

**RESEARCH REPORT**  
**TO**  
**THE CHICAGO CENTER FOR ARTS POLICY AT COLUMBIA COLLEGE**

**INFORMAL ARTS:**  
**FINDING COHESION, CAPACITY AND OTHER CULTURAL BENEFITS IN**  
**UNEXPECTED PLACES**

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Chicago Center for Arts Policy

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## PREFACE

In the spring of 1999, I received a visit at my office from five members of the Chicago Center for Arts Policy (CCAP) Executive Committee: Fred Fine, Senior Consultant to CCAP; J. Dennis Rich, Chair of the Committee; Norman Alexandroff, CCAP Executive Coordinator; and members Woodie White and Elena Marcheschi. They shared their ideas with me about undertaking a major study in Chicago on the “informal arts”. We had a lively discussion about the arts and about doing qualitative research. Subsequent meetings ensued and I was drawn into what eventually became the research study on the Social Impact of the Informal Arts. For me, the past three years have been a wonderful journey into a world I barely knew existed right in my own backyard. Long discussions with Elena Marcheschi, who did much of the early work to conceptualize the study, led me to understand that the arts policy community were only just beginning to grapple with the implications of the existence of the informal arts and that little was understood about the phenomena, the processes through which people engaged in art making and the implications of these activities. As we created the research design for the study, we realized that a standard “community” or neighborhood approach would not allow us to investigate the cross-cutting ways in which arts practice was occurring throughout the city. As a result, we decided to use case studies that reflected the range of arts practice and locations. Instrumental in constructing the research design were the wise counsel of the CCAP advisory council members and a series of focus groups with key individuals active in Chicago’s arts communities.

We were fortunate that Rebecca Severson agreed to join as lead ethnographer for the study. With solid ethnographic experience already under her belt, Rebecca brought to the study an unexpected enthusiasm and delight at being involved as an artist in informal activities. She was the ethnographer for six of the twelve case studies. Also joining us was Mario Longoni, who had just finished his Masters’ in Anthropology, and had a talent for both data management and ethnography. He quickly mastered the ATLAS-ti qualitative database management program. He also did the ethnography on two of the case studies. When we ran into funding difficulties and could not bring the anticipated third ethnographer on board, I decided to do two case studies myself. We were also fortunate to obtain the volunteer services of Sarah Feinstein, then a graduate student at the School of the Art Institute, who was looking for a dissertation project, as well as Dr. Raymond Codrington, who had just joined the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change at the Field Museum as a Boyd Post-Doctoral Fellow. Sarah did the work for the case study of the writers’ group, and Raymond undertook the hip-hop case study. Finally, toward the end of the project, we recruited Kevin Karpiak, a doctoral candidate at the University of California, Berkeley, to do the statistical analysis of the survey data.

This report contains the bulk of the data collected during the course of the study. In addition to the data reported on here are voluminous files of published literature, flyers, graphics and so on, collected at the various study sites and throughout the City. These are now stored at the Chicago Center for Arts Policy. We hope that all of this material will prove useful to others who wish to continue to investigate the informal arts.

Throughout, we have changed the names of the groups and the study participants in order to preserve their anonymity and respect their confidences. We followed the ethical guidelines of the American Anthropological Association in conducting the study and obtained informed consent in all cases.

Finally, because this study relied on ethnographic methods, it incorporates the passionate and joyful voices of the many artists who make Chicago a vibrant place to live. Their commitment to art testifies to its lasting power to provide us with the means of expressing our creativity—that which makes us human.

Alaka Wali  
June 24, 2002

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The study authors would like to express their deep gratitude to all of the study participants who gave generously of their time and shared their many rich experiences of engagement in the arts. We would also like to thank Elena Marcheschi, who was the project director and was invaluable to the smooth operation of the project. She also provided keen insights and commentary based on her decades of work in the arts arena. Nick Rabkin, even before he assumed executive directorship of the Chicago Center for Arts Policy, was a supportive and reflective voice. Others who offered thoughtful commentary included Fred Fine, Victoria Malone, J. Dennis Rich, Woodie T. White and Norman Alexandroff, as well as other members of CCAP's Executive Committee and Advisory Council. We benefited as well from insights provided by Maria-Rosario Jackson of the Urban Institute and Caron Atlas. We're also grateful to the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, the Chicago Park District and the Illinois Arts Council, who facilitated access to administrative data. The research was immensely enriched by the work of two ethnographers who contributed their time freely: Raymond Codrington, Ph.D. currently Boyd Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Field Museum and Sarah Feinstein, M.A. in Arts Management. Additional research assistance was provided by Kevin Karpiak, M.A. in Anthropology (who did the statistical analysis of the survey results), and Jennifer Malloy, M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning (who analyzed newspaper clippings and other administrative data). Graduate assistants included Maria Quintana Diaz, Josh Hanes, and Maria Izabel Leme-Harris. Interns who worked on the project were Allison McGarry, Jennifer Moore and Jennifer Welch. Staff at the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change at the Field Museum provided wonderful logistical and moral support. We want to especially acknowledge the work of CCUC's administrative assistants, Austin J. Moore (2000-2001) and Meganne Lube (2001-2002) for making maps, charts, and for editing and formatting the report. The graphic design of the moebius strip was made by Rosa Cabrera, Public Involvement Manager at CCUC. All errors of interpretation or fact are those solely of the authors. The opinions expressed in the report are also those of the authors and not those of the Chicago Center for Arts Policy.

Partial funding for this study was provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council, the Richard H. Dreihaus Foundation, the Urban Institute/Arts and Culture Indicators in Community Building Project (ACIP), and Columbia College Chicago.

**THE INFORMAL ARTS: FINDING COHESION, CAPACITY  
AND OTHER CULTURAL BENEFITS  
IN UNEXPECTED PLACES**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**OF FINAL REPORT  
SUBMITTED TO  
THE CHICAGO CENTER FOR ARTS POLICY AT COLUMBIA COLLEGE**

**MAY 2002**

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## INTRODUCTION

Over the last two years, a team of ethnographers from the Chicago Center for Arts Policy at Columbia College (CCAP) conducted a research study in the Chicago metropolitan region, investigating adult participation in the “informal arts” (sometimes called “unincorporated arts”). The informal arts encompass such diverse experiences as acting in community theater, singing in a church choir, writing poetry at the local library, or painting portraits in a home studio. These popular creative activities fall outside traditional non-profit and commercial arts experiences, and yet, according to a recent National Endowment for the Arts *Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*, engage millions of amateurs and professionals alike (NEA, 1997).

As the researchers discovered, these “hands-on” activities tap people’s creative potential and expand our concept of artistic participation beyond the role of audience member. Based on two years of ethnographic data collection, researchers concluded that the informal arts occupy a significant place in the social infrastructure of communities, helping to build both individual identity and group solidarity.

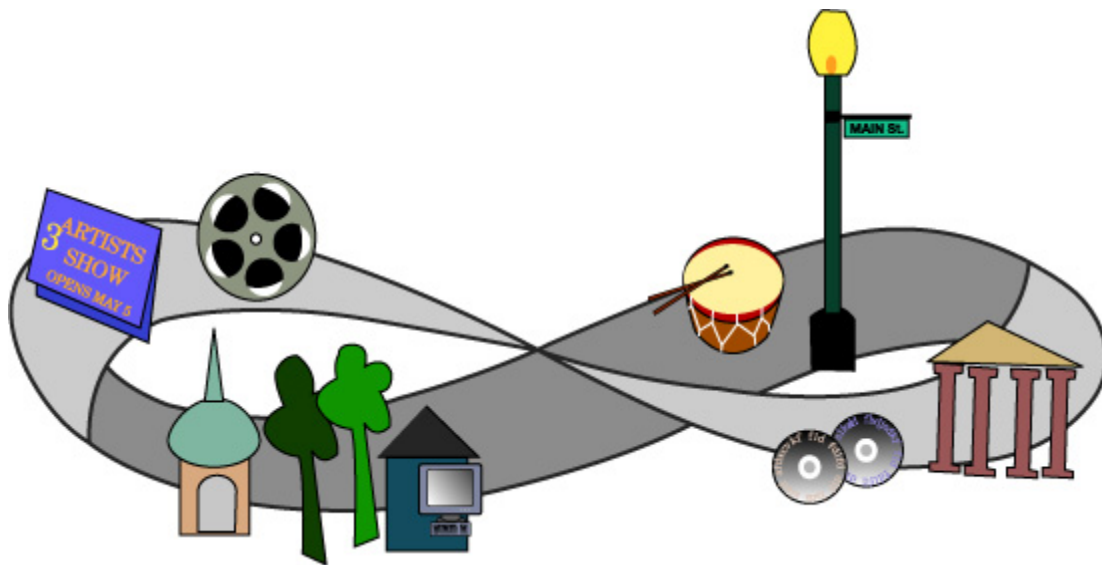
### GLIMPSES OF THE INFORMAL ARTS FROM THE FIELD NOTES:

- **An African American secretary who writes poetry** saw an ad in the Beverly community newspaper about a poetry reading at the public library, went and was “hooked”. She also writes articles for her church magazine and has published a local cookbook. The ethnographer met her while observing a poetry reading at an Afro-centric bookstore, where she (the secretary) was the featured poet. The poet/secretary mentions that a male co-worker/engineer has illustrated one of her poems; he also presents his drawings to guests of honor during farewell parties at their workplace, a federal government agency.
- **The drumming circle takes place Friday nights**, year round, in a Chicago neighborhood park. The circle is managed by a drummer who works at the park as a music instructor. 30-70 diverse participants sit in a circle of folding chairs on the lawn near the field house (inside if there’s inclement weather), with a variety of drums, tambourines and shakers in hand. Some are professional players, some are hobbyists, some just happen upon the circle – they heard a sound in the distance and followed it. A drummer / public school engineer comments, “I had no musical anything, but I wanted to be more expressive. Now I’m decorating the house and thinking of aesthetic things. I never wore jewelry until I was 40.”
- **At a church on Chicago’s northwest side**, a small, multi-racial group of volunteers organized an arts gallery that features an “artist of the month”, some of whom have never shown their work before. Show openings, featuring refreshments and sometimes live music, are held after Sunday morning services. Dozens of people mingle there, not only at the openings, but also on the other Sundays of the month. A description of the artist appears in the church program, and sometimes fliers are placed on seats. In addition to the gallery, the church provides free studio space to a church garden volunteer / painter, who doesn’t have room for large works in his apartment. This studio is a makeshift space in an unheated storage / tool shed adjacent to the church.



In order to better articulate these artistic experiences, the researchers conceptualized all arts production as existing on an “informal-to-formal” continuum, one that ranges from ephemeral and highly spontaneous activities that occur in unstructured spaces (such as the street or individuals’ homes), to long-established, formally organized cultural production, governed by rules for inclusion and occurring in publicly-labeled “arts” spaces (such as museums, galleries, performance venues and commercial centers). Despite the fact that millions of Americans regularly participate in activities at the informal end of this arts continuum, prior to the CCAP study there had been little research about the social and educational impact of the informal arts.

### *THE ARTS CONTINUUM*



The CCAP study (which concluded in early 2002) found substantial evidence that the informal arts are an important reservoir of social capital, significant for life-long-learning, building civic engagement and strengthening communities. Researchers discovered that in the course of informal arts participation, people are coming together across such social boundaries as economic and occupational status, ethnicity and race, age and geography. Researchers also discovered that participants make use of opportunities generated through informal arts practice to develop social skills and inclinations important to civic renewal. The study found further evidence that the formal (non-profit and commercial) part of the arts sector is closely linked with the informal, each side deriving benefits from the connection.

## STUDY FINDINGS FALL INTO THREE INTER-RELATED AREAS:

- 1. BRIDGING DIFFERENCES:** Researchers concluded that informal arts activities help people to bridge social boundaries of age, gender, race/ethnicity and occupational status, boundaries that through historical processes have often been used to sustain structures of inequality. The inclusive character of informal arts practice and the socially accessible localities where it occurs induce trust and solidarity among participants, and promote greater understanding and respect for diversity.
- 2. BUILDING CAPACITY:** Informal arts practice provides important sites for adult personal expression and creativity. In the process, it helps to build individual and community assets, by fostering social inclinations and skills critical to civic renewal. These include greater tolerance of difference, trust and consensus building, collaborative work habits, use of innovation and creativity to solve problems, the capacity to imagine change and the willingness to work for it. Artists practicing in informal settings come from all walks of life and are largely representative of the pluralism of American society. They have high rates of participation in such civic activities as advocating for arts and community improvement causes, voting in elections, and joining voluntary organizations.
- 3. STRENGTHENING THE ENTIRE ARTS SECTOR:** The informal and formal arts operate on a two-way continuum, upon which information, personnel, financial benefits and other resources flow back and forth. While some parts of the formal arts sector make available a variety of resources in the exchange, the informal arts create employment opportunities for professionally working artists, play a “research and development” role, and provide audiences for the formal arts sector. Individual artists, small and medium sized non-profit arts organizations, community-based groups, and public and private non-arts institutions all play significant roles in forging these links.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

In order to document the impact of the informal arts, the researchers gathered data relating to three areas of inquiry: 1) the extent to which informal arts participation leads people to interact across social barriers such as ethnicity/race, class, gender and age; 2) the types of skills and inclinations that participants acquire or develop in the course of art-making that could be useful for building community capacity; and 3) the processes through which links are established between the informal and formal sectors of arts production, and any gains arising from the ensuing interactions.

The researchers examined 12 case studies of informal arts activity that involved either small groups or single individuals as participants. Case studies were selected to reflect a variety of art disciplines (visual arts, music, theater and other performance, crafts, and creative writing), and a range of locations throughout the Chicago metropolitan region (including a suburban location). Researchers employed ethnographic techniques that included participant-observation, open-

ended and semi-structured interviews, focus groups and a survey questionnaire completed toward the end of the field research period by 165 of the 310 case study participants (a 53 percent response rate).

This combination of techniques insured triangulation of data sources as a measure of validity, as well as the ability to elicit multi-layered perspectives about the behaviors and practices of artists, and about the deeper meanings and values that participants brought to their work. In addition to the case studies, data was also collected from a variety of available sources, such as from records of public arts agencies, newspaper articles and notices, the United States Census database, and interviews with key figures in arts organizations.

## THE CASES:

<b>TYPE OF GROUP OR NETWORK</b>	<b>LOCATION</b> (Within Chicago unless otherwise indicated)	<b>SIZE OF MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>TYPE OF SPACE</b>	<b>MEETING FREQUENCY</b>
<b>Chicago Theater</b>	Southwest Side	20 core	Church Basement	According to production schedule
<b>Suburban Theatre</b>	Northwest Suburb	25 core/100 in network	Public Park Recreation Center	According to production schedule
<b>Asian Music Ensemble</b>	South Side	30	Church Basement	Once a week
<b>Quilting Guild</b>	Far South Side	100	Public Park Field House	Once a week
<b>Church Choir</b>	South Side	40-50	Church	Twice a week
<b>Drum Circle</b>	Far North Side	35-70	Public Park	Once a week
<b>Painting Class</b>	North Side	12-15 (at peak)	Public Park	Once a week
<b>Writing Group</b>	Near South Side	15	Public Library Branch	Once a week
<b>Artists Who Share The Same Employer</b>	South Side	Over 100	Large Cultural Institution	Irregular
<b>Individual Visual Artists</b>	Various Locations	8-9	Homes / Studios	Irregular
<b>Masters and Apprentices, Ethnic &amp; Folk Arts</b>	Various Locations	4	Homes / Studios	Irregular
<b>Hip-Hop Artists</b>	North Side/ West Side	6-8	Homes	Irregular

## THE INFORMAL PART OF THE ARTS CONTINUUM: MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE

- **KEY FINDING -- A HIDDEN ASSET**

As demonstrated by other research at the national level and confirmed for the Chicago region by this study, informal arts activities are largely hidden from public view. In part, this is because government and private sector agencies don't generally maintain systematic databases of community assets.

Recent studies and reports on the state of the arts in American society have focused on diagnosing health and well-being by measuring audience participation, employment, and revenues generated by the established commercial and non-profit parts of the sector (c.f., *The Performing Arts: Trends and Implications* a Rand Research Brief: The Rand Corporation, 2001). Surprisingly little quantitative or qualitative data exists on the nature and size of participation by people in actual *art making* outside of the officially labeled spheres of arts production. Indeed, much of what we term “informal arts” occurs beneath the radar screen of standard data collection practices for indicators of civic life. While there is ongoing data collection at the local, state and federal level on indices such as the physical health of populations, labor force participation, inflation rates, and the like, there is virtually no standardized and consistent data collection on either arts production, or on other asset-based indicators of community well-being. Thus, these activities remain largely invisible from view.

The study authors nonetheless conclude that arts production in the “informal” sphere is far more ubiquitous than the scant attention it receives in the broad public media would suggest. Using a combination of techniques and sources (such as informant interviewing; focus groups conducted with artists and arts leaders; advertisements and notices collected from neighborhood venues throughout the metropolitan region; administrative data culled from entities such as the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, the Chicago Park District and the Chicago Public Library system; as well as a search of 13 city-wide and neighborhood based newspapers), the researchers discovered a significant presence of informal arts production in a majority of Chicago's community areas.

The relative visibility of arts practice (both formal and informal) is not uniform across the region. In some Chicago areas, clusters of arts activity are more readily visible than elsewhere. In addition to the downtown area (Loop), among the most widely recognized of such clusters are those in the vicinity of Bucktown (Logan Square & West Town), Pilsen and East Pilsen (Near West Side), and in the communities of South Shore, Lincoln Park and Lakeview. These places contain a mix of *both* informal and formal sites for arts production (for example, festivals, classes, residential spaces, galleries, and a range of performance venues).

The apparent clustering of arts activities in these areas attracts people, and so a certain density is achieved that would appear to facilitate arts practice. Indeed, study informants indicated that they frequented classes or attended performances in some of these localities, and, if they lived in other parts of the city, that they knew more artists in localities than in their own neighborhoods. Newspapers also tend to list arts activities in these localities more frequently than for other parts of the city. Despite the “clustering” effect, however, study participants indicated overall that they had trouble finding information they needed about training opportunities, spaces for practice and available resources.

Research indicated nevertheless that supposedly “arts-poor” areas outside of the cluster localities still contain significant amounts of informal arts production. In the community area of Grand Boulevard, for example, statistically represented as one of the more “impoverished” neighborhoods in Chicago (median household income was \$7,907 in 1990, population has decreased by 22 percent between 1990-2000), where one of our case studies was located, there are 78 places of worship with choirs, arts programs and classes in the major park in the neighborhood, a creative writing program at the public library, a coffee house that hosts regular spoken word open microphone performances, and several service organizations that are either offering arts programs or promoting neighborhood artists.

In Roseland, another south side “impoverished” community, where two case studies were located, there are over 100 places of worship, most of which have choirs; ceramic and music classes in park district locations, as well as ongoing craft activities; a regular poetry reading at the local police district headquarters, and dance classes, writing groups and crafts workshops at the public library branches. On the Southwest side, also an area that has low visibility with respect to arts production, mixed-income and largely working class neighborhoods, there are bars that host Karaoke nights, a polka club, arts classes and other activities offered in the parks, a theater group located in a church basement, as well as dance, craft-making, decorative gardening at the public library branch, and an Eastern European folk dance group that operates out of a local cultural center.

The researchers discovered that in these locales, where arts production is not widely known or publicized, existing groups must struggle harder to recruit new members, making extra efforts to enlist family and acquaintances from members’ own networks. On occasion, groups will use such strategies as “advertising” widely around the city for participants (for example, in the case of a church basement community theater, which advertises audition calls citywide). Still, the very existence of arts production, despite its common invisibility, is indicative of the ubiquity of the phenomena, and points to the need for more systematic data collection on these types of community assets.

## EVERYONE WELCOMED: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE INFORMAL ARTS

- **KEY FINDING -- A DIVERSE GROUP**
- People who participate in the informal arts come from all walks of life, reflecting a diversity of demographic characteristics such as occupation, age, race/ethnicity, and gender.

The demographic profile of study participants exhibits broad diversity, drawing from most segments of the larger society. Interestingly, the level of education is high, as over 90 percent of participants had at least a high school degree (compared to 88%, Bureau of the Census national figures for 1998), and up to 80 percent had some college education (compared to 65.6% nationally, also for 1998). Otherwise, there was a range of age, occupation, income, ethnicity and fairly equal representation of gender at most of the case study sites.

Among respondents to the survey, for example, 23 percent were in an education-related profession, 20 percent were in an arts, design, entertainment, sports or media related occupation, and about 10 percent each were either in management, administrative support, business, financial, computer, or sales-related occupations, while other occupations were represented in smaller numbers. Within these occupational categories, there was further diversity with respect to status. Study participants included highly trained professionals, clerical staff, low-wage retail and service employees, and construction workers, among others. Eighteen percent were retired, 7 percent were homemakers, 8 percent were students, while close to 5 percent were unemployed and looking for work.

Household income of survey respondents ranged from under \$10,000 (5 percent) to more than \$100,000 (6 percent), with over 50 percent of respondents in the \$30,000-\$75,000 range. Additionally, the ethnic diversity of the total study population was proportional to the national ethnic composition, although ethnic mix differed in the different case studies. Interestingly, age diversity was commonplace at all 12 of the case study sites. At all twelve sites, there was considerable occupational and income diversity as well. Of the twelve sites, nine had fairly equal gender representation (the quilting guild and the painting class members, on the other hand, were primarily women, while the hip-hop artists were mostly men). Racial and ethnic diversity was perhaps the least common, with five of the twelve case studies including a more balanced mix of African-Americans, Latinos and whites in the group membership.

Demographically, the study participants reflected the pluralism of American society overall. Participants were civic minded and engaged in a variety of activities. For example, in the survey response, over 85 percent reported having joined or given money to an organization or a cause, 86 percent reported having voted in presidential or local elections, and 80 percent reported having signed a petition. Significant percentages also reported volunteering, attending public

meetings, writing letters to newspapers, and attending block club meetings. We might contrast this with the popular perception of the American public as “apathetic” (for example indicated by voter turnout rates). In the 2000 election, for example, Illinois voter turnout was 48.9 percent as opposed to 57 percent in 1992 (Bureau of the Census). Voting levels in the 2002 Illinois primaries, on the other hand, were less than 40%. Close to one-third of the survey respondents indicated that participation in arts activities had led them to act on behalf of causes for other neighborhood resources.

## CROSSING BOUNDARIES FOR THE SAKE OF ART

### **KEY FINDING -- BRIDGING DIFFERENCES**

Informal arts activities help people to bridge social boundaries of age, gender, race/ethnicity and occupational status, boundaries that through historical processes have often been used to sustain structures of inequality. The inclusive character of informal arts practice and the socially accessible localities where it occurs induce trust and solidarity among participants, and promote greater understanding and respect for diversity.

The high degree of diversity and the practices found in informal settings are significant. This suggests that arts activities in the informal sector may contribute to civic renewal, by breaking down social and geographic barriers that are the product of historical constructions of inequality. Ethnographic research at the case study sites revealed some of the reasons why art making in informal settings may be a catalyst for bringing diverse people together across social boundaries, for promoting trust and solidarity among participants, and for encouraging a respect for diversity itself.

The authors found certain distinctive factors that characterize informal arts practice and that may also nurture and sustain diversity. These include: *the common interest and intrinsic passion that people have for making art; the metaphorical space of informality that permits participants to engage with the arts in a non-intimidating manner; the greater ease of access to physical spaces where informal arts practice occurs; and the types of strategies used to recruit new participants.*

At all twelve case study sites, people spoke frequently of the joy and satisfaction they attained from making art. The ethnographic research at these sites and the subsequent survey data also made evident that people are willing to expend considerable time, effort and resources to participate in artistic production. People regularly traveled long distances (sometimes across the length of the city, or from Indiana and the western suburbs to Chicago’s near south side, or from the northern suburbs to Chicago’s north side), sometimes employing public transportation in lengthy trips to attend rehearsals or classes, or in order to give performances.



Survey respondents also indicated that, on average, individuals spent well over \$1000 annually on training materials, supplies, class or workshop fees, and travel expenditures. Some 75 percent of respondents disclosed they had set aside a room in their homes for arts practice. Individual artists (such as those practicing in the visual arts, or master-level artists transmitting ethnic and folk arts skills to apprentices) often practiced their art after coming home from a regular job and on the weekends. All of the case studies involving groups of artists scheduled weekly and sometimes twice-weekly rehearsals or practice sessions, usually in the evenings and sometimes also on weekends (these schedules intensified close to performance dates). For those involved in administrative duties on behalf of the group, even more time was spent at business meetings. In addition to the group activities, most of the artists also spent time at home practicing or perfecting their skills.

This passion to create apparently leads people to search out and join groups regardless of their location or composition. While visibility of location (for example, in areas recognized as “arts-rich”) facilitates boundary crossing, it can also occur under more adverse circumstances. For example, the drumming circle and the painting class, both located in neighborhoods known for artistic activity, attracted participants from all dimensions of diversity (e.g., age, occupation, ethnicity/race, and gender), without much effort on the part of the organizers. Yet, even the least apparently visible of the activities, such as the choir of a south side church located in an area perceived as “arts-poor”, drew participants from as far away as the northern suburbs, and was diverse with respect to age and occupation. Two of the more specialized groups — the Asian music ensemble and the quilters’ group -- also drew diverse participants intent on pursuing this particular art form. The Asian ensemble, specifically, drew in people from every region of the city and the suburbs, across a wide spectrum of age and occupation. The quilters’ group attracted two men, who despite the popular stereotype of quilting as a “woman’s activity”, wanted to participate and were welcomed into the group.

The generally inclusive character of informal arts practice—what the study authors term the metaphorical space of informality – appears a powerful facilitator in bringing people together to engage in arts making. The study documents that in case after case, barriers to participation are low at the informal end of the continuum (i.e. no set level for training, no rigid criteria for skill level or prior experience). Indeed, informal arts groups are constantly seeking new members, regardless of where they come from or what their other characteristics may be, while individual artists are often seeking to expand their own networks. Each of the case study groups (including the cluster of individual visual artists) contained participants ranging from complete novices to highly trained professionals with years of experience in the art form.

## THE THRILL OF IT ALL:

- “I have to dance to get them the message that I’m here. When I dance I’m giving them the message that it’s okay. It’s okay to let it all out. It’s okay to express yourself. I just love people and for me it’s like being connected – reconnected to them. I’m passionate about it because we go to work all week and then come (here) and we say we did not forget. We still exist. We’re still living life.” – *Male drummer*
- In the moment when I am writing something, especially if I know it is good, and that people could really attach themselves to it, I feel like I am a mother, actually giving birth to my child...I feel like I am bringing life, a new idea, to somebody. It is a great feeling to me. I am all excited on the inside, and I am proud of myself...I love what I do. I wouldn’t change it or trade it for anything in the world.” – *Woman writer*

Other aspects of informality that emerged as significant included the flexible nature of participation (people could leave for periods of time and then return), cost-scaling (i.e. people could determine the degree of financial resources they wanted to commit to the activity, because set fees for classes or participation were generally minimal or non-existent), and a high degree of autonomy in practice (participants did not usually exercise authority over others in the group with respect to their style of the art-making).

Beyond merely bringing people together, the informality of the arts activities also permits people to transgress normative patterns of interaction, and gain insights into lives and perspectives different from their own. In this context, otherwise normative patterns of hierarchy—(class or occupational status, gender role, age/seniority) do not seem to operate. Instead, active efforts are made to level these differences or to reverse the normative patterns. Thus, women felt empowered to take leadership roles within organizations, African-American or Latino members, despite being in the minority, sometimes exerted authority or made decisions affecting production, young people teased older members of the group or shared knowledge, and members were accorded respect for skill, talent or effort, rather than for class status.

In addition to the metaphorical space of informality, the physical spaces in which informal arts activities take place are important factors for promoting diversity. In addition to the diverse sites where the case studies are located, the authors also found informal arts activities in such venues as coffee houses, police stations, office buildings, social service agencies, and the street. Not surprisingly, informal arts activities in the more public places (such as parks, public libraries and the streets) attracted more diverse participants. At these sites, people often joined after “stumbling across” the activity and watching rehearsal or art production. The drummers in the park, for example, were constantly inviting passers-by to join in the circle, while at the public library the writing group finally decided that they would limit the overabundance of interested observers to those who were seriously considering joining. At the work place site, fellow workers who overheard a group rehearsal would peek into the room and sometimes join in the music making. Public spaces also seemed to create a sense of “ownership”, with participants

stating that they felt these places were for everyone. The fact that the locations are often *not* associated with “arts” activities seems to also increase people’s comfort about participating. Ethnographers observed that people quickly appropriated the space, giving it a meaning or value that created a zone of safety in which they could take risks with creative expression.

Finally, the recruitment strategies employed by groups of informal artists can also themselves lead to diverse composition and sustained participation. While artists in our case studies most frequently recruited new members from their personal networks, they also had to reach out more widely in order to sustain their organizations. Recruitment strategies included offering classes (advertised in local periodicals and on websites), performing at venues outside of the neighborhoods where the group is based, and, in a few instances, joining larger loose coalitions or membership organizations.

The study documents that the nature of the interactions between participants does lead to an increased awareness of the value of diverse perspectives. Over 80 percent of respondents to the survey indicated that making new friends was one of the significant benefits of interacting with diverse people in the course of art making. Close to 70 percent stated that they gained a greater understanding of different people, 62 percent felt they were exposed to new arts opportunities, and 50 percent said they gained exposure to places they would not otherwise have known or traveled to. Overall, ethnographic research documented that informal arts activities are characterized by sociality. People frequently met each other outside of practice or rehearsal, sharing meals, communicating through e-mail, hosting parties or attending performances.

## **A LATENT POTENTIAL: ACQUIRING SKILLS AND DEVELOPING CAPACITIES IMPORTANT TO CIVIC LIFE**

### ***KEY FINDING -- BUILDING CAPACITY***

Informal arts practice provides important sites for adult personal expression and creativity. In the process, it helps to build individual and community assets, by fostering social inclinations and skills critical to civic renewal. These include greater tolerance of difference, trust and consensus building, collaborative work habits, use of innovation and creativity to solve problems, the capacity to imagine change and the willingness to work for it.

The study documents an array of skills and inclinations acquired or developed during the course of informal arts practice. The ethnographers found that one of the reasons people acquire skills and build on inclinations is because of people’s constant striving to improve their artistic

proficiency, regardless of existing skill level. As do other practitioners, artists working in informal settings strive to achieve art's "illusion" of a seamless and unforced aesthetic experience. Additionally, artists gain organizational skills as they confront the need to nurture and sustain informal arts practice (whether as individual practitioners or within organized groups) in the face of scarce resources and at times daunting invisibility.

Artists obviously derive significant personal benefits from informal practice, such as enhanced technical and artistic skills, personal enrichment and a more meaningful personal life, overall. Significantly, the study also found that people acquire important skills and develop inclinations applicable to a healthier civic life. These include collaborative work habits, the use of innovation and creativity to solve problems, the nurturing of tolerance, the capacity to imagine social change and the willingness to devote time and resources to achieving it. The mechanism for developing these skills likely lies in the regular creation of art. For example, the need for constant practice/rehearsal, or other honing of skills in a voluntary setting leads to the development of techniques for giving and taking criticism as a way of knowledge sharing and collective improvement. In turn, this action requires people to listen to each other, creating momentary spaces of trust, and opening the way for collaboration.

Another technique the ethnographers documented was the ability to quickly find alternative solutions to problems (for example substituting materials, improvising texts, re-thinking design, or re-structuring roles). These strategies were developed in all of the case studies, in the contexts of both collective and of individual practice. As an interesting example, the individual visual artists interviewed by the ethnographers discussed how they used networks of colleagues to provide criticism and encouragement for their work. In the case studies involving groups, both problem-solving and the giving and taking of criticism were ritualized, such that they were regular features of rehearsals or practice sessions. And at the work place site, artists reported often applying problem-solving skills developed in the course of informal arts practice to their regular work.

#### **GLIMPSES OF THE INFORMAL ARTS FROM THE FIELD NOTES:**

- “We want to take things to the next level...It wasn't till I hooked up with these guys that I started thinking I could do this seriously. They taught me how to make music... You could look at it like a tree. We got the middle and we are all like branches... We got each other's back... We all believe in each other. Works together like the roots of a tree...” – *Rapper and DJ artist*
- “To be successful in acting – and I mean satisfying, not money-wise – you have to be willing to go outside yourself and do things you wouldn't do in ordinary life. When I got the job selling tax annuities, the guy said, ‘Can you stand up and talk to a group of teachers?’ And I said, “If I can drop my pants in front of an audience, I think I can do that.” - *Actor, former beautician and now a retired tax annuities salesman*

Researchers found that certain capacities, such as tolerance for difference and the ability to imagine social change, were nurtured by the informal nature of the arts practice. Eighty-seven percent of survey respondents reported meeting people of differing skill levels in the course of their arts practice. Respondents averaged a 5.07 on a 1-7 scale (with a median of 5) when asked about the degree to which participation in arts activities had increased their tolerance towards less skilled artists. Only 32 percent of survey respondents indicated tension around different skill levels as a primary tension in their group. Ethnographers found that the use of humor to deflect or recognize differences, the physical structuring of space (for example using circle formations), the sharing of equipment and supplies, and the conscious “orchestrating” of techniques to absorb the varying range of skills were all methods used to nurture inclusion and tolerance for difference.

In most of the case studies, the ability to envision change, while not explicitly expressed, was evident in the actions and outlook of participants. For example, most refused to accept the categorization given to them by the wider society as “leisure-time” or “hobby” artists, or even “amateur” artists. Rather, people expressed a sense of self-assurance and a striving toward the best that characterized their efforts. The necessity of persisting against obstacles such as lack of funds, lack of time, and impermanence of performance, rehearsal or studio space, impelled artists to critically examine the social structures and power relations within which they live, and to strengthen their organizational practices in response. In a few instances recorded by the ethnographers, these inclinations were transferred to activism on behalf of both arts-related and other causes. As indicated by the survey data, “civic-mindedness” was definitely a characteristic of the study population.

## INSTANCES OF ACTIVISM:

- **The artist is a 50 year old Puerto Rican painter / day care instructor / former factory worker** who talked of how a church group that visits the sick and elderly on Chicago's north side visited her when she was recuperating from an operation. "They saw my paintings and told me about a volunteer-run gallery for art shows at the church". This was the genesis of her first-ever show, held at the church gallery. "And now I'm one of them, who visit sick people, and I like that. I'm fixing Christmas stockings and gathering things to put in them for the seniors. I'm asking the parents from the day care center to donate things."
- **A kindergarten teacher and drummer explains** that, "as I learn to play my drum, I am finding my own voice. When I can make my drum sound the way I want it to, I will no longer be afraid to speak." Since making that statement, she has initiated efforts to help the homeless through her school. She has also presented papers at a professional conference, much to the surprise of her principal, who admitted his belief that she would never make a public presentation almost convinced him not to hire her.
- **A Native American visual artist engaged in political organizing** to improve neighborhood conditions. She says she draws on her experience as an artist working in informal settings to frame the organizing work she does in the community. "We ran a candidate...well, we only got 25% of the vote. But even though we didn't win, we did get a lot of things done. Every time we had a coffee [a meeting in people's homes where the candidate would speak], the streets would be fixed there the next day. We may not have reached our goal, but we accomplished other things. That comes from being an artist. I've learned people aren't going to like some things, and some things I don't show."
- **A janitor / drummer starts to speak out** about the loss of jobs in his industry, as the public sector turns to increased privatization and outsourcing of services.
- **A rapper conducts a petition drive** to obtain a Hip Hop show on a local college radio station.
- **A quilters' group lobbies successfully** to increase safety and parking access at the public park facility where the group meets.
- **A writer persists** in applying for grants from a variety of sources, despite repeated rejections.

## FORMAL/INFORMAL: MOVING BACK AND FORTH ON THE CONTINUUM

### ***KEY FINDING – STRENGTHENING THE ENTIRE ARTS SECTOR***

The informal and formal arts operate on a two-way continuum, upon which information, personnel, financial benefits and other resources flow back and forth. While some parts of the formal arts sector make available a variety of resources in the exchange, the informal arts create employment opportunities for professionally working artists, play a “research and development” role, and provide audiences for the formal arts sector. Individual artists, small and medium sized non-profit arts organizations, community-based groups, and public and private non-arts institutions all play significant roles in forging these links.

Chicago’s arts scene is replete with stories of now well-recognized artists or arts institutions that began as or were influenced by informal arts practice (e.g., among many other examples, the pop singer R.Kelly, who initially sang in his church choir, the Steppenwolf Theater, which began in a suburban church basement, Chicago’s Second City, whose improvisational work was influenced by the “theater games” system developed by Viola Spolin, who herself adapted a similar approach she encountered while attending settlement house classes at Chicago’s Hull House). Less understood are the pathways by which informal arts practice contributes to the “formal” (commercial and non-profit) part of the sector, including by nurturing and sometimes helping to sustain professionally working artists. In turn, the formal part of the sector may facilitate art making for people at the informal end of the continuum. The ethnographic research revealed that these pathways are multiple, varied and complex, and involve not only arts organizations, but other public agencies and private institutions. For the most part, the links are tenuous, vary in duration and often go unrecognized. They center around such aspects as skills training, provision of space, audience building, and “research and development”, being sometimes reflected in the efforts of individuals to move back and forth along the continuum.

The study documents the significance of professionally working artists and of public and private institutions as sources of instructional opportunities. Among informal arts survey respondents, 26 percent were enrolled in classes or other training programs during the time of the study. Study participants sought out classes or training in a wide variety of venues, such as at colleges and universities, secondary schools, public parks, and even faith-based institutions. Museums, public libraries, visual art galleries, professional theaters and other performance venues were also mentioned as sites for training. In all of the case studies involving group arts practice, participants either brought in or otherwise worked with “master” teachers, formally trained artists, or full-time professionals that offered instruction or direction to the group. These individual teachers not only contributed to enhancing individuals’ technical skills, but also helped create non-authoritarian spaces in which people felt free to experiment, take risks or explore new dimensions of their art practice. In turn, teachers interviewed by ethnographers

stated that they also valued working in the informal sphere, because they gained freedom to experiment and were not limited to institutionalized methods of teaching or practice.

The role that community-based non-profit arts organizations, together with some non-arts institutions, play in facilitating space and other resources for informal practice cannot be overstated. Community performance groups, neighborhood cultural centers, neighborhood music schools, social service organizations with arts programs, and many others support and often showcase informal arts practice. Again and again, public parks, local libraries, places of worship, coffee houses, school classrooms, office settings, bookstores, and studio spaces at community-based organizations were among those mentioned or observed as valued and desired locations for informal arts practice. Institutions providing such spaces seemed to also benefit from the increased use and the positive attitudes that accrued to the institution.

However, the data also showed that the availability of these types of spaces and resources is not stable and that individuals and groups frequently have to search out new arrangements. Ten out of the twelve case studies (all except the church choir and the painting class) have had to change locations at one time or another in their history, and some have moved two or three times. Others have no regular space at all (e.g. the hip hop artists, the visual artists and some of the master-level ethnic and folk artists training apprentices in their heritage traditions). Anger and frustration was expressed when access to such venues was curtailed as a result of budget cutbacks, or through institutional or policy changes.

Not surprisingly, the data also showed that artists practicing in informal settings frequently attend arts events at both formal and informal venues. Among survey respondents, close to 70 percent had attended performances at a public park or other open-air facility within the past year, 58 percent had visited a museum, 48 percent had gone to the theater, 45 percent had seen a performance at a college or university, and 40 percent had attended a gallery exhibit. Clubs, coffee houses, concert halls and dinner theaters were also ranked popular. A little over 50 percent of respondents indicated that they had been very inspired by attendance at artistic events. Some 76 percent of respondents indicated that they were more inclined to attend performances because of their own participation in art making. Ethnographers also recorded numerous instances of study participants speaking about specific performances they had seen, arts events they were planning to attend, and sharing reviews of shows or of the work of individual artists. The researchers did not find evidence, however, of any coherent audience-building strategy by formal arts institutions targeting the informal arts, or of any consistent outreach efforts.

Finally, the ethnographers documented a variety of efforts and strategies used by artists in the informal sphere to attain a foothold in the formal sphere, either through recognition by the non-profit institutions or through commercial production. The hip hop artists, for example, produced their own compact discs, which they distributed at radio stations, publicized at performance venues, and marketed at record stores, on the street and in clubs. Groups also strove to perform at venues that would give them more visibility; visual artists banded together to put on shows in rented or bartered gallery spaces; actors auditioned for roles in major productions as well as in community theaters; and poets and writers either published their own works or submitted them to literary journals. Despite aspirations on the part of some, researchers found few artists who succeeded in moving from the informal to the formal end of the continuum.



In the aggregate, these informal activities make important contributions to the arts-related economy, from the buying of supplies, to investing in training, paying admission fees and the like. In addition, the informal arts continue to play an important research and development role in contemporary culture, (as recently indicated, for example, by the cross-over of hip-hop art forms from the informal to the formal, and likewise in the popular resurgence of “roots music” from various parts of the country). Despite these impacts, the researchers did not find evidence of extensive recognition of the flow between the informal and formal. Researchers found no widespread recognition of informal arts practice within the informal arts world. The researchers did not find widespread recognition of the informal arts as an important source of creative nurturance and as a market contributor on behalf of the formal arts.

## **CONCLUSION: POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

What are the implications of the study findings for policy discussions about arts advocacy and civic engagement? Researchers discovered that, despite their positive characteristics and potential, the informal arts remain largely hidden from view, while the energy and creative contributions of artists in this part of the sector remain unrecognized and untapped. Obstacles such as scarce resources, insecurity of space, insufficient access to affordable training or production sites, and a dearth of information about existing opportunities are common. To remove these barriers, to enable greater participation and to fully realize the potential of the informal arts, the study authors offer a series of policy recommendations.

- **Integrate arts practice in community development** - The informal arts can be a significant component of strategies designed to expand and build upon social capital in communities. Many communities have abundant but underutilized capacity-building potential, including rich connective networks and other social assets. Yet, community development strategies are often focused exclusively on physical infrastructure and economic development, lacking intentional strategies to expand and build upon existing social structures. Policy makers, community activists, philanthropic entities and others working to invigorate civic life should make concerted efforts to integrate arts practitioners from across the continuum into asset-based community development efforts. Clearly, the creativity and problem-solving skills, the high level of civic-mindedness, and the personal satisfaction that artists demonstrate can be tapped for more effective approaches to improving both efficacy and expanding social capital. Linking arts practice to other aspects of urban development will serve to increase both the spaces of arts practice and the spaces for community empowerment.
- **Remove barriers to informal participation and enhance access** - To meet the high interest that clearly exists, public officials and urban planners should seek ways to expand resources, facilitate access and provide opportunities for informal participation. Institutions that already intersect with informal arts practice should be supported in their efforts to sustain and expand activities. Classes and other arts programs in such places as public parks

and local libraries, as well as in private venues such as neighborhood cultural centers and other community-based sites, need to be increased, not decreased. Cultural facilities, materials, equipment, educational opportunities and clear information should be made as widely available as possible, so that people who want to participate have an opportunity to do so in a variety of structured or unstructured ways.

- **Build arts advocacy coalitions across informal - formal divides** - While arts advocacy has rightly promoted the civic benefits of strong non-profit and commercial arts organizations, these strategies should be expanded to include advocacy for the informal arts. If the arts are ever to be fully recognized for their contributions to the public interest, broader coalitions in support of the arts must coalesce across divides of professionalization and specialization. Sharing of increased resources, information and decision-making across the full span of the arts continuum will assist the development of such coalitions, and lead to more effective advocacy in support of the arts as necessary and vital components of civic life. For this to happen, cultural policies in support of informal practice must be developed that are compatible with the rights of all artists working professionally to be fairly compensated for the value of their creative work.
- **Make the informal arts more visible** - Despite its popularity, informal arts practice remains largely hidden from view. Civic leaders and leaders of arts communities, including those representing small to large-scale non-profit or commercial arts institutions, should make efforts to publicly recognize and remark upon the value of informal arts practice. More inclusive terminology and practice is needed to insure that the continuous nature of arts production (rather than simplistic dichotomization) is valued and upheld.

In part, this will require clarity in the use of descriptive terms, especially those that carry multiple, sometimes pejorative meanings (i.e., “amateur” and “professional”, which may be used to simply distinguish employment status, but may also be interpreted as referring to levels of artistic proficiency). The authors of the study themselves found it a challenge to settle on neutral terminology. While informal arts participants are often self-taught, some are academy trained. Whether self-taught or school-trained, some are highly accomplished, others less so. Some may not be equipped for a successful career in the arts, some choose not to pursue one, while others are impeded from achieving one. Yet others slip in and out of professional employment, but are involved in the informal arts throughout. Given the complexity, it will be particularly important to develop descriptive terms unburdened by intended or inadvertent pejorative meanings. In order to navigate this complexity, it will be helpful to understand the “informal” in informal arts as involving the “process” and the “context” of art-making, not, as a threshold matter, the “product” of the activity, nor the characteristics of the artist’s training.

- **Collect missing data on social impact of the arts** - Finally, further research, both ethnographic and quantitative, needs to be conducted in Chicago and elsewhere, to collect systematic data on the assets created by arts production and the obstacles faced by artists. Trends in cultural policy limiting valuation of arts activity to direct economic factors needs

to be complemented by ongoing investigation into the mechanisms and pathways by which art making creates value in individual and civic contexts. Social science research of this character (i.e. on the social context of arts production) should be carried out, and will be essential if a strong political case is to be made for public and private economic support for the arts. Additionally, systematic measures need to be developed to determine the efficacy of arts practice as part of asset-creation and effective community development.

# REPORT

## CHAPTER I THE CONTEXT AND METHOD OF THE STUDY

### Vignettes:

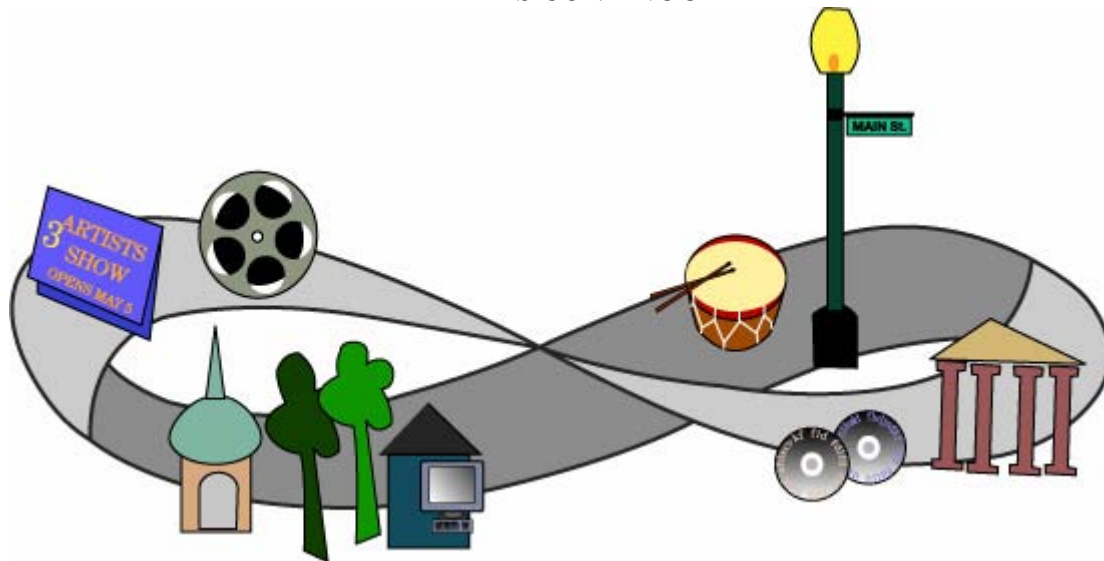
- *An African American secretary who writes poetry saw an ad in the Beverly community newspaper about a poetry reading at the public library, went and was “hooked”. She also writes articles for her church magazine and has published a local cookbook. The ethnographer met her while observing a poetry reading at an Afro-centric bookstore, where she (the secretary) was the featured poet. The poet/secretary mentions that a male co-worker/engineer has illustrated one of her poems; he also presents his drawings to guests of honor during farewell parties at their workplace, a federal government agency.*
- *The drumming circle takes place Friday nights, year round, in a Chicago neighborhood park. The circle is managed by a drummer who works as a music instructor at the park. 30-70 diverse participants sit in a circle of folding chairs on the lawn near the field house (inside if there’s inclement weather), with a variety of drums, tambourines and shakers in hand. Some are professional players, some are hobbyists, some just happen upon the circle – they heard a sound in the distance and followed it. A drummer / public school engineer comments, “I had no musical anything, but I wanted to be more expressive. Now I’m decorating the house and thinking of aesthetic things. I never wore jewelry until I was 40.”*
- *At a multi-racial church on Chicago’s north side, a small group of volunteers organized an arts gallery that features an “artist of the month”, some of whom have never shown their work before. Show openings, featuring refreshments and sometimes-live music, are held after Sunday morning services. Dozens of people mingle there, not only at the openings, but also on the other Sundays of the month. A description of the artist appears in the church program, and sometimes fliers are placed on seats. In addition to the gallery, the church provides free studio space to a church garden volunteer / painter, who doesn’t have room for large works in his apartment. This studio is a makeshift space in an unheated storage / tool shed adjacent to the church.*

These vignettes drawn from the ethnographers’ field notes provide a sense of the variety of experiences we discovered as we explored the social impact of the informal arts. The study is among the few ethnographic research projects that attempts to document a widespread, but little understood dimension of arts production by adults in contemporary urban society.

Over the last two years, we have conducted a research study in the Chicago metropolitan region, investigating adult participation in the “informal arts” (sometimes called unincorporated arts)<sup>1</sup>. These activities fall outside the traditional non-profit and commercial sectors, and include diverse experiences such as acting in community theater, singing in a church choir, writing poetry at the local library, or painting portraits in a home studio. Arts production exists on a continuum that ranges from informal activities that occur in ephemeral, highly spontaneous fashion in completely unstructured spaces (such as the street or individuals’ homes), to the long-established, formally organized practices governed by rules for inclusion and occurring in publicly labeled “arts” spaces (such as museums, galleries, performance venues and commercial production centers). A more detailed discussion of the continuum occurs in Chapter Five.

The study found substantial evidence that the more informal end of the continuum brings people together across such social boundaries as diverse occupation, ethnicity and race, age and geographic divides. Engagement in informal activities furthermore affords participants opportunities to develop or acquire individual and collective skills and inclinations that are significant for life-long-learning, building civic engagement and strengthening communities. The study found similar evidence that the formal (non-profit and commercial) part of the arts sector is closely linked with the informal, each side deriving benefits from the connections.

### *THE ARTS CONTINUUM*



In this chapter, we place the research study within the context of other research and policy discussions that are currently shaping the understanding of arts production.

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<sup>1</sup> The informal arts is the term we have chosen to use to describe the subject of our study because it captures the types of sites and activities we documented; however, all terms or definitions are only partial descriptors of this phenomena. Chapter Five contains a detailed discussion of the issues surrounding definitions and terms.

We review the catalysts for the study, the policy debates over a national perspective on arts and culture, and the anthropological literature on the social context of the arts. We then describe the study's method and research process. Finally, we outline the organization of the report.

### **Early Catalyst For The Study**

The decision by the Chicago Center for Arts Policy at Columbia College to pursue this research study of the informal arts was influenced by: 1) The American Assembly Consensus Report, entitled "*The Arts & The Public Purpose*", which came out in late 1997, 2) The National Endowment for the Arts' *Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*, the latest of which was also conducted in 1997, and came out in 1998, and 3) A research study then being conducted by Mark Stern and Susan Seifert of non-profit arts organizations in Philadelphia, under the title *Social Impact of the Arts Project*.

As a threshold matter, the Assembly report (1997) and the NEA survey (1998) focused attention on the informal arts (which the American Assembly called "unincorporated arts", and defined as: "the range of citizen-based, often vocational arts in their many manifestations"). This amorphous bundle of popular artistic activity (ranging from performing in community theatre to singing in the church choir, writing poetry and the like), had not received very much attention by arts policymakers, or many others in the arts community, until this time. The American Assembly is a national educational institution affiliated with Columbia University, which, about twice a year, convenes authorities from relevant constituencies to examine issues of vital public interest (for example, in areas such as health, education, etc.). In 1997, the 92<sup>nd</sup> American Assembly brought together about 100 representatives of the commercial, non-profit and public arts sector, to consider the role and place of the arts in America. It was co-chaired by past NEA Chairman Frank Hodsell and former director of the Rockefeller Foundation's Arts & Humanities program, Alberta Arthurs.

The Assembly report argued for an inclusive view of the arts sector, as made up of a wide spectrum of activities spanning a commercial, non-profit and informal continuum. It anecdotally suggested a great deal of cross-movement and interdependence among the various parts of the sector. It also stressed that there was a significant and detrimental empirical data gap about the informal arts, about their overall impact and about their relationship to the rest of the arts sector.

The Assembly also tried to reckon with the reasons why the arts, as a sector, remain unable to effectively compete in the court of public opinion with other sectors such as business, education, science & technology. One of the conclusions the American Assembly reached was that the arts sector (broadly defined) has failed to make as convincing a case as it could about the ways in which the arts serve significant "public purposes" that are vital to individuals, communities and the nation (such as contributing to quality of life and economic growth, helping to form an educated and aware citizenry, enhancing individual life, and helping to define what it is to be a member of one's

community). According to the report, one of the things working against making a more successful case was the scarcity of empirical data about the social impact of the arts on American life (upon which a fuller theory base could be built).

A second factor that influenced the decision to conduct the study were the statistics that the NEA issued in 1998 as part of its *Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*, which showed a substantial number of Americans personally participating in hands-on art activities. The independent survey consisted of about 12,500 national telephone interviews conducted in 1997 by Westat Corporation of Rockville, Maryland. Among the categories that were surveyed was “Personal Participation in the Arts” a category that referred to arts participation by “doing”. Respondents were asked whether they had personally performed or created works in given categories in the previous year (categories included various musical forms, dance, acting, painting, drawing, sculpture, creative writing, photography as an artistic activity, creating ceramics & jewelry, and weaving among others). The respondents who answered affirmatively were then asked whether they had performed or exhibited their work publicly. The number of probable personal participants nation-wide was then computed by multiplying the participant rate by the U.S. resident non-institutionalized population, 18 years of age and over, calculated using the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, March 1997, which was then 195.6 million.

Two-thirds (66.6%) of the respondents said they had participated personally in at least one of the categories. The NEA calculated that this translated into a staggering 130 million people nation-wide who might be arts participants. The survey projected that:

- 33 million adults are involved with photography as an artistic activity
- 31 million could be said to paint, draw and/or sculpt
- 24 million may express themselves through creative writing and
- 22 million to play classical music

As far as public performance, display or publication was concerned, the survey showed that:

- the most popular public arts activity is singing in a choir with more than 20 million adult Americans projected to sing in groups in public
- more than 5 million American adults are projected to act in public performances of non-musical plays
- nearly over 10 million are projected to publicly display their paintings, drawings, sculptures or photography.

These struck us as very significant fractions of the total population, and made us wonder if a substantial portion of participants’ discretionary time might in fact be devoted to these arts activities. Here then were these provocative numbers, but no real detail about what they meant. Why do so many people participate? What is the impact



of this participation? How does this activity fit in with the rest of the arts sector? The NEA's *Survey* lent quantitative authority to the anecdotally recognized pervasiveness of American personal arts participation. CCAP hoped to be able to add depth and dimension to the numbers, to provide some of the detail necessary to a full understanding of the nature and impact of such participation.

The third factor influencing the decision was the study undertaken at the University of Pennsylvania (Stern and Seifert, 1998). The study appeared to be one of a very few to actually examine the impact of the arts. Through the use of community participation surveys, the research identified a strong relationship between arts participation (in this case, attendance at arts performances or displays) and other forms of community engagement, including civic participation. The study authors suggested that, in order to have a fuller understanding of the phenomenon they were encountering, more detailed quantitative and qualitative research needed to be conducted. Thus, the under documentation of what appeared to be a widespread phenomena, coupled with preliminary indications of a potentially significant social impact impelled CCAP to undertake a more in-depth research study in Chicago.

With little exception, most arts research to date has focused on easily quantifiable data. This has produced a multitude of economic impact studies; surveys at the national, regional and local level of the numbers and kinds of non-profit and commercial arts organizations; studies of arts organizations' financial structures and health; as well as demographic studies of audiences and audience participation (Gray and Heilbrun, ; Wyszomirski and Lucci, 1997; Coopers and Lybrand, 1995; Lilley and DeFrance, 1995; NEA, 1997, 1992, 1985, 1982). Community economic revitalization studies also exist, as well as works discussing the potential use of the arts in community capacity building (Stern and Seifert, 1997; Kretzman and McNight, 1993). An additional number of studies have focused on the educational effects of the arts, primarily the development of critical thinking and other skills attainment by children and youths ( Fiske, ed., 1999; Catterall, 1998; Heath, Brice and Roach, and Aurora, 1998; NEA, 1996). While this work has been groundbreaking, research needs to be conducted on the broader social impact of both the formal and informal arts in American society (Jackson, 1997; Kaple, Deborah, Morris, Lori, Rivkin-Fish, Ziggy, and DiMaggio, 1996).

### **The Cultural Policy Debate**

Simultaneously, there was a growing interest in arts policy circles of establishing a national cultural policy. Several major efforts were undertaken to "launch" a more visible discussion of the elements of a policy and how "culture" could be taken with equal gravity as the "environment".

One significant development was the decision by the Pew Charitable Trusts to spend \$50 million over five years to study and support cultural policy development on a national level. The Pew initiative, which began in 1999, is intended to strengthen financial and policy support for America's cultural resources. As part of this initiative, Pew gave \$1.5 million to the RAND Corporation to conduct an integrative assessment of

the economic health of arts organizations, large and small, across the country. One of the RAND study's three tasks was to identify policy issues that are common to the non-profit performing arts and compare them to the policy issues in the for-profit and "amateur" sectors. This study (2001), based on analysis of trends in secondary data sources such as the U.S. Census, demonstrated that the larger non-profit arts organizations and the commercial arts sector are likely to experience continued growth and stability while medium-sized non-profit arts organizations are vulnerable due to shrinking audiences and financial resources. Interestingly, the RAND study identified activities in the "amateur" part of the sector as perhaps comprising 30 percent or more of all activities in the entire arts sector, while also accounting for the fastest growth in some areas. Despite their astounding prevalence, and despite recognition of its potential importance to a number of relevant concerns reflected in arts policy arenas, (Peters, M. and Cherbo, J. M., 1998; Wyszomirski, M. 1996) the "amateur" part of the arts sector has remained largely under-examined. Indeed, the Rand study also pointed out that this is perhaps the least studied of the arts sector. Thus, the cultural policy debate has largely proceeded without much attention to the informal end of the arts continuum. The debate has rather centered on an attempt to find an economic valuation for the arts, similar to the effort to determine the value of ecosystem services. Missing from these efforts has been an understanding of how arts practice constitutes a part of the social fabric of urban life and how it *creates* value in individual and civic contexts. As perhaps best expressed by Monnie Peters and Joni Maya Cherbo in their 1998 article on this subject, "...we must grasp this universal characteristic of the arts, for it surely will have programmatic and policy implications for the future" (Peters and Cherbo, 1998). Refocusing on the arts as a broad, multi-faceted sector, casting "a wider net", as Peters and Cherbo suggest, will be crucial to making a successful case about the value of the arts to the broader community.

### **The Social Context Of Art-making: Anthropological Perspectives**

Beyond arts policy and management circles, very little research has been done on the social context of arts making, although this is changing. Among anthropologists, the study of art and aesthetics has recently focused on the examination and contextualization of the aesthetics of distinct cultures and communities (Coote 1992, 1996; Morphy 1994, 1996; Phillips and Steiner, 1999; Price 1989). This is a much-needed move away from previous approaches that essentialized and isolated so-called 'Primitive' art (Gell 1998:1). Prior research in anthropology had attempted to delineate the symbolic meanings encoded in the artwork of non-Western people who have been the discipline's traditional subjects of study.

The "action-centered approach," as defined by Gell, which focuses on the process of art-making and the context of such production, is more anthropological than a semiotic approach that centers only on symbolic or textual analysis. However, despite the move toward this action-centered approach, nearly all anthropological research on art remains centered around description and contextualization of the artistic "language" of a people (Ben-Amos 1972; Berman 1999; Geertz 1983; Ingold 1996, Ward 1997). Additionally, most anthropological research continues to concentrate in non-western societies. Only

recently have social scientists started examining the impact of art making on social interaction and other aspects of social life or on the performative practices of urban industrial cultures (see for example, the above-mentioned Stern and Seifert's 1997 research on non-profit art organizations in Philadelphia). The bulk of this work is in the area of ethnomusicology: "ethnomusicology perspectives are increasingly social, linking the structure and practice of musical performances and styles with music's deep embeddedness in local and translocal forms of social imagination, activity and experience" (Feld and Fox 1993:25).

Some past research addresses the topic of social boundary crossing and social interaction in describing both the tendencies toward either anonymity and impersonality or community identity within local art worlds (Finnegan 1989; O'Connor 1997; Regis 1999). Stressing the variety of experiences and perspectives in any urban setting, research shows that both impersonal and personal relationships develop within and between local art worlds. A degree of anonymity allows different people to come together and focus their energy on weaving their unique expressions into a social fabric. Examples include the coming together of unfamiliar jazz musicians or that of performers and their audience. Our study uses this analysis as a point of departure. Whereas much research recognizes the great diversity of individuals and group dynamics and also reports a great deal of variety in depth of relationships (Bauman 1971, 1990; Cadaval 1991; Crafts, Cavicchi and Keil 1992), and some research has looked at economic, public policy, and educational effects of art participation (Catterall 1998; Coopers and Lybrand 1995; Gray and Heilbrun 1993; Heilbrun 1987), relatively little research investigates the impact of arts participation on everyday social interaction and bridging (Stern and Seifert 1997; Hanna 1992). Public and informal participation in the arts builds a public sphere and, as Finnegan recognizes, builds "local music worlds." These "worlds" certainly involve crossing social boundaries and the development of public resources for particular skills and self-expression.

This study also builds from anthropological discourse on arts practice and its role in construction and representation of community identities. Most research on this topic has centered around informal participation in the arts as a functional element of social memory building, communication, or a direct expression of life in a particular community (Bauman 1990, 1971; Hanna 1979, 1983; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1992; Spitzer, 1992). For example, Hanna (1979) proposes that the urban area is a stimulus for innovation and diversity, that dance is a "manifestation of urban contingencies," and that the restriction of some forms of dance comes out of specific urban dynamics. Hanna's study, and other research of this kind, shows that artistic expression is simultaneously generative and reflective of the heterogeneous urban population (Danielson 1991; Gilroy 1997; Lavenda 1997). Thus, from this perspective, arts practice is defined as the aesthetic expression of life in an urban environment that creates and recreates social phenomena. These observations and theories are important for a general understanding of performance in community communication, continuity, and change. This study builds on this work by comparing several different genres of expression to deepen our understanding of these processes.

Recent ethnographic research also incorporates performance into a mechanism for community solidarity (Auser 1970; Baron and Spitzer Eds. 1992; Spitzer 1992; Thomas 1997). This research discusses artistic expression in terms of shared experiences and memories. Performance fosters social identity and centralizes memories. “These experiences of festivaling engage people’s minds, bodies, and emotions, and lay down a set of physical, cognitive, and emotional memories,” writes Lavenda (1997:7), constructing what Connerton calls a “bodily social memory”. Lavenda writes that artistic expression in the public sphere, exemplified in the festival, provides its own structure, time, and history. “Performance of community and the creation of the sets of things remembered and things forgotten...create the community symbolically and physically” (Lavenda 1997:9). Our study adds to this literature by widening the scope beyond the performative moment to explore the processes that under gird them and how day-to-day interactions within this context impact other aspects of people’s lives.

Finally, for many years scholars have been investigating creativity and innovation in community context (Csikszentmihalyi 1994; Lavie, Narayan, Rosaldo 1993; Stern 1991; Wagner 1981). Roy Wagner (1981) writes that creativity is always emerging; the youth of any given community transforming the traditions they inherit. According to this approach, tradition and community identity are perpetually changing entities, lending to a construction of “everyday” innovations as essential aspects of culture and society. “From this perspective, mundane everyday activities become as much the locus of cultural creativity as the arduous ruminations of the lone artist or scientist,” writes Lavie, Narayan and Rosaldo (1993:5; but for an alternate perspective see Csikszentmihalyi 1996). Our study documented the processes through which this type of creative innovation is nurtured through participation in informal arts practice.

## **Study Methods**

Our research aims to broaden the scope of inquiry and moves through anthropology into a study of the ways in which art and everyday life intersect beyond the specific functions of art examined in the above mentioned literature. We also hope that an anthropologically-informed approach will help to broaden the scope of arts policy beyond a defense of the need for funding for arts organizations and toward an advocacy for locating art production at the center of arts policies for improvement of the health and well-being of the country’s residents.

To that end, we have emphasized a theoretical framework for our study that approaches arts production as a collective social “asset” necessary to the nurturance of a democratic civil society. There is a considerable debate over the concept of “social capital” or community assets in the social science literature. The debate has largely centered on whether or not social capital or community assets exist in sufficient quantity in poverty-ridden urban locations, and while much of the research until the last five years emphasized the “deficit” of social capital in poor communities (see Putnam, 2000; Sowell, 1994; Wilson, 1996), the academic discourse is now shifting to the investigation

of assets (following the work of McNight and Kretzman, (1993) as well as the work of Stanley Hyland, 1999).

Still, much of this most recent research has tended to investigate the question only in the most resource scarce sites in metropolitan regions. Little attention has been paid to the broad sector of the population that are the working poor, and the lower to upper middle class. Yet, increasingly, the social geographies of metropolitan regions are not so neatly divided into “inner city” zones of poverty or suburban rings of affluence. Processes such as gentrification, settlement patterns of new immigrants, and policies such as reform of welfare, scattered site low-income housing development and promotion of enterprise or empowerment zones are changing the demographic and social characteristics of cities in ways that require new understandings of where social capital, or community assets may be located. Here, anthropological research is making a significant contribution through documentation of how changes in demographic and settlement patterns are changing the character of communities, particularly the patterns of cultural interaction (See Gregory, 1998; Sanjek, 2000; Williams, 1988 for recent examples).

Additionally, sociologists have tended to concentrate on documenting the presence or absence of community assets through such indicators as infrastructural conditions, the strength and weakness of institutions, and the degree of collective activity. However, anthropological research over the past three decades in urban communities indicates that community assets also exist in less tangible states – such as in networks of social relationships, or in the historical memory of community life --- and are also more fluid, (so that, for example, there can be a temporary coalition over a specific issue that then dissolves once the issue is resolved). Informal arts activities may fall into this rubric because they often occur in temporary and ephemeral formats. The research approach we used was designed to allow the collection of systematic data in these less researched types of assets. While treatment of wider structural social conditions is beyond the scope of this study, the focus on arts practice as a social asset can contribute to our understanding of how people organize, what the creative potential of communities or groups may be, and the social context of arts practice.

Qualitative, and more specifically ethnographic, methods are more useful than quantitative methods alone in this endeavor because they allow for the investigation of process. Ethnographic methods also are advantageous because they concentrate on eliciting the interrelationship between different variables or social institutions in order to provide a holistic picture of social life. The holistic approach is especially important for an analysis of the informal arts in everyday life because much of the policy and social science literature on the arts has tended to emphasize it as a separate sphere of activity, located in the formal institutions of artistic production or representation.

In order to document the impact of the informal arts, the researchers gathered data relating to three areas of inquiry all focusing on adults, not children:

- 1) The extent to which informal arts participation leads people to interact across social barriers such as ethnicity/race, class, gender and age;
- 2) The types of skills and inclinations that participants acquire or develop in the course of art-making that could be useful for building community capacity; and
- 3) The processes through which links are established between the informal and formal sectors of arts production, and any gains arising from the ensuing interactions.

### **Early Research and Case Study Selection**

The ethnographers used two techniques to identify the scope and breadth of informal arts activities in the Chicago region. First, a series of eight focus groups were convened with artists, leaders and members of arts organization. Four of the focus groups were held at Columbia College and were deliberately constructed to bring together a diverse set of perspectives from the Chicago arts communities. Four other groups were held at sites of informal arts practice –two in public parks and two in public libraries. Information from these focus groups was analyzed to determine locations of informal arts practice, range and types of organizations and key contacts. Second, the ethnographers began visiting sites of informal arts practice that had been mentioned in the focus groups and others that were identified through newspapers and other media outlets. During this time, we collected information in the form of flyers, posters, and newsletters that we found at these sites. We also interviewed participants and observed performances.

Based on this preliminary work, we selected a set of case studies of informal arts venues or practitioners. The extended case study is frequently employed in urban anthropology (see Buroway, 1991). The advantage of the extended case study is that it enables the researcher to gather comparative data and to focus on the activities of an individual or set of individuals within a larger social context.

The criteria for the selection of the case studies included examining the major types of art making, different geographic locations across the city including a suburban location, a “spectrum” of the degree of informality (i.e. from very spontaneous and unorganized to some more institutional and formalized groups), and ease of access. Following is a table of the case studies, including the geographic locale where they were situated, the number of participants, the type of venue in which they convene, and the frequency of times they met during the fieldwork.

## THE CASES:

<b>TYPE OF GROUP or NETWORK</b>	<b>LOCATION</b> (Within Chicago unless otherwise indicated)	<b>SIZE OF MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>TYPE OF SPACE</b>	<b>MEETING FREQUENCY</b>
<b>Chicago Theater</b>	Southwest Side	20 core	Church Basement	According to production. schedule
<b>Suburban Theatre</b>	Northwest Suburb	25 core/100 in network	Public Park Recreation Center	According to production schedule
<b>Asian Music Ensemble</b>	South Side	40 core 100 members	Church Basement	Once a week
<b>Quilting Guild</b>	Far South Side	100	Public Park Field House	Once a week
<b>Church Choir</b>	South Side	40-50	Church	Twice a week
<b>Drum Circle</b>	Far North Side	35-70	Public Park	Once a week
<b>Painting Class</b>	North Side	12	Public Park	Once a week
<b>Writing Group</b>	Near South Side	15	Public Library Branch	Once a week
<b>Artists Who Share The Same Employer</b>	South Side	Over 100	Large Cultural Institution	Irregular
<b>Individual Visual Artists</b>	Various Locations	8-9	Homes/Studios	Irregular
<b>Masters and Apprentices, Ethnic &amp; Folk Arts</b>	Various Locations	7	Homes/Studios/ Schools	Irregular
<b>Hip-Hop Artists</b>	North & South Side/West Side	11	Homes/Call Radio Stations	Irregular

The cases ranged from formally organized groups (first 5 on chart) to less formally organized “classes” or networks (next 4 on chart), and finally to individual artists who are either working alone or very loosely affiliated with a network (last 3 on chart). The following description compares the groups according to types.

*Organized Groups.* The organized groups in our study varied considerably in composition, manner of operation, and type of art, but all had similar organizational characteristics. They all had an established governing structure—either elected officers or a board of directors. The governing group managed the organization’s funds (through a bank account), and administered the organization, keeping track of records, membership dues (if any), archives, and so on. Of the five, two—the Asian music ensemble and the Southwest theatre group have an official tax-exempt designation as a non-profit organization (501-3C). All of these groups’ governing bodies met on a regular basis, and also held meetings with all the regular members of the group. However, despite this level of organization, none had yet achieved other aspects of formality, such as a permanent home for their activities, organized fund-raising activities or a secure means of income, or selective criteria for membership. While all maintained some type of contact with other similar organizations, only one, the suburban theatre group, belonged to a formal theatre league (Suburban Community Theatre Association), which is more of a mutual-aid group with currently 9 affiliates. For these reasons, these organizations, representing the most formal end of the continuum in our study, are still definitely “informal” as compared to other types of organizations such as non-profit arts organizations, presenting organizations, or entities in the commercial arts sector. Following are short descriptions of each.

- The Southwest Side Community Theatre. This community theatre group has been operating in the same neighborhood for 12 years, and has moved a number of times from its original park gym location, first to a public school assembly hall, next to a music school and, finally to a stage in the basement of a small Protestant church, where it has been for the last eight years. Subsequent to the study the church closed and the theater group relocated to a grade school auditorium in a nearby suburb. The theatre group is managed by a board of directors comprised of eight people, most of who also serve as part of the production crew. The board decides which plays to perform after reviewing proposals made by members of the group or by outside directors interested in working with the group. The members of the group are diverse in age (ranging from late 60s to early 20s); occupations (with a fairly even distribution among such categories as professional/administration, education, service sector, and health sector), and income. The Board is currently ethnically diverse as well. The group pays a small portion of its ticket sales to the church as “rent”. Audiences for performances average about 40 people.
- The Northwest suburban Community Theatre. This group has been in existence for about 10 years and operates under the auspices of the town’s park District. The group currently has about 25 core members, a mailing list of 600 people (to whom they send notices of auditions) and a 11-member board, which operates through a committee structure. They put on two



performances a year and a summer variety show. The theatre started out in a former Junior High School building operated by the park district, but now works out of a gym in another Park District building. However, when their schedule conflicts with sports activities, they rehearse in the recreation center building. They are hoping that the Park District will improve the facilities for performance as part of general renovation work being done on the building. Their budget falls under the park district general funds, and they typically break even on productions. They draw audiences of up to 80 people for their shows. This group, as with the Chicago theatre group is diverse with respect to age, but has a narrower occupation and income range (participants are mostly in the administrative or professional occupations, and income falls between \$20,000-\$75,000. The group is fairly homogenous ethnically.

- The Asian Music Ensemble has been in existence for twenty years. People who are in the group were attracted to the music in a number of different ways. Initially, the group formed as a result of an adult music class offered at a cultural institution. When the class stopped, regular members decided to continue as a group and found a location to practice at an educational institution. They established themselves as an independent group and pooled their funds and purchased a set of instruments from Asia, and started practicing together. Over the years, they have had a succession of teachers. About 10 years ago, they moved to their current location, meeting in the basement of a university chapel. They operate under the auspices of the university's music department. The ensemble gives concerts, holds workshops and offers classes to any who want to learn. The weekly rehearsals are open to all, with people coming and going from week to week. Students or staff at the University can attend the weekly classes for free. All others who participate pay a quarterly fee of \$100.00. The group has a slate of five officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Coordinator) who are elected once a year. There is also a position of music director, but during the fieldwork period, that position was vacant. In September of 2001, an old teacher of the group resumed duties as the musical director. However, he lives outside of the city and can only come once a month to give classes.
- The Quilting Guild was started about ten years ago by a woman and three of her friends who realized after going to a variety of quilt shows, that there was no specific organization to bring African-American quilters together and make their work visible. She sent out letters to about 35-40 people in her network, and eight of these became the core of the Guild, initially meeting at each other's homes. Within a year, the group had grown to 17 people and successfully solicited space in a park district building on the South Side of Chicago. They did their first show within that year and have been putting on shows every other year since then. By the fall of 2001, their membership had increased to 100 people. The shows have become quite successful and so some of the revenue is returned to the Park District. The remainder goes to support other Guild activities, including an active community service component that provides quilts for hospitals and other service agencies. Guild

meetings are held once a month and used to make decisions about activities, expenditures, and plans for the shows. The Guild has a formal governing structure with elected officers and volunteer committees. There are also weekly “classes” offered by the Guild at the Park District facility. These two-hour sessions are a time when members come to show each other their work, get advice, teach the less experienced quilters, and generally socialize. The members of the guild are largely African-American women with a few white women and two men who are also members. The age range is diverse, and while many in the group are not currently working, there is a range of income.

- The Choir is a regular feature of one of the morning services at a South Side Church. The choir, in addition to singing at church services, rehearses once a week and sometimes more frequently if there is a special performance. The choir is a volunteer activity for church members (although the music director does receive a stipend), and most of the members do not have professional voice training. Members are recruited from the church roll and anyone who wants to join is permitted to do so. There is a broad age range, and choir members also live in different parts of the city. While most come from the vicinity of the church, others come from the Southern suburbs, while a few come from far northwestern suburbs. Their attachment to the church may stem from family ties, but also sometimes results from the reputation of the choir. There is also occupational diversity, with a range of incomes represented. The choir has been part of the church since its inception, and some of the current members of the choir joined the church as small children. The group does not favor “popular” music but rather sings purposeful hymns that advance the message of the service. They are thus seen as integral to the worship function of the church. Singers frequently discussed the importance of the spiritual dimension of their work.

*Loosely Affiliated Groups Or Classes.* This set of cases comprises the variety of less formally organized groups and classes, which we researched. Many people are first exposed to arts activities through this type of structure, attending a class or an artistic “event” such as a talent show, a festival, or a social get-together at a private home. The survey respondents, for example, indicated the importance of art classes in their background. Close to half of the respondents (47.5 percent) had taken adult education classes. People find themselves engaged by the activity and then become regular participants or practitioners. Sometimes, as in the case of the Asian Music group above, participants in a class form their own more formally organized group. Even when the class ends (as in the case of the Painting class described below), people will continue with the activity on their own or seek out other venues where they can practice their art. This set of cases also includes informal artists who formed loose networks with others they met at their workplace. The workplace, together with other public spaces such as the park or the library, become critically important venues for nurturing and fostering arts activities (this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5). Following are descriptions of these cases.

- The Drumming Circle takes place at a public park located on a major street in a neighborhood on the north side of Chicago. Held year round on Friday nights, the circle is managed by a drummer who is also a music instructor at the park. Weather permitting, participants (varying between 30 – 70 a night) sit in a circle of folding chairs on the lawn near the park field house and adjacent to the play lot. People relaxing on nearby park benches or strolling through the park often join in, sometimes stepping up to an idle conga drum or accepting a shaker or drum paddle that the facilitator or one of the children have given them. When necessary, the circle is held indoors in the auditorium. People hear about this drum circle through a variety of sources: through drumming classes, offered by the park district in other locations, through web sites devoted to drumming, through newspaper listings, and through word of mouth. Drumming circles now occur in a variety of locations around the city and are often mentioned in media features about art in Chicago. This particular circle was started about four years ago. Because it is open to anyone who wants to join in, there is a wide range of ages (including children), ethnic backgrounds, occupations and incomes. There are currently about 15 people who are regular participants.
- The Painting Class instructional “open studio” was part of an array of offerings at a north side park district facility. When we initiated the case study, the number of enrolled fluctuated between 10-12 people. Classes were offered as five-week sessions (two classes a week) for a fee of \$10.00. Some of the people who were in the class had found out about it just by wandering into the field house while they were in the park. One woman, however, had carefully researched art classes at a variety of locations before settling on this class. She traveled half an hour by bus to reach the class. Class participants were mostly women, although a few men also participated. Occupations were diverse as was income level. Class participants ranged in age from some in their early thirties to others in their mid- to later sixties. The class has been taught by the same instructor for four years. He is a formally trained artist who also participates in organizing art shows at a small space in Bucktown. In late 2000, the park district and the instructor could not negotiate a contract and so the class was curtailed. Students in the class were upset about the uncertainty surrounding the status of the instructor, and one or two wrote or called the park district. By late March 2001, this class seemed to have petered out. By the summer of 2002, it was back with a new instructor and only a few students.
- The Writing Group meets at a library on the near south side. The class was started under the auspices of a non-profit group that promotes creative writing as a mode self-empowerment. The organization sponsors writing groups for adults in a variety of venues, including schools (for parents), housing developments, job training centers, and libraries. The library writing group usually is filled to capacity (15 people) and people seeking to join are encouraged to go to other nearby writing groups. The group members meet once a week to share their writing, provide critiques to each other and discuss the subject matter of their work. Individuals’ work is published in a journal

produced by the non-profit group and members also have done readings from their work at open microphone performances. There is a facilitator who attends the weekly workshop, but the writers determine the themes, pace and tone of the discussions. The group is all African-American but diverse in age, gender and occupation. Although there is some homogeneity within the group, through their public performances and interactions with other writing groups working under the auspices of the non-profit organization the group meets and interacts with a wide range of people. The library where the group meets has historically been home to famous African-American writers.

- The Workplace Artists are located at a cultural institution that has a large public component. The total work force is about 600 people, which includes a wide range of occupations such as research scholars, technicians, craftspeople, administrators, service providers, educators and other professionals. When a general inquiry was sent to all employees asking if they engaged in some kind of artistic activity, close to 20 percent reported that they did. A little over half of these filled out the survey questionnaire. Their reported artistic activities cover the gamut of types. People reported playing music, dancing, doing visual art, writing, photography, and making crafts among other activities. Responses came from all parts of the institution's occupational hierarchy. Of particular interest in this cases study were two groups of artists who formed loose networks at the workplace. One was a group of musicians who would informally play together during the lunch hour on a weekly basis. The other was a group of visual artists with a range of formal training, who, having met each other at work, together to organize a show of their work at a small gallery. The musicians group was comprised of about 7-8 people while the artists group had 10 people in it. However, both groups were fluid with people joining or leaving at various intervals. The musicians group lasted for about one year, after which, as work activity intensified, they found themselves unable to organize to practice together. However, currently, members of the group still record music individually and one member then puts together a "holiday" CD for internal distribution.

