, the accurate interpretation of meaning depends upon one's knowledge of the cultural context of the object. Usually one does not come to understand cultural context from the object alone. One must read and look to see that the style of the art and the style of life are parallel systems of form and meaning.

The appreciation of art involves more than the simple understanding of aesthetic values; it includes the attempt to analyze distinctive cultural characteristics as they affect the art object. One cannot fully appreciate what one does not understand. In viewing artwork produced by people in other cultures one only understands their art in the degree one can learn their culture
(McFee & Degge, 1980, p. 279). As was previously discussed one cannot fully understand the cultural context of art unless one examines the cultural concepts and behaviors leading to the production of the art object, and recognizes the impact of the finished product on the cultural concepts.

**Synthetic Categories of Art Appreciation**

Appreciation involves not only consideration of the physical object examined in the analytic categories, but it involves a highly personal reaction to the visual form as well. This is emphasized by Pepper:

> A great work of art...is the potentiality of a vivid and satisfying human experience. The possibility of that experience lies in the structure of the physical object to which we respond. The conditions for our having the experience lie in ourselves.

The synthetic categories of art appreciation indicate ways in which the observer may become critically and emotionally aware of values in an artwork. Whereas the analytic categories are neutral regarding the value of a work of art, they provide a framework of knowledge against which one can test personal responses (Marantz, 1966, p. 156). The artwork has a statement to make, but it is the observer who shapes that statement into a personal communication. Marantz observes that "one gets out of an experience what one brings to it" (1966, p. 155).

**Association**

Hawthorne stressed the importance of associations. When the Virtuoso offered a decanter of water from the Lethe his visitor
refused: "Not for the world! I can spare none of my recollections, not even those of error or sorrow. They are all alike the food of my spirit. As well never to have lived as to lose them now" (Hawthorne, 1865, p. 290).

Feldman describes association as the process of forming personal interpretations which connect one's feelings about and observations of the visual form (1970, p. 364). The observer is not a sponge absorbing an invariable signal issuing from the object, but a contributing agent in the appreciative experience. People do not simply respond to what they see, but rather they select, organize, and interpret apprehended sensations into meaningful messages. Boyer (1983a) states that in determining the nature of the art experience, it is important to focus on the nature of the perceiver in terms of psychological and cultural factors (p. 2).

When considering context one examines the visual form in its original setting; when considering association one examines the significance of the artifact in relation to one's own culture. As each person is a culture carrier who experiences the world through a complex web of culturally transmitted concepts, associations cannot be separated from cultural experience. According to Bourguignon (1979), "Culturally learned orientations define, specify, evaluate, and interpret the information derived through the senses" (p. 200). (See pages 15-16)

Personal experiences, habits, needs, and endeavors also have an influence on one's experience with the visual form. The object
may remind the observer of events, of ideas and feelings, or of other works of art. Many of these associations are of the "it looks like," "it feels like," or "it reminds me of" variety.

Personal and cultural factors determine a screen through which a person filters sensations. As a result the same sensory stimuli will produce different associations in different people. Although Bersson (1982) feels that one often bypasses associations and feelings and opts for intellectual knowledge, systematic methods, and pre-arranged services to organize direct experience (p. 36), to ignore or discount the influence of association on the response of the individual is to ignore an important component of art appreciation. One can only make cautious guesses as to the impact of association in one's response to art. All one can say with reasonable certainty is that the individual does associate forms, colors, and objects in works of art with other experienced moments of life (Lanier, 1966, p. 93).

Critical Judgment

This stage of appreciation involves judging the significance and making decisions about the value of an experience. Whereas the aesthetic experience involves the observer in a non-linear, goal-less experience, art-critical inquiry requires that the viewer carry out a series of mediating procedures which lead in a purposeful linear manner to the achievement of certain goals (Bersson, 1982, p. 36). The main goal of criticism is to make a value judgment which distinguishes one work from another on the basis of specific criteria.
Formalistic aesthetic theory often has dominated critical discussions of art. (Formal qualities are discussed on pages 38-39.) Through paradigms of art criticism such as those developed by Feldman (1970), students are instructed how to formally describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate artworks. Bersson (1982) suggests that art appreciation has come to be closely associated with the teaching of art criticism and that it often employs the working method of the formalist art critic as its model (p. 34). In keeping with the formalist view, many studies treat verbal response to line, color, shape, form, or movement as a sign of more "appropriate" response than references to mood, feeling, imagery, techniques, subject, or contextual observations regarding the artwork or artist (Chapman, 1979, p. 7).

Critical practice can be thought of as a spectrum extending from the most readily communicable statements to those that are the most individualized and difficult to transmit (Ackerman & Carpenter, 1963, p. 146). At one end one represents the work of art in terms of physical properties, materials, and techniques; at the other one represents the art object as a unique experience that demands great powers of understanding and communication. Critical judgment should be based on carefully observing the facts of identification, description, and context, (as outlined in the analytical categories), analyzing the facts and relationships among the facts and feelings in order to discover their implications (association), and stating criteria or offering reasons for
decisions about a particular art experience (judging). Although judgment is a personal matter, the judgments of appreciation cannot be simple judgments of personal taste (Osborne, 1970, p. 15). "It is good" or "It is bad" are relative terms and must be examined in relation to knowledge about the object being judged (Marantz, 1966, p. 156).

Friendship

Friendship is a step beyond comprehension with knowledge, judgment, and discrimination. It involves appreciating an artwork emotionally as a total experience (Marantz, 1966, p. 151). According to Boas all of the various aspects of a work of art exist together and influence one another (1962, p. 295). As it is impossible to discuss all of these aspects at once, one discusses them separately. But the experience accumulated from examining the evidence of the analytical categories and the reflections of the synthetic categories is preparatory for the ultimate experience of appreciating a work of art as a whole and for developing a friendship with it (Marantz, 1966, p. 156). This "total" appreciation is suggested by Pepper (1949, pp. 11-12) and Boas (1962, p. 292), when they refer to funding experiences: a single impression of the artwork is formed as the mind adds up or funds memories of former experiences and successive perceptions of the work of art, and fuses them into a single unified feeling (Boas, 1962, p. 295). (See Appendix, p.178, for "A Model for Art Appreciation.")
As no tight formula for appreciation can be given, scholars differ on the best ways to appreciate art. Like the Virtuoso, people can bypass feelings and opt for intellectual knowledge to conceptualize and organize direct experience. People can take a Herculean approach and obliterate all but the emotional response. And because people rarely find out how much they are missing, they think they are not missing much (Perkins, 1983, p. 41).

But the broadest appreciation of art will be achieved through consideration of affective and cognitive components of the experience. To understand appreciation it is necessary to consider the characteristics of the viewer and the properties of the artwork being perceived.
CHAPTER IV
HISTORY MUSEUMS

Development of History Museums

The Greek work *mouseion* referred to sanctuaries dedicated to the Muses, nine sister goddesses who presided over learning and the creative arts. The *mouseion* at Alexandria exhibited collections of artistic, scientific, and historical objects; it supported botanical and zoological parks as well as productions in music, drama, and dance. After the decline of the ancient world, the destruction of its libraries, and dispersal of collections, the *mouseion* temporarily disappeared (G. H. Hamilton, 1975, p. 100).

During the Renaissance those who could afford to began to amass collections which, in the tradition of the early *mouseion*, contained a variety of items. But like the Virtuoso's collection some of these cabinets of curiosities were wonderworlds of the exotic and the weird. Horns of rhinoceros and narwhal were displayed as unicorn's horns, believed to be capable of foiling assassins; skeletal remains of elephants were displayed as giants' bones; fossilized sharks' teeth were shown as serpents' tongues; and mummies were prized for the mummy powder (often from a criminal's body treated with bitumen) which was believed to have healing properties (E.P. Alexander, 1979, p. 41). Collections such as these did nothing

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to dispel Hesiod's vision of the Muses in which they revealed that they knew how to tell the truth, but that they also knew how to tell falsehoods that seemed true (E. Hamilton, 1942, p. 37).

In early myths the Muses were not distinguished from each other as they were all of one mind; in later stories, however, each sister had her own special area of interest (E. Hamilton, 1942, p. 37). In the evolution of Greek mythology, Clio became the Muse of history. And in the evolution of the mouseion, she acquired her own special sanctuary—the history museum.

History museums developed more recently than those devoted to art or science (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 79). They began as derivatives of art collections. The first of these derivatives were portrait galleries. In sixteenth century Europe, Bishop Paolo Giovio collected portraits of famous men; he revived and brought into general use the word "museum," and his collection, the Museum Jovianum, was regarded as one of the marvels of the age (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 79). This type of historical collection became popular with wealthy collectors such as the Medicis. Catherine the Great also owned a "Cabinet of Muses and Graces" which contained likenesses of Europe's most beautiful women.

The popularity of portrait collections spread to the United States. In 1782, Pierre Eugene du Simitiere opened his Philadelphia home to the public (Katz & Katz, 1965, p. 4); he exhibited drawings of American military leaders and statesmen. Charles Willson Peale's eighteenth century Philadelphia Museum displayed portraits (many
of them by Peale) of Revolutionary leaders and Founding Fathers (Katz & Katz, 1965, p. 2). In the 1850's the State Historical Society of Wisconsin formed a historical art gallery composed mainly of pictures of pioneers and Indians (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 80). The Minnesota Historical Society also began as a portrait gallery (O'Sullivan, 1982, p. 11).

As the nationalistic spirit pervaded Europe, national museums and history museums were variations of one theme: European communities striving for independence were seeking symbols of past greatness (Wittlin, 1970, p. 122). "Battle galleries" consciously sought to instill a love for wartime glory. Louis Philippe established the Historical Museum at Versailles in 1837; the Gallery of Battles, four-hundred feet in length, held paintings depicting Napoleon's victories (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 81). Vienna's Museum of National Glories, established in 1850, included a Salon of Honor which contained statues of famous Austrians (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 81).

Panoramas or cycloramas were other forms of historical museums. First developed in 1792, these large circular paintings depicted important battles. They were often housed in rotundas, and viewers observed from the center of the room. Sound and lighting were added for realistic effects. In 1823 dioramas were created by painting on translucent gauze and using moving lights to give the impression of motion. Two panoramas created in the nineteenth
century can still be seen in the United States: "Pickett's Charge" at Gettysburg National Historical Park and "The Battle of Atlanta" at Atlanta's Cyclorama.

Another forerunner of the history museum was the museum of industrial or decorative arts. The South Kensington Museum, for example, was founded to display decorative arts remaining from the Crystal Palace Exhibition. Created in 1857, it implemented the beliefs of Ruskin and Morris regarding the study of past decorative art for the improvement of the useful arts of the present.

In the eighteenth century the French government began to inventory, classify and protect buildings of historic and/or aesthetic importance. While Europeans converted churches and castles into museums, Americans developed historic house museums. In 1850 the Hasbrouck House at Newburgh, New York, once headquarters of General Washington, was opened to the public; nine years later Mount Vernon was purchased to be authentically furnished and placed on public display (E. P. Alexander, 1959, p. 10).

At this time a new approach to museum exhibition was developed: historical objects were put in their functional context against the background of the cultural environment in which they were created and used (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 85). Charles P. Wilcomb designed "colonial kitchens" and "colonial bedrooms" for the Golden Gate Park Museum in San Francisco (Deetz, 1980, p. 42). They were eventually referred to as "period rooms." Whereas historical period
rooms were furnished to fit a specific time and place, artistic period rooms exhibited outstanding examples of architecture and decorative arts (E. P. Alexander, 1964).

In Sweden, Arthur Hazelius, distressed by the Industrial Revolution, not only collected historical furniture, furnishings, implements, costumes, and paintings, but he also began to move buildings of historical and/or aesthetic value to a single site. In 1891 he developed the first community re-creation at an old fortification (Skansen) overlooking Stockholm. His idea became popular in the United States: Colonial Williamsburg was founded in 1926 and Greenfield Village in 1929.

Specialized Spaces for Specialized Collections

Considering the evolution of historical portrait galleries, battle galleries, panoramas and cycloramas, museums of decorative arts, furnished historic house museums, and community re-creations, one realizes that the role of art was firmly established in these various historical museums from their beginnings. The New York Historical Society, for example, received the Lenox collection of Nineveh Sculptures in 1858 and added Dr. Henry Abbott's Egyptian collection two years later; in 1864, when Thomas Jefferson Bryan's Christian artworks were added, the society had the greatest collection of art in the city (E. P. Alexander, 1959, pp. 4-5).

Prior to the twentieth century collections of scientific, literary, historical, and artistic products were common in museums. Heterogeneous collections reflected the popular belief of the
Enlightenment that man should take all knowledge for his province (G. H. Hamilton, 1975, p. 102). This tendency was reflected in Hawthorne's mythical museum which contained everything from the Christian's burden of sin to the Countess of Salisbury's garter.

Specialization first was necessitated by overextension and congestion in institutions. Specimens illustrating one subject were combined to form a separate collection. Collections often were passed on to agencies developing a concentration in particular objects. In some instances historical societies passed on natural history specimens and works of art to specialized institutions as these came into being (Wittlin, 1970, p. 122). With the advent of specialization the great storehouse concept of the museum was gradually modified. "It had indeed become apparent by the beginning of the twentieth century that an unspoken schism existed in scholars' minds about the history of mankind (Ripley, 1969, p. 78).

History Museums--Art Museums

When collections are concentrated on specific types of material culture, museums can be defined according to the types of artifacts they contain. This is exemplified by museums of art. Others, such as history museums, cannot be so simply classified. This brief account of the development of history museums shows the variety that characterizes this type of institution.

History museums can be divided into three general categories. Period rooms are collections of artifacts which are organized into functional groupings to indicate some aspect of the life style of
a certain group of people; a number of period rooms placed together in a single structure make up historic house museums (Deetz, 1980, p. 43). Community re-creations are collections of restored or recreated historical houses; these are full scale duplications (as far as possible) of a place, a point in time, and/or a way of life, the main purpose of which is to communicate certain aspects of that segment of the past (Colwell, 1972, p. 37). Composite history museums refer to those museums which offer some combination of period rooms, exhibits with a suggestive historical background, and exhibits with objects arranged chronologically or stylistically for close examination; these sometimes incorporate historic house museums or community recreations.

According to Thurman, "We could ask people, 'Why have art museums?' Without batting an eye, most of them would tell us: 'for art objects'; whereas, with counterpart questions they would not be apt to say 'for history objects'" (1968, p. 142). In the latter, artifacts are organized to offer overall lessons pertaining to a group of people. Although history museums have a specialized purpose, their collections might include scientific, literary, and artistic products in addition to artifacts which are of significance only because of their historical associations.

To the historian it is natural that the artifact is presented to history museum visitors with information about the use and meaning of the object in the lives of the people who made it. But in the museum of art why is the same object displayed in isolation
without detailed labeling? The difference in interpretation that such an object might have by the curator of a history museum and the treatment it might receive by the curator of an art museum focuses on the frame of reference in which the object is displayed.

As was discussed in chapter 3, there are those who regard objects aesthetically without regard to their cultural context; there are those who find it foolhardy to isolate the object from the culture that produced it, and to ignore its power to communicate ideas and emotions. These two major frames of reference used by museums are identified by Pott as aesthetic and intellectual (1963, p. 158). Each makes different demands on the way objects are presented, and each offers the viewer different opportunities for art appreciation. One's perceptions of a work of art are affected by the way in which it is seen and by the label it carries, reflecting how it is rated and what is known about it. Museum curators may choose to emphasize one or both frames of reference in their exhibits (Sidamon-Erstoff, 1973, pp. 310-311).

Aesthetic Frame of Reference

Although some curators may be oriented more toward the history of ideas and forms, others consider the object as an independent entity (Stokstad, 1982, p. 1). The arts are peculiar among cultural creations because the behavior involved in their creation produces a product which is sometimes studied apart from its cultural context (Merriam, 1971, p. 96).
In the late nineteenth century, as increasing emphasis was placed on museum education, critics reacted to the use of art as social documentation. The fusion of art and history became less fashionable, and there was greater concentration on the aesthetic aspect of artworks. When the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art opened in 1924, attention was focused on the formal qualities of the objects. (Schlereth, 1982a, p. 17). The first exhibition of American folk art took place at the Whitney Studio in 1924; although most folk art had been created for functional purposes, it was considered only in regard to its aesthetic beauty (Schlereth, 1982a, p. 19). The viewer's experience was intended to be emotional, rather than instructive. But according to Schlereth, "Had academic historians...shown any interest whatsoever in the early-twentieth-century material culture research going on in museums, historical societies, and among private collectors, this often ahistorical perspective might not have developed as it did" (1982a, p. 17).

Some art museum directors are so devoted to the aesthetic frame of reference, that they begrudge any interpretation beyond the simplest one-line, inconspicuous label. They feel that their sole purpose is to display aesthetically significant objects in the best possible setting so that each visitor can personally experience them. The history of the artwork, the effect of the environment on the artist, the influence of political, religious, and economic factors are ignored (Lucas, 1963, p. 200).
The emphasis on the aesthetic importance of objects has led to the "objective" exhibit style which has been used extensively at the Essen Museum in the Ruhr and the extension of the Germanisches Museum in Nurnberg (Hudson, 1975, p. 97). Paintings are removed from frames and hung free in space or on very light free standing frames, and sculptures are placed on transparent ramps or pedestals in order to neutralize the surroundings and enable the object to be viewed in its own right with no associations. Hudson states that works are "naked prisoners in empty cells, with nothing to confuse the viewer, and equally, nothing to help him" (1975, p. 97).

The aesthetic frame of reference has been subject to criticism. As Ripley emphasizes, understanding art of other cultures is a monumental task; removing objects from their context makes that task almost impossible (1969, p. 129). Schlereth (1982a, p. 40) warns that the aesthetic frame of reference leads to three other tendencies that color the approach to artifact study: creator worship (concern for who made the object and belief in the intrinsic worth of exhaustive study of the artist), primary fascination (concern for who made it first or valuation being automatically assigned to an object's innovative elements), and normative evaluation (what is its worth as art as opposed to its possible cultural meaning). Uniqueness is emphasized at the expense of significance.