*Individual Artists Working Alone Or In Loose Networks.* The final set of cases described here are comprised of individuals either working alone or in loose networks. These artists were engaged in a variety of activities and while at first glance, they seem an odd fit into the study objectives, they nevertheless provided important insights into the interaction of arts practice and other aspects of civic life and also specifically on the interconnections between the informal and formal ends of the arts continuum. All three cases contained some of the most professionally trained artists in the case study or some of those most intent on succeeding in the more commercialized arts sphere. Even among those working mostly alone, the community context was important for obtaining resources and inspiration.

- A network of visual artists centered on, but not limited to Chicago's South side comprised this case study. This network is very loose, and not all members that participated in the study were directly connected to one another.

We focused on three nodes of artists, noting the relationships artists have within these nodes, and the links these nodes have to each other and the wider visual arts community. First is a group of African-American and white artists who show together in at least two of the artists' home studios. (These home studios are standard apartments in which a bedroom or study has become a dedicated arts production space and the entire apartment becomes gallery space during an open studio night. So these are not shows that hang for a month, but are one-night events.) Not only do they gain one or two additional places to show, but promotion and refreshments are also a shared responsibility, the commission on sales is lower than in most standing commercial galleries, and they benefit from one another's customer base. The boundaries of this node are fluid; two of the African American artists who show together sited a white artist, who hadn't been in the group shows, as having introduced them and as having been supportive of their efforts over the years. In another example one of the artists whose studio is used for shows has also done solo shows in which he coordinated promotional efforts with another African-American painter in his neighborhood. They had shows at the same time and printed a single flier to advertise both, but they did not have their work in one another's spaces. Most of these artists either met through other artists or by working at a picture-framing store where they worked together or were in client/service-provider relationships. Others met through a South Side non-profit art and culture center.

- Another node where artists were interviewed is the arts center cited above where two of the aforementioned artists met. This center has been in existence since the late 1930s as a dedicated African-American arts and cultural center, and was originally funded as part of the New Deal. Besides hosting shows, which do hang for an extended period of time after opening receptions, the center offers a limited number of classes for adults and kids, those in photography and painting taught by the center's staff of two. The classes at this location were not a part of the study, but interviews were conducted with these two staff members, as they are practicing artists in their own right. The education director uses a back room of the first floor as a dedicated painting studio for his artwork. The center director does most of his art in his home studio, a Queen Ann style mansion not far from his job at the center. His home studio was the third node of artistic practice where fieldwork was conducted.
- While he rents this home, it is with the understanding of the owner that he is running it as an emerging art center. Much of the first floor is undergoing renovation in order to be turned into a dedicated gallery space. He has dedicated art making and living spaces on the second floor, where he sometimes paints all night in the large front room while watching his favorite movies on video. The front room on the first floor is a classroom where he teaches adult drawing, painting and printmaking classes three mornings a week. These classes include as many as five or six students on a typical

Tuesday morning. It is an open studio structure in which students work independently of one another, receiving individual attention from the instructor as he moves from student to student. He has standard exercises for beginners and for students as they embark upon projects with new techniques and media. This is not to say the painters do not interact, offering opinions, encouragement, and advice. The center director has been teaching art for more than two decades, but has been in this location for the last 5-6 years. This class was observed on a couple of occasions for the study, and the mostly retired African-American women that attended were also briefly interviewed during class time. People come to the center director for classes because of his reputation for realistic rendering, especially in portraiture and human figures, and his ability to teach these skills by breaking the process down into small, standardized steps. (At least two of the painters in the class reported hearing about him through another well-known African-American painter who teaches a very different painting style through classes in the Chicago Park District.)

- Masters–Apprentices were a set of artists and their students who were contacted through the Illinois Arts Council’s Ethnic and Folk Art Division’s Master-Apprentice grants program. We interviewed and observed performances and classes for seven artists who had applied for grants to this program: a Bosnian puppeteer, an Irish Dancer, a South Asia dancer, a Chinese couple who played classical Chinese music, a Mexican guitarist, and a Spanish Flamenco dancer. Apprentices for all of these artists except the Chinese and the Irish Masters were also interviewed. Some of the sites in which these artists perform are indicative of the informality of the settings. The Bosnian puppeteer, for example, gave a performance for children at a dress shop while their parents were shopping. The Irish dancer’s studio is in the basement of her home.
- Hip-Hop Artists. This set of rappers, deejays, and graffiti artists that we interviewed were located through snowballing sampling techniques after initial contacts were made with one or two artists. The hip-hop style of music grew out of earlier styles in low-income African-American communities in the 1970s (George, 1999). It has two main components: rapping (fast rhythmic spoken word/song lyrics) and DJ-ing (sampling previously recorded music on turntables while scratching the vinyl records). These music components are associated with two other hip-hop art forms: break-dancing and graffiti. While hip-hop music styles have now become integrated into commercialized popular music, it continues to have an informal component, in that artists perform it in non-commercial venues, for example, in public spaces or in the streets. The particular set of artists we interviewed were all performing at informal arts venues but had varied experience with achieving commercial success. None had obtained a contract with a major distribution label, however. They strove for exposure in a variety of venues—for example, performing on a late night radio show dedicated to local artists at a University-run studio, attending talent shows, going to open microphone events, or performing at events sponsored by local record stores. However,

none have successfully entered the commercial world, and all have some other non-arts related means of income generation. Most of the artists we interviewed were in their 20s or early 30s. They were ethnically diverse, and included African-Americans, whites, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Asians. These artists knew of each other or knew of the venues where others performed but they did not all work together. Generally, it seemed artists worked in crews of two or three, and in addition to performing the music, some were interested in producing the music for others and some of the latter had sound and recording equipment in their homes.

### **Ethnographic Field Work**

At each of these case study sites, a standard procedure was followed. First, informed consent was obtained from the group as a whole to permit qualitative research with the participants. The ethnographer then entered into a period of participant-observation at the site. Participant-observation is at the heart of all ethnographic method. The ethnographer joins the group and attempts to engage in the same cycle of events as all the other members. In so doing, the ethnographer is able to directly observe and experience the impact of the social relationships constructed in the course of everyday life. This provides the opportunity to compare what people do with what they say, as well as an opportunity to more deeply engage with study participants on the nature of their experiences as well as their perceptions and attitudes. In this study, participant observation generally consisted of attending rehearsals, classes, workshops, studio sessions and public performances. Ethnographers generally tried to learn the arts activity. Thus, one ethnographer took a painting class, became assistant stage manager for a theatrical production, learned how to drum, and wrote poetry. Another became a quilter, and the third learned how to play South Asian ensemble music. Becoming informal artists themselves provided ethnographers the opportunity to learn the whole range of the experience: recruitment, inclusion, the nature of the skills and inclinations acquired and the significance of the social relationships created during participation.

Additionally, ethnographers attended group meetings and in some cases public events or meetings of sponsoring or affiliated groups. Participant-observation was accompanied by in-depth interviews with key informants at each of the sites, as well as the collection of contextual data from local sources (such as community newspapers, organization bulletins, neighborhood libraries and so on). As the field data was collected, it was entered into a qualitative data base management program, *Atlas TI*, and coded for later analysis.

During the field research period, supplementary data on informal arts production was also collected from city-wide sources (i.e. newspapers, television and radio programs, administrative data collected by public agencies and arts organizations) on such things as the types and varieties of classes offered at public sites such as parks and libraries, informal arts performances, conflicts or struggles over funding or access to space, and public perceptions about the arts. Increasingly, urban anthropologists have

turned to these types of data sources as valuable tools for providing contextual data on the broader social and political context (c.f. Sanjek, 2000).

Finally, toward the end of the field research phase, a survey questionnaire was given to 310 artists at the case study sites. This represents almost a complete universe of core participants in the case studies. A total of 166 persons completed the survey, for a return rate of 54%. The survey was designed to obtain uniform data on the three major areas of inquiry and to determine the validity of certain patterns that had emerged as a result of the participant observation and interview phase of the fieldwork. Details of the survey sampling strategy and development of the instrument are provided in appendix.

The ethnographers, in conducting field research both during the preliminary phase and during the work with the case study participants visited locations in a total of 22 Chicago Community Areas (of 77 identified by the city):

Ashburn	Lincoln Park
Ashburne-Gresham	Logan Square
Bridgeport	Lower West Side
Clearing	McKinley Park
Douglas	Oakwood
Edgewater	Portage Park
Englewood	Rogers Park
Grand Boulevard	Roseland
Hermosa	South Chicago
Hyde Park	West Ridge
Kenwood	
Lawndale	

In sum, our research design permitted both documentation of the breadth of arts activities of adults in the Chicago region and in-depth exploration of the processes through which engagement with the arts impacts people’s everyday lives. The comprehensive scope of the research provides ample evidence to make some generalizations about patterns that may also be applicable in other cities in the United States.

The report is intended to be a comprehensive document that presents the bulk of the data gathered and analyzed during the course of the study. In Chapter Two, we describe in more detail the principle case studies that were the subject of the ethnography and place them both in the contemporary social context of the city and historical context of arts production in Chicago. Chapter Three reports on the data collected on the nature and extent of “boundary crossing” activity entailed in informal arts practice. Boundaries we examine here are both social and geographic and reflect the structural divisions that have been created historically as part of the process of social stratification. In Chapter Four, we delineate the types of skills and inclinations acquired or practiced in the context of arts making, and how these may be spilling over to other areas of civic life. In Chapter Five, we examine the relationship between the



informal end of the arts production continuum and the more formal and commodified end. We especially document the critical role played by professional, formally trained or career artists in linking the continuum. Finally, in the Conclusion, we summarize the policy implications of the study and provide recommendations for further research.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THE INFORMAL SECTOR OF ARTS PRODUCTION: MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE**

Much of what we term “informal arts” occurs beneath the radar of standard data collection practices of indicators of civic life. This is because these activities fall into the “assets” column of community life and as such are not privileged by documentation that emphasizes “deficits”. Thus, while there is ongoing data collection at the local, state and federal level on indices of deficits such as morbidity and mortality rates, public health concerns, levels of unemployment and labor force participation, and inflation rates, there is virtually no standardized and consistent data collection on either arts production or on other positive or asset-based indicators of community well-being.

Yet, we found that arts production in the “informal” sphere is far more ubiquitous than supposed. Using the variety of techniques mentioned in the previous chapter as well as culling of data from records of such agencies as the archdiocese of Chicago, the Park District and the Public Library system, and a search of 13 city-wide and neighborhood based newspapers, the researchers discovered a significant presence of arts production in over 60 percent of Chicago’s community areas.

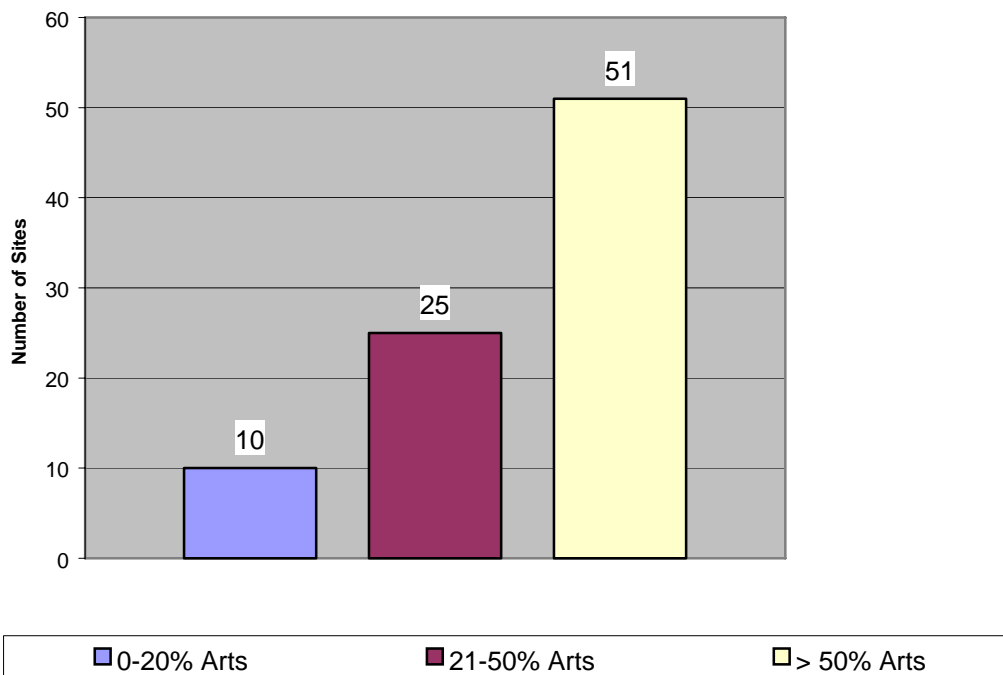
A representative of the Chicago Catholic Archdiocese provided information that the vast majority of Archdiocese churches probably have some kind of choral or other liturgical music group. However, the Archdiocese does not keep a list of these (the Chicago Archdiocese 1999 parish directory listed 386 churches, to give some idea of the potential size of this activity). Central offices of other faith-based institutions were similarly unable to provide data.

The Chicago Park District, which began some years ago to make a concerted effort to increase arts offerings (such as visual arts programs, small performance groups, and music classes) in city parks and field houses during Harold Washington’s term as Mayor, had more specific available data. In 2000, the Chicago Park District identified 237 neighborhood parks, located across the city. Of these, 146 listed program offerings in one or more of the “cultural arts” (subcategorized as “art“, “crafts”, “dance”, “literary arts”, “music” and “theatre”). Although the majority of these are youth-oriented, there are also numerous adult programs in each of the listed categories, including such specific offerings as orchestra, piano, ballet, folk and modern dance, painting and drawing, photography, ceramics, woodcarving, theatre, creative writing and the like. In the summer of 2001, 108 offerings (classes or activities) for adults were listed in parks in the seven regions of the case study locations (see appendix for specific programs).

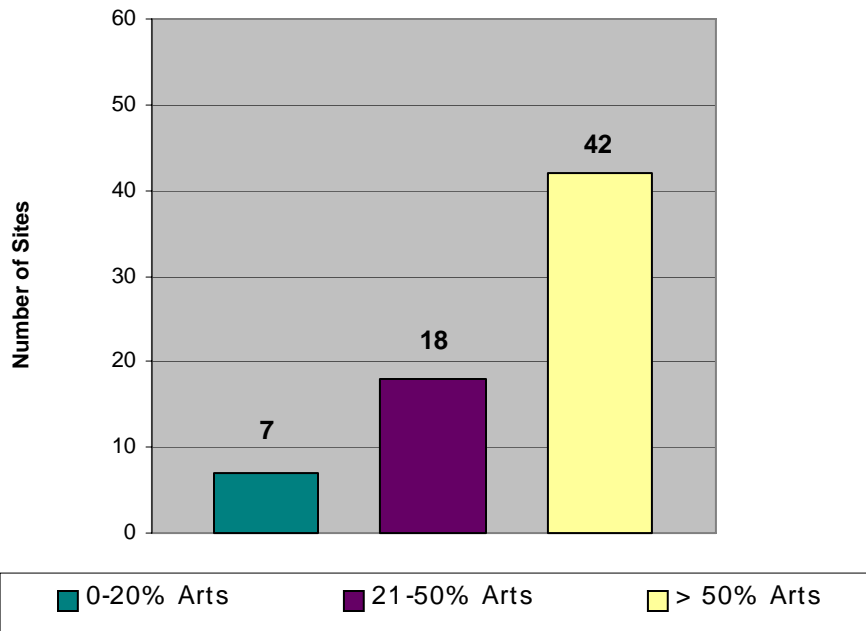
Data was also available on offerings at the local branches of the Chicago Public Library. Many public libraries host writing workshops and hold poetry readings or other similar activities. (A list of sample program activities is provided in the appendix).

Furthermore, both citywide and neighborhood-based newspapers carry listings or notices of a variety of informal arts activities. Data from these sources demonstrate that informal arts activities are widespread geographically and encompass a broad range of artistic disciplines. The following four graphs show the degree of activity we were able to identify during the early phase of the research. They represent information from a total of 86 sites in neighborhoods visited (67 within the city limits and 19 in surrounding suburbs), where all flyers, posters, etc. were collected from each site at the time of the visit. The sites include such venues as grocery stores, park field houses, coffee shops, churches, libraries and other similar public spaces. As shown, the data indicates that at approximately 60 percent of the sites, more than half of the publicized activities are of an artistic nature (within the city limits this holds for 62 percent of the sites). Furthermore, this same data shows the distribution of artistic disciplines to be quite broad, encompassing architecture, different types of visual arts, dance, theatre, performance, and multi-media activities, among others.

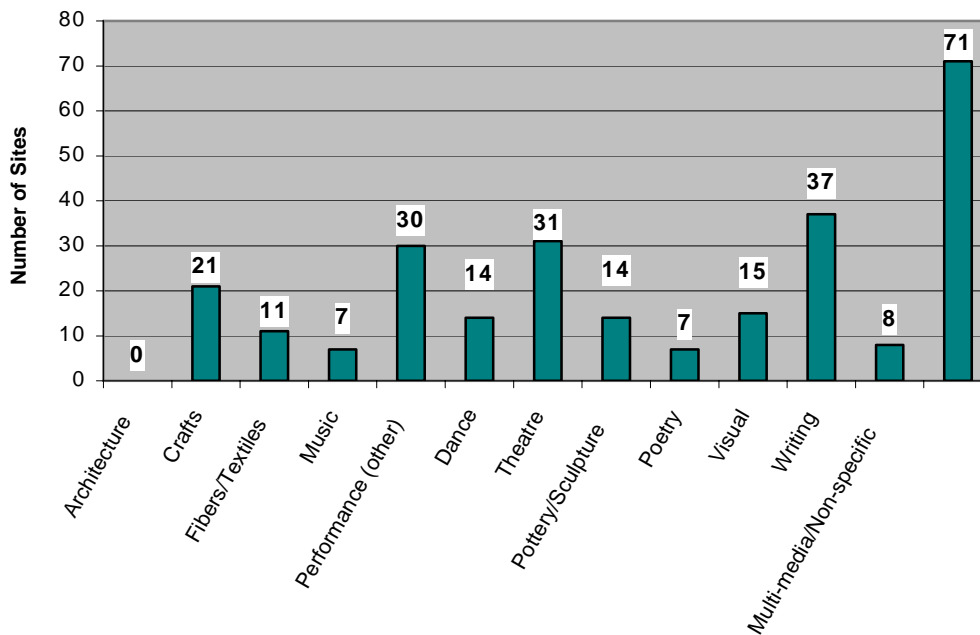
**Arts Activities as % of Total Announced at Each Collection Site in the Chicago Metropolitan Area**

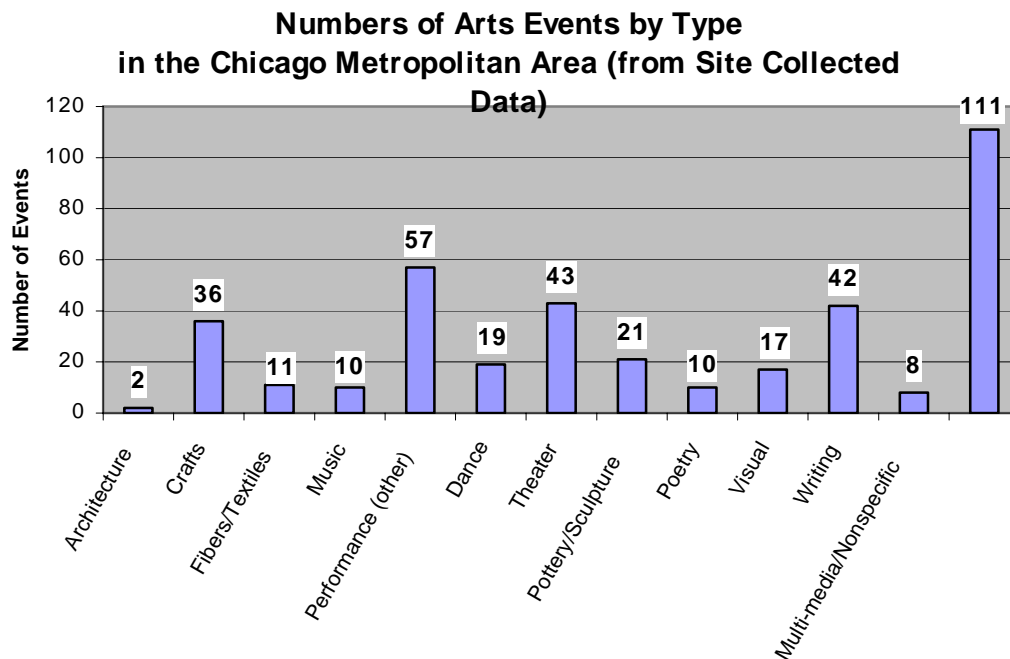


**Arts Activities as % of Total Announced at Each  
Collection Site  
within the Chicago City Limits**



**Numbers of Arts Activities by Type  
within the Chicago City Limits (from Site Collected Data)**





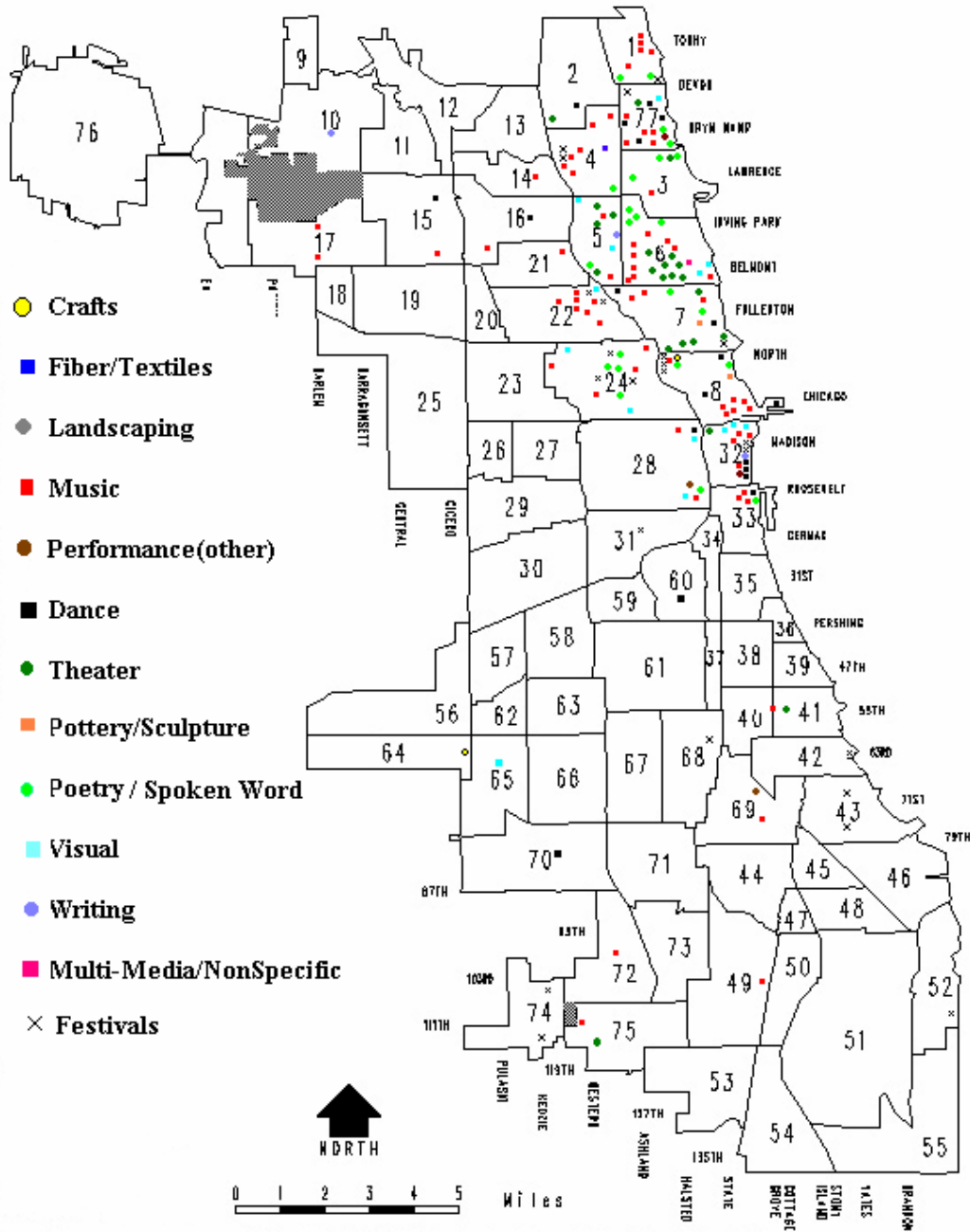
In order to further systematically gauge the extent and scope of informal arts activities, subsequent to this early research we initiated a systematic survey and analysis of thirteen newspapers and periodicals, some metropolitan-wide and some community-based. We clipped articles and advertisements, indexed and analyzed them for the months of August 2000 and March 2001, so as to further indicate the scope, breadth and visibility in print of informal arts activities around the city. Based on the comparison of these newspapers, we created a map showing the location of informal arts activities mentioned in the newspapers for both months. (See appendix--- for description of the specific newspapers that were used in this part of the study).

Beyond reflecting the ubiquity of the informal arts activities, the following maps demonstrated an interesting pattern that emerged from this part of the research: the uneven distribution of “visibility” of informal arts activities. From the first two maps it is clear that the informal arts activities reported in the print media are clustered in certain locations (especially on the North Side of the City). However, a slightly different picture emerges from the ethnographic fieldwork. In the third map below, we have depicted the three most frequently mentioned locations at each of the case study sites. Clearly, there is a more even distribution of informal arts activities in this map, indicating that artists in the informal sector know of activities occurring in a wider range of locations than are reported on by the media.

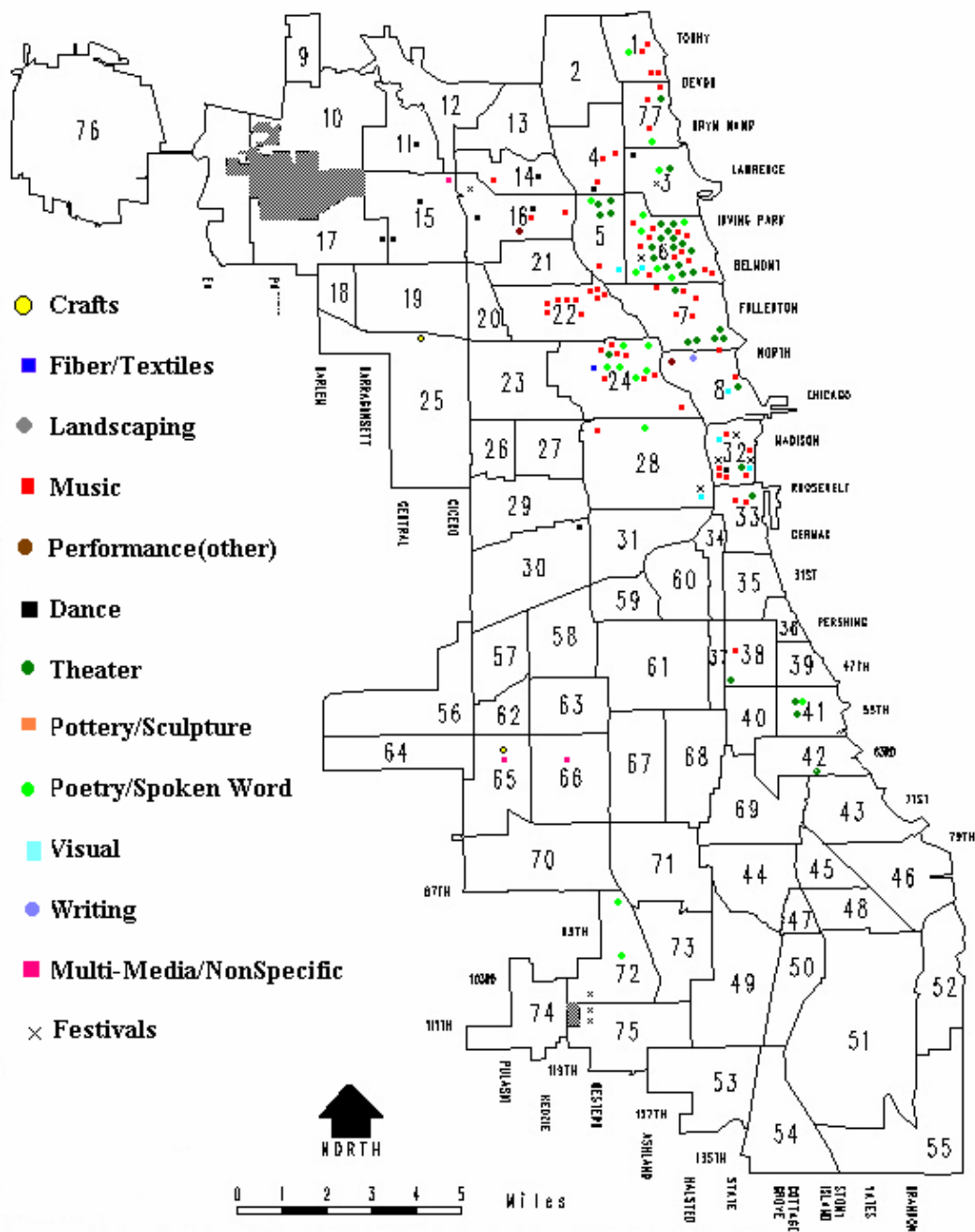
Why should this be so? Those sites identified in the newspapers tend to cluster in neighborhoods with widely recognized profiles as “arts-rich”. These neighborhoods, such as the Lincoln Park vicinity, Bucktown, and Pilsen (including the neighborhood of East Pilsen) contain a mix of both informal and formal sites for arts production and display, for example, festivals, classes, residential spaces, galleries, and a range of performance venues. The clustering of arts activities in these vicinities attracts more people and facilitates arts practice

across the continuum. The arts activities located in these neighborhoods therefore have more potential to achieve economic success as well. As a result, arts activities occurring in these neighborhoods are more visible and in turn attract more attention. In the ethnographic survey, for example, respondents reported learning about the art activities that they attended chiefly through newspapers (83.23%). Thus, it is not surprising that many participants mentioned that they frequented classes or attended performances in these localities, and they knew more artists in these localities than in their own neighborhoods if they lived in other parts of the city.

## Informal Arts Newspaper Research Map - August 2000

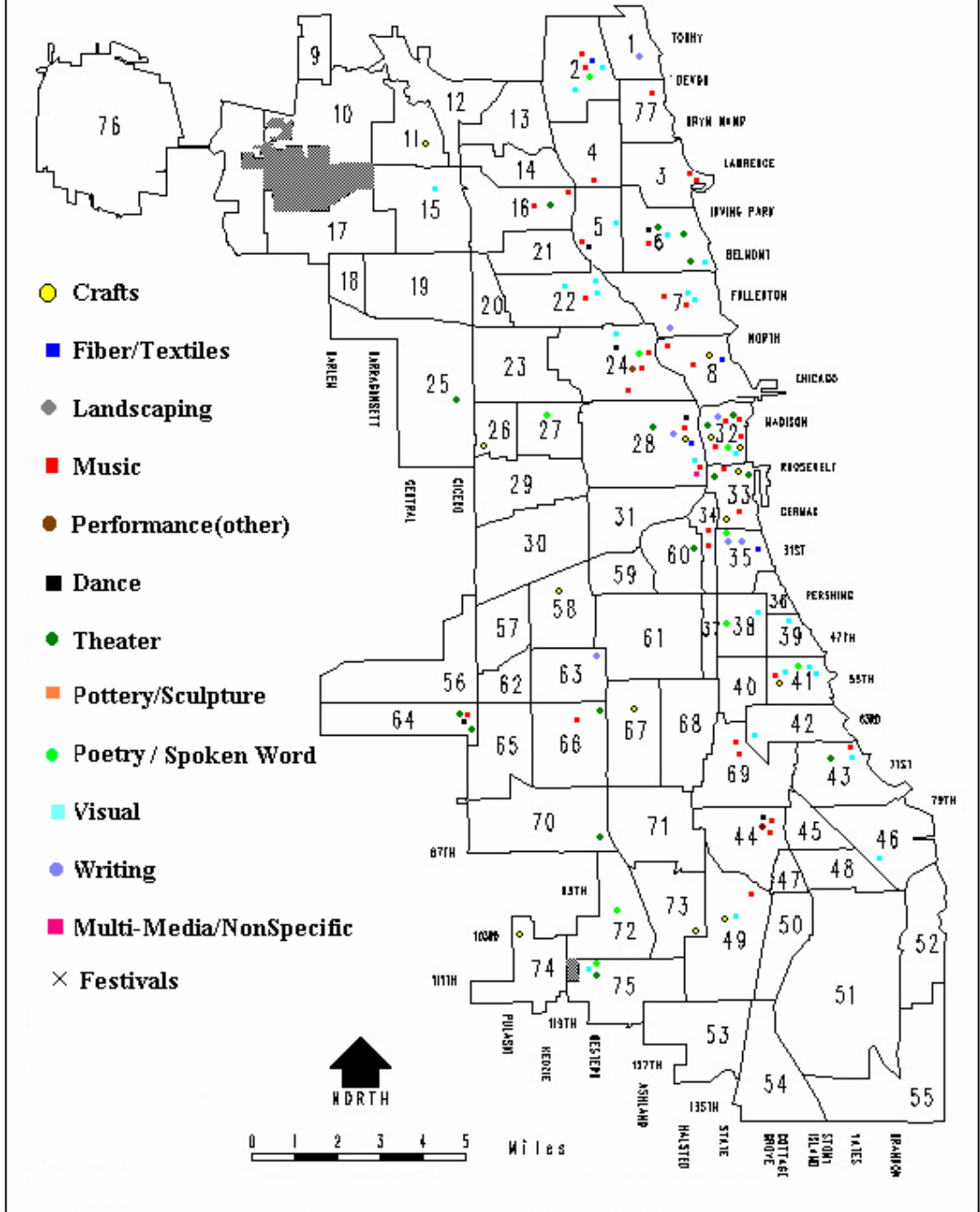


## Informal Arts Newspaper Research Map - March 2001





## Informal Arts Locations Map



An example of such a region is the North Lake Front, which includes the community areas of Lincoln, Lakeview, and West Town among others. This region is also where one of our case studies was located and is considered by some to be the epicenter for the North Side's cultural life. Residential areas in the region encompass some of the wealthiest sections of the city, although there is also a range of incomes and occupations represented in the neighborhoods in the region. According to the 2000 census, the current total population of the region is 433,993. The median household income for Lincoln Park is \$61,500, compared to the Metro areas \$44,700, Chicago \$34,700, and suburbs \$49,700 (Metro Report, 2000)<sup>2</sup>.

The community area is home to at least eight major Chicago theaters, including Steppenwolf, Second City, Royal George, Chicago Park District's Theater on the Lake, St. Sebastian Theater, Shattered Globe Theater, Victory Gardens, and the Apollo Theater. Lincoln Park Cultural Center operated by the Park District offers a variety of art and craft classes. Bars and restaurants in the region regularly feature local artists, work or invite artists to exhibit in their spaces. There are numerous art galleries as well. Other institutions, such as private schools offer art classes to adults, as do the theaters. It is not surprising, then, that the density of art activity would be noticed here and reported on widely.

Nevertheless, because artists also relied on other sources for learning about arts activities, their knowledge encompassed a broader landscape. In the survey, the most frequently cited sources after newspapers were "Mailed announcements, flyers, brochures" (73.65%), "Friends, relatives, other individuals" (65.27%), "Other artists" (62.87%), "Members of my art group" (60.48%), "Posters/notices in public areas" (57.49%), and "Broadcast (Radio & Television)" (53.29%).

We discovered as well that supposedly "arts-poor" localities still contain significant amounts of informal arts production, although they are more hidden. The community area of Bronzeville/Grand Boulevard, for example, is a site for one of the case studies but does not appear in the newspapers or other representations as an "arts" neighborhood. Furthermore, this community area, is typically statistically represented as one of the more "impoverished" neighborhoods in Chicago using the deficit approach to defining community (median household income was \$7,907 in 1990, population has decreased by 21 percent between 1990-2000, with a total population in 2000 of around 78,152). It is home to large public housing developments operated by the Chicago Housing Authority. These developments are currently undergoing "transformation" which entails the destruction of existing high-rises relocating the residents and replacing existing high-rises with mixed-income developments. The long-term effects of de-industrialization, discrimination, and disinvestments that have shaped settlement patterns and the availability of resources and services will not go away easily in this region.

In spite of these obstacles, however, there are ongoing efforts by community groups and residents who are trying to preserve and restore the rich cultural and economic life of the neighborhood and are contributing to positive social change. Furthermore, we found that in the community area, there are 78 places of worship with choirs, arts programs and classes in the major park in the neighborhood, a creative writing program at the public library, a coffee house

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<sup>2</sup> When available, we have used the 2000 census data; however at the time we constructed these community profiles, not all the regions had 2000 data available.

that hosts a regular spoken word open microphone performances, and several service organizations that are either offering arts programs or promoting neighborhood artists. Finally, Bronzeville/Grand Boulevard is benefiting from dedicated funds allocated to art and cultural projects and activities in the city's Empowerment Zone program. A "cultural zone" is being established in the area which will provide new facilities for several of the long-established arts organizations, such as the Muntu Dance Company and the Little Black Pearl Workshop. However, there is controversy in this neighborhood because even while some arts organizations are benefiting, others are losing ground, as was the case when Jerry's Palm Tavern, a famous jazz gathering spot was forced to close.

In Roseland, another south side "impoverished" community, where two case studies were located, there are over 100 places of worship, most of which have choirs; ceramic, dance, and music classes in the park district, as well as ongoing craft activities; a regular poetry reading at the local police district headquarters, and dance classes, writing groups and crafts workshops at the public library branches. Yet, statistically, this area, with a current total population of 52,723 is usually documented through its negative statistics: a high unemployment rate (11 percent unemployed, 37 percent not in the labor force), high crime rates (for a long time during the study period, much of what was heard on the local newscasts about Roseland focused on the bus stop rapist), and high rates of abandoned buildings and vacant lots.

On the Southwest side, also a locale that has low visibility with respect to arts production, there are bars that host Karaoke nights, a polka club, arts classes and activities offered in the parks, a theater group located in the church basement, as well as dance, craft-making, decorative gardening programs at the public library branch, and a Eastern European folk dance group that operates out of a cultural center. This region of Chicago and the adjacent suburbs continue to be characterized by a manufacturing and transportation industrial base, despite manufacturing job losses in the metro area over the last 30 years. A railroad switching/transfer station and its adjacent allied industries provide numerous jobs, while an international airport is the largest employer in the region. (Chicago Community Fact Book, 108) Popular national brands of cookies and candy are still produced in the area. The ethnographer passed both welding and fastener manufacturing businesses while driving to rehearsals of the community theater case study located in the region. In addition, large numbers of Chicago's police, firemen, and other city workers make their homes in the residential neighborhoods of this region of the city. (Chicago Tribune: Homes – internet edition p.3)

These neighborhoods and their surrounding areas are thus also sites of arts activities, despite their statistical profiles that emphasize the so-called deficits. This type of statistical profiling obscures the ongoing efforts of local residents to improve their quality of life. It also makes it difficult to identify arts practice such as those described above. For example, a recent survey of the cultural landscape conducted by the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA only collected data on those nonprofit arts organizations that applied for CityArts grants). Of these, according to the survey results, nearly one-third of nonprofit organizations are located in two community areas: the Loop and Lakeview, representing 48% of the city's population (DCA, 2002). On the surface, then it would appear that negligible arts activity is occurring in many of

the community areas, when more than likely, what is occurring is just not statistically documented.

The lack of attention by the public media and others to arts activities in these locales means that existing groups must struggle harder to recruit new members, making extra efforts to recruit family and acquaintances from members' networks and on occasion, using such strategies as "advertising" (for example auditions) more widely around the city. Still, the very existence of arts production, despite its invisibility, is indicative of the ubiquity of the phenomena and points to the need for more systematic data collection on these types of community assets.

Indeed, overall, study participants indicated that they had trouble finding information about training opportunities, spaces for practice and available resources. Respondents to the survey reported seeing or hearing art (meaning art in formal settings such as concert halls, galleries, theaters and the like) in their neighborhood (excluding taped and televised performances) an average of only 5.72 times per month (median = 3). Perhaps not surprisingly then, 41.21% of respondents indicated that there were "Only a few" arts opportunities in their neighborhood while 32.73% indicated that there were "Some" art opportunities. 9.70% went so far as to say that there were no arts opportunities in their neighborhood. Only 16.97% said that there were "Very Many" opportunities.

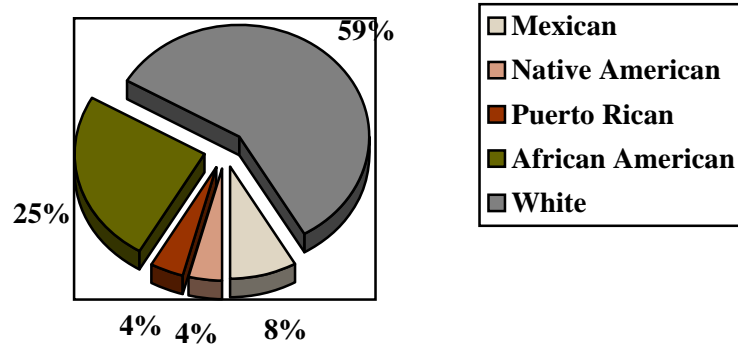
In summary, the ubiquity of informal arts activity in the Chicago region is paradoxically masked by the lack of attention it receives in the public media. This implies that it is more difficult to obtain access to informal arts activities, particularly when they occur in those neighborhoods that are profiled as "poor", "deficit-ridden" or "problematic". Interestingly, people residing in suburban neighborhoods profiled as arts- poor or "lacking in community" also may have difficulty accessing information about arts activities in their immediate vicinity because they are not profiled or recognized.

### **Demographic Characteristics of Artists Practicing in Informal Settings**

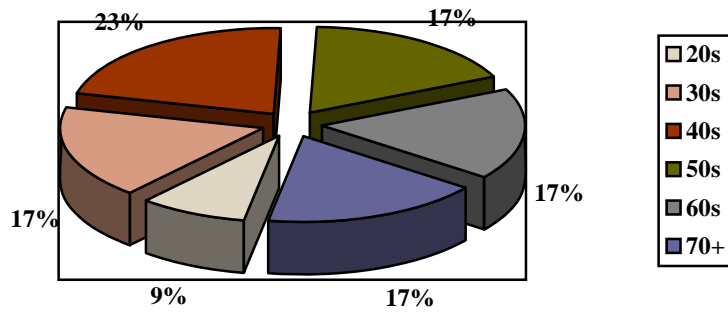
The demographic profile of study participants exhibits broad diversity, drawing from most segments of the larger society. There was a range of age, occupation, income, ethnicity and fairly equal representation of gender at most of the case study sites.

The diversity of informal arts participants was first indicated by our early research, in the course of which we visited informal arts venues around the city and gathered basic demographic data, as described above. For example, the charts below, constructed from data gathered during the early phase of the research indicate the diversity with respect to ethnicity and age that we found at these venues.

**Figure 1: Race/Ethnicity of Participants at Informal Arts Venues Visited During Initial Fieldwork**



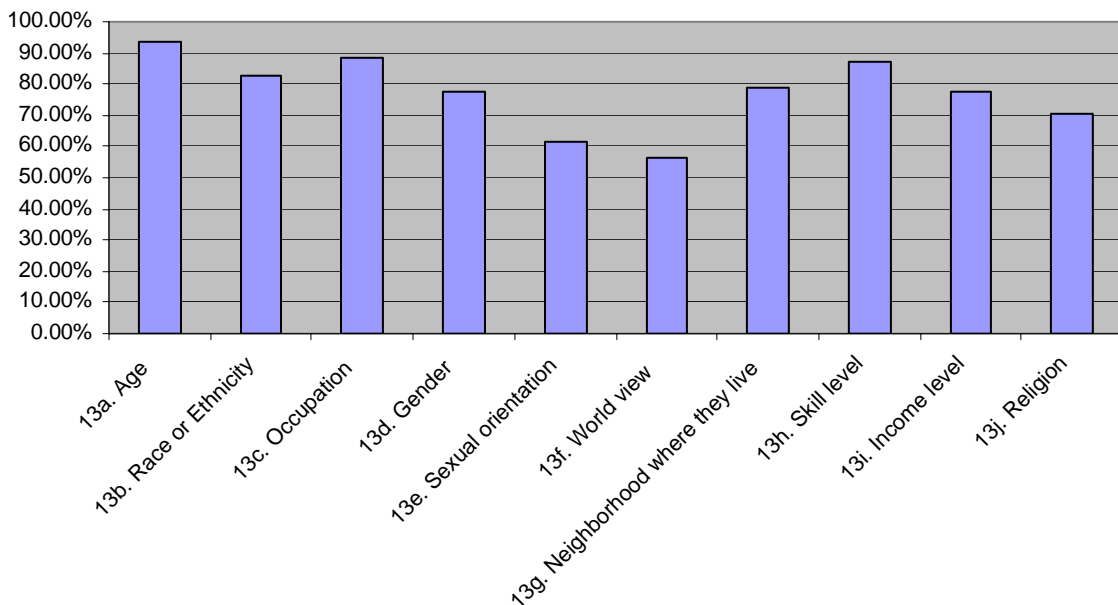
**Age of Participants at Informal Arts Venues Visited During Initial Fieldwork**



We also found occupational diversity during the early phase of the research. At sites we visited, there were people from all three major economic sectors— managerial/professional, service, and manufacturing. We met people working as sales staff, administrative assistants, janitors, lab technicians, actuaries, police, bus drivers, caseworkers at social service agencies, journalists, lawyers, teachers, marketers, machine operators, builders at construction sites, carpenters among others.

Further research at the case study locations reinforced this impression from the early research. The survey filled out by case study participants in the final phase of research reinforced our observations of significant diversity among participating artists. A quick look at the figure below, constructed from the survey data reveals that participants reported meeting people different from themselves in the course of their arts participation. Over 75% of respondents reported meeting people different from themselves with respect to age, race or ethnicity, gender, occupation, income level, and neighborhood where they live. Even considering the less visible differences queried by the survey – sexual orientation, religion, and world view – over 50% of respondents reported meeting people different from themselves.

13. Some artists meet people different from themselves in the course of their arts activities. Check below the ways in which people you have met differ from you. Include all your past and present arts activities.



Most striking perhaps, was the diversity in occupations and in income level across the study sites, and within each site. Among respondents to the survey, for example, 23 percent were in an education-related profession, 20 percent were in an arts, design, entertainment, sports or media related occupation, and about 10 percent each were either in management, administrative support, business, financial, computer, or sales-related occupations, while other occupations were represented in smaller numbers. 62.66% of respondents reported currently working full-time, while 14.56% reported currently working part-time. 23.27% of respondents indicated that they were not currently working.

Within these occupational categories, there was further diversity with respect to status. Study participants included lawyers, doctors, business professionals, administrative assistants, shift workers in minimum wage positions, and construction workers, among others. Among survey respondents, eighteen percent were retired, 7 percent were homemakers, 8 percent were students, while close to 5 percent were unemployed and looking for work. Household income of survey respondents ranged from under \$10,000 (5 percent) to more than \$100,000 (6 percent), with over 50 percent of respondents in the \$30,000-\$75,000 range. As another indicator of diversity, 52.23% of respondents reported owning their home, while 45.22% reported renting, an almost even split.

Within the actual study sites as well, there was considerable occupational diversity:

- For example, at the drumming circle, school teachers, lawyers, computer technicians, college students and homemakers were all regular participants.
- At the Asian music ensemble, core members included a video/film producer, an administrative assistant, several people in professional management positions, a food service worker, a school teacher, a retired librarian, several scientific technicians and engineers, university students, several university professors and an occupational therapist, as well as unemployed people.
- At the quilters guild, occupations ranged as well across the professional and service sectors of the economy and included computer technicians, sales managers, clothes designers, educators, retirees and homemakers.
- At the theater group on the Southwest side, occupations included business professionals, administrators, sales representatives, nurses and other health care professionals, office support workers, artists, college students, and retirees.
- At the work place site, the music group brought together people from many of the different professions within the institution, including security personnel, administrators, managers, and technical personnel.
- In the writing group, there were social workers, community organizers, retirees, homemakers, and school teachers as well as people who were currently unemployed but looking for work.
- At the painting class, enrollees included a lawyer, a social worker, an office support worker, an insurance industry professional, and a homemaker.

Interestingly, age diversity was also commonplace at all 12 of the case study sites mirroring the range of ages found at sites during the early phase of the research (see chart above). The average year of birth for the respondents to the survey was 1955 for an average age of 46 as of Dec. 31, 2001. The oldest survey respondent was 84 years old (b. 1917) and the youngest was 16 years old (b. 1985). Each site contained a range from young to older participants. While at some sites, more youthful participants were prevalent (for example among the rappers and hip-hop artists—although even here, there were some over 30), and in others, older people tended to be in the majority (for example among quilters), in general there was an even mix of ages at the sites.

The ethnic diversity of the total study population was reflective of the national census patterns, although ethnic mix differed at each of the case studies with five of the twelve case studies including a relatively balanced mix in the group membership:

- The drumming circle was probably the most ethnically diverse in composition. Americans of African, European, Central and South American and Asian descent were well represented as were recent immigrants from foreign countries.
- The painting class also attracted a diverse mix of ethnicities and included African Americans, Whites, and Latinos.
- The theater group on the Southwest side had participants from Asian, African American, Latino, and various European ethnic backgrounds.
- The artists who all worked at the large cultural institution were also diverse, reflecting the ethnic mix of the overall staff, that includes Asians, Whites, African Americans, and Latinos.
- The hip-hop artists' network included whites, Latinos and African American rappers and deejays.

At four of the sites, while one ethnic group tended to predominate, there were members of other groups present in small numbers. For example, although the Asian music ensemble was almost all white, there was also a Japanese participant, a Latino participant, and several from foreign countries. In the quilters guild, African American women were in the majority, but it did include three white members. The suburban theater group attracted some Asian actors among its largely white membership, while the writing group composed mostly of African Americans, had a white woman facilitator. The implications of even a small amount of ethnic diversity within an artistic group is discussed in the next chapter. Finally, the church choir on the south side of the city was all African American, reflecting the composition of the church membership.

Among both the visual artists and the master artists and their apprentices, we sampled an ethnically diverse group, but since these were largely individuals who practiced separately, we cannot talk about group diversity. However, it was mostly the case that all of these individual artists interacted across ethnic lines with either audiences or other artists or arts-related professionals in the course of practicing their art.

Of the twelve sites, nine had fairly equal gender representation. The exceptions were the quilting guild and the painting class members, who were primarily women, and the hip-hop artists who were mostly men. Balanced gender composition in the informal arts activities may be contrasted with more segregated leisure-time activities, such as sports leagues or clubs, or volunteer organizations (such as the Shriners, the Rotary Clubs, the Lions Clubs which tend to be majority male in membership, while hospital auxiliary boards, charity service groups and institutional service groups such as Parent Teacher Associations tend to be primarily female in membership). How balanced gender representation affects boundary crossing is also discussed in the next chapter.

In addition to diversity, other characteristics of the participants in informal arts activities are notable. For example, participants exhibited a high level of education. Among

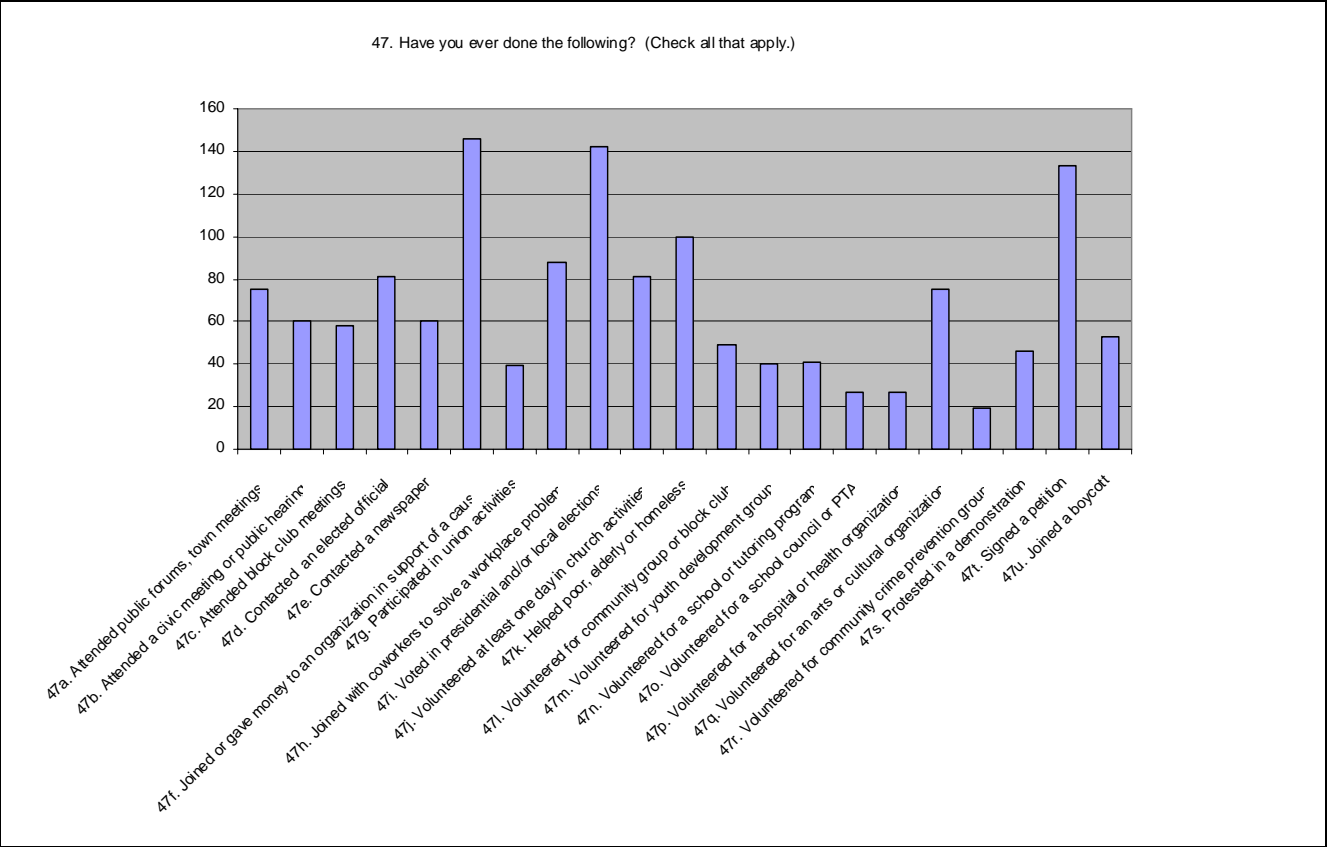


survey respondents, over 90 percent of participants had at least a high school degree (compared to 88%, Bureau of the Census national figures for 1998), and up to 80 percent had some college education (compared to 65.6% nationally, also for 1998). The survey data reinforced what we had documented at the case study sites during participant observation. The majority (54.14%) of respondents reported that they grew up in a home where there was active participation in the arts.

Respondents also reported receiving arts training at a variety of education levels. 42.50% reported receiving arts training “in school (kindergarten-12<sup>th</sup> grade)” while 45.63% of respondents reported receiving arts training in college. Also common was receiving training through Adult Education classes (47.50%) and being “self-taught” (46.88%). Other methods of receiving arts training included: apprenticeships (5.63%), one-on-one instruction (28.75%), “special classes” (22.50%), and private tutoring (11.88%).

The household composition of survey participants indicates two things: 1) almost half were living with an adult partner (47.80% of respondents reported being either married or living with a partner, while 7.55% reported being widowed, .063% reported being separated, 12.58% reported being divorced, and 32.70% reported never being married; very few reported living children under 18 years of age. The latter statistic reflects the difficulties of access to informal arts activities that are further exacerbated by childcare duties. This will be discussed in the next chapter in more detail.

The participants also exhibited a high degree of civic mindedness. For example, in the response to the survey questionnaire, over 85 percent reported having joined or given money to an organization or a cause, 86 percent reported having voted in presidential or local elections, and 80 percent reported having signed a petition. Significant percentages also reported volunteering, attending public meetings, writing letters to newspapers, and attending block club meetings. In contrast, in the 2000 election Illinois voter turnout was 48.9%, down from 57% in 1992 (Bureau of the Census). Voting levels in the 2002 Illinois primary, on the other hand, were less than 40%. Close to one-third of the survey respondents indicated that participation in arts activities had led them to act on behalf of causes for other neighborhood resources.



**Summary**

In summary, the context of informal arts activities as well as the demographic profile of the artists indicates that the ubiquity and diversity of this sector is broad enough to enable it to be a considerable repository for civic assets and the building of social capital. Just how arts practice provides the mechanisms and processes for this to happen is the subject of the next two chapters.

## CHAPTER III CROSSING BOUNDARIES FOR THE SAKE OF ART

### **Social Boundaries and Interaction**

Early urban theorists characterized the city as a place of “anomie” and alienation, where social interaction was governed by status and role, rather than by more intimate relationships (Durkheim, 1933; Wirth, 1938). In most versions of this view, the isolation individuals experience in their narrowly prescribed roles is not simply a source of individual dissatisfaction, but is at the root of other urban ills including crime, indifference to the plight of others, and both the inability to engage in self help or to band together with others to achieve mutual benefits. While much has been written since then that presents a more sophisticated portrait of urban life, this strong image of cities (including their suburban environs) persists to the present day.

As mentioned in Chapter I, recent work on asset-based community development and social networks has attempted to temper the image of modern urban life as one of isolation by providing evidence that in fact social dynamics in the city are often built on social relationships and forms of social organization that are communal. Still, much of this work is theoretically challenged because it does not place the emphasis on “assets” within the context of wider structural forces that shape the distribution of social and economic resources. A more balanced view is needed, one that accounts for both significant constraints to social engagement and mobility as well as highlights forms of engagement and civic contribution.

A number of contemporary social theorists recognize that the most significant constraints to improving civic life stem from structures of inequality that have been shaped by historical circumstances. The most salient of these structures of inequality are those of race, socioeconomic status, and gender. Socioeconomic status refers to social rank and divisions based on factors such as income, education level, and occupational prestige. Additionally, theorists are increasingly considering the inequalities structured by age - given the demographic shift towards more Americans being over 60 resulting from the post-WWII baby boom - and sexual identity. It cannot be taken for granted that these divisions and the patterns of social interaction that perpetuate them are breaking down in more “liberal” contemporary society.

A recent *New York Times* series on how race is lived in America illustrates that individually held values of tolerance and social inclusion do not necessarily result in interaction, understanding, or agreement on specific contentious issues among individuals

of different racial or ethnic groups who profess to hold these values. In a striking example, two middle aged, educated journalists, one African American and one white, even after co-authoring a series on race in America for a Midwestern newspaper, could not agree on the social and ethical appropriateness of using the adjective “niggardly”, and their friendship was cooled by the disagreement (Canedy 2000). And yet, despite limitations of understanding, unless both social and corresponding physical boundaries created by inequalities are crossed by diverse individuals, improvement in the quality of civic life in America will remain limited.

Urban policy has to some extent worked toward mitigating inequality through such measures as anti-redlining laws, investment in infrastructure in low-income neighborhoods, and anti-discrimination laws. However, much remains to be understood about where and how individuals are crossing the social boundaries generated by inequality and the quality of the interactions diverse people have during encounters. As little as is known in general about the experience of boundary crossing, particularly little is known about interactions outside of the workplace or formal educational settings. Considering the numbers of Americans who reported participation in the arts in the NEA’s 1998 *Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*, the social context of informal arts participation presents a fruitful starting point for just such an investigation.

In the previous chapter, we have documented and characterized the diversity of the artists in the informal sector that we studied. In this chapter we examine what the ethnographic evidence reveals about how such diversity is attained, how it is sustained and how people perceive the benefits of the opportunity to interact across the social boundaries.

### **Nurturing and Sustaining Diversity**

The research identified four interconnected factors, themselves sets of interacting conditions and practices, that nurtured and sustained the presence of diverse artists participating at the case study locations. These were 1) a common love of art, 2) aggressive - if usually informal - recruiting strategies, 3) features of locations that increased the visibility and approachability of art activities, and 4) the inclusive nature of the activities: including welcoming participants of all skill and confidence levels, responding to artists’ needs as they defined them, and being flexible about attendance, scheduling, and pricing.

**Love of art.** At all twelve case study sites, participants spoke frequently of the joy and satisfaction they attained from making art. The following remarks from OT, an

African American writer and mother in her early thirties, are a typical expression of how strongly artists feel these positive emotions:

“In the moment when I am writing something, especially if I know it is good and that people could really attach themselves to it, I feel like I am a mother actually giving birth to my child... I feel like I am bringing like, a new idea to somebody. It is a great feeling to me. I am all excited on the inside and I am proud of myself... I love what I do. I wouldn't change it or trade it for anything in the world.”

In the birthing metaphor it is easy to see how much she experiences being an artist as an integral part of being herself, so creativity is self-expression in which she takes pride. ML, a middle aged white painter, potter, and office support person expressed a similar sentiment talking about her creative pursuits:

“It's very much a feeling of accomplishment. Self-actualization. Especially painting because I never thought I'd paint. I thought I'd just keep sketching. I'm really proud of it (the painting).”

Artists often reveal the strength of their commitment to doing art by talking about their “need” to be creative. There were more than 32 references in the field notes to artists saying they “have to” or “must” do their art. The code “need to express” was used 72 times to mark passages concerning the compulsion artists feel to create. Some talked about their need as a physiological one, for example the “itch” to perform, or getting “bitten by the bug.” Others talked about having known they were artists from a very young age and a few of these said it was something “genetic,” in “the blood,” or otherwise inherent in their make up, with no fewer than eight occurrences of artists saying they were born artists or had it in their genes.

When they were not talking about art as an irresistible integral part of their make up, artists often described their relation to it in romantic terms or as emotionally beneficial. There were 56 references in the field notes to artists saying they “love” or have a “passion” for art. Others said art is “good for the soul,” “healing,” “a release” or a

“channeling of emotion.” In the Southside church choir, singers understood their strong attachment to being artists in religious terms. For example, two singers we interviewed talked about doing God’s will by singing, having his will “flow through you” or being “moved by the Spirit.” The choir director talked generally about members joining because of their love of God. Writers, painters, and even clothing designers also credited God with wanting them to be artists, and giving them the talent. While some artists seem more superficially invested dabblers, the majority of artists we interviewed had expressed a significant emotional attachment to doing art and being an artist.

People’s commitment to arts participation is also evident in their tangible investments in it. From both the ethnographic research and from the subsequent survey data, it is evident that people are willing to expend considerable time, effort, and resources to participate in artistic production. Survey respondents reported they were weekly spending an average of eight and one half hours making art by themselves, four hours making art with others, and about thirteen hours per month performing or exhibiting. In addition to the many hours they were investing in the arts activity itself, artists were also expending time acquiring equipment and supplies, traveling to and from their arts site, and finding and securing space for rehearsing, performing and storage. The survey indicates they spent an additional six and one half hours each month acquiring arts related supplies. This level of time investment is striking, because, the majority of study participants were working full or part time in wage-earning occupations, and the majority of these artists could only engage in artistic activity in their “non-working” hours. SU and BU exemplify this level of after work involvement:

- SU is a 23 year old Mexican American, who works long hours as a bricklayer. After SU commented that the construction companies work people like dogs, the ethnographer asked when he finds time to work on his music. He replied “Everyday after work we are down here.”
- BU is an African American quilter who recently retired. When she was asked how she has found time to quilt she replied, “Of course I don’t even do housework, or just the bare minimum. (She laughs). My husband is very patient.”

All of the case study groups held weekly or sometimes twice weekly rehearsals, practice or planning sessions, usually in the evenings and sometimes on weekends. These schedules intensified close to performance or display dates. Play rehearsals were held three times per week for 7-9 weeks before shows, with extra technical and dress rehearsals the week before shows. For artists involved in administration, even more time was spent at their art groups’ business meetings, and on administrative duties at home. For example, in just the last year, members of both the Southwest Side theater and the

quilters guild dedicated significant time to establishing or designing web sites for their groups. Finally there were those artists who participate in more than one group. For example:

- At least five writers in the South Side library group also participated in open microphone events around town or have held readings of their works at public libraries.
- A number of drummers took classes with the park district or at a music school also on the far North Side of Chicago. Others reported participating in other types of informal drumming, such as seeking other spontaneous circles, drumming at a peace conference, men's and women's spiritual drumming, or other mixed gender "new age" drumming through a local organization that holds workshops and circles that offer the cathartic opportunity to "sweat your prayers".
- Actors and directors were sometimes involved in more than one play at a time. While this was often a case of one production just getting started as another was ending, the cases with significant overlap were usually instances of directors and actors who were striving to make a career of the theater or actors retired from at least full time work having the time to do more theater.
- A number of quilters are members of more than one guild, or attend more than one quilting gathering per week.
- Career aspiring Hip Hop and visual artists were usually involved in multiple promotional partnerships or were pursuing additional partnerships to market their work. These partnerships could be artist to artist as when painters show in each other's studios or musicians with recording equipment produce other musicians' CDs, or artist to promotional personnel affiliated with galleries, record companies, etc.

Space is another resource people devote to art, with 75 percent of survey respondents indicating they set aside room in their homes for art practice. Although less expensive than renting dedicated arts space, setting aside and using space at home indicates a commitment to prioritizing art activity over other possible uses of a space or being willing to put up with the hassles of having other activities and events impinge on art activity.

What people are sometimes willing to put up with at home to be able to do art was expressed by KL, a thirty year old white bookstore employee, alderman's assistant, and painter who paints in the basement of the home she shares with her husband and two children:

“I’ve lost thousands of dollars worth of art in two different basement floods; it floods sometimes... I do a yearly exhibit in Woodstock, (Illinois, called) “Woman Works”, and there was a scholarship for \$500 and you had to write an essay on how you found room and time to do art as a mother. And I won. Here I am doing art by the furnace and when I set it up, I thought the kids could play down here while I worked, but that didn’t work. They are too interested in what I’m doing... I can do a lot when they sleep or when they’re in school.”

In eight of the case studies artists used their homes for some of their groups activities or to store materials and equipment for the group. The minority of artists who did indicate on the survey that they rented space for art activity spent a sizable average of \$2,177 per year on it. The survey also indicates that, on average, artists were generally more modest in their total financial outlays, but still spent over \$1000 annually on training materials, supplies, class or workshop fees, and travel expenditures. These expenditures varied widely between artists, even within the same activity. For example one drummer at the circle had a room full of drums and percussive instruments that cost him about \$4,000, while another drummer, a single mother of two, used drums provided at the circle and was waiting for her income tax return to buy her first drum.

This passion and commitment to create leads people to search out and join other artists regardless of location or group composition. Artists are motivated to travel significant distances and cross geographical and corresponding social boundaries to make or display art. Survey respondents on average spent two and one half hours per week traveling to and from arts activities and classes, and pay on average \$433 on arts related travel. Across all of the case studies, artists reported, or ethnographers observed, more than 130 instances of traveling significant distances out of what artists identify as their home community to participate in making or presenting art. This number in a sense is an underestimate, in that we counted regular trips for the same repeated activity as one instance, so a drummer saying she drives from Lake Zurich to attend the drum circle more than once a month was counted as one trip. Also an artist saying she traveled with a group of other artists to participate in the arts was counted as a single instance as well, because there was no way to easily count individuals in a group. To participate at case study locations, artists routinely traveled the length of the city, from Indiana and the western suburbs to the South Side, and from northern and western suburbs to the North



Side. At ten of the sites some participants routinely traveled over 30 miles round trip. Most trips across urban/suburban boundaries were made in cars, but some artists did use public transportation for trips of up to half hour or more to attend rehearsals, classes or to give performances.

OX, an actor with the suburban theater group, and a retired store owner, talked about actors' strength of commitment to traveling to participate in theater in surrounding suburbs:

“Well, near enough is an interesting word. When I met my wife she was one block too far for what my dating range was, but I made an exception. Highwood is 22 minutes because I can take the expressway. And Riverwoods, on the expressway is 35 minutes. But in the back of my head, I'm thinking about people (who used to be) coming to River Edge Players and how far they came. People are committed to acting and if you're committed to acting, you just (accept)it's not going to be in the next block. Mt. Prospect is 30 minutes away from where we rehearse and then the show is in Palatine, so it's 5 or 10 minutes farther. And that's okay.”

The following are a number of striking and typical examples of travel taken from a number of the case studies. All are examples of social as well as geographical boundary crossing:

- At the North Side drum circle a number of regular participants come from as far away as southern Wisconsin, and the Northwest and Southwest suburbs of Chicago.
- Drummers at the circle traveled out of state for drumming on a regular basis. DI, a white computer technician in his late twenties traveled to Guelph in Ontario, Canada to attend a festival that included training workshops he took and a nightly drum circle. TO, a white kindergarten teacher in her early thirties traveled to Hawaii to attend a workshop in facilitating drum circles. Though she found one of the men she had to deal with a little sexist, she felt the trip was worthwhile for the experience

she gained drumming. Finally, some of the more advanced drummers at the circle, including the facilitator, have traveled to Africa and Hawaii to study with master drummers.

- Within the city, drummers cross boundaries. CE, a white plumber in his early forties who lives on the North Side, reported taking a drumming class at a west side park with mostly Latino students and a Latino instructor.
- An African American painter traveled from south of 103<sup>rd</sup> Street to the North Side of Chicago twice a week for five weeks to take the painting clan because she wanted to improve her own technique. In taking this trip she traveled from a predominantly African American region of the city to a mostly white area, where she took a class that had a mix of African Americans, whites, and Latinos.
- HT, an African American full time visual artist who lives in a middle class African American area of the South Side, offers painting classes three times a week out of his home studio. Each summer he and his 6-10 students take a multiple day trip to Michigan or Wisconsin to find rural and natural imagery to sketch and paint.
- Five or six African American members of the quilting guild travel together to attend a predominantly white suburban quilting guild. Other guild members often travel out of the city and within it, crossing lines of race and official boundaries. Going alone and in groups they attend workshops or take classes with nationally or locally respected teachers, patronize quilting shops, and attend exhibitions.
- One quilter travels from Skokie and another from the O'Hare region to the far South Side to attend the quilters guild's activities. Out of 72 members listed in the guild's 2001 directory, 22 have addresses outside Chicago. Most of these are in the Southern Suburbs and across the border in Northwest Indiana, but there are two California and one Connecticut addresses. One of the California members traveled to Chicago and attended the Thursday meeting once during the period of fieldwork.
- Members of the South Side church and choir both come from northern and southern suburbs, as well as from Chicago. As with the quilting guild it is a handful who come from the northern suburbs and the majority of suburbanites coming from the south.
- Many writers at the library come from other South Side neighborhoods to the neighborhood of the library which, deserved or not, may have the worst reputation for crime and poverty on the South Side. Four of 15 members live in the middleclass lakefront community two or three miles east of the library, and a few others come from middle class communities

further south. With respect to economic class these writers cross a significant geographical boundary when they come to the library in its economically depressed surroundings.

- Five of the actors in the Southwest Side theater performance during fieldwork traveled from north of the 2000 N. block to south of the 5500 S. block to reach the rehearsal and performance location. In the x-member production they joined Southwest Side locals who were regular participants at the theater. The North Side of Chicago is generally perceived by city residents to be wealthier financially and richer in culture than the “working class” Southwest Side with its industrial economic base. While there was some discomfort among theater participants during the production, based on the class differences they felt between them, they pulled together to make the show a success.

Travel in most of these examples contributes to gender and age diversity simply by contributing more participants to groups; but it is with respect to class, race, and ethnic social boundaries that travel stands out as having a striking bridging function. In Chicago, as it is well documented, most geographical boundaries are socially constructed and frequently stand for other differences of race, ethnicity, and class. Travel of appreciable distances then would tend to carry people across these boundaries. In this set of examples artists crossed intra-city and inter-city geographical divides that marked these social differences. The inter-city, suburban/urban geographical split is often cited in urban research as a social divide contributing to the decline in the quality of civic life. As wealthier suburbanites become detached and unconcerned with the quality of life in cities filled with the poor and people of color, the very physical separation of the suburbs and city makes people in the suburbs disinterested in what happens in places so far removed from their daily lives. Our data strongly suggest the arts have the power to start breaking down this physical and social divide in that significant numbers of drummers, quilters, and singers are travelling too and from Chicago as part of their participation in the arts.

Even in the relatively short periods of fieldwork at each location we saw positive community outcomes as suburban artists joined with their urban counterparts in contributing to the quality of urban life:

- The second night of the ethnographer’s participant observation in the drum circle, she joined a group of 6 suburban and city resident drummers in patronizing a locally owned restaurant for dinner and conversation after the circle ended.

- The circle facilitator and two drummers he works with received a paying job conducting a drum circle at a suburban school. They were hired by the parents of the kindergartners at the request of a teacher at the school who is a regular at the drum circle. The principal was so impressed with the drumming, he brought them back to work with teachers only.
- Suburban quilters contributed quilts to the guild's community service project, with quilts going to children living in a group home. Quilters from suburban locations also take on leadership roles for the guild. The current president is a resident of Gary, Indiana. The quilter from west of O'Hare is one of the primary teachers on weekly work sessions, and the quilter from Skokie has taken over as the editor of the guild newsletter for 2002. She is also spearheading the establishment of a web page for the guild.
- Suburban choir members bring their talents and financial contributions to the Church, which serves and ministers to the community around it. For example, EX is a tenor in the choir who lives in a northeast suburb and sings professionally at weddings. A previous minister at the church used to pay him for solos on Sundays, he would just give the money back in the offering the next week in addition to his regular tithe amount. He is currently on the Church board during a time when the church has purchased seven lots of land near the church, and is considering building a senior center.

Many urban/suburban boundary crossing artists make clear it is love of the art that makes them willing to endure inconvenience to cross boundaries that represent the unfamiliar and potentially uncomfortable. For drummers from the suburbs, the North Side park where the drum circle meets is a place inconveniently far away from their homes with little parking. For suburban newcomers, it is also in an unknown community, where they are unfamiliar with the places to eat or meet. None-the-less, they say they come to the city looking for a place they can drum regularly, an additional place to drum, or because they heard the circle was a good one. Most of the African American quilters in the primarily white suburban guild reported no discomfort crossing boundaries of race to attend. The one quilter who most explicitly discussed discomfort crossing the race boundary cited the quality of the work shown and the opportunity to take workshops and learn as her primary motivation for attending. She went on to talk about having regularly attended a church where she had been uncomfortable and compared it to attending the suburban quilting guild. Her implication was that she was not one to let herself be deterred from participating in something she set her mind on. Three other African American quilters, including one from the suburbs, reported attending the case study guild for the camaraderie, while traveling to suburban, mostly white quilting locations for

reasons proper to quilting itself. This is not to say that they did not simultaneously report meeting nice people in suburban locations, but it appears there could be a comfort gradient and traveling up it, in the direction of social discomfort, is motivated primarily by artistic interests narrowly defined.

The quilters coming to the guild for camaraderie is a good example of art not being the only or single motivating force behind travel. Choir members usually cite worship as their reason for travelling to the church and for singing. On the other hand the strength of the music is sometimes the reason to choose one church for worship and not another. WF lives near her suburban place of employment at a pharmaceutical company and drives 56 miles round trip to attend church and perform. She explained to the ethnographer why she travels so far:

“I moved to Chicago 4 years ago from New Orleans. My younger brother, had been to this church and said the music was good. I was raised in a AME church and had been in choir. I had gone from AME church to AME church looking for one with people my age in New Orleans. I came here think I'd go to other AME churches, but I like it at this one. The people. The music. And the choir sang all the parts. I thought they sounded good and thought it would be even better if I joined the choir.”

The survey responses support the conclusion that so much travel by artists across socially significant geographical boundaries would not be occurring were it not for participation in the art. It shows that slightly over 50percent of respondents said that participation in the arts resulted in exposure to places they would not otherwise have traveled.

For many artists their commitment to participation includes the desire to reach a larger audience than the other artists in their group or discipline. The strength of personal motives to perform and display is clear in talking to artists about why they create or perform:

- Many theater performers described themselves as born “show offs,” the class or family “clown,” or liking the attention they get while performing.

Performing artists in general talked about wanting to please audiences or share with them.

- The library group facilitator explained that getting published in the journal produced by the umbrella organization was a major reason for most writers to belong to the group. Four of the 15 writers in the library writing group were interviewed by the ethnographer. Three out of these four cited the likelihood they would be published as one of their reasons for belonging to the group. They also praised the facilitators and umbrella organization for connecting them to audiences. Two of these three interviewed writers - and a third who was not interviewed - had belonged to another writing group before joining the one at the library. The former group disbanded in part because the publishing of members' work was not happening.
- Until recently BQ, an African American frame store employee in his middle twenties, wrote and performed rap music with two of his friends. They participated in talent shows at a local college, and hosted a free and open party in the basement of a friend's house just so people could hear their "rhymes."

As with other aspects of art making, performance and display take artists across social and geographical boundaries. Of artists participating in group arts activities, on the survey 70percent of respondents reported that their group travels within the Chicagoland area to perform or display artwork. Seventeen percent reported that their group travels nationally. Some examples of travel by groups or facilitated by groups across significant geographical and social boundaries include:

- The South Side church's men's choir traveled to New Orleans where they were one of only 12 choirs to perform at the national AME conference.
- The master Irish dancer and her students travel from Chicago's Northwest Side and northwest suburbs, to Chicago's far South Side, southern suburbs, and other locations around the Midwest to perform in Irish dance competitions.
- As part of participating in the activities of the umbrella organization, the library writing group goes to other libraries and public venues to give readings with other affiliated groups. The umbrella organization also linked a number of its writers - from several of its locations including at least one from the case study library - to a North Side theater company and playwrights that adapted their writings for the stage. The resulting

dramatic adaptations have been produced both in Chicago and out of state by theaters companies in other cities. Through their affiliation with the umbrella organization, writers from the library group have also participated in the Chicago Humanities Festival for at least the last four years. When Robert Pinsky, then the country's Poet Laureate, hosted a poetry event in downtown Chicago, along with Studs Terkel and other local art and culture notables, 2 of the 17 poets at the downtown venue were from the umbrella organizations neighborhood writing groups.

- In the past the Southwest Side theater staged holiday programs at elementary schools for the students. The group has taken full length dramas to nursing homes. Besides bringing pleasure to these younger and older audiences, these trips improve the theaters on the Southwest Side. During the research period, members took a one act production "on the road" to South Side libraries and private events.
- Even though members do not usually have quilts in the show, the annual bus trip of the quilter's guild to Paducah, Kentucky is an opportunity to see the work of some of the nation's best quilters and find inspiration. It also gives African Americans more visibility in the national quilting scene. Just ten years ago, when the four founding members of the guild found themselves to be the only African Americans at a big Midwestern quilt show. KI, one of the guild's founders, cited this original experience as a reference point, to show how far the guild has come in connecting African American quilters to each other, to resources, and to getting their work noticed in the wider community. In 2001, about 35 guild members attended the Paducah show as an official guild activity. Guild meetings and a newsletter are also primary sources of information on quilting display opportunities for members. Guild-to-guild or quilter-to-quilter communications that are announced at meetings are primary ways quilters find out when other guilds have shows that they can display in. At one meeting, an African American member stood up to say that an all White guild in a far northwest suburb had seen a news segment on their guild and decided they wanted to highlight African American quilts at their upcoming show. The speaker was planning to show some quilts herself, and had information for any others who were interested.
- The Asian music ensemble was invited to play in a number of locations around the city and in the suburbs. Most recently, the ensemble played at a festival in a western suburb. At another time, one of the members arranged to have the group perform at a public library branch on the North Side of the city, in order to expose young people in that area to this type of music.

Individual artists without group affiliations, or outside of their group affiliations, also cross geographical and social boundaries to display or perform.

- Quilters in the South Side guild not only hear about other guild's shows, but participate in them. Sometimes they belong to these other guilds and sometimes they do not. The communities where these other guilds meet and show, and the guilds themselves, are often more white in composition and wealthier than the case study guild.
- Actors not only travel from the North Side to be in plays on the Southwest Side, but Southwest Side residents travel as well to participate in theater. For example KU, a director who does not live far from the Southwest Side theater, and directs there often, but has also directed at a theater festival on the near Northwest Side of Chicago, at other theaters on the Southwest Side and in the South suburbs. EN, a Mexican American actor who was in the production during the field work period, lives in a southwest suburb near the city, and is a retired owner of a hair salon and hair care products distribution business. He enjoys traveling to the Irish area of the South Side to act in productions at an Irish community center and park, stating that the Irish really appreciate the arts.
- Within the network of individual visual artists on the South Side, at least four of these African American artists have exhibited pieces in galleries in the high-end River North District, even if usually informally, i.e. without a contract guaranteeing representation by the galleries. To get these placements of their art, artists have had to go in person to these high priced establishments, cultivating relationships with gallery managers or owners who are usually of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, or in different income brackets than the artists themselves.
- Asian, African American, Latino, and White Hip-Hop artists come together to perform and compete at open microphones in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood.
- US, a Mexican hip-hop deejay, had regular shows on two area college radio stations. One station is located downtown, and the other is in a near north suburb. He was also a frequent guest on a third college radio station with its studio on the South Side in a mixed white and African American neighborhood. The time we observed him playing at the South Side station, he had a male African American friend and fellow deejay with him who was in town from the East Coast. They both played on the air that evening. US also had a white male friend with him who helped set up



and take down equipment. US also travels as far as St. Louis to market his mixed tapes to record stores that will sell them.

- Some of the more experienced writers at the library take part in open microphones and public readings independent of the umbrella organization that administers the library group. Two of these writers have hosted open microphones at other libraries, including one at the café at The Harold Washington Library. Some of these performances occasionally lead to other opportunities and more crossing of social and geographical boundaries. SWA, a writer at the library, performed in a poetry slam at the Green Mill Jazz Club on Chicago's North Side. This performance led to another poetry reading, for which she was paid, in Berwyn Illinois, which is a predominantly white suburb of Chicago.

Considering all the instances of racial boundary crossing that result from the quilting and writing groups' efforts, or their members individual efforts, to find creative opportunities, an interesting pattern seems to have emerged. Ambitious African American quilters and writers displayed a greater compulsion to travel to white communities than vice-versa. Quilters experience a literal need to cross social boundaries if they are going to get the best in materials and supplies. No fewer than twenty guild members regularly travel to shows and quilt shops outside of Chicago to look at quilts or buy materials and equipment for quilting. In fact, there are no quilt shops proper in the city of Chicago, so quilters have to travel to the suburbs. Quilt shops focus almost exclusively on quilting, carrying special equipment and designer quilt fabrics that can not be found at regular fabric stores. When asked if they visit any African American owned quilt shops, African American quilters replied that there are none in Chicago or its suburbs. Writers at the South Side library who want to reach large local audiences, win prize money, be paid for appearing, or enjoy general social prestige as good artists find and feel they have to travel across geographical and social boundaries to achieve these things. They recognize that the highly visible, commercial and institutionalized arts community is located elsewhere in the city than where they are, even as they recognized their own neighborhoods are under-appreciated for their arts activities. White artists who already live in areas more widely recognized for their arts offerings and opportunities less often experience or feel the same compulsion to travel to predominantly African American communities, or to court the interest of African American art communities when they aspire to greater prestige and wealth through their art.

Display and performance enhance the diversity of arts participation in one more possibly unexpected way. There is a feedback loop that effects groups when good art reaches diverse audiences. People see and hear quality art and want to participate in making it themselves.

- WF is not an anomalous example of someone being drawn to the church by its reputation for good music and then drawn to join the choir after hearing how good it was. The Choir director said that many people initially come to the church because of its reputation for good music. Choir members are drawn from the congregation and most members listen and sing from the congregation before deciding to join the choir.
- Some writers reported joining the library group in part because they were impressed with the quality of the work and its presentation after reading the literary journal or attending readings by members.
- The South Side painting instructor enlisted many of his students through referrals because he is known for his realistic rendering abilities and his ability to teach these skills. While four of his Tuesday morning students were retired African American women, there was also a woman in her late twenties and two women in their thirties or forties in this same time slot. On other days, he has male students as well as more female students.
- A husband and wife team of master Chinese musicians attracted almost all of their students, who they taught out of their northwest suburban home, by simply playing concerts. They explained that audience members approach them after concerts asking about lessons.
- During the course of fieldwork, the membership of the quilters guild surged from somewhere in the low 70's to 100 dues paying members following a profile on the local television news that showed a number of impressive quilts. If the ethnographer is not counted, this impressive display on television attracted the guild's first white male member, who is its second male member overall. In another instance earlier in the guild's history, individual members were displaying quilts at a show in a racially integrated, middle class South Side community. A white quilter greatly admired their quilts when she saw them at the show, and decided she wanted to join the guild. She approached guild members at the show to ask if they accepted white members and was relieved to be told "we accept human beings." Today she is a guild officer.

These examples of a feedback loop increasing diversity point to the complementary activity to individual artists' seeking opportunities - recruiting by artists and organizations to get others to join them in their ongoing activities. As these examples show, recruiting is often what happens almost effortlessly when an interested artist becomes aware of an opportunity he or she already wants. There is little to no convincing to be done, just the delivery of information about meeting times and places,

and eligibility. How deliberate recruiting in the informal arts promotes participation and diversity among participants is the subject of the next section.

**Recruiting.** Because of their desires to maintain their art activities, to strive for artistic excellence, and to promote their art form, many individual artists and most of the art groups continuously or episodically engaged in promotional efforts to draw new participants into their activities. The aggressive and intensive use of personal networks and face to face encounters to find new participants, along with the constant or occasional use of more formal promotional techniques that reach social groups and places beyond the range of personal encounters helped generate the number and diversity of participants we observed in the case studies.

To some extent all participatory groups need to maintain their numbers to continue their activities, but in the case studies the need for collaborators, or the need to reach a critical mass of participants was more pressing for some artists and groups than others. Career aspirations, the rules of sponsoring organizations, and the need to have participants to perform a number of specific tasks all pushed the deliberate recruiting of more artists, often increasing the diversity of participants who end up working together, as is shown in the following examples:

- UP and SF are Mexican American male cousins in their early twenties who aspire to careers performing and producing rap music. SF works construction and funded the building of a recording studio in the basement of his parent's home. The cousins have teamed up with a Puerto Rican rapper in his thirties who knows more than they do about sound work, and together they are actively engaged in recruiting other performers so they can produce CDs. UP goes to a downtown college and asks students he sees rapping on campus if they want to come record with them. At the time of fieldwork, they were producing CDs for two women as well as male performers, and said it was "important" to support female artists.
- Other rappers worked across social boundaries, sought partnerships across them, or discussed the importance of being willing to bridge them to achieve commercial success. CF, an African American rapper in his twenties gave a concert in a record store on the majority white North Side of Chicago. In attendance was GK, a white music producer friend. CF was also working on another hip hop project with a Dutch rapper. He emphasized that he was willing to work with anyone to reach wider audiences and have more creative opportunities. In another example, an African American male/female music promotion duo hosted a monthly

social mixer for people in the Chicago Hip Hop scene. They agree with CF, UP, SF, GK and a couple other African American rappers we interviewed that the failure of Chicago Hip Hop to get national attention is in part because of the lack of a large local audience purchasing the CDs of a body of artists recognized city wide. They attribute this failure to the social divisions between the North, West, and South Sides that they explain in terms of race, class, and gang divisions. Most would welcome having Rap bridge these boundaries among audiences and performers so the local scene can “blow up” and become national. In this way, they recognize their individual aspirations are bound up with inclusive social interactions.

- The Asian music ensemble used class offerings as a vehicle to recruit new members. Not only did they regularly offer classes at their home venue, but they also went to other locales to teach master classes or workshops. For example, they offered a demonstration/class at a private high school in the city, to which both teachers and students were invited. After the class, they invited those who had participated to come to regular rehearsals. Several teachers and a student, in fact did come to rehearsals in the subsequent weeks. The effect of these classes is to bring in younger people to the group, thereby increasing the age diversity.
- The South Side network of individual visual artists is made up primarily of African American men making a living from their art or who aspire to make art their primary pursuit. With few exceptions their collaborations are not artistic but promotional. Since it is difficult to receive contractual gallery representation, or to otherwise have their works on permanent display in dedicated gallery spaces, they have taken to having temporary shows out of each other’s homes or at least to promoting one another’s home based shows. The barriers here are financial as well as lack of access to the most elite galleries where money can most easily be made, if one can get in. Even less prestigious galleries often take 50percent of the selling price of a piece, so unless the gallery has the visibility to sell pieces quickly and the clientele that can afford considerable mark up, it is not worth it to most of these artists to show in a space that takes such a large cut. These informal home studio “openings” have brought together a mail-room worker, a frame-shop employee, two art teachers, and a restaurant employee among others to show their work together. SK, a painter who has hosted a number of openings at his apartment, talked about the inclusion of a white painter’s work in one of these openings, saying “He’s in the same boat as us: lack of places to show. He is not getting into galleries ‘cause his work defies definition.” Although we deal

with the subject of the formal-informal arts links in Chapter V, this network is an example of those connections.

- As career artists the ethnic master musicians and dancers are committed teachers of their art forms. Lacking the institutional teaching affiliations that some of the others have, the Chinese musicians have to find their own students. At first they placed ads in Chinese newspapers, but got students who did not stick with it. They also tried going through Chinese schools, but the perception that they were openly recruiting, and therefore in it for the money, turned people off. They discovered that the most dedicated students are the ones who approach them after concerts, which also eliminates their need to engage in explicit self-promotion. They have come to view concerts as their main recruiting opportunities. In conversation with the ethnographer, they discussed the diversity of participants this approach attracts:

“After we give a concert, they come and say,  
"We love your music. I always wanted to  
learn. Can I still learn? Am I too old?  
Sometimes they're 50. They work very hard and  
they learn very good. If you love music, you can  
learn.. KD comes two times a week. Rain or snow,  
she's here. And she never had any music (training  
before this). She only sent her kids to violin and  
piano lessons. E--she's my student for 2 years. She's  
a realtor and a lot of different kinds of people are  
students. Some work at Lucent, Motorola. One is a  
boss for his company. A CEO, a doctor, a husband  
and wife, a mother and daughter, a father and  
daughter, sisters.”

- UG, the painting class instructor, was an independent contractor working for the park district, who did not get paid if his classes got cancelled for low attendance. He actively promoted his programs at the park. Wanting to add an outdoor painting class, he talked it up more than once to his open studio students. He encouraged them to recruit people they know, reminding them that it would not be offered if ten people did not sign up. He also kept after the park district promotions department to make sure they were generating promised publicity for his programs. He was not technically allowed to spend money to promote programs, but at least once

he spent his own money to promote an art fair at the park, because the park district failed to follow through on promised advertising.

- Finally, at the work place site, the small core group of musicians who started an informal music group recruited others to join them by spreading the word as they encountered people from different departments in the course of their work. In the early days of their existence, they also played at staff parties and used the added visibility to recruit members.

The last reason for active recruiting is to find enough participants to cover a variety of both artistic and organizational tasks necessary to maintain the activity. In the drum circle the problem of filling parts is skirted by not having any assigned roles besides facilitator. It is in the theater situation that recruiting takes on an urgency because volunteers are needed not just to act, but to be stagehands, set builders, tech people, and house staff during the performances. All of this is in addition to what every arts group needs beyond art production people, namely members willing to do the administrative tasks. SM and EL, board members of the Northwest Theater group talked about other community theaters in the Northwest suburbs that have failed in the last five years, connecting some of this to the theaters' failures to attract enough participants. In their view, one group in particular had become "inbred," producing too many plays board members or regular participants wanted to be in, so other actors in the NW suburbs started to stay away thinking they were not really wanted and would not be auditioning on a level playing field. SM pointed out that a closed company of friends is fun for awhile, but the same people having to do all the work every time gets tiresome eventually, and the arrangement is unsustainable.

Both case study theaters are committed to pushing their personal and organizational networks to their limits as recruiting techniques. For example:

- KU, a director and board member at the Southwest Side Theater, joked about roping everyone she knows into theater. She recruited her mother to help with costumes during the case study production and the one immediately following, adding another participant over 50 years old to both these productions. Her boyfriend helped build the sets for the production during the case study and another board member's husband did the sound work.
- Participants also recruit from their theater networks proper. KU has connections to other community theaters and high school theater departments where she teaches. When a popular stage manager at the Southwest Theater was unable to participate in a recent production because of a knee injury, KU brought in as a last minute replacement a

high school student who was in the process of applying to college theater programs.

- KM, at the suburban theater talked about recruiting spouses as a generally good strategy to increase membership, citing as one advantage that it can relieve the tension of having a nonparticipating spouse pulling a participant back out of the theater. In one case, he was persistent in recruiting the spouse of a current participant, knowing the recruit had marketing skills and connections that the group could use. This new member ultimately got park district board members to act in a production, increasing the awareness of the value of the theater to participants and the community in the minds of the people who control the theater's purse strings.

The regular recruiting of spouses helps create gender balance at the theaters on and off stage, just as adult participants recruiting their parents as well as theater students insures the participation of a range of people of different ages. In particular, artists joining their adult children in their artistic pursuits, and vise-versa, was not limited to the theater as we also observed it in Irish Dance, Chinese music (quoted above), painting, choir and quilting.

Often intertwined with the basic need for participants, was the desire to achieve artistic excellence and the need it generated to recruit the best qualified artist or artists with special skills. In collective art activities, participants' desires for high quality productions sometimes pushed them to recruit more widely than they might otherwise have felt compelled to, often increasing the overall diversity of participants. Looking more closely at the choir will make this clear.

- Choir members are drawn from the congregation. No auditions are necessary, and anyone can join, as an essential mission of the choir is to offer anyone moved by the Spirit a manner to offer praise. Simply filling all the needed positions in the choir has not been a problem. Still, there is a concern for quality apparent in the director's recruiting techniques. One technique that he reported is to listen for strong voices coming from the congregation and to pinpoint the individual singers. After services he talked to choir members about working with him to get the singer into the choir. This selection technique should cut across differences of age, gender, occupation, income among churchgoers since quality of performance is the only criteria for recruitment.

- Striving for excellence ultimately pushed the choir’s recruitment efforts beyond the church itself. Professional musician accompanists were hired to play with the singers. While the keyboard player is a long-time church member, the percussionist and organist were not. When the choir director was asked where they get the musicians, he responded, “We go wherever we have to get them. Someone recommended LF (The organist), We're his first church.” The director went on to name the colleges where the organ and electric keyboard accompanists had trained and praised their abilities to both sight read and play by ear.
- Pursuing excellence had a broadening effect on recruiting at the Southwest Side theater as well. MS, Board Co-President, explained that the board wants the best actors whom audition for each production, so they tell directors to pick whomever is best, without regard for who is on the board and therefore a “member” of the theater. To balance excellence with providing opportunity, they do not usually publicize auditions city wide, so local people get a chance at roles without being completely displaced by professionals. During the period of study, the board selected a director because they knew he was skilled and would get the most out of the actors. One of his conditions for directing was that the auditions would be published in an acting paper distributed city wide. The board agreed to this because they wanted him to direct. The result was that the play had more aspiring professional “Northsiders” than usual.

Another reason to promote participation in an artistic activity is because of a commitment to preserving an art form or an effort to popularize it. Master teachers of puppetry, traditional music and dance forms talked about teaching and performing to insure the preservation of artistic traditions, to let people experience their cultural heritage and draw them into preserve and participating in it, or of wanting to bring their art form to “the rest of the world.” The quilters guild and drum circle provide good examples of what happened when a popularizing mission drove the effort to make an activity more visible to attract new members:

- The quilting guild has as one of the goals in its charter “to promote the growth and development in the art and craft of quilting.” To work towards this and other goals the group is always looking for new members and ways to reach them. Members promote their biannual quilt show through a network of Chicagoland guilds and use it as a primary recruiting event. Information about the guild is present on general quilting websites, but



they are currently putting up their own page, which is common for area guilds. The television news segment cited above in the discussion of displays and performances generating new members was not a completely accidental recruiting event. The daughter-in-law of one of the quilters worked at the television station and told the reporter that there was a quilting group he should profile. The guild had a few of days of lead time to prepare for the segment, and CC, the organizer of the Thursday class, called a number of the quilters to ask them to please be at the park with their best quilts at the time of the filming, even to take time off from work to be there if they could. She called some of the most accomplished quilters in the guild, including its male member and its White member at the time. It was this carefully orchestrated event that created a membership jump of one third and the attraction of the guild's second male member.

- Promotion of the drum circle via the internet and publications, in addition to word of mouth and street level visibility, shows that using multiple promotional techniques does reach different kinds of potential participants, reflecting more social diversity than would be achieved by any one approach alone. In the drumming case, the use of multiple promotion techniques is an outgrowth of the circle's mission, and reflects who KZ, the head facilitator, deliberately wants to target for participation and why. KZ wanted to hold a "community drum circle," a form popularized in recent years by Arthur Hall, a professional drummer who has played with nationally known music acts and tours the country teaching how to facilitate a community drum circle. The facilitator even brought Hall to Chicago a few years ago to teach a facilitation workshop. In a "community drum circle" the intention is to draw as many people as possible from wherever they are willing to come. It is not a geographically circumscribed definition of community, but the idea of a community realized by participating together in the circle. The hope is to bring together those who are otherwise socially separated. It is with this community building goal in mind that the circle is held outside, where it is easily seen and joined in, but the facilitator also put announcements on his drumming organizations web site, as well as in a popular drumming periodical distributed in Chicago and its suburbs. Of 69 instances noted by the ethnographer, of drummers gathering information on drumming or other art opportunities, more than half were drummers using the internet or hard-copy publications to gather information. The majority of these instances involved were specifically gathering information about the drum circle at the park. These promotional techniques and word of mouth drew

drummers from Chicago's North Side in general and from both the northern and southwestern suburbs to play in the circle. A couple of regulars come from Southern Wisconsin, and occasionally drummers show up from more distant states; for example, an engineer in town for a few days from Pennsylvania who found the circle on the internet. Those who find the circle through published and posted announcements tend to be white men and women of working age. How the nature of the park space also attracts the very young, old, and ethnically diverse is the first subject of the next section.

**Ease of Access: The Metaphorical Space of Informality.** Diverse artists find it easy to join in and remain as participants at the case study sites because of two factors. First, the features of the locations increase the visibility and approachability of activities, helping artists find activities and feel comfortable participating in them: and secondly, features of the activities are inclusive: welcoming participants of all skill and confidence levels, meeting artists needs as they define them, and having flexibility in attendance, scheduling, and pricing.

*Visible Spaces.* Since some artists are clearly willing to cross social boundaries in order to participate in art activities, promotional techniques that increase the visibility of an activity across social boundaries should tend to increase the diversity of participants. The North Side drum circle, possibly the activity where we observed the most diverse participation, is an especially good example of a high level of visibility driving diverse participation, visibility predicated in part on the open location when the drumming is held outdoors.

The immediate neighborhood of the park where the circle is held is more diverse with respect to race and ethnicity than most of the other case study communities. Residents were diverse with respect to age, occupation, gender, and income as well. When the weather was warm enough, the drum circle was held outside, where it could be heard and seen for a great distance around. A number of drummers reported finding the circle for the first time because they heard it, while others talked about finding drumming opportunities in general by listening while outdoors. A sample of their stories reflects the diversity of drummers who have been drawn to it in this way:

- One first time drummer (seemingly of Middle Eastern descent) reported hearing the circle as he was parking his vintage car in a nearby garage that he rents. He had been out driving for pleasure. He spontaneously decided to join in the drumming, and played congas most of the night. He

favorably compared the circle to the kind of street art opportunities he had encountered travelling in Europe but had not associated with the U.S.

- A white couple with a toddler said they heard the drumming from their nearby apartment for years, and then, after their baby was born, they deciding to start coming out on a regular basis for the sake of exposing him to the music.
- A Puerto Rican mother of two in her early forties said she heard drumming while playing basketball in the park with her sons and decided “I got to do it.”
- An African American social worker and army reservist in her mid thirties first heard drumming while she was playing racquetball at another nearby park. She first enrolled in Park District drumming classes with the drum circle facilitator and then started attending the drum circle.
- A white plumber in his early forties, a white unemployed visual artist in her late twenties, and an Asian American restaurant worker in his early twenties all talked about joining drumming in general (not the circle specifically) that they heard while outdoors in city parks, especially those along the lakefront.

These examples display diversity in gender, occupation, ethnicity, and income, with the range of the latter axis extending from the well-traveled man who rents a garage for his expensive car to the Asian restaurant employee, who talked about changing jobs often to avoid the routine of low paying work.

On any Friday night of the drum circle, the value of outdoor visibility for recruiting diverse participants is immediately apparent to the observer. At the time of peak attendance the drummers can vary in number from 30-75. Participants span in age from 5 to 70, are of mixed gender, and are of white, Native American, Latino, African American, Asian, and Middle Eastern ethnicity. Among the more regular participants are a computer programmer, railroad engineer, plumber, academic counselor, state social worker (army reservist), massage therapist, unemployed sculptor, college student, city park employee, and professional musicians. (Some of these regulars are drummers who found the circle through Internet and published postings.) Beyond the circle of chairs there are senior citizens and parents with children sitting on benches or playing in the nearby tot lot. Many of these seniors and families are of Eastern European, Latino, or South Asian descent, and many seem to be first generation immigrants, speaking to one another in languages other than English. Further out are groups of kids from 7 years old to teenagers who are playing in the park, especially on the basketball court. Instruments such as shakers and drum paddles are placed in the middle of the circle for anyone to grab, and some of the “observers” from outside the circle proper pick up instruments and

join in, if only for a short time. The facilitator of the circle or other drummers also take instruments to bystanders and encourage them to join in.

Another advantage of being outside in the park is apparent in this description. Not only can large numbers of people see and hear the circle, but it is approachable because there are not obstacles between the circle of chairs, the seniors on benches, the families on the playground, and the older kids on the basketball court. Facilitators can walk directly up to these people and offer instruments, just as they can easily get instruments and return to their original areas to play them. The importance of the unobstructed large space became apparent midway through the summer when an iron fence went up around the park. The ethnographer noticed there was less through traffic of people walking across the park, and people stopping to listen on the sidewalk stayed outside the fence, not seeking or being offered instruments. This contrasted with the early summer when the sidewalk was an area where facilitators recruited participants. The importance of outdoor visibility and accessibility to promoting diversity was also apparent when another change of the physical space of the drumming occurred. When the drumming went inside for the winter months, the total number of participants dropped off by about one third and children and seniors were disproportionately the ones eliminated.

Visibility is a factor aiding the recruitment of participants at other case study locations as well, as the following examples illustrate:

- The meetings of the writing group at the South Side library are visible to library patrons through the conference room door. Sometimes writers find themselves fielding inquiries from curious library patrons when they leave the room. This was a position OT, an African American writer in her thirties, found herself in:

“Sometimes they stand  
right there up against the glass doors  
looking in. I think they are trying to  
figure out what we are doing in there. When  
we have a break and we come out, people will  
come up to me and ask, ‘what are you doing  
in there?’ I’ll say we are a writing group  
and we are in there writing....  
Every now and then we’ll get a  
new member....  
A lot of people think what we are doing

is very interesting. I had a lady confront me when I came out and was on my way home. She asked me what I do in there, so I told her. She said, 'oh, that is really nice. So what else goes on?' I told her about the group and she was really interested."

- The Thursday class of the quilter's guild is in the front room of a park fieldhouse, with a bank of windows facing the street and sidewalk where people enter the building. Anyone coming up the walk can see what is going on inside. It is not uncommon for women who have come to the park for other activities to enter the quilting room, asking what participants are doing or wondering if they can learn quilting. A striking example of this happened on a Saturday, when the quilters were at the park working together to produce quilts for donation to a group home for youths. A Girl Scout troop meets at the park on the same Saturday of the month, and a Girl Scout leader came into the quilting room asking if quilters could offer lessons to her scouts on some subsequent Saturdays. The quilters took the request back to their community service committee and a decision was pending at the end of fieldwork. This example also highlights the crossing of generational boundaries.

For drumming, quilting, and writing then the literal openness of the physical facility or space increases the visibility of the activity and aids recruiting. But in all three locations, and at other case study locations not in parks, the facilities have another kind of openness that also increases participation. They are multiple use facilities that host more than just art activities and organizations. Especially the parks and park buildings are not dedicated art spaces, but multipurpose spaces that people use for a variety of leisure activities. As a result, area residents are already in the park for other purposes - sitting on benches, playing with children, shooting baskets - when they are drawn into the drumming. The same holds true to a lesser extent for quilting and writing, at their respective park and library locations. While literal street level visibility is present at these three locations, it is not essential to increasing participation rates in art activities, given the presence at the venue of multiple other activities. The following examples from other park and non-park locations attests to this:

- The church basement where the Southwest Side theater performs is neither visible from outside the church nor to someone entering the first floor entrance. None-the-less, church board members are very aware of the theater's activities, as they have to regulate the use of the basement space.

One church board member used the occasion of a production with children's parts to recruit her grandson to act with the usually "adults-only" company.

- OX, a 70 year old Jewish actor got back into theater after retiring from owning and operating a clothing store. He first joined a group that reads old time radio shows. The group met at a church, where one night he discovered theater auditions were being held in another part of the building. Other people in the radio group were already in the theater company and encouraged him to try out. While he failed to get a part the first time he auditioned, he received a part in a later production when he auditioned for it.
- The park district painting class is the one park or library activity in the case studies that is not literally easy to see. It is not outdoors, easily visible from outside the building, or even visible from the park building lobby. Nevertheless, the park is busy with people who rollerblade, bike, or stroll through ornamental gardens. Four of the twelve painters enrolled in one five week session reported finding the class because they were in the park already for something else, including a jazz concert. They each came into the building just to see what goes on in there, or to see what kinds of classes were being offered. During this session of classes, a white woman came all the way into the classroom while participants were painting and asked the instructor about enrolling. She became a student in the next cycle. Four artists reported finding the studio class by word of mouth while three found it in a park publication.
- A South Side Afrocentric bookstore hosted a weekly poetry open microphone reading. Children were in the store at the beginning of the event because it followed Afrocentric education programs that are offered for children on the weekends. The hostess made a point of openly recruiting the kids to read their own compositions. She said she often includes kids to get them used to reading and using the microphone. The week an ethnographer attended, a ten-year old boy read a poem he composed on the spot after being asked to read.

Summarizing the implications of this section on visibility and the previous one covering recruiting, our point is that where informal art activities were made visible across social boundaries, by either active promotion efforts or the visible location of the art activity, we observed diverse participants joining in arts activities. More than that, members of social groups that are often excluded from other sectors of society, including sometimes exclusion from sectors of the arts, joined activities right along with the usually more privileged when they became aware of the opportunities. For example, older people who are often excluded from commercial television acting and entertainment roles by the industry's focus on the interests of a younger viewing audience, found easier

access through the church. In the example above, it was the site for an old time radio group of older members and one of them was drawn into another theater opportunity when it presented itself at the same location. Children are often excluded from adult activities, but when adults reading poetry intersected with children's activities at the bookstore, and the boy was told he could read, he eagerly did so. White as well as women of color, already in the parks for other activities, walked right into the rooms where art activities were taking place and inquired about joining in. African American library patrons also questioned writers about their activities, curious to discover what was going on.

*Feeling Welcome.* But more is going on here than just the traditionally excluded becoming aware of art opportunities. They are feeling welcome and comfortable in the art activity spaces. Walking into the room during activities to find out what is going on and if they can join, suggests that these participants bring the assumption to these spaces that the activities are there for everyone including themselves. They are certainly being made to feel welcome by inclusive features of the activities, such as drumming facilitators offering instruments to bystanders, adults telling children they can read at an open mic, or an senior citizen being encouraged by his friends to try out for a part in a play. We will return to this point, but first we need to examine how people's discomfort in some instances acted as a barrier to participation and then examine how the nature of the host locations creates a space of comfort and therefore inclusiveness.

Some artists talked about being uncomfortable enough with the location of an art activity or with participating in an art group that they decided not to participate. Some examples show the circumstances under which discomfort has deterred arts participation:

- A 37 year old white, South Side college radio station Hip Hop DJ does not do DJ tricks like scratching or sampling on the air. He practiced these techniques for over a year at home with the help of experienced DJ's, but never felt he got good enough to do it outside of his home.
- ENV, a Polish/Irish actor in his early fifties, is a board member and regular actor with the Southwest Side theater. He used to be stage manager for what he described as a "professional" theater where it seemed to him that everyone on stage took intensive summer actors' training sabbaticals. He wanted to be on stage, but was too intimidated by the professional atmosphere. Finally he quit and started doing theater with the case study theater, which describes itself as a "community" rather than "professional" theater.
- EX, a South Side African American visual artist started his art career in San Francisco working in a corporate advertising firm. He eventually quit because

he did not feel welcomed in the industry as an African American. On one occasion a client representative asked repeatedly before work began if EX was really working a scheduled photo shot or just fooling with the client's team, and the actual photo team would arrive soon.

- NH, a middle aged white quilter, reported that she quit a quilters guild in a South Side neighborhood near a major research university. She felt too uncomfortable with how nice the other women's homes were, and did not want to have to compete with them as home decorators and hostesses when it was her turn to have the meeting at her house. Additionally, meetings ended after dark, and she did not feel comfortable walking back to her car at that hour in that community. She is far more comfortable being one of three white in the quilters guild at the park because the park meetings are during daylight hours and she does not have to compete with the appearances of other women's homes to be able to share quilting.

The first two examples illustrate the most frequently occurring type of discomfort by far in all of our research, artists feeling uncomfortable having their work heard or seen by others because they fear they are not skilled enough, or at least not skilled enough to participate at the venue with the opportunity. The second source of discomfort, illustrated in the third and fourth examples, is traditional social exclusion, activities in which people are made to feel or simply feel uncomfortable because of differences of race and class aspiration. This form of discomfort did not come up as often as the first in discussions of arts participation, and sometimes would arise only when the ethnographer was very direct in discussing the topic of exclusion. The last form of discomfort was fear for one's physical safety or safety from crime in general. Crime concerns were only pervasive in the case studies at South Side locations, with the quilters, writers, choir members, and some individual artists feeling they had to be systematically concerned and attentive to the threat of crime. For example, choir members and writers would walk with one another to their cars to make themselves less likely targets of criminals.

Despite artists citing these barriers to comfort and participation at both informal and formal venues, they reported and we observed characteristics of informal locations that help artists to overcome sources of discomfort while they create, display, or perform art. Before going into these characteristics, a more precise term and definition is needed to close the gap between the nature of a place and the experience of activities there. Taken together the more tangible features of a place, the conceptions of a place people bring to it, and the activities that take place there give it its character as an experienced space. Used in this way, the word space connotes a metaphorical space of experience. With this as a definition, we will highlight the case study locations as spaces where artists



feel at ease participating in the arts because real and perceived features of the places contribute to their comfort.

*Spaces as Comfortable Places.* At public facilities like parks and libraries, it was apparent that people who have traditionally experienced social exclusion from elite cultural spaces enter these informal arts locations with the idea that the art activities are there for them to join. They take seriously the egalitarian missions of these neighborhood based public facilities, making statements and acting in ways that indicate they understand that these places and the activities they house are for everyone including themselves:

- DT, a 51 year old African American special education instructor in the writing group, talked about the libraries as appropriate spaces for a writing group:

“Yes, because many of those structures at some point turned certain people away so people don't feel comfortable. I think by having groups at the libraries or parks in the different communities, it is a good start. With that you will always find someone who would not find a structure like the Art Institute or the Museum of Science and Industry. I think it is a great start because you have a certain comfort level in going to a public library, especially in your community”.

- The quilters first approached the park district for space to hold monthly guild meetings on Saturdays and to reserve the gym for one weekend a year to hold their quilt show. Later they asked for a room to have on a weekly basis to teach quilting on Thursday mornings. Class started in a small room with a handful of students, and grew to where it had to be moved to the large double sized classroom where it meets now. Recently they added a first Saturday of the month quilting class for those who cannot make it to those on Thursdays. It also meets at the park. The guild requests the classroom or rents the gym for other special events like extra group work days for community service projects or to throw holiday parties. It was within the last two years that the guild started paying the park district for the space to hold their monthly business meeting and to rent the gym for the quilt show. The space for classes

is still free. CC, the organizer of Thursday class, explained her comfort with approaching the park for space by pointing out, “They are very happy to have us. We’ve brought people into the park, filled the space, and we don’t charge.” Later she went on to say that park district supervisors and the elected officials over them listen to the wishes of seniors because “they like our votes.”

- The artists at the work place make use of a variety of spaces for their arts practice. The institution has a flexible and open approach to the staff’s use of space, and as long as no one has booked a space for an official event, staff were free to use it for their practice sessions. While these spaces were not of the same type of public space as park facilities, for example, they represented the equivalent and staff felt comfortable using them for artistic purposes.
- UN, a white male painter/poet in a writer’s group who is a regular member of a coffeehouse based poetry group also sometimes reads at library open mics. He describes the participants as including a few locally respected poets and people with degrees, but added that it included the mentally ill who are not aware of when their poetry is not good, or when their presentation is poor. He explained that he became uncomfortable with inappropriate material, and disappointed by the quality of much of what he heard, leading him to quit going to the libraries.

The quilter’s remarks clearly reflect a belief in the parks as public, community serving spaces, opened for all citizens to use and enjoy. Just filling the park fieldhouse with people engaged in activities is a value in her view. Park personnel are happy because they are able to achieve their institutional mission to serve citizens with space and activities. She does not feel excluded from the park as an African American or a woman, but rather believes that she along with many of the guild members belongs to a group -- Senior Citizens -- who enjoy a high degree of influence in park management because they wield their power as citizens at the ballot box. In the case of UN ceasing to read poetry at the library, even though it is an instance of him ultimately avoiding interactions with people who were different from him, supports the argument that public facilities are experienced as comfortable and welcoming places for participants who are excluded from other types of venues.

Parks and libraries share with other informal art locations real and perceived features that help artists feel welcomed and relaxed. The most important of these features include the neutrality of the location, people’s feelings of familiarity with the location, and the inclusive and relaxed atmosphere that people associate with many “non-arts” locations. By the neutrality of space we mean that a location welcomes everyone regardless of social background. A neutral space does not have features that mark social

differences between participants. Recall the example of NH who felt uncomfortable in the upper middle class homes of other quilters when she thought of having them to her less immaculate home. Finding she liked the park better as a comfortable place where she could engage other quilters, she also discovered it was important to her for art space to be neutral, that it not be employed to mark economic status. In this sense, not only parks and libraries, but any kind of space from a church to a school, or a restaurant can be suitably neutral. As long as participants do not become individually responsible for purchasing decorations, a place that none of them owns or controls the appearance of, can be comfortably neutral as a meeting space for artists who have different incomes or different financial and household priorities. Homes appear to be both among the most comfortable of spaces and the least comfortable depending on the source of discomfort. Performance anxieties seem to be at their lowest both in artist's own homes and in other's homes, while, as the case of NH shows, discomfort based on crossing social boundaries can be at its height inside homes.

The earlier mentioned examples of people boldly joining or inquiring about art activities at locations where they were already involved in other activities has already made the case that familiarity with a location makes people more comfortable participating in the arts there. Possibly because they had already had the experience of being welcomed to participate in other activities, the entire facility and its activities felt welcoming to them. CC, the quilting organizer and teacher observed, "People in the area can (now) see seniors in the park and see it is safer", an indicator of how use of the park nurtured feelings of comfort and belonging. We might infer from her remark that in addition to actual safety improvements, repeated usage has made her more comfortable with the park and more inclined to use it more often for guild activities.

But people do not literally have to have previously used a place to feel at ease joining and participating in an art activity there. Along with parks and libraries, people associated an inclusive and relaxed atmosphere with other kinds of locations. The fact that informal art locations were not usually associated in people's minds with "arts" activities - most not being dedicated art spaces even when they have a single primary purpose associated with them - seems to increase people's comfort with engaging in art activity. The unpretentious, familiar, or intimate nature of parks, libraries, churches and church basements, building lobbies, homes and home studios, workplace break or common rooms, and neighborhood restaurants and bars creates a comfortable artistic space characterized by a sense of belonging and ease for those creating, performing, or showing art together. This is illustrated in the following list of instances taken from field notes:

- One participant in the South Asian music ensemble said of the church basement that while it wasn't the "fanciest" place around, it was secure for the group's instruments and had a nice atmosphere.
- The case of the church choir demonstrated a way that only a church can put participants at ease. Most choir members think of their primary purpose as singing to praise God, not to perform for an audience. This concept is reflected in the quote below by a choir leader, who is in her early fifties, and lives in a home near the church. This is how she responded when asked if she joined the choir as soon as she returned to the church:

“No, not right away. Coming back was an act. I knew I wanted more. I wasn't satisfied (with where I was), but not until the Holy Ghost filled me, did I commit. It's my way of praising. And giving back to the Lord. (i.e. being in the choir). And the loss of my father had a lot to do with it. I sat at home and read the Bible from front to back. I was searching. I came back. My roots are here. The people I love are here.”

- DI, a white computer technician in his late 20's, grew up playing drums with his friends in the streets and homes of a town north of Milwaukee Wisconsin. He described the combination of playing with laid back friends in such familiar surroundings as creating an "intimate space" where he felt "no pressure to perform."
- TT, an African American mother of two in the North Side painting class put a positive spin on the small size of the room, which sometimes gets crowded with painters, saying she appreciates that the space is "cozy."
- MSP, a gay, white member of the Southwest Side theater, used to write serialized fiction stories about himself and his colleagues at work. He held an office job at a beverage distribution company, and would leave his stories in the break room for coworkers to read. He considered the stories to be "stress relief" for himself and his lunchtime friends, just a part of being the company clown.
- SK, an African American mother of two children, is a writer married to a visual artist. They both do their artwork out of their apartment on Chicago's South Side. SK used to feel that getting up in front of people and reading was not what she was "about". Even though she taught composition at a

community college, she felt her creative writing was too personal to share. It was at a bar, over a beer, that she was finally convinced to enter into a bet with another writer to see who could write a better short story in a week's time. Figuring it was just part of socializing with friends over drinks, she took up the challenge. Her work was so well received at the bar the next week, that it helped convince her to go read at other venues with structured open microphone programs.

- An accomplished South Side visual artist offers painting classes in a Victorian mansion where he also lives and works. The 4-8 students he has every Thursday arrive as they please between 10 and 11 in the morning, and leave between 12 and one. They do not feel a sense of urgency about timing, as GSA is usually flexible about when they come and go since he lives upstairs. They paint in the sunny front room with a view of the plants in the yard, and enjoy coffee and tea that the instructor makes in his kitchen. Alternatively, a student unselfconsciously goes upstairs to the kitchen and brews beverages for everyone. Frequently someone brings a coffeecake, donuts, or holiday sweets.

As the use of the bar as a place to share food and drink and to relax with friends demonstrates, comfort is not only related to fixed features and preconceived ideas of places, but it is recreated by the actions and activities of users. Artists made and remade the spaces of their creative expression through their actions and interactions. SK and her friends came into the bar associating it with relaxed activity, and recreated that feeling by sharing food and drink which again, put her at ease when the story writing challenge arrived. Also, the sharing of food at the artist's home studio means students are treating his home as their own homes, so they can feel as comfortable as if they actually were at home. In fact, we found at every case study location that artists were involved in actively creating a comfortable space for expression, appropriating and altering physical components and spatial relations of the place for their own purposes. Again, the following examples are summarized fieldnotes:

- At both the South Side home-based and the North Side park-based painting classes, course terms officially end after a fixed number of weeks. Some of the students leave finished and unfinished works on continuous display, signaling both their intention to return and the permanence in their minds of the space as a space for painters and painting.
- The facilities where the northwest suburban theater performs and rehearses are not dedicated theater spaces, so there is a constant back and forth in remaking the space for their activities and for other activities. For example they perform in a gymnasium so the basketball hoops have to be cranked to the

ceiling, the bleachers and tumbling mats pushed back against the walls, and chairs set up on the basketball court proper to convert it into a theater space.

- The religious rituals at the South Side church transform the building from a place where a concert might happen into a place of worship, where people are moved by the Holy Spirit to sing praise. Logically this transformation of the space has to accompany choir members' abilities to feel not as performers singing in a concert hall, but as fellow worshipers of God doing the same thing as their fellow Christians in the congregation. The transformative power of the religious ritual to create the sacred space and by extension to put singers at ease was verified by the choir director when he told the ethnographer that people who struggle in rehearsal usually are able to pull off their parts during services or sacred performances.
- The quilters use the same room at the park that is used for kids after school and summer camp activities. They quickly move into the room on Thursday mornings, checking table surfaces to make sure they are free of paste or food, and open a locked cabinet they keep there for housing supplies and their library. Quilts are spread out on tables, and often books or quilting supplies are put on display for sale. A ping-pong table from the summer city wide promotion of the game, is a favorite table for displaying quilts and pinning the layers together, because it is larger than most other tables in the room. The guild plans to buy a more secure locking cabinet so it is safe to keep a video library at the park and use it for teaching.

These artists are engaged in an ongoing project of making these spaces their own, where they can count on being able to comfortably and dependably do art. It is an ongoing project in part because the informal arts so often share spaces with other activities. A special case of the ongoing creation of safe space is the quilter's plan to make storage safer than it has been by adding a new cabinet, so they can offer more training. Their decision suggests they have tolerated what they feel are specific, acceptable risks over time, only attacking a danger when it grows and they want to use the space more intensively.

Another instance in which artists made spaces their own to overcome discomfort involved performance spaces. SK expressed the most frequently stated and witnessed type of artists' discomfort, discomfort with having an audience. Some performing artists talked openly about stage fright, or being shy; but with others the fear of having an audience was implied in their choosing and using aspects of places to create spaces of arts practice that offer a degree of concealment or anonymity:

- The outdoor space of the drum circle offers a kind of novel anonymity. On one occasion, a beginning white drummer in his forties from a southwest suburb was not drumming as the circle participants began playing. He leaned over to the ethnographer sitting next to him and said, “I have to wait until it gets dark.”
- TO, a 26 year old white drummer who comes to the Chicago circle from the northern suburbs described what she likes about the indoor and outdoor space for the drum circle and performance spaces in general:

“I know for myself, I like it when it's dark outside and inside when he turns most of the light out. At circle it's kind of small and intimate and though I think I'd like it at Dublin Pub because you could (get lost in the crowd). A friend says nobody's watching other people. The space does make a difference. And I think I know most of the people here (Friday night circle) though—maybe that would (make it harder). When I drummed a month ago at the peace conference, we were in the hallway and I felt like people were watching us. Like we were on display. I didn't feel safe. And then there were those photographers and they started taking photos right away so I knew it would be (bad). I like it if the other people are involved and not there just watching. I like it outside. That's my favorite; it always feels good.”

- The plain and concealed nature of the basement at the Southwest Side church where the theater group performs allows valued anonymity as well. The basement as a performance space is not so finished, large, or known that other theater or performance groups besides the church youth programs use it. One of the regular directors with the company, KI, is a white woman in her middle thirties from a working class background. She has done factory work, and her parents wanted her to study something practical in college so she could get a good job; as a result, she studied literature and never received formal technical training in the theater. She highly values being able to go to the church on

weekdays to play with the lighting and sound equipment, or plan the positioning of the actors on stage. Not having to do this in front of the cast or crew relieves her fear of having her authority undermined by her lack of training.

These three examples illustrate features of places that contributed to the comfort of participants because they deliberately acted to incorporate these features into their experience of the space. This suggests that the characteristics of activities proper -- as an outgrowth of participants' desires and actions independent of features of place -- are also central to insuring the comfort of participants, and more generally effect how inclusive activities will be. The role of group policies and member practices in creating an inclusive space of arts practice that welcomes and even promotes participation by diverse participants is the subject of the next section.

*Low Barriers and Flexibility.* All of the case study group activities offered opportunities to artists who ranged from beginners to the highly skilled and experienced. Barriers to participation were low. With the exception of auditions to be on stage at the theaters, there were no jury processes to insure a common skill level of performers; e.g. actors did not need to have head-shots or resumes, musicians and singers did not have to submit demo tapes or audition, and no previous training was required. The low barriers to participation at the writing group were especially appreciated by OT, who had little or no formal training in writing:

“I am going to be honest.  
When I first heard about the (the writing group), I thought  
it was a joke and I am going to tell you why.  
I thought, ‘oh no, they have to be kidding.  
These people over here they have to have  
degrees and different things like that. They  
aren't going to let anybody like me come up  
into that group.’ When I got there, I had to  
see it with my own eyes to believe it.  
Because, like I said, before I didn't think I  
would be able to get into the group because I  
didn't have some kind of degree or anything  
like that behind me. I said, ‘I know they  
aren't going to let me in because I know you  
have to have some kind of college degree. You  
have to be a big something, you know? Here I



am, I haven't done anything except write and that's it.' When I got in there, it really blew me away. I was in shock that they had blessed me and let me it.”

The writing group included a college writing instructor and professional advertisement writer, a special education teacher, a former postal worker, a day laborer, and a child safety worker, among others. Participants ranged from those who had completed some high school, to others who had some college, and a few with graduate school training. This occupational and educational diversity illustrates how welcoming people with various degrees of artistic training can cut across more general social boundaries of educational and professional differences.

Inside the space of participation proper, we found informal art activities were structured flexibly allowing participants to choose both the difficulty level and often the focus of their own participation. Artists of different ability levels and with different goals found what they wanted within the same creative space and sometimes within the same collaborative activity. Flexible and voluntary participation also caters to the comfort level of artists by accommodating different levels of desire for attention. Each group was structured so everyone from masters to self-assured novices could be in the limelight when they wanted to be, while shy artists or insecure beginners could enjoy anonymity if that is what they wanted. We found that this ability to accommodate and create comfort, increased the number and diversity of artists who worked together at the case study sites. Some examples make clear the range of artistic and attention gaining options that were opened to artists within any one group and illustrate the ways they accommodated various artists:

- UG, the painting instructor at the North Side park based class, had beginning artists do a week of basic exercises before they started working on pieces of their own choosing. He waived these for people who felt they did not need them, and welcomed more advanced painters who wanted the review to join in doing them as well. Once these exercises were done, painters chose their own subjects to paint and UG moved around the room offering individual assistance. At the end of each class, sequence of classes, or when pieces were completed, artists could leave their works on display in the studio space or take them home. Painters in the class ranged from an African American and a white woman who were formally trained artists, to a retired male white lawyer and two women in their twenties, one Latino and white, all three of whom were beginners.

- The quilters had “show-and-tell” at Saturday guild meetings when quilters could come to the front of the room and show off completed or in progress quilts to seated guild members. There was no obligation to show pieces. One long time quilter told the ethnographer that she had all kinds of quilts at home that no one has ever seen because she did not quite finish them or did not like how they turned out.
- Drummers in the circle could take on more prominent roles by going to the center of the circle to facilitate or to dance, or by stepping up to the base drum to set a new beat. Alternatively, drummers could stay seated in the circle proper, or standing behind it, and blend with the large sound of the group. Some instruments were louder than others and one could always play louder or softer on most instruments without anyone objecting. The parents and kids in the park, passers by, and retired people who join in from the benches were usually not inclined to jump into the more prominent available roles, but were happy standing back in the crowd.
- The community theaters accommodated different skill and comfort levels, partially counteracting the exclusion that occurs due to the competitive selection of actors. At both community theaters, off stage support and technical roles allowed participation in the production without having to be in the limelight. At the Southwest Side theater, directors with extended affiliations with the theater notice who in support roles really wants to be onstage but is too nervous. The directors encouraged, coaxed, and steered these possible actors towards manageable small roles that suit their abilities or would help them gain confidence. Directors did this for actors whose abilities were also moving the other direction, i.e. deteriorating. Some older actors, who have been in theater for years, find their ability to memorize and remember lines diminishing. Both theaters have directors who encouraged older actors to stay involved by offering roles on stage and off appropriate to their abilities. In one instance a director called an older actor knowing he would be good for a role which required playing the violin, which he could do, but not speaking, which he felt he could not have managed anymore with his failing memory.
- Songs performed by the South Side choir included solos as well as singing in unison. Performing a solo was voluntary and no one who asked to perform got turned down based on ability. The director reported that he coaxed some singers to volunteer when he could tell they were already doing a good job singing the part in their section. This helps insure they will be comfortable doing a song they know and sing well, as well as insuring the quality of the solo for the listeners.

- Anonymity takes a different form in the Asian music ensemble, allowing people not to feel singled out as less skilled or for making mistakes. When participants wanted the ethnographer to learn a new piece, the group played it over and over a number of times claiming repeatedly that the group needed the extra practice. It was only later that the ethnographer found out it was a piece they already knew well, and that work had only continued until she got it right.

The anonymity offered by the Asian music ensemble illustrates how participants do more to insure one another's comfort than simply letting people stand out or blend in as they please. In not singling the ethnographer out for criticism, the musicians showed a commitment to accepting beginning as well as advanced players, making the space comfortable for her by not drawing attention to her relative lack of proficiency. The musicians were not showing a lack of concern with or effort toward improvement. The effort was made without overt criticism that would fall disproportionately on less skilled players. Other groups created relaxed, accepting, and usually noncompetitive space of practice; following routines of mutual praise and avoidance of negative criticism or direct comparisons of participants work during group activities (skills that will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter):

- The facilitator at the library described the way the group spontaneously changes its tone when a new member joins, not just in relation to the new member but in relation to each other as well. For a period of time, they only praised what they liked about each other's pieces. They avoided discouraging the new member by not forwarding even diplomatic critiques.
- There was a habitual aspect to the way painters compliment both one another's finished pieces and works in progress, routinely finding something good to say about each person's paintings. In class, comparisons of different painters' work was strictly avoided.
- EX, the cousin of the choir director who is a member himself, talked about overcoming his fear of performing in church by taking his father's advice to remember he is praising God, not playing to an audience, and that the congregation is there to support him in his praising role, not to critique or be dissatisfied with his beginner status:

“There's lots of anxiety but my Dad helped me out. I'd tell him when I was a kid that I was scared and he said, 'Son, what's different about singing in front of church, is you can't mess up'. And I said, Oh, yes, Dad, I can mess up. I can.’

And he said, ‘Nobody paid a ticket to come and hear you. If you make a mistake, they’ll only encourage you to do better.’”

- Show-and-tell for the quilters most often took a standard form that included clapping and praise from the onlookers. All pieces were met with applause and positive comments with truly great work receiving louder applause and exuberant praise. Show-and-tell was not a time to share any critiques of works and like the painters they avoided comparing one another’s quilts, at least in front of the makers of the quilts.

In seven of the nine group case studies, comfortable spaces with opportunities for a variety of artists also reflected the commitment by the groups, or their lead personnel, to respond to artists’ artistic desires as the artists define them. Here are five examples of this commitment to responsiveness, which also once again illustrate how flexible activity structures met distinct artistic desires and thereby promoted greater participation rates and participant diversity:

- The first members of the quilters guild were all knowledgeable about sewing and some took classes to learn quilting through Chicagoland sewing and quilting businesses. Both the guild founder and the founder of the Thursday class (CC), reported that as the guild grew, more and more members did not have basic skills and were asking if a class could be offered, so CC decided to offer one which has grown into the Thursday gatherings of often more than 30 quilters. The usual one-to-one teaching approach meant not only could beginners get individual attention from more experienced quilters, but experienced quilters helped each other with more advanced problems and quilters found plenty of opportunity just to socialize. The high attendance rates on a weekday, and the mix of retired and employed participants attests to the diverse audience that can be attracted when organizations or lead artists are attentive to artists’ wishes.
- MSP, the gay, white Board Co-President at the Southwest Side theater, started with the group as a lighting tech. When members found out he wanted to act they cast him in small roles to help him get started. He found he was too nervous and decided being on stage was not for him. MS, the other board co-president at the time of the fieldwork, taught him directing including having him as assistant director on productions she directed. He advanced to start directing productions increasing his involvement with the group.

- KZ, the drum drill facilitator, consistently encouraged other drummers to try facilitating, on one occasion telling a drummer who asked permission to try that it was not necessary to ask his permission because it was not KZ's drum circle.
- The commitment of UG, the North Side painting class instructor, to being flexible enough in his teaching methods to provide each painter with what they want is reflected in comments he made concerning when he first started teaching adults at the park:

UG: Some of the things I was afraid of are what I ended up liking. Like the different personal styles. I enjoy that now because it's constant change. I didn't think I could teach up in front of a class and say, okay we're all going to paint this still life; get out your #4 brush. Because that's not art anyway. It's craft time for adults....

Ethnographer: Constant change?

UG: Yea, the different things different people are working on. Some want tips, some want advice, some come for camaraderie.

That this flexible approach is important to attracting and retaining some participants was clear in the comments of BN, a white painter in her twenties who works downtown doing marketing for a real estate firm. Based on her income, she could have afforded to go to a school like the Art Institute, but chose the park instead in part because the Art Institute instructor she spoke to was too rigid, as she explained:

“...I had looked at the Art Institute for classes. But the hours, the cost, and the structure were too much. And I talked to some professors and oh, my goodness, they were so scientific, saying, oh, you have to learn to draw first... So I said, I can't do this (the Art Institute).

But then it was back on my radar screen. See, on May 25, it was my birthday and I took the day off and fixed my own picnic and my own little book and had myself a day. And I was reflecting on life and walked by (the Park building with the class) and walked in and talked to UG and signed up.”

BN struggled with accepting even the pointers for painting that UG offered her when she would ask for help. She still felt restricted by “rules”. UG did present techniques as suggestions and let her switch to photography when painting became too frustrating. She attended until the end of the class cycle.

- The umbrella organization that facilitated the writing group at the library is also committed to having its activities meet the needs of artists as they state them, rather than being wedded to a rigid initial vision of offerings. EF, a founder of both the organization (OXB) and the founding facilitator of the library group explained how important this flexibility is to a successful arts organization. Her comments were paraphrased by one of the ethnographers in field notes and reprinted here:

I met with EF in the OXB offices to follow-up the interview and review press clippings. She clarified that the main goal in her mind of OXB was to build the community, to empower organic growth for the individual and the community. For the writers that might mean increasing their confidence or skill level, or helping them publish their work. Those goals should be developed from the writers' own desire not the institutions....She said it is very important to see the organization's identity and growth coming out of its mission not the personality of its staff or director.

The success of this approach is reflected in the fact that the group has had to split in two once before when it was getting too big, establishing a group at another nearby library. At the time of fieldwork it was preparing to split again starting another group at a

third library further south. Three of the four interviewed participants commented on what a good job the organization did offering them the kinds of writing, public reading, or publishing opportunities they were looking for.

The flexibility of these activities was not limited to accommodating artists of different skill levels, artistic desires, and comfort levels. To a greater or lesser degree they were all flexible in their attendance requirements, scheduling, and pricing which accommodated a variety of outside demands and responsibilities in the lives of artists and made it possible for more and diverse artists to participate.

*Flexible attendance, scheduling, and low prices.* The demands of family and work vary from artist to artist, and also differ in patterned ways among social groups with age, gender, profession, marital status, and education having effects on the flexibility of artists' schedules and quantities of free time. The result is that less flexible art activities eliminate some groups from participation in predictable ways. For example, theater is an ensemble activity that aims to please a sizable audience at scheduled performances. Of all the case studies, the theaters were the most rigid and demanding of a great deal of artists' time on a fixed schedule in the weeks leading up to a performance. This limited participation in ways explained by SM, a white board member at the Northwest Suburban theater.

In the case below, SM has just told the ethnographer that he had taken a "break" from theater:

Ethnographer: And so you call your time away your "break"?

SM: Yes, once I started getting--I was going to college part time--then I got into retail management which I was really interested in. Unfortunately, retail hours don't go with performing. It's evenings and weekends. So I was out of it not voluntarily; it was money and work reasons. Then I got married in that time and didn't do it. Let's see, how long was that? It was 15-16 years.

Ethnographer: And then you started back?

SM: Yea, I finally got a more typical 9-5

job. And after a few years, I finally realized I had some free time....

Ethnographer: Are there other barriers or things besides job hours that you've experienced?

SM: Family commitments make a difference. My wife and I didn't have kids, but you're still possessive of your private time and when it gets down to the show (week), you're not home a lot. And that can cause some friction. Especially when you're used to being home all the time.

A similar pattern of restricted participation was apparent at the Southwest Side theater, although it suggests that the flexibility or daytime schedule of one's profession is a determining factor of participation more independent of pay rate than SM asserted. Participants' jobs ranged from tuck pointing and office support to professors and police officers; only one person worked in the retail sales sector of the economy. Spouses tended to be artistic themselves, often also involved in theater, and a number of participants were single. None of the board members or regular participants at the Southwest Side theater had children below the age of 18. Only one actor cast in the show during the period of fieldwork had children at home, and he also was the only one with a job in retail.

Despite these barriers, in all of the case study activities we observed, flexible attendance requirements helped specific participants overcome time constraint barriers. As SM's "break" from acting illustrates, outside of particular commitments to a given performance, members of the suburban theater still had the freedom to take time off and return later without being turned away or suffering a stigma or penalties. Reasons for artists' extended breaks in all the case studies often related to family and job demands, and participants took advantage of the opportunity to easily leave and return as the following examples illustrate:

- EH, a divorced 48 year-old white police officer who played one of the lead roles at the Southwest Side theater during the research period, is planning to take time off from acting so he can moonlight as a security guard to put his 18 year old son through school.



- EF is a founding member of the umbrella organization that sponsors the library writing groups, and the founding facilitator at the case study's library location. She explained that members were able to stick with the group because of the freedom to come and go:

“In the libraries, people stay. If at times they get jobs or their schedule changes or they have to start taking care of a grandchild in the afternoons, they might not come for two or three months. We have even had people come back after two years its like okay now I'm available again. So with the libraries our retention is really quite high, although we haven't done these statistics”.

- At the North Side painting class, not only did OQ stop rushing because her classmate TT reassured her she could come back later after teaching the fall semester, but TT gestured to the works of other painters who were doing just that. Also painters and the instructor UG talked on more than one occasion about an older woman painter who was not there during the period of participant observation because of health problems. When the ethnographer followed up with the class the subsequent winter, this woman was back.

Some activities accommodate the outside responsibilities of participants by letting them bring them to meetings. While the drum circle is the only activity in the case study that regularly recruits and integrates children into the activity, other activities are flexible enough to accommodate children and their families, making it possible for adults, mostly mothers and grandmothers with childcare responsibilities, to attend rehearsals and meetings:

- A handful of children between 8 and 14 are sometimes in the nave of the church during choir practice, quietly doing homework while their parents practice singing. Sometimes a child will sit up with the singers or the accompanists taking an interest in closely watching the music.
- Quilters often bring children, usually their grandchildren, to Thursday class. Girls that are old enough, or interested, occasionally learn quilting or show their quilting, having praise heaped on them by the adult women. Other children who are too young or not interested in quilting are supervised and entertained even as their caretakers socialize and talk quilting.

- A production following the intensive fieldwork period at the Southwest Side theater included a number of roles for children. One of the mothers did not want to leave her child at the church for rehearsals, so the director allowed her to attend them, waiting for her child each time. (She also attended each performance, working as an usher at most to avoid having to pay for more than one ticket.)
- At the Asian music ensemble, participants would sometimes bring their children to rehearsals. For a while, one of the participant's mother came to rehearsals just to watch the children.

Even going beyond group activities proper we find this kind of relaxed atmosphere that allowed for the presence of children as non-participants. Two South Side individual artists, who worked out of spaces in their homes, could participate in childcare responsibilities as part of their painting workdays. They each had two or more children under the age of seven and a typical day included brief breaks to pick up kids at the neighborhood school, supervising television viewing, or providing meals. In a similar circumstance taken from the Hip Hop case study, the ethnographer arrived at the home of one of the musicians to conduct an interview to find both men there already listening to music tracks they had received from a producer. Once they picked tracks they would Rap over them to make a CD. While they did this they also babysat one of the musician's infant child.

Outside of theater, all the other case study group activities were flexible not only about allowing extended breaks, but also not requiring strict attendance on a week to week basis. In drumming, painting, quilting, writing, Asian music playing, and to a degree choir the mix of people shifts from week to week, as someone returns who had been away and someone else who attended the week before is gone. Additionally, outside of choir, performances, these group's activities had no prohibition attached to artists arriving late and leaving early. Schedule flexibility was made possible by the loose internal organization of the activities and by having enough participants in ensemble activities that artists fill redundant roles. The following examples illustrate these features and differences:

- Under the studio formats of painting and quilting, teachers move around the room helping artists as individuals based on the "student's" rate of working and learning (student's is in quotation marks because who is the student and who is the teacher can also shift from week to week or even hour to hour depending on who has the knowledge someone else wants.) With the exception of a handful of voluntary group lessons, there is no one lecturing to a crowd or teachers having to concern themselves with whether everyone has

learned the technique before going ahead. (This loose structure is what makes possible the assertive seeking of information by non-participants who happen to stumble upon the activity and think they might want to join. Walking into a room and asking questions is not bad manners if you are walking up to a small group of artists engaged in casual conversation while they paint or quilt, rather than interrupting a lecture being given to an entire class.) In contrast to ensemble activities, irregular participation in studio classes does not adversely affect one's artistic peers, but only effects one's own progress or rate of learning or production.

- Writers at the library discussed and shared their work at weekly meetings, much like the quilters. While individual works were considered at the same time by the entire group, any collaboration outside of a given days meeting was by personal arrangement between authors, but not part of a structured routine of the group, so again there was not a structural need for consistent attendance by every participant.
- In the drum circle, where there is an effort to play together, the absence of fixed pieces of music, specific parts, and scheduled performances meant there was no structural reason to stop people from coming and going as they please. This flexibility is apparent in the recruiting of new drummers by other drummers offering instruments even as the circle is playing.
- DX, the South Side choir director explained the lateness and early departure of some members for each week's practice:

“They leave to go to work. They come here before work, they're on their way to work; they work 3rd shift.”

DX tried to put enough people into each section so that if someone had to miss a concert he or she would not be missed overall, and he made tapes for people who could not make it to rehearsal because of job responsibilities. The tapes allowed them to practice the parts at home.

Artists talked about the importance of these forms of attendance flexibility in making it possible for them to participate. The following comments were made by PE, an African American painter in her twenties who works for an insurance company downtown:

“The oldest ladies have taken classes for two years or so and they're still there. And the woman with cancer, she left; she was in town

for treatments. I'm the only generation X member who has stayed. When you work 9-5 it's sometimes hard. And I've skipped a few. Sometimes I just want to go to bed early. It started on Mondays and Thursdays but now it's on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Mondays were hard because of Manic Mondays plus you're already tired from the weekend.”

PE's comments point to the busy lives of single young people who need to work full time and to whom it is important to maintain an active social life with their peers. Painting needs to fit in with everything else, and being able to miss class at times is something PE values to keep painting from becoming burdensome. In painting it was especially clear that the flexibility of class attendance is what made it easy for the younger, working, or parenting painters to enroll and interact with the older painters who were variously retired, wealthy enough not to have to work, or looking for activities to fill time now that their children were grown.

The flexibility of Thursday quilting gatherings also made it possible for some quilters with jobs to attend on an infrequent but still regular basis, when they can get a Thursday morning free from work. Notable are a naproathic doctor, computer systems support technician, lawyer and elementary school teacher who were usually able to attend about once a month. When they attended, they joined their more frequently attending peers, many who were older than they were and either retired, or semi-retired. But even the quilters who were retired took advantage of flexible attendance, using days away for travel, doctor appointments, attending to other family members' needs, and waiting for household service providers (plumbers, etc.). More than one quilter over the four months of the study period had to take time off from quilting to attend to an ill spouse.

It was the freedom to come and go at will that made it possible for children, parents, seniors and any passers by who could not or would not commit to an entire evening of drumming in the circle to participate in the significant numbers that they did. There was a subjective element of experienced openness aiding comfortable participation along with the literal lack of a rule prohibiting casual joiners. For any mother who considered hitting a drum paddle until her toddler lost interest, and decided it was time for them to go to the playground, knowing she could walk away without leaving her musical peers in the lurch, or drawing attention to herself for doing something unusual or unappreciated no doubt made it easier to join in the first place.

In other activities as well, there were emotional responses that had to be overcome to make irregular attendance comfortable, in addition to it simply being structurally

possible. We found that in most activities participants and activity directors played key roles in reassuring the fears of participants who have to miss gatherings or classes, or who do not produce or learn as rapidly as their peers often because of the demands of outside responsibilities:

- In the case cited above, OQ was nervous about not having time to finish her painting before having to return to teaching, but it was her peer, TT, who convinced her it was really all right to take advantage of the option to miss classes and come when she could, to finish her piece later. This allowed her to relax and return to enjoying her work. TT herself is a working mother of two and talked about how much she valued the flexibility of class, because it allowed her to have “her time” and not another rushed obligation.
- Quilters who felt they could not keep up with the pace of others marveled aloud at the rate at which some guild members produced quilts. This elicited the usual tension relieving, only half joking response that “quilters don’t do housework.” In one striking example of discomfort over not being able to learn quickly enough or to get enough done, a new quilter apologized for not doing more quilting and practicing the techniques she had been shown. The more experienced quilter who had been teaching her launched into an impassioned lecture, not on how the novice had better work if she is going to ever be any good, but how she should only do what she wants in life, only quilting as much as suits her own desires. The novice had been doing private nursing a great deal for a client who had been very sick, which is what interfered with her quilting. What she actually wanted was an enjoyable artistic activity to fill her leisure time and bring her together with other people now that she was semi-retired and heading into full retirement. She was relieved to hear that there was no expectation that she produce quilts at a given rate, and she heartily thanked her “teacher” for saying so.
- On the occasion of a special weekday morning service, the choir director implored singers with jobs to try and make it to the performance even if it was only for 30 minutes on their lunch hours. By “asking, beseeching, and begging...” he made it clear that there was not an obligation for working singers to make it, but that their presence would be very appreciated.

In each of these examples there was a time conflict between work and arts participation. The reassurance by other participants that it was all right to miss some gatherings or to work more slowly helped those limited by outside responsibilities to continue to find participation satisfying and to feel welcome in the group.

In addition to having flexible attendance requirements, all the groups we observed scheduled activities, both their times and places, to accommodate participants, which also promoted participation by more and diverse participants. All of the regularly scheduled meetings and activities of the groups we observed were in the evenings, on the weekends, or at times worked out to suit current or potential participants' schedules. How this scheduling helped more artists participate, or that this scheduling was done to accommodate artists' schedules is illustrated in the examples below:

- The drum circle being in the park on Friday evenings was a case of the activity going to where many residents of the community could be found at that time on that day of the week. The drumming in effect traveled to park users at an evening time they have already set aside for leisure activities away from jobs or other institutional responsibilities.
- When the quilting guild began, they scheduled official guild meetings on the fourth Saturday of each month to accommodate quilters who had to work weekdays. The weekly Thursday classes at the park started in response to new members asking for training. Despite the success and attendance levels on Thursdays, often exceeding 30 quilters, some guild members were unable to make a weekday class because of job responsibilities. The head of the education committee has started to offer a once a month class on the second Saturday of the month at the park to reach these quilters who have to work during the week and for anyone else who is interested.
- In the North Side painting class, the instructor, UG, initially did not have time to get dinner between activities, as his schedule had no evening break. Students agreed to start class thirty minutes later so he would have time for dinner. Later in the term, the park district announced activities would be ending an hour earlier at all locations to cut park district expenses by 10 percent city-wide. UG in a sense returned the earlier favor to students by reverting to the published start time for class and sacrificing his dinner break. He also got the park location to stay open thirty minutes longer, cutting only 30 minutes from the buildings original opened hours. This second accommodation, restoring 30 of the facilities cut minutes, was especially important to painters with jobs who were in danger of being squeezed out of evening painting time by the earlier closing times.

That these activities are free or low cost is also an important consideration that maintains general participation as well as the mixing of artists of different income levels. In at least six case studies, participants said free or low cost activities made the difference in whether they could afford to be involved in the art activity or not. Some of these artists had low incomes and the survey indicated that almost 10 percent of participating

artists in the case studies make under \$10,000 per year, with 15percent of artists making under \$15,000. But even artists who have a bit more income reported encountering financial barriers to participation at other locations. There are over fifty references in the field notes to financial barriers stopping or hindering art activities, covering both individuals and groups who found an activity or venue too expensive. Often the locations that were cited as too expensive are dedicated art institutions. For example, a number of painters participating in a few of the case studies reported that the Art Institute was too expensive for them. ML, a painter at the North Side park who makes more than \$20,000 annually reported to ethnographers that most locations she considered for painting classes, including the city colleges, were too expensive, and she would not have been able to take a class but for the park district.

Part of the explanation of the frequency of financial barriers also lies in the high costs associated with some art forms. Four out of seven individual visual artists interviewed on the South Side indicated that they did not work in certain media because of the costs associated with them. These included mostly material and equipment intensive media such as welding, metal smithing, and throwing and firing ceramics. Other artists talked about the value of finding low cost facilities to work at, working in these media. One such facility is a North Side settlement house with potters' wheels and a kiln where shifting groups of up to 15 potters throw together up to three times a week. As reported by the artist, who uses this facility, this potting location was inexpensive and displayed the same high degree of gender, age, and racial diversity as the park painting class where she was participating in our study. (Subsequent to fieldwork, this facility was slated for closing.)

But low price does not just create income diversity in informal art locations by helping those who, as a simple function of income, cannot afford activities at one location to find affordable art opportunities somewhere else. Such a simple dynamic alone would run the risk of creating sites of less wealthy participants and other sites of more wealthy participants. Low prices at informal locations actually help establish preference gradients that moves even people with large disposable incomes into collective participation with people who have less disposable income. At least five painters reported choosing the park class, even though they could have afforded other more expensive classes or space elsewhere. KI, a retired white divorce lawyer who owns the multi unit building he lives in is typical of this group:

KI: D really thinks UG is good; she's been coming here for about 9 months. I'm so glad I'm doing this. I needed a jump start and this didn't sound intimidating, didn't

require a big commitment or money and physically, it was so close.

Ethnographer: Jump start?

KI: I wanted to paint. I had done a few drawings after my daughter gave me the book and stuff, but I just hadn't done it. It's like that with me, I have a lot of things waiting in line to do and I think I'll do them after I file the stuff from moving my office or ...(other activities).

It seems people are shopping for the lowest price at which they can still receive the value they want no matter their income level. For some artists, this idea of value also includes not wanting to pay very much for something they do not always have the time to take full advantage of because of outside life demands. This was true for TT, an African American mother of two who lives in the Lincoln Park areas with her husband who is a lawyer for the state of Illinois. TT runs her own playgroup business out of an area church. She cannot always get away from family and work for painting class. In the following remarks she expresses both the difficulty of getting away from family responsibilities to come to painting, and also her appreciation of the low price and UG (the teacher):

Ethnographer: You said you were wanting to paint?

TT: I couldn't do it at home. The space doesn't allow it. Plus the paints are toxic so you can't have them around kids. And the space just isn't there. I told my husband, I'll rent a studio apartment on Pine Grove (around the corner from her home on Waveland) and then you'll see. He told me about UG's class. That's how I found out about it. He (husband) brings home calamari and wine to tempt me to stay at home (and not go to painting class). So I eat a little of it. Just a little. Or he says, 'kids will miss



you'. I say, 'no, you can put them to bed in two hours and I'll be home'.

Ethnographer: You have 2 kids?

TT: Yes, 4 year old and 6 year old.  
This class is good. And it's so inexpensive.  
UG is fabulous. He's very resourceful.

The role of price in her selection is not immediately obvious in this quote taken alone. To be clear, her husband told her about UG's class to avoid having her pay for additional rent for private space. The same dynamic of choosing the best price for a given value applied at other locations in other activities as well. MS, a founding member of the Southwest Side theater group, referred to classes the theater has offered in the past to all interested students noted the importance of price to attracting students:

MS: We did have acting classes once that one of our directors offered. It worked well because it was a series but people could just come and pay for the night they were there, which was \$5 a night. So they liked that because they could just come when they could.

Ethnographer: General acting classes?

MS: Yea, things that a lot of experienced actors would already know: techniques on voice and relating to each other, things like that.

MS highlights the desire not to be paying either very much or anything for sessions one misses, and thus the appeal of low and flexible pricing to busy artists who cannot always attend. It also echoes the spending preference expressed by KI in his remark just above. In his comments, he appreciated the low price of painting studio because it did not require a big financial "commitment" to a process of trying something new. The acting classes are also for beginners who might be sampling an activity without knowing if it is ultimately going to be a serious pursuit. This could be another reason the price was right for the target participants at the theater.

Free activities like Thursday quilting gatherings and the drum circle are ultimate examples of a favorable financial gradient drawing in beginners and occasional participants from a variety of occupational, age, and income backgrounds. The structure of the drum circle with facilitators actively soliciting the participation of bystanders, who often have not come out to the park with the intention of playing music, would not be possible if money had to be collected. According to KZ, who facilitated the circle and has facilitated other circles that charge as well as ones that do not, such a gate keeping activity would eliminate the families, kids, seniors, and passers by who favor a sampling approach to participation, and who sometimes later become more consistent or regular participants.

*Limits of diversity.* While all of these strategies to make the metaphorical space of informality one where diverse people can come together to create art have mitigated the impact of the social boundaries that keep people apart in every day life, they cannot completely erase these barriers that are deeply embedded in the structure of American social life. It would be naïve to think that they might do so. Chicago, according to recent reports, remains one of the most residentially segregated cities in the country, while nationally, income inequality has been growing creating a widening gap between rich and poor. Even in the case of gender equity where substantial gains have been made, old patterns of discrimination persist. Additionally, in this case, attempts to increase diversity or be more inclusive are hampered by the persistent perception that art is not for everybody—that one needs special training or skill or talent, which can cause people to not participate. In this section, we document the ways in which the complexity of social boundary maintenance impacted arts practice in these informal settings.

First, individual barriers to participation stemmed from peoples' feelings of inadequacy that derived from their treatment within the more formal sector of the arts continuum. Writers in particular complained of being excluded from academically affiliated writing community because they lacked the background in terms of specialized knowledge or credentials that this community demands for acceptance. Visual artists and theater participants also talked about being excluded from more formal art settings by a lack of the required artistic credentials, and they too appreciated the openness of informal activities. Most artists who complained about exclusion had some college education, some even college arts education, but they reported that they lacked the right kind of advanced education or education from the right institutions to gain entry to some venues, suggesting just how exclusive some formal art venues can be. A minor pattern of exclusion emerged in relation to artists who said their parents discouraged them from pursuing formal training in art. At least five of these artists had parents who came from working class or low- income background in their own childhood even if they enjoyed a middle class lifestyle in their adulthood. They all wanted their kids to study or do something practical and not pin their financial hopes on art careers. For three of the

artists who listened to their parents, not pursuing formal art training when they were younger, they felt it impeded their ambitions later. This suggests that access to more formal art opportunities is not independent of class background but connected in complicated ways even across generations. While, obviously, these artists found a space to do art within the informal settings where we encountered them, nonetheless, their sense of disappointment affected the character of their participation. These instances are also clues or indicators of probably a larger phenomena of non-participation that results from feelings of exclusion.

Second, persistent patterns of racial segregation and the institutionalization of racism shaped the character of participation at some of the sites, although at others, people seemed to cross over even this boundary. Thus, the Church Choir, entirely African-American in composition, is reflective of the national pattern of segregation in religious worship (c.f. Canedy, 2000). Patterns of inclusion and exclusion in three of the case studies—the library writing group, the quilting guild and the Southwest theater group exemplify the difficulties of crossing the racial barrier.

The library location of the writing group is in an almost exclusively African American region of the city whose quality of life and built environment have been shaped by institutionalized racism and the practices of residential segregation. Chicago residents who do not know this area except through its negative reputation often highlighted in the media, tend to avoid it. The umbrella organization that sponsors the writing group founded it at the library because they wanted to provide a free, facilitated, public writing workshop to a community that did not otherwise have that kind of art opportunity. As one umbrella organization staff member said:

“But you wouldn't find one of our groups in Lincoln Park where people have access to these kinds of workshops. Our workshops are free and open to the public, in neighborhoods where there isn't other wise these types of programs.”

For that reason, the organization does not make aggressive efforts to recruit participants from outside the local neighborhood or community. Recruitment of writers is occasionally spontaneous, and on site, as library patrons can see into the conference room where meetings are held and make inquires about participation with the library staff or with group members when they come out of the room. Members of the group most often report having been recruited by other African American members, who they encountered in the course of their lives away from the library. In one instance a writer was working her day job as a temp with the phone company, working outdoors not far from the library. A man on the street gave her a copy of the group's literary journal and invited her to the library. She joined the group the next week. In this case, the purposeful

intent of establishing the writing group for this community has reinforced its racial/ethnic homogeneity.

Considering the low level of active recruitment, and the racial segregation of the city, it is no surprise participants mostly come from the roughly contiguous, predominately African American neighborhoods of the South Side. Through the umbrella organization's library-based groups, underserved communities of writers were gaining access to space and resources and the groups are generally full to capacity. At the case study location a new group was going to be spun off to another library further south as the original group was beginning to grow too large. For this reason, the writing group itself did not feel any pressure to do more aggressive recruiting.

While the recruiting then has been mainly from the neighborhood surrounding the community, exposure for the group across the racial boundary has come from public readings and performances of the group's work throughout the city as well as from the publication of the journal by the sponsoring organization. However, this has not meant that the writing group is itself diversifying. Here, too the effects of institutionalized racism can be perceived. On the one hand, even though non-African Americans who are exposed to the group's work appreciate it, they do not want to "belong" to the group, because they perceive it as being based in the specific community, of which they are not a part and which they continue to view as "dangerous" despite exposure to the complexity and heterogeneity of the people who live there. Organization staff and writers all cited the popular perception of the area as lacking in art and artists as part of the general perception of it as an area with little to offer socially or economically. OT expresses it well, highlighting the division between this popular view and her own sense that of course the area has art and artists:

"Far as I know, a lot of people are very interested in what OXB does. A lot of people think it's really great. They are like, 'Wow! A writing group?' I think, to be honest, a lot of people are shocked that there is a writing group down there in that area. I don't know why, but they seem to be shocked."

Furthermore, the writing group is billed as a "service" that has been offered to the community, and so whites or others outside of the community do not perceive that they need this type of service. On the other hand, the African Americans, both those from the immediate vicinity and others who come from the South Side see this area as their own and

consider the program to be there for them. Many are aware of the historic importance of the area where the library is located as a center of African American creative expression in Chicago. They talk with pride about the library branch itself as having been a meeting place for African American writers and political activists off and on from at least the 1930s to the present, and feel that they are carrying on a tradition. In this sense, they value having their own space where they feel free to express themselves creatively outside the normative power relations that would only afford them a marginalized status. Thus both the external perception of the community and the internal value of a “liberated” space combine to keep the group racially homogenous, albeit diverse with respect to age, occupation and gender.

The quilting guild, which is also located on the South Side, historically the area where African Americans were permitted to settle from the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, incorporates the same racial dynamic as the library writing group. The guild, as previously described, was specifically started to provide an opportunity for African American quilters to participate in a comfortable space. Recruitment remains driven by personal networks, although exposure on television broadened the net for participants. In this instance, as well, interestingly, because the guild is not “billed” as a service for the community, non African-Americans have asked to join and have been welcomed in.

As with the other two groups, the local focus of the Southwest Side theater’s mission and the informality of promotion, intersect with community composition and racial dynamics to maintain the group’s homogenous ethnic and racial composition. The theater enjoys fairly balanced diversity with respect to gender, occupation, and age; and has one openly gay board member. Most participants however, are white at the level of the organization and in specific productions, although there are some exceptions. Latinos also participate at all levels, including being cast in dramatic roles. A Chinese American board member acts and directs, although she was not creatively involved in the case study production. African Americans have occasionally been involved in productions, specifically invited by directors or group members who know them, but members readily admit this is the exception to the rule. One member added that African Americans just do not show up for auditions. Members point out that the make up of the theater is consistent with the demographics of the surrounding area which is mostly white with Latinos constituting a significant minority. This blue collar, “white ethnic” area historically has a reputation for not being welcoming of African Americans. A parishioner of the Church where the theater has space mentioned older residents always wanting to know what any African American in the neighborhood is doing there. The theater does not usually widely advertise auditions in general or trade publications. Having started the group to offer residents of the “theater poor” Southwest Side opportunities to participate in dramatic productions, board members want to avoid attracting too many professional actors who might just use productions for practice

between paying jobs. They also seek to place local actors who can then draw the local audiences of family and friends they counted on to fill the house. The local absence of African Americans in the area, their possible discomfort crossing geographical boundaries that correspond to race, and the local, low visibility focus of most recruiting seem adequate to explain the usual absence of African Americans in the theater's activities.

With respect to African American discomfort crossing racially coded geographical boundaries, one of the actors in the case study production mentioned that he had been in a production of *Six Degrees of Separation* at a community college in the predominately white Southwest Suburbs. He reported that they had trouble finding an African American willing to come out there to play the part. He did not specify whether distance, discomfort, or some other reasons were given by unwilling actors. Such discomfort on the part of African Americans however has been reported in other contexts. For example, television and radio coverage in early 2002 of a controversy surrounding an African American Catholic School joining a white suburban, Catholic athletic league included African American parents observing that because they expect to encounter racism, they are afraid to cross racial boundaries and visit the Southwest Side of Chicago and the Southwest Suburbs beyond; just as white parents say they are afraid to travel to the African American South Side of Chicago because of perceived crime rates there. (See especially WBEZ's 848 January 2001 program, and Lieblich article in the *Chicago Tribune* 12/02/01).

Third, turning to the issue of gender imbalance, the numerical dominance of women in the quilting guild is not primarily a function of geographical segregation, or informal, low visibility promotional methods - although one of the two male members was first attracted by a news segment profiling the otherwise not especially visible guild. To be precise, the guild has national visibility through a book profiling African American quilters, and members have appeared in a national quilting publication. These sources do not tell readers precisely how to find the quilters profiled, although many current members used it as a starting point for finding the guild. Currently they do not have their own website and since the guild meetings are not official park district activities, they are not listed in park district materials. One recently joined member talked about it taking her over a year to find the guild. Rather, the gender imbalance is a result of the traditional place of quilting in American society as part of a woman's sewing duties, itself a component of her role of taking care of her family's domestic needs. As one of the guild founders told the ethnographer:

“They (grandparents generation and older) needed them [quilts] to keep warm, so quilts were made for utilitarian

reasons. Now, we don't have to make quilts for utilitarian reasons. We can make them however we want. Now quilting is an art."