**Intellectual Frame of Reference**

Those who advocate the intellectual approach feel that works of art have a reference to things beyond themselves. Chalmers,
for example, urges that all art be regarded as cultural artifact (1981). According to Roskill, "Works of art are part of the society from which they spring, and one cannot learn about one without learning about the other. They are mutually enlightening" (1976, p. 11).

With the intellectual frame of reference the object is presented in terms of cultural values and ideas rather than in terms of form and design. The common assumption underlying this approach is that man-made objects consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, reflect the belief patterns of individuals who made or used them, and by extension, the belief patterns of the larger culture of which they are a part (Schlereth, 1982a, p. 3). Viewed as a product of craftsmanship the art object may reveal the range of construction materials, skills, tools, and techniques available at the time of its creation; viewed from the standpoint of its social role, its function may reveal answers to everyday problems of the period (Chavis, 1964, p. 161). Chittenden (1982) asserts that genre scenes of subjects such as local social events, disasters, prominent citizens, and town and farmstead views were often painted with close attention to details (p.14). As written history is weak when it comes to the lives of ordinary people, artwork often provides important historical information. Information gained from a study of a Colonial painter, a nineteenth century craftsman, or the transformation of a region through the artifacts in the possession of the museum can add immeasurably to historical knowledge (Heslin, 1968, p. 161).
One object might reflect a variety of ideas. For example, cigar store Indians can indicate indulgence in tobacco; as shop figures they convey concepts such as individualism and enterprise; in their appearance they connote ideas about minorities such as Indians; and they are a gauge of technical and artistic level of the carver's art (Welsh, 1967, p. 63). The shop figures can be used to illustrate line and form. Repetitious use of objects at different places throughout the museum permits the presentation of multiple levels of meaning and gives the visitor a greater opportunity to understand some facet of the past (Welsh, 1967, p. 63).

There are also criticisms of this approach. Newsom suggests that one can devote oneself to examining the geographic, literary, social, technological, religious, and philosophical influences surrounding an artwork without devoting very much time to the work itself (1979, p. 512). While focusing on so many cultural aspects of art, attention is drawn away from the individual character—the uniqueness of artworks. For example, if a historian were using artworks as documentation for a discussion of the Counter-Reformation, he/she would choose works of art as documents of a social-religious movement; standard of selection would not be excellence or significance of style, but relevance to edicts of the Council of Trent (Ackerman & Carpenter, 1963, p. 221).
In short, historians do not necessarily broaden our perspective or contribute to the enrichment of humanistic studies by divesting art "documents" of the qualities that are peculiar to works of art and that differentiate them from other products of society. (Ackerman & Carpenter, 1963, p. 221)

In addition, with the intellectual frame of reference the viewer is not always placed in the best position to appreciate objects as art. As the intellectual presentation is organized with respect to the meanings and uses of the artifacts, one frequently does not find the most favorable circumstances for the undistracted contemplation of artistic works arranged so that the form is readily apparent.

**Mixed Frame of Reference**

Museum specialization is emphasized in Webster's New World Dictionary (1966) which defines a museum as "a building, room, etc., for preserving and exhibiting artistic, historical, or [emphasis added] scientific objects." Museums have also been defined as organized, permanent, non-profit institutions essentially educational or [emphasis added] aesthetic in purpose (Swinney, 1976, p. 5). Adoption of these arbitrary divisions would preclude objects from being artistic and historical, aesthetic and educational.

Visitors enter an art museum expecting to be delighted by the beauty of certain works; viewers enter a cultural history museum expecting to be instructed about history. With the aesthetic frame of reference typically used in art museums, curators and visitors tend to focus on friendship and formal description of the artwork;
they fail to recognize the historical value of isolated objects. Yet, with the intellectual frame of reference frequently used in history museums, curators and visitors tend to focus on the object's identification, factual description, and context to the exclusion of other factors (such as association, judgment, and friendship) that would contribute to the appreciative experience. What one fails to realize is that a number of objects in the history museum are of unique aesthetic value; a number of objects in the art museum are of historical significance. Despite attempts at rigid classification, there are instances in which the historical specimen and the object of art are one and the same.

After a century of separate development, the history museum and art museum still have much in common. It is not so much in their subject matter as in their approach and intellectual emphasis that they draw apart. Art objects can be seen individually and collectively as manifestations of the culture that produced them. They can be aesthetically apprehended and intellectually comprehended. This is exemplified by the display of the Garvan collection of Americana at Yale University; furniture is set on platforms and pedestals, shape played against shape, in order to emphasize aesthetic qualities and to illustrate developments ("American Arts", 1974, p. 41). This was also evident in the diorama installation of "Man in Africa" at the American Museum of Natural History; great works of art were carefully displayed alongside artifacts and
functional objects of little aesthetic distinction. Although the aesthetic and the intellectual are regarded as two worlds of thought, they are bound together in the art object—as a body in which two souls dwell.

Dissolving the Schism

The meaningless way in which museums split their territory does violence to the way the ordinary person sees the world. According to Hudson:

There is a growing feeling...that really effective communication cannot be achieved in any kind of museum until the old academic compartments and barriers are swept away, and until the collections of every specialist museum are seen to be only arbitrarily placed there, rather than in a completely different kind of museum. Why, for example, should Van Gogh's paintings of the peasants in the Borinage be considered to belong inevitably to an art museum and not to an agricultural or history museum? (1977, p. 93).

In developing meaningful cultural and historical interpretations, the objects used as evidence can not be parceled out as the special preserve of the different disciplines. Ripley suggests that the task is to dissolve the schism, to remove the gap between museums, and to recreate public understanding of the roles of these institutions (1969, p. 81).

To arrive at an accurate impression of the cultural past one must study not only what man has written, but also what man has wrought. These tangible fragments of the mirror of history are found most easily and in greatest quantities and varieties in museums (Moe, 1968, p. 31). In one's search for the past, museum
collections offer a longer and wider range of evidence than exists in any other form. Exhibits serve as analytical vehicles in which objects are arranged in new relationships to prompt new interpretations and to encourage viewers to see collections in different frames of reference. Museum curators should not hesitate to take advantage of the object's emotional appeal in order to draw visitor's attention to what they should see and learn. There is a potential for delight as well as cultural background providing a mirror of life.
CHAPTER V

ETHNOGRAPHIC PROCEDURES FOR DISCOVERING
THE ROLE OF ART OBJECTS IN THE HISTORY MUSEUM

The Virtuoso's melange of magical data-dispensing objects would fulfill any researcher's fantasy. Fortunatus's wishing cap, Aladdin's lamp, Prospero's wand, and Agrippa's mirror could assist in supplying answers to almost any question. The visitor to Hawthorne's mythical museum, however, was unimpressed: "There are so many greater wonders in the world, to those who keep their eyes open and their sight undimmed by custom, that all the delusions of the old sorcerers seem flat and stale" (Hawthorne, 1865, p. 281).

The attempt to observe with "sight undimmed by custom" is important in all research. According to Chapman it is useful to think of research as an effort to be honest with oneself in order to produce reliable, coherent, and useful knowledge (1979, p. 6). Engel suggests that research may be regarded as "disciplined inquiry" (1979a, p. 4). But the variety of research approaches and processes each has its own advocates and detractors.

In the absence of magical methods for data discovery, the experiment has been regarded as the ultimate form of research. Unfortunately it has not yielded the results that educators had
hoped for. Eisner suggests that the more one tries to isolate factors leading to changes in educational situations, the more trivial the results seem to be (1979b, p. 12). Experimental and correlational approaches that isolate variables from their context and overlook important dimensions of meaning in human behavior sometimes fail to answer pressing questions (Spindler, 1982, p. 3). Recognizing the reductive character of experimental methods and quantification of results, Eisner emphasizes that "not everything that is worth knowing about educational life can take the impress of a number—and survive" (1979b, p. 13).

There is a tendency to seek alternatives to the experimental model of research. In the past educators have attempted to identify problems on the basis of methodologies from other fields and in so doing, they have adjusted problems to fit the methodologies rather than first identifying the problem and then identifying, adapting, or creating a methodology to investigate the problem at hand (Davis, 1971, p. 8). An increasing number of art educators, including R. Alexander (1982), Brooks (1982), Degge (1975/76, 1982), B. Rubin (1982), Sevigny (1977/1978), and Szekeley (1982), found that ethnographic methods can be adapted to meet their research needs. Wolf (1980), who claims that failure of research in museum education can be traced to lack of adequate methodology, advocates more naturalistic and holistic approaches and suggests that what is lost in terms of standardization of data is compensated for by richness and depth (p. 40).
Ethnography

"An ethnography is literally, an anthropologist's 'picture' of the way of life of some interacting human group; or, viewed as a process, ethnography is the science of cultural description" (Wolcott, 1976, p. 23). As the methodology involves more than a set of easily described and readily adapted data-gathering processes, it is difficult to describe what an ethnography should look like. The following attributes do not appear in every ethnographic study, but they provide general characteristics of this type of research: (a) ethnographic research is holistic; (b) it is an initially exploratory, open-ended approach to research; (c) the researcher, who is present in the setting over an extended period of time, utilizes a number of approaches for in-depth information gathering (including participant observation, interviewing, and unobtrusive techniques); and, (d) research results are organized in a written product—an ethnography.

Ethnographic Research Is Holistic

The ethnographer is committed to understanding what it is like to "walk in someone else's shoes" (Wolcott, 1976, p. 25). Ethnographers deal with three aspects of human experience: what people do, what people know, and the things people make and use. These are referred to as cultural behavior, cultural knowledge, and cultural artifacts. As cultural knowledge cannot be directly observed, ethnographers make inferences from observing cultural behavior and examining cultural artifacts. Inferences are made
about explicit and tacit cultural knowledge. Explicit knowledge refers to knowledge about which people can communicate with relative ease; tacit knowledge is outside the general range of awareness (Spradley, 1980, p. 7). The magician's vanishing act must be performed in reverse; the ethnographer's task is to make explicit that which is culturally implicit.

Cultural knowledge, although not directly observable, is important because it is the meaning behind behavior and artifacts. "Holism" refers to the search for context based on the belief that behavior can be understood only when one knows how it fits into the larger cultural situation (Bourguignon, 1979, p. 12). In the ethnographic approach, behavior is regarded not as the simple consequence of a stimulus but as a result of meanings that individuals construct as part of their total environment (Eisner, 1979b, p. 12).

**Ethnography is Exploratory and Open-Ended**

Ethnography is initially exploratory and open-ended. Ethnographic research usually begins without precisely predetermined hypotheses, categories of observation, or data-gathering techniques. These tend to impede the process of discovering what is significant in the setting (Wilcox, 1982, p. 459). Roberts suggests that the ethnographer is often "guided by a foreshadowed problem area which will take form only as the investigation proceeds" (1976, p. 3).

Early stages of inquiry involve repeated sessions of loosely-structured watching, listening, and conversing. The purpose of
the initial stage of research is to become oriented—to acquire a clearer sense of the general arena and the people coming together there (Gearing & Epstein, 1982, p. 245). During the orienting phase of field work, the ethnographer is likely to learn many things that could not have been determined prior to the study. Knowledge gained at this time assists the researcher in developing specific hypotheses, categories of observation, and data-gathering instruments and techniques most applicable to the setting. This is especially useful in exploring phenomena about which extensive literature does not exist.

The ethnographic research process is open-ended. Researchers often find the realities of the field situation to be incompatible with initially specific research plans. Whereas formal analysis of experiments takes place only after data collection is completed, analysis in ethnography is an ongoing process which provides additional information for each research phase.

The Researcher uses a Multi-Instrument Approach

The ethnographic approach is characterized by the researcher's presence in the setting over an extended period of time in order to use a number of techniques for in-depth information gathering (Wolcott, 1976, p. 37). Using more than one measure or mode of observation is referred to as multi-instrument research. The ethnographer is the main instrument of observation, and most data-gathering techniques used are simply methods for sharpening perceptions and standardizing the recording of observations (Pelto & Pelto, 1978, p. 117).
The ethnographic approach to research does not dictate specific research procedures. In choosing among the various research techniques, appropriateness is related to personal style, training, resources, the nature of the problem, and the nature of the setting (Wolcott, 1976, p. 37). Methods of inquiry are developed to avoid disruption in the setting being studied; they are used to respond to, rather than manipulate, the natural setting. Technical devices such as cameras, audiotapes, and videotapes are sometimes used to assist the researcher with detailed data collection, but do not substitute for the on-site presence of the ethnographer.

Each method of data collection has its own strengths and limitations. Engel (1979b) suggests that one set of data cannot provide a reliable picture of the situation being studied (p. 17). In ethnographic research an activity is repeatedly observed, studied from different viewpoints by different methods, and recorded in detail; there is flexibility to focus on general structure as well as on specific incidents. By using a multi-instrument approach, shortcomings of each method to some extent may be compensated for, thus enhancing the credibility of research results. Ethnographic research techniques include interviewing, participant observation, and unobtrusive measures.

**Interviewing**

Interviewing involves the collection of information through direct verbal exchange between individuals. Key informant
interviewing refers to extended interviews with a few members of a group as opposed to brief interviews with numerous subjects (Wolcott, 1976, p. 37).

Interviews vary from informal encounters to highly structured interactions. Open-ended questions allow the respondent a certain amount of freedom to explore areas introduced by the interviewer. Closed questions require the respondent to choose from a set of categories. Questions asked during an interview may vary along this continuum. Interviewers may begin with a series of structured objective questions; later, they may probe more deeply, using more open-ended questions at a semi-structural level in order to obtain more complete data (Borg & Gall, 1971, p. 214).

There are advantages to this research technique. Interviewing is especially helpful when direct observation is not possible. Another benefit is its adaptability; in contrast with the questionnaire which provides no immediate feedback, the interview permits the researcher to follow up leads in order to obtain more data and achieve greater clarity.

Interviewing nevertheless has some limitations as a research tool. The adaptability gained by the interpersonal situation leads to subjectivity. Eagerness of the respondent to please the interviewer and the tendency of the interviewer to seek answers that support preconceived ideas can bias the data obtained from the interview. The investigator, assuming that habitual behavior tendencies of subjects will be reflected in reactions to interview
questions, is sometimes confronted with people who intentionally distort information they offer. In other instances respondents cannot accurately recall events or aspects of behavior in which the researcher is interested (Borg and Gall, 1971, p. 224). Pelto and Pelto suggest that social characteristics, style of presentation, and other qualities of the interviewer can affect the interviewing process (1978, p. 74).

This technique relies heavily on the interpersonal skill of the interviewer in "drawing out" the informants during discussion; the more intensive the interview the smaller the chances are that it will be administered in a standard way.

In addition, there are some problems in the interpretation and analysis of data; because answers to open-ended questions fall into different categories, comparability among respondents is difficult.

**Participant Observation**

Participant observation, the technique most closely associated with anthropological inquiry, refers to "the simultaneous occupation of a structural position within a social system and study of that system" (Philips, 1982, p. 202). The role of the participant observer in the field requires sharing the activities of the group being studied. It requires personal involvement as well as detachment; degree of involvement may range from passive to active. In participant observation the researcher acquires a social role which is determined by the requirements of the research design and the organization of the culture.
Observation is prolonged and repetitive. The participant observer seeks to apprehend, register, interpret, and conceptualize facts and meanings within a prescribed area of study (Bruyn, 1976, p. 249). Preliminary data from participant observation also provides the researcher with insights necessary for developing other data-gathering techniques and methods of analysis.

Participant observation has its own strengths and limitations. In some ways it has been proven to be more reliable than other methods. Whereas the subject may not know how to respond to formal interviewing methods and may unconsciously or purposely err, the participant observer has the opportunity to examine processes as they occur naturally over time and to record what actually happens. However, the observer must determine the degree to which his or her presence changes the situation being observed; techniques such as key informant interviewing and unobtrusive measures can be used toward this end. In addition, the researcher attempting to study complex behavior patterns may find that the more straightforward behaviors which can be objectively observed and recorded are only slightly related to the complex behavior under investigation (Borg & Gall, 1971, p. 225).

Unobtrusive Measures

Like other researchers ethnographers have found indices of interaction which do not require direct observation of behavior. These include records, curriculum materials, official documents, literature, and any material which might be relevant to the topic
under study (Wilcox, 1982, p. 461). Borg and Call refer to these as unobtrusive measures (1971), p. 239). These existing sources of data help researchers to explore the relationship between the setting and its context.

**Ethnographic Research Is Organized In An Ethnography**

The two major tasks of the ethnographer are discovery and description. From the details collected by multi-instrument research the researcher develops a written research product—an ethnography—which combines the view of an insider with that of an outsider. As ethnographers employ a variety of techniques to gather data, it is difficult to define what an ethnography should look like and thus to judge its quality.

Language plays an important role in ethnography. The ethnographer must communicate discovered meanings to readers unfamiliar with that cultural scene. The ability to translate meanings of one culture into forms that are appropriate to a different culture is what Spradley calls "translation competence" (1979, p. 19). Although ethnographic findings should be reported without prejudice, they need not be reported without feeling or sentiment. Eisner suggests that qualitative research be recorded in terms that are descriptive, expressive, and even metaphorical (1979a, p. 27).

In writing an ethnography the researcher identifies cultural patterns, their meanings, and their eventual reconstruction into results (Peshkin, 1982, p. 62). In order to provide validating evidence in support of the author's interpretation of data, it is
necessary to clarify what kinds of observations formed the basis for generalizations. This is referred to as "operationalism."

Operationalism is a research strategy in which primary elements (terms) of descriptions and theoretical propositions are structured, wherever possible, in forms that prescribe, or otherwise make intersubjectively available, the specific acts of observation that provides the primary transformations from raw experience to the language of theoretical systems. (Pelto & Pelto, 1978, pp. 40-41)

Specification of operations enhances control of variables, increases precision of measurements and other observations, and provides the framework of information that enables researchers to retrace steps in order to understand predicted and unpredicted results (Pelto & Pelto, 1978, p. 39). Strict operationalizing of all field observations is almost impossible, for interpretation often involves inferences based on data from a variety of sources. In addition many observations are factual and self-evident and do not require procedural support.

Although early ethnographies attempted to be comprehensive in their descriptions of ways of life in whole communities, the focus of these research products has become increasingly narrow (Wilcox, 1982, p. 459). Wolcott (1976) offers the following for testing the adequacy of an ethnography:

A deceptively simple test for judging the adequacy of an ethnographic account is to ask whether a person reading it could subsequently behave appropriately as a member of the... group about which he has been reading, or, more modestly, whether he can anticipate and interpret what occurs in the group as appropriately as its own members can. (p. 24)
Ethnographic Analysis

Steps in ethnography involve selecting an ethnographic project, asking ethnographic questions, collecting ethnographic data, making an ethnographic record to build a bridge between observation and analysis, and analyzing ethnographic data. Ethnographic analysis is a search for the parts of a culture, the relationships among the parts, and their relationships to the whole; it is a search for cultural patterns (Spradley, 1980, p. 85). Analysis is an ongoing process which provides additional information for each research phase. Throughout the research process the ethnographer assesses the significance of what is seen and heard in order to refine techniques and categories of observation.

The purpose of analysis is to put data in an interpretable form to answer the questions the study was designed to answer. As Chapman asserts, "Facts do not speak for themselves; they are... sought and interpreted within some framework of interest and value" (1979, p. 8). Analysis is interwoven with the purpose of the study, the method of data collection, and the type of data collected (Miles, Alt, Gosling, Lewis, & Tout, 1982, p. 166). The product of analysis takes different shapes depending on which rules of analysis are invoked. "The different outcomes are not necessarily correct or incorrect; but they are more or less useful, more or less sensible, and more or less interpretable" (Pelto & Pelto, 1970, p. 172).
In this study I am using the ongoing process of ethnographic analysis outlined by Spradley (1979, 1980). This includes domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, and analysis of cultural themes.¹

Domain Analysis

Early stages of ethnography involve general descriptive questions/observations that identify major features of the situation: the physical space, the actors, acts (single actions), activities (sets of related acts), events (sets of related activities), physical objects present in the setting, time-sequencing, goals, and feelings. Descriptive questions/observations reveal ways in which cultural knowledge is organized into general categories. These categories of cultural knowledge are called domains; discovery of this general organization of cultural knowledge is referred to as domain analysis. In contrast with the imposition of predetermined categories of investigation, ethnographers can use domain analysis to discover the natural order within the cultural setting.

Taxonomic Analysis

One can carry out a surface investigation identifying and partially studying as many cultural domains as possible, or one can select an ethnographic focus and conduct an in-depth taxonomic analysis. "A focus refers to a single cultural domain or a few related domains and the relationships of such domains to the rest of the cultural scene" (Spradley, 1980, p. 101). Selection of an ethnographic focus can be based on a variety of factors including personal or theoretical interest. At first it is difficult to
determine which domains will cluster together in such a way as to provide an ethnographic focus. For focused analysis of the cultural meaning system, taxonomic analysis is necessary. The major difference between a taxonomy and a cultural domain is that a taxonomy shows more of the relationships among all things inside the cultural domain. Taxonomic analysis discovers subsets and how they are related to the whole.

**Theme Analysis**

Adequate cultural description includes in-depth analysis of selected domains and an overview of the cultural scene to convey a sense of the whole culture. It is important to discover and analyze conceptual themes used to connect cultural domains. The concept of theme has roots in the idea that cultures are more than bits and pieces of customs--cultures involve complex patterns. Spradley defines a cultural theme as a "cognitive principle, tacit or explicit, recurrent in a number of domains and serving as a relationship among subsystems of cultural meaning" (1979, p. 186). A cognitive principle is something that people believe; it is a common assumption about the nature of their experience. Most cultural themes remain at the tacit level of knowledge and recur throughout different subsystems of a culture.

**General Procedures Used in This Study**

Appropriateness of methodology is related to the nature of the question at hand. Determining the significance of the history museum as a resource for art appreciation is a complex problem
which no experiment can "solve." It calls for the discovery of "what is" rather than an establishment of causal links between two or more variables. This study deals with multiple levels of investigation, with affective as well as cognitive dimensions, with processes as well as products, and with elements which can be described more readily than measured. Methodology that stresses quantitative assessment is not likely to be sensitive to the nuances and interactions of these factors. As opposed to an investigation of isolated variables which are limited in their effects, this study calls for a holistic approach examining what people do, what people know, and the things they make and use. As this is a problem about which extensive literature does not exist, it requires an open-ended approach to discover what is significant in the setting. It calls for a variety of flexible data-gathering techniques which can be adapted to meet the requirements of the different parts of the investigation. For these reasons I have chosen to use ethnographic research techniques.

As Wilcox (1982) emphasizes, ethnographic techniques are being used in a wide variety of situations with a wide variety of research concerns (pp. 462-463). But there are two main ways in which ethnographic research is conducted. The first type of project is one in which a particular problem (or set of problems) in a particular setting is selected for study; the second kind of research is that which aims at some important issue which is studied through a series of investigations carried out in a number of
of locations (Pelto & Pelto, 1970, pp. 232-233). The first method, which I use in this study, can be a comprehensive ethnography attempting to document an entire way of life or a topic-oriented ethnography focusing on an aspect of life in the community (Spradley, 1980, p. 31). This project is topic-oriented, as I am focusing on particular cultural scenes within an institutional setting.

Criteria for selecting a particular research setting include simplicity, accessibility (one can enter easily, participate freely, and record observations), unobtrusiveness, and frequent recurrence of activities. These were determinants in my decision to use the Ohio Historical Center in Columbus as my research site.

Discovering the role of art objects in the history museum is essential for determining the significance of the history museum as a resource for art appreciation. Spradley (1980) states that specific areas of inquiry should be discovered in the social situation being investigated (p. 32). Although the "foreshadowed problem" of determining the significance of the history museum as a resource for art appreciation was established prior to on-site investigation, my exploratory "orientation phase" of research—one and one-half years of participant observation at the chosen site—was useful in developing categories of observation and choosing general data-gathering techniques which seemed suitable for the setting and for the problem. It enabled me to discover certain elements of this
particular setting which might have been overlooked in predetermined
categories of investigation. Systematic looking, and ongoing domain
and taxonomic analysis enabled division of the study into smaller
parts.

Ethnographic description must account for meaning as well
as behavior. According to Wilcox (1982):

One must be in a position both to observe behavior in its
natural setting and to elicit from the people observed the
structures of meaning which inform and texture behavior....
The practice of ethnography enables one to discover the cul­
tural knowledge possessed by people as natives (members of
groups or communities) as well as the ways in which this
cultural knowledge is used in social interaction. (p. 458)

Behavior and the underlying meanings likely to account for it
were both considered in the development of areas of inquiry.

The discovery of the role of art objects in the history museum
is accomplished by analyzing data found in the review of relevant
literature and in the data generated by focusing on four areas of
inquiry at The Ohio Historical Center. This part of the
study is based on the following questions:

1. What are administrators' and staff members' formal group
statements of attitudes regarding art objects in the history museum?
The museum's stated purposes are examined by document analysis to
discover specific attitudes which relate to the role of art objects
in this context.

2. What are administrators' and staff members' individual
statements of attitudes regarding art objects in the history museum?
Attitudes of administrators and staff members towards the role of art objects in the history museum are examined through semi-structured interviews.

3. What are the characteristics of history museum exhibits containing art objects? Exhibit contents, frame of reference in which art objects are presented, exhibit form (including how the exhibit (a) attracts attention, (b) holds attention, and (c) flows), and exhibit environment are examined by direct observation.

4. What are the characteristics of the museum's educational program? The role of art objects in on-site activities and in materials designed for use at other locations is investigated through direct observation, interviewing and document analysis.

Although ethnographic research techniques are used, the written results do not qualify as an "ethnography". They do not satisfy Wolcott's test for the adequacy of an ethnography: it is doubtful that the reader would be able to behave appropriately as a member of the group in the setting described, or whether the reader could anticipate and interpret what occurs in the group as appropriately as its own members can. This project is not aimed at describing "what it feels like to be there," but rather attempts to apply ethnographic techniques to specific areas of inquiry. The study is "ethnographic-in-approach." Wolcott states that most accounts "contribute towards ethnography rather than achieve it;" he feels that "adequate attention to an aspect of a culture is an acceptable ethnographic accomplishment" (1976, p. 38).
CHAPTER VI

DISCOVERING THE ROLE OF ART OBJECTS:
ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFF ATTITUDES TOWARD ART OBJECTS
IN THE HISTORY MUSEUM

Members of any well-established human group are guided in their group affairs by attitudes they have come to share. Any explanation of behavior that excludes these attitudes is only a partial explanation. To determine the significance of the history museum as a resource for art appreciation, one must discover administrative and staff attitudes toward art objects in the history museum. This is accomplished through examination of formal group statements of attitudes and individual statements of attitudes.

Attitudes

An attitude is a relatively enduring system that includes a cognitive component, a feeling component, and an action tendency. The cognitive component consists of beliefs or opinions about an object or idea; the feeling component refers to the emotion connected with beliefs; the action tendency is the readiness to respond in a certain way.

We conceive of an attitude as a collection of cognitions, beliefs, opinions, and facts (knowledge) and as including positive and negative evaluations (feelings), all relating to and describing a central theme or object—the subject

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of the attitude. The knowledge and feeling cluster tends to produce a certain behavior. (Freedman, Carlsmith & Sears, 1970, p. 248).

The components of an attitude are closely interrelated; each affects the others to the extent that they are sometimes difficult to disentangle for measurement. The three attitude component categories—beliefs, feelings, and action tendencies—are exemplified in a series of attitude statements such as "Art can enhance exhibits. I like to enhance exhibits. I am going to use art in the next exhibit."

Attitudes are part of cultural knowledge. As such, they must be determined through mediation of other cultural aspects. They must be deduced from behaviors such as production of artifacts or articulation.

From the subject's articulation one can make inferences about (a) what the subject feels the action should be (We ought to...), and (b) what the subject believes the action is (We actually do...). But what the subject believes the action is may not be supported by product observation. In inferring attitudes, then, one can observe what the subject says the action should be, what the subject says the action is, and the actual product of the action.

None of the three observations alone reveals the underlying attitude. The attitude is inferred from the reconciliation of the three observations of behavior, whatever their apparent contradictions. "Do as I say, not as I do" is evidence of an attitude that simultaneously recognizes an ideal of behavior and human imperfection in achieving that ideal.
Formal Group Statements of Attitudes Regarding the Role of Art Objects in the History Museum

One alcove of the Virtuoso's museum was devoted to documents. Shelves were burdened with papyrus scrolls and iron-clasped volumes including the Book of Hermes, works by Anaxagoras, missing manuscripts by Longinus and Livy, and the books which Tarquin refused to purchase from the Sibyl of Cumae. The collection included the original copy of the Koran, Alexander's volume of the Iliad, and Agrippa's book of magic. If this melange included a formal statement of purpose for the Virtuoso's museum, it was not mentioned.

Methodology for Analyzing Formal Statements of Attitudes

Published statements of purpose are formal statements of attitudes. They include knowledge and feelings which should impel and shape decisions about acquisitions, exhibits, and programs. Bergmann stresses the importance of putting the museum's purposes in writing in order to give thought and refinement to what may have been uncoordinated generalized feeling (1976, p. 151).

Examination of formal group statements of purpose to discover attitudes towards the role of art objects in the history museum is accomplished through an 'unobtrusive method' of product examination referred to as document analysis. (See pages 72-73.) The formal statements of purpose analyzed in this study are "The Constitution of the Ohio Historical Society" (as amended in 1964) and The Ten Year Plan of the Ohio Historical Society 1974-1984. These documents concern the entire Ohio Historical Society organization which
administers more than fifty museums, restoration complexes, and archaeological and natural sites throughout the state. As this study focuses only on the Ohio Historical Center in Columbus, I have used only those references relevant to it. It is important to note that there is no separate statement of purpose for this museum.

In the analysis of these documents, I recorded all references relevant to art objects in the history museum. For these citations I created the categories of favorable, unfavorable, and neutral towards the role of art and the potential for appreciation in the Ohio Historical Center. None of the references fell into the last category.

**Favorable References**

The importance of art to Ohio's heritage is emphasized in the first pages of *The Ten Year Plan of the Ohio Historical Society 1975-1984*. The first paragraph describing the origins of the organization begins:

Ohio's prehistoric Indian sites were being looted of their primitive art treasures. State archives were being removed from the State House. The personal papers of Ohio leaders were being destroyed or dispersed. No state organization existed to halt the loss of Ohio's patrimony. (The Ohio Historical Society, 1974, p. 5)

The Ohio Historical Society "Articles of Incorporation" also include the study of art among the purposes of the association.

To promote a knowledge of archaeology and history, especially in Ohio, by establishing and maintaining a library..., a museum of prehistoric relics and natural or other curiosities or specimens of art or nature promotive of the objects [objectives] of the association...and by courses of lectures and publications of books, papers and documents touching the subjects so specified. (The Ohio Historical Society, 1964, p. 1)
Although the major purpose of the Ohio Historical Society is to promote knowledge of history and archaeology, these terms are not clearly defined in the documents. Archaeology is "the scientific study of the life and culture of ancient peoples" (Webster's New World Dictionary, 1966). As art is an important part of every culture (see chapter 2), any thorough study of archaeology includes the study of art.

History is "the branch of knowledge that deals systematically with the past" (Webster's New World Dictionary, 1966). But history encompasses the special preserves of a variety of academic disciplines. This is emphasized in Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1981) which defines history:

The events that form the subject matter of a history: a series of events clustering about some center of interest (as a nation, a department of culture, a natural epoch or evolution, a living being or a species) upon the character and significance of which these events cast light.

For the Ohio Historical Society the center of interest is the State of Ohio and its people. This is specified in The Ten Year Plan: "The Society shall systematically collect, preserve, interpret, and present impartially historical sources which elucidate all important facets of Ohio life" (The Ohio Historical Society, 1974, p. 15). The study of all important facets of human life in Ohio subsumes the study of Ohio culture. (See pages 15-16). Art is an important part of every culture, and insofar as the Ohio Historical Society historical studies include the general study of Ohio culture, they can be expected to include the study of the art of the region.
The original purposes of promoting knowledge of archaeology and history (and consequently promoting knowledge of art) also are emphasized in these excerpts from the current functions of the Ohio Historical Society: (a) "Engaging in research in history, archaeology, and natural science;" (b) "Collecting, preserving, and making available by all appropriate means and under approved safeguards all manuscript, print or near-print library collections, and all historical objects, specimens, and artifacts which pertain to the history of Ohio and its people;" and (c) "Publishing books, pamphlets, periodicals, and other publications about history, archaeology, and natural science." (The Ohio Historical Society, 1974, p. 8).

Unfavorable References

On the one hand The Ten Year Plan and "The Constitution of the Ohio Historical Society" reveal that art is part of the provenance of the historical museum. In fact it was a concern for art objects that generated the foundation of the museum.

But document analysis reveals a contrasting position. In the chapter discussing the need for revision, improvement, and expansion of exhibits and programs, The Ten Year Plan contains the following reference to art:

What a museum has is often given greater emphasis than what a museum does with what it has. Collections are the raw materials through which knowledge is conveyed to the viewer. A work of art by a reputable artist is a complete, individual creation capable of communicating without tangible interpretive devices. However, an historical object, an antique, is usually a utilitarian piece which was not originally created for exhibition. Consequently, the creative challenge, cost,
and physical properties required to prepare historical ex­hibits of archaeological and natural specimens and historical objects exceed enormously the effort of "hanging" an art exhibit. (The Ohio Historical Society, 1974, p. 45)

The history museum is distinguished from other institutions by its concern with organizing artifacts to offer overall lessons pertaining to a group of people. But according to this reference art is sui generis. It neither needs interpretation nor has histor­ically or archaeologically pertinent content. As appreciation has a cognitive as well as an aesthetic dimension, and since this reference limits art to the purely aesthetic dimension, it can be interpreted to be unfavorable to art appreciation.

**Summary of Results**

According to Bergmann, museum guidelines should be firm in overall direction but flexible enough to adapt to specific cir­cumstances (1976, p. 151). *In the Ten Year Plan* and "The Constit­ution of the Ohio Historical Society," the overall direction is established, but there are only these few references to art. It is important to note, however, that the Ten Year Plan is addressed to the Ohio General Assembly as a statement of the Society's proper role as a recipient of public funds; its financial focus could account for the scarcity of references to artistic issues. Although references to art are few, the presence of the art object in the history museum is justified. But after document analysis the role of the art object--its function in specific circumstances--remains unclear.
Individual Statements of Attitudes Regarding the Role of Art Objects in the History Museum

With displays including a live phoenix, a griffin, the heart of Bloody Mary with the word "Calais" worn into it, Alexander's steed Bucephalus, the hairy ears of Midas, Rosinante, the original fire that Prometheus stole from heaven, the skin of the spirited sly snake that tempted Eve, the blood encrusted steel pen with which Faust signed away his salvation, and a vase of oracular gas from Delphos, Hawthorne's museum differed from the norm. It differed not only in the objects presented, but also in the manner of presentation. In the Virtuoso's museum the visitor was escorted by the owner who was solely responsible for the exhibits and who had the time to explain his attitudes toward each display. In this study where many people are involved with the creation of exhibits and related programs, the task of discovering underlying attitudes is not so simple.

Methodology for Analyzing Individual Statements of Attitudes

Spradley (1979) notes the problems that arise when questions and answers come from different cultural meaning systems (p. 83). During my one and one-half years of participant observation at the Ohio Historical Center, I used domain analysis to determine areas of inquiry that would avoid these problems and facilitate my task of discovering individual attitudes towards the role of art objects in the history museum.
As no measures of attitude exist that suit my particular purposes, I developed a semi-structured interview. (See pages 69-71.) Closed questions are easy to analyze, but they force the respondent to use the interviewer's concepts and terms. Open questions elicit the full range and complexity of the respondent's views with minimal distortion, but as few individuals give the same answers, responses are difficult to classify. The semi-structured interview has the advantage of being objective, at least in part, while permitting a more thorough understanding of the individual's attitudes.