The American Quilting Society show in Paducah, Kentucky attests to the fact that far more women than men still quilt today. The vast majority of the 34,000 attendees in 2001 were women. Women joked in the convention center hallway about commandeering a men's restroom to relieve the pressure on the overused ladies room. A woman looking at show quilts on the convention floor excused her 9 year old son's inattention to them even as she scolded him for his wiggling impatience. Her comments to him were roughly that she knew this was not a guy thing, but he needed to hold still for just a few more minutes before they would be done. The Paducah JayCees host their own small show not far from the national show at the convention center. Club members serve as attendants and handle admission. A male show attendant teased the ethnographer and a male quilter he was with that they were the first men to come through who looked carefully at, and commented on, the quilts. Most were pulling their wives along or slinking along behind them silently. The male quilter asked the attendant if he quilted and the latter replied that his sewing consisted of putting buttons on. A couple guild members talked about having husbands who quilt, but in at least one case she reported that she came to the guild because he didn't like to talk while quilting or to talk about quilting. Clearly a large number of quilters today do not think of it as a male activity.

The other striking gender imbalance is in painting, where both classroom settings were dominated by women, while the South Side network of individual visual artists who collaborate on shows was all male. We were not able to systematically pursue an explanation of these gender imbalances, or determine how or if they were unique, although the data we have is suggestive of explanations and some generalizations. The lone male in the park painting class talked about painting, along with gardening and cooking, being an expression of his feminine and creative side; suggesting the possibility of some gender bias against certain visual arts. The drum circle facilitator suggested another explanation that extends to informal classes across genres. He said that there are more women in his drumming classes than men, and the circle used to be more male than female. He has been surprised that the number of women at circle has risen over time but realizes it is in part because he is sending them from class. He explains these patterns in terms of women generally preferring explanations and systematic input as a style of learning, while men like the circle because it is less structured and non-pedagogic. This seems consistent with the overwhelming numbers of women in painting classes. Despite their loose studio structures, especially at the park, painting classes at both locations were promoted as opportunities to receive specific instruction in a group setting. Women also outnumber men in the poetry group by about a 2:1 ratio, supporting the idea that, at least

in more informal art activities, men are less inclined to join groups that are explicitly aimed at learning.

While these examples illustrate some of the more pervasive ways that social boundaries impinge on informal art activities, it would be a mistake to forget that all these groups display diversity with regard to participants crossing other social boundaries. Highlighting the conditions and practices that support diverse participation is the focus of the next section.

### **Managing the Tensions of Boundary Crossing**

Breaking with normative patterns can create unsettling feelings of unfamiliarity just because it brings together diverse people among whom social separation is the general rule. Discomfort over not knowing what to do is aggravated by discomfort over loss of social prerogatives or fears that other participants will assert normative privileges. OX, a regular actor with the suburban theater expressed these tensions well in his remarks about interacting with younger actors:

Ethnographer: “Do you have contact with under 30 people outside of theater?”

OX: (pause) No. And it's not a problem on stage. We did *Hot Tin Roof* and are you familiar with the play?...you can imagine what this (young actress) looked like. And she sells rugs and teaches diving (as jobs), so she's used to being in a swim suit. And let's be (straight), swim suits are really like bra and pants. Well she's sitting there (?back stage) and I had to get up and leave. And someone asked me, “where are you going?” and I said, “well, look, bra and panties; that's what's going on in there.” So that's good. That's life. Interacting with people....

...I accept what I am. They're young and I'm not. Notice that I didn't say I'm old. I'm not young. There are worlds in between us and that's as it should be. It doesn't mean you



shut them out of things. We do warm ups (for theater practice) and that includes physicals and they're a little difficult for me to do, but I wouldn't sit down and not do them. I did them. If I could, I'd find a way not to do them.

OX clearly valued the art opportunity he got from the activity being opened to all ages and saw it as right that neither the young nor the “not young” were closed out. At the same time, it was disquieting to him not to enjoy the usual prerogative of having the young dress modestly in mixed company with their elders. With the privileges of age superseded by conventions of the theater, he had to confront the discomfort of being reminded of the loss of his youth.

Participants in all the case studies use several strategies in order to overcome the tensions that accompany breaks with normative patterns. We might consider the first to be pure force of will to persevere. OX's statement shows a determined persistence to continue in the theater despite the variety of challenges he faces due to age and age differences. Sitting through discomfort is a prerequisite to achieving more comfortable relations and logically it has to accompany all the other strategies. But most strategies for dealing with the tensions surrounding breaks with normative patterns are aimed at reducing or diffusing tension, not just trying to push through it.

It was not uncommon for artists to relieve social tension by venting it, either naming the source of tension directly, or drawing people's attention to it in ways that let it be acknowledged and partially negotiated without being openly named. These variations are illustrated in the following examples:

- OX's answer to his concerned peer, that “bras and panties are what is going on in there” was basically a direct venting of his discomfort. It was safe to talk about his discomfort because he did not disrupt rehearsal or performance and, more important, he owned the problem as his own, not blaming or demanding anything or anyone else. His blunt admission of personal discomfort was a kind of self-deprecating humor, where the humorous aspect of it releases tension for the speaker and listener.
- Another example of venting with humor is the South Asian music ensemble. Seniors and younger group members (the age range varies from people in their early 20s to people in their 70s) often engaged in teasing and playful joking as a mode of conversation. Such use of humor helped release tension by naming it and making light of it. Joking was also an informal mode of interaction that

asserted the desire by the speaker to be on relaxed and intimate terms with the listener, rather than formal terms expressing status differences. So mutual joking in the music ensemble was communicating that both parties were willing to leave status behind.

- Humor was also used to vent normative role tension in ways that partially veiled the discomfort behind it. Some women quilters worried that men get an unfair advantage when they are judged at shows, being rewarded for being good male quilters, rather than good quilters. One guild member explained that some women thought John Flynn only won first place in the national show because he was a man and he had learned to quilt so quickly, not because his was the best quilt. Some of this anxiety was expressed at a guild meeting when a middle aged White woman, with an Eastern European accent, stood up and talked about the quilting services she and her husband offered out of their home using a state of the art quilting machine. When she was done, an older African American quilter teased the younger woman about her husband also quilting, saying in effect that she should watch out because her husband was going to overtake her in his abilities. For her part the second woman said she was not worried, implying confidence in her own ability, not a lack of talent in her husband's part. This all happened with male members present but since the teasing woman's comments in relation to men's abilities were overtly complimentary, she vented her anxiety without openly challenging the appropriateness of men's presence, and precluded them from taking offense.

Leaving the group and sometimes returning at a later date is another strategy artists used to deal with tensions across social boundaries, especially in decision making contexts. Strains can be especially exacerbated in ensemble activities since creative content that everyone cares about is often at issue, and these groups were more often characterized by dissatisfied artists coming and going.

- In the Asian Music ensemble, people sometimes left the group for several years, either because they had disagreements with other members or because they were not enjoying the interaction anymore (this is understandable in the context of the twenty year history of the group). Still, many who left came back at some point.
- At the Southwest Side theater a male director left the board because of disagreements with long standing female board members including an officer. MSP, the male board co-president pointed out that the board does not bear grudges and would welcome the director back if he wanted to return. CB, the Latino stage manager who regularly worked on productions also left the board

because she did not like “the politics.” She returned later though not on the board.

- A quilter, who had suffered persistent health problems had not been able to work for a long time or could not afford her guild membership dues. She left the group for a year, but not because she couldn't have gotten the money from someone to pay her dues. She left both because her health was poor and because her feelings were hurt by a comment about her financial situation, directed at her by another quilter while she was discussing her lack of funds with a third person.

Relaxed, egalitarian modes of interaction were also deliberately employed by teachers and facilitators as a way to diffuse tension arising from the crossing social boundaries and exercising authority. For example, UG, who taught painting at the park, decided not to push students he had inherited from the previous teacher to do his structured exercises. He wanted to avoid discouraging them or turning them off to the class. Many of these students were older, which he saw as potentially posing extra problems if he tried to assert too much authority:

“Yea, the different things different people are working on. Some want tips, some want advice, some come for camaraderie. Because at first when I started teaching, there were some left over students.... And that was hard; they were older for one thing, and less willing to try new things. And if they had a failure they were upset. Some of them didn't think I had time for them when the class got busy and that some of them didn't like. Plus I didn't have them do the basics like I did with new people because it's hard to tell them to stop, let's do these exercises now.

QN, the white writing group facilitator at the library also talked about refraining from asserting authority as a way to deal with coming into a standing group, however, the additional social tension she was diffusing was along the lines of racial difference not age:

“I do appreciate that the writers have known each other longer than I have known any of them. ....This group has its own roles and ways of interacting. I still sit back and let the group make those decisions. Sometimes someone in the group will sit up and say, ‘okay, I think it's time for us to move on.’ I think that is okay, rather than me. The group more or less runs itself, and I just bring the box of writing. Or, I'll come with an idea for an exercise that we may or may not use. I am the connection to what is going on here. But, often writers have their own announcements; they have their own projects they are doing. So, I try and give time for both. I don't think I take a strong, central role. It is also an issue of race. Race is a big issue for the group, and I do try and talk about that.

The opposite approach was taken in most ensemble groups, or at meetings of decision-making bodies. Leaders strongly asserted role authority to preclude the tensions that could have arisen from the inversion of normative roles. Specifically, to avoid the chaos and discomfort that can ensue if someone habitually slips into insubordination by asserting normative authority. Those in power positions made a point of reminding everyone else who was in charge. As the following instances show, this reduced the chances that participants would forget in moments of anxiety or desire that they had to perform tasks in specific ways that may not have been their preferred ways.

- During rehearsals at the Southwest Side theater, the Latina stage manager warned her rookie assistants that actors sometimes feel insecure and become arrogant and insubordinate. She told her assistants to tell actors who complained about the rules that they should do what they're asked because “she (the stage manager) said so.” She was counting on the actors respecting her authority as the stage manager, rather than responding to her based on her identity as a Latina woman in her twenties.
- In the quilting guild, some of the older founding members held important committee chairwoman positions. The President of the guild was a much younger woman, but she still occasionally interjected at meetings when committee chairwomen started to ask the entire assembled guild their opinion

on a matter before the committee. She reminded them that they should make decisions in committee and sometimes added that the group recently decided to shorten meetings by turning power over to committees; implying that she was just doing her job in keeping the meeting going.

Sometimes artists would maintain personal distance from other participants so as to increase the chances that their role authority or positional status would be respected. Women in theater settings in particular found it useful, and at times necessary, to maintain personal distance so their interactions would be based on mutual recognition of role authority, rather than personal loyalties, feelings, or habits. Some examples will make what we mean clear.

- The crew and actors at the Southwest Side theater maintained their social distance during the case study production. During rehearsals, when the Latina stage manager told her assistants to tell actors who complained about the rules that they should do what they're asked because "she (the stage manager) said so," she was counting on the actors respecting her authority as the stage manager since it was the only role they knew her in.
- FD, a white actress in her late twenties who was in the Southwest Side theater production during the case study, told the ethnographer about a "mistake" she made in another production. She and an actor felt they were not getting the direction they wanted from the director and worked on their parts together outside of rehearsals. He developed romantic feelings towards her that created conflict between them so they agreed not to speak outside of their dramatic roles for the rest of the production.
- KU, a regular director and board member at the Southwest Side theater, generally found it necessary to maintain her distance from other participants. Usually her need as director to have authority over actors kept them distant from her. It also avoids other complications. In some instances, people felt working together gave them more license than they actually had with her, and they would comment on her personal life in ways she felt were inappropriate. Additionally, she complained that many men she worked within the theater either wanted to be her father or did not know what to do with her. Sometimes she bonded with a crew person or hit it off with someone from the start of a production, but usually social distance was the norm. She did see herself as close to some of the men and women regularly involved at the Southwest theater because she is on the board with them.

Maintaining social distance so as to only interact with other artists around the art itself is a special case of a more general strategy for dealing with the tension of boundary crossing and breaks in normative patterns through focusing on the art itself at the exclusion of all other concerns or differences. In nine case studies, during potentially uncomfortable situations, artists resorted to focusing on the art itself as what everyone knew and cared about. As one ethnographer discovered, working on his quilt could provide breaks from tense interactions. It filled lulls in conversation with new unfamiliar people and prevented spaces in conversation from becoming awkward and uncomfortable. The ethnographer's working on his quilt was not taken as rudeness by other quilters, because his focus was seen as a sign of inspiration or deep interest, which the other quilters respected and understood. They would comment positively on seeing his level of focus and interest in the activity. Other quilters reported finding knitting or quilting a valuable ice breaker between themselves and strangers of diverse social backgrounds, giving a point of commonality to start from and have something to talk about. NTP, an African American quilter and retired public school teacher, told the following story of making an unexpected new friend:

“I had a trip planned a few years ago and the transit fell through at the 14th hour. I had to ride the bus, I hate the bus. I tried calling about a plane but no that wasn't going to work. So I had to take the bus to Tennessee. I went with PH. I got on and there was this (white) woman quilting. We talked the whole way. It opened things up. That is the thing about art. It doesn't matter what religion, race, or number you are. Art is something that can bring people together.”

Because of the portability of activities like hand quilting and knitting, they had the most potential to connect people in places like airports and doctor's offices where the artists can pull them out to work for a few minutes. But even in the other arts, it was usually the art form itself that was the most common topic of casual conversation for members getting to know one another. As a mode of interaction, discussing the art forms participants had in common played an important role in bridging social distances. Again, OX expressed this best as it relates to social distance and tensions that correlate with age differences:

“Sometimes I miss entrances and I have senior moments.  
Concentration is (hard); my mind wanders (during the play

and he misses his entrance or line). I don't know if that's an individual thing or not. So it's different to act with young people. Like they don't know who Sidney Greenstreet was...He was an actor. To me, he's a part of what my life was like. But then you find commonalities. Like in *Beau Jest*, there were 6 people in the cast, me and my wife (character) and the other 4 were under 30. What did I have to talk to them about? The performers they're interested in are different than the ones I am.... And another (young) guy, I gave a ride home to (points as if he lives southeast of him), and he's a house-husband. He's in something at Court theater now--down in Hyde Park, but I found a lot to talk to him about. Not music, because I wouldn't know anything about what he listened to and I wouldn't want to. So a name will come up (in theater rehearsal setting) and someone (young) will say, "he probably knows it". Or the director will say, 'OX, do you want to explain?.'

OX's knowledge of theater history gets transformed from just another point of divergence between him and the under age 30 actors he was working with into a special function for him to play, as unofficial production historian. Their common interest in theater resulted in the younger actor wanting to share his knowledge and valuing his presence for an off-stage role none of them could have played.

In summary, breaks with normative patterns are predicated on achieving mutual artistic benefits for all participants, maintaining relaxed and egalitarian work environments that foster creativity while filling necessary authority roles with those most qualified or committed to achieving the groups' creative goals. Tensions around these breaks are handled using humor, breaks in participation, the relaxation of authority, the assertion of authority, and by the maintenance of focus on designated roles, essential tasks, and common interests. The next section goes further than establishing the acceptance of breaks in normative patterns to show that artists actually bonded with one another across social boundaries as a result of their shared art interests. Artists valued the diversity of participants they found in the informal arts by valuing interactions with individual artists different from themselves.

## **Valuing Diversity**

Our findings strongly suggest that the presence of a diverse range of participants in the informal arts promoted the valuation of social diversity by participants. The valuation of diversity was apparent, for example, at a Friday night drum circle when a White woman in her early fifties exclaimed: “It’s like a cultural Mecca here; it’s so cool.” But most artists did not talk about diversity in such general terms. Instead, they talked about liking or bonding with individual artists who were different from them, receiving benefits from these relationships, or benefiting from interactions with diverse artists in general. Among the benefits they cited were artistic growth and access to art opportunities, access to opportunities in non-art activities, friendship, the joy of sharing the art experience, and greater understanding of and respect for people different from them. It is through detailing these bonds and benefits that one can see art participation promoting the valuation of diversity among artists.

The survey results reflect artist’s general awareness that the diversity of participants in their arts activities contributed to the number of art opportunities they encountered. 62 percent of respondents marked “new art opportunities” as a benefit of “interacting with diverse people in arts activities.” This high number is consistent with the week in and week out observations of the ethnographers at the case study locations, where art opportunities were extended from one social group to another on a regular basis. In writing, quilting and drumming, sharing art opportunity information was a structured part of meetings, as well as part of casual conversation. In painting classes or in networks of either individual visual artists or Hip-Hop artists, opportunities were informally shared on a regular basis through conversation or announcements, or sometimes more formally publicized at performances and openings. The breadth of information being shared in these exchanges reflected the diversity of participants and the range of their social networks, as the following examples attest:

- Japanese American and African American master drummers told the diverse students in their classes about the drum circle, while the circle was a place to find out about these master drummers and their classes.
- Quilters Guild members - part time professional quilters, officers, and guild members who also belonged to other guilds or lived in the suburbs -brought information and invitations back to the group from the wider, mostly White quilting community.
- On a weekly basis, retired and semi-retired painters in the park district studio class talked about other art and non-art happenings in the city, so painters in the classroom who were generally too busy to keep up with this kind of information, i.e. good plays that had opened, could find out about new



developments. The instructor also shared information about other events at the park and openings at the galleries where he was affiliated, and students sometimes attended these events.

- The mostly white staff affiliated with the writing group's umbrella organization had professional networks that connected them to the libraries, academic institutions, and other nonprofit arts and funding organizations. It was through these networks that they developed or heard about new writing opportunities for their writers.

Artists were generally appreciative of people different from themselves who created and shared art opportunities with them. We have already shown artists accepted normative role inversions and status leveling when it was for the sake of the art, even appreciating the artists to whom they gave up social prerogatives. As the following examples show, there were other circumstances in which appreciation for art opportunities and creative growth extended across social boundaries. Taken together with earlier examples of appreciation in contexts of role inversion these examples demonstrate how common feelings of appreciation were among diverse arts participants.

- In the library writing group, the status roles of facilitator, editor, and paid staff were held mostly by whites, with African Americans filling the volunteer writing participant roles. Despite the typical normative racial hierarchy, writers openly expressed nothing but appreciation for the White staff because they did a "wonderful" or "great" job connecting them to reading, writing, and publishing opportunities. During the period of fieldwork, the White executive director announced her own resignation, the promotion of another White from an assistant director position into the executive role, and the hiring of a new assistant director. Writers strongly expressed their approval of the promotion of the White assistant director to be the new executive director, even before they heard that the new assistant director would be African American. Organization personnel were committed to equal opportunity and actively provided opportunities for greater prestige and pay to the artists. Some of the opportunities members talked about appreciating were efforts to move African American writers into more prestigious and paying art-related positions, including within the organization. PGU, an African American woman writer started as a member of the case study writing group and became a paid part time staff person at the organization office and facilitator of a writing group centered at a job training center. Another African American woman writer in the case study group has facilitated kids' writing workshops set up through the umbrella organization, and the organization staff aided her in receiving a grant to publish her own work.

- CE a white drummer in his forties, expressed appreciation towards Latino and African American drummers on both the far west and South Sides. He realized that the Puerto Rican drummers came to accept his participation despite fears that Whites would “rip off” their traditions. He also expressed appreciation for the African Americans who let him play. He was conscious that they were a long-standing group, with a long established membership that was all African American and they could have easily resisted including a White outsider.
- KI, CC, and WN- African American members of the South Side quilting guild - all agreed that quilters are among the “nicest people” they have ever encountered; and they really enjoyed conventions and shows. At the same time they acknowledged that African American quilters do not attend quilting events in large numbers, so they were mostly talking about White quilters in their assessment of character. Probed on the issue of being accepted across racial boundaries, CC stated that in her experience the only people that have not welcomed her in White communities were not the artists involved in the activities she went to join, but people from the wider communities that she had to deal with in getting to an art location.
- EN, a Mexican actor in the Southwest Side theater production, talked about how great it is that the Irish are so supportive of their artistic traditions, and how nice it is for him being in plays at an Irish community center.

“It's really not a theater, it's an ethnic center. The Irish are very appreciative of the performing arts I've found out. And they do all this Irish stuff, and Irish playwrights. It's nice to find a full house every weekend. It's nice to get that response”.

Artists were also aware that they benefited from diverse participation in their art activities in tangible ways that spill out into their wider lives. Twenty seven percent of survey respondents indicated that they found new opportunities in non-art activities from interacting with diverse people in arts activities. More specifically, 24 percent indicated they found new job opportunities. The following are just a few examples of these benefits taken from field notes:

- EN, an actor who was in the Southwest Side theater production during the case study, reported that he became friends with a woman actor through his

earlier theater involvement. Their friendship included going out together with their spouses but she also helped him get started in selling tax annuities, which was a career change for him.

- The founding facilitator of the South Side library writing group reported that a writing group member had been unable to maintain her own home anymore because of worsening multiple sclerosis. Another writer needed a place to live, so he moved in with the disabled writer offering her assistance as part of the bargain.
- The quilting guild meetings were regularly a location of information exchange and assistance with non-art issues. Younger and older members of the guild would help each other with computer problems, members announced to the group events and activities taking place at their churches, and one of the male members and a handful of the women regularly talked about genealogy lectures and events.

That artists formed what they considered to be valuable inter-personal bonds across social boundaries was strikingly reflected in the survey results, in which 84 percent of respondents, reported that they had made friends as a benefit of interacting with diverse people in arts activities. Fieldwork findings are consistent with the survey results. In all of the case studies, we observed or artists reported highly valuing interactions and forming personal connections across social boundaries. These connections were manifest in the sociality that characterized activities. In the context of official activities, artists greeted each other warmly (often embracing), showed interest in one another's wider life circumstances (including offering advice on personal and household problems), and shared art equipment and supplies as well as food and drink. Outside of scheduled meetings, practices, and performances; groups of artists went out for meals, communicated through e-mail, attended parties and performances, shopped, collaborated on artwork, or just "hung out." The following examples are of socializing outside the art process proper.

- After a college radio station Hip Hop show ended at two in the morning, a Mexican DJ, an African American DJ, and a white friend of the Mexican DJ, all of whom attended the broadcast, went to get Mexican food at a 24 hour restaurant a number of miles away. They invited the white DJ who hosted the show, but he declined given the hour. For his part, he reported having made a couple of lasting friendships with African Americans through his work as a DJ. Even now that one of these friends does not work at the station, the two others still get together to attend concerts, or to catch up on one another's lives.

- At least twice during the period of fieldwork, drummers at the circle held birthday parties to which they invited large numbers of drummers, across age, gender, and ethnic lines. One of these parties had at least 30 people in attendance and included drumming in the basement of the host's house.
- OX, a regular participant at the suburban theater, reported regularly having dinner and going to plays with his Roman Catholic friends he had made through the theater; he referred to himself jokingly as "the token Jew" in the group. To show their support of one another, they also attend the plays of those who are still acting. OX really looks forward to their outings, and enjoys a high degree of license in their interactions. He reported teaching them little bits of Yiddish, and telling them jokes that mildly poke fun at Christianity.
- SC, the now deceased White member of the quilting guild, was chairwoman of an organizing committee for the biannual quilt show for the in fall of 2000. Rather than have her committee's members meet at the park after the regular guild meeting to price items to be sold at the show, she had them to her house for a luncheon. FX, an African American member of this committee, remembered what a beautiful lunch she served and expressed her appreciation for SC's friendship by affectionately recalling that SC used to refer to the committee members and to herself as "us girls." BU, another African American quilter stressed that her closeness to SC was not based entirely on sharing the love of fabric arts. They had both suffered from depression at times and had to deal with their children being stationed overseas in the military. They were able to understand one another and offer support around these issues.
- TX, a member of the South Side writing group, came to a meeting with a number of first lines for poems that she and FG had written when they got together earlier in the week. FG had been unable to attend meetings recently, because of complications with her multiple sclerosis, but kept in touch with a number of writers by phone. The group used these opening lines to write longer poems that they recorded with greetings, so TX could take them back to FG to hear.
- Romantic or intimate relationships were not uncommon as a result of art involvement. Drummers, theater participants, and visual artists reported marriages based on art involvement. We also observed marriages or long term intimate relationships among hip hop artists and theater participants without being able to determine what role arts participation may have played in their unions. Among drum circle participants, there were two weddings just during the time of fieldwork. Both couples met through drumming, and the unions bridged ethnic divisions. One of these marriages was between an

African American social worker and a White plumber, who met in a drumming class. The other union was between KZ, the circle facilitator, and a Czech drummer who had initially attended the circle while she was visiting the U.S.

While some artists did not report getting together with other artists for reasons completely independent of art activity, this is not indicative of art having been insular or less important than activities in the rest of their lives. On the contrary, it points to its centrality in their lives. For example writers saw each other outside the regular meetings at writing or reading events. The umbrella organization hosted an official end of the year party to which family members were invited and which they attended. Members met each other at the party with warm embraces and lots of pictures were taken. But they did not let the party go by without turning it into an art event. They held a reading, just as the quilters, but still had show and tell and guest speakers to talk about quilting at their holiday and an anniversary party. In other words, the writers and quilters chose on these occasions to gather socially and bond personally with one another as fellow artists, based on the strength of their commitments to being artists. This is apparent in the following examples of artists expressing solidarity with artists from social backgrounds different from their own. Overlooking usually marked social differences such as race and gender, they bonded based on their shared identity, interests, aspirations, and obstacles to arts practice. Just as important, these instances show that artists did not consider the relations they had across social boundaries to be superficial, even when they were mostly expressed in arts related contexts:

- Feelings of solidarity based on common ambitions, shared artistic approaches, and facing common obstacles are evident in the remarks of SK, an African American painter who paints and shows his work mostly out of his South Side apartment:

“NB I met through FO. He (NB) is a white guy from the North Side, a painter. I like art period, don’t really care about ethnicity. I don’t like some Black artists. He (NB) is in the same boat as us: lack of places to show. He is not getting into galleries ‘cause his work defies definition. A fireman friend of someone came and looked at my stuff. He does not paint much, but he said my stuff was really postmodern. I’m like, ‘what is that anyway?’ He broke it down for me. I was like, ‘OK, I could use that to talk about it if I need to.’ I bonded with NB because he is

intuitive. He doesn't go for labels. Same with FO, he's self-taught. I was self taught in school. I got a library and materials really (that's all). That was one of the things that was cool about it".

- One of the founding members of the quilting guild, expressed similar sentiment of identification and solidarity when asked if she valued belonging to a mostly African American guild:

CC: Quilting is a craft, I don't think about it as a one race thing. I've been one of four Blacks in a group of 500 quilters at Nancy's Notions in Beaver Dam Wisconsin, and one of two Blacks in Rockford. I don't think about it that way, in terms of race. I meet warm and welcoming people with whom I can quilt. I am just as comfortable with male as with female quilters, it's the craft, not the person.

Her last comment that "it is the craft, not the person" should not be taken as an expression that she or other artists felt the bonds they formed through art were superficial. Her phrase "not the person" is a gloss of gender, ethnicity, or other categories of identity that she does not let stop her from meeting other artists.

- The solidarity artists felt with one another based on a shared identity was not always limited to artists working in the same genre. SM, an actor and board member at the suburban theater could see the best of what he aspired to as a performing artist realized in the performance of other artists. For him this generated feelings of respect and understanding of what the other artists felt about their craft. In one case, this even happened to him watching an art form he did not care for; he still had to admire the performance:

SM: From my connection with my uncle, I was able to judge The Lake County Fair's Talent Show. I'm not much of a dance fan, but as a judge I was able to appreciate a dancer because her passion for dance came through. I

couldn't vote for anyone else. So arts can transcend (biases). I can't speak for visual arts. I have no artistic talent whatsoever. But performing arts, yes.

- BN, another African American quilter, talked about the strength of the connection that can come about by sharing common art interests, even if interaction is limited to just showing and discussing art. Sometimes she felt the connection she felt was strong enough that it displaced the usual categories of race she admitted to using when first encountering people. HQ is a white gay male friend of hers who paints on silk and introduced her to collecting kimonos:

“In most cases I see a white face the way most Whites see a black face. HQ, I don't think he is like that. I think he sees a person....I know I sound bad. Talking to HQ, when we talk about kimonos, it is like we are sisters, or he is my brother.

BN also talked about missing the chance to connect with white quilters because she did not share her own quilts at guild meetings. She contrasted this with the comfort and strength of the connection felt between quilters of different races who did show one another their work. In her comments below, she is talking about the same CC quoted above, and the context was the meetings of the mostly white suburban quilting guild that a few African American quilters attended:

“I don't really know any members at (quilting group). Some of them are not that friendly to me. Professional people come in to do workshops and give lectures. I like that. It's a reason I keep going there.... These barriers take time. I'm meeting a few people slowly...CC, they (all) love her and CCF. The two of them have been in it the longest. (She is saying they are the two African Americans who have been in the mostly white guild the longest) .... ...It could just be me, something I'm doing... ...They love CC. Maybe they know CC

better because I haven't taken my stuff to show the way she does. I don't know why I haven't. (I just wrap it up and put it away when I'm done.) Since CC shows her stuff, maybe they feel they know her through her work..."

- For many artists, an element of valuing their identity as artists was valuing its uniqueness. In their view, being artistically creative or self expressive is outside of the typical and too easy routine of working a job and passive consumption. Artists often talked about art involvement being of better than sitting around watching TV, or just working your whole life to earn a paycheck. Coming together, some valued the feeling of belonging to a kind of exclusive club of creative people. In the North Side painting class this feeling was heightened for TT, because she experienced it as a "secret" activity separate from the "hum drum" of everyday life:

"So yea, there is a certain bond that develops. Sitting there every week with each other. It's like knowing something that no one else knows. Because it's not your profession. It's something on the side. Or it's just something to get out of your hum drum(routine). It's our little secret society. It's not what people know you for."

The remarks of SK, CC, BN, and TT illustrate another specific benefit that artists valued from their participation in diverse arts groups. They found joy in the acts of discussing, showing, or doing art with other artists. If artists were from different social backgrounds than their own, it did not matter when they were experiencing the joy of sharing their common interest. Artists appreciated other artists just for sharing with them, even when learning or an additional opportunity was not explicitly part of the interaction. The examples immediately above are mostly of individual artists showing or discussing art. If anything, feelings of solidarity or appreciation based on sharing a pleasurable experience were even more intense in ensemble activities, where artists each created different parts of a whole artistic work and depended on one another to have it turn out all right:



- The South Asian music group is characterized by significant socio-economic status differences. (which are arguably as salient today as ethnic divisions, c.f. William Julius Wilson, 1987; Castells, 1998). The members of the ensemble range from university professors, senior corporate managers, technicians, students, and retired or unemployed people. All of these participants have a common fascination or passion for the music they play. Some have become so involved that they have journeyed to the home country of the music. There is often discussion about the common attraction of both the music and the culture from which it stems. But here is where individual practitioners and collective artists part company. In the ensemble the teasing and playfulness cited earlier centers on individual musical competence and on the other challenges of playing music together. It relieves the tension people feel over the prospect of making mistakes, but as part of the process of trying to synchronize and unify the performance, it is part of the actual content of collaboration. The joy that comes through in these playful exchanges is then also that of just playing and playing together. It is this shared joy of collective musical performance that establishes participants' solidarity as fellow musicians, whatever social divisions may come between them outside of the church chapel basement where they meet.
- SM, at the suburban theater, talked about the unique feelings of closeness that can quickly develop between people through working together in the theater:

“You really don't have a show that stands on its own. It's really a combination of those actors working together. So you actually have a little bit of pressure on you, to produce this character and put all this together. Not just yourself, but it's a team effort and your part has to fit with the others. And that's where the director comes in and makes sure everyone is on the same page. There is a dynamic that is pretty unique. So even though we're strangers, you've been together 8 or 9 weeks and it's sad to have to go (when it's over); but that's the nature of it, it's a short term thing...

- FD, an actress in the south west side theater production also talked about the unique bonding potential of theatrical collaboration, but emphasized the value to her of the bonds, rather than the fleeting nature of the shared intense experience:

“Plus, you meet so many neat people doing this. I know there are two or three people I’ll be in touch with (after the play is over)...and I think we’ll be going out tonight (after rehearsal). I want to see how they’re doing. You get close with people. It’s a different way of being with people. More open. It’s good and healthy...you have to open yourself up.... You have to let yourself out.”

- FM, a Filipino male in his early 20 explained how the collective activity of drumming and dancing brought him closer to people different than himself, generating lasting feelings of connection, appreciation, and admiration:

“Yes, one thing that happens while I’m dancing or playing the drum my head is down and then I look up and people are smiling or they give me a gesture and are smiling and it’s great.... People come up to you afterward and say, “it’s so cool; I was playing with you for a little while. I was playing over here and then I heard you playing over there.” It’s not like everyday conversation. It’s simple. It’s hey-there. And not like conversation I went to work today and I did this. It’s simplicity. The gesture. The body...People build up your self esteem. It’s like energy. It’s like a big bowl of positive energy (makes his hands into a bowl). You give each other - what’s the word? - attention. It’s like ping pong: I love you. I love you back. It’s like all the hard things that exist aren’t there when you’re drumming.... Competing doesn’t really exist that much....  
...He’s a great teacher. They all are. They’re all so different. But they’re all great. They’re older than me but they’re so energetic. I wish I can be like that when I’m their age. (I want) not to forget.

FM's valuing of artists different from himself went so far that his White and African American instructors had become not just artistic role models and examples, but reassuring models for him that getting older does not have to mean losing one's "energetic" engagement with life. He also appreciated the positive attention he got for drumming and dancing from other drummers and dancers, the majority of whom were not Asian, like him. The reciprocal validation by artists of artists also takes place in visual art activities that don't have a direct collaborative component. At the South Side painting studio/class, one of the painters said the teacher called them a "mutual admiration society." That this reciprocal validation was greatly appreciated even when it crossed social boundaries was clear in the case of OQ, an African American painter in the North Side class. The following passage shows how much she liked being praised by the White ethnographer who was participating as a painter herself:

OQ: I've never done this before and this is fun. (she's sketching with charcoal the morning glory ).

Ethnographer: That's really good.

OQ: Keep on motivating (spreads her arms wide with hands out as if receiving something). I haven't drawn in so long. I get scared and am afraid I can't do it. This is like a breath of fresh air.

The fifth major benefit of diverse participation cited by artists was greater understanding among people from different sides of social divides. Almost 70percent of survey respondents, reported developing a greater understanding of people different from themselves through their participation in the arts. Artists described the value of this understanding, or it was manifest in expressions of respect, admiration, and empathy that clearly grew out of knowledge gained through arts based interactions. The following examples make this clear:

- FM was not alone in coming to better understand, respect, and emulate teachers who were older than him. In another striking example, FO, an African American visual and plastic artist, learned iron forging from a German-Jewish man 60 years his senior. Asked what life lessons he had learned from being involved in art, FO insisted he had not learned broad

lessons from the art process so much as from those he has worked with, especially his older teacher:

FO: The life lessons you learn from old people you are around. He was the old person, I was around him. I learned things about women, how hard things can be in life, how hard they have been for him. Things about letting go materially.

- The four original members of the case study quilters guild, were turned away from an all White guild in the south suburbs before they started the case study guild. The White guild told them that there was a waiting list to get in. BN and a couple of other quilters elaborated on these events, explaining that for a long time guild members feared the founders had been victims of racism when they first tried to join the other guild. But when SC, a White woman, joined the case study guild they found out she had been wait listed at the other guild as well, so they were pleased to discover it had not been a case of discrimination.
- SM of the north suburban theater described himself as “gray collar” and an “everyman”, contrasting himself through his description with the “professional” and “rich people” who make up a large percentage of his fellow actors. The ethnographer then asked him what it’s like working with these people:

“It's helped me accept other people better than I used to. Until you've been exposed to other types of people or groups of people, you pretty much have an idea in your head what they'll be like. And then that's what you've got, you have an idea, e.g. they'll be snobby and some are. But if you treat them with respect, they treat you the same way.”

- KI, a wealthy, retired divorce lawyer acknowledged that fellow painters in the park district class were not people he encounters in the rest of his life and at the same time he respectfully acknowledged their dedication to class participation, dedication he would not have witnessed but for being in the class:

“...So it's not that I wouldn't ever meet the (people like in class), but on the other hand, I wouldn't meet them, to a certain degree. There are young mothers who seem to be fairly closeted except to get out to do art classes and seem to take it very seriously.

- NN, a nurse and actress who was in the Southwest Side theater production during the period of fieldwork, hosted the cast party at her North Side apartment after the production was over. HT was another actor in the production who was younger than NN. He lived on the South Side not far from the theater and worked multiple low paying blue-collar jobs. After hearing from a theater board member that HT had been asleep when she called him, NN told the other party-goers that she did not expect HT to attend despite his earlier insistence that he would. HT arrived soon after, apologizing for being late, but explaining that he had worked one of his jobs until early in the morning and had had school as well, and it was the last day of classes. He had needed a nap before he could come over. NN found herself apologizing for not knowing he was “working those hours.”

In these instances one can see ignorance, fear, and possible indifference were replaced by awareness, trust, respect, and empathy. MS does not say it, but it seems clear that she did what she could to make sure EB tried out. These examples illustrate the sense in which good feelings about one another are not just a nice thing in and of themselves, but they underpin the actions of sharing, reciprocity, and social bonding that we observed in all the case studies.

In his analysis of the problem of civic disengagement in America, Robert Putnam cites the need for norms of social trust and general reciprocity to underpin civic cooperation. He considers networks of social interaction to be “social capital” that can encourage behavioral norms of trust and reciprocity needed to sustain a healthy democracy and effect meaningful social change (Putnam, 1995: 67). In the next chapter, we will take up this proposition that certain kinds of interactions encourage socially valuable inclinations and practices. The examples in this chapter of diverse artists sharing resources and talents, cooperating to make art endeavors succeed, and coming to understand and bond with one another through arts participation have already begun to make the case that reciprocity and trust are both requirements of successful arts activities

and encouraged by arts practice. The quilting guild is a good example of how the combination of offering art opportunities and acts of reciprocity can build social trust between groups that have suffered past social division and mistrust. When SC and NH first joined the case study guild, there was discussion among members of whether they should have been admitted or whether the guild should have remained exclusively African American. One argument put forward in favor of admission was basic reciprocity. Other White guilds had admitted case study guild members when these other guilds had not had African American members before. Because of this some members felt it was only right to let the White quilters into their African American guild. It was sometime after she was admitted that SC told other members that she too had been wait listed at the suburban White guild that originally wait listed the case study guild's founders. So the extension of the opportunity to join some White guilds promoted reciprocity at the African American guild, which in turn contributed to a reduction of mistrust between African American and White quilters.

**CHAPTER IV**  
**A LATENT POTENTIAL:**  
**ACQUIRING SKILLS AND INCLINATIONS FOR CIVIC LIFE**

In the previous chapter we demonstrated how the informal arts help people bridge social boundaries via the informality of the spaces and the way trust and solidarity are fostered among participants. In this chapter we document the specific interactions that occur in the course of art making in order to understand how, when and why artists are developing other civic capacity building skills as they practice art in informal settings.

Our approach to understanding the value of creating art derives in part from the work of anthropologist Alfred Gell who emphasized the agentive nature of art making in an attempt to move the field of the anthropology of art away from comparative aesthetics. Gell (1992) delineates a conceptual framework that suggests that art is a special (or unique) form of technology, one that leads to “beautifully made” objects (Gell, 1992:43). He considers art to be “a vast and often unrecognized technical system, essential to the reproduction of human societies, which [he calls] the *technology of enchantment*” (p. 43). Art’s purpose, at least in part, lies in the realm of the ideological—it functions to maintain or reproduce the society’s belief systems. However, Gell goes on to state that while art is a technological system, it is different from other technical systems humans have created because the object produced through it embody the same technical processes that produced them, creating in effect, “the enchantment of technology” (p. 44). In other words, art objects are intended to “obscure” the technical efforts that went into the making of them—the old cliché, “you made it seem so easy” comes to mind. Because we can’t easily see the technical effort that went into the making of the object, we experience it as magical, as having the power to enchant us:

“It is the way an art object is construed as having come into the world which is the source of the power such objects have over us—their becoming rather than their being” (p.46).

Of course, the obscuring of the technical effort also incorporates aesthetic sensibilities and processes.

In this sense, the making of art—the transformation of the natural into the magical, as it were, is an important process for unleashing creative capacity *and* as we will show, for building the skills of social life. The final product of that process, the object of art is only one small component of the value this activity brings into peoples’ lives. As one participant in the painting class put it:

“Creating is the important thing in what I'm doing. I couldn't care less about the pots-- those things (waves her arm at the living room shelves full of pots she’s made). My satisfaction comes from doing it. ”

The artists working in these informal settings emphasize process over the finished product through a variety of mechanisms. Sometimes it is seen in the way their resources are allocated. In the Southwest theater group, for example, though there is little spent on props and very little on costumes by the group or individual members, the group does arrange for a videographer to tape the production; and most of the actors and actresses buy a copy of the tape for their own uses. Other times it is in the way artists place emphasis on rehearsal or practice. The product is not the focus, as this choir member illustrates when speaking to the ethnographer seated in the audience prior to a Good Friday performance that they've been practicing for weeks. He shakes her hand as they greet each other and then he says, "You've already heard the best music, who knows what will happen tonight."

Our study revealed different types of skills or inclinations that informal arts participants cultivate in the course of their practice. These skills can be grouped under three broad types: 1) those acquired while striving to perfect the techniques and craftsmanship during the course of producing art 2) those acquired because of the informality of the activities and 3) those acquired while striving to sustain the activity or organization.

The ethnographers identified two sets of skills that seemed to derive from the need to expend effort to continually perfect techniques and craftsmanship: 1) competency in the giving and taking of criticism (i.e., in effect, the ability to listen), and 2) competency in problem-solving. Another set of skills derived from the fact that the informality of the settings made low barriers to participation possible (as we discussed in the previous chapter). These related to the nurturance of tolerance for difference and mechanisms for inclusion. And lastly, three sets of skills were developed as artists strove to sustain their arts activities or organizations. Little or no paid staff, few other resources, plus extremely low visibility meant that participants had to organize themselves and divide responsibilities in order to keep the arts activities going. Under these circumstances participants developed 1) consensus building skills, 2) collaborative work habits, and 3) the ability to imagine and foment social change. The mechanisms through which these important civic capacity building skills were acquired are explored below.

### **Skills Acquired While Striving To Perfect The Art**

Across the case studies, participants were continually striving to create an "illusion" of a seamless and effortless aesthetic experience regardless of their level of experience or skill level in the specific art form. This was evident in the time and effort people spent in rehearsals, practice sessions, re-working a painting or sculpture or other visual art piece, or re-writing a piece of poetry or fiction. The need for ongoing perfection of craftsmanship leads to the development of a set of techniques for giving and taking criticism as a way to share knowledge and to improve the collective undertaking. Seventy-five percent of respondents to the quantitative survey indicated that their abilities for giving and taking criticism had improved since starting arts activities. The critiquing



skills that are used in the context of informal arts require people to listen to each other, creating momentary spaces of trust and opening the way for collaboration.

**Acquiring Critiquing Skills.** This skill of giving and taking criticism is a product of the nature of artistic practice, and also translates into other spheres of activity. We have observed that some amount of time at all study sites was spent in doing the same work over and over, until satisfaction was achieved. During this process participants shared knowledge with each other about methods or techniques that were personally useful and that benefited the group as a whole. This giving and taking criticism was critical to both self-improvement and a satisfactory group experience, so people seemed to learn to listen to each other, and in turn to provide critiques in a manner such that it could be heard. The case below illustrates how and when listening and respect were reinforced as part of the arts activity for OT, an African American woman in the library based writing group.

OT is an African American in her 30's who has been in this writing group about a year. It is interesting to observe how she stresses listening and respect but balances that with self-determination.

“Really, I try my best to listen to the other writers. I try to learn from them, because there are things that they know that I don't know that they can teach me as a writer. The one thing I did learn from them is respect. You have to have respect for everyone in the group. If you don't have respect for the next person, it isn't going to work. The other thing I have learned is to not apologize for something that you wrote; whether it is because someone didn't like what you said or didn't like the way you said something.”

Across the case studies there were a variety of mechanisms through which people acquired the skill of giving and taking criticism. Although these were often combined and overlapping, for purposes of analysis we have grouped them under six broad rubrics: rituals, tricks, balance, humor, imitation, and mottoes. These mechanisms were used by peers and facilitators/teachers alike.

*Ritualizing Criticism.* There was a pattern across seven of the case studies, as well as in arts activities or events we observed outside of the case studies of ritualizing criticism: framing it as a familiar oft-repeated practice that was set aside from other arts activities. Some instances of this we observed were:

- Writers in a life story writing class regularly passed out written copies of their work from that week. Their peers took them home, wrote comments in the margins and returned them to the writers at the next class session.
- The choir director used the ritual of only referring to singers by their role title (i.e., tenor, bass, alto, soprano) when he provided critique instead of naming individuals. In this way, he avoided singling out a person in an embarrassing way.

- Theater directors routinely provided criticisms, suggestions, and praise to actors at the end of every rehearsal as part of a group meeting, a ritual which was called “giving notes”. In the case of the Southwest theater, he called individuals by their character's names, which actors were observed doing also. Actors said "even if you get bad criticism, you know it's only to make your character better".
- The South Asian music ensemble played a piece over and over until they got it right, but avoided any kind of evaluation involving personal characterization. When a master teacher of the genre visited, he also used the ritual of repetition, although at times he would sit next to a person and play the same instrument so they could watch his technique.
- At the quilting site, they had ritualized giving and taking criticism activities during monthly and the weekly meetings. The strength of the ritual is evident in that criticism was observed being withheld at times outside of the ritual frame. The ritual consisted of a sort of show and tell. In the case of the monthly business meeting, when it was over several people would voluntarily show their finished or semi-finished quilts, wall hangings, or other work to the group. People praised the work but also offered criticism in small group discussions after the show and tell was finished. It was during the weekly work and learn sessions, however, that considerable critiquing took place. During these morning sessions, a small group would gather around someone who had unfolded their work in progress on the ping-pong table in the park building room where they met. Sometimes this small group attracted other participants who also wanted to see what was being shown. During this process, onlookers would volunteer opinions and comments, often after a general or specific request for such by the quilter. Sometimes the quilter was looking for solutions to a particular technical problem, (such as how to get pieces to line up or how to get pieces to lie flat), but often it was more about color and visual effect. She would want to know what others thought about the fabric color she was planning to use for the border or the print she was planning to use for the background of the quilt. Opinions from novices and newcomers, as well as high and low-skilled long-term members were all given consideration by the artist. This kind of solicitation of ideas was an integral part of the quilting group. It also took place on a smaller scale, person to person as people sat at the tables during these weekly sessions, in both class session and work sessions. One quilter would turn to the one next to her and ask what she thought of this or that color combination or pattern combination. And often a beginner and/or newcomer to the group were introduced to this ritual from the start, as the case below illustrates. At the weekly work and learn session, one woman was told after her first lesson to take the squares home, sew them together, come back the next week, and show them off in Show and Tell. The experienced member giving the instructions then added, “If you mess up we’ll all still say ‘Ohhhh’ and ‘Ahhhh’!” She, another woman nearby, and the novice all laughed. The instructor then qualified her statement saying, “No”, and adding assurance that praise was genuine and comments would be kind.

- Although the visual artists were not observed ritualizing critiques, a “salon” practice reported at an informal gallery could be a similar mechanism. Artists were invited to hang their work for an evening, talk about it and hear responses and feelings from a general audience who was in attendance. The artist was then given the opportunity to respond to the feedback, but was not required to.

Likewise with some poetry open microphone events, ritual-like practices have been observed, in which poets and other audience members use finger snapping to indicate approval and groans to indicate disapproval of such things as sexism. As with all of the aforementioned critiquing practices, the ritual makes the critique easier to give and easier to receive.

*Sharing “Tricks”*. Ethnographers observed participants in at least seven of the groups using what an actress called “tricks.” These were methods or techniques that one practitioner had found effective and then shared with a peer, often a beginner (unlike in the case of ritualized criticism, this mechanism was used only by peers, not by the teachers or facilitators). The tricks were characterized by their brevity and ease of learning and often offered without accompanying negative criticism, but instead were presented in a very positive supportive manner.

- An experienced soloist in the choir stood in the parking lot after rehearsal and shared with a beginning soloist a particular way to hold the microphone.
- A drummer sat next to another djembe drummer, and told her, "tilt it, otherwise the sound can't get out".
- Noticing all the pencil lines on a quilter's work, another quilter shared her trick for removing them.
- An experienced player showed the novice ethnographer how to properly hold the percussion stick between her fingers.

Actors also coached each other and shared tricks, as we see in the case of FD, a white 30-year-old woman.

- The spring show of the southwest side theater group was the first for FD, an elementary school teacher. An older and more experienced actress told her to use one of her strengths, her eyes, to respond to the lines another actor directed to her. This use of her eyes, FD came to understand, was something she could learn quickly and would compensate for one of her weaknesses, diction. Here FD talks about “tricks” taught to her by other cast members and also the criticism provided by the male director:

“You get used to taking criticism. At first I don’t like it, but I know the play is going to be better if he says something...it’s totally different because here it’s for your character. But even in real life, it’s always sketchy (when people criticize you) because everyone has their own stuff (that they bring into it). Here, the director--it’s his job. People in the cast

are really helpful too. They're complimentary. They tell me what my good strengths are and to use that. The tricks. There are tricks to use."

*Balancing Critique With Creative Freedom And Aesthetic Taste.* Balancing creative freedom and aesthetic choice with critique was an important aspect of the process in virtually all of the case studies. Practitioners often demanded this kind of balance, exhibiting a desire to experiment, a confidence in their own aesthetic choices, and a satisfaction of having their work uniquely reflect themselves.

- A few quilters who were pinning fabric together were told by another that by using adhesive spray they could save time but this comment was quickly followed by "it's okay to do it however you like".
- The painting instructor learned that though many beginning painters want help with mixing paints to get the desired color, they did not want him to take the brush and apply paint to their canvas, and he respected their wishes.
- A theater director did not like the suggestion an actor had for his character, but agreed to give the actor a chance, saying, "let's try it".
- According to the choir director, "There has to be a balance of musical excellence and spiritual freedom, because you don't want people to think they can't be in that choir because 'I can't sing'."
- "You can't limit people" is how one of the rappers put it.

The experiences of the library-based writing group illustrates how this balancing component of criticism operates as we see in the case below:

- Group members depended on both the leader and each other for feedback. This feedback was so important that members changed group practices in order to hear the feedback sooner. Originally, members submitted their writings to the leader who had them typed up so that they could read them aloud at their meeting the following week. Subsequently, the members decided to read what they wrote at the end of each session, instead of waiting for the typed version. Members also informed the leader of the group about the kind of feedback that they found helpful. The writers pointed out to her when they felt that her criticism didn't honor the writer's intent but also told her when other kinds of critiques were welcome. In the quote below, the leader explains this process of giving and taking criticism:

"People give each other very good feedback. They are very supportive. It is not a critical feedback kind of group. Sometimes I'll ask questions and say, 'Well, you have this written to a general audience. How about if you had written it to a specific person, how would that change the piece?' Occasionally, that is really good and people say it gives them new ideas; but sometimes the writers will say, 'But that is not how she wrote it. You have to respect how she wrote it.' Sometimes I feel they still, in good

ways, will let me know where my feedback is welcome and where it is not. They very much see themselves, for good reason, as credible writers. So they want to know about their grammar and spelling—they really want to know. The other day I talked about apostrophes--when they are used in a contraction and when they are used in a possessive and how to know the difference. Oddly, something like that, they were really interested in. I was just referencing one of the pieces--someone had asked if an apostrophe was supposed to be there. So issues of correctness people will point out to each other, like ‘that word is spelled wrong’.

Separating one’s personal aesthetic or artistic taste from the critique was also a distinction which the writing group had found crucial. In the following case, TN, a college writing teacher and formerly an advertising writer, explains why her group is better than other groups who do not make this distinction. Here, too, she discusses the advantages of being in a group which publishes member's work on a regular basis. Notice how she stresses the importance of combining praise with the critique:

“I still say it's rare because I talk to other people who have been in other writing groups and some of them continue to go to them even though they are not happy because their work gets criticized for the wrong reasons. They didn't write what somebody else would have written, so the person doesn't like it. Or, it's nit-picked and they never tell them what the good points are. You know I couldn't stand something like that for two weeks! And we won't even discuss the idea of the places that do all this talking, yet nobody gets published. So I have found that [sponsoring agency and this group] in particular not only ‘talks the talk’ but ‘walks the walk’ too. You come in here with stuff you've already written, or you write stuff here and we talk about it, and we encourage you and if we think it can be improved, we say that. If we like it, we say that too. When it is in its best form we put it in the book for everybody to read. I know you can't beat that”.

*Humor.* Laughter, teasing and joking were other mechanisms for giving and taking criticism across the case studies (just as they had been devices for bridging status differences, as described earlier). Humor deflected attention away from the “error” and/or the critique. This practice also made it possible for people to hear each other and to trust each other, which then paved the way for working together collaboratively. Humor broke the tension between the giver and the receiver of criticism and also at the group level. In the instances below we see that sometimes laughter in and of itself is used with no accompanying dialogue. Other times it is teasing of a less skilled practitioner.

- Standing around after the close of drum circle one night, a less experienced facilitator asked a highly skilled professional one to critique him; the skilled man prompted a lot of laughing by asking in a teasing way, "Got a chair?"
- After repeatedly critiquing how a beginner quilter was going about her work,

the experienced quilter finally laughed; this then opened the way for the novice to explain her strategy. The experienced quilter/teacher answered with, "Now I see what you are doing".

- The painting instructor knelt in between 2 students and laughed with them about how one had incorrectly drawn the color wheel which the students had been assigned; then he helped her get it right.
- Members of the Asian music ensemble also relied on joking to couch criticism. If someone stumbled during the rehearsal of the piece, others would laugh gently and make a comment that they would have to start over now. Often, the joking was not directed specifically at the individual, but toward the group as a whole, so that all could share in the “fun” of making mistakes together.

In the choir, the director used a wide range of practices to give criticism and assist others in receiving it. In addition, a tone or overall mood that was a combination of teasing and relaxation underpinned all rehearsals. Even when the director was rushing through songs in order to cover as much as possible during the busy Easter season rehearsals, there were never any feelings of tension or anxiety in the room. He encouraged people to trust their voices and exuded unfailing confidence in soloists whose memory failed or voice faltered during rehearsal three nights before a performance. Joking and teasing were techniques used the most during instances of criticism. In the quote below, DX, the choir director, talks about giving criticism and explains how he uses humor, with whom, and why. DX has been in the position of choir director for many years. He started directing when he was fifteen years old, working with the youth choir, but also assisting his mother who was the director for the adult choir. Formerly a furniture store manager, he now works as church administrator and receives a small stipend for directing. He stated:

“And I also have fun doing it sometimes. If I do that, I pick a person who can take it (i.e. have fun with someone while criticizing them). I wouldn't do it to a person who couldn't take it. It helps break the tension...these people have worked all day, then I work them two more hours. So we have to have it fun or it's 'what am I doing this for'?”

Sometimes the joking was accompanied by a sense of competition, pitting the tenors against the altos for example. Oftentimes criticism and praise were co-joined so that in one sentence the director would tell them how good they were and then say that their timing was off. Other techniques used by the director in giving criticism were a scowling facial expression, rhetorical questions, and imitation. Unlike in some other case studies there was very little giving and taking of criticism between participants. The director's view was that only he could “tell someone that they're flat”. However, the choir did join in praising each other.

*Imitation.* Imitation was another common critiquing mechanism across the case studies. When an artist's mistake, lack of skill, or shortcoming was noticed, a

teacher/facilitator or a peer would demonstrate a better way or the correct way so that it could be mimicked by the one being critiqued. There was little if any mention of attention given to what the person had failed to do; instead there was a matter of fact attitude that the person could easily improve by imitating another person.

- The painting instructor would demonstrate a brush stroke and then the student would imitate it.
- The choir director would sing the first few lines of a song, in order to help singers find the rhythm, that they would then try to mimic.
- A beginning actress would stand on stage imitating a projection exercise that a more experienced actress had just showed her.
- A master dancer performed a specialized movement of her hands and fingers while she danced and the apprentices watch closely and then mimic the movement.

Likewise, in the drum circle, imitation was especially useful. Spoken criticism was usually precluded by the high noise level made by the drumming. Instead of speech, a facilitator or drummer employed mimicry, eye contact, head and hand movements, the mouthing of words, or a combination of these to indicate such things as "don't use that stick on that drum" or "slap the head of the drum this way", "there's a lot going on here", "they're jamming over there, but you can't hear them". Mimicry was occasionally used in a playful way, when an experienced drummer sat next to a relatively new drummer, and drummed one new rhythm after another, pausing in between each one as the beginner tried to immediately mimic the very fast, complicated rhythmic pattern she had just heard. In a matter of minutes, ten or more rhythms were played in this manner; the face of the student changing from extreme concentration as he attempted each rhythm to full joy as he executed it and then listened to the next one.

*Mottoes.* Mottoes were another mechanism for giving and taking criticism and were particularly observed at two of the sites. Participants in these groups were explicit about a philosophy, or what the writer's group called a "motto" that also framed their critique practices. The nature of such mottoes ranged from those empowering the writer to become open to learning, to those kinds of criticism that group members might give each other. How the writer's group motto was used in facilitating giving and taking criticism is discussed in the following case:

- During a writing workshop in which the ethnographer was present, a group member hesitated about reading her work in progress. It was at times like this that members of the group provided each other support, as the ethnographer describes below. At this particular workshop session, the writers were there to select and rank their work for inclusion in the journal the sponsor published. This is how the ethnographer described the interaction:

The editor asked if there was any work anyone wanted to read before they had quiet time to select their work and someone said Geri had just written a piece. Geri replied that she felt it was too rough to read. The writers then began talking at once about how she should just read it and not apologize for it. She

should be proud and they wanted to hear it. Paula said that Geri shouldn't forget the motto of the group "Don't apologize for your writing. Don't apologize for what you write." Geri laughed and read the poem. People responded with questions and discussed her work for about 5 minutes.

For quilters life-long learning was the philosophy of the group. The case below illustrates how this philosophy is expressed in a motto and used by the leader to new quilters and how it also serves as a leveling device:

- The ethnographer describes the interaction at a weekly work and learn session, in which the ethnographer's commented on an appliqué a member had sewn on her coat sleeve and she replied, "I'm still learning". It was this comment that prompted the group's leader to say, "Of course. We are always learning. All of us."

To conclude, though we have found these six specific mechanisms in which the critiquing process was made easier under the conditions of informal arts practice, there were also circumstances which complicate the process of giving and taking criticism. Competition and rivalry in the arts and in the work world can make the critiquing process a difficult one. An example of this was seen among rappers. Hip hop artists, were always looking for new ways to express themselves--new metaphors, new ways to punctuate syllables in their rhymes. The data indicates that "tricks" were received better than critical statements. As one rapper explained, there are some who are "selfish" and don't want to help another rapper with constructive criticism because they don't want to be surpassed by that person. This rapper also made a reference to fear, in that people were "scared of the next person making it" and the data points to the perception that the market will allow only a limited number of rappers to be commercially successful and that the industry favors New York talent, resulting in even greater odds for a Chicago star. This may make the competition stiffer, which may impact the degree to which artists feel free to help each other. There are also those like himself who appreciate hearing ideas for improving his rhymes.

- In the following quote, rapper BQ explains the different ways of giving and taking criticism. First, he tells how he ended up making one rap group angry when he told them he disliked their rhymes, even though he had prefaced the statement with praise for their performance. Then he talks about how he himself likes to receive constructive criticism from his own rap group. Finally, he discusses how he is able to help others with techniques he learned from the voice lessons his group took. We see how the blunt statements of dislike are not well received whereas tricks are.

"But we'll give like a little (praise or props when)--such and such performance was good. 'But your rhymes – I didn't really like those too much.' So people get mad. Some people want that feedback like how should I change it? 'Cause I kick (perform) something, my guys (in his



crew) are like, 'that is awful.' I say 'Really? What don't you like about it?' And they tell me and I say 'Okay, make somethin' better.' (So they show me how they would do it and I say) 'Man, that is hot. Thanks.' You want to do that to other people. You want to--I mean you can be selfish and say 'look I'm hot, I (don't want) nobody else out here as nice as me'--but you can talk to people and help them, (saying) 'and you know what you should do? Just practice. Work on your breath. Work on how you pronounce a certain word. All those things.' 'Cause we (his rap group) took voice lessons to get better."

Finally, it is important to note that informants at five of the case studies have explicitly cited this inclination of successfully giving and taking criticism as one they take with them into their work-a-day worlds. Participants talked about how they have learned to listen, "to be more comfortable" with themselves, "to be less afraid to take risks and to try new things", "to have more courage", to make better "eye contact", all important aptitudes for the public sphere:

- One participant in the community theater, CT (who is an actor and a writer) stated: "I've learned not to be ashamed...you stick your neck out and make a fool of yourself...no hard feelings. I'm not going to jump out a window".
- A kindergarten teacher (drummer) now presents papers at professional conferences, much to the surprise of her principal, who admitted his belief that she would never make presentations almost prevented him from hiring her.
- As actor EN, a former beautician and now a retired tax annuities salesman, put it:

"To be successful in acting—and I mean satisfying, not money wise—you have to be willing to go outside yourself and do things you wouldn't do in ordinary life. When I got the job selling tax annuities, the guy said, 'Can you stand up and talk to a group of teachers?' And I said, 'If I can drop my pants in front of an audience, I think I can do that'".

This transfer of skills also occurs for those giving the criticism. In the workplace, supervisory staff often find giving criticism to workers a difficult task. This is how the choir director answered when asked about if this skill spills over into other areas of his life:

"It does, definitely...I managed the largest [furniture brand] store and supervised thirty people, including loading dock guys and everyone. And it's different but it's easy because of what I do with the choir. I would say, 'that's not quite how you do that', for example. I have a way of not thinking about it too much and making it like a joke. It's served me well in both areas. Because I do it a lot, people take it better from me".

**Acquiring Problem Solving Skills.** Another skill ethnographers observed as artists strove to perfect their art was problem solving. As Sanjek(2000:769) pointed out in his New York City research, the ability to improvise or problem solve is a skill basic to effective grassroots organizing or building civic capacity for democratic engagement. Thus, potentially, gaining such a set of skills through arts practice contributes to artists' potential for civic activism.

Close to 60 percent of respondents to the survey indicated that their problem solving skills had improved as a result of their arts practice. Ethnographers documented practitioners acquiring and using the ability to quickly find alternative solutions to problems (for example substituting materials, re-thinking design, re-structuring roles). The ability to problem-solve in these contexts meant that people were able to improvise quickly or invent new ways of doing things. These skills developed in the contexts of both collective and individual practice were observed in two-thirds of the case studies. In the Northwest suburban theater case, an example of this kind of inventiveness was exercised in a year when the group had been bumped from their performance space in the park building. Their solution was to present three one-act plays and perform them at five local nursing homes, which also brought them free publicity. Other times the innovative thinking came about in response to a need for different instruments or the raw materials used in the creative process:

- Individual visual artists used networks of colleagues to provide criticism for their work.
- Striving to improve himself, a percussionist searched for and found interesting sounding metals while working at construction sites and crafted bells out of them.
- An individual artist cut a lock of his dread-knotted hair and used it as a paintbrush, solving both the problem of obtaining a heavy brush when he was short on funds and not having to throw his hair in the trash.
- A musician invented an electronic instrument, using an aluminum walker as the base.
- Several visual artists at the workplace site discussed how they picked up new materials from the workplace site (things that were being discarded) to incorporate into their artwork. Additionally both musicians and visual artists at the workplace site discussed how they strategized to find places to practice music together or do their art work when their usual places for meeting or working were taken away as the museum got busy.
- The Asian music ensemble performs in a variety of venues, from museum halls, schools to outdoor sites in parks or gardens. At one point, the ensemble needed to put together a small screen for a puppet show, and so some members rescued some scrap wood, used it to build a frame, tacked colorful cloth around it and stretched a thin piece of cloth on it to produce the screen. The groups members also frequently came up with new ways to transport the

heavy instruments, to attach sheet music to stands, and otherwise solve problems associated with performance in a variety of venues.

In the case below we illustrate how a visual artist thought about the ways he found solutions to problems. He put it succinctly when he said “that being creative is just as much about finding materials”:

- A white male artist and former actuary rent a home/studio in Chicago’s Pilsen community, where he spends a lot of time marketing his work to galleries in up-scale restaurants and hair salons. He has creatively figured out how to access art supplies for his work, even though he was living on a reduced income:

“I knocked my income to one tenth, but it’s not your income that’s the difference, it’s what you spend. So if you reduce spending by 90 percent then you’re fine...The selling part--you got to do that. I hate schlepping art around and I do that a lot. Hauling art around...I only use the proceeds of sales to get supplies. I dive into dumpsters around Lincoln Park. I use plywood that I find at construction sites and frames I find in dumpsters at artists’ frame shops. I have to buy saw blades, but I try to get most things at Maxwell Street (Chicago historic market for primarily second-hand goods). For paint, I go to Home Depot and after they use their pigment mixing machine the can still has this much paint in it (points to an half inch of liquid in a glass on the end table). I don’t tell my customers this, but I think being creative is just as much about finding materials. I get frames out of a frame shop dumpster. Like that one (a painting) she’s buying—it’s a \$250 frame (carved wooden frame painted gold and black). I had a framer put it together and I bought the glass. And I get canvas from a second hand canvas shop. It has flaws in it but what’s a flaw to me? It’s like the weavers in Arabia or wherever who weave a flaw into their work”.

Ethnographers discussed with study participants how these problem-solving skills might transfer to the work place or to every day life. While most did not explicitly mention the ability to improvise or solve problems as contributing to more effective civic activism (as in Sanjek’s example cited above), many did discuss how these skills did improve their abilities to do their jobs. In one case, NN, a middle aged white woman who lives in Uptown and works as a hospital nurse and cosmetic salesperson, stated that she found that her acting experience has increased her problem solving capacity at work. She told the ethnographer of how she instituted a more efficient and less disruptive method for transferring patients to new rooms. Below, she reflects on her problem solving abilities:

“One thing I might bring to a job is doing the same job in a different way. For example, when it’s time to transfer a patient to a different room out of intensive care, what they usually do, is take the patient in his lazy

boy and put his possessions and chart on his chest and wheel it to the new room. But most of them are too weak to get out of the chair into the bed by themselves, and it takes sometimes 3-4 people to get them from bed to chair and from chair to bed. So one time I had a man and I took the bed from the new room and wheeled it into the old room and transferred him from the old bed into the new bed. It shook everybody up. The head nurse thought it was good, but everyone else was shook up. So maybe my (acting) work has made me a better problem solver. And this is something that comes from learning from the crew”.

The transference of problem solving skills gained from practicing art in informal settings was most evident at the work place site. Here, ethnographers observed a myriad of ways in which artists improved work performance or adapted new techniques, bringing a versatility to their jobs. Artists were observed substituting materials, figuring out how to do something quickly, resolve emergencies and at times just get around bureaucratic obstacles to get things done. During a focus group with some of the visual artists at the museum, they stated that they often found themselves applying artistic skills to their work, particularly if they were involved in the design or construction of a space within the institution. The artists mentioned that problem solving was often something they just did and rarely reported to their supervisors.

Discussion at the focus group brought out another aspect of how artists “problem-solve” when the topic of how they dealt with fluctuating and low income and with balancing time for art with the need for making a livelihood. Several artists in the focus group recounted that they were willing to “risk” living in neighborhoods reputed to have high crime rates and poor living conditions because they could find ample space for relatively low rent. They felt that the trade-off was worthwhile because it gave them the opportunity to have work space and living space without having to spend more time earning an income. In the exchange below, two artists discussed their living situation:

KA: We’ll probably be moving again because we’re running out of parking spaces. We used to live in... and then we moved. We just keep moving (looking for cheap place) and I never thought about it.... I never thought about just leaving Chicago.

BH: Maybe artists aren’t so scared about going to a bad neighborhood. They don’t have a fear. So we go in and we clean it up; I mean we don’t build condos but we clean it up. (And then it’s gentrified).

KA: I'd say rough neighborhood, not bad.

BH: I hear gun shots every day.

KA: Yea, we heard 2 (recently) and it was like when we were living in Wicker Park and there were heroin addicts in the park and there were gun shots every night. We'd go to sleep listening to gun shots and the train going by.

Clearly, here, risk-taking, an aspect of problem-solving spills over into every day life as artists tried to cope with their low-income. In another part of the focus group conversation, the artists discussed how they attempt to balance having time to do their art with having to make a living. One participant recounted the following experience:

EG: A lot of it here is more creative than other jobs. I married an artist and we tried to work as artists and pay rent and the bills and get around town. It was what I call "living like bugs". We had rechargeable batteries and would listen to radio for entertainment. (we couldn't pay for electricity). And ..., the person I married, well, I got a job then and she explored sculpture and fashion design. And eventually found a way to do that (for a job). I'd love to trade positions and let her "sell her soul" and maybe then I'd be in the studio and also try to do some things to sell.

Others in the focus group discussed how they searched for jobs with flexible time schedules and access to resources they could use in their work so that they could continue to do their art. Artists' strategies for earning income and continuing to do art are discussed in more detail in the next chapter, but these examples illustrate that even as artists strove to do their art, they applied these problem solving skills to their work and to their every-day lives.

## **Skills Acquired Because Of The Informality Of Arts Practice**

Ethnographers documented another set of skills or inclinations that artists in the case studies seemed to acquire because of the informal character of the arts practice. These revolved around the nurturance of tolerance and fostering mechanisms for inclusion. In the previous chapter, we examined how tolerance was nurtured to accommodate diverse social groups. Here, we examine the development of this inclination as it related to accommodating the wide range of participants' skills and experience that resulted because of the low barriers to participation, also discussed in the previous chapter. The mechanisms which were used to foster acceptance of different styles and different talents included humor and deflection, the structuring of space, "orchestration" techniques, and the sharing of instruments, supplies and equipment. What resulted, as ethnographers found during the course of fieldwork was that participants were able demonstrate forbearance toward difference and active efforts for inclusion. This manifested itself as using patience with others, respect for people's strengths even if their skills or experiences were less than one's own, open-mindedness toward different perspectives, and trust of strangers. The practice of such inclinations clearly are important for civic activism or community building, arenas where clearly there will also be a wide range of differences among community members or citizens and where taking advantage of such differences while striving for maximum inclusion will improve chances of success for any project or change effort. While we did not specifically observe the transference of the artists' practices related to tolerance and inclusion to civic activism per se, we did document the transference to aspects of every day life. In other words, it seems that if these skills are acquired in the course of arts practice, they can be applied in other realms of life, constituting the latent potential for building better civic engagement.

**The range of difference.** Every case study site included people practicing art at different levels of skill, talent and experience, as previously mentioned. Thus, it was common to find a vocalist who came from one of the country's top gospel choirs sitting next to a "tone deaf" member of the church choir. An actress playing the lead in her first-ever show worked opposite a middle aged woman who started in film when she was six and has been in dozens of plays since then. A woman who had never sewn a stitch in her life sews worked on a quilt with a retired professional tailor. In the Asian music ensemble, the group included people who had studied for many years with a Master teacher in the home country of the music, people who had obtained doctorates in musicology, and others who had never played an instrument until they joined the ensemble. At the work place site, as well, artists in the music group ranged from some who had been making art all their lives (one musician, for example, had been playing for 36 years), some with Bachelors of Fine Arts, others with Masters of Fine Arts, and still others who were complete novices. As one participant in the theater group said,

"There's all these interactions with people...lots of kind of people come. There are Plain Janes but also *Prima Donnas*. You learn to deal with that. Just say, 'okay', and go on. Just let it blow off."

Although the research team selected sites for the purpose of learning about adults practicing in informal settings, it is interesting to note that five of the sites also involved children to various degrees. At the drum circle children from the age of three to sixteen participated as equal members of the weekly gathering and sometimes numbered twenty or more; adult members often mentioned how they appreciated their interaction with the children. In the theater groups and the church choir adult members occasionally staged performances that included parts for children. Similarly, there were individual artists who exhibited at an informal site which included children's art and an occasional child also sewed along with the adults in the quilting circle. All of this demonstrates the degree to which tolerance and inclusivity were aspects of practice in these groups.

The following two cases provide a glimpse into the range of talent that is present in the informal arts, and the accompanying challenge and fulfillment it engenders for people at different points within that range:

- OT, the African American mother of a 10 year old quoted in the previous chapter, was raised in public housing and though she had been writing since she was a child, she only recently had become "serious" about it. She found the group via a self-published writer whom she had been referred to by the public librarian. She eloquently described her experience the first time she attended the library-based writing group which she subsequently joined. The writing group included a college writing instructor, writers who had published books and ones who had been granted awards.

"I had another friend with me, TQ, and the two of us went down to the Monday workshop to meet the group at (the library). Everyone there was beautiful, and they welcomed us there with open arms. I am not going to tell a story--I was very intimidated. These people sitting around the table--they had books, CDs, traveled most of the world and doing all these different things. I thought, how am I going to sit here with them? I was just a baby to this. I was just starting to come out. I was really intimidated and there was a part of me that didn't want to come back, but I came back anyway. From that point on, I fell in love with everyone there and I don't want to ever, ever leave. It has been a wonderful experience."

- The second case is that of DX, who started directing the youth choir when he was 15 years old and occasionally helped his mother who directed the adult choir. He worked fifteen years in corporate management jobs and is now the church administrator. Here he talks about the task of directing a choir of mixed talents:

"It's fulfilling. Unlike other groups I've been with, you get what you get. We can't audition, so you get people who are like professional singers and

then you get a person who is tone deaf, too. The joy and fulfillment is when you've been able to pull it altogether. You've heard of the Morehouse College Glee Club?... (He hands the ethnographer a CD by this choir.) Well, one of the guys who sings bass, used to sing with them...And next to him is a guy who's tone deaf. Couldn't carry a tune in a bucket. But they're both faithful, great guys. And they love the Lord and (the church). And because of his enthusiasm, the (tone deaf one) is great. So for me to be able to pull all that together--to do it well--in a church choir is fulfilling. Especially when there's a good bass singer sitting next to a guy who's tone deaf."

The quantitative data supports the ethnographic data in this area; 87 percent of survey respondents reported meeting people of different skill levels in the course of their arts activities and 90 percent of respondents reported working with people with fewer skills or knowledge than themselves. There is also some support for the suggestion that this interaction across skill levels has positive effects on the higher-skilled artists as well. Respondents averaged a response of 5 on a scale between 1 and 7 when asked about the degree to which participation in arts activities has effected their tolerance towards less skilled artists (1 = much less tolerant, 7 = much more tolerant). Further support was found in that only 32% of the survey respondents indicated tension around the different skill levels as a tension in their group. 48 percent of the respondents indicated that their ability for building trust among people had improved since they started doing arts activities.

**Mechanisms by which tolerance and inclusivity are nurtured.** The ethnographers discovered a number of mechanisms—humor, the structuring of space, orchestration and the sharing of equipment and supplies through which people were able to become more tolerant and inclusive of difference.

*Humor.* As we saw earlier in this chapter, laughter, teasing, and joking eased the way for the giving and taking of criticism. Humor and deflection were also mechanisms by which groups accommodated the range of skill levels within arts activities. Although these uses of humor were often intertwined, we have separated them for purposes of analysis. When humor was used as a mechanism for inclusivity, it was sometimes self-deprecating humor by a less skilled practitioner. At other times peers would use humor to deflect attention away from the awareness that one member had lesser skills. The following instances and cases illustrate this:

- As two inexperienced stage crew members struggled to affix a length of black fabric at a stage entrance, two experienced ones came by with tape, rope and suggestions. Laughing, they started pretending it's an operating room, "Blood pressure is going up...sponge...let me wipe your brow..." This then opened the way for an inexperienced one to say, "You're going to trust me to tie this knot?"
- Joking and teasing was also used in the quilting group as a leveling device. Humor was used in the lesson situations and during show and tell, the practice during which people showed their artwork to others.



For example, during an applique lesson, a beginner to the technique laughed and joked about a mistake she had made while sewing together a female figure they were each piecing together. Pointing out how her stitching had resulted in a lopsided figure, she joked, “Mine’s just going to have to be pregnant”.

At other times the joking alleviated the tension around instructor expectations and variations in the speed at which people quilted. In one instance, quilters teased another group member, who was in the role of instructor that day, about how she was pushing a learner to hurry and finish a sample “block” prior to the end of the session. All in jest, they compared the instructor to a knuckle-rapping type of piano teacher. Laughter erupted, tension was relieved, and the block was completed.

Variation in productivity also engendered tension in the quilting “show- and- tell” rituals. Although quilters are encouraged to bring finished or unfinished quilts to show others, a quilter who brings in and shows a different finished quilt each week for several weeks in a row, can also be teased about doing so. In the example that follows from the ethnographer’s field notes, we see how M teases C about her high level of productivity and how C responds in a way that is self-deprecating:

C came in for what must be the fourth week in a row with a completed quilt to show off. It is all Oriental fabrics and very elegant. She had made one for her son. This one is for herself.

M teased and complained: “You got another one?! I was telling my friend that I got to start quilting more. These ladies just make them and make them. I don’t know how you all find the time.”

C responded from across the room: “Quilters don’t clean and quilters don’t cook. Didn’t you know that?”

M: “I guess that must be my problem.”

- During the focus group with the musicians at the work place site, one of them joked that he really did not know how to play guitar and he usually just “faked” it when he jammed with the others. The other musicians laughed and implied that he really was not as bad as that.

These illustrations demonstrate the ways in which humor, particularly self-deprecation created the conditions for acceptance of differences across skill and experience levels.

*Structuring of Space.* Space, whether indoors or outdoors, was often structured through re-arrangement of the furniture or the placement of people within it to maximize the inclusion of all participants in virtually all of the case sites.

- This is best exemplified by the drummers. The drumming group was purposefully called a community drum circle and during clement weather was held in an outdoor yard near the park's tot lot and in clear view of one major street and one side residential street. As previously described, the participants were a mix of ages and ethnicities and attracted passersby, who almost always accepted an instrument when offered one, as they joined in the music making. On one evening the ethnographer observed, the circle included a three year old white girl, obviously with little experience, a white twenty year old college student wearing a Grateful Dead T-shirt who is a regular at the circle, a sixteen year old Puerto Rican girl with her ten year old brother, also regulars but who have not taken any formal music classes, a seventy five year old Latina who is only an occasional participant, a Pakistani father with his five children, also occasional participants, and a middle aged master drummer from Africa, all making music together.

Space was structured in a variety of ways. First, the chairs were always placed in a circle, whether indoors or outdoors. As the circle of chairs was filled, drummers expanded the circle to accommodate newcomers by adding more chairs. This was done even though it meant people had to quit drumming, stand up and move their chairs and instruments. This was done rather than allowing newcomers to start an outer circle of chairs behind a core circle, thus including the latecomers into the whole. At the same time as the circle was always enlarged, it did not privilege those in it in a way that excluded those on the far periphery. The entire space was used in a way that included everyone nearby who chose not to join the circle (for example, the mothers sitting on the low wall surrounding the tot lot of swings and jungle gyms, the elderly people or small family groups sitting on benches along the park path, and the teenagers standing under a nearby tree on their way to the basketball court). All of this surrounding space was treated by the facilitators as part of the circle. The circle also included children who sat in chairs and participated in the same way as adults.

- The painting class space consisted of a small room with tables and chairs, plus a small storage closet with shelves. The use of the closet fostered inclusivity, in that the instructor kept the closet uncluttered and neat, while the students were given free access to it, and place their materials on the shelves, making it their own. Novices and experienced artists alike left supplies there, e.g. art books used for subject material. A mother of two young children who periodically came to the class to paint, easily and quickly slipped in, got her supplies from the closet, found a seat, and started painting. People sat at tables, which formed a large rectangle. The room was also structured with a high shelf on each end of the room so that works in progress could be stored in such a way that no one painting was displayed in a more prominent position than another.

- At the work place site, the musicians would rearrange chairs in the classroom they used for the jam sessions so that they could all join in. They also tended to use the spaces that were in the public areas of the institution so that other staff and even the visiting public could walk in and join the group.

*Sharing Equipment and Supplies.* Across the case studies, the sharing of the raw materials and the technology of the artistic practice constituted another mechanism through which a sense of tolerance was nurtured. In addition the demystification of these supplies and equipment aided inclusivity.

- Quilters routinely hauled their sewing machines, cutting mats and rotary cutters to the weekly sessions, making them available to all who were present. At one session observed by the ethnographer, someone brought in their scissor sharpener, which was much appreciated by the rest of the participants.
- Novice and expert actors alike shared make up, scripts and costumes when needed by other actors.
- Reaching across the table where they gathered, all painters chose brushes from the tin can holders and tubes of paint from the plastic caddies.
- For those without white robes for a special performance, others in the choir shared the extra ones they had on hand at home.
- Members of the Asian music ensemble often wrote out music and then made copies to share with new members. A large file of such shared music notations had been constructed over the years. Other times, musicians brought in their own amplifiers or recording equipment so that rehearsals could be taped and the tapes shared and used to improve performance. Members used their own cars to transport instruments for performances, and shared rides with each other.