The interview guide lists, in sequence, the questions that are to be asked. It enables the researcher to obtain information required to meet the specific objectives of the study and to standardize the situation to some degree (Borg & Gall, 1971, p. 213).

The Interview Guide

Points Emphasized to Respondents

1. The purpose of this study is to understand your attitudes towards the role of art objects in the cultural history mall of the Ohio Historical Center.

2. An attitude is a relatively enduring system that includes a cognitive component, a feeling component, and an action tendency. The cognitive component consists of beliefs or opinions about an object or idea; the feeling component refers to the emotion connected with beliefs; the action tendency is the readiness to respond in a certain way.
3. There are no right and wrong answers to these questions. An honest assessment of your personal beliefs, feelings, and action tendencies is what is desired.

4. All information provided by this interview will be analyzed in group form. Your personal responses will remain anonymous.

5. In order to be more accurate I would like to tape-record our conversation.

6. At the end of the interview I will answer any questions you have about the study.

Questions Dealing with Criteria of Recognition for Art

It is generally assumed that objects such as painting and sculpture are art objects. These questions deal with your attitudes regarding "what is art."

1. Can photographs be regarded as art?

2. Can architecture be regarded as art?

3. Can industrial products be regarded as art?

4. Can craft items (such as quilts or leatherwork) be regarded as art?

5. Can objects created for advertising purposes be regarded as art?

6. Can decorative arts (such as glassware or furniture) be regarded as art?

7. Are examples of art displayed in the cultural history mall?

8. Would you like to comment further on how you would describe art?
Questions Dealing with Attitudes Toward Displaying Art in Aesthetic and Intellectual Frames of Reference

Most history museums have some art objects in their collections, whether they are anonymous portraits of founding fathers, works by recognized masters, or art objects such as you have just described. These questions deal with how art should be displayed in the cultural history mall of the Ohio Historical Center.

1. Should art objects be displayed separately to be valued for themselves without reference to their cultural contexts? If not, why?

2. In the cultural history mall, are art objects displayed separately to be valued for themselves without reference to their cultural contexts?

3. Would you give specific examples?

4. Can art objects be displayed to promote knowledge of history?

5. Should art objects be used to promote knowledge of history? If not, why?

6. In the cultural history mall, are art objects used to promote knowledge of history?

7. Would you give specific examples?
Questions Dealing with Attitudes Toward Displaying Art in a Mixed Frame of Reference

We have discussed how art objects can be displayed separately to be valued for themselves without reference to cultural context and how art objects can be displayed to promote knowledge of history.

1. Can art objects be displayed so they can be valued for themselves, as well as for knowledge they convey?

2. In the cultural history mall, should art objects be displayed so they can be valued for themselves as well as for knowledge they convey? If not, why?

3. In the cultural history mall, are art objects displayed so they can be valued for themselves as well as for the knowledge they convey?

4. Would you give specific examples?

5. In displaying art objects so they can be valued for themselves as well as for the knowledge they convey, what problems are encountered?

Questions Dealing with Attitudes Toward the Cultural History Mall as a Resource for Teaching About Art

These questions deal with the cultural history mall as a resource for teaching about art.

1. Can the cultural history mall of the Ohio Historical Center be used as a resource for teaching about art?
2. Should the cultural history mall be used as a resource for teaching about art? If not, why?

3. Do you have any comments on how the cultural history mall should be used as a resource for teaching about art?

Questions Dealing with Attitudes Toward the Role of Art in the Ohio Historical Center Educational Programs

These questions deal with the role of art in Ohio Historical Center educational programs. Educational programs include on-site activities as well as programs to be used at other sites.

1. Should art objects or references to art objects be included in Ohio Historical Center educational programs? If not, why?

2. Are art objects or references to art objects included in Ohio Historical Center educational programs?

3. Would you give examples?

Additional Comments

1. Do you have any other comments on the role of art objects in the Ohio Historical Center?

Selecting Informants

The most obvious consideration involved in the selection of subjects is to get people who will be able to supply the information wanted (Borg & Gall, 1971, p. 196). In describing good informants Spradley (1979) emphasizes qualities of thorough enculturation, current involvement, and adequate time to answer questions (p. 46).
In selecting informants there is the problem of how many group members must be interviewed to establish reliable information about attitudes. Although Borg and Gall (1971) warn about the dangers of bias when only a small number of individuals are included in the research, Pelto and Pelto feel that the careful selection of four or five people who are representative of significant intra-community variations produces a high level of reliability (1978, p. 139). This study is limited to those six people who are directly involved in the planning and layout of the physical setting within the museum and the planning and execution of the educational program. Because of the small size of this group, data is based on interviews from a 100% sample.

Borg and Gall suggest that subjects for the pilot test should be taken from the same population sample as the main study (1971, p. 220). Because everyone directly involved in the planning and layout of the physical setting within the museum and the planning and execution of the educational program is a respondent in this study, such a sample for the pilot study was not possible. My pretest was administered to two museum educators who were not directly involved with the education department at the Ohio Historical Center.

Interview Results

Criteria of Recognition for Art

Respondents had broad descriptions of art. All agreed that photographs, architecture, industrial products, craft items,
objects created for advertising purposes, and examples of decorative art can be regarded as art objects. All agreed that there were art objects displayed in the cultural history mall.

When given the opportunity to comment further on how art should be described Respondent One did express reservations about regarding craft items and objects produced from prototypes as art forms:

In my opinion a craft is something...that...you planned it that way and it came out that way...You design a chair...and the end result is a chair. In painting or sculpture...you may start out with a concept but by the time you get done with it, it's not the same thing...It's not blueprinted. ...A chair or a quilt has to be planned out. You have a pattern...There's no great aesthetic philosophy behind it, or social point or whatever. It's an object used on a bed--now they become art forms and are hung on walls, and I have trouble with that.

Referring to objects produced from prototypes this person later added: "See I can't call that art unless we have originals. They are just artifacts in this case. Originally there was a viewpoint to be expressed which got lost in the translation. " Other respondents' criteria of recognition for art objects are exemplified in the following response: "In many cases you find there is a great deal of disagreement about fine [arts] and other...[art forms]. Practically speaking, we don't draw that distinction." (Respondent Six)

Attitudes Toward Displaying Art in Aesthetic and Intellectual Frames of Reference

Although three respondents felt that there could be instances where art objects would be best displayed with an aesthetic frame
of reference, it was generally felt that art objects should not be displayed separately without reference to their cultural contexts. "If it [an artwork] fits in...some kind of setting which is going to enhance it, I think it should be done [displayed] that way. I don't think it should be just separate, hanging on the wall." (Respondent Three)

The more you know about an object the more you appreciate it....I think that both exhibiting objects with a context related to the object and labeling the object will provide more information....I've read...about displaying the object in isolation. To me that takes away from appreciating. (Respondent Five)

The history museum is very fortunate because it can display things as art for art's sake although their primary purpose is to interpret the art. The portrait generally is valuable because it says something about the person in the portrait, the artist, or something else exterior to the portrait. (Respondent Six)

Although respondents felt that art objects should be displayed with reference to their cultural contexts, they also felt that this is not always done in the cultural history mall.

The "[Ohio] Treasures [Exhibit]" had some paintings hanging on the wall...They were just hung there as examples of paintings [with] a little bit of history of the person who did the painting....We have paintings hanging in the administrative end of the building with names and artists and dates.... Doesn't have a thing to do with its history or context. They're still treated as the gallery situation. They're not in any context of this culture or any other culture. (Respondent One)

The "Thirties Exhibit" gives you a cultural context, but the others don't really. They are just lumped together--each piece stands on its own. There is nothing around it to give you a frame of reference, so I have to say it's standing on its own without cultural context. The "Glassware Exhibit" [for example] stands by itself. (Respondent Three)
There was never any real attempt to interpret..."The Currier and Ives Collection". There is one small plaque...with what lithographs are and a little bit about Currier and Ives. I don't think there was any real attempt to display those objects as they might have been used in the nineteenth century or as they are used today. They're just hung there for people to look at because they're Currier and Ives. (Respondent Five)

The"Christopher Collection"...That exhibit was developed by a group of people who if you knew them and knew their mind set you'd see the context the objects were setting in. They grouped them according to style...and related one object to another. To most people it is a display that is unrelated to cultural context. (Respondent Six)

All respondents felt that art objects can and should be displayed to promote knowledge of history. According to Respondent Five, "Those objects are a product of history....They also influence what comes after. They're part of history whether curators will admit it or not....As well as having some sort of intrinsic value, ...they [art objects] have utilitarian value."

Respondents felt that art objects can and should be displayed to promote knowledge of history, but they acknowledged that this is not always done. Although two respondents felt that in the cultural history mall art objects are never used to promote knowledge of history, others felt that some, but not all, art objects are displayed this way. According to Respondent One, "The...history mall is a hodge-podge of nonsense--just things out there. There's really no rhyme or reason." Respondent Two stated, "Most of the exhibits are not even arranged in chronological order....[There is] no...interpretation about cultural background....I don't think they are instructional at all."
Those who felt that some, but not all, art objects are displayed to promote knowledge of history included Respondent Three who stated, "With the 'Thirties Exhibit,' yes [art objects are used to promote knowledge of history]....But with the '[Decorative] Glassware [Exhibit]' and the '[Zanesville] Pottery Exhibit', no, not really. They're just there." Other comments included the following:

Certainly many of the objects are [used to promote knowledge of history]. But I would say there is also a group of objects--the "Christopher Collection"--that is displayed more to encourage the visitors to develop appreciation of the past...rather than a knowledge of it. (Respondent Six)

We do some of that [display art objects to promote knowledge of history]--not as much as we should. But, I think in general we don't do enough with social history. I'm one of those people who think too much emphasis is put on political history, economic history. There's not enough about people who lived in Ohio, what those people did with their leisure time, what types of art objects they had in their homes, what kinds of furniture...[There is] too much emphasis on the governors and presidents--the big man type thing. (Respondent Five)

This person added:

We went at the "Thirties Exhibit" with that [display of art objects to promote knowledge of history] in mind,...I know that was one of the objectives going in...[In] the furniture, the poster art from that period, even the style that we used in the lettering--the art Deco--there is a definite attempt to reflect the social history of that decade...So again, we don't do enough. I think we have tried to recently more than we did in the past.

Attitudes Toward Displaying Art in a Mixed Frame of Reference

Respondents generally agreed that art objects can and should be displayed so they can be valued for themselves as well as for knowledge they convey. Responses included the following:
Even if you put a vase out there and you describe that it was used for such and such a purpose, a visitor could also appreciate it for itself. You don't necessarily have to point that out to the visitors because they will look at it that way anyway. People will look at things for their own personal relationship—if it is something they can relate to. (Respondent Two)

I think they [the visitors] certainly have the freedom to take those objects out of the context we put them in. For example, some of the depression art in the "Thirties Exhibit"—people can certainly take those things out of that context and value them for what they are—as a piece of art as well as a part of that setting....That is one of the nice things about exhibiting that way. It...allows the visitor the freedom of looking at the object the way they want to rather than us saying they have to look at it...[a certain way]. They can look at them [art objects] for themselves or as representing something in history. (Respondent Five)

Although Respondent Six agreed to the importance of displaying art objects so they can be valued for themselves as well as for knowledge they convey, this person stressed:

The primary purpose in the history museum is to convey the knowledge, the context. Our first goal should be to do that. So long as there is no conflict between that goal and the display of art...[so it can be valued for itself] there is no reason why one shouldn't [display art in a mixed frame of reference]. Whether we like to admit it, we do it, I suppose.

There was disagreement as to whether art objects are displayed so they can be valued for themselves as well as for the knowledge they convey. Two answered negatively, three answered positively, and one felt that the answer depended upon the specific exhibit in question. This last person (Respondent Three) felt that in the "Thirties Exhibit," art objects are presented in a mixed frame of reference, whereas artworks in the "Decorative Glass Exhibit" and the "Zanesville Pottery Exhibit" are not. This person added:
There's nothing more boring than looking at twelve bottles... all the same shape. I find that...boring and I think kids would also. They would probably not look at that. Even though it is a part of our history...—some of them are hand blown and they are pieces of artwork—the kids are going to ignore it. It is not shown in a specific use; it's shown as one of many of a collection. And they are all out there.

Respondent Four felt that aside from examples in the "Currier and Ives Collection," which the visitor is able to value for themselves as well as knowledge they convey, "very little else" is shown in a mixed frame of reference. Although Respondent Five felt that art objects are sometimes displayed in a mixed frame of reference this person referred to other exhibits where they are not:

I would say that the "Glass Exhibit"...conveys very little knowledge to the uninitiated visitor. You almost have to know something about glassware...to be informed about the exhibit....That's the only way those objects are displayed—rows and rows of glassware can be looked at for the sake of looking at glassware.

When asked about the problems encountered in developing exhibits which display art objects in a mixed frame of reference, respondents gave a variety of answers. Respondent One, who previously stated that in the cultural history mall, there are no exhibits in which art objects are displayed with a mixed frame of reference, replied:

[No problems] as far as I can see right at the moment. 'Cause I don't think we are...doing that....What information we have we don't convey to them [the visitors] through our exhibits or anything....Most of the time exhibits are done for the peer groups—historians, archaeologists, and naturalists. So a lot of times exhibits are really not done for the public.

According to Respondent Three, too many objects cause problems in displaying artworks with a mixed frame of reference: "They
are all out there. To derive any kind of benefit they [exhibit organizers] should pick the best and show those—or maybe the worst—but not everything." Other responses included:

Too much text is one major problem. A...[visitor] should be able to look at it [an exhibit] and be able to glean from that without reading a tremendous amount of text. And that's very difficult to do if you're trying to convey culture as well as appreciation for the object itself. You can get into too much text and people don't read it. (Respondent Four)

My experience has been that if one tries to be highly interpretive, which is to say, spends a lot of time putting this or that object in cultural context, you have to rely on another media [sic] to do it. As you rely on another media to describe the object...people cease...viewing the object as an artistic object. Consequently the more interpretation—[the] less likely people are to appreciate that object as an artistic object. (Respondent Six)

The problems you can encounter would be in knowing your audience—our audience is basically school children. I think it would be very difficult to display things like that [in a mixed frame of reference] for school children because they are not at that stage of their education yet where they can appreciate things...[aside from] the utilitarian purpose. But it could be done. (Respondent Two)

Probably the biggest problem is the curators. Surprisingly enough, I always thought the curators were interested in the knowledge about an object. I have come to find out curators are...interested in the objects themselves—as objects. Some go so far as to say the object should be displayed with no labels or anything; the object speaks for itself [and if] people want to find out more...we've got a library upstairs --get a book and look it up. That leads to friction. Theoretically their [curators'] job is to tell [us] what to say about the object; [the educator's] job is to find a good way to say it. Frequently we disagree. They say to say nothing. Find a good way to say nothing....What ends up happening [is that] we not only do the interpreting part, but we do a great deal of the content as well. Which is wrong—curators should be responsible for the content. I'm not an historian and don't claim to be one, but when I don't get any information I have to do something. (Respondent Five)
The Cultural History Mall as a Resource for Teaching About Art

Except for Respondent One, who felt that the history mall did not have many art objects, respondents felt that the cultural history mall can and should be used as a resource for teaching about art. Respondent Six pointed out that the museum's primary purpose is not to teach art, "but if in the course of doing exhibits on history, one can provide opportunity to teach art, there is no reason one couldn't." According to Respondent Five:

Yes, I think it can, depending on the teacher, but there is certainly enough art out there...[and] things that could be done with those objects....We have seen...art classes coming and using the objects out there as models for doing art as well as appreciating art.

This person added:

I'd like to see us used for teaching English, science, and everything else. There is a lot here for that interdisciplinary [approach]. It would be nice if the English teacher, art teacher, and social studies teacher and science teacher could get together and bring those kids here for a lot of different purposes, since given the limited resources schools have, the probability is that the kids are only going to get to come here maybe once a year...Kids could look at the same object and get a lot of different experiences from it.

Respondents were asked how the cultural history mall should be used for teaching about art. Although I had hoped that answers to this question would provide more insight into respondent's attitudes towards the role of art objects, there were no detailed comments. The following answer from Respondent Four was typical: "As for ways that I would use it, I'm really not trained very well in art...I would hate to elaborate."
The Role of Art in Ohio Historical Center Educational Programs

All respondents felt that art should be included in Ohio Historical Center educational programs. Again, it was pointed out that although art education was not the primary purpose of the Ohio Historical Center, art education was subsumed in the museum's goals. According to Respondent Five, "We should, and probably can't avoid, dealing with art objects."

Respondents were asked to identify educational programs and materials that were produced by the museum's education department between January, 1983, and June, 1984, and that contained art objects or references to art objects. With the exception of Respondent One, who believed that there were no programs and materials that related to art, all respondents cited educational programs involving art. It was emphasized that the archaeology loan kit contains art objects and related contextual information. Teacher guides and the slide set on prehistoric peoples were also mentioned. (The materials mentioned are evaluated in Chapter VII.)

Additional Comments on the Role of Art Objects in the Ohio Historical Center

Five respondents did not have detailed comments. But Respondent Five added:

We probably have not paid attention to that [art] but again I think that's symptomatic of a larger problem—not dealing with social history enough. Not only should art...[receive] more attention [but] work, leisure, anything else pertaining to the common person's experience in Ohio. We spend too much time on oddball things..., not typical things that really tell the story. We tell...what the rich people might have collected
but we don't tell about the common guy... Maybe the stuff [art] we have down there isn't bad, I don't know... I think that says something in itself... If I work here and don't know-- I haven't learned that from the exhibit, then how are visitors supposed to know?

**Summary of Results**

Respondents gave broad descriptions of art and agreed that art objects are displayed in the cultural history mall. Respondents favored displaying art objects with a mixed frame of reference conducive to art appreciation: art objects can and should be displayed so they can be valued for themselves as well as for knowledge they convey.

Although there was agreement on what the action should be, there was less unanimity about what the action is. When asked whether art objects in the cultural history mall are displayed so they can be valued for themselves as well as for the knowledge they convey, respondents disagreed. There was also variety in the identification of problems encountered in displaying art objects with a mixed frame of reference.

Respondents generally felt that the cultural history mall can and should be used as a resource for teaching about art. They also felt that art should be included in Ohio Historical Center educational programs and generally agreed that some current programs contain art objects or references to art objects.
In an earlier chapter, history was compared to a shattered mirror. Unlike the Virtuoso's magic looking glass with its complete images, the mirror of history is fragmented and scattered. Unlike the Virtuoso's mirror, the shattered mirror of history cannot offer direct answers to questions. To know what happened one must examine fragments; one must put together the pieces to discern a larger area of reflection.

In the history museum the pieces of the shattered mirror are assembled in exhibits and educational programs. These are the museum's fundamental means of communication. They are symbols of their creators' underlying attitudes toward material culture. For example, the Virtuoso's exhibits reflected his sole concern for acquisition of rare and curious objects dug out of the dust of fallen empires. His lack of interest in the viewer's aesthetic or intellectual experience was apparent in the chaos of his collection.

Exhibits

Studying exhibits to discover the role of art objects in the history museum with a view to determining the potential for art
appreciation focuses on four interrelated variables:\(^3\)

1. Contents: Does the exhibit contain art objects?

2. Frame of reference: Are art objects presented in an aesthetic, intellectual, or mixed frame of reference?

3. Form: How does the exhibit a) attract attention, b) hold attention, and c) flow?

4. Environment: How does the organization and design of the physical space affect people's experience of it?

**Exhibit Contents**

In discovering the role of art objects to determine the significance of the history museum as a resource for art appreciation, one must consider which fragments of the historical mirror are included in exhibits. Do exhibits contain art objects?

This study engages the following criteria of recognition for art objects: art refers to all those human-made things that are done purposefully with some attempt to enrich a message or enhance an object or structure to affect a qualitative and content awareness in the viewer. An object described as an artwork need not meet all of these conditions. For example, an artifact that might have been the result of an accident may nevertheless be presented and viewed as an art object. But to describe an object as "art" is to commit oneself to the presence of some of these conditions. The more these conditions are present, the more viewers can be expected to agree that the object is art. According to these criteria of recognition for art objects, a painting, a sculpture, or a photograph can be labeled
as "art"—architecture, industrial products, and advertising also can be included as art forms. This description of art is broader than that used by some authors described by Watson, who deny artistic value, for example, to an object created to fulfill a technological function (1983, p. 41).

Frame of Reference

As fragments of the historical mirror, art objects can reflect different facts about the past. What they reflect depends upon the way one turns them and the standpoint one adopts. Thus the role of the art object is determined in part by the frame of reference in which it is presented. It is possible to select a fine painting, separate it from other objects, and give it individual lighting so that it can be viewed in isolation as an object of art. The same painting could be arranged with the artist's other works to illustrate that individual's style. It could be displayed with other paintings to show a way of life at a certain time (Inverarity, 1964, p. 28). It could be put in a period room as an element of atmosphere. In these instances the object has not changed--what has changed is the frame of reference (Inverarity, 1964, p. 28).

The three major frames of reference described earlier are the aesthetic, the intellectual, and the mixed frames of reference. (See pages 55-62.) Each of these makes demands on the way material is presented. Each offers different opportunities for art appreciation. As the mixed frame of reference offers opportunities
for emotional and cognitive responses to art objects displayed, it offers opportunities for broader appreciative experiences. (See pages 33-47.)

The mixed frame of reference allows the art object to be valued for itself while also providing interpretation—explanation of the object's non-aesthetic meaning. Although artifacts are sometimes considered to be self-explanatory, it is an achievement to find meaning in what one sees (Chapman, 1982a, p. 48). The cliche, "objects speak for themselves," assumes that the audience understands the language spoken by the objects. It ignores the fact that the significance of an object is learned and is established when objects are seen in the context of others and in conjunction with additional information. To display something without exploring its meaning in a way that can be comprehended by someone not versed in the subject means that the first criterion of any exhibit—its ability to communicate—is not met.

**Exhibit Form**

Just as the Virtuoso's magic mirror was held in an ebony frame, the fragments of the shattered mirror of history must be assembled within a framework. The outer form, as well as the inner substance, of the exhibit is important to the role of art objects in the history museum. A trite article can be made to seem exquisite by the arts of display; a truly exquisite object of art may be made to seem trite by display failure (Parr, 1963, p. 240).
History

It is often difficult for people to break away from precedent. Just as early automobiles resembled carriages, early museums resembled private collections of the past. Little attempt was made to organize or interpret objects displayed. There were no concessions to the uninformed. In the system of open storage, dozens of objects were crowded together with no explanation. Wall-to-ceiling exhibits of paintings were locked frame-to-frame like wallpaper (Ripley, 1970, p. 21). Heavy cases were overflowing with masses of curiosities. Some collections were housed in palaces so heavily ornamented that it was difficult to focus on displayed objects. The disorder may have been fascinating but fatiguing.

Several forces changed attitudes toward exhibits. The revolution in display techniques started with large expositions such as the Crystal Palace Exposition of 1851; huge crowds necessitated more exciting, uncluttered exhibits and better methods for organizing material culture. The transformation of museums into educational institutions serving the general public had an impact on methods of display; objects were chosen and supplementary materials were prepared to tell a story. Those associated with the Bauhaus also influenced display techniques by advocating simple shapes for powerful, direct visual communication (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 175).

Attracting Attention

Attracting attention is fundamental; unless people come to view an exhibit, they cannot appreciate its contents. Certain
displays are more attractive than others. For example, objects and participatory displays attract more attention than static, graphic displays (Miles et al., 1982, p. 78). Displays incorporating unusual materials and methods of construction also attract attention.

Placement of objects affects attraction. The average eye-level point used by most museums is five feet three inches from the floor (Witteborg, 1981, p. 6). Comfortable head movement is restricted to about thirty degrees from eye level up or down and about forty-five degrees from side to side (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 180). Objects and labels decrease in effectiveness as they leave this zone of attraction.

Attraction is also a function of exhibit location. For example, easily accessible locations tend to attract more visitors. Further, there is a tendency to turn right upon entering a gallery, which can affect numbers of people viewing an exhibit (Miles et al., 1982, p. 57). Positions of entrances and exits are important. Museum visitors stop at more exhibits early in their visit than later in their visit (Alt, 1979, p. 87); they tend to pay less attention to displays the closer they get to an exit (Miles et al., 1982, p. 57). Visitors become weary from the need to move from floor to floor; there is generally diminishing attendance on upper floors, regardless of transport facilities (Hudson, 1975, p. 84). People tend to avoid open spaces where they feel conspicuous, and shun "dead areas"--areas under-used because of architectural intrusions. Attraction of adjacent exhibits might reduce the time
visitors spend in a particular space. If the space provides a route to other exhibits, this also may affect the way it is used (Miles et al. 1982, p. 57).

Some art objects require that viewers be directed to them. For this purpose, the designer has a wide range of possibilities:

1. Contrast: Emphasis can be provided by contrast between the objects themselves, between different backgrounds, or between the object and its background. Contrast includes dissimilarity in size, shape, texture, lightness, or color.

2. Position: Objects can be emphasized by placing them higher than or in front of other objects (Miles et al., 1982, p. 70). In addition, objects that are separated (but not isolated) from other objects tend to attract attention.

3. Size: An exhibit element can be emphasized by increasing its size. For example, a photomural generally attracts more attention than a small print (Miles et al., 1982, p. 70).

4. Display structures: Objects can be emphasized by the form of the display structures. These can be individually tailored to give an object its most appropriate space (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 181).

5. Lighting: Artificial lighting is perhaps the most flexible and forceful display technique available. It can be internal (in a light box) or external (from spotlights); it can be general (overall illumination) or accented (directed at specific points).
Lighting determines what one sees and how one feels about what one sees. It can create a visual change of pace. Changes in intensity lure the visitors and encourage them to look more closely at the objects. A mixture of general lighting and spotlighting adapted to specific objects brings out surface qualities that would be missed in bland overall illumination (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 182). This helps viewers focus on the object's technical and formal qualities important to its appreciation.

**Holding Attention**

Because attractive power is so necessary for exhibit success, studies of exhibit effectiveness have tended to concentrate on popularity and to neglect consideration of teaching power (Shettel, 1968, p. 138). Teaching power and holding power are interrelated; the longer people attend to an exhibit containing art objects, the greater the chance they may understand the aesthetic and/or intellectual message. And the greater the chance of understanding the aesthetic and/or intellectual message, the greater the potential for appreciation.

On the average, visitors touring a museum on their own will look at a display for about forty-five seconds before moving on unless something catches and holds their attention (Booth et al., 1982, p. 43). To increase holding power the visitors must be told what the display is about, that it has something to do with them, that it is organized in a particular way, and that it will function (if participatory) in a certain way (Miles et al., 1982, p. 79).
Visitor involvement. Visitors must participate in the exhibits for their attention to be held. They may explore the exhibit and touch the objects. Although entertainment value sometimes clouds communication, audio devices, films, computers, and other participatory devices can improve visitor involvement; these can be used to give details, to compare objects, or to demonstrate techniques to supplement the exhibit (Witteborg, 1981, p. 3).

Participation need not be overt. In presenting information the display may ask questions, offer explanations, give examples and illustrations, sequence and pace information to arouse and maintain interest, relate the message to what the visitor might already know, and remind the viewer of previous displays (Miles et al., 1982, p. 79). Participation is increased by encouraging visitors to make their own judgments, rather than passively to accept an expert's judgment as their own. Due to its subjective nature it is impossible to list all possibilities for passive involvement with art objects.

There are different degrees of involvement. Visitor characteristics such as age, learning style, motivation, and previous knowledge must be taken into account; adults seem to prefer exhibitions with higher cognitive involvement than young children who are physically active (Miles et al., 1982, p. 81). But participation can assist in the acquisition of facts of identity, description, and context; it can contribute to the observers' associative responses and judgments for greater appreciation.
Labels. Although the label has been seen as a distraction from the contemplation of the art object, the label assists the viewer with facts of identity, description, and context. It is a basic means of enabling viewers to understand the fourfold organizational pattern involved in the arts—concept, leading to behavior, resulting in product, which in turn feeds back upon the concept. (See pages 22-28) While it is true that most people do not read all the labels, almost all visitors read some labels. According to Wolf:

Our naturalistic studies have consistently found that not only do people read labels in the museum, but visitors come to depend upon labels and even search for them while touring exhibits. Furthermore, our studies have documented that both labels and objects, in combination, have an impact on visitor involvement. (1980, p. 45)

Label writing seems easy, but this is deceptive. Objects and text reinforce each other in telling a story; as the story line must harmonize with the total design concept, there is a need for close cooperation between writer and designer. The text must be edited and refined to attract attention, convey information concisely, and motivate an unknown audience to look at the entire exhibit.

Carmel suggests that labels are the glue holding together the material being exhibited, giving it cohesiveness and often adding a point of view; he also suggests that the less glue the better the exhibit (1963, p. 104). A person moving through an exhibit can read only a limited amount of text. Writers and designers must remember that an exhibit is an offering for inspection and not a
substitute for a book or catalogue. When lengthy labels are used, the label gradually becomes the exhibit, and the object becomes an illustration for the label. This was exemplified by "The World of Franklin and Jefferson," a bicentennial exhibit shown at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Including few objects and consisting mainly of photographs and explanatory labels comprising 40,000 words, it was criticized as the world's greatest walk-in tabloid (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 17). In such instances viewers often experience museum fatigue and skip long labels entirely (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 183).

To hold attention label writers must insure that labels be legible, that they be placed in the zone of attraction, (see page 111), and that both objects and labels be presented in easily comprehended units.

Labels should give immediate, then secondary, and finally detailed information. To accomplish this, the main label (sometimes called the room or gallery label) states the theme of the exhibit. The secondary topic label (sometimes called a case label) is used for the exhibition's subthemes. The main and secondary labels carry the overall message to viewers who do no more than read them and look at the displayed objects (E. P. Alexander, 1979, p. 183). Other explanatory labels, longer and of smaller type size, offer in-depth information for interested viewers; these supply facts of identity as well as descriptive and contextual information.
Flow

Moving through a series of separate objects or displays produces a cumulative experience (Witteborg, 1983, p. 23). Experience of the art object is related to other objects and information that precede and follow it. Thus, communication of the aesthetic and/or intellectual message of the exhibit requires care in the sequence of displays.

Circulation must be organized for smooth flow and to encourage the visitor to view all displays. As was previously mentioned there is a tendency to turn right upon entering a gallery. Further, most visitors view exhibits from left to right and move from left to right in going from display to display (Miles et al., 1982, p. 59). But devices such as island displays or architectural intrusions can confuse visitors who do not know where next to go.

Controlled circulation, in which visitors are not offered a choice of routes, remains controversial. Although teaching exhibits demand that displays be viewed in a definite sequence, museums risk depriving visitors of "dream space" in which visitors distill meaning as an art object jolts a memory or provokes a fantasy (Williams, 1984, p. 11). People should be able to move around at their own pace and backtrack if they choose. This can aid them in the comprehension of analytic facts, and give them time to develop associations, judgments, and friendship with art objects displayed. E. P. Alexander (1979) suggests that controlled circulation should be used only when absolutely necessary and should not extend for more
than one hundred yards at a time; he suggests a varied circulation pattern using controlled order for those concepts that demand sequential viewing and free circulation elsewhere (p. 179).

Museum Environment

The environment in which the fragments of the historical mirror are presented also has an effect on the role of the art object and the potential for appreciation. When public museums became popular in the nineteenth century, collections were installed in old palaces or in buildings designed after old palaces. Magnificent staircases and high ceilinged rooms were inflexible and intimidating. Museums were ill-lit, under-heated, and damp. During the second half of the nineteenth century new building materials, equipment, and construction techniques became available. But there were few attempts to meet physiological and psychological needs of the visitor until Walter Gropius, working with some of his former Bauhaus colleagues, designed the 1930 Deutscher Werkbund Exhibition in Paris and the 1931 Building Workers Union Exhibition in Berlin (Miles et al., 1982, p. 7). Space was divided into areas of different character; displays followed a logical sequence; curved walls were introduced to promote smooth circulation patterns; form, space, texture, line, color, and light were treated as related elements throughout the exhibit area.

Despite these accomplishments museum fatigue continued to be a problem. According to Gardener and Heller:
Museums and art galleries are outstanding for the shabby dreariness of their display. The most beautiful or interesting exhibits are as good as buried in the average setting of crowded showcases, yellowing labels, echoing marble galleries, dim overhead lighting from dusty skylights and a building whose very entrance frightens people away. (1960, p. 153)

Parr adds, "There are few cities which do not, for better or for worse, offer visually more stimulating sights in the windows of their leading department stores than in the vitrines of their best museums" (1963, p. 240). Variety of arrangement, atmosphere, and scale reduces fatigue. Curved or angled walls, moveable panels with varied divisions, and varying floorscape relieves monotony.

When exhibit designers go too far in combatting boredom, the museum visit becomes a kaleidoscope of sensations and information leaving the visitor tired and bewildered. Marshall McLuhan, for example, has argued for electronic bombardment of the viewer's senses with live performers, slides, films, strobes, and black lights. Although the presentation of objects can give life to an exhibit, it can also result in the objects being eclipsed by the glory of the packaging (Washburn, 1964, p. 20). To appreciate an art object one must be able to focus on it.

Ignoring the needs of the visitor by causing discomfort or creating unnecessary physical and mental effort detracts from the enjoyment and educational effectiveness of the exhibit (Miles et al., 1982, p. 67). Hudson debates as to which kind of museum the visitor finds most exhausting and frustrating--the small, crowded museum where the viewer must do a lot of peering and mental sorting, or
the large, orderly museum "where room passes into room in an apparently never-ending sequence and where one's brain, spirit and feet try to meet an impossible challenge" (1975, p. 38). Boyer (1983b) notes that additional research is required to examine the environmental influences on the aesthetic experience (p. 38). But no additional research seems required to affirm that in situations where the museum visitors are uncomfortable, confused, or fatigued, they will scarcely be open to appreciating exhibited artworks.

Evaluating History Museum Exhibits to Discover the Role of Art Objects and Determine Potential for Art Appreciation

Exhibits are seldom reviewed for their aesthetic or intellectual potential. Instead they are reported as cultural events in the society pages where more attention is paid to those who attended the opening than to the exhibit itself. As Schlereth (1984) says, "Museums which labor diligently to collect and conserve the creativity of others treat their own creations with callous indifference" (p. 7).

As compared with other teaching devices, the exhibit provides a series of more subtle, and at the same time less quantifiable, experiences which can offer visitors new perspectives and require them to ask new questions of material culture (Skramstad, 1978, p. 183). Regarding the exhibit as a distinct and complex learning device with its own particular rules answers many of the questions about why the exhibit is difficult to evaluate. It is not a simple adjunct to the process of collecting and research.
Shettel emphasizes that "Prescriptions for effective exhibit design will never be reduced to a set of specifications that can be looked up in a handbook" (1968, p. 151). This is especially true of such a task as developing an evaluation form to assist in discovering the role of art objects and determining the potential for art appreciation in the history museum. For the purposes of this section of the study, I reviewed exhibit literature by authors such as E. P. Alexander (1979), Bergman (1976), Carmel (1963), Miles et al. (1982), Neal (1976), Schlereth (1980b), Shettel (1968), and Witteborg (1981, 1983), and recorded statements involving exhibit effectiveness. I used domain and taxonomic analysis to group statements into categories. Categories unrelated to art appreciation as discussed in chapter 3 (see pages 29-47) were eliminated. Once major observational variables were identified, I developed a form on which they could be described.