The drum circle provides an in-depth look at the sharing of equipment. More than 15 kinds of instruments (approximately 150 instruments in total) were available for use by all. Some were simple, some more complex, so that even the highly skilled percussionist was observed digging through the bins in the middle of the circle for an instrument. There were several triangles, maracas, jingle bells, three kinds of cowbells, drum paddles, tambourines, more than a dozen simple plastic milk bottles filled with beans, plus other shakers and a jembe and dun dun (African drums). These were provided by the facilitator and park district and, though most of the regular attendees brought their own drums and hand instruments, they also often dug in the bins for another instrument to try. As the facilitators modeled sharing of instruments, participants followed suit by readily sharing their own personal instruments with adults and children in the group as a way to include them in the group.

Facilitators would take instruments to people standing on the periphery or sitting on nearby park benches. As these outliers joined in, those within the circle often squealed in approval as they did so. Instruments were also offered to people as a way to include them in the group. Children too used this strategy, often bringing an instrument from the center of the circle to a mother or grandfather sitting on the low wall

surrounding the nearby playlot. Even if the adult relatives had declined an instrument from a facilitator, they invariably accepted one from a child and played it. Everything was considered as a potential instrument, e.g. the backs of chairs and the bike rack nearby as drummers tried out the sound using drumsticks. Even the police and an ice cream vendor joined in at various times. As a police car<sup>1</sup> pulled up on an adjacent street, the facilitator motioned for them to blow their siren in short bursts in time with the music, which they did, much to the delight of the other participants. A young Latino man pushing an ice cream vendor's cart through the park, stopped to watch and listen, jingling the cart's bell in time with the group's music.

The demystification of instruments was another factor contributing to inclusivity and was observed at the drum circle and at the painting class. One way this was accomplished was through comments such as one made to the ethnographer when she was admiring a doombeck (middle eastern drum with elaborate decoration). Doombecks were played by a small minority of drummers in the circle. The owner, a rather accomplished drummer, first explained that the decoration was composed of decals the makers used on the base of the drum and then said, "go ahead and play it. You can't hurt it;" thus making it less intimidating.

In painting class there was little time spent on reviewing and explaining materials, making it less intimidating for beginners. Acrylic and oil tubes of paints plus a couple cans of various sized brushes were provided and kept in the middle of the table so that they were in easy reach of everyone. Paper plates were used as palettes and tin cans for rinsing brushes. This small but adequate provision of materials did not overwhelm the beginner and yet the quality met the needs of an experienced painter, too. As the supply of available canvases were depleted, painters were told what to buy at a local artist's supply store.

*Orchestration.* Other mechanisms which fostered inclusivity could be grouped under the heading of orchestration. These techniques were activities during collective art making in which the facilitator manipulated the ways in which individuals or subgroups contributed to the whole. Through these practices, the collective was emphasized or set in relief by way of contrast, while often providing space for the less skilled and/or the more skilled to be recognized and included. The drumming group provides good examples of this, but similar practices were also found in quilting. UC, an African American drummer, teaches many of the same drum classes at a private music school that KZ teaches at a park district location. One night at the drum circle, UC declined to follow KZ's lead as the circle facilitator when KZ concluded the circle with a group rumble (crescendo) that should have ended abruptly and in unison. UC hit an extra beat after everyone was supposed to have ended. KZ realized what was happening and let UC usurp his authority and lead the last rumble when they did it again. The next week a younger less experienced drummer tried the same tactic, and once again KZ deferred to the usurper, letting him lead a second concluding rumble, thus accommodating the need for demonstrations of individuality.

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<sup>1</sup> Chicago police provide security at Chicago parks, resulting in police officers knowing the drum facilitator and other staff. As part of their patrol duty, they sign a log at the park's office.

Additionally, aside from the usually simple steady beat provided via the dun dun (big drum), the drum circle found its own rhythm, but also used orchestration in the form of patterns or games. This involved a person going to the center of the group and getting the group's attention via eye contact and often beating on a hand instrument; the person then introduced and orchestrated a pattern. One of the common patterns or games was what might be called "each one add one". In "each one add one" one person was instructed to play a self-selected rhythm solo and, when done, to indicate to the next person that it was their turn. That person then played the first person's rhythm plus added one of her own. The third person played both of those and added one of her own, etc. Not only were all skill levels accommodated but everyone was given the chance to play each other's rhythm, whether it was simple or complex. Everyone tried their best and the game moved quickly around the circle, with no one indicating whether anyone else was doing a perfect imitation or not. This also allowed members to really listen to each other and feel part of the group.

Interestingly, the quilting group had an activity based on this same group dynamic—the "block of the month" they called it. All participants, including beginners were able to participate along with the most skilled as each person made a block that was then combined with the others and made into one quilt. Though only a small number of persons participated in any one month, the activity did serve to bind the less experienced and more experienced.

Another activity facilitated at drum circle was what might be called "all imitate each one", in which each person in the circle played a self-selected rhythm and then the group in unison imitated it. As with the previous game, it allowed the advanced drummers to shine, but there was less pressure on other individuals.

Also used by the drummers was the orchestration of subgroups, in which the facilitator divided the group into two or more parts or grouped drummers by gender, age or type of instrument, and then directing which part to play when, usually in a simple back and forth pattern. This strategy was also observed when people referred to as "hippie" drummers were part of the circle. The hippie drummers played in a way in which they seemed oblivious to the group, focussing on themselves and listening only to themselves instead of the group. They were nonetheless incorporated into the group, by the use of subgroup orchestration. In all of these methods there was little if any use of words to assist with orchestration.

Less frequently, an orchestration technique we will call showcasing was used by the drummers, a technique ethnographers observed in use by other groups. It helped accommodate the more skilled drummer. These drumming showcases or solos were facilitated by way of having the group pause so that a single person could provide a solo rhythm of his or her choice. On the evening which included a master djembe drummer from Mali, he and a professional drummer who accompanied him, were directed into the center of the circle to play. This was striking in that except for the facilitator and the occasional dancer, no one played in the center of the circle.

In the choir, this kind of showcasing was observed as solos. In the quilting group, this showcasing practice was part of the “Show and Tell” ritual described earlier. Show and Tell allowed not only the skilled quilter a showcase but also the beginner. Not only could the beginner display her work and get feedback but her opinions about other quilter’s work were also welcome, providing an opportunity to participate at the same level as the highly skilled quilter.

Yet another orchestration technique was observed at the Asian music ensemble. Here, there was frequent rotation of people on different instruments, so that the less skilled players were always given the opportunity to play the more difficult instruments and the more skilled players were seen playing the simpler instruments. Thus, no one felt that any one person was the only one who could play a certain instrument. On the other hand, the drums, which were central to keeping the beat cycle could only be played by the most experienced musicians who had actually studied drumming techniques. Thus, if a musician aspired to play this central instrument he or she knew that much practice and training would be involved.

*Other Mechanisms.* As we examined the various mechanisms and how inclusivity was fostered, we found there was a cluster of practices that eased the entrance of beginners to the arts sites. As noted above drum circle participants voiced their approval when peripheral people accepted and played the instruments as part of the music-making. In addition to this general affirming and welcoming attitude, we observed informal mentoring of newcomers, gift-giving to newcomers, and a focusing on abilities rather than credentials. The suburban theater group found that there was not a word to call the kind of auditions they had for their annual showcase, which featured adults and children. That and other instances of inclusivity follow:

- The actor/emcee told the gathering of dancers, teen age rock groups, and middle aged solo singers waiting to audition for the annual variety show, “We call these 'auditions' because we have to call it something. We just need to hear it, to see the length so we can put together the order. It's a showcase.”
- As a first-time quilter struggled to make his stitches smaller, a skilled one noticed from across the room, took two of his smaller needles, and offered them to the novice as gifts.
- Since there was not always sheet music, a new choir member was often paired with an experienced one at the beginning.
- Writers in the writing group scaled back their critical exchanges when a newcomer joined, allowing trust in the group to develop as they focused on encouragement of the beginner.
- A theater member, upon noticing the selected play that season included a part with only a few lines, telephoned the news to an elderly actor who she knew was having trouble memorizing lines.
- The quilters loosely structured their sessions with a variety of group and individual projects happening simultaneously, thus allowing a beginner to

watch and learn and an expert to help others instead of working on their own projects.

- The theater director placed the most reliance on the applicant's performance rather than on credentials in the resume, thus giving the novice and the untrained, more of a chance during auditions for a play.
- As rappers at an open microphone finished their performances, they held out the microphone to whomever wanted to go next, thus allowing all an equal self-determined chance.

Beginners welcomed the informality of the sites that allowed an openness to all skill levels. TX, a 27 year old clay animation artist who was recently laid off from her job, talked about the creative freedom she enjoyed in the drum circle, as compared to the more formal drum classes she attended:

“I learned 3 rhythms (in class) and have learned 4 to 5 since then. But I like the drum circle because I don't have to play one rhythm--one thing over and over while someone else plays some cool solo. Because I get so annoyed by being relegated to beginner parts. I like to pull in off-beats and up-beats and just do crazy stuff.”

Another mechanism we observed was the use of modesty by those who have excelled and the inclination of all to nurture each other during the arts practice. There is a value placed on learning from each other so the inclination to support each other's individual growth is seen as a way of helping everyone. The maximization of the individual's potential increases the potential of all. In the case below, NS, an African American writer, elucidates on the value of humility when participating in a group of people with a range of skills and talents.

OT, an African American in her 30's, has been in the writing group for about a year, and like others in the group, had had her work published by the sponsoring group. She received and enjoyed an outpouring of praise and adulation when she and the other writers present at city events, though her role as mother of a 10 year old limits her in presenting her work elsewhere. She “would like to try out other things and maybe be a part of another group, but to be honest, it is really hard to find out that kind of information”. In the instance below she reflects on how group members model modesty as a way of being inclusive and reveals how this serves as a leveling device.

“The two things that working with the (group) has taught me: to never be sorry for anything I write or that I share with them and not to come in there with a big head or think I am all that just because I have done this or I have not done that...Everyone in there – even though there are a few in there that have done great things and one day I want to grow up and be just like them – the one thing I love about them is that they are very modest. They do not have giant egos. Everybody in there, we are on one level together. We are like a family. Everyone in there loves and respects

each other. We nurture one another, and we are each other strengths. We have each others back, that is what I like about (the group).”

In summary, all of these specific mechanisms and techniques helped participants to accommodate the range of skills and experiences and promote inclusion, so necessary because the activities were occurring in that metaphorical space of informality.

**The quality of tolerance and its potential for civic activism.** In addition to noting the mechanisms through which tolerance is promoted, the ethnographers discussed with study participant how the practice of tolerance and inclusion which they needed in art making might have been applied in other aspects of their life. Participants mentioned several aptitudes they found had been useful, including the ability to establish rapport with strangers, the ability to exercise patience, being able to recognize strengths of less skilled people, and achieving an open-mindedness toward new or different perspectives. The examples and cases that follow illustrate what study participants meant:

- A participant in the South Asian music ensemble, NB, who is a bench chemist, stated that he had learned to share and to more easily develop rapport with strangers as a result of his experience with the group. Others in the ensemble have spoken about how they have learned to be patient with people of differing skill abilities, and to recognize strengths in people that may compensate for their musical weaknesses. DK, a mother of two and a substitute teacher who lives in a Western suburb, spoke about how she tries to encourage students in her classes to take on an assignment even though they did not feel comfortable with the subject matter. One long-time ensemble participant believed that the tolerance expressed in the group is reflective of cultural practices of the home culture of the music, which they had absorbed as they learned the music.

A participant in the Southwest theater group described the type of tolerance he had learned as “forbearance”. In the case below, this same participant details what it is like working with a varied group of people and clearly explains how tolerance is something he has to develop because of his work in the theater:

- OX is a 70 year old retired owner of a men’s clothing store; he lives in Skokie and got involved in theater groups after stumbling upon auditions while attending an old time radio group meeting at a suburban church. He spent hours practicing his lines, using a tape recorder to do so, and talked about how the evening rehearsals and performances were difficult because he’s not as sharp then as earlier in the day. In the following quote, he is discussing a problem he and an actress, D, were having with their lines in one of the group’s productions:

“...D told me I was jumping on her lines, that I was coming in too fast and not giving her time to say her lines. Well, I know I do that. And so I told her she was slow. While she’s hemming and hawing, I go ahead and go on



with my lines...She didn't like it and I didn't like her telling me. So finally the director told me that I needed to be bigger than that. I said, 'I know, you don't need to tell me, but it's hard.' It's hard. But okay... And then, on stage one night our characters are arguing and she goofs up and says Monday night instead of Tuesday night and I look at her and think, what the fuck do I do now? And then I say (adlibbing), 'that's what I've been telling you, Monday night.' Well, for awhile afterwards, I was wondering if that really happened...But then later, the director told me, 'Good save'...When you work alone (like in the clothes store), it's different. Someone questions something, I get out the magnifying glass and show them how something is made. Then I don't care if they walk out. Now I work for somebody. I'm in a group. I depend on them; they depend on me. I'm in a circle of cooperation. It's entirely different. I have to be more forbearing. Forbearance rather than forthcoming."

The data indicated that aside from forbearance, tolerance and inclusivity also involved suspending pre-judgment of people who are strangers. It was common during arts activities to have strangers coming and going. There were seldom any formal introductions by name, though the facilitator often knew names. Since most of the groups did not require regular attendance, the composition of the gatherings varied from session to session. People were regularly making art with others they did not know while regularly interacting socially and building relationships. Even in the church choir where there was less flow in and out of the group, one of the choir officers did not know the names of many of the singers. As discussed previously, there was a trust based on common interest and the recognition that all are important for the group success. This kind of rapport with and trust of strangers is an important capacity for a healthy civic life. The cases below demonstrate how these art-fostered skills of inclusivity and tolerance are then transferred to the public sphere. The first case involves CE is a middle aged white man who is in regular attendance at the drum circle, where he frequently serves as facilitator. He explains how he has learned to be less quick to pass judgment on people in the drum circle and subsequently in his public surroundings. In the second case, first-time actress FD, helps us understand how an individual ability such as making eye contact with people is developed in the process of arts activities but then transfers to the public sphere:

- CE is a plumber who often works in downtown Chicago on large construction projects. In addition to the drum circle, he drums at the lakefront and maintains a separate apartment where he can drum without disturbing his Rogers Park neighbors and where it is easier to load instruments to his vehicle. In the quote that follows he explained how he is more inclined to trust people because of his experience with strangers in the drum circle and how that has transferred to the public sphere:

"I primarily know people by their drumming. I know them by their drum. I know them by the kind of rhythm they make. The kinds of noise they

make. I wouldn't know anyone's politics. Some I know what they do for work. What I know about them is how they respond musically and energetically...So I've learned how to read how people are feeling. I work downtown a lot and I've always been a little worried about things like Kennedy's assassination. And people being crazy in a crowd. At some point I decided I didn't want to be distrustful of people. Some people are naturally loud and seem like they're aggressive, but that isn't necessarily so. And that pretty much applies to all of life."

- FD is a north side single thirty year-old white woman who the ethnographer met during auditions for the spring production at the Southwest theater case study. Three years prior she had taken forty weeks of classes at a local acting studio and had done showcase scenes for Steppenwolf and Goodman. She had auditioned unsuccessfully at seven other community theaters when she landed the lead in her first-ever community theater production. A year later she had auditioned for acceptance at a few theater schools, quit her elementary school teaching job and was moving to California to pursue acting. The quote below, however, was from an interview prior to her departure. It is interesting to note how she talks about the courage and security that comes from acting and emphasizes how it makes her more present when she's in the public sphere:

"It helps me be more 'out there'. Like having 20% more courage. When you're in a play, you have 50% more enlightenment and security. But then that leaves when it's over and it goes back down. For example, like when I go out, I'll be less afraid to dance or maybe my eye contact is better. Yeah- -it's like that whole play was scary and then it was like, hey, I got through this".

In summary, the ethnographic work revealed that participants were able to find ways to be more tolerant and more inclusive in other aspects of their lives as a result of having to practice such inclinations in their art making. As with the greater valuing of diversity that came from meeting and interacting with people in different social categories, so too diversity in skill and experience came to be appreciated and valued. Such aptitudes or inclinations then appear to be a latent potential for more efficacious building of relationships, necessary for civic activism or community building.

### **Skills Acquired Due To The Need To Nurture And Sustain Practice**

The third type of skills was developed as artists and organizations strove to sustain the arts activities. Because all of the activities we observed were generated voluntarily by the practitioners, the participants had to provide their own infrastructure: they had to organize themselves in order to nurture and sustain their arts practice in the face of scarce resources and at times daunting invisibility. Skills acquired under this type

of effort encompassed 1) the development of collaborative work habits, 2) the ability to build consensus, and 3) the ability to imagine and work for social change. Collaborative art-making, of course, was integral to the rap groups, South Asian music ensemble, church choir, theater groups and the community drum circle. Here, however we want to focus on the cooperative work of organizing--dividing responsibilities and sharing leadership as well as decision-making practices. The informal arts become the learning ground for the development of such habits because of the ongoing need to keep the arts activities going, locating space, supplies and personnel, and recruiting members, regardless of whether or not the art activity itself was collaborative.

This pattern of relying on co-participant was supported by the quantitative survey data, which showed that, for the most part, art groups did not rely on staff to organize and arrange art activities. Fifty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they relied on group members for organization. Respondents also saw themselves moderately active in the arts administration of the group (average of 4.1 on scale of 1-7). The survey results also indicated that 72 percent of respondents reported an increase in “working collaboratively” since starting art activities, and that 48 percent saw “building trust among people” as one of the skills that had increased as a result of their arts activity.

**Collaborative work habits.** Ethnographers observed at all of the case study sites that people worked together to secure such things as space, supplies, and exposure as we see in the instances below. In cases of collective arts activities, there was also a pattern of trust building among group members that fosters collaboration. Trust was developed among members but not premised on personal intimacy. Indeed, not surprisingly, there was a fair share of bickering, inter-personal rivalry and so on. However, despite inter-personal conflicts and tensions, there seemed to be the recognition that everyone is essential to the success of the effort and that people can and will come through and do their part. One of the drummers, a twenty-eight year old computer technician expressed it succinctly when he said, “Whether you're playing a box with rocks in it or the big bass drum, it's all about community and everyone is important”. The following cases further illustrate the ways in which participants worked collaboratively and how they perceived it:

- DI, a white drummer and computer technician in his late twenties has drummed since childhood, and taken workshops in African, Afro-Cuban, and Latin drumming. He liked the circle because it contrasts with what he experienced as typical human interactions in the city:

It ( the city) tears the meat off your bones. It seems like in the city everyone is for themselves. There's no accountability to each other. Like on the highway, people can do things to each other because they will never see you again. It's me first because there is no community. People are self-involved. Not cooperative like in drum circle. And well, I came from a small town, so I notice that.

- Interested in keeping their space and building audience, the Southwest opp theater group collaborated with the church, their landlord, and other local organizations on a neighborhood block party. They mounted a table that displayed information about their work.
- Individual visual artists banded together to organize a gallery show. This was observed both among the loose network of South Side artists and among the artists at the work place site. In the latter instance, the group made collective decisions about how to mount the show and then pooled their money to buy refreshments for the show opening.
- A rapper decided to sell his records independently of the record industry, knowing from experience that "it's hard but it can be done with a few people working together".
- Individual artists regularly sought out the opinions of peers in a form of collaboration. Such "peer review" occurred in organized formats at sessions in artists' homes and in informal conversations with each other at social occasions, or in the case of the work place artists during lunch breaks.
- One puppeteer helped another one who was new to the area to get her business started; they also worked in a puppet show together.
- Finding no poetry group at a local library, a writer recruited a friend to help her start one, though neither had led one before.
- The choir divided the tasks of bringing food, collecting robe money, finding costumes, raising money, putting up decorations.
- Asian music ensemble members structured collaboration through delegating tasks to committees.

In the community theater on the Southwest side, this pattern of collaboration was noted across a range of intra-group interactions. For example, even though managing members of the group questioned decisions made by the Director (selected by the Board to direct the play), they nevertheless ceded authority to him to do it his way, because they trusted him in his role. Even though many of those involved had not met each other prior to this particular production, each relied on the other to know his or her participatory role and to fulfill it. There was a sense of responsibility to one another and to the group which one actor called "not wanting to let the others down".

For example, the stage manager gave verbal directions to the ethnographer (who worked as the assistant stage manager on one production), and then relied on her to remember them, allowing her to fulfill her role without ongoing review or interference. CD, a retired salesman from the manufacturing sector, who regularly acts in the group's productions, explained the nature of the interactions this way:

"I never noted any jealousies or meanness there. You understand you're part of a team. They count on you and you count on them."

This kind of interdependence and trust building based on roles was also apparent

in how rap group members divided responsibilities, such as producing the music or buying the sound equipment. In the case below, S speaks eloquently about working together as a team and watching out for each other while confronting an uphill battle in trying to get exposure for their music.

- S is a 23 year old who works as a bricklayer; he went to work instead of finishing high school. Though he now makes a good salary, he strives to get his music heard and make just enough money in order to get by and be able to go back to school. S also told the ethnographer about how he chose this particular rap crew because each person believes in himself. In this way each can be trusted to do his own part.

"We want to take things to the next level. I've been rappin', djin' and graffin since I was in 6th or 7th grade. We always had hip hop going. We were raised like that. It wasn't till I hooked up with these guys that I started thinking I could do this seriously. They taught me how to make music. I was into it, but I didn't know where to go with it. You could look at it like a tree. We got the middle and we are all like branches... We got each other's back. Financially, I got his back. I got the knowledge of the music, he got the skills. We all believe in each other. Works together like the roots of a tree. We always gonna expand."

*Acceptance and Appreciation of Inversions.* Another important part of collaboration and manifestation of trust building was the sharing of leadership across lines of social difference. This skill was developed because of the need to maintain group membership and ensure group longevity and stability. Breaks from normative hierarchies were visible in the case studies in the inversion of normative roles in both administrative and artistic activities. In particular, we found women in leadership roles over both men and women in a number of the case study groups, as the following examples illustrate:

- In the South Asian music ensemble, a woman is the organization's president and she often co-leads the rehearsals with two men.
- The SW Side community theatre board leadership was shared between a man and a woman. The former prepared meeting agendas and acted as chair, while the latter had significant input into these agendas, and exercised great influence over the group's overall direction. MS, the female co-director, had the greatest individual influence over group direction in part because a founding board member, who was too ill to attend meetings himself, asked that she be allowed to cast his votes in his absence because he felt she knew his mind. Both directed productions when the company did a set of one-act plays, soon after the period of intensive field research.
- At the Southwest side theater, during the period of participant observation, the director of the production was a man, but the women held the assistant director, set designer, and stage production manager positions. According to theater participants, the stage manager actually has the most control over a production during performances, so much so that crew members talked about

shows being the stage manager's once they began.

- The President of the NW suburban theater is a woman, who works part-time on the park district staff, teaching drama. She handles the theater's day-to-day operations and their relationship with the park district. The Vice President is a man who had worked hard to increase the core membership of the theater board from four to 15 people. They can now take care of board responsibilities by committee instead of everyone having to do everything.
- During the time of the study, the library writing group was made up of 11 women and five men, counting the female facilitator. The umbrella organization was founded by a man and a woman, the latter having remained as director after the former left. The approximately seven person staff of the umbrella organization, all of whom facilitated writing groups at various locations around the city, was all women at the time of the study, although at least one other man in addition to the cofounder has held a position with them.

The comments of SM, Vice President at the suburban theater, illustrate the typical "diversity-welcoming" and "status-inversion accepting" attitudes of most theater participants who, aware of how much work goes into a production, were grateful for everyone's contribution to their collective endeavors:

Ethnographer: You were asked to be Vice President for the second season?

SM: Yea, so (I saw) that the president - well you met EL - she's very organized and has good relationships with the park; she didn't need my help. So I was going to work on membership.

Ethnographer: You have a membership structure?

SM: There's a board of directors. President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer. It's not uncommon for theater groups in the area. (Theater) has committee heads to handle publicity, props and acquisitions, construction committee, program (playbill), play reading (for finding a play), and at one time we (officers) were all those things. And that's a lot of strain.

RS: So you saw that membership was what you needed to work on?

SM: Absolutely. It's like management, you get things done through people. Anyone who

steps up to be on a committee, we're  
(officers) pretty much hands off.

In the context of lots of unpaid volunteer work to be done, SM, and the other officers were willing to reward anyone who would make a behind the scenes contribution with a share in the prerogatives of board membership, including a decision making role in play selection. The concern that runs through his comments was the desire to make sure the theater could continue creating art activities without the effort becoming a “strain” on too few participants. He did not chaff under the idea of a woman president, but instead appreciated and admired her because she contributed so much to making the theater happen. He seemingly could not help but notice her efficiency, because it made his volunteer job easier, freeing him to get others involved who could also do work. Whether SM is already someone who would equitably share power without a personal incentive is not at issue here. The point is that at the suburban theater there was structural pressure to distribute authority broadly and across social boundaries, giving it to those most qualified or most willing to take on responsibilities. This pressure was as strong for each participant as their desire to see the theater continue, while not having too much of the work fall on their own shoulders remained a requirement.

Participants’ acceptance and appreciation of “status-inverted” relationships was not limited to labor-intensive activities, where the quantity of work encouraged cooperation and appreciation. Those who normally enjoy high status and authority in other social contexts, often valued relationships in the informal arts in which they were in subordinate roles as assistants, students, or regular group members. Men, for example, were aware that through their female superiors’ efforts, they were gaining artistic opportunities they would not otherwise have, or receiving valuable training to improve their own performance. Where women had more authority than men, men expressed respect for the skills of the women along with appreciation for the women’s contributions to both the men’s individual artistic goals and those of the group as a whole. This is clear in the following set of examples of men accepting and respecting the authority of women, women who were often also younger and of another ethnic or racial group than the men and younger:

- At the Southwest side theater ENV, the white house manager for the production during the field work, expressed his respect and appreciation for the Board President. He admitted she “put him off at first,” implying he did not like her. But he came to “love” her for “her business acumen and organizational skills.” ENV also expressed similar appreciation for the stage manager, CB, a Latina police officer over 20 years his junior:

“Yes, I was her assistant for one show and she taught me how to do it. She wants it to be quiet. She's the best. I've worked with others and they don't compare”.

BT, a retired Jewish man and the assistant stage manager during the case study show, had never assisted or stage managed before. He expressed similar sentiments to ENV saying if CB did not show up for a show “we might as well turn around and go home.” He was asserting that she was invaluable to a successful production because of her knowledge and skill. These men valued what she did for the quality of productions and for what she taught them about how to stage manage.

- The numerical dominance of women in the quilting guild insured women held leadership roles even as it was the result of traditional gender divisions in the wider society. Nevertheless the male members in the guild accepted the authority exercised by women officers, even as the women also broke with normative ideas of appropriate gender roles by welcoming the men into quilting. PH, the long-standing African American male member, was a good example of a man comfortable with learning from women and in participating in an activity that normative social expectations would dictate are women’s activities. In fact, he did flower arranging as well as quilting, and used Thursday meetings to discuss his flower business, the quilts he planned to make covered with flower motifs, and the aesthetics of quilting in general. To learn quilting techniques, he gladly accepted the subordination implied in a student-teacher relationship. He had more than one woman helping him learn embroidery stitches to add to his “crazy quilt,” and praised their skills and generosity to the ethnographer. Included in this group of appreciated women teachers was a recently deceased white quilter.
- Adult men with social status were also willing to be subordinate to a woman as their teacher in order to learn to play music. Since immigrating from China the husband and wife team of master Chinese musicians offered lessons out of their suburban home. They both spoke proudly of the diversity of their students, specifically mentioning a doctor, a CEO, and a man who was “a boss of his company.” The masters described their adult students as particularly dedicated and eager to learn, saying adult students often confessed they “always wanted to learn” when they approached the masters about starting lessons.

Even in the drum circle, in which men dominated prestige drumming roles, there were some notable breaks from normative patterns, based on the recognition of artistic merit and the commitment to equal opportunity. The drum circle was gender balanced in the number of participants. Facilitating is a leadership role to the extent that the facilitator at times goes to the center of the circle and directs the drummers in playing. The role carries a certain prestige, in that it is usually only taken on by those who are more experienced drummers or who have studied facilitation. When KZ was not facilitating, two other men were the most likely participants to take a turn at it. To be clear, there were routinely long periods when the group played with no facilitator at the center. Facilitation is something that happens for a short period to set a beat, or make drummers aware of one another’s playing. One of these men was a member along with KZ of a four-man professional drum ensemble; together they enjoyed the circle



participants' recognition of them as among the best drummers there. KZ and others in the circle were good about encouraging women to play more prominent roles. They coaxed TO into facilitating a few times after she came back from a facilitation training workshop. She generally did so only briefly, stopping and restarting the drumming, then returning to her seat quickly. For her part, TO was ambivalent about these opportunities. Lacking confidence in her playing abilities, which made her shy about getting in front of a group of adults, she tried to avoid the coaxing, and yet talked about how she should get over her fear. But not all women hesitated to take on lead, or prestige roles. Besides KZ, one of the other cofounders of the circle was a woman who has since moved from Chicago. In a third instance of women being assertive, there was a big bass drum at the drum circle. KZ encouraged a young Latina woman who is a regular on Friday nights to play the big base drum, smiling and pushing the drumsticks towards her. She was hesitant, but then got into it. She has subsequently become more assertive about playing this drum, doing so without being coaxed. YY, the other drummer who was in a professional ensemble with KZ, gave the same woman written versions of drum beats so she could practice at home, something she had not done before either. While some traditional gender roles get acted out in the drumming, these examples indicate there are counter tendencies at work as well. Drummers in prestige or leadership positions gave opportunities and respect based on drummers' commitment to the activity and their skill level, without concern for factors like age, gender, or ethnicity.

There were other instances of normative inversion besides inversions of gender roles. Frequently, younger artists found themselves exercising authority over older artists, and in the Southwest side theater, quilting, and writing groups, members of ethnic or racial minorities regularly or occasionally found themselves exercising authority over white participants, as we have already documented in the previous chapter. What is interesting to mention here, is that such sharing of leadership seemed to be seen as advantageous by those who normally would have been in power. In the following case a retired teacher comments about how the sharing of knowledge after leadership transfer in the quilting group was different than her experience at work:

- NS is an African American woman who has been in the quilt group for four years and is now Vice President. In the quote below, she speaks of tapping a former leader when planning the group trip to Kentucky and when planning for a guest speaker. She also implies that unlike in her teaching experience, there are no "know-it-alls". This is how she explained the collaborative nature of getting things done as a quilter.

"I've learned to ask for suggestions, taking a load off my shoulders. It is not delegation, but the input of other people. You don't want to be a "know it all". We used to get know-it-all teachers, when I was still teaching. We'd have assemblies, and we would let the know-it-alls do it their way. They would end up doing it alone. Not that we would say it to them that way, but our actions would show it. In the guild, we have people of all different experience levels, not just in terms of quilting but what they bring to the group."

To conclude, the building of role-based trust that came from working collaboratively and sharing leadership in organizations in informal arts settings derived at least in part from the need to sustain these organizations under conditions of scarce resources and where most participants voluntarily commit time and effort. Although we were unable to directly observe how these skills may transfer to other aspects of civic life, clearly they could be important sources of the social capital that makes civic activism and community building possible.

**Consensus building.** Another quality necessary to collaborative work, consensus building, was also frequently practiced among practitioners as part of group decision-making. Most groups were observed using a combination of consensus, majority vote, and hierarchical modes. It is interesting to note, however, that respondents to the survey under-emphasized consensus as a mode of decision-making. Survey results showed that 27% of the respondents reported that consensus was used most of the time, whereas 37% said majority rule and 35% said hierarchy were used most of the time. However, this discrepancy between the observed behaviors at the case study sites and the perceived behavior reported on the questionnaires could be explained by a lack of understanding about what consensus decision making may entail.

Ethnographers observed that the use of consensus in decision-making did not seem to be built on total agreement or “like-mindedness”, but rather on a sense of egalitarianism, because everyone was participating on an equal footing. Group discussion was observed to be the usual path to consensus, but four other practices were also used, often in combination: 1) mediation 2) deference to a facilitator, 3) consensus building through informal conversation and 4) conflict resolution. In three of the case studies there was an internal person who mediated during dissent, keeping the group focused on their purpose and goals. In two of the case studies there was deference to the facilitator on many decisions. In one case study, one of the leaders also did considerable consensus-building outside of the business meeting, talking up issues and reminding people of the upcoming meeting where a decision would be made on the particular issue. Finally, ethnographers observed conflict resolution strategies in two of the case studies.

*Group Discussion.* All of the case studies used group discussion as a pathway to consensus:

- In meetings of the Southwest theater group, all were allowed to voice their thoughts or concerns and no single person's ideas seemed to carry more weight than ideas of others. Although voting was seldom employed as a method of decision-making, an agenda was followed and no one person dominated the discussion of topics. Some people exhibited more knowledge about some topics than others--topics that ranged from the choice of play dates to the benefits of membership in a theater league. A search for consensus was seen as important because each of them were volunteering to stage the production. As one participant commented:

“People voice their opinions and they can say they agree or they disagree and then we talk it over. Sometimes you get a majority or sometimes you get a person saying, 'well I don't agree but I can live with it.' I've never seen any one argue, but there has been heated discussion. And there's always people in the group who are natural leaders and they let their opinions known more than others. And that's okay because there's people like me who don't like to talk unless I have to. As long as I feel I've had my say, I'm okay with it...the president will go around and say, at the end, is there anything else anyone wants to say?”

- In the following quote, a Northwest suburban group member talks about how consensus happens through discussion when the Board has the task of deciding upon a person to direct the play:

"We hire a director. And we hold director interviews. We don't always agree on who is best. But to move on, we do need to reach a consensus and hire someone. So it depends on how much you want to hang on to a particular viewpoint...It's discussion. And usually there's a majority that develops. As long as you've talked it out. For example, if I like a particular director but 4 others like another director, what am I going to do, say 'I'm right?'"

- In the quilting group, consensus via discussion was the usual way to make decisions, though often aided by external consensus building, as will be discussed next. Consensus decisions were formulated in an unstructured way in that issues or questions were raised and opinions were heard and then a decision emerged. There was no formal facilitation in that no one queried if all had spoken or if there was a consensus, instead, people spontaneously made sounds of approval and assent as other members spoke their opinions. In a few minutes, usually, someone spoke an opinion that seemed to reflect the whole, and the matter was settled; no one else spoke. This kind of informal decision making by consensus was observed within monthly business meetings, weekly work and learn sessions, and at an occasional community service project work session. The kinds of decisions decided by the group clustered around three types of issues: meeting and event times and locations, allocation of money and nature and content of joint quilting projects. At large group business meetings the guild was struggling with decision making protocol, trying to transition to a committee structure for decision making. Still, they continued to practice consensus building during these sessions.

*Mediation.* In three of the cases, people in various relationships to the group played a mediating role during discussion and dissent. In all of these cases, the mediators' efforts were concentrated on keeping the group focused on their purpose and goals. By reminding people that they were present because they wanted to play music together, or to praise the Lord through song, or produce rap, the mediator was able to assist people in letting go of individual desires such as a different colored robe.

- At the church choir site, group members invested \$130 each for the robe that was on loan to them. In this instance, "majority rules" was the strategy they used to decide upon the color and style of the robe. Interestingly, though, there was much time and effort spent in allowing the minority to be heard. The choir president, KL, explained that some members who were not present on the evening the robes were voted on, later voiced strong opposition to the majority's decision. Below, she discusses how the issue was re-opened so that the minority could be heard. In the end, though, the minister was called upon as a mediator. As the president, KL, explained:

"The bottom line is the majority chose the robe but there were some who weren't present. They come the following week and were shown, here, this is the robe we chose. And they say, we don't like it. We don't even like the color. (i.e. it's not just the style they're opposed to). But the majority had voted on it, but (they were so firmly against it), we opened the discussion (again). We try to do things in decent order. (i.e. conduct business). This lasted two weeks. And then me, D (choir director), my husband, and the pastor, the four of us went into prayer. And we came back into rehearsal and they (the antagonists), said, okay (we'll accept it). (Conflict) used to happen more. But we're more spiritual now."

- In the South Asian music ensemble, decisions were made by consensus and although there is a formal organizational structure (president, treasurer, secretary, etc.), it serves more to coordinate activities than to impose decisions. Interestingly, when people disagreed with decisions taken (for example by the music director to rehearse a particular piece), they would not openly voice their discord immediately, but resorted to sending an e-mail later, often framed in a mild tone (for example expressing preference for an alternative piece instead of direct criticism of the decision). Key people in the group (those who have the longest history of participation) play an important mediating role, responding to the emails and keeping everyone focused on playing music.
- In one rap group, we saw a mediator role similar to that in the South Asian music ensemble, whereby an experienced member of the group, kept others focused on their art. In this rap case, UW, a 30 year-old guest producer for the group, saw himself as a philosopher, teacher, and a hip hop veteran because he had been around since the 1980s. Others granted him authority and respect because of his experience with the sound equipment and his

knowledge of producing music. In the role of mediator or philosopher, he kept the group's energy focused on the positive, in the face of an uphill struggle to get their rap produced. At one of the meetings of the rap group, he passed out proverbs and positive thoughts on pieces of paper to the members.

*Ceding Authority to the Facilitator.* Not all issues were brought to the whole group for either a vote or for consensus building. Similar to the director-actor relationship in the community theater case, the choir director-singer relationship was one in which the director was given authority by group members. Members were observed asking the choir director questions, with the assumption he already knew what the decision was, (e.g. what type of costume they were wearing on the night of a special Easter week performance, for example). Some decisions came from the planning he did, sometimes in concert with the pastor, e.g. so songs would complement sermon themes. The choir director also determined the rehearsal schedule and the seating arrangement for performances where only part of the choir could attend. Though he dominated decision making about song selection, he often asked for their permission, e.g. saying "Can we sing this on Sunday"? He also deferred to the group in this way regarding costumes, in this way reinforcing the pattern that although he had authority, he derived it from the consensus of the group. In the following example, where the choir director has just finished directing an evening rehearsal, we see this kind of deference but also how the informality of the process and humor fosters participation and cooperation.

- This rehearsal was one week before a Thursday night performance for a conference the church was hosting and the choir director announced that the conference planners wanted the entire choir, not just the men's choir. He asked how many would be able to perform on Thursday night for this special performance and seventeen raised their hands to indicate they will. Then he suggested, in the form of a question, the wearing of African garb for one of the performances. As he joked about this, they laughed, and the issue was settled:

Choir Director: Okay, it's 9:37 You worked exceptionally hard tonight. Oh, and there's a change for Thursday night. It's still men's night, but they want all the choir.

Choir member A: You still want us Thursday morning?

Choir Director: Yes, I'm still begging. And how many think they can make it? (about seventeen raise their hands.) That's great. That's encouraging.

Choir member B: Will we be wearing robes Thursday night?

Choir Director: Can we do our African thing again? Is it clean? (laughter). Drop it in the cleaners on Monday and get it out on Wednesday. Put it "special". (Laughter).

*Consensus Building through Informal Conversation.* Consensus building through informal conversation was exemplified in the quilting group as members discussed issues with one or more people outside of the business meeting. The issues being discussed were ones that sometimes were later to be voted upon at a business meeting or a committee meeting. Though this may have happened in all of the groups, it was directly observed as a regular practice in the quilting group. One of group's facilitators was especially adept at this. She dispensed information to the group at these weekly session while people were quilting and built consensus around issues that the larger group would later address such as the content of the raffle quilt, the location of the meeting place or the purchase of a locked cabinet. As they sat around talking and quilting, she raised issues and led discussions in which people voiced their ideas. Sometimes she would directly ask them for support on an issue at the larger meeting or advocate for one side of an issue that would later come up in the group or committee. Sometimes she would request that someone specific talk to others about the issue, thus turning others into external consensus builders also. Although, as membership grew, the quilters found themselves increasingly drawn to standard, more formal decision-making procedures embedded in committee structures, they nevertheless still relied on these informal conversation mechanisms as a way to give members voice.

Sometimes in these groups, consensus didn't come easy, or there was dissent after a decision made by a director or by majority vote. Then, conflict resolution was used, as we see next.

*Conflict Resolution.* Not surprisingly, there was some conflict within the groups and there were reports from four of the case studies of participants leaving groups due to content and/or style differences and also time conflicts. Conflicts were also handled within the group, sometimes through heated discussions and sometimes through less direct ways. External discussion, group discussion and voting was used by the South Asian music ensemble and what we might call "increasing input to the decision maker" was used by the quilters to avoid repeating a conflict.

- In the South Asian music ensemble, a conflict arose over the balance in the group's repertoire between classical music and newer, more "avant-guard" music. A few in the group, including some who composed pieces for the group wanted to devote more time to newer music, while others wanted to play more in the classical style. At the time, there was no formally designated music director, and three of the most experienced members often made decisions together. Those who wanted more classical music voiced their dissent through emails to one of the group leaders. She in turn, tried to mediate, but the discord continued. Finally, it was decided that there needed to be a group discussion about the disagreement, and people were given a chance to voice their opinions. The leaders explained how they had made the music choices, and ultimately, it was decided that one of the leaders would suggest a repertoire and people would vote on it through email. Subsequently, one of the leaders reported out the vote results and the program was agreed to. Dissent subsided. Here, it is evident that "voting" and authoritative decision

making was subject to the process of consensus building. The risk, if the conflict had not been resolved in this manner, would have been departure of some of the long-time group members or non-participation in the rehearsals.

- In the quilting group, they “increased input to the decision maker” as a way of avoiding conflict. A committee chair made a decision that members disliked (location of the group’s lodging for a trip to a quilt convention), so they looked for ways to improve that person’s decision making ability by providing the person more information from which to make the decision for the following year. In other words, they accepted some of the responsibility, instead of blaming the person for a bad decision.

*Using Voting to Guarantee Consensus.* In one case, there was a need to prevent any question of whether everyone was participating in decisions on equal footing. Unanimous voting served that purpose. During the thirteen years the group had been together, the Southwest Chicago theater group had found that there were three decisions that required clear-cut unanimity: the choice of the play, the location and dates of the production and the selection of the director. The Southwest theater group thus used unanimous vote as an insurance to consensus building. As one theater board member explains this:

"We have a strange rule. It has to be unanimous; the choice of director and the script. 3 or 4 things I think are like that, the dates and the location, for example. The original intention was that if everyone's going to do this on their own time, then it should be something everyone wants to do".

Each board member necessarily had to participate in order to produce the show. To insure that participation, and to respect and guarantee that investment, they each needed to be involved in these critical decisions. Sometimes this was a paper vote taken during a meeting or if necessary, in between meetings as a voice vote gathered via the telephone by one of the board members. Below, one of the long-time members explains this process and why it is used:

"...because we think people should agree on those things if they're going to volunteer on it. Now, lately with the church schedule there's not much choice as to dates. And when we didn't have space, the location was an (issue so that's why that's in there). But like I called people not at meeting to see if it was okay that JTH direct (the spring show) and it was fine with them. It really is amazing how we get consensus, it seems like an impossible thing but it works...The unanimous vote helps us not have conflict, e.g. if I don't like the play (that someone proposes), then, we move onto something else (another play). "

Even here, however, when voting was a clear mechanism for decision-making, consensus played an important role in achieving group acceptance of the decision.

*Collaborative work habits are transferred to the work world and the public sphere.* In the three cases below, an actor and a drummer, both white males, and a leader of the Asian music ensemble, a woman, demonstrate how skills acquired in operating or maintaining arts organizations in informal settings have transferred to other areas of their lives. SM, the actor found that because of his experience in theater he has learned to not “take over” and so could play the role of mediator at work. CE, the drummer had much experience mediating sometimes competing rhythms in his role as drum circle facilitator and envisioned himself doing something similar in the civic arena. The leader of the Asian music ensemble was a senior administrator and found that she often had to build consensus among factionalized groups in her work setting.

- SM started in theater when he was eleven, acted in high school, and then took a seventeen-year "break" until he got settled in a more typical nine to five type job. Here, he talks about how he acts as mediator in a small company where he works as a purchasing agent. Aside from his aptitude for mediating, he also discusses acting as the place where he learned how to express his ideas without fear of rejection.

“At work...There are those who basically show up to work to collect a check and don't put up an effort and might have ideas but don't express them--for fear of being rejected, whereas an actor you get used to that. The other group are those with thoughts or opinions so strong that no one will challenge them. People who have performed fall in between those two. It (theater) not only helps with expressing your ideas and having the willingness to do that, but if your idea doesn't fly, you're not going to be crushed. In meetings, most performers tend to be more of a mediator than trying to take over. I think because of that ability to take the middle ground, people tend to gravitate to those people. So the people with strong or harsh opinions and the people who are real quiet--both want to talk to me. So I'm kind of in on more things.”

- In the drum circle, the pattern of egalitarianism was found to be integral to the musical activity of the group. The unspoken goal was to collectively find the group's rhythm. Although there sometimes was a facilitator (who did such things as divide the group so that sub-groups could play solo parts, or subgroups could play in response to each other), such facilitation was always aimed at achieving a more integrated whole, consensus building through music. As the facilitator pointed out, "that's why we have a circle, so everyone can be heard." CE, a 41 year old plumber, is one of six people who were observed facilitating the weekly circle at various times over a five month period.



CE's understanding of his role as a mediator in the drum circle and how his drum circle experience may relate to his engagement in civic activities, was something he expressed quite thoughtfully during an interview with the ethnographer:

“I think I’m the least skilled, but I’m there all the time. I’m on my mission to do what I do. And I’ve had a chance to sit in with some master drummers. There are a few different strata or levels, some who are close to being master drummers, some who are highly gifted students, some who are professional players, some who are hobbyists like me, and people who just happened upon it--they heard a sound in the distance and they followed it. And on any given night, all are together. And the master drummer isn’t any more important than the person who just happens upon it. I’m into equality of people and trying to treat people the same or have the same opportunities. So, to that end, if I now consider myself a community leader because of having been with drum circle awhile, I have 2 equal parts to play: encouraging people who think that they can’t play and I say, you can do it, and also making or keeping the master drummers from going off. Keeping them here, which can be a challenge, armed only with a tambourine or a bell...West African rhythms can push the beat, push the limit. And it takes a little bit of translation not to lose everyone. And I’ve had that experience. To let them inspire but not lose everyone. I use the dun dun or the bass drum to keep a feeling underneath, but not to have it stand out too much. The bass drum can be loud, but I keep it at a feeling level. The pulse is what keeps it together. Sometimes I use the shaker to do that”.

As he successfully is able to build consensus with music, CE reflects about his relationship to a wider community, outside of drumming. In the quote below we see how he starts to apply his ideas of community, democracy and egalitarianism there:

“I do tend to talk more to my neighbors, people who live close by. I haven’t gotten as active in community things as I’ve wanted to eventually. But I think it’s important for people to get together and have some sense of not being in it alone. I used to go CAPS (Chicago’s Alternative Policing Strategy program) meetings because there were a few problems in the neighborhood: people shooting or standing on the corner selling drugs...But I feel pretty strongly people need to have some kind of group, where they fit in and they have a voice and can be heard...Now and for awhile, the drum circle is going to be important because I learn a lot there. But I think it’s partly my way of trying to help my community. I think there’s a lot I’m trying to learn about the world I’m living in. There’s a lot of complicated issues”.

- The woman leader of the Asian music ensemble frequently discussed how she found herself mediating between factions at work, just as she did for the music ensemble. Her ability to listen carefully, try to find a balanced path that did

not blame one side or the other and to facilitate acceptance of the decision was valued both in the music ensemble and by her colleagues at work. Those who had seen her in action in both settings, acknowledged her to be a master at handling difficult issues. Through mediation and persuasion, she was winning support at her work place for bringing needed changes in recruitment and retention policies in order to promote social diversity.

**Ability to imagine social change.** In most of the case studies, the ability to envision the world differently, while not explicitly expressed, was evident in the actions and outlook of participants. Most refused to accept the status given to them by the wider society as “leisure-time” or “hobby” artists or even “amateur” artists. Rather, there was a sense of self-assurance and a striving toward the best that characterized their efforts. The necessity of persisting against obstacles such as lack of funds, lack of time, and insecurity around permanence of performance, rehearsal or studio space impelled artists to critically examine the social structures and power relations within which they live and to strengthen organizational practices.

In this section, we examine how self-assurance and acceptance of the creative self among the arts practitioners seem to develop abilities important for civic life, i.e. the ability to form an opinion, to speak one's point of view, and to be physically comfortable in the public sphere. In a few instances recorded by the ethnographers, these inclinations have been transferred to activism on behalf of both arts causes and other causes, but as indicated by the survey data detailed in Chapter Two, “civic-mindedness” is definitely a characteristic of the study population.

The ethnographers witnessed or heard about the following are some of the instances of activism:

- A writer persisted in applying for grants from a variety of sources despite repeated rejections. She perceived it as an unlevel playing field, but felt it was worth it to keep trying.
- A rapper started a petition drive and obtained a hip hop show on a local college radio station.
- A kindergarten teacher and drummer initiated efforts to help the homeless through her school; she also spoke up more to her supervisors.
- The quilting group passed a petition and was successful in lobbying to have the street made into a one-way in front of the park in order to maximize safety as they entered and exited.
- A janitor/drummer started to “figure out” what to do about the loss of jobs as the public sector turned increasingly to privatization or outsourcing.
- A Native American visual artist engaged in political organizing to improve neighborhood conditions.
- Upon joining the writing group, a writer told the sponsors that the journal was too “heavy”, stereotypically “ghetto drama” and she got that changed.

Below we describe the mechanisms through which participants obtained the self-confidence to participate in such actions.

*Speaking out.* As part of art making, self-expression and an embracing of the creative nature seems to nurture a self-assurance and self-actualization among art practitioners. In the writing case study, this kind of self-assurance was also developed as part of the editing process and the way writer's voiced their opinions about publishing their writing. Because the group wanted to have a professional looking journal, they cede editorial and layout/graphic design services to the sponsoring organization. Still, they have a say in the selection of pieces. When it was time for the sponsor's editors to select pieces for publishing in the journal, they asked the writers to rank their recent writings but sometimes the editors and the fellow writers let an author know if they disagreed with the ranking. In the two cases below we see how finding one's voice is part of the artistic practice and how it can affect where one sees one self in society. OT, an African American writer and UW, a Puerto Rican rapper talk about the self-confidence and communication skills they have developed through their arts practice.

- In the first case, OT, an African woman in her thirties, has written since she was a child. Here she elaborates on how in the year since she joined the library based writing group she has developed courage and presence via her poetry:

“When I first started out...I used to worry about offending people, pissing them off, that they would say, 'wow, I don't want to read your stuff anymore.' But now I don't worry about any of those things...I don't feel I am doing my job at all if I don't upset somebody, put a smile on somebody's face or make someone think. I want to get a reaction...I find that I have a lot of courage writing now. I'll give you an example. Before I started to write, I was invisible. Nobody saw me, not even my friends, not even my family. BUT since I started writing poetry, I am not invisible anymore. Poetry gives me a voice. I am able to say what is on my mind and in my heart and in my soul and in my spirit. People hear me. I have a message and I am trying to get it out there.”

- The second case is that of UV, a 30 year-old Puerto Rican who raps, has his own record label, and markets himself as a rap producer. He describes how the arts have affected his ability to interact with people and how that in turn has enlarged his ideas about where he belongs in society.

“Yeah, I've learned to be my own boss. I learned that anything is possible. 'Learned to communicate, to talk to people. I used to be real shy and rappin' brought me out of that. I learned that if I speak up then I'm not an outcast. So I guess I got self esteem. I am my own God and I only have the confidence.”

Self confidence and being able to speak one's ideas are important community capacity building aptitudes that seem to transfer to taking action in civic life. For example, an actress from one of our study sites said that, unlike other people at block club meetings, she's not afraid to talk. The following quote illustrates how a drummer credits the arts for helping her to speak out. TO, a kindergarten teacher and drummer says:

“As I learn to play my drum, I am finding my own voice. When I can make my drum sound the way I want it to I will no longer be afraid to speak.”

Since she started drumming, she has for the first time approached her school principal and the PTA with her ideas and has implemented those ideas, with their support. One project involves students making lunches for a local feeding program for homeless people. Here she talks about this process:

“I'm taking risks now. I speak my opinion...I was so quiet, but now I give my ideas to the principal...like we make lunch one day a week for the homeless now. And we (parents, teachers, students) made nine quilts last year for a shelter in Lake County.”

*Standing up.* Recent research (Holland, et al. 1999) has reported that one of the deterrents to civic engagement is that people are uncomfortable going to meetings and having people look at them. As we have seen above, however, participants gain confidence in themselves as part of their activity in the informal arts sector and become familiar with speaking their opinions. Another way that the informal arts may develop competencies useful in the civic arena has more to do with learning to be more comfortable with one's body. Below, two white female drummers in their 30's talk about the importance of art for democracy in that it gets people moving.

- QT is a single, Chicago-born, self-described “gypsy” and TO is a suburban divorced woman from a self-described “sheltered” background. They have formed a friendship via the drumming circle at which QT also frequently dances. Both women have tried their hand at facilitating the circle.

QT: I was at a street fair last weekend and no one was dancing. And it was good dance music and just me and my friend danced. People in our society don't move; they're not in touch with their bodies.

TO: They're told to sit still and be quiet.

QT: It scares me. Talk about art being good for democracy, it's scary how many people are just doing nothing.

TO: They just sit in front of their computers.

Interestingly, the South Asian music ensemble participants also commented frequently about the way in which the music engages the whole body, and that in playing it, the whole body must become involved. Observing group members outside of the setting of the ensemble, the ethnographer noticed that, indeed, this comfort with the movement of the body translated into a wider comfort with moving through spaces and exerting a sense of ease in-group settings.

*Figuring it out.* Examining issues, forming one's opinion on issues, and strategizing about acting on one's beliefs are all important parts of civic life. The ethnographers documented several instances when the interactive spaces within an arts group or between individual artists were sites of discussion about world issues and current events, everything from political election results to gay rights, to the consequences of slavery. Indeed, in the writing group, members frequently discussed politics or current affairs and one group member found this to be the most valuable aspect of the group. At the Asian music ensemble, as well, current events or politics were frequent topics of conversation. The evidence would seem to indicate that because listening, trust, patience and respect are being developed in these spaces, controversial topics that arise are discussed in a non-threatening and satisfying way. This is one of the ways that arts activity builds the capacity for civic life. In the cases below we hear how U, a white middle aged man is emboldened by the activation of the creative self to find solutions to social problems; and how a Native American woman uses her arts practice to understand political strategizing she does around neighborhood issues. In the third case, EC, a visual artist at the work place site described how his creativity as an artist transfers into his commitment to actively help people gain better access to knowledge and thus achieve a measure of empowerment.

- In the first case U talked about his new-found creativity and also about the problems faced by the men with whom he works as a public school building engineer, since that service has been privatized. One of the most striking things was the confidence he displayed in his ability to "figure it out".

"I had no musical anything, but I wanted to be more expressive. Now I'm decorating the house and thinking of aesthetic things. I never wore jewelry until I was forty."

Later in the conversation, he talked about what he's trying to figure out at work:

"You know, guys used to be able to make a living doing (janitorial work), with just one parent working and raising a few kids, and get a decent vacation. But now they've privatized and guys are getting \$8 an hour and only a week off per year. You can't raise a family on that. And I don't know what to do about it. I haven't figured it out yet."

- CM, a Native American woman, elaborated on how her experience as a visual artist helps her to frame the political organizing work she does in the community. CM works as a consultant to schools and credits her arts experience as giving her perspective when considering gains and losses after a campaign to oust the alderman in her area.

“We raised \$70,000 and had 500 volunteers. And we ran...our aldermanic candidate against [the incumbent], who we didn’t think was serving the community. Well, we only got 25 percent of the vote and we all had building inspectors in our houses and (before the election) we had our tires slashed. But even though we didn’t win, we did get a lot of things done. Every time we had a coffee (social meetings in people’s homes where the candidate would speak), the streets would be fixed there the next day. And that’s how you have to look at it; we may not have reached our goal, but we accomplished other things. And that comes from being an artist-- I’ve learned people aren’t going to like some things and then some things I don’t show.”

- CE, a visual artist and musician at the Cultural Institution work place, was adamant that he did not do “art” as part of his work, even though he used illustration to produce education materials. However, he acknowledged that the creativity and imagination he drew on for his own art work inspired him to commit to contributing to the efforts to engage diverse communities. He knew that he probably could have found a higher-paying job but he chose to remain in his position because of the significance of the work.

*Taking action for the arts.* Increased self-confidence came about not only through art-making itself, but also through the organizational practices in which artists were involved. Organizational practices such as applying for grants and making group decisions were seen as necessary to sustain the arts practice. Finding one’s own voice and gaining confidence to have it heard propels writers, for example, to try things such as grant writing applications and self-publication. In the following example, we see how an African American writer is attempting to publish her writings, trying over and over again to get an Illinois Arts Council grant in order to do so.

- TX is an African American middle-aged woman who has been writing stories since she was a child. Though she became discouraged and questioned the fairness of the grants selection process, she continued to apply, self confident that her work was competitive, that she deserved a grant, and that she would eventually get a grant:

“I will continue to try. I will probably fill out an application for a grant from the Illinois Arts Council again. I have done this a few times before, so far without success, but I’ll keep trying it. There have been various

times when I have been discouraged by that. I remember one particular year when I submitted what I felt was some of my very best work and I discovered that not only did I not get accepted, nor did a couple of other people whose work I knew was good. And yet when I read the list of the people who were accepted, there was a husband and wife team of writers who both got grants. Am I the only idiot who doesn't know that this is not a level playing field? What am I wasting my time for now?... but you know, what about the appearance of impropriety? Here, it appeared improper to me. I don't know. Anyhow, it took me a couple more years to recover from that, before I submitted work again, and once again it was not accepted. I guess there's been enough time now for me to try again. I think that can be a good opportunity. I'm glad that it does exist because I do know some people who have gotten grants and who have benefited from them. And consequently (because the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results), I have to be insane--because I am going to try it again.”

- At the work place, one visual artist, KIN, decided to organize a group show. He obtained a gallery space through someone he knew who participated in the *Around the Coyote* art festival in Bucktown, and invited artists at the work place to join the show. Only ten people could be accommodated although the list of volunteers was longer. KIN took it on himself to inform the department head that he was organizing the show and insuring her agreement that it was appropriate use part of the institution's title in the title of the show. He also obtained permission to post advertisements about the show at the institution.

As we have noted previously, people are investing much time and effort in making art in the best way they can. Perhaps as a result, they are willing to take action to change things, either to broaden the sphere of participation or to protect resources that they need. As the ethnographers did the fieldwork, they observed discussion about possible changes in public policy relative to the use of public spaces for “unregulated” activity. Parks, streets, subways and the like, according to arts activists interviewed by the ethnographers, were now subject to more intense regulation and standardization in landscaping, in part perhaps because the city was seeking to position itself as a tourist destination, and in part perhaps to accommodate the tastes of a growing number of affluent people who were moving back into the city from suburban locations, as part of the process of “gentrification”.

Yet, these public spaces are the very ones so dear to informal artists. We observed informal artists starting to vocalize their claims to these spaces, though the level of organization was minimal. The quilters, for example, saw themselves as seniors with political power, and submitted petitions to the park supervisor in order to improve some of the physical and programmatic aspects at the park. These included increasing parking, improving safety, and getting programming for children.

In addition, in two of the parks where we conducted research, it was a park employee who took action so that the space or program would become or remain available. And in another case, a member of the group handed out postcards provided by the park employees' union to other participants, so that they could register their protest of proposed cuts in parks programming. One of the artists was especially active in making calls to register his concern with officials.

In another case, TB, a young Caribbean-American mother of two was impelled to speak up for the continued funding of arts programming at her local park where she enrolled her children in art classes by day and herself in the painting studio class one night a week. In the quote below she is describing attending a puppetry event at the park where her children were performing. Since Mayor Daley and the Parks Superintendent were present, she took the opportunity to voice her concerns about the arts programming at the park. As she proudly recounts her experience, she refers to the Parks Superintendent as the "park guy".

"Daley was there because of this puppets thing around Chicago that they're doing. It's a big thing. And UG (her painting instructor) is working on this program (puppets). And they had performers and everyone there. So some of the parents and I went up to the park guy-- the head of the parks was there too--and told him we were upset about the programs being cut. I found out they cut out-- you know they let go the piano guy, too. The guy who was there teaching piano...I ran up to the park guy (superintendent) and--there were 4 or 5 of us people who did--and we tried to get him to stay to see the kids dance, but he left."

## **Summary**

The data collected in the study reveals the complex interplay between personal satisfaction and social significance generated by participation in informal arts activities. The ethnography documented some of the reasons why people expend time and resources to engage in these types of activities, at a time when constraints around work-life are increasing as a result of the accelerated pace and rigor of an economy in transformation. The joys of participation, the exposure and the opportunity to build such skills as we have described in this chapter were clearly valued by individual participants. Personal satisfaction at achievement and the desire to perfect art making even more drove participants to listen to each other, to share materials and experiences with each other and to solve problems innovatively. The wide range of skills and experiences people encountered in the metaphorical space of informality offered the opportunity to practice tolerance and inclusion of difference. Finally, the commitment to sustain their organizations or arts practice led participants to work collaboratively, engage in consensus building and imagine and act for social change. All of these skills and inclinations are ones that transferred to other aspects of everyday life and that contribute



to the potential for arts practice in informal settings to be sites of community building and civic activism. In the next chapter, we document how relationships and intersections between the informal and formal sectors of the continuum of arts practice also shape the ways in which the practice of art making has an impact on social life.

## CHAPTER V FORMAL/INFORMAL: MOVING BACK AND FORTH ON THE CONTINUUM

In this chapter, we examine the data collected on the nature of the links between the informal and formal end of the continuum. The pathways by which informal arts practice contributes to the “formal” (commercial and non-profit) part of the continuum, including by nurturing and sometimes helping to sustain professionally working artists is not well documented. In turn, the formal end may facilitate art making for people at the informal end of the continuum. This relationship has been evident from the early history of the city of Chicago and is exemplified in the following piece, researched and written by Elena Marcheschi (2002):

### *THE INFORMAL ARTS IN CHICAGO HISTORY: THE ROAD FROM HULL HOUSE TO SECOND CITY*

*Adult participation in the informal arts goes back to Chicago’s early years.<sup>1</sup> By the late 1800s and into the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, neighborhood fraternal organizations, mutual aid societies, groups with religious affiliations, ethnic clubs and trade unions were sponsoring well-attended cultural activities, including amateur dance and theater groups, community singing societies and musical bands.<sup>2</sup> According to Chicago Public Library records, there were more than 6,000 of these kinds of societies in Chicago in the year 1900.*

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<sup>1</sup> As early as 1855, German song and music societies were meeting at Chicago’s Dearborn Park. (The Daily Press, 6 July 1855, 3). The Union Glee and Quadrille Club was active on Chicago’s Near West side in 1871. (Chicago Public Library Archives, Neighborhood History Research Collection, West [Near West] Side Community Collection, 1857-1953, Box 7: 4). In 1887, amateur “camera clubs” met regularly at Chicago YMCAs, with members participating in contests and exhibitions (YMCA records).

<sup>2</sup> As Hull House records show, eleven Bohemian singing and dramatic clubs were active in Chicago in 1895, with “a great deal of rivalry between these amateur actors”. (From Jane Addams *Hull-House Maps and Papers*, “The Bohemian People in Chicago, by Josefa Humpal Zeman. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1895: 115-128). Other immigrant groups had their own clubs and societies. By the early 1900s, Irish step dancing clubs geared for adults were in existence in Chicago and participation was increasing. (“Cultural Expression Takes Root: Irish Dance in Chicago, 1893-1953”, K. M. Flanagan, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, citing “Irish Music Club Annual Festival”, *Citizen* July 4, 1903: 6; “Irish Music”, *Citizen* October 14, 1905: 5). In 1912, the Bach Choral Society was also meeting in Chicago’s East Garfield Park community. (Chicago Public Library Archives, Neighborhood History Research Collection, East Garfield Park Community Collection, 1871-1964, Box 3: 1). African American singing societies during this period included the Freedman Choral Union (1887), the Lyric Swan Glee Club (1897) and other choral groups. By 1920, as new waves of African-Americans immigrated from the south, amateur orchestras were also active in Chicago’s African-American community. (Chicago Public Library, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature, *Illinois Writers Project: “Negro In Illinois” Papers*, Box 49: 7, 13, 21, Box 48: 8). The Workmen’s Circle, a major supporter of Yiddish culture, sponsored activities such as singing and dramatic clubs, as did unions including the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

*Recognizing a dynamic social energy associated with informal arts practice, settlement house and other reformers at the turn of the 19th century also embraced the informal arts, as vehicles for cultural and class boundary-crossing, learning, self-actualization, and political action. At Hull-House on Chicago's near west side, the prevailing view embodied a belief that participation in these kinds of activities would engender cross-cultural sociality, and that "the vicarious power of contact... would generate more equitable and relational methods of negotiating American diversity." <sup>3</sup>. According to Harvard cultural historian Shannon Jackson, artistic practice as part of the everyday life of Hull-House (which included cultural and social formations such as festivals, exhibits, theatre, music, reading groups, and dances), "uniquely illuminates its role in the production of locality, a commitment to communication, contact, and co-habitation amongst diverse groups that was both the settlement's goal and its method."<sup>4</sup> Likewise, for reformers such as Ellen Gates Starr, co-founder of Hull-House with Jane Addams, art was not "a passive medium, but a powerful political expression of people's experiences and hopes."<sup>5</sup>*

*In furtherance of this philosophy, Hull-House offered a plethora of music, performance and other arts-related opportunities for children, youths and adults from the surrounding immigrant and working-class neighborhoods. At the same time, it created opportunities for trained, primarily middle and upper-class artists to interact with people from diverse immigrant cultures. Painter Enella Benedict, a Hull-House resident and a faculty member at Chicago's Art Institute, for many years directed the Art Studio at Hull-House. Its classes were filled not only with young people of promising talent, but were also attended, as Jane Addams wrote, "by older people to whom the studio affords the one opportunity of escape from dreariness; [by] a widow with four children who supplemented a very inadequate income by teaching the piano, who for six years never missed her weekly painting lesson because it was 'her only pleasure'; [by] another woman, whose youth and strength had gone into the care of an invalid father, [who] poured into her afternoon in the studio, once a week, all of the longing for self-expression which she habitually suppressed."<sup>6</sup>*

*Although Hull-House provided a panoply of much needed social services for community residents, the unique reach of its artistic activities was also recognized. Edith de Nancrede, who directed theater and dance clubs at Hull-House, wrote to Jane Addams*

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<sup>3</sup> Jackson, Shannon. *Lines of Activity: Performance, Historiography, Hull-House Domesticity*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2000: 4.

<sup>4</sup> Jackson, Shannon, "Civic Play-Housekeeping: Gender, Theatre, and American Reform", *Theatre Journal* 48.3 (1996): 60.

<sup>5</sup> Stebner, Eleanor J. *The Women of Hull-House: A Study in Spirituality, Vocation and Friendship*. State University of New York Press, 1997: 87; a captivating example of such political expression is found in a 1919 letter sent at the height of anti-German sentiment by the United Singing Societies of Chicago (representing over 33 different area societies), which petitioned the city's mayor to reject a proposal to change the name of Goethe Street, by act of the City Council. Letter from William Arens, President, United Singing Societies of Chicago to Mayor of the City of Chicago (Jan.18, 1919), City Council Documents, Illinois State Archives, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois.

<sup>6</sup> Addams, Jane. *Twenty Years at Hull-House*. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1912: 373-74.

that, “there is one thing I absolutely know. It is the ‘art’ side that holds them when they grow older. No matter how good a time I give them socially, they would drift apart after they are grown up but for the plays.”<sup>7</sup> While most Hull-House arts activities were led or supervised by trained instructors, some were self-directed by area residents. Many ethnic societies and clubs, as well as workers’ groups used Hull-House facilities, including Yiddish, Greek and trade-union drama clubs, Italian musical bands, and local choruses.<sup>8</sup>

Informal arts participation by adults did not abate as the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed, also influencing the development of the formal and professional arts. Hull-House again offers some illustrative examples of these historic connections between informal and formal arts practice. The connections stretch from the early part of the last century to the very present, with links still being added.

The story of Viola Spolin, who is credited as the originator of American improvisational theater and was a major influence in the establishment of Chicago’s Second City, is a case in point. Through Spolin, the genesis of improvisational theater can be traced back to informal arts activities at Hull-House. Spolin had attended classes at Hull-House with Neva Boyd, a Northwestern University sociologist who used dramatics, folk dance, storytelling and games to stimulate creative expression and self-discovery in children and adults.<sup>9</sup> By the 1930s’, Spolin was herself teaching dramatics to children and amateur adults as part of a Works Progress Administration arts project, applying and refining Boyd’s approach into a method she called “theatre games”. Spolin ultimately developed and codified her approach, producing a number of books that remain seminal in the teaching of improvisational acting.<sup>10</sup>

Spolin’s son, Paul Sills, went on to use his mother’s “theater games” method in founding Chicago’s Compass Players and Second City (the latter with Sheldon Patinkin, who is currently Chair of Columbia College Chicago’s theater department and who continues to train contemporary actors using Viola Spolin’s books).<sup>11</sup> Compass Players, Second City, and a major branch of the modern “improv” movement can be considered direct descendants of the amateur theatre games and dramatics learned and performed at Hull-House. As is well known, Compass Players and Second City went on to train and influence local and national theatre artists too numerous to list. To name a very few, these include playwright David Mamet, actors Ed Asner, Mike Nichols and Elaine May,

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<sup>7</sup> Nancrede to Addams (August 13, 1931), the Jane Addams Memorial Collections, University of Illinois at Chicago, Reel 22-801-806, quoted by Shannon Jackson, “Civic Play-Housekeeping”, p. 347.

<sup>8</sup> Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, p. 388-89.

<sup>9</sup> Bebb, Bruce. “Improv: Where Did You Come From & What Are You Doing In My Living Room?”. *Hollywood Reporter*. January 26, 1988.

<sup>10</sup> Spolin, Viola. *Improvisation for the Theatre*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1963 (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of this classic text was published in 1999, edited by Paul Sills, and includes new exercises. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1999); *Theater Games for Rehearsal: A Director’s Handbook*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1985; *Theatre Games for the Classroom*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1986;

<sup>11</sup> Sills, Paul. *Story Theatre*. New York: Samuel French, 1971.

filmmaker and artistic director (*Organic Theatre*) Stuart Gordon, and comedians John Candy, Martin Short and Tim Meadows.<sup>12</sup>

*Hull-House remains an example of the creative fluidity and productive interdependence that exists between informal, grass-roots arts practice and the formal arts. As critic Richard Christiansen writes, the community theater program in the Jane Addams Hull-House building on North Broadway, in the early 1960s, served as the city's principal incubator of what would become Chicago's internationally recognized theater movement, training actors, inspiring playwrights and developing in audiences a taste for "Chicago" theater.<sup>13</sup> The Hull-House community theater players all had day jobs, a miniscule budget provided by the Hull-House board, and a passionate desire to create what Christiansen calls "wonderful....homegrown, homemade, hometown theater that needed no apologies."<sup>14</sup>*

*Through the efforts of its then young director, Bob Sicking, the Hull-House leadership opened two additional theaters. The first one, located in the Uptown Center Hull-House on Beacon Street, is today part of a neighborhood cultural center that hosts a number of North Side community arts groups, including the Black Ensemble Theater. Over the years, the Uptown Center Hull-House also became the incubator of Chicago's vibrant Beacon Street Gallery and Theatre (now separately incorporated), which continues to nurture informal community arts practice and creativity from a new location. In addition to Beacon Street, Hull-House opened a second theater, located on East 67<sup>th</sup> on Chicago's South Side. Today, it provides a home for the Chicago Theatre Company, which has been instrumental in launching the careers of film stars Robert Townsend and Irma P. Hall.*

*And, by 1979, the original Jane Addams Hull-House Theater on North Broadway had become home to the Steppenwolf Theatre, which had itself recently moved from an auditorium in a suburban church basement. When Steppenwolf soon moved on to bigger things, Bailiwick Repertory moved in, and then after Bailiwick others, up to the present occupants, The About Face Theater Collective, Chicago's only resident gay and lesbian theater company.*

*Hull-House continues to be a cultural presence in Chicago today. In its history, one sees the continuity of arts practice clearly, driven by an unabashed desire for expression, creativity and human connection. The continuum stretches from the informal to the formal arts, embracing masters and apprentices, amateurs, emerging and established artists, artists practicing in informal settings and professionally working artists. It's a continuum that not only connects us as human beings, but also nourishes the very best of our artistic achievements.*

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<sup>12</sup> London, Todd. "Spolin And Sills Laid Down The Rules. The Generations Who Came After Played By Them. That's How Chicago Invented Itself". *American Theatre*. July/August, 1990.

<sup>13</sup> Christiansen, Richard. "A Resourceful Community, Using 'Talent At Hand', Develops A Distinctive Style." *Chicago Tribune*. February 10, 2002.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

The continuum of arts practice, so well illustrated by the preceding account, implies a new way of thinking about the role of the arts and artists in society. Rather than dividing the arts world into specializing sectors, it attempts to unite them by delineating the relational contexts in which art is created. In part, this requires clarity in the use of descriptive terms, especially those that carry multiple, sometimes pejorative meanings (i.e., “amateur” and “professional”, which may be used to simply distinguish employment status, but may also be interpreted as referring to levels of artistic proficiency). The research team found it a challenge to settle on neutral terminology. While informal arts participants are often self-taught, some are academy trained. Whether self-taught or school-trained, some are highly accomplished, others less so. Some may not be equipped for a successful career in the arts, some choose not to pursue one, while others are impeded from achieving one. Yet others slip in and out of professional employment, but are involved in the informal arts throughout.

Given the complexity, it is particularly important to develop descriptive terms unburdened by intended or inadvertent pejorative meanings. In order to navigate this complexity, it is helpful to understand the “informal” in informal arts as involving the “process” and the “context” of art-making, not, as a threshold matter, the “product” of the activity, nor the characteristics of the artist’s training. Indeed, the labels artists give themselves and other practitioners provide us with insight to the continuum. This is how a drummer, who had been attending the drum circle for quite a few years, and now often facilitates it, labeled the attendees:

“There are a few different strata or levels: some who are close to being master drummers, some who are highly gifted students, some who are professional players, some who are hobbyists like me, and people who just happened upon it. They heard a sound in the distance and they followed it. And on any given night, all are together. And the master drummer isn't any more important than the person who just happens upon it.”

In the course of doing the ethnography, we encountered over one hundred terms that artists in the informal sector used to refer to themselves. A list of the terms is included at the end of the report, but a few listed below illustrate the wide variety of perceptions about how this phenomena should be labeled:

Amateurs	Community of artists
Because it was fun	Casual, relaxed
Recreational art	Credible writers
Close to being	Artist, but an amateur
Highly gifted	Experts
Not ready for prime time	On the Clock
Hobbyists	Too special
Not professional	Take it serious
People who sang for the joy of it	Real quilter
Going platinum	Not commercial
Independent route	Artists without credentials

The continuum itself may be conceptualized as a spectrum of interconnected activities, with distinguishing characteristics that define different parts. At one end, activities occur in multipurpose spaces that artists appropriate temporarily for use. These temporary spaces can be public like parks and libraries, or a private space in the home. Activities are spontaneous, inclusive of multiple skill levels and not confined to juried formats. In the middle of the spectrum are somewhat more structured activities, occurring in a range of institutions and with a variety of organizational features. Places of worship, coffee houses or cafes, community based arts organizations and facilities, social service agencies, classes offered by educational institutions are all examples of the contexts in which this broad middle-range of spectrum activities occur. Finally, the other end of the spectrum is characterized by activities occurring in permanent, dedicated art spaces, with specialized facilities and highly structured nonprofit and for profit arts organizations with standing artistic and administrative budgets. Here, credentials and criteria are important to determine the merits of inclusion. A well endowed, standing institution, like the Art Institute, has permanent, dedicated art facilities with specialized equipment for various visual arts. Global companies like Time Warner or SONY produce and mass market art and entertainment. We found that there is much concrete interaction across the entire spectrum. For example, analysis of the survey results indicated that people from our case study sites are interacting with formal arts organization 1.92 times per month.

Making the distinction does help in thinking about particular cases and how they compare, for example in realizing that certain art forms are sustainable at lower levels of formality than others. Writing can be created and discussed easily in undedicated spaces without need of special equipment. Welding metal sculpture requires either the large investment of money in equipment and the dedication of permanent space in or around the home, or the artist affiliating herself with a standing facility with the requisite space and equipment; that is either formalizing the space at home by dedicating it and organizing it for arts use or formalizing one's creative activity through affiliation.

Adherence, however, to overly rigid categorical distinctions between artists would undermine the purpose of this chapter which is to illustrate the interconnectedness and interdependency of art activities along the organizational continuum. Artists move along the formal/informal continuum pursuing their creative aspirations wherever seems most fruitful to them. When they do not find the activity or level of organization they desire, artists often create it themselves. In attracting and drawing on personnel and resources linked to more formally organized art activity, more informal activities sustain themselves and support the more visible formal institutions and personnel identified with them.

In this chapter, we present the data that supports a key finding: that activities in the informal end of the arts continuum strengthen the entire arts sector. We demonstrate the ways that informal arts create employment opportunities for professionally working artists and the benefits that accrue to all when training or learning or expertise development occurs at the informal end of the continuum. We discuss the benefits and

problems with the types of spaces and places and organizational arrangements in which activities at the informal end of the continuum occur. We document as well the ways in which activities in the informal end of the continuum provide an opportunity for “research and development”, enabling artists to experiment with new forms or new material. We further demonstrate that artists in the informal sector are a special type of audience for formal arts activities, although they are not cultivated as such. Finally, we also document the strategies used by artists as they attempt to move from the more informal to the more formal end of the continuum, and the difficulties they face as they do so. Individual artists, small and medium sized non-profit arts organizations, community-based groups, and public and private non-arts institutions all play significant roles in forging these links.

### **Training And Expertise**

Looking more closely at training – and sometimes going beyond it to include the contribution of other kinds of expertise - illustrates the interconnectedness and interdependence of participants on the arts continuum. Repeatedly we found formally trained or affiliated artists imparting their knowledge and skills to other informal arts participants, as well as contributing expertise in other ways, especially through their own performances in ensemble settings. In return for their contribution, they often received more than just the joy of participation.

It must be stated at the outset that the difference in skill between formally affiliated participants in the informal arts and those who were not was small at times. An Irish dance master, for example, freely admitted there were other good teachers instructing in Irish dance, but they were not accredited like her. She cites being excluded from most official competitions, not a lack of competent instruction, as the primary disadvantage to students of studying with an unaccredited teacher. Certainly the art establishments increasing acknowledgement and embracing of folk and outsider art well illustrates the multiple possible loci outside of formal structures where art expertise can grow and flourish. What we are trying to do here is not to discredit self-taught or unaffiliated artists, but to show how formally affiliated or trained artists do play a sizable role in carrying art expertise to informal settings where it plays valued roles.

A basic reason for the informal arts participation of skilled or experienced artists is discussed in chapter III, where we show that many of these artists at the case study locations enjoyed art activities in part because they were loosely structured and egalitarian, allowing artistic freedom. It should be noted that some of the skilled artists we cite in that discussion are among those we discuss here as artists with one foot in the formal sphere and one in the informal. It should also be noted that some of the artists we cite here, who are not cited before, expressed similar sentiments of valuing informal activities for being free and relaxed. But for some artists with formal training, or formal affiliations based on the artistic merit of their work, there are other benefits of participation in the informal arts, including, for example, the opportunity to cultivate audiences for their work.



Formally trained and affiliated artists gained promotional opportunities for their work and careers by displaying their expertise in informal settings. Choir musicians, music and dance teachers, drumming facilitators and painting instructors all received word of mouth recommendations that reached other choirs, organizations, and students increased their job opportunities or numbers of students. For example, both HT and UG gained a number of their painting students through word of mouth recommendations. Informal art settings and associated networks of artists are also resources for promoting specific art events. We observed artists publicizing through their networks of informal theater, painting, writing, quilting and drumming their own upcoming performances or displays in more formal venues. In particular, the drum circle became an ideal promotional venue. We observed over 50 participants on most summer Friday nights. KZ and the other members of a West African-style drum ensemble in which he performs announced their concert dates and sold t-shirts at the circle. Many participants attended the concerts they announced.

The level of training and expertise that participants bring to the informal arts and the value they attach to improving their skills is reflected in their responses to the quantitative survey. 26 percent of respondents were enrolled in classes or some type of training in the arts at the time they filled out the survey, and 41 percent indicated they had taught art at some time. The chart below reveals that almost half of respondents to the survey (47 percent) had taken classes at facilities associated with a college or university, and this was only one type of the many venues where artists indicated they sought training.

Considering the numbers of respondents who indicated receiving training either at dedicated arts and culture facilities (theater, museums, libraries, and galleries) or at college facilities, it is no surprise that in nine of the case study activities key participants had either received training from dedicated art institutions and/or college and university art departments. The following lists the specific formal training of some of these artists and their essential roles, usually as teachers or directors, in the informal settings.

- The organizer and primary facilitator of the drum circle has a music degree from a four-year college. Besides music classes his college training included participation in music ensembles, and courses in music education.
- The painting instructor at the park has a Bachelors degree in advertising and design. The painting instructor who teaches out of his South Side home studio received training in visual art and drama, and possibly holds a degree in art, from the City Colleges of Chicago.
- Two former facilitators of the library writing group had an MFA in writing and a master's degree in English between them. The facilitator at the time of research was working towards her Ph.D. in Language, Literacy, and Rhetoric at a local university.
- Both of the primary accompanists for the South Side Choir were music majors in college. While they only assisted the director in teaching song to the choir, the director indicated that he does more teaching than directors at most other

churches, who leave it to accompanists to teach songs and then they come in at the end to polish the group's performance.

- At the NW Suburban Community Theater a director who is on the board, and yearly directs one of their plays, studied theater in college and taught it for years at one of the City Colleges.
- Some of the masters of ethnic traditions worked with adult students or assistants in more informal settings, for example giving lessons out of their homes to adult students who were not necessarily aspiring to art careers. Of these Masters most had received formal training. For instance, a Bosnian puppeteer graduated from a prestigious school of Puppet Theater in Europe and an Irish dance teacher was accredited through an examination process administered by an Irish dance organization headquartered in Dublin.
- Many of the visual artists who were in the workplace case study had received Bachelors of Fine Arts or Masters of Fine Arts. In fact, quite a few knew each other from their school days. None of them were employed as artists in the workplace but instead worked in a variety of positions.
- Among the members of the Asian music ensemble, over half had received private lessons with a master of the musical tradition, in Chicago. Several had actually traveled to the music's home country and studied there for longer periods of time (ranging from six months to over several years). Several participants were also either in doctoral musicology programs or had already received advanced musicology degrees.

Even when we were not able to determine the level of formal training of teachers, facilitators or directors - or when they had little or no formal training - we found they often had links to more formal arts institutions or involvement in more formal activities than most other participants at a given case study site. These links often indicated the level of expertise they had to bring into informal settings, and some of these instances are highlighted below. Study participants frequently reported having taken private lessons, but it was not always clear how their teachers or lessons may have been institutionally or commercially affiliated, and therefore where they might have landed on the formal informal continuum. Still, it is probably safe to assume that some of these unplaced private lessons took place at art schools, colleges or universities, as well in instructors' homes, and that some of the instructors had formal training.

- The director of the SW Side Community Theater's production during the period of fieldwork usually works with North Side theaters and their associated career actors. He became the artistic director at an equity theater company soon after completing the production at the Southwest side theater.
- One of the regular directors at the Southwest side theater, who sits on the board, has worked with career actors and directed at a theater festival of professional companies. She also teaches theater at a local High School. Her college major was literature, but with a focus on drama as literature.

- The founder, and one of the frequent directors at a now disbanded NW Suburban community theater, grew up in a show business family performing on a Mississippi River boat.
- Selected members of the library writing group were able to take a intensive writing class at another library taught by a published author of fiction who has had one of her books selected for Oprah's book club.
- Two Chinese musicians, who offered private lessons in traditional Chinese music out of their suburban home, played in the Chinese National Orchestra before they immigrated to the U.S.
- A few of the quilters are retired tailors and clothing designers who brought their knowledge to the guild where they helped less experienced quilters.
- BN, half of an urban music production team, worked in marketing and advertising in the music and radio industry. At the time of the fieldwork, she and her partner were helping aspiring Hip hop and R&B artists to both record and network within the local music industry. They facilitated networking by hosting a monthly social hour for artists, producers, and others in Chicago's urban music industry.
- For most of the study period, the Asian music ensemble did not have an official music director. However, master teachers were invited to offer workshops to the group if they happened to be visiting Chicago. Finally, a master teacher was able to assume the role of music director for a period of six months, commuting to Chicago on the weekends from a university in the region where he was a visiting faculty member. Members used the occasion of his visits to also take private lessons with him. When members returned from visits to the music's home country, they would also spend time teaching the group new techniques or new music they had learned.
- Artists we spoke to in venues outside of the case studies cited numerous formally trained or affiliated artists that they have worked with or learned from in informal arts settings. This was especially true of painters and musicians.

In some case studies we frequently noticed a kind of diffusion of expertise from more formal settings into informal settings. Master teachers affiliated with large nonprofit and commercial organizations taught the artist/teachers who in turn taught in the more informal settings such as beginning classes or weekly unstructured gatherings. The following examples illustrate this process.

- Well known professional quilters tour the country giving workshops at local guilds. In the Chicago area, nationally recognized quilters come to the larger guilds that have the budgets to afford their fees. Usually, they first give either what is called a trunk show, showing off their actual work, or a slide show that does the same thing. These presentations take place at regular guild meetings, and highlight what the artist wants to teach at a subsequent workshop. A one or two day workshop follows usually no later than the next weekend. Members of the hosting guild usually pay a lower price, with nonmember quilters paying a little more to attend. Many of the more

experienced quilters who we observed attending the Thursday morning gatherings of the case study guild learned advanced techniques by attending such workshops at other guilds then brought this knowledge back to interested fellow guild members.

- At both community theaters, members who do not have formal theater training beyond high school direct productions. They learned directing by watching and being taught by other directors many of whom had more formal training and experience.
- KZ (the drum circle facilitator), UC, and IB all offer beginning drum classes on Chicago's North Side. In turn they all study, or have studied with internationally recognized master drummers from Africa or Japan. On one occasion during the period of intensive fieldwork, a West African master drummer who was in town conducting a workshop that KZ and UC attended also participated in the drum circle.
- The director of the South Side Choir, and a number of other African American choir directors around the city, learned directing in an annual summer workshops they attended during their college years. The workshop was named for the mother of the South Side director, and, while the participants taught each other, she helped when they needed it. She was the original director of the case study choir, and had a degree in music education. The current director also learned directing just by watching his mom direct, so in these ways her expertise reaches the choir today without the current director having had formal classes in music education himself.
- A master Spanish dancer has trained the other dancers in her professional company. They in turn offer a weekly workshop opened to the community held at the college where the company is in residence. The master dancer learned dance as a child from another master who had a dance school in Chicago. She also learned piano and music theory from her father who had a Ph.D. in musicology and conducted a suburban orchestra.

In all these case studies, artists talked about how much they benefited from skilled and knowledgeable teachers many of whom had formal training or affiliations. They appreciated the knowledge and teaching technique these instructors brought to informal settings, as the following examples illustrate.

- NN works as a nurse and acts in both community and non-equity theaters. She expressed her appreciation of the North Side director (LI) directing at the southwest side theater, favorably comparing the learning experience she had to an earlier one from a more institutional setting:

NN: As far as directors go, I remember the good ones and forget the rest. This one (LI) is one of the best. He knows exactly what he wants. He's like they are at Highwood. I want a director to direct me. I can't see what I look like. Tell me what I

look like. JI is like that at Highwood.  
LI knows how to get characters to work.

- A painter in the Park District studio talked about her appreciation of TFR as a teacher, citing the specific knowledge about painting that he imparts:

ODA: Yes, when you first start, well I didn't realize you had to outline and draw it first. I was shocked how it all turned out. You do the background first and then put detail on top of that. Like the sky and ground goes on first. And I thought wow, you can really tell it's Jamaica. TFR is good at teaching about mixing colors and then has an eye for detail. He'll say, notice how some parts of the ocean are dark blue and then there's green. So he'll say, we're going to fix that. And so we make turquoise. He said you're supposed to look at paintings from a distance and I didn't know that. We were like that's the neatest thing....[footnote]

It should be noted, not surprisingly, that teachers were not universally praised. The North Side director was criticized by some crew/board members at the Southwest theater for poor blocking; that is, not doing a good job of arranging the action on stage. Painters complained of other formally affiliated or trained teachers who they felt had been too quick to paint on students' canvases, or were too detached and disinterested, turning their informal classes into nothing more than retiree social hours, or opportunities to condescend to the untrained. Asian music ensemble members also compared different teachers and criticized one or two they felt did not give them enough direction.

In ensemble activities, participants did not just benefit as students of the more highly skilled. The expertise of formally affiliated or trained artists also improved the quality of the groups' collective performances. This was certainly the understanding of actors at both theaters, who insisted that skilled and knowledgeable directors were often able to compensate for poor acting, and were more responsible for doing so than actors. The case study choir director also talked about having to compensate through his direction for weaker singers, arranging the choir so that strong voices were closer to microphones and strong singers next to less skilled ones. But what he also made clear was that a critical mass of skilled singers is needed or the best director can do nothing:

RS: And do you have seats you assign?

CWA: I place them as well as I can and then I leave it alone. It can be really touchy, moving people according to skill, but there is what I call a sweet spot. There's a sweet spot in the choir loft. It's where the microphone hangs from the ceiling and comes down like this (using his finger in the air, he draws

a cone shape coming down from this imaginary microphone). I make sure the good ones are placed there. But people who may not be able to hold their part by themselves, I place them by someone who does. So that's different than one group I was in where we sang mixed, that is, you never stood by anyone singing the same part (i.e. an alto would stand next to a bass and a tenor, etc.). "Horses," we call them, the ones who can hold their part.

RS: And how many horses in tenors and the other parts?

CWA: Tenors are better because it's a smaller section. Five there who can hold their part. In bass, here are two; and soprano is thin right now because some of them are out of town. There are about five (horses). And it's normal to have that many (who can't hold their part) when you have an open choir (i.e. no auditions).

Some of these "horses" in the choir are formally trained artists, doing their part to insure the quality of Sunday performances. In particular, CWA singled out the quality of one of the two singing bass parts, a man who was in the Tuskegee Choir and recorded a CD with them.

In the Asian music ensemble, as well, the more experienced players would take the key instruments (such as the drum), in order to insure high quality overall, especially for performances. Yet, sometimes, the person who played a key instrument at a performance was the one who had consistently been to rehearsals, not necessarily the most experienced player. One woman, who had studied for several years in the home country felt that she should take more of a leadership role (playing the drum, for example). However, she did not feel that she had the time to devote to practice and self-improvement that this would entail.

All this is not to suggest all the artistic skills and expertise that enter into informal arts setting come straight from formal settings. On the contrary, the examples of diffusion cited above, and the number of skilled artists who described themselves as self-taught point to the informal sector's ability to sustain itself even in contexts where no one received their training in a formal setting. What we have shown is that artists with formal training and affiliations are common in the informal arts, and are valued by their artist peers or students for the training they impart and for the other ways they bring their expertise to the aid of the group. But appreciation in these contexts does not only run one

way. Many formally trained or affiliated artists take more of value away from the informal arts than just the simple pleasure of artistic involvement.

What formally trained or affiliated artists get out of informal arts participation depends on what they are looking to get out of it. These artists were often those who pursued their own interests in informal contexts, only irregularly entering into teaching others or taking on leadership roles in the process of art production. Sometimes, artists formally trained in one art type (for example painting) would use informal sites as places to try another art form (music or spoken word performance). This was certainly the case at the workplace site. EN, for example, a formally trained visual artists, played with the music group. So did EV and SU, trained in graphic arts and videography respectively.

Other formally affiliated or trained artists took on teaching or directing roles regularly. Some of these artists were volunteers who enjoyed teaching or directing in the art form they love. For others, taking on teaching, directing or other specialist's roles was part of pursuing a career while doing what they love. Rather than serving as an escape from the arts workplace, the informal arts became part of their arts workplace. During the period of research, we observed formally trained or affiliated artists being paid for performing key functions in four of the case study activities. Additionally, most of the paid as well as unpaid teachers reported that teaching improves their own artistic and teaching skills, and is a source of pride and pleasure in itself.

For artists we encountered who were being paid to teach in informal settings, the job was often part of their overall strategy to make a career of working in their chosen art form. This is certainly true of the artists who travel nationally or regionally giving workshops and making presentations to individual arts groups. In quilting, drumming, and some ethnic music forms we found touring workshops were often part of larger, well organized commercial or nonprofit promotional and educational activities. Expert artists often made their living this way, many times doing quite well financially. For example, the touring professional quilters who travel to guilds to give workshops sometimes also come into other quilters' homes via television, teaching on training shows that air on cable and public television stations. Through affiliations with manufacturers, some nationally recognized quilters endorse products or design their own fabric and product lines. On the smaller scale of the tri-state area of Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana, quilt shops and large fabric and sewing stores often have home economists, or store owners that teach quilting classes and will travel to teach to groups. For example, the case study guild hired the owner of an Indiana quilt shop to give a presentation on color choice at their 2001 holiday party.

For many not famous but formally trained or affiliated artists - who participated regularly in the same informal arts groups - making a career of art was no less important to them than it was to their touring counterparts, even if almost always less lucrative. For those who took paid positions, or offered training and related services as independent contractors, holding jobs in the informal arts was also part of cobbling together multiple opportunities to make art careers. The following examples illustrate some of the ways artists put careers together by including the informal arts, while also reflecting the value

they attached to these opportunities since they were willing to endure low pay, long hours, and working non-art components of their jobs to be able to work as artists. This is not to say that tenure in some of the position was very long, or loyalty to any one employer especially high, just that artists were committed to working as artists in the jobs they could find. Issues of sustainability are taken up again at the end of this section and expanded on in the next one on the role of organizations in supporting the informal arts.

- In the course of fieldwork we interviewed nine formally trained and credentialed visual artists who were teaching in informal settings as part of their art careers. A West Side artist who teaches at an art center talked about the financial challenge and pleasure of making a living from teaching and creating visual art, explicitly stating that teaching adults from the neighborhood was becoming part of his overall financial strategy:

I teach students art classes here and then I do this work (his masks and painting) also. I have a family to support. It's hard, but I like it. People are asking for adult art classes, drawing, so I will teach those the next two Saturdays. I led the mural project with [a well known youth art organization]....

- The South Side painting instructor was also one of these visual artists hustling to make art his career, working and teaching at an art center while also offering lessons at his home studio. The latter is a Queen Ann style home that he rents from a patron who wants to see an art center developed in the space. So when he is not teaching or painting, he is often working on remodeling the first floor of the home into future gallery space.
- During the period of fieldwork, UG taught painting at the North Side park as an independent contractor working for the Chicago Park District. Other components of this contract and other contracts he had with the Park District included teaching day camp for kids (which included art activities), and coordinating a summer art fair in the park. Before his contracts expired at the park, he combined them with administrative work at the gallery where he had work space and displayed his paintings, teaching art to kids in schools, and occasional catering jobs in the evenings to make a full time living.
- The north suburban community theater board president also works for the park district teaching children's theater on the weekends, staging fully developed productions with the kids as well as the adults.
- KU, a regular director and board member at the Southwest Side theater, also directs at other South Side and south suburban theaters. Additionally she teaches drama and directs at a suburban high school. Not long before the period of fieldwork, she quit her day job at an insurance company to make her living from theater. As a member of the board at the Southwest Side theater, she did not get paid for directing there. The Southwest theater paid outside directors up to \$300 for a single show, and the suburban case study theater paid \$800. As a member of the board at the southwest side theater, Ku did not



receive any payment for directing there, but she also directed for other community theaters in the larger southwest Chicagoland area. Since she was trying to make a living from her theater activities she appreciated even the “token” amounts these theaters paid directors.

- For KZ, the drum circle is part of his larger job as a Park District employee who runs day camp for kids, and teaches music classes, including drumming classes, at another park’s field house nearby. In the summer of 2001 the long hours he committed to drumming and his overall employment were apparent. By the time the evening start of the two to three hour drum circle arrived, he had already spent a full day dealing with three sets of 40 kids between the ages of 8 and 13.
- The writing group facilitators are paid on a per session basis by the umbrella organization. The case study group’s facilitator was working on a graduate degree outside of her work with the library writers, while some other facilitators worked in administrative and support positions at the umbrella organization to round out their employment.
- One musical accompanist for the South Side Choir, also accompanies Gospel Choirs at other churches and at two South Suburban High Schools. The other accompanist plays with a couple of popular local jazz acts with regular gigs at premier North Side clubs.
- The master Spanish dancer and her company are not simply in residence at a local university. She is a member of the arts faculty, and the class open to the general public doubles as a teaching training course for her more advanced dance students, many of whom work towards membership in the professional company.
- The Chinese Master musicians make most of their income at home giving private lessons to adults. As parents, they are making do with less money than they would like to have for raising a child, but have ignored suggestions that they receive training in the computer industry or practice their instruments less so they can make more money in other activities.

Nearly all the art teachers we interviewed, formally affiliated and not, said they enjoyed teaching and expressed pride in being good teachers. HT, the South Side painting instructor, said that his legacy as an artist will be the many students he has trained who are now working in art careers around the country. The effort to do a good job teaching also resulted in teachers improving their own skills as artists. KZ talked about sharpening his own fundamentals by having to teach drumming to different beginners in different ways:

RS: What about your teaching and how that may relate to your drumming professionally?

KZ: You learn more when you teach. You learn the most when you go over the fundamentals. And when you go over them in different ways so the student will understand it, you learn it....

UG said the same thing of drawing, explaining that he better understood what he does when cross-hatching after explaining it to a student:

UG: It teaches me a lot too. (puts hand on his chest by his heart). If a student has a problem that I never had or haven't had in a long time, then I have to figure it out. And in figuring out how to deal with it, I learn.  
# But that's true in teaching a lot of things.

RS: So it's like you're a third eye?

UG: A third set of eyes is always helpful. Because it's training your own eye too.

RS: Example?

UG: Like with KI, with the cross hatching I was showing him last night. And he was being typical KI and said, crosshatching is this way and this way (motions vertical and horizontal with his fingers). But no, I said, You change the value of the line. And then afterward (i.e. after class) I thought of something else I didn't tell him. And so it was reinforcement for me. When you do it (crosshatching), you want to follow the contours of the shape. If it's a (pear), you don't just make (flat) cross hatching, you change them as the pear curves ....

The following instances give a couple of other common and compelling reasons that formally trained or affiliated artists were involved in informal art activities.

- In the South Side choir, formally trained singers participated for the same reason as their less formally trained peers, “to give praise to the Lord.” Even the director, who acknowledged that his full time administrative position at the church is “encouragement” to continue as the director, sees directing as something he does because: “This is my home. It's part of my ministry. I don't think I'd want to get paid.(laughs heartily). I'd do it anyway, even if they didn't pay me, truth be told.”
- WQ studied musicology at a university, and in the process learned the folk traditions of many regions of Mexico. His ensemble plays collaborative concerts with the Chicago Symphony and they have played at Ravinia.

Besides teaching Mexican folk music to children and teenagers through school programs, he offers classes to adults at a North Side folk music school. He teaches to a wide audience in part because he wants to preserve the rich folk music traditions of Mexico, making others each a “branch” in spreading folk music.

- Similarly, the music director of the Asian music ensemble felt that it was important to spread the musical tradition of his home country in the United States. He was especially appreciative of the hard work of this particular group, and enjoyed the time that he had to work with them.
- UG, the painter who taught the park class, liked teaching a diverse mix of straight artists. He valued learning how they thought about social mores and aesthetics. This helped him work towards one of his artistic goals, to have his work challenge mores opposed to homosexuality, while having the presentation increase the chances that his viewpoint would be accepted by viewers. He also preferred discussing art and showing his pieces to his students at the park, as opposed to other institutionally trained or career artists, because he felt his students’ responses were more “honest.” In his view, when being critical or praising, career artists too often say what they think will help them get ahead in their careers, rather than what they really think. He argues this is especially true at commercial gallery openings, when artists are trying to put forward specific images of themselves and their work, in an effort to sell pieces or establish commercially useful contacts.

While some teacher/student and more generally expert/group relationships we observed in the informal arts were long standing, many were short lived, despite the value the interactions generally had for both parties. The ephemeral nature of some relationships was in part a desired outcome that was arrived at by design. As we noted in chapter III, flexibility in attendance was valued by participants. A painting instructor and theater director both observed that the workshop format popular in four of the case study activities is ideal for busy people, who cannot make continuous commitments to activities. It was also frequently easy for participants to walk away from bad interactions once an initial commitment was over. In the theater, actors and directors reported choosing to work with one another in the future after positive production experiences, and alternatively choosing to leave bad interactions behind by not working together again.

While all of these positive benefits are laudable and clearly recognized, there were also significant dilemmas associated with teaching or training at the informal end of the arts continuum. In the case of artist-employees (paid teachers, directors, or facilitators), for example, short tenure was not usually desirable, but was a tolerated condition of employment. In illustrating these artist-employees’ commitments to working in art, we have already highlighted a few circumstances of low pay, very few hours, or very long hours. Add to these other challenging features such as uncertain tenure or temporary positions and it becomes clear why some artist-employees were always on the look out for something better or just the next job.

Additionally, we observed a larger pattern to the distribution of paying positions in the informal arts which helps explain why some artists and institutions are able to achieve financial sustainability by offering arts education while other artists and institutions struggle financially. Within the scope of our study, we encountered more paying positions teaching the arts to children than to adults. This was even true at the Chicago Park District if one considers the art components of day camp activities. There are less than three major providers of employment for artists who want to teach kids in Chicago: Art Resources in Teaching (A.R.T.), Urban Gateways, and Gallery 37 all place artists in schools to offer children more extensive art training than regular classroom teachers can offer alone. HTQ, director of education at a small art center, talked about teaching kids as the best way to tap into institutional dollars, but his small center is not able to compete with these larger organizations in the price and services they can offer schools. A few artists we talked to were making their livings from teaching kids art through other institutions, working directly for private schools, community art centers, and in one case the Cook County Public Guardians Office. While some of these artists who taught kids were themselves struggling to make ends meet working as full time artists, it was the smaller number of artists we encountered - not connected to teaching kids and still trying to be full time artists - that consistently face the greatest financial challenges. All of them either struggled financially or were resigned to lifestyle choices such as not owning a car. This is not to suggest that this pattern is indicative of the majority of full time artists in the city who are not working with kids. We deliberately looked for aspiring full time artists who were working independently of the most formal, adult-oriented art organizations in the city, so this description is of that sample. The full time artists teaching at colleges, universities, and art schools, or represented by galleries with whom they have contracts, may be doing well financially, but they are outside the scope of this research.

This distribution of resources points to the centrality of supporting organizations in determining the continuity of both informal arts activities and individuals' participation. The role of arts and non-arts organizations in supporting, sustaining and sometimes also disrupting informal arts activities is the subject of the next section.

### **The Role of Organizations in Providing Space and Resources**

The role that non-arts institutions and small-scale or medium sized arts organizations play in providing space and facilitating the coming together of both individual artists and artists with audiences cannot be overstated. We found that institutions providing space and assistance often did so as part of pursuing their overall mission and/or associated goals, frequently receiving tangible benefits from supporting arts activities. None-the-less, connections between groups of practicing artists on the one hand and space and resource providers on the other were often tenuous. The difficulty artists had gaining and retaining space is reflected in the frequency with which the ethnographers coding the field notes applied the code indicating artists had encountered a barrier to access to space. They used it 110 times while analyzing the case studies. A more tangible indication of the transitory nature of artists' connections to venues is the fact that ten of the twelve case

study activities - all but the painting class and choir – have had to find new permanent space or temporarily relocate at least once during their history. Some of the groups have moved two or three times, while other artists who work alone or collaborate either in smaller groups or in more transitory ways have no fixed arts space outside their homes. This latter group includes the hip hop artists and most of the individual visual artists and masters of ethnic art forms. Budget constraints and cuts, the narrow interpretation and pursuit of institutional missions, and policy changes destabilized and restricted the supporting infrastructure of the majority of activities we observed, causing frustration for participants, and undermining the ability of activities to sustain themselves at or near maximum participation levels.

**Non-art Institutions.** By non-art institutions we mean both those that have a primary purpose distinct from the arts, and those whose overarching purpose includes supporting the arts as a single component among many. These defining features are not mutually exclusive. For example, a Christian church functions primarily as a space for members to worship God, but at the same time music can be an important component in that worship. At the same time, the business of an architectural firm, distribution warehouse, or daycare center has no necessary adult informal art components, but artists reported activities at these facilities. Examples of these kinds of institutions that we found supporting the informal arts, especially providing space, included parks, libraries, places of worship, schools, workplaces, restaurants, and bookstores.

Looking again at the chart in the preceding section reveals that not only did 47 percent of respondents report taking arts classes at college sponsored facilities but 27 percent indicated they had taken classes at an elementary or high school facility, 26 percent at a park or other open air facility, 23 percent at a place of worship, and 16 percent at a library. 8 percent even indicated taking classes at a coffee shop. Survey respondents' answers to the question, "In the past twelve months have you seen displays or attended performances at any of the following facilities in the Chicagoland area?" demonstrated high levels of attendance at a wide variety of venues. While the question does not differentiate between events presented by organizations or artists functioning at different points along the formal to informal continuum, it still reflects the importance of venues operated by non-arts organizations. Schools (both colleges and elementary or high schools), parks, places of worship, libraries, coffee houses, and civic centers appear to be important venues for displays and performances.

The popularity of parks for more informal arts activities is based on three distinct features that they also share with some other venues. First the outdoor spaces of parks can often be used free of charge for performance and practice, and they are spontaneously and easily available without having to fill out paperwork or get permits. As the following instances illustrate, we encountered drummers, other musicians and visual artists who valued using the parks and other outdoor spaces to play music or create images.

- A woman in her twenties told the story of drumming just after dark in a Chicago park and having the police shine their flashlights on the group of

drummers. They sheepishly asked the police if it was alright that they were playing. The police responded, “sure, it sounds good.”

- Another drummer in his forties marveled at a South Side drum group being able to play at the same beach for thirty years without having to get a permit. He likes to run into drumming friends in North Side lakefront parks and decide whether to play on the spur of the moment, based on who has instruments in their car and how nearby they have parked.
- The easy availability of Grant Park saved the day on one occasion. A local nightclub and arts sponsoring organization forgot to unlock its doors or provide staff for the second day of a drum circle facilitation workshop being held at its facility. Because participants and their out of town workshop director were able to pick up their drums and walk into Grant Park and continue the event, the organization’s mistake did not cause the cancellation of the workshop.
- In the course of conducting field work, or just going about their daily lives in Chicago, the ethnographers encountered guitarists, singers, accordionists, and wind instrument players in the parks, on downtown streets, or on subway platforms. On at least three occasions in two different parks, guitarists were just playing for pleasure, while other musicians had a hat out, or opened case to solicit donations.
- A few drummers and rappers talked about other outdoor venues that offer the same kind of spontaneous and accessible opportunities as parks. They told stories of drumming in a charity walk, joining other drummers in the streets of Waikiki, enduring the cold at a New Years Eve drumming gathering in a suburban town square, and getting into a rap battle on Navy Pier with another group of rappers that the story teller’s group happened to run into there one summer day. Navy Pier is a popular Chicago tourist and recreation destination, with pedestrian walkways along its entire length where large numbers of people pass one another coming and going from theaters, restaurants, museums, and carnival rides.
- A South Side visual artist takes a sketch pad with him wherever he goes, including to the park where he produces quick sketches of people, animals, and events some of which he using to later produce larger works in oils and other media.
- A 34 year old Jewish editor of scientific journals reported that she and friends who she has kept in touch with since college used a South Side lakefront park to film a music video about the adventures of a superhero emergency medical technician. Making videos is something they do “just for fun” and no one takes it too seriously.

The second valuable feature of parks is the availability of indoor space at low prices or free of charge. For example, since the South Side quilters’ guild’s meetings are not an official park district activity, the park district does not promote them, nor does the guild receive special equipment or supplies from the park district beyond tables and chairs that come with the space. The guild only uses the park building as inexpensive space that can accommodate its size since it outgrew members’ homes. Inexpensive

space is essential to a group like the guild that only charges \$15 a year for annual dues. This was also true for the north suburban theater that did not charge participants to be in productions. SM, the suburban theater's vice president talked about the crucial need for low cost park district space to maintain the group:

SM: Well, it's (high rents) killed quite a few groups. Rents are exorbitant. If you don't have help from a park, it's difficult. One thing I like is we don't have to go out and fundraise with this group. Some facilities are outrageous.

Before we were able to get into a new park location, we were looking for space to put on one show, and it was insane, what they were asking. We were talking to churches, schools, a youth center. We couldn't do it.

RS: What kind of rent?

SM: The best facility I looked at they wanted \$60 for each night of rehearsal, just for the room, but the also for the janitors, we would have to pay \$120 an hour each night. For performance days we would pay \$100 a day plus \$120 an hour for janitors.

Visual artists also find exhibit opportunities through the Chicago Park District, not just work space. For example, visual artists, especially painters, cited the South Side Cultural Center and the Stables at Humboldt Park as important display venues where they have shown works, attended openings, or as places they have at least heard about from other artists. Another kind of visual art display event often depends on park facilities, namely art fairs and neighborhood festivals. The larger of these festivals have performing art components as well. One choir participant mentioned performing at neighborhood festivals with an ensemble of Chicago gospel choir directors, but the bulk of our data on festivals and fairs concerns visual art display events, so it is our focus here. The annual neighborhood art festival "Around the Coyote" in the Wicker Park community includes visual artists displaying their work inside the field house of the park proper. Often the low cost park space used for these events is actually outdoor space that has been reserved and temporarily modified by artists erecting display tents. The Hyde Park Art fair, the Africa Festival of the Arts, the Bucktown Arts Fest, the Lincoln Park Art Fair, and portions of Around the Coyote are located outdoors in city parks. These events provide opportunities for visual and plastic artists to market their work to large audiences at the relatively low rental cost of space for a temporary booth.

Other annual fairs and festivals are located on Chicago's streets or in other public places. For instance, the 57<sup>th</sup> Street Art Fair closes a city block and fills a schoolyard as well. These events are in effect being hosted by the city government in cooperation with local merchants whose streets are temporarily closed to auto traffic. In an Uptown neighborhood, a local synagogue worked with other organizations to start an annual art

fair that was held in a public parking lot. Participants in arts programs at neighborhood service agencies displayed their work, as did individual artists who lived nearby.

Art Fairs are a good example of art events that are somewhere in the middle of the informal to formal continuum and that depend on non-arts institutions for space. They are informal to the extent that they often include “craft” or “folk” items that are frequently excluded from commercial and nonprofit venues dedicated to displaying only “fine art,” and many of the artists produce their work at home and take responsibility for their own marketing, so they lack lasting ties to the institutional or commercial art establishment. At the same time art fairs are significant commercial art events in and of themselves. Many have standing organizing committees or sponsoring organizations, are frequently juried or have a juried section, and at large fairs artists can see more potential customers in one day than might pass through a gallery over the duration of a one month show.

The third positive feature of park districts is the additional resources they provide for activities. As part of their mission to offer citizens recreational opportunities, Chicago’s park district not only provides space, but teachers, coordinators, supplies and promotional services for a variety of art activities that range from theater to dance and the visual arts. For example, new participants in the North Side painting class were usually pleasantly surprised to find that in addition to a teacher and a room the park provided paint and easels in return for their modest class fees. The extent of the Chicago Park District’s arts offerings, those to which it definitely contributes more resources than just space, is illustrated in Appendix I, which lists the district’s adult arts activities for the summers of 2000 and 2001 as advertised in their official publications.

Over the course of fieldwork we also became aware of a few suburban park districts’ arts offerings. Some of these are highlighted below.

- At the suburban theater, SM expressed appreciation that the theater’s budget comes from the park district, allowing participants to not be constantly consumed with fund raising or money management. Not that they can be careless with money, but the park district has personnel who take on what would be a treasurer’s duties if the theater board had to fully manage its own budgets.
- During the period of field work, the suburban community theater helped the park district produce an annual talent show that included artists of a variety of ages who sang, danced, played instruments, acted, or did some combination of these things. While attending auditions for the show, the ethnographer happened upon the rehearsal of a community brass band practicing in another room of the facility. The talent show, and likely the concerts for the brass band, was staged at an outdoor performance shell in the park. SM reported that the event usually draws audiences in the hundreds.
- The participants in both theater case studies talked about doing theater at a number of other park district locations in the southern, western, and northern suburbs.



- A master Irish dancer reported that she used to offer classes to children and adults out of a north suburban park district building.
- The Berwyn park district hired a master puppeteer to perform puppet shows for children and adults. While the puppeteer was professionally trained in Europe, and is sometimes paid for her shows, she is not trying to make a living off of her puppet theater, but rather does shows for the pleasure of performing. She also has neighbors and friends from her church assist her with creative aspects of puppetry both before and during performances.

Since there was only one suburban case study out of twelve, and given the extent of the Chicagoland region, we were not able to observe activities or pick up publicity materials at suburban park districts to the same extent that we did in Chicago proper. We did ask artists from the suburbs, and artists who travel to the suburbs to participate in the arts, where they participated. Consistently, especially outside of theater and dance, artists did not mention suburban park districts as sponsors or locations of their activities. Considering the number of activities the ethnographer at the suburban theater found sponsored by that park district, however, it is possible that there are many more art activities that we did not become aware of in suburban public parks. As the following examples illustrate, artists frequently also cited other public, nonprofit, or commercial non-arts organizations and facilities as locations and sponsors in the suburbs.

- Some suburbs offer public support of the informal arts by providing space and resources in municipal and government buildings not affiliated with a park district. For example, a south suburban quilting guild meets weekly in the city's town hall, while another south suburb and a northern one both provide town hall space to groups that perform dramatic readings of radio plays.
- A north suburban quilting guild with over 350 official members holds its business meetings at a synagogue. Members also regularly hold smaller informal quilting sessions at the Chicago Botanical Gardens, and for larger workshops and quilting sessions the guild rents space at a commercial retreat and meeting center that used to be a religious retreat facility.
- A suburban kindergarten teacher and drummer learned how to use sinew in drum making in a workshop on frame drum construction held at a bookstore in Des Plaines Illinois.
- During the period of field work, the park drum circle facilitator and some of the more experienced drummers who usually attend the circle led a weekend drum circle for families at a Jr. High School for the gifted in Schaumburg Illinois.
- A 21 year-old Spanish dancer saves himself a weekend trip into Chicago, to the college where he studies dance as a minor, by going to a local elementary school and using the hardwood floor in the auditorium to practice.
- When the master Irish dancer discovered that the suburban park district was charging the majority of her students extra class fees because they lived outside of the district's service area, she moved the classes to a suburban church where all students could pay the same rate for class, and the church was closer to where the majority of students lived.

- EN, an actor in the Southwest theater during the case study period, has taken three painting classes at a south west suburban community college. He started in classes opened to the general public, but found the atmosphere was too social and unstructured. He felt he was not learning as much as he wanted, so he paid more to register for a college credit class to have a more rigorous environment. He has taken two semesters of painting courses for credit.
- Performing arts organizations also found important space in the suburbs outside of park districts. The College of DuPage, Moraine Valley College, and a couple of south suburban high schools were used for performances by community theater groups or dance organizations to stage adult performances that were not part of these schools' official curricula. The facilities were valued for their quality. One of the high schools even had a "fly system" usually only associated with larger commercial theaters that allowed sets to be changed with a pulley system.
- A musician managed a folk music coffee house in a church basement in the suburb of Downers Grove. Across the street, he pointed out to the ethnographer, there was a dedicated gallery space for local visual artists in the public library.
- In Evanston, the city operates the Noyes Arts Center, a multi-use facility that houses the famous Piven Theater, which trained actors such as John and Joan Cusak, dance classes offered by a variety of groups, the Actors Gymnasium, and art galleries. Also in Evanston, a variety of music groups use churches for performance and rehearsal space. One church hosts a regular meeting of a square dance group. Finally, the City sponsors an annual "First Night" festival on New Year's Eve and uses a variety of public and private spaces for dance, music and theatrical performances by groups from all points on the informal to formal continuum.

Within Chicago, non-arts institutions and organizations besides the park district also play important roles providing space and resources. Case study data reveals the nature of the relationships between the art activities and the supporting facilities and organizations, showing clearly what sometimes was provided beyond space, and the motivations of artists and their supporters to enter into these relationships.

- A consortium of West Side public schools, in cooperation with local business sponsors, offers educational opportunities to students' parents on the weekends. In the fall of 2000 one of these programs was a macramé class at an elementary school, taught in conjunction with classes to help parents prepare their children for college. Approximately eight parents were at the school from nine to noon each Saturday for eight weeks, spending the first half of the morning learning macramé and the second half in the parenting classes. The program was sponsored by Century 21 Realty, and included a stipend for participating parents. The school principal said of the macramé that it was the school's hope that parents would learn something they could

enjoy and maybe make a little money from. The macramé was taught by one of the school's custodians, who has been doing it since the 1970s. By the following autumn the school principal had helped him locate another school where he offered a Saturday macramé class.

- The master Spanish dancer's company is in residence at a public university in Chicago where she is on the arts faculty. Young ensemble members are often students at the school, with minors in dance and majors in Spanish Culture or something else in the humanities. The school does not offer a major in performance. The master dancer talked about "loving" the university president for the support that she gives to the arts, and described the university as having a long tradition of supporting dance, including past affiliations with the Joel Hall and Ruth Page dance ensembles. At the time of field work the school was remodeling its theater space and paid for the ensemble's alternative performance space at a suburban performing arts center and at a performing arts high school in the city.
- Over the years, a number of the African American visual artists we interviewed have had pieces in the annual "Black Creativity" show produced by the Museum of Science and Industry (MSI), and during the period of field work one of the artists enrolled in the South Side painting class had a piece exhibited in it. "Black Creativity" started at the museum thirty years ago under the name "Black Aesthetics" and initially was not juried. For approximately the last 17 years it has been juried and currently includes the categories of ceramics, drawings, mixed media, paintings, textiles, and video. There are no restrictions on who can submit slides to the judges and the work is judged anonymously. The 2001 show included both pieces that conformed to traditional artistic conventions and production values and many that did not. There is a companion show to "Black Creativity" held each year in May, "Latino Horizons," which was established a little less than thirty years ago. MSI provides not only space for these shows, but promotes and stages them with the financial assistance of corporate sponsors. Artists' time commitment is usually limited to pick up and drop off of their work. According to EN, the museum's 17 year director of "Black Creativity", both shows were founded when community leaders approached the museum asking what the museum could do that would be positive for their communities. Further EN stressed that it is not a problem for a science museum like MSI to host an annual art show, because MSI is located in a residential neighborhood and both needs to be responsive to the community and want to encourage residents to patronize the museum.
- The Asian music ensemble had started out as a class offered at a major cultural institution. When the class was over, the group self-incorporated and moved to a space in a Chicago university, where one of the members of the group worked. Finally, when this space proved unsatisfactory, the ensemble moved to the croft of a church that had ties to another university. The University provided the group with the opportunity to teach classes through its music department, and assigned a faculty member as a liaison. In return,

University personnel who participated in the group were not charged class fees, as were the non-university group members.

- SU, the minister of the South Side case study church responded with the following comments when asked what it meant to the church to have the choir as an organization within the church:

SU: It's a premier organization. It's impact and influence in worship and the culture of the church is as much as or more so than the preached word. Some say they come just for the music. It's my greatest source of inspiration. Even on nights of rehearsal, I find myself eavesdropping. I get insight, inspiration and joy, even from the rehearsals. I see them as a catalyst to the worship experience. They are inspirational.

- When the quilters guild members found out they could not use the park fieldhouse's meeting room for Thursday meetings during the summer, two or three quilters offered to arrange to have the meetings at their respective churches. The summer meetings moved to the church of the chairwoman of the guild's membership committee, because she kept the schedule for her church and knew immediately that the classrooms were available on Thursday mornings, and would be free of charge.
- The Southwest side theater's original home was at a private music school that itself was in a converted town hall building. MSP, the theater's co-president explained that they had to pay a fixed rent each year to use the space for rehearsals and performances. This meant they had to stage at least four productions per year to cover rent; no matter how overextending and hectic keeping this schedule might be for board members. The theater's arrangement with the southwest side church allowed them to pay just a percentage of the door revenue as rent for use of the basement theater space, so the pressure to stage more productions than they could really handle and otherwise fund raise was reduced. At the time of field work, the church was struggling to survive in the face of lowered attendance and the extra income from the theater was appreciated by the church board. Church board members would also sell cookies at performances to raise additional funds for the church.
- The executive director of the writing group explained that the South Side library was the group's first library location. They wanted a new meeting place for a group that started at a local high school as an empowerment activity for parents. The school setting did not lend itself to participants continuing beyond the school year or to the period of their children's enrollment. The library location attracted more permanent participants, and the umbrella organization has since expanded its writing programs to other libraries. Two writers talked about the libraries being ideal places for a group,

because they could learn research techniques using computers and the internet, use the internet to find writing opportunities, or observe people to get story ideas. Librarians at both the South Side library and other locations have helped writers directly by reminding them of scheduled readings at other locations, telling them about other writing groups, and letting them know the library will host their individual readings independent of the umbrella organizations activities, even printing promotional flyers for them. At least one of the South Side groups writers has had a library reading, one of the ethnographers attended a library hosted poetry reading given by a poet not in the writing group. One of the group's writers talked about finding out about the existence of the group by attending a reading at another library. One member of the writing group used to host a regular open microphone session at another library for three months before she had to stop because of job responsibilities. She had not intended to host an event, but when she went to the library asking about reading at an open microphone event, the librarians talked her into founding and hosting one with their help. During the period of field work there were at least three regularly occurring open microphone sessions at Chicago public libraries, and the libraries host other writing programs beyond those associated with the umbrella organization. For example, the earlier mentioned a workshop, offered by a novelist whose book had been an Oprah selection, and was held downtown at the Harold Washington Main Library.

- A police station on the South Side hosts regular spoken word performances. In the lobby of the precinct, several tables are set up with table cloths and candles to create a café-like atmosphere. People from the neighborhood as well staff at the police station participate in reading their poetry.
- Non-art commercial businesses were frequently cited by artists as locations and supporters of the arts. Sometimes there may have been a degree of sympathy and personal support implicit in the availability of space, as when a spiritual center made space available to a women's' drum circle for only [\$3] per drummer. At other times, how commercial space was obtained was not explained and the situation was not suggestive, as when a spiritual gathering that included the entire group drumming was held inside a large empty storefront. In the visual arts, artists reported having exhibitions or just hanging their works in restaurants. Performing artists also found space in hospitality and amusement industry venues. For example, a west side bowling alley is periodically converted into "The Rock and Bowl," a location of concerts by multiple local rock bands that - while often well respected as musicians - cannot attract large audiences individually as bands. Additionally, part time musicians, poets, and improvisational comics sometimes found performance space and audiences at neighborhood bars and coffee shops. For our purposes, what makes these venues "non-art" commercial establishments is that they primarily make their money marketing something else. In some cases they did not charge the artists for using the space, and/or there was no charge to patrons for coming in for entertainment. Their relationship to art and artists is nevertheless symbiotic, with art creating an atmosphere conducive to business

or attracting extra patrons. The owners of the spiritual center may have been interested in music and spirituality, but they no doubt also hoped to attract like-minded people to their other activities as well.

In a sense these “non-arts” venues are only different by degrees from commercial “arts” establishments like music and book stores, dinner theaters, clubs, and music schools that heavily or exclusively depend on the marketing of art or aesthetic “products” or performances for their revenues. The bowling alley was an especially ambiguous case. When an ethnographer attended a rock show, bowling was suspended in most of the lanes, so the business was counting on its share of the door and soft drink sales at an “all-ages” show to make its money. It effectively functioned as a nightclub during these events.

Despite their appreciation for the support of non-arts organizations and facilities, artists found a number of non-arts venues posed specific challenges that at times resulted in activities having to relocate or come to an end. Some of these instances are highlighted below.

- The quilters’ guild Thursday class is regularly displaced in the summertime by kids activities, and even on occasion during other times of the year by other one-time events that come into the park district building. Quilters do not think these displacements are unreasonable, accepting that paying activities and children will always get priority in the parks. Quilters discussed either paying the park district, or some other space provider rent to have a higher priority hold on a space. There seemed to be a general willingness to do this if it would improve the priority quilting received or secure a permanent space, but during the period of field work payments did not begin and other permanent space was not found. The quilters came back to the park in the fall, apparently motivated by familiarity, convenience, and the need to maintain attendance. The summer move to a church was accompanied by a drop to as few as five participants a week from over 30 at the park. At least part of this decline reflected participants taking a summer vacation from quilting. Members traveled, and at least one other had extra child-care responsibility. For at least a few other quilters, convenience and familiarity effected their willingness to travel to what they assumed would just be a temporary location.
- The NW suburb theater group has to share both rehearsal space and performance space with other activities, especially basketball. The result is that they can only get into the performance space a little while before performances start so there is no time to teach members new technical roles, much to the disappointment of SM and others. Members hope they can get their “own” space in a park building soon, but realize this will only happen if new space for sports activities free up a hand-me-down space for them. They realize that workout facilities and basketball leagues are the money-makers for the park district, while theater breaks even. So the former activities will get new buildings and they get what is left.

- Tight budgets at the Chicago Park District led to constant pressure on the drum circle facilitator to start charging for participation, despite the fact that this would hurt the diversity of participants. Cutbacks in staffing, because of budget shortfalls, have already hurt arts programming in the parks. Drummers at the circle reported that a jazz workshop at another North Side park was cancelled after six years of regularly having a full attendance of 12 members. The park employee-musician that ran the workshop was laid off to save money. Some painting students, and drummers felt that the lack of money for the arts was a result of overly high priority being placed on beautification and wrought iron fences in the parks instead of programming.
- Painters who asked David Doig, head of the CPD, why art classes were cancelled were told that classes are cancelled when they do not have enough enrollees. While they admit that not all classes fill, some artists we interviewed felt some of the blame belongs with the park district. They pointed to the failure of the park district to make its offerings known to the wider public, the majority of them having found course by word of mouth or happening upon it while in the park for another reason. Drummers and painters who were searching for classes complained of employees at parks not even knowing what is offered when they called, an experience that was repeated for the ethnographers on a couple occasions. The painting instructor told the story of having the district print completely inaccurate fliers promoting classes after he had given them the correct information. He lost most of the students when they found out the class was not what was advertised. In another instance, he reported the Park District failed to do any promotion of an event that they had partnered on with an arts nonprofit organization, despite it being the PD's responsibility to publicize the event. The organization will not partner with the parks anymore.
- In an example of possible mismanagement leading to the loss of artists involved in activities and that occurred during the period of the study, the park district failed to renew any of the contracts of artist/contractors working at the cultural center where the painting class was held. Painters and the instructor reported that the cancellation was a mistake that occurred during the turnover of the center's director. The painting instructor chose not to work as a park employee, instead leaving and taking a couple of his students with him into private lessons. Class was cancelled for most of the fall and winter of 2002. When a new teacher resumed classes in the summer participation was down to 3-5 participants per week. The discontinuity of class offerings seems to have hurt enrollment, not a surprise in the context of activities heavily dependent on word of mouth, repeat students, and the visibility of the activities themselves to gain full enrollment.
- Being a low priority relative to non-arts activities hurts informal arts activities in other non-arts venues. Despite the historical commitment of Jane Adam's settlement houses to building community through the arts, recently the governing board of the North Side Jane Adams Center announced that arts classes and facilities would be eliminated because they were not central to their mission of providing social services, and funds were needed for these

other activities. The ceramicophonophones and photography classes and studios were especially popular and the announcement precipitated protest by artists and their supporters.

- A husband and wife drumming duo were overheard playing in their apartment by a neighbor who invited them to use the youth center he directed as a location for a drum circle. They used this location for an extended period until a new center director told them they could not meet at the center anymore because their circle did not include any children or teens. This was the end of the circle.
- In praising the church location, South Side theater members compared it to earlier school locations where they had performed. Like the north suburban park district, theaters that perform at schools have to compete with other activities including student art activities, so they get only very short access to performances spaces, which artists reported makes the whole process more hectic and difficult.
- The Southwest theater had to check with each new pastor about their continued use of the church space, and to a degree had to carefully select plays and/or censor material and specific lines, so as not to offend. The theater ultimately had to leave the church because it closed. After the theater moved to a Catholic elementary school in a nearby southwest suburb, a new congregation at the church asked the theater to return, but because of the lack of dedicated parking space there, they declined. Schools usually present the same problem as suburban park district facilities, in that theater groups have limited access to the space, resulting in little or no chance to cross train tech people. As we go to print, the elementary school is scheduling remodeling and the theater group has planned a meeting to discuss if and where they will relocate.

In summary, non-arts institutions, especially public parks, play an important supporting role that enables activities at the informal end of the spectrum to occur. These non-art institutions also derive benefits from such support, as the arts activities draws in participants, provides visibility, and helps the organization fulfill its service mission. Still, the character of informality and the instability of resources of these types of institutions combine to present serious obstacles to practice in the informal arts sector.

### **Small And Medium Sized Arts Organizations.**

In the course of the field research we also documented numerous instances of small and medium sized arts organizations (including community based ones) that offered classes, workshops and other training opportunities as well as space for rehearsal, practice and performance or display. As in the arts classes or activities offered by non-arts institutions, activities and classes offered in these organizations brought together professionally working artists with those more firmly planted in the informal sector. Since the completion of the research phase of our study, other surveys have been



conducted of arts organizations in Chicago (Department of Cultural Affairs Cultural Landscape Study, 2002 and Grams and Warr, 2002). We documented the following instances:

- The Old Town School of Music was frequently mentioned by case study participants as a place that offered not only classes but the opportunity to interact with master practitioners. Of course many of the participants in the drum circle mentioned that they had taken classes at the School and a few mentioned that they had been directed to the drumming circle during a class. Drumming circle participants and facilitators also taught classes at the School. Additionally, several participants in the other case studies mentioned they had taken classes there (for example a painting class participant had taken drumming there, and a choir member also took classes there). Finally, both the Mexican and Chinese master musicians taught at the Old Town School. Interestingly, we also observed Old Town School musicians/teachers who had been contracted by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra to provide musical entertainment prior to the start of a matinee children's concert. The musicians were stationed throughout the lobby at Orchestra Hall and played children's songs.
- The Guild Complex was cited by several of the poets and spoken word performers we interviewed or observed as a venue where they could both hear a range of poets and performers and perform themselves. The Guild Complex charges low prices both to perform and to attend performances, so barriers to entry are low.
- There are several small theaters and theater guilds that share resources and provide opportunities and classes for actors, directors and other theatrical work. For example, the Baliwick Theater was cited as a company where a director was given a chance to break into professional theater, while the Center Stage in Lake Forest was appreciated by an actress for being a transitional theater between community and professional theater. With high quality facilities and technical and directing staffs, it was not a place where actors were paid. The North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie is a multistage performance complex that makes space and stage management staff available to resident professional companies (e.g. the Northlight Theater) one time performances of dance, music, or theater, and anyone willing to pay the rent on the space. When the university auditorium where the Spanish Dance Ensemble is in residence was unavailable due to construction, performances were staged at The North Shore Center. The Piven Theater and Actors Gymnasium in Evanston, along with Act One Studios in Chicago provide classes and training. Some of these organizations, along with The Directors' Forum, a peer support organization, and the Act One Bookstore were cited as sources of networking opportunities, support, and scripts.
- Arts and Cultural Centers, among them the Chicago Cultural Center, The Beverly Arts Center, The South Side Community Art Center, and the South Shore Cultural Center were mentioned as important venues for both taking classes and for exhibition opportunities. The Beverly Arts Center, for

example, had a juried show for visual and plastic artists who live within a 100 mile radius of Chicago. The Beverly Arts Center also is a venue for theatrical performances, both for the Beverly Theater Guild, a community theater, and other groups. As another example, the Arab-American Council produced a show there based on oral histories of Palestinians.

Other organizations that were mentioned or observed during the course of the ethnography included The Little Black Pearl Workshop, The Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum and Redmoon Theater. These organizations and others like them frequently provide performance opportunities as well as opportunities to both take and offer classes. As with the non-arts organizations, they represent significant spaces for interaction and intersection between participants in the formal and informal sectors.

### **A Special Case: Artists In The Work Place**

The relationship between formal and informal ends of the continuum is especially heightened when artists are allowed to use their creative and expressive abilities in the workplace. Such was the case with the case study we conducted at a large cultural institution (CI) in the city. Over the course of the study, we were able to document the ways in which artists working in a variety of positions within the institutions contributed their skills and expertise to enhance the daily functions of the workplace. In turn, the institution has historically been supportive of encouraging artists to practice within the workplace setting, making it a place that attracted artists. While this mutual-aid relationship is changing to some extent, the workplace site demonstrates the potential benefits of arts in the informal sector to the experience of everyday life. We have described in previous chapters the ways in which the workplace artists, as did artists in the other case studies, crossed social boundaries or developed skills that they used in daily life and at work. Here, we detail the relationship between the artists and the formal context of the workplace.

The CI was founded over one hundred years ago with a dual mission of education and knowledge accumulation. From the beginning, art, whether produced by formally trained, professionally working artists or artists at the informal end of the continuum has been an integral part of the CI's work and interaction with its public constituents. Visitors to the CI are enthralled by and engaged with its subject matter precisely because of the artistic component of its presentations. The CI has consciously and deliberately used art for this very purpose. Mirroring this very visible use of art has been the use of artists/workers in the day-to-day operations of the institution, albeit without this necessarily being the "intention" of the institution. Every department of the CI has artists working in it, including people who sing in choirs, writers, poets, people who make handicrafts, and painters with professional degrees.

The CI has recognized the importance of artists among its workforce however, and provided support for them to practice their art at the workplace.

- Until about two years ago, the CI would invite “in-house” musicians to perform at workplace celebrations such as holiday parties. Musicians recounted that these occasions when they played for the staff were opportunities for them to display their talents and gain self-confidence. Eventually, a small group of these musicians started playing at other venues, such as bars and coffee houses. However, when one of them tried to organize the group into a more professional venture, it proved too difficult for the members to sustain that level of activity.
- The CI let the musicians do their regular (once a week) lunch-time jams in a room that was part of its formal operations (i.e. not a staff lounge). The musicians would check to see if the room was otherwise occupied, and if not, would jam together. Often, the sounds would drift out into the public space, and other staff or even visitors would peek in. Other staff who peeked in would be invited to join the group for the jam.
- Visual artists often used their lunch hour to work on their art, storing their materials and their work in various closets or other storage spaces. They also used the equipment (carpentry tools, for example) to make their own art. Oftentimes, this was large and heavy equipment that they would otherwise have difficulty accessing.
- At one point in the CI’s history, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it would host an “art show”, where the staff artists would display their work in a public space that was accessible to visitors. Artists who participated in the staff show stated that they appreciated the opportunity to display their work with all the satisfaction accrued from such validation. Professionally trained artists who had formally exhibited were showcased alongside others who had less experience with the formal art sector. This practice was stopped, however, as space became limited due to increased activity in the CI.
- Another practice, however, has continued. This is the semi- annual craft fair which is organized and run by the staff. At the craft fair, all staff members are invited to display and/or sell their work. In the fairs witnessed by the ethnographer, about twenty staff displayed or had pieces for sale. Included here were jewelry, hand-made paper, ceramic objects, knitted wear, quilts, paintings, foods (baked or canned goods), and decorative objects for the home (such as picture frames). Musicians also sold CDs of their music. Fair participants enjoyed chatting with each other and with potential customers (fellow staff) about their work.
- More recently, administrators of the institution publicized and recognized the work of the artists outside the museum. For example, a professionally trained artist who was a manager in one of the departments had a piece in an art show in a museum in New York. The fact was publicized in the staff newsletter. Another artist who works in a lower ranking position has regular gallery shows in Chicago. On the opening of one of his shows, the chief administrator of the institution hosted a reception at the gallery for fellow staff members. Staff who are going to have shows or perform in concerts regularly post notices about these events in the building, and on one occasion,

the opening of a group show by ten artists on staff, the head of their department attended the reception.

In these ways, the CI has supported artists on the staff by allowing a certain flexibility in the use of its space and resources so that artists could incorporate their arts practice into their work life. In the meantime, the institution also benefited because staff brought their creative talents to bear to improve work performance, boost social interaction and solve problems, as we have demonstrated in the previous chapters. The institution also benefited in another, less tangible way. Artists on the staff appreciated the encouragement of the institution and were loyal to it, despite a generally low wage scale (consistent with that generally in the non-profit sector) and often worked beyond the required hours or the specified tasks. This “labor of love” that artists brought to the workplace, the pride that they took in the institution and its mission seemed to infuse work throughout.

Within the last several years, however, according to artists’ accounts, and also observed in the course of ethnographic fieldwork, practices within the institution have changed as it has grown in size and gained more visibility. The size of the staff grew by over 50 percent within the last five years. Additionally, the institution’s public programs grew in number and it pursued a more aggressive public relations campaign to attract more audience. One result of the growth has been increased bureaucratization and specialization of roles within the occupational structure. The overall “informality” of relationships between staff in different departments has been slowly replaced with formal procedures and practices. More impromptu staff celebrations and full lunch hours became less frequent as the pace of work increased due to the increased numbers of programs and activities.

One result has been that the time and space for informal arts practice within the workplace has diminished. The musicians, for example, stopped playing together at lunch time as their workload demanded working through lunch. The main organizer of the jam gave up trying to get the group together because too many members would cancel or say they were unable to come. Additionally, he himself became too busy to really sustain the group. Visual artists also stated that they had less time during the workday to make their pieces.

Diminished celebratory gatherings of staff also meant less performance by musicians during the work time. Two years ago, the personnel department decided to make one of the annual staff holiday parties a more formal event, with a sit down dinner and a hired band to provide dance music, which also diminished opportunities to showcase the in-house musicians.

Changes in administrative procedures have also diminished the visibility of the individual contribution of staff to the public presentations of the institution. For example, new public presentations no longer carry plaques or signs naming staff who worked on the project. Rather, only external financial supporters are acknowledged. Instead, the

institution acknowledged staff contributions to the project through notices in the staff newsletter and through special staff previews of the presentations prior to their official opening. Staff interviewed for the study acknowledged that they regretted the loss of more public attribution for their work. “We just do our work anonymously now, and it’s like we are just cogs in the machine,” one artist stated.

Another major impact on the artists was financial difficulties suffered by the institution in the past year as a result of the worsening national economic climate and decreased revenues that resulted from decreased visitor-ship. The institution, like many other cultural institutions in the city, had to cut budgets and curtail activities. It could not sustain the growth spurt it had embarked on. As a result, staff who had been hired for term positions to work on specific projects were notified that their terms would not be renewed once the project was completed. This included many of the group of visual artists who had been in the case study. When interviewed, the visual artists who were soon to be unemployed were philosophical about the transition, and said that they were used to cycles of employment and unemployment. In fact, some had experienced this type of temporary employment at the institution before. Some said that they would try to use the time between jobs to push their arts practice, while others were more uncertain about what direction they would pursue. The administrators at the institution, when interviewed, stated that they were committed to rehiring artists for new projects if and when financial conditions improved.

In summary, while many mutual benefits are evident in the deliberate embracing of artists by a work place, it is also evident that such relationships between an institutions and its workers are subject to the economic and social fluctuations structured by external forces and internal institutional dynamics.

### **The Informal Arts’ Role In Research And Development**

Artists in the informal area of the arts continuum, as we have mentioned before, are striving for perfection in their work as well as the expression of creativity. In this process, they experiment with forms, style and new approaches, some of which make their way into the formal sectors of the continuum. Such “crossover” from informal to formal is exemplified in some well-known examples of artistic forms that started informally and have now become part of commercial arts production. One such recent form is hip-hop music, which started off as street and party music in the 1970s and is now a multi-million dollar industry. In our study, we observed talent shows that were attended by and sometimes sponsored by major recording labels. Though few local artists were signed on the labels, these events provided valuable market research as to what direction the audience tastes were heading.

In other instances the informal sector is a place where people can try out a style or form that is not their major artistic endeavor. For example, EC, a painter in her early twenties, uses graphic design principles in her job as a web page designer. She contrasted the studio class favorably with her job. She likes the relaxed and flexible

atmosphere in painting class because she does not get a break at work, and in class she can “relax and go with the flow.” Class allows her “total creativity.” While her job has a few opportunities to be creative, because she is answering to the wishes of someone else “it is not an expression of myself,” in her own words. TT, who also uses graphic design in one of her two outside jobs, talked about the painting class as “my time”, contrasting it with the demands of jobs and family responsibility. When speculating on whether she would ever incorporate the characters she was painting in class into her commercial work, she said, “Some day. I guess it will take awhile. It's difficult because it's mine.”

A particularly interesting informal space where much research and development seemed to be occurring was the home. We observed that peoples' homes are one of the most popular places to create art. Here, artists work within their major art form and they also frequently do work in a second or third art form (for example, a visual artist might play music at home). We interviewed theater directors, choir members, and painters who all write short stories, poetry, or inspirational pieces at home. Comfort is one of the advantages that make artists prefer their homes to other creative venues. Many talked about their homes as places they could take chances or experiment safely, without others hearing or seeing them. This is sometimes a precursor to sharing with a larger group, as with musicians learning a part or new style of playing. Other artists chose to never share their efforts or art works outside of the house, for example the hip hop radio DJ who never samples, scratches, or tries other DJ tricks outside his house because he feels he never got good enough at it when he was practicing at home.

The home is also a convenient place to create. It is where people find themselves after work, with their families, and often the time when inspiration hits. One member of the South Side choir recounted that he sometimes wakes up in the night feeling the inspiration and compulsion to write, while a retired CTA bus driver said he likes the early mornings best:

I'd get up at 3:00 in the morning, it was still then, and ideas would just come and flow (moves arm like flowing) and I would write until daybreak. And it was stimulating and healing. I could write without stopping and I'd recall so much and things I'd forgotten. I'd think you're not so dumb, you're somebody.

Expense was probably the most often stated reason for creating art at home. For the majority of the individual visual artists we interviewed who are striving to make a living from their artwork, working at home is an exercise in frugality and as crucial as their marketing strategies. Paying for dedicated art space away from home is not really a financial option, especially since most of them are able to dedicate an entire room in their home or apartment as a workspace.

While the most popular at home art activities we observed were writing, drawing, painting, fiber arts, and music, dance, theater, sculpting and jewelry making were also sited as activities undertaken at home. Quilters, for example, often worked on stitching their pieces at home. Homes are not just sites of individual activity, either. Group activities in writing and music are routine, and dancers even reported working together in their homes. Theater directors used the Internet at home to research aspects of productions and find scripts, while quilters used it to order hard to find or discounted fabrics.

Music also offers the opportunity for a few artists to operate home-based businesses. Many musicians we observed purchased instruments or other equipment they needed so that they could play at home. Members of the South Asian music ensemble, for example, purchased individual instruments when the group purchased a new set and had it shipped from the home country. What fewer musicians have is the equipment to produce commercial quality recordings of their music. In the Hip hop, Drumming, and Theater case studies we encountered musicians who had set up recording studios in their homes, making the capital investment needed to buy digital recording and editing equipment and dedicating space in their homes to it. For Hip hop artists hoping that the Chicago Scene will “blow up” soon, doing production is a way to be part of what they see as the coming commercial success of Chicago.

A few drummers, however, talked about being afraid to play too much or too loudly at home, for fear of offending neighbors. Interestingly, no one actually had a story of being asked to stop, although one drummer had kept his old apartment after getting married so that he and his wife could use the garden level basement that only had one neighbor for drumming, rather than risk upsetting neighbors in a co-op building with neighbors on all sides. Others talked generally about not being able to play where they live. In contrast, another drummer talked about an elderly neighbor complaining that she did not hear drumming lately, while another approached all his neighbors to work out suitable practice times.

Homes are not only places to make art, but also, with varying degrees of regularity, are places to display, market, or perform it, again pointing to their significance as spaces for research and development. For visual artists who do not aspire to show their work publicly or sell, family and friends are main audiences and consumers, and in turn display pieces in their homes. Painters in both open studios and in the theater case study, talked proudly of family displaying their paintings. An actor with the SW Theater who also paints is a good example of the interest family members can have in displaying an artist’s work in their homes:

RS: Now do you hang them or give them.

DMO: Well, if anybody wants them. My one son has three kids and they asked me to paint Mother Goose characters on the wall of the kid’s room. It was about 20 feet of

painting; this was about 2 years ago. It was acrylics, which are just like oils but they dry faster. It was fun to do. I got books from the library to get the characters. Then I sketched them and then painted them.

We found that career-oriented visual artists without contractual gallery representation, or those who were not members of cooperative gallery spaces, had shows in their home studios and routinely showed work by appointment. In addition, they arranged marketing collaborations around these events to maximize their success. A West side painter had a show in the home of one of his best customers, who in turn invited his friends to meet the artist. The network of South Side artists has open studios, sometimes with 2-5 artists showing in each other's homes. Just as *Around the Coyote* is a kind of collective marketing event for different artists with home studios and gallery space in the Wicker Park community, on a much smaller scale these artists maximize exposure by working together. They pooled customer mailing lists and worked together to promote the open studio events, handing out and posting show announcements in the neighborhood, even placing stacks of them at local businesses. During the field work period, not everyone worked equally hard, or brought as much to the table in these marketing collaborations, and who was willing to collaborate with whom shifted from opening to opening, making the group rather ephemeral, with artists seeking and trying new partners. The marketing success of events varied, but artists did manage to sell pieces and attendance at an opening certainly exceeded twenty if not thirty people.

These openings are not only a strategy to counter partial or complete exclusion from more visible dedicated gallery spaces, but they gain artists a degree of control and profit they do not have in more formal gallery settings. TK explained that most standing galleries take a 50 percent cut of the selling price, so the artist has to decide how much he needs to make from the work, and that price gets doubled. This process can reduce sales, or result in artists making less than they would like from a sale if the price comes down. When selling at home studio shows, the host artist charges 10 percent on each sale, well below gallery rates. It is enough of a fee to make the host happy and low enough to make the artists happy.

In the case of artists who also have or have had pieces in standing galleries, home studio shows are in part a subcategory of a larger phenomenon - formally affiliated artists either dropping a formal affiliation to market their own work and services or offering individual services out of their homes to supplement services at more formal commercial and nonprofit locations. The home space serves as a "development" venue for a variety of artistic activities that are being commercialized, albeit on a small scale. We observed this in at least six instances across visual arts, quilting, writing, and music. In one instance a quilting instructor left her teaching job at a quilt shop to start offering advanced workshops out of her basement studio at home. The motivation for severing ties can include not only the desire to keep a larger share of profits, but a sense of having learned enough to be able to do one's own promotion, or even a sense of being able to do



better than the gallery, store, or organization. This feeling was summed up well by EX a South Side visual artist:

ML: So not having to deal with them is a position you have worked to get yourself into?

EX: Yeah, and I'm a serious business person. I've worked on my selling skills.

An example of offering supplementary services is that of a drumming instructor teaching at a North Side music school. To supplement the classes, he offered free practice ensembles to select students at his house to supplement the classes. In addition to these ensembles he gave extra help to students who ask, which can include viewing his drum video library, and, for a minimal fee, receiving drum repair lessons and supplies. Student visits to the instructor's home could take on the serious air of practice when a recital was approaching, or a casual air of fun, hanging out after class. His marketing angle seems to be that he gains loyal audience for his advanced ensemble, and the drumming shows they promote around town that include guest artists from around the world.

A growing aspect of home-based commercial arts activities that we did not have time to investigate is the use of computers to generate music, visual arts, and "zines" or other forms of writing. The transmission of these artistic products across cyber space represents an entirely new way of arts production and dissemination and warrants further study.

The potential relaxed nature of homes and home-based events is reflected in modes of presentation. At the South Side open studio events, friends and family were usually more inclined to stay for an extended period, a fact which combined with openings being in artists' homes, the serving of food, and the playing of recorded music to give openings the festive air of a party for artists to show off their works. Parties with an art focus were not just for marketing. We encountered five instances of in-home parties organized to display art works or for performances in cases where artists desired an audience but were not engaged in marketing.

For example, a South Side rap group looking to have their own performance, instead of sharing the stage as usual at a university talent show, threw a successful basement party and performance at the large home of a family friend. Parties such as this were for the usual reasons (holidays and birthdays), but performance and display sometimes were a planned or spontaneous element as when a basement drum circle/jam session started at a 40-person birthday party for two drummers. Three of the parties were annual events and were encountered as part of the at-large fieldwork outside of the case studies proper. One, a holidays party in a North Side home, was a designed opportunity for people of different ethnicities, ages, professions, and genders to come together and share feelings and life experiences by sharing mostly original works, writings, and rituals. The second example involves South Side academic journal editor TD, who used to make

jewelry of her own design for a downtown arts and crafts store where she worked for a time. She still makes jewelry in her free time. A friend of hers is an engineer who creates music using musical toys he buys at drug and department stores, wiring these “instruments” together, and assembling their sounds into larger songs. The jewelry-maker and friends collaborate with him on an annual music video by coming up with story lines, acting, and doing costume design. The video is shown as a countdown to midnight at a New Years Eve party at the apartment of the jewelry maker. In the final instance, the jewelry maker and her husband drive to Buffalo N.Y. each Halloween with other Chicagoans, to the home of a friend who is an award- winning illustrator. The party there includes a costume competition with original artwork as prizes. TD has won one of the top three prizes most years, going against competition that includes a costume designer who has worked at Chicago’s Lyric Opera.

### **Informal Artists As Audience For Formal Arts**

Not surprisingly, informal artists frequently attend performances or see art exhibits at both formal and informal venues. Among survey respondents, 60 percent had attended performances at a park or other open-air facility within the past year, 58 percent had visited a museum, 48 percent had gone to the theater, 45 percent had seen a performance at a college or university, and 40 percent had gone to a gallery show. Clubs, coffee houses, concert halls and dinner theaters were also popular. A little over 50 percent of respondents indicated that they had been very inspired by attendance at artistic events. Ethnographers recorded numerous instances of study participants speaking of performances they had seen, places they were going, and sharing reviews of shows or individual artists. Lacking however, was any recognition or outreach effort on the part of arts institutions in the formal sector to these informal arts organizations as part of a coherent audience building strategy.

Informal artists are an important audience for formal and informal artists and arts organizations. Although 83 per cent of the survey respondents indicated that newspapers were where they had learned of the events they attended, the next highest rankings were word of mouth—group members, other artists, or friends and family.

- A Drum circle participant attended "great" plays because his girlfriend works in theater and knows "where the good stuff is because she has the inside track".
- Another drummer attended orchestra hall to hear a drummer that the drum circle facilitator had recommended.
- A retired lawyer and painter told a painting classmate about a carillon concert at a university chapel which they attended with other friends and family, bringing a group of six audience members.

Seventy six percent of survey respondents indicated that they attend art events more often because of their own arts experience. We also found that informal artists pick

and choose among formal art events based on interests they have developed as artists. Almost fifty-one percent of the survey respondents reported that their attendance at artistic events or displays have “Very Much” inspired their own arts activities, while 39.52 percent agreed that attendance “Somewhat” inspired their arts activities.

- A rapper attended a concert of a famous rapper and then talked about how he would like to collaborate with him.
- An actress who worked as a nurse goes to the Goodman Theater because she wants to see actors like Brian Dennehy or Julie Harris.
- A master puppeteer put it this way, “I go to puppet shows and I’m always looking for techniques to use.”

The formal art events participants attend are often parts of larger informal events such as conventions, festivals, and conferences and it is often their regular art activities’ facilitators/instructors who tell them about these events. Interestingly, an added attraction of seeing formal artists in these informal venues is that the attendees, at some point in the event, also get to participate. For example, a community drum circle was held nightly at a Canadian music festival.

- Drummers heard Mickey Hart (Grateful Dead percussionist) play at a New York drum festival, which was also celebrating the birthday of a master drummer.
- A church choir member attended a jazz festival in Cancun and hears top name performers.
- At a Chicago writer’s conference, participants heard former United States Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky read his poetry.
- A master puppeteer attended a Chicago Puppet Festival where there are internationally known performers.
- Quilters from the guild attended an annual national quilt show in Paducah Kentucky where they saw over 100 quilts by master quilters, attended lectures and bought fabrics, equipment and other supplies.

In addition to performances and exhibits, participants in the study are also a market for consuming products of formal artists. Choir members purchased, actors bought scripts, and drummers and other musicians invested in instruments. Drummers, for example, buy drums and a myriad of other percussive instruments at music stores, restaurants, festivals, and from instructors and other drummers, in order to make their music. Incorporating other work into one's own artistic transformation was also seen with a master puppeteer who used Michael Jackson's music in one of the puppet shows she created. Vinyl records are purchased by rappers and DJ's for use in their sampling and for compiling “mixed tapes” of raps for sale at record stores that support “underground” hip hop. Quilters purchase Designer fabrics, including Afrocentric designs, at conventions and local shows for inclusion into their own quilt designs.

A considerable amount of money is spent on art materials, including these kind of raw materials that are then transformed by the informal artist during the artistic process. This

occurs of course at the more formal end of the continuum also, where we find master artists using the art of others. The Bosnian puppeteer uses an adaptation of *The Emperor and the Nightingale*, for example, in her puppetry staging of that fairy tale. The Mexican folk musician, on the other hand, finds very little in the way of traditional Mexican folk sheet music, and so does his own arrangements, based on songs he's collected throughout his homeland. In addition, he also composes music.

### **Informal Artists Strive To Obtain A Foothold In The Formal Arts**

Finally, the ethnographers documented a variety of efforts and strategies used by artists in the informal sphere to attain more of a foothold in the formal sphere, either through recognition by non-profit institutions or through commercial production. Barriers to entry are high and success in traversing the continuum is anecdotal and episodic. Musicians produced their own compact discs which they distributed free or sold at clubs, and other performance venues, and radio stations; groups strove to perform at venues that would give them more visibility; visual artists banded together to put on shows in rented or bartered gallery spaces; actors auditioned for roles in major productions as well as in community theaters; and poets and writers either self-published their works or submitted them to literary journals.

**Every Artist Needs An Audience.** For the artists seeking visibility, public parks, libraries, artist organizations, and museums were often important links to that kind of exposure. Sixty five percent of survey respondents had performed or had their art work displayed in free sites while forty eight percent had done so in public spaces.

- An individual artist joined an artist's organization, which links her to a non-profit gallery.
- A jeweler showed in a non-profit gallery via the painting instructor at the park.

In the case of the writing group, the multiple roles of the sponsoring organization are seen clearly:

The non-profit sponsor of the writing group used the library as a link in finding group participants. The non-profit then linked the writers to the audiences the writers sought—at conferences, the Chicago Cultural Center, television, etc. The library then supported the writers via personal encouragement and reminders as to their class schedule.

For the informal arts groups that we worked with, group members are a built-in audience. Participants in quilting circles or painting classes, for example, also serve as spectators for each other's work. Though this may be a factor in attracting participants to the groups, this may not always suffice as far as exposure goes.

In the case below, CE, a drummer, reflects upon the importance of visibility. These reflections came at a time when he had been passed over for a position in a professional ensemble.

“Yea, after awhile I tend to hold up my standards against those of professional musicians and try to see if I'm marketable or any of that. Not that I have ever tried making money with music, but I think I can't continue unless someone is willing to listen.

Most of the arts I would think of getting involved in, need appreciation. I think anytime anyone creates anything (the goal) is to communicate an idea, and if the artist doesn't get it across, the artist might tend to give up. Most would say, they create because they need to--that it's something inside the self--but on other side is the audience. Every artist needs an audience.”

College radio stations, record stores, and clubs are also providing hip hop and rock artists with access to audiences via air time, open microphones, and concerts. College radio stations were often described as less “censored” and aired more Chicago talent than commercial radio stations. On air concerts were broadcast and guest hip hop deejays were provided air time, on the shows of hip hop DJ's with regular shows. In addition, one DJ's web site provides a place for discussion and question and answer sessions between himself and listeners. At one college station, regular DJ's have access to the station's record library and station DJ's were given free records by industry publications for submitting the list of the top 30 songs they play. One record store allowed DJ's to “shop” for free records, because the radio station provided advertising in return. In the course of the study we encountered at least three record stores that hosted in store concert/promotions by local hip hop artists and the same number of clubs that had weekly hip hop open microphone events for artists to come up on stage and take a turn performing.

Stores and clubs were not always accessible to hip hop artists. Artists encountered high charges for display advertising (\$500) at even a “supportive” record store, and one artist was kept from performing at a club due to the high deposit required by the club owner. In the example that follows, a boycott strategy was attempted in order to pressure a large blues club to feature local talent:

- In this case, as a rapper talked of the lack of venues and the Chicago scene, he explained how the House of Blues was boycotted but a Chicago grown famous rapper didn't honor the boycott.

“Now people are coming up to me with CDs and even with shrink rap and bar codes even, but we need venues. That House of Blues boycott was weak. I mean they said that the House of Blues wasn’t showcasing local talent. Common (nationally noted rapper from Chicago) performed there anyway. The boycott wasn’t focused and it was ineffective. But we have independent labels here. People are starting to come to Chicago to get talent.”

**Taking It To Another Level: Obstacles and Strategies.** The continuum concept is especially useful when we examine the aspirations of informal artists. For example, an artist will talk about taking her poetry to “another” level instead of the “next” level”. These aspirations are more about being the best they can be, i.e. improving skills than about reaching a pre-determined rung on a ladder to success.

In the case below, OT, an African American woman, with a 10 year old child, talks about her goals, plus the obstacles and the assistance she gets along the way. She is a member of the library-based writer’s group. Though she appreciates the sponsor publishing her writing in the journal, she aspires to have a book of her poems published.

“Number one for me, and I can’t speak for anybody else--I’ve found that since I am not a college student or have any degrees standing behind me -- I am just an ordinary person who chose to do this -- it is very easy for people to overlook me and not take me seriously. People can say, ‘so she likes to write, so what? It’s just a hobby. That is just a hobby for her.’ I think people shouldn’t be that way JUST because I don’t have any degrees behind me. People shouldn’t take what I do as a joke, because it is no laughing matter to me. I am very serious about it. I think that there should be some things out there for people like me. It is hard for me to get help with certain things like funding, because I don’t have the degrees. It is hard for me to know where or what help I need to do to take my poetry and my writing to another level.”

She goes on to say how she reached out to a prominent African American museum director and artists for advice and encouragement as she strategized to get a book of her poems published.

“What I mean by that is that is why I am having the poetry readings at my home. I know that you heard of Dr. Margaret Burroughs, the founder of the DuSable Museum. She suggested to me that I should support myself though raising funds with poetry readings so that I can take my work to another level. So this is what I have to do to get recognition and exposure...my dream and my goal is to have a book of poetry of my own. It is not easy for me to do that simply because I don't have the know-how, I don't know the right people. I don't have certain contacts or whatever.”

Another strategy used by artists is to become their own managers and promoters. Only sixteen percent of those responding to the survey said they had hired a promoter or manager.

In the case below, to get the visibility he wants, a rapper's vision included assuming the role of manager and promoter, while he also valued collaboration with a more renowned artist. He also refers to the segmented Chicago market as an obstacle. This is explained in more detail below.

“I want to be able to hype up a crowd. Want to make bounce music, hype music. Want it to be like underground club rap. Want to be an all around man... make beats, manage, and promote. I never actually set out to be a rapper, but I would get on the microphone. Now I want to do it seriously. Now I see that I can do things myself. We are soldiers. If there are too many people, it fucks things up... We always gonna expand... Yeah, Chicago is opening up. We got rappers, but we ain't got one style. Until Twista (Chicago rapper) comes out, he may break down the barriers (in hip hop and between areas). But he doesn't even have a record deal. I went to his concert. It was dope. I'd like to collaborate with him.”

**Making money doing art.** Many artists on the continuum work various arts-related jobs in order to do their art as their work. Part of this strategy involves maintaining a low-expense type lifestyle. In the following example, theater director KU explains how quitting her office job means she can be satisfied artistically. College-educated at DePaul and the daughter of a factory worker, she lives on the Southwest Side with her boyfriend CH who drives delivery truck and because of KU has also become active in theater. KU now makes a living by directing at various

community and high school theaters and teaching high school acting and technical seminars.

“Part of the argument for CH is that I can be personally happy if I'm doing this. And it was a big cut, cutting my income by one-half. But he knew that it was my ultimate goal to work full time in theater. And we thought, why not do it now while we could do it and (not notice a big change in lifestyle). Why not do it while we're still at a limited level (of income). So there would be no big change in lifestyle. We had nothing before, we have nothing now. So it's not like jumping off a cliff. If I had stayed working (at insurance) then we would have gotten to a (higher income level) and would have noticed the difference more. The most important thing for CH is that I get to do theater...he knows that I'm miserable and then he can't make me happy if I'm not doing it (theater).

In the case below it also means managing success in order to maintain control of the process and creative freedom. KB, who is a South Side painter, illustrator, Zine self-publisher, musician, and college radio DeeJay; pieces together a living doing his creative work.

“Honestly, I'm not that ambitious. I don't want more success beyond what I'm doing; that would require that I go to a whole 'nother level of involvement (and time commitment) with the promotion or (turning it over to other people). Doing this show does not cost me any money; in other things I do, I make as much as it cost me, or even make a little money. I have no ambition to make more. Success to me is not losing money...I could do everything a little better with money.”

One of the obstacles on the way to making money is finding and selling to the market. This often requires middlemen, who can also become obstacles. One of KB's zine distributors was a well-known underground comic store in New York. KB had to stop distributing to this store because the owner rarely paid him,



leading KB to conclude that this store owner knew he could take advantage of self-publishers because he knew they had limited visible outlets for their work.

In the case below a rapper explains how the segregated city and lack of venues pose obstacles to developing a local following, which he sees as crucial to the recording industry, who controls the marketing nationally. He also explains one of the strategies for changing the situation and why it didn't work.

“It's real divided here. Each part of town has a different sound. You have like a Do or Die or Crucial Conflict, they have their sound. Common is like South Side. And the North, like Wicker Park where we were Sunday is trendy. Up North they have a different flow.

The support issue is different here. It has a lot to do with the way that the music industry works. People are getting clued up to the business side of things. People want to take things to the next level, but they think that they will get a record deal. That people will just give them a deal. We've got to make our own noise. Your own people have to support you first. You've got to shop this to major labels.”