There are certain limitations to this evaluation process. The subjective nature of describing art must be considered; even with the use of previously mentioned criteria of recognition, there may be differences of opinion as to whether or not an object is an art object. Those elements of the appreciative which are included in the synthetic categories of appreciation vary from person to person and cannot be fully described. (See pages 42-47.) Nor is it possible to list all exhibit elements which may affect the analytic aspects of appreciation (See pages 36-42.)
As a result of his studies on the relationship between the form of presentation and exhibit effectiveness, Shettel concludes that "There may be agreement that lighting, color, labels, etc., are important elements in exhibits, but those knowledgeable in the field seem not to agree as to the quality of these elements as they exist in a particular exhibit" (1968), p. 147). Although Shettel's (1968) studies indicate the unreliability of published criteria as guides to determining exhibit effectiveness, he asserts that evaluation forms aid in the more analytic inspection of exhibits and in the formation of better informed opinions.

**Exhibit Evaluation Form**

**Objects**

1. What art objects are displayed in this exhibit?

**Frame of Reference**

1. Are art objects in this exhibit presented in an aesthetic, intellectual, or mixed frame of reference? What are the reasons for the preceding categorization of frame of reference?

**Form—Attracting Attention to Art Objects**

1. Is the exhibit containing art objects located in an area that attracts attention? How does the location of the exhibit affect its attractive power. (Consider entrances and exits, open spaces and dead areas, other displays, and well-used areas.)

2. Is attention directed to art objects in this exhibit? How does the designer use contrast, position, size, display structures, and lighting to emphasize displayed art objects?
Form—Holding Attention on Art Objects:

1. Is there unity in the exhibit containing art objects? How is unity used to hold attention on displayed art objects? (Consider relationships of objects, labels, and spaces; and clear internal organization.)

2. Is there variety in the exhibit containing art objects? How is variety used to hold attention on displayed art objects?

3. Are there opportunities for interactive involvement with art objects? How can interactive involvement with displayed art objects enhance appreciation? (Consider participatory devices, display exploration, or direct contact with art objects.)

4. Are there opportunities for passive involvement with art objects? How can passive involvement with displayed art objects enhance appreciation? (Consider illustrations, maps, photos, replicas, audio-visuals, or other objects that supplement displayed art objects, explain how art objects are relevant to the viewers, or encourage viewers to form their own judgments.)

5. Do art object labels hold attention? How do the art object labels hold attention? (Consider whether labels are attractive; whether they are legible; and whether they are presented in concise, easily comprehended units.)

6. Do art object labels provide information which can enhance appreciation? How do art object labels enhance appreciation? (Consider whether labels include facts of identity, description and context; and which parts of the fourfold process of art—
concept, leading to behavior, resulting in product, which in turn feeds back upon concept—are mentioned.)

**Form—Flow of Display/Exhibit**

1. Is potential for appreciation increased by viewing displayed art objects in a sequence? How does sequencing affect appreciation of displayed art objects? (Consider whether art objects are related to other objects and information that preceded and followed them, and how this sequence affects analytic and synthetic aspects of appreciation.)

2. Is circulation organized for a smooth flow of visitors, while still enabling the individual to move at his/her own pace? How does circulation affect appreciation of displayed art objects? (Consider whether circulation is controlled, free, or mixed; whether the visitor will view objects and labels in the proper order; and whether the visitor has time to analyze facts, and to form associations, judgments, and friendships with art objects.)

**Environment**

1. Is the museum environment conducive to appreciation of art objects? How does the environment affect appreciation of displayed objects? (Consider whether visitors are uncomfortable or must undergo unnecessary physical or mental effort; whether line, form, space, color, texture, sound, and light are treated as related elements in creating environmental interest; whether visitors are able to focus on art objects in order to appreciate them.)
Results of Exhibit Evaluation

"Propaganda Poster Exhibit"

Objects and frame of reference. The "Propaganda Poster Exhibit" contains American propaganda posters from World Wars I and II. (See Plate I.) Posters are presented in a mixed frame of reference conducive to appreciation: objects can be valued for themselves as well as for knowledge they convey. Although the posters are not displayed in their original contexts (e.g. mounted on sandwich board or billboards), the labels and the posters themselves provide contextual information.

Attracting attention. The exhibit is located in an area that attracts attention to the art objects. (See Figure 1, Area 1.) It is located in a well used section which is en route to other exhibits. There are no uncomfortable open spaces, but part of the island display, visible in Plate I, can be regarded as a dead area because of poor lighting. It should be noted that there are no additional track lights available to remedy this situation.

Attention is directed to the posters in this exhibit. They are located in the zone of attraction. Although objects are of similar size, shape, and texture, there generally is contrast between colors of posters and the white background. With the exception of the island display mentioned above, objects are displayed with equal emphasis.
Holding attention. Art objects in this exhibit hold attention. Although reflections from mylar protective covering (designed for preservation purposes) and limited lighting in the island area are somewhat distracting, internal organization is clear. Similar frames give visual unity to the exhibit. Variety of subject style, message, and color also hold visitor attention.

There are opportunities for passive involvement with art objects displayed. The viewer is able to closely examine posters. The labels at each entrance encourage visitors to relate posters to contemporary culture and to form their own judgments. The label asks: What is the message? What techniques are used to communicate the message? Is the poster effective? Would it be effective today?

The label is cleverly designed with the "Uncle Sam" motif and message: "I want You to Read This." (See Plate II.) It is legible and presented in concise, easily comprehended units. The label provides contextual information explaining the impact these posters had on American society: They encouraged enlistment, promoted conservation, identified allies, vilified enemies, stressed the need for security, raised money and bolstered morale. It is important to note that the label also encourages the viewer's aesthetic response by referring to the content of this collection as "art posters."
Flow. The exhibit label placed at both entrances to the exhibit provides contextual information which is important for appreciation. Aside from that initial information, there is no special sequence for viewing objects. Circulation is free. Visitors can move at their own pace and backtrack if they choose.

Environment. The museum environment is conducive to appreciation. Aside from the lighting problems discussed above, visitors do not undergo unnecessary effort. They are able to focus on displayed art objects.

Summary. In addition to lighting adjustments, additional facts of identity and context (especially about represented poster artists such as Howard Chandler Christy, Norman Rockwell, and Ben Shahn) could increase appreciative potential. But the exhibit attracts and holds attention, gives contextual information, and provides opportunities to examine objects at one's own pace, while developing associations, judgments and friendships with displayed art objects.

"Nineteenth Century American Glass Exhibit"

Art objects and frame of reference. This exhibit contains nineteenth century American glassware. (See Plate III.) The frame of reference is not immediately apparent. Row after row of closely-placed glassware impedes the valuing of objects for themselves; contextual information is not immediately apparent.
Despite these problems, as it is possible to value objects for themselves as well as for knowledge they convey, the objects are presented in a mixed frame of reference.

Attracting attention. The exhibit is located in a well-used area that attracts attention. (See Figure 1, Area 2.) There are no uncomfortable open spaces or dead areas.

Attention is not directed to individual art objects displayed. There is little contrast among the objects themselves; the viewer sees row after row of objects of similar nature, size, shape, and texture. Although there is some color contrast between colored glassware and its background, there is little contrast between clear glassware and its white background as is exemplified in display cases G and H. Objects are given equal emphasis; they are placed at equal distances from each other, displayed in similar structures, and shown under fairly uniform lighting.

Holding attention. The exhibit does not hold attention. Although the repetition of objects gives a unified look to the exhibit, internal organization is confusing. The exhibit is divided into four categories: blown three-mold pieces, freeblown glass, pressed glass, and historic flasks. Whereas the first three categories are technical, the last is product-oriented. To add to the confusion, as one follows the sequence of the exhibit, one encounters blown three-mold pieces, freeblown glass and historic flasks in one single row of displays; pressed glass is presented in separate display cases.
There is a lack of variety. Objects and display techniques are monotonous; in emphasizing themes of figured bottles, the display of a dozen almost identical flasks depicting George Washington is no more effective, and in this case is certainly less effective, than the display of one example.

Many labels do not hold attention. They are generally overloaded with information, giving technical details that are difficult for the layman to understand. For example, one label on the free-blown glassware display refers to inserting "the hot gather" into a pattern mold; a label of the figured bottle display mentions the use of a "pontil rod"; a label for Cases D, E, and F mentions "chestnut," "pitkin," "grandmother," and "grandfather" flasks. There are no explanations for these terms. One also questions whether these textual details are appropriate for an exhibit of this kind.

There are some instances where labeling is too sparse. The display entitled "The History of Glassmaking" has a series of unlabeled photographs. One wonders what the people are doing and where the photos were taken. In another display, where glassware is shown in context with period furniture, the object label reads "Typical glassware of the period."

Placement of some labels causes problems. It is very difficult to read object labels on lower shelves of Cases A through L. Another case label which discusses the "Cornucopia Theme" on
figured bottles is illustrated by bottles with depictions of Jenny Lind and George Washington.

The meaning of silhouettes on labels is often not clear. For example the label of Blown Three Mold Glass states that the "following illustration shows the process." Yet the "following illustration" is a silhouette of a bottle.

It should be noted that other labels are well-written. One label explains the development of new processes to substitute for cut glass, and the commercial and technological impact on American society. Another offers concise explanations for uses of displayed glassmaking tools. Other labels list additional resources.

Flow. Circulation is mixed. Although there are no physical barriers, wall cases are lettered to suggest viewing sequence, which generally enhances one's understanding of displayed objects. If one follows the wall case letters, however, one tends to walk back through free standing cases in the middle of the floor. Then when one is prepared to look at the other wall display on "The History of Glassmaking" one will see those items in reverse. This leads to confusion and interrupts smooth flow of visitors. But determined visitors can backtrack and move at their own pace.

Environment. The museum environment is conducive to appreciation. It is comfortable. Visitors are not subjected to unnecessary effort. One may become aware of the soundtrack of the neighboring "Thirties Exhibit," but this does not distract from the display of art objects.
Summary. Although it is possible to value the objects for themselves as well as for knowledge they convey, the glassware exhibit does not attract and hold visitor attention. Major problems are the complex text and the visible storage of 400 items, many of which are almost identical to one another. Facts of identity and technical description are abundant but other contextual information is lacking. The visitors are free to move at their own pace and backtrack if they choose, but there is little to encourage them to form associations, judgments, and friendships with the objects.

"From Bust to Blitzkrieg" (The "Thirties Exhibit")

Art objects and frame of reference. This exhibit contains examples of American glassware, prints, photographs, and clothing from the 1930's. (See Plates IV and V.) These objects are presented in a mixed frame of reference; objects can be seen individually and collectively as manifestations of American culture.

Attracting attention. The exhibit is located in an accessible area that attracts attention. (See Figure 1, Area 3.) Although there are "windows" that open into other exhibit spaces (see spaces on each side of the photography mural in Plate IV), these do not distract attention from displayed objects. Objects are not displayed in open areas or dead areas.

Attention is directed to art objects. The photographs are located under the room label and are directly in front of visitors as they enter the exhibit. The size of the photo mural and the
color contrast with the orange background also commands attention. Although some photographs are located above eye level, they are large enough to be easily seen. Photos such as those of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Billy Sunday, John L. Lewis, Mae West, Eugene O'Neil, Adolph Hitler, and Winston Churchill attract more attention than do the others because of their larger size.

As visitors tend to turn right upon entering an exhibit, the costumes are among the first displays the viewer sees. Costumes and accessories are displayed in the zone of attraction. There is contrast in sizes, shapes, textures and colors of these objects as well as contrast between the colors of the objects and their background. (See Plate V.) Mannequin display structures also attract attention.

Prints and glassware are shown in period settings which attract attention but do not engulf the objects. These objects are displayed in the zone of attraction. Although some glassware is lying flat and is difficult to see, other pieces are propped up for easy inspection. Some glassware is placed higher than or in front of other objects, but there is little contrast in size or lighting that would emphasize one object over another. Prints are also given equal emphasis.

Holding attention. This exhibit holds the viewer's attention. It has a unity which is difficult to achieve with so many disparate objects. Visual unity is achieved through repetition of colors,
textures, and lettering styles. Although the period settings might tend to contain too many items, there is an unified relationship between objects, labels, and space. The internal organization is clear.

There is variety in the shapes, textures, colors, and nature of objects. Presentational devices, including period settings, a photo mural, and mannequins, also add variety. (See Plates IV and V.)

There is a wealth of opportunity for passive involvement with art objects. The use of mannequins and period settings makes apparent the object's relationship to the viewer. Depictions of displayed objects in photographs and advertisements of the period also enhances visitor involvement. Adult visitor's interest is maintained while they identify photographs of famous people including Adolph Hitler, Walt Disney, Albert Einstein, Johnny Weissmuller, Al Capone, and Shirley Temple.

Display labels hold attention. They are attractively presented in Art Deco lettering and are organized in concise, easily comprehended units. These labels provide important contextual information which can enhance art appreciation. The costume display label, for example, emphasizes that the greatest means of fashion communication was movies; emphasis on Hollywood glamour led to the "sporty look" of shorts, slacks, and culottes. One display label specifically discusses art of the Thirties. It mentions the Federal
Art Project which kept artists employed and increased awareness of America as a source of inspiration. It also mentions artists such as Thomas Hart Benton, Emerson Burckhart, Andrew Wyeth, and Edward Hopper.

**Flow.** Although objects are related to each other, the visitor does not need to see one object in order to understand another. The circulation pattern is free; people can move at their own pace and backtrack easily if they choose to do so.

**Environment.** Visitors are comfortable. Steps outside the exhibit entrance provide variation in floorscape. Walls are angled. The space is not overpowering. There are no visual barriers. Visitors also can push a button to activate a tape in the radio of the living room setting; music and programs from the era add to the atmosphere.

**Summary.** Art objects in this exhibit are presented in a mixed frame of reference which is conducive to art appreciation. Although objects are displayed in close proximity, what might be lost in one's ability to isolate the object from its surroundings is compensated for by the rich contextual information provided. The exhibit deals with art as a product that was shaped by cultural concepts and that shaped them in return. Not all objects are identified and described, but they attract and hold attention. Visitors can move at their own pace and can backtrack if they choose to do so. Visitors are given opportunity and encouragement to develop associations, judgments, and friendships with art objects.
Art objects and frame of reference. This exhibit contains Ohio pottery created between 1890 and 1920. (See Plates VI, VII, VIII, IX, and X.) Objects are presented in a mixed frame of reference; they can be regarded as artistic and historical, aesthetic and educational.

Attracting attention. The exhibit is located in an area that is less accessible than other areas of the cultural history mall. (See Figure 1, Area 4.) If the visitor follows signs and uses the designated entrance to the cultural history mall (see Figure 1, Entrance) this exhibit is near the exit which inhibits its ability to attract attention. There are no uncomfortable open areas, but there are many dead areas, due to architectural intrusions, windows, and poor lighting.

Many displays attract attention to art objects. The display depicted in Plate VII, for example, has contrast between sizes and shapes of objects. Two of the pieces are emphasized by spotlighting. The smallest piece is emphasized by placing it higher than and in front of other objects. Plate VIII, typical of many of the displays in this exhibit, shows contrast between shapes, sizes, and colors of objects. Objects on middle shelves tend to be emphasized by position and lighting; items on the top and bottom of the display structure receive less light and less emphasis.

A few displays, however, are not this attractive. For example in the first case seen as one enters the exhibit area, none of the
lights are working (nor were they working at any time during the two months that I studied this area.) This was true of two other displays as well. The major deterrents to attractive power are lighting problems (including not enough lighting and reflections from spotlights and windows) and the visible storage of too many similar objects. (See Plate IX.)

Holding attention. Repetition of objects with the characteristic of the dark brown glaze and earthen tone handpainting gives visual unity to this exhibit. The internal organization is clear. But visible storage of too many similar objects is a problem which destroys the unified relationship between objects, labels, and spaces.

Although the visual storage of similar objects borders on monotony, there is variety in some displays. Plate X, for example depicts an especially instructional display. One side briefly explains how glazes are made and applied; it shows mineral samples and sample glazes. The other side of the display explains and exemplifies bas relief, scraffito, slip painting, and pouncing patterns to show basic production techniques.

Exhibit labels hold attention. They are legible and presented in concise, easily comprehended units. They include facts of identity, description, and context. Labels on the first displays tell about the development of the potteries, their special designs, and how they advertised. They describe production steps and offer interesting descriptions of how Dickens ware and Sicardo ware were
named. The text includes information about espionage within the industry; (Sicardo was so concerned with secrecy that he continually searched his studio walls for spy holes.) The labels discuss cultural influences on designs: work was inspired by public taste and competitor’s lines as well as by art director’s ideas. Labels discuss concern with production expenses and the public demand for quality work. Working conditions are also mentioned.

Deterrents to holding power include low lighting, severe reflections, and the "see through" display methods where one is distracted by objects displayed on the other side of the case. (See Plate VIII.)

Flow. Potential for appreciation is increased by viewing objects in sequence. Objects are related to information that precedes and follows them. For example, history of the development of Zanesville potteries and their special designs and production steps are discussed at the beginning of the exhibit. One exception to the orderly sequence of the exhibit is near the end. Just before displays related to the demise of Zanesville art pottery due to changes in taste, cheaper imports and the Depression; there is a display dealing with the Zanesville pottery industry prior to 1890. This is obviously out of sequence and would be more appropriately placed at the beginning of the exhibit. Circulation is free, allowing visitors to move at their own pace, yet to view displays in their proper order.
Environment. This area is not as conducive to appreciation as other previously discussed areas of the museum. Lighting is the main problem. Sunlight, and spot lighting where it is used, reflect off glass cases. It should be noted, however, that the ramp area, visible in Plate VI does provide variety, as does variation of the outside wall. (See Figure 1, Area 4.)

Summary. Objects in this exhibit are displayed with a mixed frame of reference conducive to art appreciation. Although most displays attract and hold attention, some do not. Major problems that impede appreciation are lack of lighting, strong reflections from spot lighting and sunlight, and the visible storage of too many similar objects. Viewing the exhibit in sequence enhances appreciation because initial displays provide information which is useful for understanding objects displayed later in the exhibit. The area is not as conducive to appreciation as other areas of the museum. Despite these problems facts of identity, description (especially technical and literary) and context are provided. The viewers are free to move at their own pace; they are given opportunity and encouragement to develop associations, judgments, and friendships with art objects.

Summary of Exhibit Evaluation Results

Art objects and frame of reference. All four of these exhibits have some potential as resources for art appreciation. Although the "Propaganda Poster Exhibit" is more aesthetic in its presentation, and the "Nineteenth Century American Glass Exhibit" has a more
intellectual approach, art objects in all of these exhibits are presented in a mixed frame of reference; they can be valued aesthetically and intellectually.

Attracting attention. None of the exhibits are located in inaccessible areas, but the "Zanesville Pottery Exhibit" is in the least advantageous position. The "Thirties Exhibit" and the "Propaganda Poster Exhibit" are without doubt the most successful in attracting attention to art objects through the use of contrast, positioning, display structures, and lighting. The "Zanesville Pottery Exhibit" has many displays that attract attention to art objects, but some displays suffer from lighting problems and crowding of objects displayed in a system of visible storage. The "Nineteenth Century American Glass Exhibit" also suffers from the crowding together of similar objects.

Holding attention. The "Thirties Exhibit" and the "Propaganda Poster Exhibit" are most successful at holding visitor attention on art objects. Both have clear internal organization and a unified relationship among objects, labels, and spaces. The other exhibits also have clear internal organization but visible storage hinders visual unity.

The "Thirties Exhibit," the "Propaganda Poster Exhibit," and the "Zanesville Pottery Exhibit" offer greater opportunity for visitor involvement with displayed art objects. Labels offer contextual information, ask questions about art objects, explain how objects
are relevant to viewers, and encourage visitors to form their own judgments. In the "Nineteenth Century Glass Exhibit" facts of identity and technical description are abundant, but they are organized more for the specialist than for the layman. It is important to note that labels in all four of these exhibits reflect the understanding that art is shaped by culture and shapes it in return.

Form. In the "Nineteenth Century American Glass Exhibit" and in the "Zanesville Pottery Exhibit" potential for art appreciation is increased by the viewing of displayed art objects in a sequence. All exhibits are organized for a smooth flow of visitors, while still enabling them to move at their own pace and to backtrack should they choose to do so. Visitors have opportunity to form associations, judgments, and friendships with art objects.

Environment. Although the "Zanesville Pottery Exhibit" is located in a darker, less accessible area than the others, the general environment is conducive to appreciation. Visitors are comfortable and are not subjected to unnecessary physical or mental effort. They are able to focus on art objects.

Educational Programs

The exhibit is one form of communication used by museum staff members and administrators; another is educational programming, including on-site activities and materials that can be used in other locations. Although many American museums have undertaken
educational programs from the time they were established, museum educators have never fully agreed on what should be taught, who should be taught, and why (Silver, 1978, p. 13). According to Chapman (1982a) "In some museums education is merely a fancy word for activities that involve little more than crowd control, scheduling of events and public relations" (p. 54). Rebetez (1970) asserts that the multiplicity of impressions without logical connection hinders museum educational programs. Unlike school programs, museum education is informal: people come by choice; there are no prerequisite courses; the audience represents a variety of age groups and educational backgrounds; there are few fixed schedules (Pitman-Gelles, 1981, p. 79). The Council on Museums and Education in the Visual Arts, which recorded their nationwide study of museums in The Art Museum as Educator, concluded that there are no perfect programs, easy answers, or ultimate solutions in museum education (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 677).

Just as each museum has a unique purpose, collection, environment, audience, staff, and administration, each has a unique educational program as well. One has only to look at the program sampling discussed by Newsom and Silver (1978, pp. 35-657) and Pitman-Gelles (1981, pp. 52-225) to recognize the diversity of educational programs among museums. Many of the most common programs are represented in the activities and materials developed by the Ohio Historical Center Education Department: the orientation program, the demonstration program, teacher's guides the speaker service and workshops,
loan kits, the filmstrip and videocassette loan program, the slide and picture card set loan program, and the reference service.

On-Site Programs

On-site programs, which include staff demonstrations and visitor orientation, supplement the exhibits. Orientation can fulfill many different functions. It can introduce visitors to the museum, to a specific collection, or to a single object; it tells the visitors where they are, what they will be seeing, and provides information not readily apparent in objects or labels. (Pitman-Gelles, 1981, p. 26). Orientation encourages participation and use of resources. It can facilitate appreciation by identifying art objects in the collection, and providing contextual information to encourage visitor interest. Without a useful scheme for visiting exhibits, frustration, boredom, fatigue, and missed opportunities may result.

Some museums incorporate demonstration facilities in which staff members illustrate processes not easily understood by looking at an object or reading a label. They effectively present descriptive and contextual information to a large number of people at one time. Carmel emphasizes that because of the element of personal contact, a good demonstrator can adjust the talk to audience needs (1963, p. 125).

Materials That Can Be Used at Other Locations

Educational materials development is a complex task. According to O'Connell (1984), comparatively few museums have done much in
Educational materials that can be used at sites other than the museum include teachers guides, workshops and speaker services, loan kits, filmstrip and videocassette loan programs, slide and picture card set loan programs, and reference services.

Teacher's guides may be sent to a group prior to their museum visit to help teachers select and organize tours. By letting visitors know what to expect when they arrive, teachers and students are helped to feel more at ease in the museum environment. Teacher's guides are designed to direct attention to certain objects and to stimulate imaginative observation; they provide facts of identity, description, and context; they suggest ideas and provide materials for pre-visit and post-visit classroom activities; they include listings of related resources. Pitman-Gelles (1981) suggests that teachers should be consulted about the clarity and usefulness of guides (p. 103).

Outreach programs such as workshops and speaker services include visits to classrooms and group gatherings by museum staff members. They are designed to further understanding of specific topics. When they deal with an art-related topic these activities can provide facts of identity, description, and context which are important to appreciation.

Portable loan kits have two main formats: those with artifacts sealed in cases and those with objects that may be handled (Pitman-Gelles, 1981, p. 91). Both usually include written and graphic materials. Some include teacher workbooks, filmstrips or films,
books, and replicas of artifacts. Many provide ideas for projects to follow the loan kit program. Unless loan kits are informative, attractively packaged, and understandable they will not be used. Handbooks or user guides must be prepared. Teacher workshops are sometimes given to clarify the teacher's role and demonstrate how to use the materials. (Pitman-Gelles, 1981, p. 88). The loan kit is often accompanied by evaluation forms; museum staff members should respect users' comments on usefulness, ease of operation, and success of the loan kit.

At the end of the nineteenth century museums began lending lantern slides to teachers; today filmstrips, slide programs, videotapes, and picture cards are sent out. Whereas filmstrips have accompanying text printed on each frame, picture cards and slide sets come with scripts printed on accompanying sheets. These reproductions of artifacts are popular because they are inexpensive and are readily available.

Many museums provide reference services in which museum staff members answer specific requests for information. Files are maintained on a variety of museum-related topics.

All of these programs are potentially useful for art appreciation. What is actually used depends upon the educational program at the specific site in question.
The Evaluation of Educational Programming at the Ohio Historical Center

The study of educational programming at the Ohio Historical Center to discover the role of the art object and determine the potential for art appreciation is accomplished through interviewing, direct observation, and document analysis of museum programs developed and/or used by their education department from January, 1983, through June, 1984. As these educational programs are so diverse I found a standardized evaluation form to be impractical. As a result the programs are more generally analyzed in terms of (a) whether they contain art objects or references to art objects, and (b) if so, whether they are ready to use as resources for art appreciation.

Evaluation of On-Site Programs

Direct observation of the orientation program revealed no references to artwork in the collections. Interviews with staff members and document analysis of thirty Education Department demonstrations conducted in the exhibit area of the Ohio Historical Center, revealed that none contain art objects or references to art objects.

Evaluation of Materials That Can Be Used in Other Locations

Teacher's Guides

Of the three teacher's guides that I examined, two, "From Bust to Blitzkreig" and "Advertising" are especially useful for the purposes of art appreciation.
From Bust to Blitzkreig. This teacher's guide for the "Thirties Exhibit" has a special section on "Arts and Artists." It discusses the government's Arts Project and the Federal Art Project, which provided help for artists while increasing awareness of America as a source of inspiration. It mentions artists such as Thomas Hart Benton, Andrew Wyeth, and Emerson Burckhart.

The sections entitled "The Movies," and "Fashion" discuss the introduction of sound in film, major studios, film classics of the Thirties, and the impact of films on the fashion industry.

Sections such as "The New Deal," "International Events," and "Literature" do not provide specific references to visual art, but do provide important contextual information which could enhance appreciation of the art objects in the exhibit.

One suggested activity is the examination of Thirties catalogues and newspapers for clothing styles and advertisements to be compared with exhibit artifacts. Another activity involves using the exhibit of Thirties movie posters to draw comparisons between popular movies of that era and movies of today. Although the introduction to the guide stresses that teachers need to adapt information to meet their specific purposes and audiences, this guide is ready for use in explaining how American art of this era was shaped by the culture and shaped it in return.

Advertising. This teachers' guide, designed to accompany the "Advertising Exhibit" discusses the history of advertising and its transformation from the act of informing into the act of
persuading. The guide outlines ways in which advertisements are influenced by the culture and influence it in return. As a result ads provide important insights into culture. Suggested activities involve study of television and magazine advertisements to identify intended audiences, selling methods, and the emotional or intellectual dimensions being appealed to; other activities enable students to become aware of the impact of advertisements on their lives and to compare present advertisements with those of the past. Although this teacher's guide does not refer to visual advertising as an art form, it supplies abundant contextual information that could be adapted to enhance appreciation.

Workshops and Speaker Services

Interviews reveal that of the nine workshops and lectures presented by education staff members within the time limitations of this study, two, "The Genealogy Workshop" and "Rural Cemeteries, My Favorite Haunt," contain references to art. The major theme in both of these presentations is that nineteenth-century Ohio grave markers should be preserved because of their aesthetic value and the knowledge they convey. For example, gravestone art may refer to the person's national origin: the depiction of thistles often refers to the national flower of Scotland, the depiction of a rose often refers to the Tudor rose of England. The artwork may reveal other information such as the person's appearance, hobby, or profession. These workshops and lectures incorporate similar slide presentations that offer facts of identity; literary,
technical, and formal descriptions; and contextual information. Although the content and presentation of these workshops would vary with the age level and interests of the audience, they would need no major adaptation to be used for the purposes of art appreciation.

Loan Kits

Direct observation and document analysis of three loan kits revealed one that contains art and refers to art objects: "Ohio Archaeology" includes slides of early Ohio Indian dwellings, pottery, engraved stone tablets, earthworks, effigy pipes, stone figurines, and ornaments. The kit also includes examples and replicas of pipes, a slate pendant, and an engraved tablet.

The accompanying text and slide script offer available facts of identity about art objects. In addition to offering descriptions of the objects, they provide technical information about production of pottery and metal crafts. Contextual information is provided about the purposes of earthworks, the possible uses for stone engravings, and how effigy pipes functioned.

The script discusses art objects made from materials that were not native to the Ohio region and suggests probable trade routes for contact with other tribes. It discusses the cultural significance of the Indians' more permanent dwellings and their pottery which was not easily transported. It stresses the significance of having time to engage in activities that were not necessary for
day-to-day survival. The script is filled with cultural information derived from examination of art forms.

"Ohio Archaeology" also includes a teacher guide which suggests activities related to materials included in the kit. Some of these activities enhance potential for appreciation. Activity 6 uses slides and examples of Hopewell pipes and jewelry to enable students to understand that some prehistoric cultures participated in activities unnecessary for day-to-day survival, and to realize that archaeologists use the products of these activities to infer information about past cultures. Activity 10 uses slides and a replica of the Adena engraved tablet to sharpen awareness of the aesthetic values and artistic skills of Ohio's prehistoric people. A studio exercise in the creation of linoprints is used to develop further awareness of the prehistoric artists expressive use of line, symmetrical patterns, and the interplay of negative and positive space. Activity 11 uses the kit's pottery sherd, slides of prehistoric people's pottery, and a studio exercise to sharpen awareness of the prehistoric artist's skill in working with clay.

Each of these activities involves identification, technical and formal description, and context of prehistoric artwork. Although the kit can be criticized for its failure to initially distinguish between original art objects and replicas, it is otherwise well-organized. It would need no major adaptations to be used for the purposes of art appreciation.
Filmstrip and Videocassette Loan Program

Of the eighty filmstrips and one videocassette available for loan, four filmstrips depict and/or refer to art objects. These are: "Prehistoric People in Ohio," "The War Between The States," Parts I and II, and "Cultural and Social History Since 1870."

"Prehistoric People in Ohio." This filmstrip includes slides of earthworks, architecture, ornaments, engraved tablets, effigy pipes, and pottery of Ohio's prehistoric people. Facts of identity, description of technique and subject matter, and contextual information are provided. The filmstrip discusses the origins of materials from which some of the art objects were made and what this suggests about trade relations among these people. It also discusses the cultural organization required for the creation of earthworks. This filmstrip is well-organized and would need no major adaptations to be used as a resource for art appreciation. It is designed for a middle-school grade level.

"The War Between the States," Parts I and II. Although art is not the subject of these filmstrips, they consist of Civil War photographs by Matthew Brady. The filmstrips show how Brady followed the course of the war with his traveling darkroom. With supplementary descriptive and contextual information these filmstrips could be adapted for the purposes of art appreciation.

Cultural and Social History Since 1870. Although the first part of this filmstrip deals specifically with visual art, it is so poorly organized that it is not useful for the purpose of art
appreciation. For example, it lists artists but shows no examples of their work; it then shows examples of work by artists not listed.

**Slide and Picture Card Set Loan Program**

The Education Department has developed one picture card set about archaeology and five slide sets. The picture card set and three slide sets have potential as resources for art appreciation.

The Picture Card Set. The picture card set refers to artwork of Ohio's prehistoric Indians. It includes pictures of sculpture, stone tablets, pottery, ornaments, pipes, and architectural models. The accompanying explanation sheet provides available facts of identity and descriptive information about subject matter and technical processes related to pottery, architecture, and jewelry. It includes contextual information on inferred uses of engraved tablets, ornaments, and pipes. Although the card set can only be used by small groups, it would need no adaptation to be used for the purposes of art appreciation.

"Ohio's Prehistoric Peoples." This slide set is part of the Archaeology Loan Kit discussed above under "Loan Kits." The slides and their accompanying script are available separately.

"Art of the Hopewell." This slide set shows breastplates and effigy pipes created by the Hopewell and compares their representations with those of more contemporary artists. It demonstrates the accuracy of Hopewell depictions of wildlife by comparing them with paintings by Louis Agassiz Fuertes, Alexander Wilson,
F. L. Jacques, and Walter Weber. The set indicates that the Hopewell were not only accurate observers, but they were also skilled artists. The slide set provides available facts of identity, description, and contextual information about art objects. It is well organized; although adjustments would have to be made to meet the needs of the audience, it would not require significant adaptation to be used for the purposes of art appreciation.

"Mound City Group National Monument." This slide set depicts earthworks, sculpture, ornaments, pipes, pottery, and models of architecture. It provides available facts of identity, and descriptive information on subject matter, media, and technical methods. It includes contextual information on how the Hopewell got their name, what archaeologists have inferred from their depictions, with whom these prehistoric people traded to get materials for their artwork, what earthworks reveal about their system of measurement, what earthworks reveal about their burial practices, who first explored earthworks, why "Mound City" was so named, and the obliteration of earthworks. Although adjustments would be required to meet specific needs of the audience, no major alterations would be needed for the purpose of art appreciation.

The Reference Service

In this service, Education Department staff members answer specific requests for information. The files contain data on over 1,200 topics. Examination of these files reveal 72 topics
under which information related to art is available. (See Table 1 for a complete list of topics.) These materials would require organization and adaptation for the purposes of art appreciation, but they do provide facts of identity, description and context. It should be noted that these are most easily adapted for the high school level and below.

Summary of Results of Educational Programming Evaluations

Various programs contain art or refer to art objects and can be used for the purposes of art appreciation. Although all need to be adjusted to meet the specific needs of the audience, some would need more adaptation than others. The loan kit "Ohio Archaeology", for example, is practically ready for use with high school students. Other programs, such as the reference service, provide raw data to be developed into programs in art appreciation.

Although there are materials which could be adjusted for use with age levels varying from small children to senior citizens, there is nothing available for the scholar.

Another fact evident from this study is that education programs that can be used for art appreciation concentrate on prehistoric art of Ohio and neglect what has been accomplished in more recent times. Program analysis indicates that many of the programs on prehistoric art overlap, providing little new information from resource to resource.
Table 1. Reference Service Topics Related to Art Appreciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Art in Ohio</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adena Indians</td>
<td>Mounds</td>
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<td>Adena Pipe</td>
<td>Mound City Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archaeology</td>
<td>National Register</td>
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<tr>
<td>Architects</td>
<td>Newark Earthworks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Ohio Village, Cabinet Shop</td>
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<td>Architecture, Pioneer</td>
<td>Ohio Village, Glass and China</td>
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<td>Architecture, Prehistoric</td>
<td>Ohio Village, Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artists of Ohio</td>
<td>Ohio Village, Photography Shop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artifacts</td>
<td>Ohio Village Weaving Shop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ater Mound</td>
<td>Ojibwa Indians</td>
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<td>Audobon</td>
<td>Papermaking</td>
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<td>Barn Symbols</td>
<td>Parlor Furniture</td>
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<td>Bellows, George</td>
<td>Photography</td>
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<td>Blown Glass</td>
<td>Platt Castle</td>
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<td>Brassware</td>
<td>Pioneer Life, Architecture</td>
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<td>Ceramics</td>
<td>Pioneer Life, Clothing</td>
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<td>Christmas</td>
<td>Pioneer Life, Crafts</td>
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<td>Christopher Collection</td>
<td>Pipes</td>
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<td>Costumes</td>
<td>Pottery</td>
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<td>Coverlets</td>
<td>Preservation</td>
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<td>Crafts</td>
<td>Quilts</td>
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<td>Dress</td>
<td>Row Houses</td>
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<td>Dunlap Mound</td>
<td>St. Peter in Chairs</td>
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<td>Ft. Ancient Indians</td>
<td>Sculptors</td>
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<td>Furniture</td>
<td>Serpent Mound</td>
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<td>Glass</td>
<td>Spatterware</td>
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<td>Greenville Treaty, painting of</td>
<td>Spinning</td>
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<td>Hambleton Mound</td>
<td>Stamps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heisey Glass</td>
<td>Textiles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic Preservation</td>
<td>Tinware</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>Valentines Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indians, Historic Architecture</td>
<td>Villages, Restored</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indians, Historic Clothing</td>
<td>Voss Mound</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leather</td>
<td>Weaving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Log Cabin House</td>
<td>Williamsburg</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wray Figurine</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Plate I. Propaganda Poster Exhibit
Plate II. Exhibit Label—Propaganda Poster Exhibit

I WANT YOU TO READ THIS
Plate III. Nineteenth Century Decorative Glass Exhibit
Plate IV. From Bust to Blitzkreig (The Thirties Exhibit)
Plate V. Costume Display--The Thirties Exhibit
Plate VI. The Zanesville Pottery Exhibit
Plate VII. Display--The Zanesville Pottery Exhibit
Plate VIII. Display--The Zanesville Pottery Exhibit.
Plate IX. Display--The Zanesville Pottery Exhibit
Plate X. Display--The Zanesville Pottery Exhibit
Art and Culture

Art and culture are so closely intertwined that a person cannot fully understand the one without learning about the other. Art is shaped by the culture that produced it and shapes it in return.