From the late nineties until now, Chicago rappers have seen some greater commercial success than in earlier years, with Common and a handful of others having signed contracts with major labels. Not all these arrangements lasted, however, and they are the exception rather than the rule. Common left for New York after becoming successful. What he said at an event sponsored by the American Society of Contemporary Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) suggested that he wanted to work with established commercial rappers there and on the East Coast in general. (He said he needed to go where the business was located, and while visiting in New York found people there who wanted to work with him.) Few study participants seem to fault him for leaving, considering it to be a result of the lack of support rappers find in Chicago. In fact, while some issues such as lack of respect by major labels and the need to send out more talent scouts are cited as part of the problem, just as pervasive and more emphasized is the opinion that Chicago must support its own people if anyone outside (labels or audiences) is going to be expected to take notice. While some talk about there being a “Chicago sound,” (less sampling and more melody is one description), others talk of the need to have a person lead the way in creating a sound, or the need to develop a distinct popular sound and the acts that can carry it forward. The failure to have a unified, popular local scene is on the one hand attributed to factionalism of parts of the

city and neighborhoods – expressed in more specific terms as a function of gangs, race, and/or loyalties to regional style differences within the city. On the other hand, it is linked to lack of local infrastructure, including no dedicated rap radio stations like in New York, and, more importantly, not enough venues promoting and providing performance space to local artists.

All of the hip hop study participants, except BQ, are currently involved in performing and/or producing hip hop or other forms of music, the majority in both. This is in part a response to the lack of label attention, and of people taking matters into their own hands. A man and woman production team even host networking socials to connect local people in the music industry, so they are trying to create the unified front they believe Chicago needs to get national attention and distribution. Like these producers, a hip hop duo we observed performing at an industry sponsored talent show want to make it on the national scene, and so they try to get distribution and marketing contracts with national labels. At the same time, they want to have enough control over their music to make the profits. They have worked through the performers union (ASCAP) to get copyright control over their own music, so they will collect the royalties on sales. There are those in the local scene taking not just the production and copyrights into their own hands, but also the distribution and marketing of their music. Soldiers At War (SAW), recently profiled on *Artbeat Chicago*, is the best known example in Chicago of this kind of self marketing, selling over 500,000 copies of their last CD out of the backs of their cars at major intersections on the South and West Sides. Within our study CF displayed this level of commitment to self-promotion and avoiding big recording industry labels. He has not had the success of SAW, but during the fieldwork he did hold an in store concert at a North Side national chain record store.

Most of these rapper/producer participants are guardedly optimistic that the Chicago scene may be about to “blow-up,” often giving one form or another of the basic explanation that L.A., New York, and Atlanta rappers - who have enjoyed some recent commercial success - are getting tired and have run their course. Even though the metaphor “blowing up” may sound like something sudden is expected, most expect to have to be patient to see the extended process that has started in the last few years with Common, Da Brat, Xtreme, and others. Most acknowledge that there are no guarantees, and people who expect to be handed contracts, or get rich are unrealistic. Those who continue to struggle as rappers say they have to create music for the love of it.

Some participants, like CF, see a sharp division between the commercial and underground Rap scene, even as these spheres constitute a continuum with respect to most performers/producers’ quests for success. At the ASCAP and East of the Ryan events, local record-store owners, especially George Daniels, were given credit for supporting local acts. The journalist, Mark Armstrong, pointed out that this is limited support, in that George charges \$500 to post promotional materials in his store, and does not sell the mixed tapes party DJ’s compile and sell (personal communication). These tapes help otherwise invisible local acts get heard. NHS of F gives more credit to college radio for playing underground hip-hop, calling a popular radio station, WGCI, too commercial.

Most participants we talked to proudly claimed the underground label to describe their own work. This is not only an owning of the fact that they do not have contracts with major record companies, but a way of simultaneously claiming artistic superiority and constructing an argument for inclusion in the commercial sphere. If the themes of commercial rap have become tired, are empty, and narrow, then you have an argument for including other voices and sounds. Beyond that, if someone never makes it commercially, there is still the ability to feel aesthetically superior to what you didn't gain access to. In a particular extreme example of distancing from commercial rap and claiming creative superiority, BQ sees hip hop as a cultural system which in his view excludes the legitimacy of music created with overly commercial concerns, i.e. writing insincere lyrics with the goal of selling records, instead of honestly portraying one's own life experience in music, which is what he and his crew had always done. They performed at a universities talent shows and a basement party, but had no success finding a record deal. He did not see pursuing a record deal as hypocritical. In his view, some commercially successful hip hop is sincere and has merit, but he then does not apply the pejorative term "commercial Hip hop" to that music.

To summarize, artists across the informal part of the continuum have different opinions, strategies, and ambitions about gaining a foothold in the formal sector and what its benefits or drawbacks might be. While some wanted more exposure for their work, others wanted to achieve commercial success. Still others were not dissatisfied with earning a low level of income from their art, while maintaining the flexibility or freedom that came from remaining in the informal sector. The complexity of these perspectives and strategies imply that the relationship between the formal and informal sectors is not a straight linear flow but rather a fluid and unpredictable process. For this reason, the visualization of the continuum as a moebius strip is appropriate, in that it draws attention to the inter-connectedness of the different sectors.

**Special case: Ethnic and folk arts organizations.** While individual artists sometimes attempt to cross into the formal sector of the arts continuum, "informal" arts organizations or groups themselves sometimes seek to transform themselves. At what point do organizations (as opposed to individuals) move from the more informal sphere into the more formal sphere and how do they do so? The example of Steppenwolf Theater, which did so early in its career, was mentioned above in the piece on Hull House. Another well-known example in Chicago is Lookingglass Theater, which also started as a small ensemble of like-minded theater students and will soon be permanently housed in the Water Tower building, under an agreement with the City. Lookingglass Theater recently premiered playwright Mary Zimmerman's *Metamorphoses*, which was later nominated for a Tony Award on Broadway in 2002. There are, of course, many such examples, and indeed, much of arts policy has been directed toward building and fortifying arts institutions (c.f. Rabkin, 2002). In the course of this research, we were able to document, in part, the "formalization" particularly of ethnic (alternatively folk) arts and crafts groups. Such groups have a special, in some ways more difficult relationship with the formal arts end of the continuum because of their placement at the

margins of the art world that has resulted from the historical privileging of European arts forms and traditions (c.f. Price, 1989; Sholette, 2002).

Quilting, African Drumming, Mexican Guitar, Irish and Spanish Dance are all examples of art forms rooted in folk traditions that have been undergoing institutionalization in the United States starting at various times in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. South Asian Dance, which has an ancient “formal” trajectory in India and Chinese classical music are in a similar category because of their lack of status in the United States. In these art forms, particular masters were not people generally recognized by institutional affiliation or degrees but simply by reputation for their performance skills. For those art forms that originated in other countries and were transported to the United States by immigrants, practice waxed and waned with the waxing and waning of the significance of ethnic affiliation (c.f. DiLeonardo, 1984)

Institutionalization has been driven by efforts to popularize, preserve, and elevate the prestige of these arts and their practitioners, in part to create a recognized space for career artists in the formal arts world. It should be noted that these art forms have also been undergoing institutionalization in their countries of origin. Such institutionalization is often linked with nationalistic attempts to “iconize” folk traditions into representations of national identity. Thus, for example, the *Ballet Folklorico Nacional de Mexico* is a formal arts institution in Mexico with an international reputation. In India, what used to be temple dance and also folk dance are now incorporated into the classical repertoires of traveling troupes or individual artists. Similarly, the “Lords of the Dance” and other Irish-based dance companies have become popular both in Ireland and internationally.

Institutionalization in the United States for these ethnic or folk-based arts, however, generally necessitates linkage with mainstream formal arts organizations, or with some form of official accreditation or legitimization. The result is that in these arts practices, we found participants in informal activities with links to more formal institutions, both those representing “mainstream” or “Euro-centered” art as well as those established organizations within these ethnic/folk genres. For example:

- An Irish Dance instructor interviewed by one of the ethnographers received her certification from The Irish Dance Commission out of Dublin after taking an exam.
- In quilting over the last three decades, increasingly organizations like the American Quilting Society organize and host national and important regional competitions and exhibitions. By recognizing separate professional and amateur categories they help to establish the professional reputations of a body of skilled quilters. The American Quilting Society defines a professional as: "someone who either teaches quiltmaking, judges quilts, has written a book on quiltmaking, sells or designs quilts as a profession, or has won Best of Show or Blue Ribbon in two or more major competitions. A person exhibiting as a professional cannot return to the amateur division." The AQS has been hosting an annual show for 17 years, and attendance at the 2001 show was 34,000 up from 7,000 the first year. At these annual shows,

there are juried events and prizes awarded. Professional quilters are a large proportion of those who travel nationally and internationally offering quilting presentations and workshops at local guilds.

- Independent of any one ethnic drumming tradition, there is currently a national drum circle movement. Drumming has the same kind of integration as quilting between national and local organizations and personnel that provide the networks for nationally and internationally recognized drummers to make a career of teaching drummers in various places. Also like quilting, this is not always an elite event in which masters teach only advanced students affiliated with dedicated art institutions. Rather workshops are opened to wide audiences as part of popularizing specific forms. Mickey Hart, former drummer for the Grateful Dead, was one of the founders of a drum circle promotion organization. Arthur Hall, a commercially successful session drummer in his own right, is affiliated with the organization and author of a best selling book on drum circle facilitation. He offers facilitation workshops around the country, including in Hawaii, attended by one of our case study participants. Hall offered a workshop weekend in Chicago in 1998. A case study participant was instrumental in bringing him to Chicago, and helped facilitate at the workshop. Other drummers who are still participants at the North Side circle attended the three-day workshop.
- There is another informal drumming activity that is popular right now along side ethnic drumming traditions and drum circles, although it overlaps somewhat with the other two. It is sometimes loosely referred to as new age drumming, and practitioners use their own specific terms like “spirit drumming.” Practitioners explicitly connect drumming to emotional healing, catharsis, and spiritual self-knowledge. As with other popular drumming forms, local organizations bring in nationally known experts to lead weekend long workshops in drumming and dance. Workshops are opened to all interested individuals who meet a minimal number of prerequisites, i.e. having taken a preliminary workshop lead by local facilitators first.

Linkage or collaboration with established formal arts institutions brings opportunities and challenges:

- Several of the groups or Master practitioners we interviewed or observed had linked with formal arts organizations such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO). In one case, a South Asian dance troupe negotiated to perform with the Symphony for the Children’s Concert series. This matinee performance took place in Orchestra Hall and the dances were set to both traditional South Asian music and to Western classical music. After the performance, the director of the troupe informed us that it had been difficult to get the Orchestra to agree to let the Indian musicians share the stage, (for a number of reasons such as union regulations, cost, limited rehearsal time, as well as perceptions about the “place” of Indian music in relation to Western music), but that she was appreciative of the opportunity to reach a wider

audience. Although the program was considered “lighter fare” for a family audience, it nevertheless represented an opening for the local group.

- In another instance, a Mexican guitar Master and his apprentice performed together with members of the CSO at a high school as part of the CSO’s outreach program. The Chinese Master musicians have performed at Ravinia and at the Art Institute. Initially the Art Institute brought them in to perform short pieces in the Chinese art galleries as a way of “enriching” the viewing experience (these were during interpretive tours when stories about the statuary were being told). The musicians were eventually able to persuade the Institute to let them have proper concerts in the auditorium.
- The Spanish Flamenco Dancer has had a fruitful relationship with Northern Illinois University, which facilitates rehearsal and performance space. She also teaches classes at the University.
- Both the Art Institute and the CSO host world music programs which incorporate these local artists. The CSO’s “day of music” celebration (a sort of 24 hour music marathon held at Orchestra Hall) was also cited by our informants as an important opportunity to showcase their art.

In addition to these links with established organizations, some have started their own organizations. The Spanish and South Asian Dance masters and the Mexican guitar master are examples of this. Others in Chicago, though not interviewed formally for this study include the Muntu Dance Theater of Chicago, and the Trinity Irish Dance Company. All of these perform on a regular basis at a variety of venues, including ethnic arts festivals, other music festivals, in museums, at concert halls, and even at private events. They also teach classes and thus provide the opportunity for entry into art to both youth and adults. It is interesting to note the variety of ways in which these organizations started:

- In the case of the Spanish, South Asian and Mexican masters, all were highly trained professionals in their art before they started their organizations. The Spanish Dance master had roots in an artistic family and had trained in professional dance studios. Her ensemble celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2001. The Mexican master guitarist had started out studying anthropology as a young college student in Mexico but switched to music. He eventually left school and obtained further training in music through apprenticeships and self-study. He traveled throughout Mexico learning different music styles and also worked for the Mexican government promoting Mexican music and interchange within different regions. He initially came to the United States on a tour and eventually decided to stay here permanently. Together with another musicologist who teaches at The Old Town School of Music, he founded a music ensemble that performs a variety of regional music from Mexico. The South Asian master dancer started dancing when she was six years old and went on to learn choreography. In 1974, after settling in the United States, she founded a South Asian dance school and later the non-profit organization that now encompasses the school and dance company. Currently, the company includes 20 dancers and does frequent performances and outreach programs throughout Chicago.

- The Muntu Dance Theater of Chicago which celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2002, started as an informal group of African-American drummers and dancers who used to convene in a South Side park to learn and practice African dance and music. As one of our informants (a drummer who no longer is part of Muntu ) described it:

Drums I studied with the Sun Drummers who then became the Muntu Dance people. Sun Drummers were a group that birthed Muntu. It all started at The Point, the place (in Hyde Park) where drummers gather and then went beyond congas to African ancestry and libations and soaking drums... So I learned from Sun Drummers...A good percentage went into Muntu. Drummers would go to Washington Park field house and sisters would dance. And then they decided to put on a performance. I danced with Muntu for a short period. Some of these ventures out of the past and the artistic revival then were very powerful things in the Black community. It was the 60's and 70's and there were (issues of ) black identity and African ancestry and political stuff and the drum was the essence of who you were as African. And it was seen as the heart of the culture and drummers were seen as the elite.

From these beginnings, Muntu Dance Theater of Chicago has persisted and attracted many professionally trained African drummers to teach workshops and perform. Finally the Company was afforded the opportunity to have a permanent “home” space in a new building constructed with funds from the Empowerment Zone Program. Construction will begin in 2002.

An issue that some of these organizations struggle with as they institutionalize and gain in reputation is the relationship to tradition and the question of “authenticity” of the art form. Within the broader context of understanding the relationship between tradition and change in art forms, the questions facing these organizations are shaped by their multi-faceted relationships to the processes of change in the home countries, arts practice in the United States, and their own creative desires.<sup>15</sup> During the course of the study, we came across several instances of these struggles:

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<sup>15</sup> It is not our intention here to review a significant body of literature in anthropology and ethnomusicology on this topic, but rather to report on the instances we observed and analyzed with respect to the relationship between the informal and formal areas of the arts continuum.

- The South Asian Dance Company members participated in a two day conference on the transformation and significance of the classical Indian Dance form, the *Bharatanatyam*. During the conference, attended by one of the ethnographers, students and apprentices discussed with long-established masters the degree to which they could deviate from the “pure” dance forms, both to accommodate their creativity and to make the dance more accessible to United States audiences. The question about how much to innovate is shaped by the need to maintain and preserve ethnic identity within a context of marginalization.
- The Spanish Dance Ensemble founder also spoke of the tension between preserving authentic form and changing practices in the diaspora. She stated during an interview:

And so there are others out there doing Flamenco, but you have to be careful. Flamenco can be cheapened. My dancers want to do new things. And so I encourage them to do new things, but I never let them get away from the (core traditions). Like the poster is just coming out now for Rythmos Unidos. United Rhythm. We invite dancers from Mexico, Argentina and Columbia. And we'll do a dialogue with the slides like we did with the (other) show. And so we'll take you to the coast of Argentina and then the dancers from there and (same with Columbia and Mexico) and then we'll dance also.

She always incorporates a classical “deep song” in the ensemble’s performances but also mixes in “more entertaining” pieces.

- In an interview, the Mexican guitarist stated that playing Mexican guitar music was easier in the United States than in Mexico:

For me, in Mexico it was harder. To be an artist, here in Chicago, it is easy. I’m lucky. I think because it’s multicultural. All the people recognize my work. I think it’s the city. Not the state or the Midwest. I think it’s the city.

In both Mexico and the United States, he perceives that people are listening more to mainstream American (i.e. commercially produced popular) music rather than their own folk traditions. He believes that it is important to expose youth to the classical and folk traditions of Mexican music and teaching and outreach projects either through Urban Gateways or through collaboration with the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra are important vehicles for doing that.

- The Chinese master musicians also discussed their dilemmas within their own community—they are often asked to play at weddings or other occasions but



not treated as serious musicians. They struggle with recruiting students and maintaining audiences within the Chinese community.

Another, slightly different perspective on this issue comes from the experiences and work of artists who are struggling with issues of ethnic identity but are not using “traditional” art forms from their home countries. While we did not formally include these artists in our case studies, we did observe some performances that we report on here:

- *I was Born with Two Tongues* is an ensemble of Asian-American poets, perform at open microphone events and poetry slams and have produced their own CD. Recently, one of their members was showcased in a public radio feature on emerging new artists in Chicago. The group’s poetry reflects on their struggles as young people born in the United States and facing hostility, oppression and persisting “exoticization”. The spoken word performance (including poetry slams) is a relatively new type of art form, which emerged at another interstice between formal and informal areas on the continuum. They occur in a variety of settings—parks, the streets, coffee houses, bookstores, and jazz or other music clubs, among others. A feature film (*Slam*) was made about aspects of the phenomena, even as both slams and spoken word performances are debated in academic and literary critic circles about their status as an art form. *I was born with Two Tongues* draws on hip-hop aesthetics as well as Asian aesthetic forms to convey the group’s emotions. The poets are speaking about deeply personal but also political experiences through spoken work performance *and* reaching beyond “traditional” ethnic aesthetic forms. *I was born with Two Tongues’* work, thus, illustrates the complex interrelationship between transformative processes shaping ethnic identity and identity politics and specific emerging art forms.
- A group of young Korean-Americans is sponsored by the two-year old Korean-American Cultural Center and write and perform theatrical pieces about their experiences trying to resolve their tensions with holding on to a Korean identity while incorporating “American” cultural practices. Their work speaks of young peoples’ pain that comes from being simultaneously criticized by their elders for “losing” traditions of their homelands and by their peers for not being enough “American”, no matter how hard they try. The piece was performed at The Field Museum as part of its’ Cultural Connections Program.

As groups such as the ones described above continue to find ways to gain footholds, formalize their practices and stabilize resources, they also continue to serve as critical bridges between the informal and formal sectors of the continuum. Through public performances, the courses they teach, community workshops, presentations at symposia and other academic events, they draw in new aspiring artists and provide youth with the opportunity to express themselves

and discover aspects of their identity and heritage. They provide the opportunity for new innovations, cutting edge practice in art and the reshaping of ethnicity.

In summary, all of the activities highlighted in this chapter make informal artists important contributors to the art economy: buying supplies, investing in training, paying admission fees and expanding the range of marketable art forms. Yet, by an large, they remain unrecognized as an important source of nurturance or even market for the formal arts sector.

## CONCLUSION

### POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Researchers discovered that, despite their positive characteristics and potential, the informal arts remain largely hidden from view, while the energy and creative contributions of artists in this part of the sector remain unrecognized and untapped. Obstacles such as scarce resources, insecurity of space, insufficient access to affordable training or production sites, and a dearth of information about existing opportunities are common. To remove these barriers, to enable greater participation and to fully realize the potential of the informal arts, the study authors offer a series of activism and policy recommendations.

- **Make The Informal Arts More Visible** – At the heart of all of the recommendations that follow is the need to take notice of these adult activities we call the informal arts and to see the processes they entail as examples of human imagination. Being creative is part of what makes us human. Acknowledging and claiming informal arts practice as an expression of creativity will fully recognize its value. As individuals, agencies, arts organization staff, or as policy makers we must find a way to see and talk about these arts activities as central to civic life.

Despite its popularity, informal arts practice remains largely hidden from view. Activists, civic leaders and leaders of arts communities, including those representing small to large-scale non-profit or commercial institutions, should make efforts to publicly recognize the value of informal arts practice. More inclusive terminology and practice is needed to insure that the continuous nature of arts production (rather than simplistic dichotomization) is valued and upheld.

In part, this will require clarity in the use of descriptive terms, especially those that carry multiple, sometimes pejorative meanings (i.e., “amateur” and “professional”, which may be used to simply distinguish employment status, but may also be interpreted as referring to levels of artistic proficiency). The authors of the study themselves found it a challenge to settle on neutral terminology. While informal arts participants are often self-taught, some are academy trained. Whether self-taught or school trained, some are highly accomplished, others less so. Some may not be equipped for a successful career in the arts; some choose not to pursue one, while others are impeded from achieving one. Yet others slip in and out of professional employment, but are involved in the informal arts throughout. Given the complexity, it will be particularly important to develop descriptive terms unburdened by intended or inadvertent pejorative meanings. In order to navigate this complexity, it will be helpful to understand the “informal” in informal arts as involving “process” and the “context” of art-making, not as a threshold matter, the “product” of the activity, not the characteristics of the artist’s training.

- **Integrate Arts Practice In Community Development** – The study demonstrated that the informal arts are prime spaces in which diverse people meet, interact, and go on to develop trust, make obligations, and meet expectations. In order to maximize the social impact of the informal arts, those interested in building community need to think of ways informal arts spaces can be part of that vision. When there are intergroup issues of trust and expectations, is there a

way that the informal arts can be incorporated to draw upon their latent potential for nurturing civic skills and inclinations?

The informal arts can be a significant component of strategies designed to expand and build upon social capital in communities. Many communities have abundant but underutilized capacity-building potential, including rich connective networks and other social assets. Yet, community development strategies are often focused exclusively on physical infrastructure and economic development, lacking intentional strategies to expand and build upon existing social structures. Policy makers, community activists, philanthropic entities and others working to invigorate civic life should make concerted efforts to integrate arts practitioners from across the continuum into asset-based community development efforts. Clearly, the creativity and problem-solving skills, the high level of civic-mindedness, and the personal satisfaction that artists demonstrate can be tapped for more effective approaches to improving both efficacy and expanding social capital. Linking arts practice to other aspects of urban development will serve to increase both the spaces of arts practice and the spaces for community empowerment.

- **Remove Barriers To Informal Participation And Enhance Access** – The study demonstrated that there are two kinds of participation in or access to informal arts practice that need attention. On one hand the data shows that adults are interested in trying their hand at a variety of arts practices and in improving their arts skills so there is a great need for access to informal opportunities for classes, studios, and workshops. The informal nature of the physical as well as the social space for these activities is crucial—relaxed, welcoming, inexpensive, and respectful of the creativity in all persons. On the other hand, we now understand that informal arts activities are often organized by the artists themselves; in other words, it is not so much an activity that needs to be delivered by agencies or individual culture workers to people as much as they are activities that need to be supported. The challenge will be to think of the informal arts as frequently occurring activities practiced by individuals or groups of individuals with ideas, creativity and vision who often need the time, space, and materials to bring all of that to fruition. The importance of disseminating information about informal arts classes as well as arts productions and presentations cannot be understated. Along with the other aforementioned resources, it is part of the infrastructure needed to support the informal arts.

To meet the high interest that clearly exists, public officials and urban planners should seek ways to facilitate access and provide opportunities for informal participation. Institutions that already intersect with informal arts practice should be supported in their efforts to sustain and expand activities. Classes and other arts programs in such public places as parks and local libraries, as well as in private venues such as neighborhood cultural centers and other community-based sites, need to be increased, not decreased. Cultural facilities, materials, equipment, educational opportunities and clear information should be made as widely available as possible, so that people who want to participate have an opportunity to do so in a variety of structured or unstructured ways.

- **Build More Effective Arts Advocacy Coalitions On Principles Of Cultural Democracy** – This study demonstrates that the formal and informal arts are inextricably intertwined. While the informal arts benefit from the formal arts in the way of providing training and inspiration, the formal arts benefit from the informal arts in the way of audiences and research and development. We suggest that there is more to lose in seeing the informal

sector as a competitor to scarce arts funding and dismissing the processes and products as “inferior” and “amateur”, than in seeing the art making processes as a continuum. While formal artists struggle to make a living and arts organizations strategize to develop new audiences, alliances that include such a popular activity as the informal arts would strengthen the overall positioning of arts in society and the case for the value of arts.

While arts advocacy has rightly promoted the civic benefits of strong non-profit and commercial arts organizations, these strategies should be expanded to include advocacy for the informal arts. If the arts are ever to be fully recognized for their contributions to the public interest, broader coalitions in support of the arts must coalesce across divides of professionalization and specialization. Sharing of increased resources, information and decision-making across the full span of the arts continuum will assist the development of such coalitions, and lead to more effective advocacy in support of the arts as necessary and vital components of civic life. For this to happen, cultural policies in support of informal practice must be developed that are compatible with the rights of all artists working professionally to be fairly compensated for the value of their creative work.

- **Collect Missing Data On Social Impact Of The Arts** – This study, though extensive and groundbreaking, is especially important as an initial survey of the informal arts; it shows us the lay of the land in the social world of informal arts practice.

Further research, both ethnographic and quantitative, needs to be conducted in Chicago and elsewhere, to collect systematic data on the assets created by arts production and the obstacles faced by artists. Trends in cultural policy limiting valuation of the arts activity to direct economic factors needs to be complemented by ongoing investigation into the mechanisms and pathways by which art making creates value in individual and civic contexts. Social science research of this character (i.e. on the social context of arts production) should be carried out, and will be essential if a strong political case is to be made for public and private economic support for the arts. Additionally, systematic measures need to be developed to determine the efficacy of arts practice as part of asset-creation and effective community development.

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# Appendices

## **Appendix I**

### **Data sets available from arts organizations**

The following four sections detail information on adult art activities and/or potential activity locations available from the Chicago Park District, Chicago Public Library, and the Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers. This information was publicly published or available upon request from the organizations.

#### **I. CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT PUBLISHED CULTURAL ARTS PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS SUMMER 2000**

Repeated entries indicate multiple sections of the same activity. Chicago Community Areas are indicated by the name and number officially recognized by Chicago's city government.

**Ada Park, 75 Morgan Park,**  
11250 S Ada, Chicago, IL, 60643  
Sponsored program:

- Gardening

**Altgeld Park, 28 Near West Side,**  
515 S Washtenaw, Chicago, IL, 60612  
Sponsored program:

- Arts & Culture
- Arts & Culture

**Athletic Field Park, 16 Irving Park,**  
3546 W Addison, Chicago, IL, 60618  
Sponsored program:

- Ceramics
- Ceramics
- Pottery
- Pottery

**Austin Town Hall, 25 Austin,**  
5610 W. Lake, Chicago, IL, 60644  
Sponsored program:

- Music
- Music

**Berger Park Cultural Center, 77**  
**Edgewater,**  
6205 N Sheridan, Chicago, IL, 60660

Sponsored program:

- Dance (Ballet)
- Dance (modern, Jazz)
- Drawing (Beginners)
- Drawing (Illustration)
- Drawing (Still Life)
- Jewelry Making
- Jewelry Making
- Multimedia
- Music (Ensemble - Jazz)
- Painting (Open Studio)
- Pottery
- Pottery
- Theatre
- Writing Workshop

**Brands Park, 21 Avondale,**  
3259 N Elston, Chicago, IL, 60618  
Sponsored program:

- Woodcraft
- Woodcraft

**Broadway Armory Park, 77 Edgewater,**  
5917 N Broadway, Chicago, IL, 60660  
Sponsored program:

- Photography

**Calumet Park, 52 East Side,**  
9801 South Avenue G, Chicago, IL, 60617  
Sponsored program:

- Woodcraft

**Chase Park, 3 Uptown,**  
4701 N Ashland, Chicago, IL, 60640  
Sponsored program:

- Theatre

**Daley Bicentennial Plaza, 32 Loop,**  
337 E Randolph, Chicago, IL, 60601  
Sponsored program:

- Dance (Salsa & Mambo)
- Dance (Salsa & Mambo)

**Dvorak Park, 31 Lower West Side,**  
1119 W Cullerton, Chicago, IL, 60608  
Sponsored program:

- Arts & Crafts
- Arts & Crafts
- Music (Instrumental)
- Photography

**Edison Park, 9 Edison Park,**  
6755 N Northwest Hwy, Chicago, IL, 60631  
Sponsored program:

- Cultural Arts
- Music

**Emmerson Park, 77 Edgewater,**  
1820 W Granville, Chicago, IL, 60660  
Sponsored program:

- Gardening

**Euclid Park, 73 Washington Heights,**  
9800 S Parnell, Chicago, IL, 60628

Sponsored program:

- Gardening

**Fuller Park, 37 Fuller Park,**  
331 W 45th St, Chicago, IL, 60609

Sponsored program:

- Arts & Crafts
- Music (Drum Lesson)

**Gill Park, 6 Lake View,**  
825 W Sheridan, Chicago, IL, 60613

Sponsored program:

- Stained Glass

**Gladstone Park, 11 Jefferson Park,**  
5421 N Menard, Chicago, IL, 60630

Sponsored program:

- Music (Guitar Instruction)
- Music (Guitar Instruction)
- Music (Piano)
- Music (Piano)

**Green Briar Park, 2 West Ridge,**  
2650 W Peterson, Chicago, IL, 60659

Sponsored program:

- Jewelry Making
- Jewelry Making
- Jewelry Making

**Holstein Park, 22 Logan Square,**  
2200 N Oakley, Chicago, IL, 60647

Sponsored program:

- Theatre

**Horner Park, 16 Irving Park,**  
2741 W Montrose, Chicago, IL, 60618

Sponsored program:

- Dance (Line Dancing)
- Music (Band)
- Woodcraft
- Woodcraft

**Jefferson Park, 11 Jefferson Park,**  
4822 N Long Ave, Chicago, IL, 60630

Sponsored program:

- Jewelry Making
- Music
- Music (Orchestra)

**Kenwood Community Park, 39 Kenwood,**  
1330 E 50th St, Chicago, IL, 60615

Sponsored program:

- Music (Hip Hop)

**Lincoln Park Cultural Center,**  
**7 Lincoln Park,**  
2045 N Lincoln Park West, Chicago, IL,  
60614

Sponsored program:

- Dance (Ballet - Basic)
- Dance (Ballet I)
- Dance (Ballet I)
- Dance (Ballet II)
- Dance (Ballet II)
- Dance (Jazz I)
- Drawing & Painting
- Gardening
- Jewelry Making (Lapidary)
- Jewelry Making (Lapidary)
- Music (Piano)
- Paper Arts
- Stained Glass

**Loyola Park, 1 Rogers Park,**  
1230 W Greenleaf, Chicago, IL, 60626

Sponsored program:

- Weaving (Drafting for Weavers)
- Weaving (Drafting for Weavers)
- Weaving (Drafting for Weavers)
- Weaving Studio
- Woodcraft

**Mann Park, 55 Hegewisch,**  
2949 E 131st St, Chicago, IL, 60633

Sponsored program:

- Woodcraft

**McGuane Park, 60 Bridgeport,**  
2901 S Poplar, Chicago, IL, 60608  
Sponsored program:

- Woodcraft
- Woodcraft

**Nash Community Center, 43 South Shore,**  
1833 E 71st St., Chicago, IL, 60649  
Sponsored program:

- Dance (Line Dancing)

**Norwood Park, 10 Norwood Park,**  
5801 N Natoma, Chicago, IL, 60631  
Sponsored program:

- Arts & Crafts
- Arts & Crafts
- Gardening

**Olympia Park, 9 Edison Park,**  
6566 N Avondale, Chicago, IL, 60631  
Sponsored program:

- Music (Piano)

**Palmer Park, 49 Roseland,**  
301 E 111th St, Chicago, IL, 60628  
Sponsored program:

- Ceramics
- Ceramics
- Music

**Piotrowski Park, 30 South Lawndale,**  
4247 W 31st, Chicago, IL, 60623  
Sponsored program:

- Woodcraft

**Rainey Park, 70 Ashburn,**  
4350 W 79th St, Chicago, IL, 60652  
Sponsored program:

- Painting
- Painting
- Painting
- Stained Glass
- Stained Glass
- Theatre

**Ridge Park, 72 Beverly,**  
9625 S Longwood Dr, Chicago, IL, 60643  
Sponsored program:

- Pottery
- Pottery
- Woodcraft

**Rosedale Park, 10 Norwood Park,**  
6312 W Rosedale, Chicago, IL, 60646  
Sponsored program:

- Painting

**Rutherford Sayre Park, 18 Montclare,**  
6871 W Belden, Chicago, IL, 60635  
Sponsored program:

- Gardening

**Sauganash Park, 13 & 12 North Park &  
Forest Glen,**  
5861 N. Kostner, Chicago, IL, 60646  
Sponsored program:

- Music (Band)

**Shabbona Park, 17 Dunning,**  
6935 W Addison, Chicago, IL, 60634  
Sponsored program:

- Arts & Crafts
- Woodcraft
- Woodcraft

**Skinner Park, 28 Near West Side,**  
1331 W Monroe, Chicago, IL, 60606  
Sponsored program:

- Arts & Crafts (Therapeutic  
Recreation)

**Smith (Joseph Higgins) Park, 24 West  
Town,**  
2526 W Grand, Chicago, IL, 60612  
Sponsored program:

- Ceramics



**South Shore Cultural Center,**  
43 South Shore,  
7059 South Shore Dr, Chicago, IL, 60649

Sponsored program:

- Ceramics
- Dance (African)
- Dance (Ballroom I)
- Dance (Ballroom II)
- Dance (Line Dancing)
- Dance (Steppers)
- Dance (Tap I)
- Dance (Tap II)

**Taylor Park,**  
38 & 37 Grand Blvd & Fuller Park,  
100 W 47th St, Chicago, IL, 60609

Sponsored program:

- Music

**Tuley Park, 44 Chatham,**  
90th & Martin Luther King Dr,  
Chicago, IL, 60619

Sponsored program:

- Ceramics

**Warren Park, 2 West Ridge,**  
6601 N Western, Chicago, IL, 60645

Sponsored program:

- Gardening
- Music (Percussion Ensemble)
- Music (West African Drumming)

**Washington Park, 40 Washington Park,**  
5531 S Martin Luther King Dr,  
Chicago, IL, 60637

Sponsored program:

- Dance (Line Dancing)
- Photography
- Woodcraft
- Woodcraft

**West Pullman Park, 53 West Pullman,**  
401 W 123rd St, Chicago, IL, 60628

Sponsored program:

- Woodcraft

**Wilson Playground, 60 Bridgeport,**  
1122 W 34th Pl, Chicago, IL, 60608

Sponsored program:

- Gardening

## **II. CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT PUBLISHED CULTURAL ARTS PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS SUMMER 2001**

Repeated entries indicate multiple sections of the same activity. Chicago Community Areas are indicated by the name and number officially recognized by Chicago's city government.

**Abbott Park, 49 Roseland,**  
49 E 95th St, Chicago, IL, 60628  
Sponsored program:

- Photography
- Photography

**Ada Park, 75 Morgan Park,**  
11250 S Ada, Chicago, IL, 60643  
Sponsored program:

- Dance (Square Dancing)
- Gardening

**Athletic Field Park, 16 Irving Park,**  
3546 W Addison, Chicago, IL, 60618  
Sponsored program:

- Pottery
- Pottery
- Wheel Throwing
- Wheel Throwing

**Austin Town Hall, 25 Austin,**  
5610 W. Lake, Chicago, IL, 60644  
Sponsored program:

- Music (Voice, Instrument & Studio, by apptmnt)
- Music (Voice, Instrument & Studio, by apptmnt)

**Berger Park Cultural Center, 77 Edgewater,**  
6205 N Sheridan, Chicago, IL, 60660  
Sponsored program:

- Dance (Ballet)
- Dance (modern, Jazz)
- Jewelry Making
- Jewelry Making
- Pottery
- Pottery
- Theatre (Acting)
- Theatre (Storytellers Network)
- Writing Workshop

**Bradley Park, 51 South Deering,**  
9729 S Yates, Chicago, IL, 60617  
Sponsored program:

- Gospel Concert (8-18-01)

**Brands Park, 5 North Center,**  
2509 W Irving Park, Chicago, IL, 60618  
Sponsored program:

- Woodcraft

**Broadway Armory Park, 77 Edgewater,**  
5917 N Broadway, Chicago, IL, 60660  
Sponsored program:

- Photography

**Calumet Park, 52 East Side,**  
9801 South Avenue G, Chicago, IL, 60617  
Sponsored program:

- Woodcraft

**Dvorak Park, 31 Lower West Side,**  
1119 W Cullerton, Chicago, IL, 60608  
Sponsored program:

- Arts & Crafts
- Photography

**Emmerson Park, 77 Edgewater,**  
1820 W Granville, Chicago, IL, 60660  
Sponsored program:

- Garden Club

**Euclid Park, 73 Washington Heights,**  
9800 S Parnell, Chicago, IL, 60628  
Sponsored program:

- Gardening

**Fuller Park, 37 Fuller Park,**  
331 W 45th St, Chicago, IL, 60609  
Sponsored program:

- Arts & Crafts

**Green Briar Park, 2 West Ridge,**  
2650 W Peterson, Chicago, IL, 60659  
Sponsored program:

- Jewelry Making
- Jewelry Making
- Jewelry Making

**Horner Park, 16 Irving Park,**  
2741 W Montrose, Chicago, IL, 60618

Sponsored program:

- Dance (Line Dancing)
- Music (Jazz Band)
- Woodcraft
- Woodcraft

**Indian Road Playground,**  
10 Norwood Park,  
6010 W Matson, Chicago, IL, 60646

Sponsored program:

- Scrapbooking

**Jefferson Park, 11 Jefferson Park,**  
4822 N Long Ave, Chicago, IL, 60630

Sponsored program:

- Jewelry Making
- Jewelry Making
- Music (Chamber Music)
- Music (Orchestra)

**Kennicott Park, 39 Kenwood,**  
4434 S Lake Park, Chicago, IL, 60653

Sponsored program:

- Music (Jazz Band)

**Loyola Park, 1 Rogers Park,**  
1230 W Greenleaf, Chicago, IL, 60626

Sponsored program:

- Artists of the Wall Festival (8-1-01)
- Jazz City Concert (6-29-01)
- Weaving
- Woodcraft

**Lincoln Park Cultural Center,**  
7 Lincoln Park,  
2045 N Lincoln Pak West, Chicago, IL,  
60614

Sponsored program:

- Art Fair (7-14-01)
- Arts & Crafts (Paper Arts)
- Dance (Ballet I)
- Dance (Ballet I)
- Dance (Ballet II)
- Dance (Ballet II)
- Dance (Ballet, Basic)
- Dance (Jazz I)
- Drawing & Painting
- Lapidary
- Lapidary
- Lapidary
- Stained Glass
- Woodcraft
- Woodcraft

**Mann Park, 55 Hegewisch,**  
2949 E 131st St, Chicago, IL, 60633

Sponsored program:

- Woodcraft

**McGuane Park, 60 Bridgeport,**  
2901 S Poplar, Chicago, IL, 60608

Sponsored program:

- Woodcraft
- Woodcraft

**Mt. Greenwood Park,**  
74 Mt. Greenwood Park,  
3721 W 111th, Chicago, IL, 60655

Sponsored program:

- Sewing

**Nash Community Center, 43 South Shore,**  
1833 E 71st St., Chicago, IL, 60649

Sponsored program:

- Dance (Line Dancing)

**Norwood Park, 10 Norwood Park,**  
5801 N Natoma, Chicago, IL, 60631

Sponsored program:

- Art Gallery
- Arts & Crafts

**Olympia Park, 9 Edison Park,**  
6566 N Avondale, Chicago, IL, 60631

Sponsored program:

- Music (Piano)

**Palmer Park, 49 Roseland,**  
301 E 111th St, Chicago, IL, 60628

Sponsored program:

- Ceramics
- Ceramics
- Ceramics
- Sewing

**Revere Park, 5 North Center,**  
2509 W Irving Park, Chicago, IL, 60618

Sponsored program:

- Painting
- Painting
- Stained Glass
- Stained Glass

**Ridge Park, 72 Beverly,**  
9625 S Longwood Dr, Chicago, IL, 60643

Sponsored program:

- Pottery
- Pottery
- Woodcraft

**Rutherford Sayre Park, 18 Montclare,**  
6871 W Belden, Chicago, IL,

Sponsored program:

- Gardening

**Sauganash Park, 13 & 12 North Park &**  
**Forest Glen,**

5861 N. Kostner, Chicago, IL, 60646

Sponsored program:

- Music (Band, Beginning)
- Music (Piano)

**Shabbona Park, 17 Dunning,**  
6935 W Addison, Chicago, IL, 60634

Sponsored program:

- Arts & Crafts (Project Making)
- Woodcraft
- Woodcraft

**Skinner Park, 28 Near West Side,**  
1331 W Monroe, Chicago, IL, 60606

Sponsored program:

- Arts & Crafts

**Smith (Joseph Higgins) Park, 24 West**  
**Town,**

2526 W Grand, Chicago, IL, 60612

Sponsored program:

- Ceramics

**South Shore Cultural Center,**  
**43 South Shore,**

7059 South Shore Dr, Chicago, IL, 60649

Sponsored program:

- Dance (African Dance (Katherine Dunham Technique))
- Dance (Latin & Ballroom I)
- Dance (Latin & Ballroom II)
- Dance (Line Dancing, Country Western, Advanced)
- Dance (Line Dancing, Country Western, Beginner)
- Dance (Line Dancing, Country Western, Intermediate)
- Dance (National Steppers Society, Advanced Workshop, 8-14-01)
- Dance (National Steppers Society, Intermediate Workshop, 8-7-01)
- Dance (Steppers)
- Visual Art (Gallery Opening, 6-22-01)
- Visual Art (Gallery Opening, 8-10-01)

**Taylor Park, 38 & 37Grand Blvd & Fuller**  
**Park,**

100 W 47th St, Chicago, IL, 60609

Sponsored program:

- Music (Studio Lab)

**Warren Park, 2 West Ridge,**  
6601 N Western, Chicago, IL, 60645

Sponsored program:

- Gardening
- Music (Percussion Ensemble)
- Music (West African Drumming)

**Wilson Playground, 60 Bridgeport,**  
1122 W 34th Pl, Chicago, IL, 60608

Sponsored arts program:

- Gardening

**Washington Park, 40 Washington Park,**  
5531 S Martin Luther King Dr, Chicago, IL,  
60637

Sponsored program:

- Dance (Line Dancing)
- Photography
- Sewing (Open Shop)
- Sewing (Open Shop)

### **III. CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY (CPL)**

#### **SAMPLE OF ADULT ARTS-RELATED PROGRAMS**

#### **2001**

The following is not a complete listing of library programs and events during 2001, but CPL published highlights of more extensive programming that took place at library locations during February, May, September, October and November 2001. Chicago Community Areas are indicated by the name and number officially recognized by Chicago's city government.

**Albany Park Branch Library,**  
14 Albany Park,  
5150 N Kimball Ave, Chicago, IL, 60625  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 100  
- Steppers' Dance Classes (21-Feb-01)

**Altgeld Branch Library, 54 Riverdale,**  
950 E 132nd Pl, Chicago, IL, 60627  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 0  
- African Symbol Making (07-Feb-01)

**Archer Heights Branch Library,**  
57 Archer Heights,  
5055 S Archer Ave, Chicago, IL, 60632  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 128  
- Gardening (10-Nov-01)  
- African Symbol Making (01-Feb-01)

**Back of the Yards Branch Library,**  
61 New City,  
4650 S Damen Ave, Chicago, IL, 60609  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 50  
- Polish Folk Art of Paper Cutting 06-Oct-01  
- African Symbol Making (05-Feb-01)

**Beverly Branch Library, 72 Beverly,**  
2121 W 95th St, Chicago, IL, 60643  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 55  
- Polish Christmas Decorations (16-Oct-01)

**Bezazian Branch Library, 3 Uptown,**  
1226 W Ainslie St, Chicago, IL, 60640  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 60  
- African Symbol Making (16-Feb-01)

**Breinerd Branch Library, 71 Auburn**  
Gresham / 73 Washington Heghts,  
1350 W 89th St, Chicago, IL, 60620  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 50  
- Steppers' Dance Classes (03-Feb-01)

**Brighton Park Branch Library,**  
58 Brighton Park,  
4314 S Archer Ave, Chicago, IL, 60632  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 115  
- Steppers' Dance Classes (14-Feb-01)

**Canaryville Branch Library, 61 New City,**  
642 W 43rd St, Chicago, IL, 60609  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 0  
- Polish Folk Art of Paper Cutting (11-Oct-01)

**Clearing Branch Library, 64 Clearing,**  
6423 W 63rd Pl, Chicago, IL, 60638  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 150  
- Gardening (15-Nov-01)

**Daley Branch Library, 60 Bridgeport,**  
3400 S Halsted St, Chicago, IL, 60608  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 100  
- Polish Folk Art of Paper Cutting (13-Oct-01)

**Damen Avenue Branch Library,**  
22 Logan Square,  
2056 N Damen Ave, Chicago, IL, 60647  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 0  
- Polish Christmas Decorations (19-Oct-01)

**Douglass Branch Library,**  
29 North Lawndale,  
3353 W 13th St, Chicago, IL, 60623  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 80 / 35  
- African Symbol Making (21-Feb-01)

**Eckert Park Branch Library,**  
24 West Town,  
1371 W Chicago Ave, Chicago, IL, 60622  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 25  
- Polish Christmas Decorations (12-Oct-01)  
- African Symbol Making (17-Feb-01)

**Edgebrook Branch Library,**  
12 Forest Glen,  
5331 W Devon Ave, Chicago, IL, 60646  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 128  
- Gardening (13-Nov-01)

**Edgewater Branch Library,** 77 Edgewater,  
1210 W Elmdale Ave, Chicago, IL, 60660  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 80  
- Friends of the Gamelon (19-May-01)

**Gage Park Branch Library,** 63 Gage Park,  
2807 W 55th St, Chicago, IL, 60632  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 0  
- Toy Making Workshop (15-Sep-01)

**Galewood-Montclare Branch Library,**  
18 Montclare,  
6969 W Grand Ave, Chicago, IL, 60607  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 50  
- Gardening (03-Nov-01)

**Hall Branch Library,** 38 Grand Boulevard,  
4801 S Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL, 60615  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 50  
- Open mic (NWA) 13-Oct-01  
- Writing Group (NWA) (Ongoing  
2001)

**Harold Washington Library Center,**  
32 Loop,  
State Street, Chicago, IL,  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* \*  
- Book Making [Fabric] (03-Nov-01)  
- African Symbol Making (10-Feb-01)

**Hegewisch Branch Library,**  
55 Hegewisch,  
3048 E 130th St, Chicago, IL, 60633  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 80  
- Polish Christmas Decorations (20-Oct-  
01)

**Humboldt Park Branch Library,**  
23 Humboldt Park,  
1605 N Troy St, Chicago, IL, 60647  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 65  
- Writing Group [NWA] (Ongoing  
2001)  
- Steppers' Dance Classes (07-Feb-01)

**Independence Branch Library,**  
16 Irving Park,  
3548 W Irving Park Rd, Chicago, IL, 60618  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 75 to100  
- Dance Performance [Salsa, Meringue  
& Mexican Folk Dances] (01-Oct-01)  
- Gardening [Bonsai] (05-May-01)

**Jefferson Park Branch Library,**  
11 Jefferson Park,  
5363 W Lawrence Ave, Chicago, IL, 60630  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 100  
- Gardening [Bonsai] (19-May-01)  
- Steppers' Dance Classes (24-Feb-01)

**Jeffery Manor Branch Library,**  
51 South Deering,  
2401 E 100th St, Chicago, IL, 60617  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 50  
- Steppers' Dance Classes (10-Feb-01)

**Kelly Branch Library,** 68 Englewood,  
6151 S Normal Blvd, Chicago, IL, 60621  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 125  
- Steppers' Dance Classes (10-Feb-01)

**King Branch Library,** 35 Douglas,  
3436 S King Dr, Chicago, IL, 60616  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 150  
- Writing Group (NWA) (Ongoing  
2001)

**Lincoln-Belmont Branch Library,**  
6 Lake View,  
1659 W Melrose St, Chicago, IL, 60657  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 100  
- African Symbol Making (14-Feb-01)

**Lozano Branch Library,**  
31 Lower West Side,  
1805 S Loomis St, Chicago, IL, 60608  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 100

- Favorite Books Mural Week of (08-Oct-01)
- Pinata Making (29-Sep-01)

**Mabel Manning Branch Library,**  
28 Near West Side,  
6 S Hoyne, Chicago, IL, 60612  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 100

- Open mic (NWA) reading (09-Oct-01)
- Steppers' Dance Classes (17-Feb-01)
- Workshop - How To Write A Mystery Novel (10-Oct-01)
- Writing Group (NWA) (Ongoing 2001)

**Marshall Square Branch Library,**  
30 South Lawndale,  
2724 W Cermak Rd, Chicago, IL, 60608  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 0

- African Symbol Making (15-Feb-01)

**McKinley Park Branch Library,**  
59 McKinley Park,  
1915 W 35th St, Chicago, IL, 60609  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 125

- Gardening [Bonsai] (22-May-01)
- Gardening (20-Nov-01)
- African Symbol Making (08-Feb-01)
- Dance Performance [Salsa, Meringue & Mexican Folk Dances] (25-Sep-01)

**Mount Greenwood Branch Library,**  
74 Mount Greenwood,  
11010 S Kedzie Ave, Chicago, IL, 60655  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 150

- Gardening (01-Nov-01)
- Origami Exhibit (May-01)
- Polish Folk Art of Paper Cutting (27-Oct-01)
- Toy Making Workshop (29-Sep-01)

**North Austin Branch Library,** 25 Austin,  
5724 W North, Chicago, IL, 60639  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 50

- Steppers' Dance Classes (05-Feb-01)

**Portage-Craigin Branch Library,**  
15 Portage Park / 19 Belmont Cragin,  
5108 W Belmont Ave, Chicago, IL, 60641  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 100

- Polish Christmas Decorations (04-Oct-01)

**Roden Branch Library,** 10 Norwood Park,  
6083 N Northwest Hwy, Chicago, IL, 60631  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 120

- Gardening (28-Nov-01)
- Gardening (Bonsai) (26-May-01)

**Rogers Park Branch Library,**  
1 Rogers Park,  
6907 N Clark St, Chicago, IL, 60626  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 128

- Workshop - How To Write A Mystery Novel (10-Oct-01)

**Scottsdale Branch Library,** 70 Ashburn,  
4101 W 79th St, Chicago, IL, 60652  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 80

- Polish Christmas Decorations (11-Oct-01)

**Sherman Park Branch Library,**  
67 West Englewood / 68 Englewood,  
5540 S Racine Ave, Chicago, IL, 60609  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 100

- African Mask Making (03-Feb-01)

**South Chicago Branch Library,**  
46 South Chicago,  
9055 S Houston, Chicago, IL, 60617  
*Meeting Room Capacity:* 100 (auditorium) / 15 (conference room) / 25 (conference room)

Dance Performance [Salsa, Meringue & Mexican Folk Dances] (09-Oct-01)



**Sultzer Regional Library,**

4 Lincoln Square,

4455 N Lincoln Ave, Chicago, IL, 60625

*Meeting Room Capacity:* 125 / 40

- Open mic [Poetry reading] (28-Nov-01)
- Open mic [NWA] (10-Oct-01)
- Polish Christmas Decorations (16-Oct-01)
- Toy Making Workshop (02-Oct-01)

**Toman Branch Library,**

30 South Lawndale,

4005 W 27th St, Chicago, IL, 60623

*Meeting Room Capacity:* 50

- Toy Making Workshop (06-Oct-01)

**Uptown Branch Library, 3 Uptown,**

929 W Buena Ave, Chicago, IL, 60613

*Meeting Room Capacity:* 80

- Dance Session [Salsa, Meringue & Mexican Folk Dances] (22-Sep-01)
- Workshop - Journal Writing as Part of Creative Writing (10-Oct-01)

**Walker Branch Library, 75 Morgan Park,**

11071 S Hoyne Ave, Chicago, IL, 60643

*Meeting Room Capacity:* 35

- Polish Christmas Decorations (23-Oct-01)

**Whitney Young Branch Library, 44**

Chatham,

7901 S King Dr, Chicago, IL, 60619

*Meeting Room Capacity:* 125

- Steppers' Dance Classes (06-Feb-01)

**Woodson Regional Library Branch**

**Library, 73 Washington Heights,**

9525 S Halsted St, Chicago, IL, 60628

*Meeting Room Capacity:* 180 (auditorium)

- Steppers' Dance Classes (03-Feb-01)
- Toy Making Workshop 09-Oct-01
- Writing Group [NWA] (Ongoing 2001)

**Wrightwood-Ashburn Branch Library,**

70 Ashburn,

8530 S Kedzie Ave, Chicago, IL, 60652

*Meeting Room Capacity:* 100

- Polish Folk Art of Paper Cutting (20-Oct-01)

#### **IV. THE CHICAGO COALITION OF COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTERS 2001**

Coalition centers provide sites for arts and culture activities in numerous Chicago neighborhoods. Art opportunities at some locations include, but are not limited to, classes in traditional visual and plastic arts, and participation in music, dance, and theater performance ensembles. Centers can be contacted individually for specific arts programming information, as no central source of program information exists for the Coalition. Chicago Community Areas are indicated below by the name and number officially recognized by Chicago's city government.

**American Indian Center, 3 Uptown**  
1630 West Wilson Ave., Chicago, IL, 60640  
Tel. 773-275-5871

**Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, 65 West Lawn**  
6500 S. Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL, 60629  
Tel. 773-582-6500

**Beacon Street Gallery & Theater, 3 Uptown**  
4131 N. Broadway, Chicago, IL, 60613  
Tel. 773-525-7579

**Beth-Anne Cultural and Performing Arts Center, 25 Austin**  
1140 N. Lamon, Chicago, IL, 60651  
Tel. 773-378-3600

**Beverly Art Center, 75 Morgan Park**  
2153 W. 11th Street, Chicago, IL, 60643  
Tel. 773-445-3838

**Black Metropolis Convention & Tourism Council, 38 Grand Boulevard**  
444 East 48th Street, Chicago, IL, 60615  
Tel. 773-548-2579

**Boulevard Arts Center, 67 West Englewood**  
6011 S. Justine, Chicago, IL, 60643  
Tel. 312-476-4900

**Chicago Park District's South Shore Cultural Center, 43 South Shore**  
7059 S. South Shore Drive, Chicago, IL, 60649  
Tel. 312-747-2536

**Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, 34 Armour Square**  
2169B. South Chinca Place, Chicago, IL, 60616  
Tel. 312-326-5320

**Chinese American Service Legion, 34 Armour Square**  
310 W. 24th Place, Chicago, IL, 60616  
Tel. 312-791-0418

**Clarke House Museum, 33 Near South Side**  
1827 S. Indiana Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60616  
Tel. 312-745-0040

**Copernicus Cultural and Civic Center, 11 Jefferson Park**  
5216 W. Lawrence Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60630  
Tel. 773-777-8898

**CYC/Elliott Donnelley Youth Center, 38 Grand Boulevard**  
3947 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60653  
Tel. 773-268-3815

**Duncan YMCA Chernin Center for the Arts, 28 Near West Side**  
1001 W. Roosevelt Road, Chicago, IL, 60608  
Tel. 312-421-7800

**DuSable Museum of African American History, 40 Washington Park**  
740 East 56th Place, Chicago, IL, 60637  
Tel. 773-947-0600

**ETA Creative Arts Foundation, 43 South Shore**  
7558 S. South Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60619-2644  
Tel. 773-752-3955

**Ethnic Food Tours-Grocery Stores & Street Food, 33 Near South Side**  
2010 W. Chase Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60645  
Tel. 773-465-8064

**Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance,**  
27 East Garfield  
300 N. Central Park Avenue, Chicago, IL,  
60624  
Tel. 312-746-5100

**Gerber/Hart Library, 1 Rogers Park**  
1127 W. Granville Avenue, Chicago, IL,  
60660  
Tel. 773-381-8030

**Glessner House Museum,**  
33 Near South Side  
1800 S Prarie Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60616  
Tel. 312-326-1480

**Hellenic Museum, 32 Loop**  
168 N. Michigan Avenue, 4th Floor,  
Chicago, IL, 60601  
Tel. 312-726-1234

**Indo-American Center, 2 West Ridge**  
6328 N. California Avenue, Chicago, IL,  
60659  
Tel. 773-973-4444

**Inside Art, 24 West Town**  
1651-53 W. north Avenue, Chicago, IL,  
60622  
Tel. 773-772-4416

**Irish American Heritage Center,**  
16 Irving Park  
4626 N. Knox Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60630  
Tel. 773-282-7035

**Jane Addams Hull House,**  
28 Near West Side  
800 S. Halsted, Chicago, IL, 60608  
Tel. 312-413-5353

**Japanese American Service Committee,**  
3 Uptown  
4427 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL, 60640  
Tel. 773-275-0097

**Korean American Community Services,**  
16 Irving Park  
4300 N. California, Chicago, IL, 60618  
Tel. 773-583-5501

**Lincoln Square Chamber of Commerce,**  
4 Lincoln Square  
4732 N. Lincoln Avenue, Suite 9, Chicago,  
IL, 60625  
Tel. 773-728-3890

**Little Black Pearl Workshop, Inc.,**  
36 Oakland  
4200 S. Drexel Boulevard, Chicago, IL,  
60653  
Tel. 773-285-1211

**Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum,**  
31 Lower West Side  
1852 W. 19th Street, Chicago, IL, 60608  
Tel. 312-738-1503

**Museum of Puerto Rican History &  
Culture, 24 West Town**  
2739 W. Division Street, Chicago, IL, 60647  
Tel. 312-397-4010

**National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum,**  
33 Near South Side  
1801 S. Indiana Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60616  
Tel. 312-326-0270

**Near Northwest Arts Council,**  
22 Logan Square  
1741 N. Western Ave., Chicago, IL, 60647  
Tel. 773-278-7677

**New Regal Theater, 43 South Shore**  
1645-65 East 79th Street, Chicago, IL,  
60649  
Tel. 773-721-9301

**North Lakeside Cultural Center,**  
1 Rogers Park  
6219 N. Sheridan Rd., Chicago, IL, 60660  
Tel. 773-743-4477

**Old Town School of Folk Music,**  
4 Lincoln Square  
4544 N. Lincoln Avenue, Chicago, IL,  
60625  
Tel. 773-728-6000

**People's Music School, 3 Uptown**  
931 W Eastwood, Chicago, IL, 60640  
Tel. 773-784-7032

**Pilgrim Baptist Church, 35 Douglas**  
3301 S. Indiana Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60616  
Tel. 312-842-4417

**Polish Museum of America, 24 West Town**  
984 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, IL,  
60622  
Tel. 773-384-3352

**Puerto Rican Arts Alliance, 24 West Town**  
1440 N. Sacramento Avenue, Chicago, IL,  
60622  
Tel. 773-342-8865

**Ridge Historical Society, 72 Beverly**  
10621 S. Seeley Avenue, Chicago, IL,  
60643  
Tel. 773-881-1675

**Second Presbyterian Church,**  
33 Near South Side  
1936 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL,  
60616  
Tel. 312-225-4951

**Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, 32**  
Loop  
618 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL,  
60605  
Tel. 312-922-9012 (general info) 312-322-  
1747 (museum exhibitions & programs)

**Swedish American Museum Center,**  
77 Edgewater  
5211 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL, 60640  
Tel. 773-728-8111

## Appendix II

### Community background and arts opportunities

The information in the following outlines was derived from: 1) printed materials gathered during fieldwork (e.g. community newspapers; entertainment publications like the *Chicago Reader*; show announcements, brochures, fliers, booklets and any other written materials distributed at stores, restaurants, libraries and museums; and event programs, just to name some of the major sources in this set), 2) field notes written by the ethnographers, 3) *The Chicago Community Fact Book 1990*, 4) *The Chicago Tribune* online (especially the Home section), 5) over 100 selected articles from city and suburban newspapers, 6) The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission's *Summary of 2000 Census*, and 7) maps of census data available online from the University of Chicago Map Collection.

At an even more general level than the section headings below, the outlines are organized based on a distinction we make between regions and neighborhoods. Regions are made up of a cluster of multiple neighborhoods, which in turn correspond to "Chicago Community Areas" recognized by the federal and local governments as official divisions of the city for census tabulation purposes. The neighborhoods in a region are listed at the beginning of each outline. The specific neighborhood within each region and for which we provide more detailed information was the home of a case study activity included in the study. We do not reveal which neighborhood listed within each region is the case study neighborhood so as to protect the anonymity of the activity and thereby study participants.

### Bronzeville

Region Includes: Oakland, Douglas, Fuller Park, Washington Park, and Grand Boulevard. For our purposes here it is called Bronzeville even though it is larger than the historically defined area of African American residence when it was restricted.

#### I. Region: general history and description

##### A. Economic base and Institutions

1. The Bronzeville area is currently being redone/restored. A majority of CHA high-rises from 35<sup>th</sup> to 55<sup>th</sup> are being torn down and the low-income residents are being relocated.
  - a. Goal of program is mixed income communities. Early reports are that some residents are ending up in middle class areas, one resident moved to a middle class part of North Kenwood and reports discomfort by being surrounded by all neighbors with money. (Sun-Times 5/25/01 pg. 19A).
  - b. Social services through CHA being privatized. Number of provider locations and range of services has increased during the 90's.
2. Douglas was one of the city's earliest settlements and is one of the oldest and most historic neighborhoods in the city of Chicago.
3. Besides the high-rises along State, other public housing developments in Bronzeville include... Ida B. Wells Housing Project, Dearborn Homes, Prairie Ave. Courts, Darrow Homes, and Madden Homes.
  - a. These also are going through the same phases of demolition and or refurbishment as the Robert Taylor and Stateway.

4. At Ellis and 39<sup>th</sup> one can see the destruction of the Madden homes to the north of the intersection, while middle class African American residents of the community use the new running track and restored park to the south of 39<sup>th</sup> St. Not that I have seen kids in the playgrounds while going by on the bus in the morning on school days, but mostly older adults using the track to walk with a few others actually running.
    - a. Overall, elegance and shabbiness stand parallel
  5. Middle class wealth is concentrated between 26<sup>th</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> Streets, along and east of Michigan Ave. over to the Lake and adjacent to Michael Reese Hospital, which played a role in its development. This Prairie Shores/Lake Meadows and South Commons area contained 86% of the white population of Douglas in 1980.
    - a. "The Gap" current name for area from 26<sup>th</sup> at 35<sup>th</sup> continues to develop into the '90ies
  6. Housing rehabilitation is underway championed by upwardly mobile, African-American professionals along King Drive and along Washington Park Court and Vincennes Ave.
    - a. Catalyzed by 1992 parade of homes on Indiana and Prairie.
  7. South Shore Bank has expanded operations into the area, 1996, expanding north from their older service area in South Shore and Auburn-Gresham. They have issued \$4 million in loans to homeowners and small-scale developers in that time. Homes in need of work are selling for \$100,000.
  8. In 1990, within Oakland community area, only 2% of units were single-family buildings. And only 6% of buildings were occupied by their owners. Oakland has only 55% of the housing stock it once had in 1950, which was already near the end of the period of its succession to being an African American community.
    - a. Between 1980 and 1990 Oakland went from 17,000 to 7,000 residents. The area is ripe for redevelopment as land is abundant, downtown is nearby, and suburban land prices are rising.
    - b. The redevelopment that has occurred is not without tension as newer middle class African American residents don't want to see CHA replacement housing build in the area, as they feel there is already enough subsidized housing in Oakland. (Chicago Tribune On-Line)
    - c. In terms of income, racial make up, property values, etc.... Oakland has been a continuous region with North Kenwood to its south. Before the '90's, even middle class wealth was concentrated south of 47<sup>th</sup> St, where there are palatial mansions down to Hyde Park proper, and closer to the lake high rise coops, etc. But since 1990 some of the most extensive redevelopment has been in North Kenwood with less in Oakland, so wealth is moving north in a continuous front.
  9. The long-term effects of deindustrialization, discrimination, and disinvestment will not go away easily in this region. However, efforts by community groups and residents are trying to preserve and restore the rich cultural and economic life of the neighborhood and are contributing to positive social change.
    - a. Kennedy King reconstruction bringing the college closer to the Washington Park neighborhood.
- B. Non-arts activities institutions that characterize region
1. Michael Reese Hospital
  2. Illinois Institute of Technology
    - a. An improvement campaign was announced in 1996 for their residential units. Planned for \$120 million in improvements
  3. Bronzeville Military Academy

4. St. XX Catholic High School (North of 35<sup>th</sup> and State, west of IIT)
5. New Police HQ at 35<sup>th</sup> and State, part of redevelopment plans
  - a. CHA police were to changeover to Chicago Police officers in October of 1999 (Taken from Chicago Tribune 10/19/99).
6. “Midnight College”
  - a. Plan for CHA that resembles the Midnight Basketball campaign. Would give the youth a chance to learn marketable skills instead of doing other activities (Taken from article in the Chicago Tribune 5/29/99).

## II. Demographics

### A. Region

1. History of demographics
  - a. Population decline of about 9% from 1980 to 1990.
  - b. Native Americans once used a trail (now Vincennes Ave) that became an important commercial route to the city.
2. Current Total Population = **78,152**
  - a. Decreased by 20,383 or 20%
  - b. Hispanic Population = **1%**
    - Decreased by 1,583 or 65
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **3%**
    - Increased by 231 or 13%
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **93%**
    - Decreased by 22,223 or 23%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **2%**
    - Increased by 590 or 63%
  - f. Other/Native American  
Native Hawaiian  
Alaskan Native = **less than 1%**

### B. Neighborhood

1. History
  - a. German Jewish families began moving into neighborhood around the turn of the century. The Irish-American community also once had a strong presence in this case study neighborhood.
2. Current Total Population = **28,006**
  - a. Decreased by 7,981 or 21%
  - b. Hispanic Population 236 = **less than 1%**
    - Increased by 90 or 62%
  - c. Non-Hispanic White 173 = **less than 1%**
    - Increased by 77 or 80%
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **99%**
    - Decreased by 8,204 or 23%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **less than .05%**
    - Decreased by 8 or 28%
  - f. American Indian/Alaskan/Hawaiian = **less than .05%**
    - Numbers/percentages were very insignificant
  - g. Median household income was \$7,907 in 1990 according to MCIC website.



### III. Neighborhood general

#### A. Appearance of street, homes

1. Well-preserved graystone, sandstone, and red brick buildings along King Drive suggest the former architectural grandeur of this community. This case study neighborhood is considered the heart of Bronzeville (region). Some of the structures have been restored and preserved by middle class African American buyers during the last two decades
2. Rebuilt CTA greenline, including new stations, runs south along State to 39<sup>th</sup> and then curves east to run south just west of King Drive ending at 63<sup>rd</sup> St. New stations are clean and modern with electronic ticker signs and voice announcements of incoming trains.
3. Compared to even three years ago, walking or driving around State St, Wabash, and Michigan Ave., south of 38<sup>th</sup> and north of 51<sup>st</sup>, the area feels depopulated. I walked around the area a few times, never going north of 45<sup>th</sup> on Wabash, or State, and not south of 51<sup>st</sup>. Yes I encountered people, but it was often just a handful. Two men on a stoop by St Elizabeth Preschool on Michigan Ave, where the only people I saw on the street between 45<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> walking up around one in the afternoon on a weekday. Another African American man, at around 10 in the morning, between Wabash and Michigan on 45<sup>th</sup> asked if I was looking for the Urban League and was surprised to hear me say a friend's house.
4. Getting off the bus at Michigan and 46<sup>th</sup> there are two boarded up buildings on the east side of the street that have signs out front announcing the rehab work that is going to be done. In this area, specified one points back, there are old two and three flats that are lived in, ones that are boarded up, and ones that are renovated, frequency in that order. On Michigan between 46<sup>th</sup> and 47<sup>th</sup> and going all the way across to Wabash on the East Side, are the Michigan Blvd Garden Apartments which are boarded up and closed.
  - a. Michigan Blvd Garden Apartments (47<sup>th</sup> and Michigan) closed Approx. two years ago for mismanagement of services, including heat. (Private contractor working for CHA mismanaged)
  - b. Dorothy Tillman played significant role in closure and relocation, expressing concern for residents' safety
  - c. Huge building now sits empty and boarded up not far from emptying out Robert Taylor Homes
  - d. Michigan Blvd Garden Apartments were one of the earliest experiments in Public Housing. Built in the twenties or early thirties by Julius Rosenwald for middle class African American families. They once were a prestigious place to live.
  - e. Stores still opened on 47<sup>th</sup> St side, but looking run down and unkept.
  - f. Some empty lots along Michigan especially north of 47<sup>th</sup> and South of 38<sup>th</sup> are overgrown creating a jungly look in the spaces between structures. This is especially true around the area of 39<sup>th</sup> and Michigan and Indiana, where the L and an old railway right of way cuts through. Of course the Donnalley Youth Center is also at 39<sup>th</sup> and Michigan, and its sculpture garden/playground with a colorful mural behind it commemorates black immigration to the city creates a huge spot of color and dynamic energy that is on display to anyone on the L platform at 39<sup>th</sup> and Indiana. The garden/playground itself is behind a tall iron fence, only accessible by going through the building, which looks like an elementary school.
  - g. On the east corner of 39<sup>th</sup> is a brick structure going up, looks like it might just be a garage. This anchors the end of a row of lived in homes that seem well kept up and large, two and

three story wooden Queen Ann and brick homes. The first home in this row is a wooden frame mansion with a sign out front that says “Ancient Egypt Museum” and that it is opened by appointment. Farther up is a brick home with downstairs business. The ornate sign with flamboyant lettering just says “Monet’s.” The next house is the South Side Community Art Center (SSCAC).

5. The SSCAC is in a large stone mansion, at least three stories tall with a gallery of windows along its upper edge. It sits on its own lot all the way around. On the left in the yard is a brown rust metal sculpture of a human head on a kind of angular, pyramid shaped body. On the other side of the stairs is a black cylinder with white designs painted over the whole thing. It has a cone on top painted as the roof of a grass hut. It has the overall look of a sculpture of an African hut/building.
6. NWA program participants all drove to the meeting at Hall Branch, 4801 S. Michigan, the day it was noted by SF. While it seems they usually drive, they were particularly concerned that day about reports of a rapist on the Southside and talked about making sure they offered rides to anyone who didn’t have one until the guy is caught.
7. There was little tension between artists and people on the street when they were doing a neighborhood photo shoot for JOT. A man told them to go take pictures on the north side of Chicago. Participant said he didn’t realize there were people doing that already for the JOT. Another participant reported of this shoot that she found a rose blooming in a yard in December and had the person with the camera take a picture of it with her hand supporting it. It made the JOT.
8. Going north from 51<sup>st</sup> on Wabash, one encounters new townhouses at 50<sup>th</sup> St. and a new Apt building at 48<sup>th</sup>. There is also a large Christian organization/social service agency complex in this stretch, and when they have events people double park into Wabash making it almost impassable. It is like they don’t expect anyone else to need the street, and it is a parking lot for their events.
9. North of 46<sup>th</sup>, after passing the empty MBG apartments, there is another Christian complex on the West Side of the street. This is the Christian Missionary Church. They are renovating the school building at the corner of 46<sup>th</sup> to be a daycare for 3-5 year olds. Maybe a Head Start, I don’t recall. North of this is the church proper, and a sign saying you can listen to their services on WGCI on Sunday Mornings. On the East Side of Wabash in this block is a row of homes. The two nearest the corner are boarded up, with Danny Davis campaign signs plastered on the boards. Soon after these is a newly renovated red brick three flat, with new windows, landscaping, and a wrought iron fence. The rest of the homes are in various stages of repair and disrepair. One of those that looks like it has not been painter for a few years is a two flat in the middle of the block. This is the home studio of one of the artists in the study, where he would host open studios, inviting people into his home for food and to see his work.
  - a. Going north on the block, the next house looks a little spiffier, and has a Caldwell Banker for sale sign in the yard. One time I visited the painter, a realtor waited ‘til I reached the stoop of the house I was going into next door, so she would get me in the picture of the home for sale. Or at least that is how it seemed to me.
  - b. Another time I saw a young, well dressed couple come out of a house up the block and put a child already sitting in a car seat into their late model American Car and leave.
  - c. Across 45<sup>th</sup> on the West of Wabash is a stone Mosque building with some bright colored tile in the corners and edges. It looks very new, or at least clean. Around the corner on 45<sup>th</sup> heading to Michigan is what looks like a garage, but says it is a hand car wash. It

didn't look opened, but I didn't try going in. There was a new vinyl banner across the front of the buildings advertising cellular phone service for sale. Opposite this, on the South of 45<sup>th</sup>, is a large limestone Funeral Home and Chapel.

- d. The east side of state Street between 45<sup>th</sup> and 47<sup>th</sup> feels almost as empty as the West side. There is a lone liquor store at 45<sup>th</sup>, with the clerk behind a bullet proof screen and bars. Further south is a sausage factory and a lone outdoor payphone, which works, before you reach 47<sup>th</sup>, but there are no buildings across the street from this phone.

6. Other general features

- a. This case study neighborhood has 10 parks within its borders
- b. Chicago Rock Island Railroad, along with the Dan Ryan expressway, runs to the west of this case study neighborhood.

B. Economic Base and Non-art/nonprofit institutions

1. Nearly 2/3 of population was living in poverty during 1990 and unemployment was at 34% in April of 1990 (Community Fact Book 1990)
2. Mid-South Planning and Development Commission and The Black Metropolis Tourism and Convention Council trying to do some redevelopment that minimizes displacement and preservation of historical character.
3. MSPDC in cooperation with Jaime Kalven's Neighborhood Conservation Corp (NCC) are restoring the Overton Building at 3619-27 South State. NCC provided the labor for interior demolition work, men mostly from nearby Stateway Gardens. (Project could be done, or failed, I don't know. Reference from Hyde Park Co-op *Evergreen*, "Up on the Roof: A View of Bronzeville from the Overton Building", March 1998, Vol. 51. no.3. It is mostly a reprint of statements by J. Kalven at initiation of project.
4. BMTCC has helped get 8 buildings placed on the National Historic Register. It has purchased the Supreme Life Building to convert it to a point of entry visitors center for Bronzeville with commercial tenants as well. BMTCC sees the poor current residents of Bronzeville working in the tourist services industry or being entrepreneurs starting business that serve ethnic based tourism to the area. ("Bronzeville Past, Present, and Future" an interview with Harold Lucas in the *Evergreen*, oct.98, p.6.)
5. Alderman Tillman plans redevelopment of 47<sup>th</sup> St around African American arts and culture, restoring the 47<sup>th</sup> street corridor to its historical status as a center of African American entertainment and arts in the city. Cornerstones of redevelopment so far planned include a new expanded home for Little Black Pearl Arts Workshop (over the line into Kenwood from current home in Oakland), and a new home for Muntu Dance Theater. The two projects will run \$15 million dollars, offering employment to local minority contractors. \$2.5 million will come from empowerment zone funding. The Irony is Jerry's Palm Tavern will be destroyed, last important remaining spot from Bronzeville's entertainment heyday. Billy Holiday et al could be seen there after performing at the nearby theaters and ballrooms which are now gone.
  - a. Second City 47<sup>th</sup> ST. locating is a part of this plan.
  - b. Second City and Alderman Tillman wants to "foster the talent in our community". Second City aware of derth of black top talent in Hollywood, own main stage is all white, so going to where the black talent is located. (Chicago Sun-Times Thursday June 29, 2000 pg. 3) (Also see Grand Boulevard Section IV K.)
6. Members of Hall Branch writing group have an awareness of this history, and talk sometimes nostalgically of Bronzevilles past. One participant talked to SF about a shop that used to be on 47<sup>th</sup> where a man cut silhouettes of patrons without sketching first. He could just cut. Another

woman said she saw told her father used to come to Bronzeville to play the piano and he had the reputation as a pianist. Finally a third reported she grew up at Stateway Gardens and an older woman talked about moving into a small kitchenette with her whole family during the 1950's. It was on Lake Park, which is by the lake, east of Michigan Ave.

7. Center for New Horizons
  - a. nonprofit providing daycare, welfare to work, and other social services.
8. There are two health care facilities located in Grand Boulevard
  - a. Provident Hospital
    - Nation's oldest black hospital, which was founded by Dr. Daniel Hale Williams in 1891. New Provident Hospital was completed in the '90's as a satellite county hospital. It is a modern facility with a parking garage structure behind it. Both stand in eerie contrast to the old hospital building just west of them at 51<sup>st</sup> and King Drive, which is gutted and falling down and has a high forbidding cyclone fence around it.
9. There are also 17 child-care facilities located in Grand Boulevard.

#### IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

- A. Ethnic places/activities
  1. Bud Billiken Parade
  2. Proceeds along King Dr. and attracts near 1 million spectators.
- B. Nonprofits
  1. Farren Fine Arts Elementary School (5505 S State)
  2. Ravinia sponsored art education program.
- C. Churches
  1. There are 78 places of worship in Grand Boulevard
- D. Park Districts
  1. Grand Boulevard has one Chicago Park District art activity listed (Taylor Park)
    - a. Summer 2000 adult art activity includes: Music
    - b. Summer 2001 adult art activity includes: Music
- E. Library
  1. The Hall Branch (4801 S Michigan Ave.) is the only Chicago Public Library located in Grand Boulevard.
    - a. Offered such art related activities such as: Book Discussions, Open Mics, and Writing Groups.
- F. Theaters
  1. Regal Theater (47<sup>th</sup> and Grand Boulevard)
    - a. Served African-American entertainment tastes and became nationally known. Demolished in 1970.
  1. There are no sites listed
- G. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers
  1. Black Metropolis Convention and Tourism Council
  2. CYC/Elliot Donnelly Youth Center
- H. Some Like It Black (4500 S Michigan)
  1. Hosts free style poetry and open mics.
- I. Second City in Grand Boulevard
  1. Second City was planning to open a South Side branch to showcase a more diverse talent base (Taken from Sun-Times, Thursday 6/29/00, pg.3).

## V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts activities

### A. Fuller Park

- a. There are no sites listed

### B. Douglas

- a. 2 Multi-Media/Non-Specific sites, 2 Music sites, and 1 Fiber/Textile site

### C. Oakland

- a. There are no sites listed

### D. Washington Park

- a. 1 Multi-Media/Non-Specific sites, 1 Fiber/Textile site, 1 Pottery/Sculpture site, 1 Visual Art site, and 1 Craft site

### E. Parks

#### 1. There are approximately 22 parks located in this region

- a. Washington Park, the park proper, is in the Washington Park community, but I included it in Hyde Park's outline as many arts events are at DuSable way to the east end of the park by Cottage Groove Ave. This is not to say African American's from the west of Hyde Park do not come to the large summer festivals in Washington Park. In fact just this last summer we couldn't drive through the throngs of people coming East to a festival in the Park.
- b. Burnham Park, the Eastern edge of Douglas and Oakland, is pencil thin and cut off from the communities by Lake Shore Drive and the Metra Electric tracks. Accessing the parks requires going to one of a few narrow opened air overhead pedestrian bridges over these obstacles. (Kamin, Blair "A Flawed Jewel: The Lakefront needs help, and the City of Chicago has a rare chance to remold it for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – but where is the vision?" *Chicago Tribune*, 10/26/98, Sec.5, p.10)

### F. Park Districts adult art activities

1. There were approximately 4 adult art activities offered in this region during the summer of 2000
  - a. They included: Music, Arts and Crafts, Photography, Woodcraft, and Dance.
2. There were approximately 3 adult art activities offered in this region during the summer of 2001
  - a. They included: Music, Arts and Crafts, Photography, Sewing, and Dance.

### G. Libraries

1. There are 4 Chicago Public Libraries in this region.
  - a. They include: Chicago Bee Branch Library (Douglas), King Branch Library (Douglas), Hall Branch Library (GB), and the Robert Taylor Branch Library (Washington Park)
    - These libraries offered art related activities such as: Book Discussions, Writing Groups, and Open Mics.

### H. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers

#### 1. 3 Listed

- a. Pilgrim Baptist Church
- b. Little Black Pearl Workshop
- c. DuSable Museum of African American History
  - See write up on DuSable under Hyde Park. At the East End of Washington Park, so in reality more part of Hyde Park Community.

## VI. Other case study activity in the region.

### A. South Side Community Art Center.

1. Interior gallery space is historic landmark, example of early Bauhaus design. It is covered in thick cedar paneling that is flush across the plain of the walls, but still has a warm, rough look.
2. Started by Roosevelt as New Deal Location for African American artists. Eleanor Roosevelt at dedication.
3. Regular shows of painting, photography, other visual arts in first floor gallery. Classes offered as well, for adults and kids. I saw one student being taught one time I went by, and another time 4-5 on their way out at the end of class. (Exp of show: paintings by XX in April 2001. Rebecca talked to him at a festival in Washington park behind DuSable Museum in 1999. He was selling at festival. His show at SSCAC was highlighted on Artbeat.)
4. At least one home painting gallery.

### B. For the moment Little Black Pearl is still in Douglas at 4200 D. Drexel. They offer adult and children's arts and crafts programming, e.g. pottery classes. Some classes offered in facilities at nearby King High School. First floor of LBP facility includes a shop that sells the works of young artists learning there, it is part of a deliberate program of teaching entrepreneurial skills with the art.