Art objects directly or indirectly reflect the belief patterns of the individuals who make or use them and, by extension, the belief patterns of the larger culture of which they are a part (Schlereth, 1982a, p. 3). Through such activities as drawing, painting, sculpting, and designing industrial products people relate their beliefs and feelings. "By looking at their art, we can share to some degree their visions of the world" (McFee & Degge, 1980, p. 6). And by studying what one knows of peoples' visions of the world, one can learn about their art. "We can only understand their art in the degree we can learn their culture" (McFee & Degge, 1980, p. 279).

Yet when one attempts to relate art to the broader cultural matrix from which it derives and which it influences, one isHampered by academic barriers. History is not expected in an art museum nor is art expected in a history museum.
Interdisciplinary Approach to the Study of Art Objects

The tangible fragments of the shattered mirror of history are found most easily and in greatest quantity and variety in museums. In the search for an understanding of the past, these collections--more than anything else--provide evidence covering long stretches of time and broad expanses of culture.

But the objects comprising these collections are often parceled out as the special preserves of various disciplines. This exemplifies the kind of institutional blindness from which many suffer both inside the museum world and out (Van Dyke, 1973, p. 64). The situation is due to the perspectives researchers bring to collections rather than to anything inherent in museum objects. One must keep in mind that the separation of human interests from one another is made for nothing more than facility of discussion. The artificiality of disciplinary and institutional divisions should be recognized. (See page 19.)

One enters an art gallery expecting to be delighted by the beauty of certain works; one enters a cultural history museum expecting to be instructed about history. One fails to realize that objects can be at once artistic and historical, aesthetic and educational. A number of objects in the history museum are of unique aesthetic value; a number of objects in the art museum are of historical significance. (See pages 60-61.)

Studies may ask different questions in different ways, but they have a common cause in interrogating an object as a manifestation
of cultural history. "It is hoped that the type of cross-disciplinary, cross-institutional approach...may open the avenues of communication necessary for the fuller appreciation, understanding, and interpretation of the arts and peoples of the non-western world" (Van Dyke, 1973, p. 65). When academic barriers are dissolved museum visitors may enjoy new perceptions and new insights. Schlereth points out how a single object can be informative when studied from different angles (1984, p. 7). On one hand the artifact is a guide to a reconstruction of the past; on the other the reconstruction of the past is a guide to the understanding of the artifact (Ackerman & Carpenter, 1963, p. 130).

Benefits to Art Educators

In the fourfold organizational pattern involved in the arts (concept, leading to behavior, resulting in product, which in turn feeds back upon the concept), only the product is normally studied in detail (Merriam, 1971, p. 98). Structural descriptions dominate the literature, leaving little room for the understanding of human actions and their cultural contexts; this emphasis on the artistic product encourages the knowing of everything about an artwork except its significance. (See pages 22-23.)

Appreciation must include the use of perspectives and methods sufficiently broad in scope so as to include study of the causal-functional inter-relationship of art and culture. This can only be accomplished by bridging the academic schisms. The art teacher
can, for example, use a work's historical context, not just as a
generalized screen against which the work is set off, but rather
as a specific and detailed part of the work itself (Lee, 1978, p. 25).

Current art studies tend to be limited to the "superstars" in
the history of art—the Michaelangelos, Picassos, and Van Goghs.
According to Chalmers it is as though a political historian were
to limit studies to only those political systems of which he ap­
proved (1978, p. 19). For the art student this preoccupation with
geniuses and masterpieces leads to the primary concern with estab­
ishment and defense of genealogies and heirarchies—some artists,
media, movements and periods are more important and more deserving
of attention than others (A. Rubin, 1979, p. 669).

Despite this hothouse approach to relatively modern Western
art, an entirely different opinion of the relation between art and
culture is reflected in the attitude toward other cultures.

That the art of preliterate societies is different from our
own in importance and function is an unfortunate myth that
is often perpetuated by art historians. This 'theory' accounts
for primitive art as the symbolic expression of basic values
and beliefs held by a cultural group—any cultural group,
yet relegates "our" art to that produced by and for a restricted
cultural group, typically including those who are rich and
powerful, or those who are fascinated with the avant-garde.
Besides suggesting that the contemporary art exhibited in our
museums and galleries has little general cultural meaning
and significance, this distinction is unfortunate because it
ignores the popular, environmental, vernacular, and folk arts
of our own time (and those of the past), and refuses to label
these activities as art. (Chalmers, 1978, p. 19)

Chapman (1982b), emphasizes that much of the visual culture is alien
territory to art teachers (p. 36).
As discussed in Chapter 1 on the importance of teaching art appreciation, art can be challenging even for the student with little interest in creating art. To learn to appreciate art, one must engage directly in acts that foster appreciation. Studies should concentrate not just on famous art ("absolute" aesthetic exemplars) but on all art; the study of art forms that intersect with daily life—such as architecture, industrial design, or ceremonial arts—can encourage students to view art in relation to other aspects of culture. Broadening the scope of art appreciation with studies of a variety of art forms in American communities may rescue artists and artworks from oblivion imposed by the international artworld's superstar syndrome (O'Sullivan, 1982, p. 12).

Rather than relying so heavily on commercial reproductions, which are limited in scope to the "big names" in the history of art, greater advantage should be taken of local resources such as history museums, most of which have works of art in their own collections. The great merit of this approach is that it goes beyond the traditional aim of art appreciation —knowledge about art—to provide learners with the knowledge, skills and opportunity needed to experience art (Zeller, 1983, p. 44).

Even on the most local level, the history museum can substantially benefit the study of art appreciation. The local historical museum can bring to the study of art its varied collections of newspapers, books, and photographs. From such sources one can identify local artists and their works and determine where artists
exhibited, how their art was received by the community, who collected art, what they considered to be good art; this can enhance understanding of the styles and subjects of local art, and show the extent to which local art parallels the wider American art of its time or diverges into special cultural concerns (O'Sullivan, 1982, p. 11). Some art exhibit themes are specifically historical, such as retrospective exhibits of important local artists, surveys of local art in particular time periods, or exhibits that explore a style or medium of local art (O'Sullivan, 1982, p. 12). These benefits notwithstanding the challenge of the history museum is not to recreate the history of art on a local level,

but to seek and preserve the best art of the region; to determine its uniqueness and its local identity, as well as its resemblances to American art in general; to understand art's place in the community's past, and to maintain its history in the present (O'Sullivan, 1982, p. 12).

Benefits to Historians

Discovering the role of art objects in the history museum has significance for art educators who seek resources for visual art experiences in order to develop student appreciation of a wide variety of art forms; but it also has significance for educators in history museums who have the responsibility of interpreting cultural history for their visitors. History museums can use art in a variety of ways. Art can be seen as a cultural product worthy in itself of preservation and study. Additionally or alternatively, artworks may be considered as visual documents of the region, offering visual manifestations of its people, places and history
(O'Sullivan, 1982, p. 10). For example, in the exhibit "See the Power There Moving: Three Centuries at the Falls of St. Anthony," the Minnesota Historical Society made extensive use of paintings and prints to show the appearance of the falls and to illustrate several historic attitudes toward it—a wonder of nature, tourist attraction, energy source, and focus of civic nostalgia and urban redevelopment (O'Sullivan, 1982, p. 12). Art can communicate information in a way that physical description cannot; it can provide concrete evidence of individuals and events that otherwise exist only as abstractions. One needs to examine all available fragments of the mirror of history to form a more complete reflection of the past. When documentary and physical evidence exist about a subject a coordinated study is nearer the goal of truth (Dymond, 1974, p. 9).

(See pages 17-18.)

Research

McFee and Degge (1980) stress that "When we observe art, we not only get information about situations, conditions, and events, but we can be stirred emotionally by the meaning the information has for us. " (p. 273). But the interaction between the art object and the viewer is subject to mediation and manipulation. The quality of the objects, the frame of reference in which they are presented, the form of the exhibit, and the museum environment have an impact upon the information one receives and the emotional response one experiences. Investigation of these considerations lead to identification of ideology which informs museum practices and affects visitor's experiences.
The task of discovering the role of the art object in the history museum led to the study of the Ohio Historical Center as a representative site. In particular, the study centers on exhibits in the cultural history mall and educational programs. As these exhibits and programs determine the shape of the past in peoples' minds, there was a need for critical appraisal of the attitudes embodied in historical interpretations.

There have been excessive expectations of educational research to deliver scientific generalizations like those produced in the physical science laboratory. Such a fascination with "scientification" reflects not only insecurity in the face of what are oddly referred to as "hard sciences," but also a belief that the product of a laboratory somehow reflects more epistemological validity than does a semi-structured interview. Needless to say, the evaluation of conditions pertinent to something so difficult to confine to the laboratory situation as art, in an environment so correspondingly difficult as a history museum, entailed the invocation of the more realistic mechanisms drawn from ethnography.

These approaches revealed the following: Examination of formal group statements of attitudes justified the presence of the art object in the history museum. But the role of the art object—its function in specific circumstances—remained unclear. This study showed that respondents favored using art in educational programs, using the cultural history mall as a resource for teaching about art, and displaying art objects with a mixed frame of reference.
conducive to art appreciation. The exhibits evaluated were found to be positive to art appreciation with respect to content, but not always with respect to form. Lighting problems and the crowding together of similar objects presented the greatest deterrents to art appreciation. Although some of the evaluated exhibits were more immediately suitable than the others, all had potential for art appreciation. Educational programming was more neutral in its potential for use in art appreciation. Some resources were underdeveloped while others were ready for use.

Overall, this study established that the Ohio Historical Center exhibits a variety of art objects and is a significant resource for art appreciation. But it recognizes that data from a single setting can only be used to suggest higher-order relationships; a comparative study of several similar settings is needed.

In any case, if the Ohio Historical Center, not especially renowned for its art collection, is so useful a resource for art appreciation, it is apparent that other historical museums that are known for their art collections are also likely to be good resources. The New York Historical Society, for example, owns a collection of eighteenth and nineteenth century American miniatures including portraits by West, Inman, Peale, and Sully; they own nearly five hundred Audubon watercolors and over two hundred drawings of scenes from Indian Life by George Catlin as well as fine examples of furniture and decorative objects (Katz & Katz, 1965, pp. 164 and 165). Collections of the Essex Institute include Essex County
portraits, Massachusetts decorative arts and furnishings, and houses that are considered to be masterpieces of early federal architecture (Katz & Katz, 1965, p. 167). According to O'Sullivan (1982) the Minnesota Historical Society Museum owns a collection of two-thousand paintings, drawings, prints, and sculptures which span the state's history (p. 11). The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities has restored the late eighteenth century Harrison Gray Otis House; its interior, furnishings, and early Federal design (the work of architect Charles Bullfinch) are considered to be of superior quality (Katz & Katz, 1965, p. 179). The Preservation Society of Newport County, Rhode Island maintains the Touro Synagogue built in 1763; considered a masterpiece of Colonial design, it is the work of Peter Harrison, the country's first architect. (Katz & Katz, 1965, p. 185). Alice Winchester's The Antiques Treasury of Furniture and Other Decorative Arts at Winterthur, Williamsburg, Sturbridge, Ford Museum, Cooperstown, Deerfield, and Shelburne (1959) is devoted to artwork at these history museums. Artists represented at these sites include John James Audubon, John Singleton Copley, Charles Currier, Samuel F. B. Morse, Charles Willson Peale, James Peale, Rembrandt Peale, Duncan Phyfe, Seth Thomas, Benjamin West and Gilbert Stuart.

The use of the history museum as a resource for art appreciation suggests research possibilities of connecting the history of art with other fields of thought. This interdisciplinary approach suggests exploration of relationships between expressive products
of one cultural subsystem and similar patterns in other subsystems (Fleming, 1974). It raises questions as to how the art object relates to issues such as religious beliefs, economic conditions, technology, and politics of the culture.

Leaving the Virtuoso's Museum

Although Hawthorne's Virtuoso had devoted considerable time and expense to the acquisition of objects for his collection, he was not concerned with exhibiting them in a manner that would promote interaction between the object and the viewer. The collection contained art objects such as paintings by Zeuxis and sculptures by Phidias and Iysippus. But the visitor was so exhausted and confused by the disorder, he passed them by.

When the visitor arrived at the Virtuoso's museum, he was impressed with the bronze statue of Opportunity; "he was represented in the act of flitting away from earth, yet wore such a look of earnest invitation that it impressed me like a summons to enter the hall." But after becoming so wearied by the confusion of the museum the visitor noted upon his departure that the exit was constructed with the ivory leaves of the gateway through which Aeneas and the sibyl escaped from Hades.

Although the experience of a visitor to a modern art or history museum is unlikely to encompass such extremes, it often enough runs parallel. Hawthorne's short story is a volume on museology. The Virtuoso's collection was at once an art museum and a history museum. Yet it succeeded as neither because it was not informed
by a goal related to learning. The works, unmediated, could not
be appreciated but were merely observed.

The figure of Opportunity beckons at every museum door. And
it beckons in more than one way: at an art museum, to experience
art and understand culture; at a history museum, to experience
cultural content and discover art.
APPENDIX

A MODEL FOR ART APPRECIATION

Identification
What is the object? By whom was the object made? What is the title? When was it made? Where was it made? What materials were used? What style was used? Who owned it? Is it authentic?

Description

Literary Description
What symbols were used? What objects, people, places, and incidents should be recognized in their cultural contexts? How do symbols relate to the culture which gave them meaning? How do the themes and their treatments reflect the intellectual and spiritual posture of an age? What are the origins of the symbols?

Technical Description
What level of technology is reflected in the construction? How were tools used? What materials are used in the object? Where do the materials originate? Have the raw materials been modified (e.g., clay, sand, and water transformed to brick)? What impact did technology and new materials have on the function and design of the artifact? What are the origins of the construction techniques?
Formal Description

How were elements of design (line, color, texture, mass and space, light and shade) used? How were the organizing principles of design (balance, rhythm and repetition, unity, and proportion) used? How do the visual elements interact to produce the amount of order and variety that suited the object's function and meaning in the given context? How did the culture influence the style used by the creator?

Context

What cultural concept or feelings were expressed (through materials, construction, symbolism)? What did the object mean to members of the cultural system in which it was used? How did the way the object functioned enhance cultural values? Was the artifact used as an agent of cultural change; if so, how? How did the artifact reflect changes in cultural values? Why was the object made? How was this object used? Did its function change; if so, why? What human behavior was associated with the object? Considering quantity produced or imported, prices paid, and pictorial and verbal references to the object, how was the object esteemed in the culture that used it? How was the object shaped by the culture that produced it?

Association

What relationships exist between facts learned about the object and cultural values of the viewer? What are the viewer's personal feelings about the object?
Critical Judgment

How does the artifact compare with other examples of its kind?

Friendship

The appreciative experience encompasses not just the power of feeling, but the power of relevant feeling achieved through cognitive responses.
Spradley's analytic process also includes componential analysis, in which cultural meaning is inferred from differences among domain members. I omitted it because it was not useful in this particular study.

A new Ten Year Plan (1985-1995) is being written, but I chose not to include it in my research because the programs and exhibits included in this study were devised under the 1974-1984 philosophy. Due to its incomplete state it is not useful at this time for speculations about the future.

The knowledge and attitudes the viewer brings to the exhibit include other important variables in determining potential for art appreciation, but are not discussed here. This study is limited to variables determined by museum administrators and staff members.

Value has been placed on original objects without analyzing what appreciating "originality" means. (Marantz, 1966, pp. 149-150). A clear definition of an "original" is difficult to determine for it varies with art form. According to Ferrari, aesthetic value may be so closely involved with its objective realization in a material object, that only this object can be considered the original (1966, p. 168). However, prototypes and art products derived from prototypes should also be examined: in architecture the design and the execution may both be considered original; in print-making the plates and the prints that the artist originally meant to produce are both termed original. Using the justifications for regarding certain art products derived from prototypes as originals, some contend that when the original model of an industrial product is adopted as an international criterion and is regarded as a general form or design that the machine produces in thousands, each object maintains intact the quality of being original (Ferrari, 1966, p. 168).

For the purposes of this study a "display" refers to a single unit within an exhibit (e.g., the contents of a display case); an "exhibit" refers to a series of displays dealing with a particular theme.
Although I acknowledge the educational importance of the group tour program, it has not been included in this study because it is administered and staffed by volunteers rather than by the museum's education department. Each volunteer develops his/her own program, but it is important to note that the training manual developed by museum volunteers contains a variety of articles on art objects in the museum's collection.
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