1. Example of marketing event at LBP: "Little Black Pearl: Chicago Auction" Saturday. April 1, 2000. Includes ceramics, mosaics, paintings, functional art objects, and furniture. This info on a card announcement received at home by RS.

## South Lake Front

Region Includes: Hyde Park, Kenwood, Woodlawn, South Shore, and South Chicago.

### I. Region: general history and description

#### A. Economic base and Institutions

1. Many New homes have been built in Kenwood and Hyde Park after several decades in which only a handful of new homes were built
2. Plan to build over 300 new homes, and rehab hundreds of apartments for sale or rent, was started in 1995.
3. New developing is a welcome site since the region has experienced disinvestment over the last 45 years
  - a. Over the next 15 years, various groups plan to create or rehabilitate 4,000 homes and rental units, but this would not take place without an anchor community like Hyde Park.
4. Number of homes and population in Kenwood has continued to decrease.
5. High contrast between affluent, mansion lined streets, of south Kenwood, and the poverty on and north of 47<sup>th</sup> St, where most of the new development initiatives are concentrated.
6. North Kenwood and Woodlawn have experienced high crime rates
7. North Kenwood, the former Judd Elementary School will become a Park District facility named Kennicott (Communities original founder) Park.
8. Oakenwald Ave in North Kenwood is a middle class African American enclave north of 47<sup>th</sup> Street. It has an arts presence in its 4-block stretch north of 46<sup>th</sup> and south of 42<sup>nd</sup> butted up

against the Metra Tracks and LSD. This area includes Studio Bronzeville with painting lessons; a stained glass studio, Kenard Stained Glass Studio where one can take lessons as well; and the home of a well known African American film director all in the same few blocks. (I think the director is named Dash, and directed *Daughters of the Dust*) Around the corner on Woodlawn is the new Kenicott Park with a renovated elementary school in it as a new park building (mentioned above), and this is all just north of the 47<sup>th</sup> St Coop Shopping Center.

9. Woodlawn has major plans for rebuilding that include: housing, commercial/retail, parks/recreational (green spaces along 61<sup>st</sup> and community gateway at 63<sup>rs</sup> and Stoney Island), transportation (CTA construction, renovation of Metra stations, and commuter parking). Spear headed by local community development corporations.
  10. South Shore has a dichotomy like Kenwood between its wealthiest residents in Jackson Park Highlands and pockets of poverty in the area. Most housing 77% in multiunit structures, mostly b/c lakefront luxury high-rises became crowded low-income housing starting with racial turn over as early as the 50's but not complete until 1980 when over 90% of the population was African American.
  11. South Shore Bank tried to leave community in the 1970's but a consortium of churches, national foundations, and residents blocked the move. SS Bank has been the leader in stabilizing the area since, including the redevelopment of the shopping area at 71<sup>st</sup> and Jeffery. The bank currently has for profit and not for profit subsidiaries.
  12. Nation of Islam has a Mosque and religious school on Stony Island Ave in South Shore. N of Islam also owns and operates at least one retail business in South Shore, and perhaps more. (clothing store)
  13. Commercial district in South Shore centered at 71<sup>st</sup> and Jeffery. Lots of small retail shops and groceries.
  14. Lakefront is a valued recreational resource by residents, Rainbow beach park and the area around the SS Cultural Center are wider than Burnham park to the far north, and of course South Shore residents can enter Jackson Park from the south. The beach house at 67<sup>th</sup> St is newly renovated, but there have been beach closing problems in recent years due to high ecoli reading.
  15. South Chicago mostly African American and Hispanic. Has been since 1890's. At lakefront is site of former US Steel Southworks. May be redeveloped as a park. Huge site. Not used now. Efforts by nonprofits in community to rehab and stabilize housing stock. Some success. 11.3% unemployment even in 1998. Only 17.6% managers or professional in workforce. Rest are service professions and blue collar of some sort, including sales, etc.
    - a. Bowen High School "tries to stay competitive with area academic HS" It offers specializations in teaching, tourism, and has a visual and performing arts center.
  16. Lots of daycare centers and churches in South Chicago, longer list than some other print outs of areas.
- B. Non-arts activities institutions that characterize region
1. Operation Push at 48<sup>th</sup> and Drexel
  2. New Coop shopping center at 47<sup>th</sup> and lake Park
  3. Arts corridor redevelopment along 47<sup>th</sup> west of Woodlawn going into Grand Blvd community area (see GB outline)
  4. Kenwood Academy
  5. Rebecca Crown Center (South Shore)
  6. South Side YMCA (6330 S Stony Island Ave)

7. Harriet Harris YWCA in Woodlawn
8. See Hyde Park neighborhood below, sec. III

## II. Demographics

### A. Region

1. Current Total Population = **175,521**
  - Decreased 1,053 or 1%
- b. Hispanic Population = **7%**
  - Decreased by 2,435 or 15%
- c. Non Hispanic White = **11%**
  - Decreased 3,748 or 17%
- d. Non-Hispanic Black = **77%**
  - Increased by 1,199 or 1%
- e. Non-Hispanic Amer. Indian = **less than 1%**
  - Decrease by 11 or 4%
- f. Non-Hispanic Asian = **3%**
  - Cannot tell exactly how much increased due to the 1990 census format, but did increase some where around 25-40%.
- g. Other/Hawaiian = **less than 1%**

### B. Neighborhood Demographics

1. History
  - a. Largest ethnic groups (in order of largest to smallest) in the beginning were: Irish, Germans and Russian Jews.
  - b. Long standing diversity
2. Current Total Population = **29,920**
  - a. Increased by 1,290 or 5%
  - b. Hispanic Population = **4%**
    - Increased by 335 or 37%
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **44%**
    - Decreased by 1,420 or 10%
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **38%**
    - Increased by 576 or 5%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Amer. Indian = **less than 1%**
    - Decreased by 35 or 53%
  - f. Non-Hispanic Asian = **11%**
    - Asian population increase accounts for the bulk of rise in Hyde Park population. (Taken from Chicago Weekly News, April 5, 2001. Pg. 7)
  - g. Other/Nat. Hawaiian = **less than 1%**

## III. Neighborhood general

### A. Appearance of street, homes, etc

1. Very little vacant room left from all of the development. Brownstone apartments many dominated by UC students are common. By brownstones in mean the large three story buildings, U-shaped buildings, with courtyards. Hyde Park also has single-family homes, town houses, and three and two flats all in abundant numbers.



2. Washington and Jackson Parks linked by Midway are holdovers from world's fair of 1893. These amenities plus green residential streets gives Hyde Park one of the more park like feelings of any neighborhood in the city.
3. Along Woodlawn south of 55<sup>th</sup>, heading south towards Rockefeller are numerous large single-family homes, really mansions of different styles with brick construction predominating. Some are faculty and other residents' housing, like the Erico Fermi house with its historical marker out front and lived in by a retired couple of Anthropologists formerly of UC and UIC. In the blocks between 56<sup>th</sup> and 58<sup>th</sup>, the houses are used by the university or organizations as offices or housing. The Department of Special Events, and the DU fraternity house are among these. Just north of 58<sup>th</sup> there is a 50ies style dorm for the Chicago Theological Seminary. The Seminary has a large red brick building with brick spire over its chapel along the north side of 58<sup>th</sup> St, north of Rockefeller chapel. At the very north corner of 58<sup>th</sup> St., just south of the CTS dorm is Frank Lyod Wright's Roby House, considered an archetypal example of his prairie style design. This home used to be the alumni offices of the University, but within the last ten years was bought by the FLW Home and Studio foundation out of Oak Park Illinois, and today is a museum and gift shop.
4. Just north of Rockefeller, but still south of 58<sup>th</sup>, so in the same piece of greenspace as the Chapel, is the Oriental Institute and Museum. Modern climate control was installed in the galleries and storage areas within the last five years as part of a major renovation. Exhibits were removed as part of the process, and are now slowly being redesigned and reinstalled as funds become available. West of Rockefeller is the University President's home, and then the main quadrangle of the campus. East of Rockefeller is a 1950's style, institutional looking dorm called Woodward Court. This building is slated to be torn down in the next year to make way for a new business school building. Its capacity has been replaced by the brand new Palavsky (sp) dorm at 56<sup>th</sup> and University. Also to the east is Ida Noyes Hall, one of two campus student centers. It has a new movie theater, built in the last decade, also named for Palavsky one of the Universities major benefactors. The Documentary Film Society operates the theater showing popular almost current run films, classics dramas, and documentaries, along with any genres I'm forgetting here. Ida Noyes is where student arts groups, among other registered student organizations not affiliated with departments, have space for their activities. One can learn Kapoera(sp), the Brazilian marshal art, and various kinds of folk or other dancing at Ida Noyes through RSO's that sponsor them. Really anything an RSO wants to do regularly that requires a ballroom or large opened wooden floor space is in Ida Noyes. The building also has a swimming pool, "The Pub", and offices for career and placement services. University Theater, another major space using student organization is located in Renold's Club at 57<sup>th</sup> and University Ave. Ida Noyes, like Rockefeller Chapel, can be rented by private parties for weddings or other social functions. (Rumor has it that the Dean of the Chapel in the 1980's was forced out in the early 90's for not wanting to allow Chrisy Heffner to use Rochefeller for her wedding. I was told he hadn't wanted to let just anyone use the chapel for a wedding, that it was a sacred space that should only be used for appropriate purposes by Christians or people/activities that were appropriately dignified. I only mention this to show that it's use is not uncontested or say as unidiological as a Park District.)
5. South of Rockefeller is the Midway Plaisance(sp), which was home to the carnival rides of the 1893 World's Fair and it a part of the university campus today, while still connecting Washington and Jackson Parks. The Chicago Park District has opened an ice skating ring on the Midway in the sunken middle section just south and west of the Chapel.

## 6. General features

- a. Current commercial re-development plans center on 53<sup>rd</sup> St. TIF District. Improvement of this area, including bringing in upscale stores like the Gap and Crate and Barrel are controversial and considered to be forms of gentrification by residents interested in maintaining a mixed income community. (TIF District is established, but the actual plans are still in debate)
- b. Newly developed Cornell Square.
- c. Offers 60 condominiums, townhouses and single-family homes.
- d. There are 13 parks in Hyde Park
- e. One of communities' biggest growth period in several decades as far as new development occurred recently (Printed in Tribune Homes 6-3-1995 date)
  - Most of new homes selling for over \$200,000 (Printed in Tribune Homes 6-3-1995 date)
  - Similar homes in Hyde Park are 20 to 25 percent lower than they are in Lincoln Park
  - Many new home buyers are from outside of the community

## B. Economic Base and Non-art/nonprofit institutions

1. There are 6 Child-Care facilities in Hyde Park
2. There are 12 health facilities in Hyde Park
3. Southeast Chicago Commission
  - a. Hyde Park-based community service group (they are fairly law enforcement and building code enforcement oriented)
4. Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference
  - a. Formed to halt urban decay and encourage racial integration.
5. UC
  - a. The university influence is shown in the fact that Hyde Park is near the top of the educational attainment and white-collar occupation percentage distributions for the city.
  - b. About 65% of 1,400 faculty members at UC live in Hyde Park
  - c. On average, it takes residents about 24 minutes to get to work. Reflective of the university, its hospital, and libraries and dormitories as an employer.
6. UC Hospitals
7. Museum of Science and Industry
8. Oriental Inst. and Museum
9. Lab School
10. Churches: there are 24 places of worship in Hyde Park
  - a. Second only to Berkeley California in number of Seminaries: Lutheran School of Theology, Catholic Theological Union, McCormick Seminar, Chicago Theological Seminary, UC Divinity school, and associated organizations with these institutions.
  - b. Number of communal homes for Catholic religious orders: Scalibrinians, Jesuits, Xavierians, and two more order have houses in the neighborhood.
11. The Hyde Park Neighborhood Club
  - a. Programming for children and seniors

## IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

### A. Bars, restaurants, Stores

1. Jimmy's Woodlawn Tap
    - a. Holds a weekly poetry slam where poets compete and the audience is the judge (Taken from Evergreen newspaper, Feb. 2001, pg. 5)
    - b. Some years Jimmy's has been home to Off Campus improve comedy troop. Also, to the best of my knowledge, there is still Jazz on Sunday nights.
  2. Jazz Barber Shop (1602 E 53<sup>rd</sup> St.)
    - a. Offer haircuts with community outreach and live jazz. Plans to help the community include the owners' plans to hire a high school student for the summer and match every dollar the kid makes to go towards college tuition. (Taken from Sun Times 1-4-99, pg. 29)
  3. Co-op Shopping Center (55<sup>th</sup> and Lake Park)
    - a. Public rooms used by Hyde Park Knitting Club for monthly meetings (not sure this is exact club name.)
  4. Boyajian's Bazaar
    - a. Sells imported ethnic arts and crafts items, clothing, bells, incense, carvings, etc. Largest stock is of varieties of lose beads. Tried having jewelry making class in store once, but decided he didn't have the room and now just offers on the spot help to buyers.
  5. Brush Strokes (A Pottery Bar)(1369 E 53<sup>rd</sup> ST)
    - a. Paint/Create your own pottery
- B. Nonprofits
1. Chicago Theological Union
    - a. Art Gallery: offerings included the Jesus 2000 touring exhibit with works depicting Jesus from around the world by full time and part time artists.
  2. Blue Gargoyle Community Services Center (inside a Church at 57<sup>th</sup> and University)
    - a. Jazz band in first floor meeting room about once a week, all through the nineties. Don't know if it is still there.
  3. University of Chicago
    - a. Music department events: Mandel Hall, Goodspeed Hall, and Rockefeller Chapel
    - b. University Organizations: WHPK, photography club, university theater, and other Registered Student Organizations (RSO).
    - c. Visual Arts at Renaissance Society, Smart Gallery, and Midway Studios.
    - d. Faculty informal, Quadrangle Club Revel (faculty skits and comedy), graduate students also do GSB follies.
- C. Park District Arts
1. There are no adult art activities mentioned for Hyde Park in Elena's summary
  2. Midway Plaisance Parkway
    - a. Carifete (Carnival)
      - Carnival's attractions: pulsating music, hundreds of dancers, thousands of spectators, arts/crafts, authentic Caribbean Cuisine, and to end the carnival a parade in the streets (which is the highlight of it all).
      - Summer arts festivals and concerts in Washington Park, usually behind DuSable Museum.
- E. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers
1. None mentioned
- F. Hyde Park Recording Studio
1. State of the art equipment
    - a. 5110 S. Woodlawn

- b. flier on CTA bus seat
- c. Street posted flier for recording or music video production
- d. Hyde Park location claimed, no address
- e. Not sure if same as place above, this one advertises video production as well and has a different phone.

G. Piano Lessons: Hyde Park Teachers Network

- 1. Multiple teachers come to your home.

H. 57<sup>th</sup> Street Books

- 1. Poetry and Book readings, promotional but often extended and by local as well as national authors. Local writer and illustrator in case study denied a reading despite book being stocked. May have been content driven denial.
- 2. Co-op members can put their open publications – Zines, books of poetry, etc – up for sale.

I. Site Collected folder from 57<sup>th</sup> St. Books

- 1. Flier for pottery show opening at Hyde Park Historical Society
- 2. WHPK show schedule.
- 3. Geographically defined community papers and specific constituency paper
- 4. Fliers for north side events at Historical Society, Film Center, maybe one more.

J. Visual Art and Poetry Spaces in private residences, but with events opened to the public or by invitation.

- 1. A woman has a gallery space in her home at 51<sup>st</sup> and Woodlawn where a case study participant reported showing paintings and reading poetry.
- 2. See VII. Below

K. Court Theater (5535 S. Ellis Ave)

- 1. Professional Equity Theater

L. Hyde Park Art Center (5307 S Hyde Park Blvd.)

- 1. Adult art activities offered include bookbinding and papermaking, printmaking, poetry classes, photography, ceramics, stained glass, studio art, drawing, water coloring, and oil painting.
- 2. Instructors have BFAs, BAs, or MFAs.

M. Off-Off Campus

- 1. Performs at University Church (5565 S University Ave)
- 2. Mario's recollection is that they started in the late 80's as a Second City course at U of C. Not sure how troop renews it's numbers, if it trains new improvisers itself.

N. Joan's Studio (1438 E 57<sup>th</sup> St.)

- 1. Offer classes in the performing arts.

O. Artisans 21 Gallery

- 1. Artist operated cooperative store at 51<sup>st</sup> and Harper in the Harper Court Shopping Center. Quilters, weavers, jewelry makers, ceramicists, stained glassmakers, etc all sell their work together out of this location, including taking turns selling.

V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [entertainment and leisure here only if not already in "I.B." above]

A. Kenwood

1. Little Black Pearl Workshop

- a. Future home in Kenwood at 1060 East 47<sup>th</sup> St.
- b. The building at the new location will be restored as part of a \$4.6 million project. It will include space for arts and crafts programs for adults and youth, and a café. Training will

also be given to young artist-entrepreneurs. The project is expected to generate employment opportunities for minority contractors, artists and local residents.

- c. The Empowerment Zone provided \$1.5 million in funding for the Little Black Pearl
2. Co-op shopping center (47<sup>th</sup> and Lake Park)
  - a. Co-op markets music fair (? Sept 2001), included performers from West Side School of Blues and sales of sheet music and books about music.
  - b. Music and Dance offerings for ethnic commemoration months. For example: Kopano Performing Arts Co., performed African dance for families
  - c. Arts and Crafts Benefit Bazaar (March 2001).
  - d. Latin Folk music and sales of arts and crafts.
  - e. The newly established Kenicott Park in North Kenwood behind the new Coop shopping center, for 2001 lists a variety of activities including theater, dance, visual arts, upholstery/woodworking, music, and arts and crafts. One can't tell in the guide which are for adults, but adult activities for the whole region are listed under PD below and increased from 2000 to 2001.

#### B. Woodlawn

1. Living Room Café (64<sup>th</sup> and Cottage Grove)
  - a. Established about five years ago, they provide meals, atmosphere support, and a friendly for the homeless. Help homeless define and achieve goals, find housing/employment, and with substance abuse. Modeled after Inspiration Café on the North Side.
  - b. New funding by the Chicago Community Trust has allowed them to plan to expand their program in the near future
2. The Woodlawn Express Coffeehouse (First Presb Church, 6400 S. Woodlawn)
  - a. Fliers for one time event, do not know how regular it is as a venue. "A forum on Community and the Arts with Oscar Brown Jr. and others. March 25<sup>th</sup> 2001.
  - b. Poetry (Baba Groit Leonard Lucas and others), Music (The Jackson Park Drummers and others) and Open mike.

#### C. South Shore

1. South Shore Cultural Center
  - a. Offer cultural activities, art exhibit, concerts, banquets, weddings, receptions, and community meetings. Some of their events include: African-American Heritage Month, Robeson Theater Series, Outdoor Jazz Festival, Pre-Kwanza Celebration, and Summer Day Camps. Also cultural programs and classes for all ages in dance, drama, music, art, film and literature.
  - b. Paul Robeson Theater Series (7059 South Shore Dr.)
    - Offers quality theater experiences in an affordable neighborhood venue
  - c. Black Ensemble Theater
    - Theater company that performs at the Robeson Theater.

#### D. South Chicago

1. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers
  - a. New Regal Theater (S. Shore)
  - b. South Shore Cultural Center, CPD (S. Shore)
    - The mission of the Chicago Park District's South Shore Cultural Center is to become one of Chicago's premier cultural institutions providing a wide variety of cultural programs, professional performances, exhibits and arts oriented educational and leisure activities for the community.

- c. ETA Creative Arts Foundation (S.Shore/G.Grand Crossing) (75<sup>th</sup> and Chicago)
    - Seeks to be a major cultural resource institution for the preservation, perpetuation and promulgation of the African American aesthetic in the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois and the Nation. ETA provides professional opportunities by way of training and performance for the development of both youth and adults as artists.
    - Perform stage readings/singing/dancing, since 1975, for controlled audiences as a part of test marketing to stay in touch with their audience. (Taken from article in “Tempo” section of Tribune, 4-4-01) In Tribune article class of young adults from Olive-Harvey College was audience.
  - d. Dusable Museum of African American History
    - Technically in Washington Park Neighborhood, but geographically separated from that community by the whole east west expanse of Washington Park where it sits on the Hyde Park end just west of Cottage Grove.
    - Founded by Dr Margaret Burroughs, whose work was shown there in a retrospective exhibit of Ethiopian “Art that Heals...” This is the exact genre that one of the individual visual artists cited as a primary influence on his own work. He saw show I believe, but was into Ethiopian healing scrolls before exhibit.
    - Rising Stars of Jazz 1999-2000. Partnership concert series with Ravina. It looks like all the concerts were at DuSable though. Definitely professional musicians.
    - Youth arts programs, music events and other receptions etc. that are companion to Ethiopian exhibit, including folk music group from Ethiopia.
    - Looks like Muntu and Dance African have had events at DuSable
    - “Enter the Cipher”- biweekly poetry, music, and art events. I think “Enter the Cipher” may also be the troop of poets associated with the events. At least that is how I understand the confusing entry. –M.L.
2. Site collected folder 1999
- a. Above info on DuSable, from their magazine and fliers
  - b. Afrocentric and Afrocentric regional publications. Some newspaper type and others slicker magazines, like two below.
  - c. Interesting exp: *Underground Chicago: Guide to African American Entertainment and Travel* It is a slick color magazine, 8 1/2 x 11.
  - d. *The Truth: Hip Hop at Its Best*, Premier Issue. African American Hyde Park resident is publisher. Has his own profile inside in the local profile section. Cover story on Common and his “migration” to New York. Few articles inside include one on Chicago scene being about to “blow up.”

#### E. Libraries

- 1. Blackstone Branch (Kenwood), Bessie Coleman Branch (Woodlawn), South Shore Branch (SS), Southeast Branch (S.Shore), and South Chicago Branch (S. Chicago).
  - a. Adult Art Activities offered at these branches: Book Discussions and Dance Performances with the usual meeting rooms.

#### F. Park District

- 1. There were approximately. 11 adult art activities offered in the region during the summer of 2000
  - a. They include: Music (hip-hop), Dance (line-dancing, African, Ballroom, and Tap), and Ceramics.

2. There are approximately 14 adult art activities offered in the region during the summer of 2001.
  - a. They include: Music (Jazz band), Dance (line-dancing, Latin, Ballroom, Steppers, and African), Visual Art (Galler opening).
3. There are approximately 11 parks in the region including the lakefront.
  - a. Same as in "IV." (See above).

#### VI. Other case study's activities

- A. Hyde Park Quilting Guild (HPQG), which meets at ST Paul and the Redeemer Church at 49<sup>th</sup> and Dorchester, so technically it is in South Kenwood. This church's architecture is in a '60s wooden tall triangle style. It has a square, flat structure at the back with meeting rooms, etc. where the guild actually meets. In fact the meeting room was quite posh, with overstuffed chairs and dark wood accents. It would not comfortably fit more than 25.
  1. There is quilting also at Montgomery Place, an Episcopally run nursing home, retirement community by the lake at 56<sup>th</sup> St.
- B. PQG has their annual show at the United Church of Hyde Park, at 53<sup>rd</sup> and Blackstone Ave. This is in the heart of the 53<sup>rd</sup> St Shopping district and within a block of Artisans 21 to the north, and the area slated for new stores if the TIF district planning goes as some developer hope. It is an imposing limestone grey structure with impressive stained glass windows, and has the feel of not being that tall, but that might be a result of its overall stone mass. Sales from this year's quilt show benefited the fund to restore the church's organ.
  2. See I.A. above bullet point #8 counting from the top. Also another individual artist interviewed lives and shows his work out of his apartment in South Kenwood's Madison Park area.

## North Lake Front

Region Includes: Lakeview, Lincoln Park, North Center, West Town, Near North Side, and Logan Square.

### I. Region: general history and description

#### A. Economic base and Institutions

1. Region is the epicenter for Bars/Nightlife in Chicago
2. Wrigley Field is located within this region
3. Chicago's elegant "Gold Coast" is found in this region
4. Lakeview just north of Lincoln Park is home to "Boystown" concentration of gay and lesbian population in the city. Annual gay pride parade, and 2<sup>nd</sup> annual march against antigay Hate, Oct 7<sup>th</sup> 2001. (*Street Wise*, Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>, p.8 "Activists Talks about Organizing and Police Brutality")
  - a. Broadway United Methodist Church: pastor in trouble with Methodist's for doing same sex marriages.
  - b. Site collected folder has almost exclusively Church related materials strictly speaking, with the AIDS Walk and other G/L issues materials mixed in. So no really art promotion visible in the folder here.
5. Pending merger of Illinois Masonic and Ravenswood Hospitals

6. Lakefront SRO operates nine SROs in Uptown, Lakeview and the Near South Side communities.
  - a. Trying to get one more at 3208 N. Sheffield, facing other developers opposition/competition for site. Lakeview SRO would preserve Diplomat Hotel. Other developer would build 24 luxury condos. (Inside, "Future of affordable housing in Lake View rests on transient hotel, p.1, nov.8<sup>th</sup> –14<sup>th</sup>.)

## II. Demographics

### A. Region

1. Current Total Population = **433,993**
  - a. Increase by 15,710 or 4% since 1990 census
  - b. Hispanic Population = **27%**
    - However, 82% located in West Town and Logan Sq.
    - Decreased by 21,296 or 15% since 1990 census.
  - c. Non-Hispanic White Pop = **60%**
    - Increased by 26,164 or 11% since 1990 census
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black Pop = **8%**
    - Non-Hispanic Decreased by 1,519 4% since 1990 census
  - e. Asian Pop = **4%**
    - Population has increased, but are unable to tell by exactly how much due to the way the data was formatted in the 1990 census
  - f. Other/Pacific Islander  
Native American  
Alaskan Native = **less than 1%**

### B. Neighborhood

1. History
  - a. Early immigrant neighborhood
  - b. Settlers included Germans, Irish, Poles, Rumanians, Hungarians and Italians.
  - c. Most factories adjacent to the Chicago River
  - d. Population reached 95,000 by 1920.
  - e. One of the few Chicago communities to increase in population from 1980-1990
2. Current
  - a. Non-Hispanic Whites dominate the community, making up almost 85% of the demographic
  - b. The number of Hispanic, Non-Hispanic Black and Non-Hispanic Asian are almost equal, within 1% of each other
  - c. The number of Hispanics has noticeably dropped since the 1990 census, 21,296 people.
  - d. Total Population = 64,320
    - Increased by 3,228 or 5% since 1990 census
  - e. Hispanic Population = **5%**
    - Decreased by 727 or 21% since 1990 census
  - f. Non-Hispanic White Pop = **84%**
    - Increased by 2,372 or 5% since 1990 census
  - g. Non-Hispanic Black Pop. = **5%**
    - Decreased by 267 or 7% since 1990 census
  - h. Non-Hispanic Asian = **4%**



- Population has increased slightly, but unable to tell exactly how much due the way the information was formatted in the 1990 census
- i. Other/Pacific Islander
  - American Indian
  - Alaskan Native = less than 2%
 (CCFB, NIPC: Summary 2000..., UC Map collection)
- 3. The information below was taken from the 1996-2000 Metro Report MCIC Table #24
  - a. The median household income for Lincoln Park is \$61,500, compared to the Metro areas \$44,700, Chicago \$34,700, and suburbs \$49,700.
  - b. The age of respondents for this report were:
    - 16 to 30 = 36%
    - 31 to 40 = 34%
    - 41 to 50 = 12%
    - 51 to 60 = 10%
    - 60 & up = 7%
    - A majority of these people were under 40. 53% of the people surveyed were born after 1965.
  - c. The household composition reported that almost 60% of the houses were made up of 2+ adults over 18 yrs of age. The next closest category was with children 0-17, that group made up 16%.
  - d. 32% of the people surveyed were married
    - The married family status found that 60% of the people surveyed were single with no children
  - e. Of the respondents, the top four ethnicities were German 32%, Irish 26%, England/Wales 24%, and Scottish making up 11%. The rest surveyed had single digit percentages.
  - f. 60% of the respondents reported that they were born out of state while only 35% were born in Illinois. Of those numbers, 54% were 18 to 30 when they moved to Illinois, 31% were 0 to 17, and 16% were 31 and up
  - g. More than half (41% college graduate and 29% Graduate Degree (9% some Graduate school)) either have their Bachelors or Masters Degree.
  - h. Political Affiliation
    - Democrat = 41%
    - Independent = 31%
    - Republican = 24%

### III. Neighborhood general

#### A. Appearance of streets, homes, etc.

1. North lakefront is dense with people. Little empty space for building, due to the number of high-rises, etc. One participant said it was “overpopulated” and this made it impersonal.
2. Two bedroom townhouses fall in the price range of \$250,000 to \$400,000.
3. This neighborhood offers single-family homes, townhouses, condos, and apartments.
4. The LP Conservation Association, est. in 1954, has struggled to preserve historical houses and limit some of the high-rise development.
5. At least three participants lived in Lincoln Park comm. or Lakeview, one in restored brick six flat, other two in more modern condo buildings. All nice/posh places with amenities.
6. LPCC

- a. LP Cultural Center is in LP proper, west of the Zoo and south of Conservatory.
  - b. Park is very manicured, especially coming south from Conservatory west of the Zoo. Painters talked about seeing an outdoor painting class in “Grandma’s Garden,” a specific garden area of the Park. Some expressed the desire to paint some the more picturesque parts of the park and nearby Lake, and the teacher discussed his own wish to teach an outdoor painting class, which never got off the ground.
  - c. Outside the LPCC the lawn had artfully painted birdhouses in the trees, giving it an “exotic” feel according to RS. Also the flower boxes of the building were nicely painted and planted, with many of the same ornamentals as she had seen at another park, so it is part of overall beautification.
  - d. “Keeper of the Parks” sign appeared near LPCC. It included a name and number to call if there was problem with the appearance of the park.
  - e. Outdoor café not far from LPCC always crowded, despite lots of loud traffic on street.
  - f. Park is well used: from LPCC RS saw joggers, walkers, bikers, bladders, dog walkers, families with toddlers, etc.
  - g. Usually one or a handful of people sitting on steps of LPCC, talking, eating, reading
  - h. On evenings of painting class, lots of kids and adults going in and out of the building in their Karate robes were always easy to spot
  - i. Music presence visible in Park, loud live music from Nature Center on a Thursday singles night, other painters complained of loud music from Zoo for special events, worried it was bad for animals. Jazz concert on lawn outside LPCC attracted audience of about 50 people, mostly middle class whites of various ages, some with babies – some probably just heard music and came. (Don’t know if Zoo events had live music.)
  - j. Visible art and recreation promotional efforts
    - Snow fence extending from LPCC has signs for walking club, the Cultural Fair in July at the LPCC, and “Register now for summer programming” on another.
    - Light post banners near the LPCC: one for PD in general, one for Chicago Botanical Garden, and one for Chicago Dance Medium, which does have activities at the LPCC. Not clear in field notes if this was announced on the banner. Another banner, further south in the Park, said “Art in the Parks (by Kids)”. That is the field notes indicate uncertainty about exactly what the banner said, but she thinks it was explicitly announcing kids art.
  - k. Parking was difficult in crowded area, although sometimes it was possible to nearby street parking. Later in class teacher told them they could park in LPCC driveway, which RS did. On a return trip after field study period, ?new signs out front restricted street parking to 15 minutes for pick up and delivery.
7. There are paintings on the rocks along the lake. Keith Hering at Belmont. Drumming participant worried that the art on the lake rocks in Chicago is going to be lost with the redoing of the stone shoreline. (Low relief sculpture on south side at ?35<sup>th</sup> and 55<sup>th</sup> streets. Maybe more threatened as south lakefront being redone first.)

B. Economic Base and Non-art/nonprofit institutions [only if no arts activities associated]

1. Commercial streets are lined with upscale stylish boutiques, trendy restaurants, bars, nightclubs, coffee houses and theaters.

2. During the 80's, rising property values and aging plants encouraged the conversion of industrial sites to loft and condominium housing and commercial development...I.E. River Point Shopping Center.
3. To halt the loss of manufacturing jobs in Chicago, the City Council set aside 41 acres west of Clybourne as a planned manufacturing district.
4. In 1997, the sale of single-family homes, townhouses, and condos topped more than \$430 million.
5. Parking, high rents, and property taxes have pushed some residents away for the Lincoln Park and into other nearby areas.
6. Development of neighborhood has increased annually, and some of the older community is getting sick of all of the boutiques and restaurant going up. Some of the older community feels like they built up the community, and now younger people are moving in and do not have respect for it. That, combined with the number of out-of-state tourists flocking to Lincoln Park, is making some people think twice about staying in the community.
7. DePaul (college) was founded in 1907 (Lincoln Park campus), but the college was originally founded in 1898 and went by the name of St. Vincent College.
8. Children's Memorial Hospital
9. Columbus Hospital
10. Grant Hospital
11. LP has 9 child-care facilities
12. Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum (Chicago Academy of Sciences)
  - a. In Lincoln Park, new, has nature programming.
  - b. Offer various summer camps to teach children about nature and the environment in which they live. Accommodate ages 5 to 10.
  - c. See site collected folder named "Nature Museum" Site collected data all pertains to nature, parks, environmental Ed.
13. Churches
  - a. This neighborhood has 32 churches.

#### IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

##### A. Bars, restaurants

###### 1. Jillian's Bistro (674 W Diversy)

- a. Features local artists along with monthly wine tasting and art shows. Owner, Jillian Bourne, hosts cocktail parties on the last Thursday of each month for the featured artist of the month. Jillian's Bistro offers wine from around the world, artists from around the corner, and a "Lincoln Park Comfort Food" them with dishes like various pastas and meat entrees. Article starts off by asking artists the question, "Are you a budding artist and the Art Institute keeps giving you the runaround about showing your stuff"? (Add from UR 3/19/01)

##### B. For Profit: stores, bars, restaurants

###### 1. Lincoln Park Bookstore

- a. Site collected data: bookshelf ordering info, nothing else

###### 2. Dr Wax (record store)

- a. Site collected folder: multiple arts and entertainment papers for the local scene, plus arts and entertainment publication aimed at specific young audiences, e.g. *accelerated culture*:

*Velocity*, "Chicago Hip Hop Life." Also flier for dance Chicago and what look to be Zines, e.g. *Lumpen Magazine*

#### C. Nonprofit Arts

1. Chicago Historical Society
2. Contemporary Arts Workshop (542 W. Grant PL)
  - a. Threatened with elimination by rising property taxes, assessments jumped late 2000/early 2001. (Could be gone already???)
  - b. Current location since 1960, pioneering art space in Lincoln Park
  - c. 20 studio spaces especially for up and coming artists
  - d. Article highlights young Russian Am artist who is now represented by prestigious gallery, and older artist who have been in building since 1967 but doing art full time only recently.
  - e. No classes offered for 25 years.
  - f. Fighting reassessment, including launching website and getting public support letter from CAC, etc.
  - g. Nonprofits taxed often at higher rates than residential and mixed-use buildings.
  - h. Owned and operated by Kearney's, husband and wife team. She – art management degree from Harvard. He – well known scrap metal animal sculptor with work all over city including Tin Man and Lion at Oz Park.  
(*Inside*, "Art Workshop Fighting to Stay in Lincoln Park," vol.34, #8, January 31- Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> 2001)

#### D. Park District

1. Adult arts activities offered in this neighborhood for the summer of 2000.
  - a. Dance (Ballet and Jazz), Drawing and Painting, Gardening, Jewelry Making, Music (Piano), Paper Arts, and Stained Glass.
2. Adult arts activities offered in Lincoln Park for the summer of 2001.
  - a. Drawing and Painting, Arts and Crafts, Lapidary, Stained Glass, Woodcraft, Dance (Ballet and Jazz), and an Art Fair.
3. LP (neighborhood) has 19 recreational parks (not park districts)
4. Site collected folders from Lincoln Park Cultural Center (Lpc).
  - a. Chuck full of the stuff we have come to expect at the PD sites, sports, recreation, and arts activities at that site. Public safety and service info for youth and seniors, entertainment at the site, announcements for Ping Pong and other city wide PD programs, activities at other institutions that might be of interest to park patrons i.e. Chicago Botanic Gardens classes (not a lot of other examples like this). Materials for other orgs that offer classes at center, e.g. newsletter for Karate org that offers the classes at Lpc, events at UG's gallery, etc. And a fall PD activities guide.

#### E. Library activities

1. One library in Lincoln Park (1150 W Fullerton)
  - a. Offer monthly book discussions

#### F. Theaters (from league of Chicago publication)

1. Steppenwolf
2. Second City
3. Royal George
4. Chicago Park District's Theater on the Lake
5. St. Sebastian Theater
6. Shattered Globe Theater

7. Victory Gardens

- a. Site collected folder: 5 VG activity pieces including stage bill and class catalog for VG Training Center. One gallery opening announcement.
- b. VG has the annual musical/play by auction to raise money for its operations, so amateurs get to pay to perform in production at VG with its profession staff, facilities, etc. (See Artbeat tape)

8. Apollo Theater

G. Zoos

1. Lincoln Park Zoo

H. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers located in Lincoln Park

1. None are listed

I. Art Galleries/Centers

1. Lill Street Art Center (1021 W Lill)

- a. Offer adult/children art classes and weekend workshops that include: (ADULT) clay classes, jewelry making, painting and drawing, (CHILDREN) clay classes, drawing and painting, multi-media art, (WEEKEND WORKSHOPS) super bowl Saturday, heart boxes, 2001: a clay odyssey mini tea sets, seder plates, Easter baskets, herb garden sets, and salsa bowls.
- b. Also have a gallery that includes such items for sale as jewelry, ceramics, glass, tabletop accessories, children's toys, holiday wear, and unique made artists gifts. (Information taken from an advertisement found in the *Reader*, filed under Lill St in Ref file)

J. Schools

1. Francis Parker Evening Courses (330 W Webster)

- a. Offers creative courses on subjects as varied as COOKING, WATERCOLOR PAINTING, astrology, sign language, spinning, politics, language, business, recreation, and a class on kids, parents, and the Internet. Classes are organized and taught by volunteers and proceeds go to the Francis W Parker School Scholarship Fund.

V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [entertainment and leisure here only if not already in "I.B." above]

A. Near North Side

1. Theaters (From League of Chicago Publication)

- a. Chicago Shakespeare Theater
- b. Museum of Contemporary Art
- c. American Girl Theater

B. West Town

1. Intuit: The Center for Outsider Art

- a. *See magazine publication inside North Side folder*

2. National Poetry Slam 1999

- a. Preliminary rounds at various Wicker Park venues, with the finals in the Loop.
  - Locations in Wicker Park: Roby's 1944 W. Division, Guild Complex/Chopin Theater 1543 W. Division, Subterranean Café 2011 W. North Ave., the Note 1565 N. Milwaukee Ave., Phyllis' Musical Inn 1800 W. Division.

3. Lady Fest Midwest Chicago

- a. A multi-disciplinary, four-day Fest that showcased the work of female artist, performers, musicians, and activists primarily from Chicago and its surrounding regions. Took place

on August 16-19, 2001 with the majority of the events happening in Wicker Park (West Town), Logan Square, and Humboldt Park areas along Milwaukee Ave. The Fest expected to draw over 2000 people on the local and national levels.

- Fest receives fiscal sponsorship from the Women in the Directors Chair (Uptown) organization.

4. Theaters (From League of Chicago Publication)

- Chopin Theater
- Wing & Groove Theater Company
- Vittum Theater
- Chicago Dramatists

C. Logan Square

1. Lady Fest Midwest Chicago

- See section V B (West Town).

2. Theaters (From League of Chicago Publication)

- Trap Door Theater

D. Lakeview

1. Discovery Center (2940 N Lincoln)

- Offer adult growth classes in business/finance, mind and body, language, relationships, arts, sports, etc. Includes flirting techniques and wine tasting classes.
- From a quick look at the site-collected folder, almost all the art classes – painting, photography, lots of different dance classes, jewelry making, stained glass making, etc – are at the Lincoln location. Exceptions include dark room training, writing, and acting courses, which still look to be North side as far west as Damen and Irving Park for locations. Looks like they contract with artists, or arts orgs to offer classes at the alternative sites.

2. Theater (From League of Chicago Publication)

- American Theater Company
- About Face Theater
- WNEP Theater
- Bailiwick Arts Center
- Theater Building/New Tuners
- Broadway Theater
- Timeline Theater Company
- Briar Street Theater
- Chicago Opera Theater
- Comedysportz
- Live Bait Theater
- Mercury Theater
- Strawdog Theater Company

3. Jane Adams Hull House Lakeview Center

- Ceramics, photography in addition to day care and swim lessons
- Closing soon no longer fits org. mission and finances.

(Reader, 10/19/01, p.8, neighborhood news. Filed under art in neighborhoods)

E. North Center

1. Theater (From League of Chicago Publication)

- The Viaduct

## F. Libraries

1. There are 9 Chicago Public Libraries in this region
  - a. They are: Lincoln-Belmont Branch (1659 W Melrose St.), Merlo Branch (644 W Belmont), Lincoln Park Branch (1150 W Fullerton), Near North Branch (310 W Division), Damen Ave Branch (2056 N Damen), Logan-Square Branch (3255 W Altgeld), Eckert Park Branch (1371 W Chicago), Midwest Branch (2335 W Chicago), and the West Town Branch (1271 N Milwaukee)
  - b. There is no Chicago Public Library in North Center.
  - c. The above branches offered the following arts activities during 2001: African Symbol Making, Book Discussions, and Polish Christmas Decorations.

## G. Park Districts

1. 29 adult art activities offered at the Chicago Park Districts in the region during the summer of 2000.
  - a. Painting, Stained Glass, Theater, Dance (Ballet and Jazz), Drawing and Painting, Gardening, Jewelry Making, Music (Piano), Paper Arts, and Ceramics
2. 28 adult art activities offered at the Chicago Park Districts in the region during the summer of 2001.
  - a. Woodcraft, Painting, Stained Glass, Drawing and Painting, Arts and Crafts, Lapidary, Dance (Ballet and Jazz), Art Fair, and Ceramics.

## H. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers located in the region

1. Near Northwest Arts Council (Logan Sq./West Town)
  - a. Encourages partnerships between artists, schools, businesses, and community development corporations. Programs include marketing and research, international artists exchange and cooperative arts development. Member of the National Association of Artist's Organizations. (Taken from website [cityofchicago.org](http://cityofchicago.org))
2. Inside Art (West Town)
  - a. Monthly shows of work by emerging artists and is rented together with its private garden for parties and meetings. Educational programming helps people discover local art scene. (Taken from website at [homepage.interaccess.com/~jentes/index.htm](http://homepage.interaccess.com/~jentes/index.htm))
3. Museum of Puerto Rican History and Culture (West Town)
4. Polish Museum of America (West Town)
  - a. Offers art, history, and culture of Poland and of the Polish-American community. Special exhibits showcase significant examples of Polish art and culture. (Taken from [pma.prcua.org](http://pma.prcua.org))
5. Puerto Rican Arts Alliance (West Town)
  - a. Mission: "To support Puerto Rican art and culture in Chicago and to promote the historic and cultural contribution of the Puerto Rican community at large." (Taken from website)
6. Ukrainian National Museum (West Town)
  - a. Includes artifacts, a library, and archives detailing the heritage, culture and people of Ukraine. (Taken from website at [ukrntlmuseum.org](http://ukrntlmuseum.org))

## VI. Regional case study activity [i.e. theater in the region of the theater case study]

- A. See Discovery Center, Lill Street Gallery, Francis Parker School, etc. above in sections IV. and V. for painting classes.
- B. Latin School (adult drawing courses)  
(Sources same as "IV." above and fieldnotes.)

## North West Suburbs

Region: NW Suburbs, besides locations in Mt. Prospect data gathered in Arlington Heights and Wheeling. Region demographics done for Arlington Heights, Des Plaines, Elk Grove Village, Prospect Heights, Rolling Meadows, and Wheeling.

### I. Region: general history and description

#### A. Economic base and Institutions

1. N/A

#### B. Non-arts activities institutions that characterize region

2. N/A

### II. Demographics

#### A. Region

1. Current Total Population = **301,924**

a. Increased by 18,901 or 7%

b. Hispanic = **12%**

• Increased by 19,589 or 112%

c. Non-Hispanic White = **77%**

• Decreased by 16,368 or 7%

d. Non-Hispanic Black = **1%**

• Increased by 1,811 or 68%

e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **8%**

• Increased by 10,347 or 77%

f. Other

American Indian

Native Alaskan\Hawaiian = **less than 2%**

g. Over the next two decades this region is projected to add 1.5 million people to a total of 9 million, according to the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission. *See Appearance of street in section III A. for more information of what this means to the area.*

#### B. Neighborhood

##### 1. History

a. Growth had been phenomenal, at the outset of WWI there were 300 citizens, beginning of WWII there were fewer than 2,000. Now (1990) there are more than 50,000

b. German immigrants were one of first to settle, other than Yankees and New Englanders.

##### 2. Current

a. The median family income is twice that of Chicago.

b. Current Total Population = **56,265**

• Increased by 18,901 or 7%

c. Hispanics = **12%**

• Increased by 3,209 or 94%

d. Non-Hispanic White = **74%**



- Decreased by 4,174 or 9%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Black = **2%**
    - Increased by 420 or 75%
  - f. Non-Hispanic Asian = **11%**
    - Increased by 2,900 or 86%
  - g. Other = **less than 1%**
    - American Indian
    - Hawaiian
- (CCFB, NIPC: Summary 2000, UC Map collection)

### III. Neighborhood general

#### A. Appearance of street, homes [is decoration or art visible?]

##### 1. RS description of Lyons center and area:

- a. I passed a big Brudno's (spelling?) art supply store on ?Rand. I arrive and the park is beautiful: mature well-designed landscape and modern building and big landscaped parking lot. It's in a residential area, at least to the north, which is where I came from. Big maple trees and medium sized homes, well maintained and landscaped. Don't see many people (unseasonably cold weather-in the 40's) until I get to the parking lot. Three cars are parking and there are more than 30 cars in the lot. A black woman and ?high school aged ?son (they and a family group of ?East Indians are the only people of color I saw) are entering along with a middle aged woman and a couple in their ?30's (This is the "new" site with a stage in a basketball gym, as opposed to the newer building RecPlex where both rehearsals were held, and is actually a newer building, but without a stage and more space competition. Its surroundings are described next.) It takes me about 1 « hours to get there and find the place. I take Touhy west and then Dempster but it jogs or something and I have to swing back to find it. Meanwhile I go by another large park building for an adjoining suburb (DPL) and it's quite elegant and subtle looking, set back from the road, new, with low-level modern lighting in the parking lot and lots of cars and one doorway has a large theater sign on it, subtle in concrete relief or something. There are no big lights or loud brush signs; it looks more like a country club or feels like that, or a corporate campus. I arrive at the XXX park building and it's also new and huge but a little more theme park feel in that there is a neon sign at the entrance but also large dried grass plantings there and the building is more open and lit up and has large hand painted shamrocks and St. Patrick day sayings in the windows in bright colors. Lots of windows; two stories. The parking lot is huge and is landscaped with trees and there are 150 or so cars. And it's inviting. I park and notice the people coming and going. Several women, each with two or three kids, and then several men by themselves, young or middle aged, carrying gym bags. The cars are mostly new and include mini-vans, sports utility vans and coupes. Even though there are lots of cars, I can park easily not far from the door. Later I see there are actually two main doors so no one has to park far from the door. It's well planned. I walk in and the doors have 4 or 5 printed posters about community band this Sunday at high school performing and a soccer poster, etc. Inside there's a hall like coming into a mall and the see the information desk which is huge and in the center where it's like an atrium with stairs going up to second floor; lots of windows so you can see into the fitness center (the exercise machines room) on the second floor and a track at the top of a basketball court kind of gym and on the first floor are closed off rooms plus a

swimming pool with windows all one wall and then in the center there is also a table and chairs area with vending machines. I don't ever see anyone actually sitting there. Lots of carpeting everywhere and modern armless, upholstered bench chairs.... (Skip to end of observation)...As I leave, there are dozens of Latinos, mostly men and toddlers, younger grade school kids, leaving the softball field to the south of the building. Some of the men are in uniform, and are standing around talking in the parking lot, and gathering the children together in order to leave. It's very hot, like 90 degrees, the hottest and most humid day of the year.

## 2. General Info

- a. Over the next two decades this region is projected to add 1.5 million people to a total of 9 million, according to the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission. Suburban traffic is already a problem in this area. Suburban traffic is the main problem in Chicago land suburbs according to a poll by the Tribune. The survey was given to 930 randomly selected residents over the summer and indicated that traffic is particularly troublesome in Lake, DuPage, and NW Cook County. Property taxes outranked traffic in the South and Southwest Cook and Will Counties.
- b. Homeowners have up-graded or expanded their homes instead of moving to a larger adobe in another community. The community's homes are very diverse. This gives the citizens the ability to stay in the community if you want to move up.
- c. Lots in the community are relatively large allowing owners to double and sometimes triple their houses size. Community has a very broad selection of housing sizes and styles.
- d. Mt. Prospect got its name from the city's altitude, which is the highest in Cook County, and because of Era C. Egelston's optimism about future returns on his initial investment in village land.
- e. Mt. Prospect is a mix of its two neighboring suburbs, working class Des Plaines and upwardly mobile Arlington Heights.
- f. Housing is also a mixture of old and new with almost 3/5 of the housing units in single-family dwellings. The median value of these units is \$150,000 making it among the top 10 of Illinois suburbs with 25,000 or more residents. Example: Old Orchard Country Club Homes.
- g. Plans for the commercial district of the community include re-developing of the Triangle Area (triangle bounded by Central Rd., NW Highway, and Main Street)
- h. Downtown Mt. Prospect is being revitalized with the Clock tower Condominiums. Prices range from \$196,000 to \$346,000. Plans also include shops and lofts at Village Center on Emerson ST. and NW Highway and sprucing up of old shops along Busse Rd. (Today's New Homes 8-9-00 p.11)

## B. Economic Institutions and Non-art/nonprofit institutions [only if no arts activities associated]

1. Randhurst Shopping Mall was the nation's first totally enclosed/air-conditioned mall (1962). The mall was the first and for many years the largest of its kind.
  - a. Upgraded in the mid 1990's by adding a new 16-screen cinema, restaurants, a home center store, and a new appliance superstore.
2. Many programs provide more services to the elderly including a subsidized cab fare, a modern senior citizen housing project, a Central Village, and a condominium complex for mature adults.
3. Kensington Center, 300-acre industrial park, provides almost 2.8 million square feet of office, warehouse, and light assembly space. Tenants include Mitsubishi Electric Sales America, Inc.,

G.D. Searle Company, and the Nutrasweet Company. Other large businesses in this neighborhood include WCI Financial Corporation, Hyundai, AM Multigraphics Company, and Centel and TDK Corporation of America.

4. School systems are strong according to citizens.

- a. At Forest View Educational Center (2121 S Goebbert Rd. Arlington Heights). Presented by High School Districts 214's Community Education Multicultural Partnership Committee. Event designed to recognize Hispanic Cultural heritage within the U.S. Offers food and performances by dance companies.

5. Hispanic Festival

- a. Little City Foundation Multi-Disciplinary Arts Center (Palatine)
  - Invited artists with developmental disabilities from around the world to participate in a virtual art exhibit.

IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

A. Ethnic places/activities

1. Hispanic Festival

- a. At Forest View Educational Center (2121 S Goebbert Rd. Arlington Heights) Dance and Music performances.

B. Nonprofits

1. There are apx. 10 child-care facilities in this neighborhood.

C. Churches

1. There are approximately 27 places of worship

D. PD (arts and non-arts when there are both)

1. Lyons Rec. Center (?Mt. Prospect. Park Dist)

- a. Location of DRAMA performances

2. Site collected folder for Rec Plex

- a. Tennis club, charity athletic events, child care and activities in the PD, pet magazine, garage sale flier, public works tour flier. No art materials.
- b. Mt. Prospect Veterans Memorial Band Shell offers concerts that are presented by businesses such as Mt. Prospect Bank and Motorola.
- c. Flyer for Sousa. Sousa opened the 2000 band shell season.
- d. Multi-Cultural Celebration at the Forest View Educational Center. Festival offers entertainment (Music, Dance, Performances), Ethnic Crafters (Jewelry, Beaded Jewelry, Crafts, Art, Wood Crafts, painting), and food.
- e. Drama's talent showcase at the RecPlex Music Room. Showcase for music, dance, poetry, dramatic readings, comedy, or magic
- f. Puppet Play at Forest View Educational Center Theater
- g. Ballroom Dancing at Heresy H.S.
- h. The RecPlex has space available to rent for any type of party. Taken from a flyer.
- i. Kids theater offered by PD
- j. Etched in Stone flyer. Offers people the chance to buy a brick and engrave a message or name onto it. The bricks will then become touchstones when laid in the entrance walkways of RecPlex.
- k. Materials for Youth sport activities include Baseball Camps, babysitting, kids guide to fun, soccer, preschool, basketball camps, and soccer camps.

- l. Materials for Adult sport activities include Amateur athlete, Gym Memberships, Personal Trainers, Fitness Testing, Tennis, Bike Riding, Aerobics, and Fitness Center Info. Pool Hours, and a Windy City Sports 2000 magazine.
- m. Other materials include Garage Sales, Children's Book Fairs, Children Manners Classes, Lifestyle and Weight Management Classes, and Dog Training Classes.

E. Library activities

1. Mt. Prospect Public Library (10 S. Emerson St.)
  - a. Randhurst Fall art and Craft Fair (Elmhurst and Rand Rd. Sept. 18-19)

V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [entertainment and leisure here only if not already in "I.B." above]

A. Arlington Heights Library

1. Site collected folder:

a. Arts activities

- Fashion Design at Harper College offers beginning in advance classes. Also offer Floral Design classes.
- Community Education Travel Newsletter. Offer Fall tours that feature color and culture. Some destinations include Istanbul, Prague, Spain, Morocco, Africa, and a Lake Michigan Amish Tour.
- Newcomers of Arlington Heights are invited to sign up for various activities on a single sheet of paper found at the library. Out of the 14 activities, only one (arts and crafts) is art orientated.
- Flyer to become a member of The Barrington Community Associates of The Art Institute of Chicago. Offer various adult art classes that deal with art history and art in general. No activities really mentioned.
- Flyer for The Palatine Concert Band (150 E Wood Street). Trying to sell subscription events.
- Northwest Cultural Council (Rolling Meadows)
  - Executive Directors Report includes in the calendar of events art, dance, literature, music, and theater.
  - Poetry Workshops sponsored by the Northwest Cultural Council at Stonehill Sq. in Rolling Meadows. Basically a flyer for sign-up.
- Park District adult art activities at Loyola Park (1230 W Greenleaf) include Crafts, Weaving, Woodcraft, Basket Weaving, Watercolors, and drawing
- Newspaper and booklet publications included The Arlington Heights Journal, Icare (Guide to Chicagoland Charities and non-profit organizations), Senior News, Chicago Reader, Shore Leave, The Monthly Aspectarian, Sroboda's Business Magazine, and Harper College Spring 2000 class offerings.
- Other materials covered: Health, Food, Child raring, singles/social events, job training, pets care, sons of the American Revolution membership,

B. Wheeling Library

1. Site Collected Folder:

- a. The Library Cable Network (flyer), CH. 24, airs the Chicago Zither Band, one of the oldest community orchestras in the Chicago area. No mention of where they perform, just that it is on TV.
- b. Other arts fliers highlighted elsewhere in outline.

- c. BookPage newspaper, Published in Tennessee, most of contents stuff inside is for promotions.
  - e. Other materials collected concerned Library and School Fundraising, scholarship applications, computer training/introduction, child care-childhood, learning centers, parenting, real estate, health and safety, and charity organization fundraisers. Also a copy of Chicago Jewish News. Much of this material announced events.
  - f. 100 Years of Pop Tunes, David Keer Booth and accompanist perform show tunes. In library meeting room, Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> 2000.
  - g. Lectures on African American literature and visual artists. Two events in February 2000
  - h. Storyteller, Shanta, tells stories using music, ritual, etc. Feb 13<sup>th</sup>, 2000. Picture of Shanta looks to be African American and/or Native American.
  - i. New Library in Des Plaines (From newsletter of North Suburban Library Foundation, picked up at Wheeling Lib.)
- C. College of Lake County, Grayslake (out of region)
- 1. Lots of arts offerings, both professional, student, and in between, maybe informal
    - a. Example of possible informal: "Community Gallery of Art" fine art exhibition by its approximately 80 members. Member dues go to gallery endowment.
- D. Pleasant Dale Park District
- 1. The village of Willow Springs wants to be compensated for the \$24,000 in property tax revenue it lost when the district purchased the Chalet City Club on May 25, 2000. The most contentious plan is to allow the 2000 Willow Springs residents who are not park residents to participate in park programs at the Chalet at resident rates for two years. The estimated cost of such a discount is \$109,000 a year. (The Doings Newspaper 8-10-2000 p. 13WS)

## West Side

Region includes: Near West Side, Lower West Side, South Lawndale, Bridgeport, Armour Square, McKinley Park.

### I. Region: general history and description

#### A. Economic base and Institutions

- 1. High concentration of public housing, almost 20% of city's total (Near West Side)
  - a. Jane Addams Homes built in 1938 by the WPA
- 2. Comiskey Park (Bridgeport)
- 3. Chinatown (Armour Square)

#### B. Non-arts activities institutions that characterize region

- 1. The Great Chicago Fire started in this region (Near West Side)
- 2. Area has been the center of conflict and labor strikes, including the Haymarket Affair on May 4, 1886. (Near West Side)
- 3. Hull-House, founded in 1889, was Chicago's first social settlement. (Near West Side)(house is still there as a landmark)
- 4. Region produced four Chicago mayors (Bridgeport)
- 5. Many new homes are being built by Chinese immigrants who left Hong Kong (Bridgeport)
- 6. Racial controversy stirs this region especially at the Hamburg Athletic Association (On S Emerald). Its reputation is woven with implications of political scandal and prejudice desires

to keep blacks out of the Bridgeport bungalows and the Bridgeport boys in the political bosses' chair. Hamburg is the oldest chartered organization in IL at 92 yrs. (Bridgeport)

7. There are no public schools anymore in Bridgeport
8. Tension continues between working class what communities and African American communities East of, and around Armour Sq. and Bridgeport. After 1997 Leonard Clark beating two years later an African American 19 year old beat to death a White Sox Fan leaving Comiskey Park. (The victim was a resident of southwest side Burbank.) As the perpetrator vacillated between saying robbery and having a bad day were his motives, police considered pressing hate crime charges against the offender. I don't know the final outcome. (Story from Chicago Tribune, Wed, Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1999, p.1)
9. Many in the Lower West Side feel threatened by the creeping gentrification of the area. Northeast of the Pilsen community, characterized by Mexican Immigrant working people, the Univ. of IL continues its expansion into the Maxwell St. area, and the redevelopment of Chicago Housing Authority's ABLA continues. With the expansion of the University has also come continued building of new homes north and east of the lower west side. Also in the immediately west Near South Side community, luxury homes, row houses, and high-rise condos continue to go up even with the economic slow down of the fall of 2001. The Mexican Community fears being boxed in and squeezed out, even as it has an ambivalent relationship to community redevelopment within its own borders
10. Our Lady of Pompeii, Catholic Shrine on Harrison between UIC academic and Hospital Campuses, closed its school and lost its parish within the last X? years. Now they are considering reopening school due to increased demand for Catholic education in the central city. Interviewed in article do not talk about growing Hispanic pop to the south in Pilsen, but suburban Non-Catholics coming back to the center city and knowing the value of a Catholic education. Note: St. Ignatius is at Blue Island and Racine, so in same area. (Near West Side)
11. New commercial development in the region over the past few decades including the Riverside Square (Ashland and Archer in McKinley Park)
  - a. McKinley Park (Recreation) received \$2.5 million in the 80's for a renovation. (McKinley Park)
12. Many community groups in this region
  - a. McKinley Park Civic Association. They address local problems as well as sponsor an annual Memorial Day Parade.
  - b. Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) program brings together the 9<sup>th</sup> District police dept., city officials, and residents at a monthly meeting to discuss issues affecting the community. Police use these meetings to help increase their street presence in certain areas. (McKinley Park)
  - c. Chinese American Civic Council, in existence over 40 years. (Armour Sq.)
    - Members on board of Chinese Community Center, and serve on other civic boards and planning committees.
13. Annual Chinatown parade celebrating birth of People's Republic of China. [Taiwan supporters tried to block parade for 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mao's declaration of independence in 1999, but failed. I think it was a legal block they tried, b/c no protester supporting Taiwan were at the parade, the proceeds of which went to relief efforts in Taiwan after an earthquake. (Chicago Sun Times, 9/27/01, p.10) (Armour Sq.)
14. Cook County Jails

- a. Eric Dean Spruth has visited the jails for the last nine years and provides art therapy to hundreds of inmates suffering from psychiatric disorders. This program helps mentally-ill inmates better understand their thinking and behavior by helping them to open up creatively. Spruth also is a volunteer to a variety of organizations, runs the poetry programs for the Illinois Department of Corrections, along with working with youngsters at the Cook County Juvenile detention facility. He also works with a private practices group called Associates for Life's Challenges, where he uses art therapy for family and relationship counseling.  
(CCFB, neighborhood files in gray cabinet: especially online Tribune Home Section)

## II. Demographics

### A. Region

#### 1. History of demographics

- a. Early settlers included the Irish (Near West Side/Garfield Park) along the river, and eventually Germans, Scandinavians, Italians, Jews, Greeks, African Americans, and Mexicans came to the area.
- b. By 1980, East Garfield Park became virtually an all black community of almost 31,000. About 43% of them were living below the poverty level.

- 2. Current Total Population = **243,209**
  - a. Increased by 16,228 or 7%
  - b. Hispanics = **57%**
    - Increased by 12,308 or 10%
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **16%**
    - Decreased by 6,480 or 14%
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **16%**
    - Decreased by 593 or less than 1%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **9%**
    - Increased by APX. 8,537 or 60%
  - f. Native American = **less than 1%**
    - Hawaiian
    - Other

### B. Neighborhood

#### 1. History

- a. Early settlers were Native Americans (Pilsen acted as a crossroad between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River). In time, European immigrants (Czech, German, Poles, Croatsians, Lithuanians, Italians) came into the area for work.

- 2. Current Total Population = **44,031**
  - a. Decreased by 1,623 or 4%
  - b. Hispanic = **89%**
    - Decreased by 1,083 or 3%
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **8%**
    - Decreased by 1,219 or 25%
  - d. Non-Hispanic. Black = **2%**
    - Increased by 370 or 9%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **less than 1%**
    - Increase by about 50 or 75%

- f. Other = less than .05%  
  - American Indian
  - Hawaiian
- g. Pilsen is one of the largest Mexican communities in the United States  
 (CCFB, NIPC: Summary 2000, UC Map collection)

### III. Neighborhood general

#### A. Appearance of street, homes, etc.

1. Coming south on Blue Line, after leaving UIC Hosp Campus, first rail yards, then open space with trash, finally as the 18<sup>th</sup> St stop approaches you can see a dense cluster of interesting buildings: church spires, residential, and commercial.
2. Street vendors with carts. Seems to always be at least one in Harrison Parkway by Museum. Most recent visit, there was a woman in her ?30ies selling hot dogs and talking to a man to pass the time. As recently as 1999 the regulation of these vendors was a hotly contested issue in city council, and up until that time further regulation of their activities had been blocked. Don't know what has happened since. (Chicago Sun Times, "street performers, vendors targeted", Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, p.10)
  - a. After school lets out tons of kids on the streets going home, etc.
3. 18<sup>th</sup> St commercial district with bakeries, restaurants, groceries, drug stores, etc.
4. Resurrection Project's Guadalupano Center on 19<sup>th</sup>, with colorful murals on the old St. Vitus Church building and other buildings that the organization uses for its offices. Plaza space between their buildings where kids play.
5. Lots of older homes in area, many well kept with small gardens. Often you can still see old first floor, from before street level was raised in Chicago, now a sort of half basement, and the house stairs go up to old second floors.
  - a. Some modest new homes, especially around 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> and the Blue Line. These have been built by TRP with HUD funds for affordable housing. Some funding came through UIC Neighborhood Initiatives, as part of effort to be good neighbor and advance urban mission of the school. More cynical might say Neighborhood Initiative part of effort to quite opposition to Maxwell street destruction and continued creep of University and its community south.
6. Artwork at 18<sup>th</sup> Street Blue Line Stop, both on platform and entering station. Even the vertical rises of the stairs are painted. Brighter in the late nineties, starting to fade.

#### B. Economic Base and Non-art/nonprofit institutions [only if no arts activities associated]

1. Early settlers came into neighborhood to build the Southwestern Plank Rd., Illinois and Michigan Canal, and the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad.
2. Resurrection Project
  - a. Guadalupano Family Center on 19<sup>th</sup> St. Partnership with Chicago Commons including a daycare center for 200 kids, and arts space mentioned again below. Also offers space for dance, music, etc. I believe that some arts groups in residence already. –M.L.
3. Other community development corporations and community nonprofits including 18<sup>th</sup> St Development Corporation.
4. Chicago Historical Society and neighborhood partners have come together to form the series/exhibit "Neighborhoods: Keepers of Culture"



- a. Community programs will complement the exhibit using art, theater, music, food, lectures, panel discussions, and tours to introduce many different facets of the neighborhoods past and present.
- b. Exhibit was at CHS and then traveled to the Mexican Fine Arts Museum (1852 W 19<sup>th</sup> St) in the summer of 1997.

#### IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

##### A. Bars, restaurants, stores, etc.

##### 1. Jumping Bean Café has art/poetry events

##### a. On 18<sup>th</sup> Street

- One of the summer festivals is on the street out front (or at least it was in the late 90's)

##### B. Ethnic places/activities

##### 1. Fiesta Del Sol on 23<sup>rd</sup> St

- a. Attracts Hispanics from entire Midwest, attendance numbers for the full (multi-day) Fest is close to 100,000. Professional/Commercial entertainment, not sure if there is any informal stuff that gets space??

##### 2. Posadas near Christmas time

##### 3. Day of the Dead celebration

##### 4. Neighbor Space, a non-profit corporation that buys and expands open space throughout Chicago, plans to open an art park in Pilsen (1835 S. Carpenter) that will feature Mexican themed art by neighborhood residents. (Sun-Times 2-23-99 p.14)

##### C. Churches

1. Six Catholic churches started the "Resurrection Project" to improve the quality of life in the mostly Mexican community of Pilsen. The Project builds and sells homes to low-income families and has helped close 240 mortgages, made home improvements, and refinanced loans. All of this has put \$16 million into neighborhood investment. In 1999, the Project won the Sara Lee Foundation's Chicago Spirit Award.

##### D. Library

##### 1. There is 1 Chicago Public Library in the Lower West Side

- a. Lozano Branch: Offers adult art activities such as "Favorite Books Mural" and Piñata Making.

##### E. Parks (recreation)

##### 1. There are apx. 5 to 7 parks in the neighborhood

##### F. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers

##### 1. Mexican Fine Arts Museum (1852 W 19<sup>th</sup> St.)

- a. Has become the nation's largest Latino cultural institution

- Recently opened its newly expanded facility with exhibitions, programs and events. Expansion tripled the size of museum space. Includes 5 exhibition galleries, extended educational programs and classrooms, on-site permanent collections, storage, a larger gift shop, office space, and an improved entrance for the physically challenged. (Taken from Extra 5-23-01 p.2)

- Black tile frieze around upper edge of building, "smakes" up and down.

##### G. Site collected folder: Harrison Park activities schedule for fall 2000, announcement for Casa Guatemala benefit/dialog event with music as part of the festivities (in Uptown), invitation to Mexican American families to participate in a history documentation "book" project (involvement

would be donating pictures etc.), flier for a commemorative ceremonial dance to be held August 20<sup>th</sup> in Harrison Park, a Chicago city map, gay chamber of commerce directory, a coupon for a free Spanish/English dictionary, and a copy of a newspaper El Otro. The picture on the front of the paper is of a Chicago Mural depicting the cultural class for Mexicans coming to the US, but it is an apocalyptic scene with flying skeleton creatures, and fire, with a countryside on one side and an apt building on the other and the clash in-between.

#### H. Park District

1. There were approximately 7 adult art activities offered at the Park Districts during the summer of 2000
  - a. They included: Photography, Arts and Crafts, and Music at Dvorak Park.
2. There were approximately 5 adult art activities offered at the Park Districts during the summer of 2001
  - a. They included: Photography and Arts and Crafts at Dvorak Park
3. Fall 2000 schedule at Harrison Park
  - a. Adult art activities include Arts and Crafts, Ballet, Cooking Club, Dance, Sewing, Holiday Crafts, Instrument Instructions, and Music.

#### V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [entertainment and leisure here only if not already in "I.B." above]

##### A. Near West Side

1. Experiential Maxwell Street: A community Inspired Show of a Neighborhood's Art and Culture.
  - a. A multi-media show that features art, sculpture, and photography done by the people of Chicago's Maxwell Street. Opening evening festivities include music, art, and film. This show is to help save Maxwell Street from destruction by UIC and Daley.

##### B. Bridgeport

##### C. Armour Square

##### D. McKinley Park

##### E. South Lawndale

##### D. Library

1. There are 8 Chicago Public Libraries in this region: Roosevelt Branch (Near West Side), Mabel Manning Branch (Near West Side), Marshall Square Branch (S. Lawndale), Toman Branch (S. Lawndale), Lozano Branch (Lower West Side), Chinatown Branch (Armour Square), McKinley Park Branch, and Daley Branch (Bridgeport).
  - Adult art activities offered: Open Mics, Stepper's Dance Classes, Workshops (How to write a mystery novel, Toy Making), Writing Groups, Book Discussions, African Symbol Making, Favorite Books Mural, Piñata Making, Dance Performances, Gardening, and Polish Folk Art of Paper Cutting.

##### E. Parks (Recreation)

1. There are approximately 34 parks in the region

##### F. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers

1. Duncan YMCA/Chernin Center for the Arts (Near West Side)
2. Jane Addams Hull House (mentioned in regional description above I) (Near West Side)
3. Chinatown Chamber of Commerce (Armour Square)
4. Chinese American Service League (Armour Square)

##### G. Park Districts

1. There were approximately 9 adult art activities offered in the region during the summer of 2000 at the Park Districts
  - a. They included: Photography, Arts and Crafts, Arts and Culture, Woodcraft, Music, and Gardening at Dvorak Park (Lower West Side), Mcguane Park (Bridgeport), Wilson Playground (Bridgeport), Skinner Park (Near West Side), Altgeld Park (Near West Side), and Piotrowski Park (S Lawndale).
2. There were approximately 7 adult art activities offered in the region during the summer of 2001 at the Park Districts.
  - a. They included: Arts and Crafts, Photography, Woodcraft, and Gardening at Skinner Park (Near West Side), Dvorak Park (Lower West Side), McGuane Park (Bridgeport), and Wilson Playground (Bridgeport) (Same as in “IV.” Above).

## Far South Side

Region Includes: Ashburn Gresham, Chatham, Burnside, Pullman, West Pullman, Roseland, and Washington Heights.

### I. Region: general history and description

#### A. Economic base and Institutions

1. With railroads (“the crossing”) and factories, the region can be classified as an industrial one.
2. Significant demolition and re-development on South and Southwest sides of Chicago, most of which looks to be North of Roseland.
  - a. Example: Kennedy King demolition and rebuild
3. No newspaper articles on file for re-development in Roseland. Check field notes for examples.

### II. Demographics

#### A. Region

1. Current Total Population = **224,633**
  - a. Decreased by 13,065 since 1990 census
  - b. Hispanic Population = **1.6%**
    - Increased 297 since 1990 census
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **1%**
    - Decreased 1,343 since 1990 census
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **97%**
    - Decreased 13,791 since 1990 census
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian  
Other/Hawaiian Islander  
American Indian = **less than 1%**

#### B. Neighborhood

##### 1. History

- a. Originally settled by North Hollanders in search of suitable land for truck farming
- b. Neighborhood originally named Hope in 1862, changed to Roseland in the 1870’s by local residents.

- c. The establishment of the Pullman factory brought in the Swedish, German, Irish, and English.
  - d. By 1970, neighborhood was experiencing a number of ills: unemployment, inflation, mortgage defaults, business failures, and gang-related problems.
2. Current
- a. Only about **13%** of the population have a college degree.(based on 1990 census)
  - b. Only about half of the Roseland residents (**52%**) were employed, **11.1%** were unemployed, and **37.1%** were not in the labor force according to the 1990 census.
  - c. Current Total Population = **52,723**
    - Decreased 3,770 since 1990 census
  - d. Hispanic Population = **.06%**
    - Increased 80 since 1990 census
  - e. Non-Hispanic White = **.05%**
    - Decreased 154 since 1990 census
  - f. Non-Hispanic Black = **98%**
    - Decreased 4,093 since 1990 census
  - g. Non-Hispanic Asian  
Other/Hawaiian Islander  
American Indian = **less than 1%**  
(CCFB, NIPC: Summary 2000, UC Map collection)

### III. Neighborhood General

#### A. Appearance of street, homes

1. 60% of housing units are single-family dwellings, and despite the mortgage defaults, about 2/3 of them are owner occupied. (1990 community fact book)
2. Housing is a mix of wood frame homes – one story with attics and two story but no huge mansions – and modest brick homes. Houses in the blocks around Fernwood Park are in various degrees of repair, some boarded up, some needing paint and repairs but lived in, others well kept and in good condition. The cars vary in age and their condition often corresponds to the condition of the house they are in front of. At the north end of the park, near the terminus of Lowe St., which ends because of the park, a red brick home was being renovated, with new windows installed. I noticed both members of the two-man crew were white.
3. Fernwood Park itself is surrounded by homes on all four sides, covers a four-block area, and is enclosed in a fairly new black iron fence. I didn't see many people in the park proper, even on the few Saturdays was there, although there are some dog walkers or people talking. It is nicely green and inviting in appearance. It is the park building that is heavily used. It has swimming, basketball, girlschouts, and a variety of other activities including ping-pong in the summer of 2001. Space is available for rental for special events; the guild and a school both used the gym at times I was there. (Not sure the guild had to pay. I believe the school did.) The building is red brick, in good repair, and fairly new, maybe from even as recently as the 80's. Just in the fall of 2001 an expansion of the park lot was completed immediately adjacent to the building, reducing just a little the parks green space. Landscaping right around the fieldhouse is done with evergreens and shrubs; I don't recall any large beds or pots of flowers.
4. The empty lot at 103<sup>rd</sup> and Lowe has a sign announcing the future home of X Missionary Baptist Church. I never noticed construction during the period of fieldwork. There is a storefront church not more than another block west on 103<sup>rd</sup>.

5. 103<sup>rd</sup> St is the commercial strip for the neighborhood of the Park. Businesses coming west from Michigan Ave to Halsted include convenience stores, groceries (some large but not chains store like Jewel), laundromats, day care centers, liquor stores, and video rental. There are a number of empty lots along 103<sup>rd</sup>, and near the railroad tracks west of normal quite a bit of open space.
6. Railings east to the east and interstate 57 to the north cut off most residential streets, so drivers have to use Wallace or Normal to travel north and 103<sup>rd</sup> to go east.
7. There are an entire section of north south streets named Harvard, Princeton, Yale, etc. These contrast with the number of honorary brown street signs in Roseland. Wallace in front of the Park is Honorary Myia White St. Vincennes at the Dan Ryan and 95<sup>th</sup> is Lou Rawls X. Other streets are renamed for ministers. I didn't not whether any of the Ivy League streets were among the renamed.
8. East of Michigan, into the Pullman community area, people sell goods out of their cars in a church parking lot, and a man sells used furniture out of a truck parked in an empty lot.
9. I don't know crime rates for the area, but a quilter commented that the parking lot in the shopping center at 87<sup>th</sup> is no place to leave a car for three days. Panhandling was common on the L traveling south, and news reports during the time of fieldwork included the story of a man getting into an on foot shoot out and chase with police that ended near the 95<sup>th</sup> street L stop.
10. 95<sup>th</sup> St L stop: at L stop one sees mostly African American's switching from trains to buses and vice versa. A few whites, and a few more Asians pass through the station. In the case of the former, I saw mostly what construction workers or CTA employees. The Greyhound Bus does stop at 95<sup>th</sup> to pick up riders. I noticed Texas as one of the destinations. This also tends to bring a few whites to the station.
  - a. Some of the CTA buses going to and from the station were painted to promote art nonprofits. One a moving mural of kids art, or kidesque art, promoting Little Black Pearl arts workshop, and another promoted Gallery 54 at the Athenaeum.
11. The following two points are RS's descriptions of the area around St. James, taken directly from her field notes.
  - a. I exit at 87<sup>th</sup> street, going by a large shopping mall with a Toys R Us, Marshalls, and a clothing store for large women. Some of the stores are not filled. And on the periphery of the property behind the mall, along the street there's a lot of litter that looks like it has been there forever. I see the church, which is on the corner and has a large bell tower; it's orange brick and fairly new, about 4 stories high. I turn at the corner and drive around the block, seeing that the lot behind the church is full. The street the church is on has mostly brick one and two story small, well-kept homes on it; most with wrought iron fences. There's a vacant lot at the north end. On the west side of the block, i.e. that street, there are a couple homes that are wooden and less well made, plus more vacant lots. The church has a metal sign near the door with the name of the church and the minister but there are no times for the services listed. The lawn and the evergreen foundation plantings are well maintained. Across the Dan Ryan I can see that there are more brick homes and 1 apartment building.
  - b. On the entrance to the Dan Ryan there's a not flashy, black and white big billboard (billboards are rare; the other two I saw in the area are the same Jesse White Secretary of State organ donor ones that have a black girl depicted.) that says: "Wake up Black Men, Your children are killing themselves". There's an image of a big gun coming out

of each of the baby buggies that are facing each other. This is near the Gillespie public grade school. (I go home and change clothes and return to the church, driving around in the neighborhood a little) 10:00 I see that it's a security guard in the brown jacket and pants who I had seen by the church door; this time he's walking south on the street away from the church, but later he's back by the church door. There are signs that hang along the light posts in the area to the south and west that say "Lilydale: A Landmark Community Association. I also see to the west and south that there is housing that looks like CHA low rises but I don't see any CHA designation. There's a big sign that says Princeton Park. I can't tell if the housing like this along 95<sup>th</sup> is the same as what's west of the church]. So there's a strip of more middle class homes near the church but then nearby is the low-income housing. One street leading to the low-income housing is torn up, like it was being resurfaced but never finished. It's gravel and has large potholes everywhere and the manhole covers protruding above grade. It has that look of being unfinished for a long time. I drive along 95<sup>th</sup>, going west. 95<sup>th</sup> is about 3 blocks south. There are small businesses: nail sculpting, Allstate Insurance, storefront churches that don't seem to have much activity around them. Then I come to Trinity United Church of Christ [See AFO field notes, for a description of this area also. Also, Isabel, in CCAP, said she goes there. And I think that's where participant FD goes also. It has several parking lots and buildings, including a child care building (sign says that) and a building that has a sign that says: Human Enterprise and Development Center. There are people coming and going from the church. Well-dressed people, all African American. Further on 95<sup>th</sup> is the large new Woodson Regional Public Library. Gwendolyn Brooks and other's names are prominently displayed in the architecture. At a major intersection a middle aged black man is washing windows. I give him 50 cents and he asks for a dollar. I see the car driver behind me gives him a dollar. I drive back to the immediate church area (study site, i.e.). A couple blocks away, behind the church, and among the homes so you almost miss it (I notice it because of the parking lots (?2) that are full), is a small new looking Progressive Baptist Church. I see someone coming or going. The street trees in the area, including lots of ?silver maple, look like they're a good 20 or more years old, i.e. mid-sized trees. The parkways and yards are clean, and the vacant lots (which are fewer in the residential area than on the business strip, are littered but look like they've been cleaned in the last year or two, i.e. not totally neglected.) I see 2 different men in their ?20's walking (dressed casually, and with stocking hats.) from the west toward the east. They're noticeable because except around the churches I don't see others walking around on the street. They both look like they're headed somewhere as pedestrians, i.e. don't seem to be coming from a parked car and going into a house. There is, I notice a large bus terminal (?Trains too??) at 95<sup>th</sup> and the Dan Ryan. Directly behind the church, on the other side of the alley, are two homes with garages that have signs and one has a wrought iron fence with a cross on it. The sign on the corner building says E.A. Hawkins Education Center and the adjacent one says Dorothy Hawkins Community Service Center. It has a parking lot to its side that opens to the alley, by the church. The church itself has an attached low building and the house adjacent to it has "W.L. Johnson Parish House" on letters (?above the door). I park on the street to the south of the church. I can see the side parking lot and also the side door. No one comes or goes from that door. An old guy (?70s) pulls up in an old

well kept Cadillac that has a dent in the side, and parks on the street, leaving the car running.) 10:30. I circle around and park in front of the church, near where I was before, so I can see people entering and 1 person leaving. There are Chevrolets, Volvo, Lincoln, Buick, and Mercedes SUV parked here or on the side. There's a jovial man (?40s) entering the front door with a purple (choir) robe over his arm. [I note this because at the very large Black church I observed (CUT) in December 1999, it appeared there were separate entrance that the choir used).

B. Economic base and Non-art/nonprofit institutions [only if no arts activities associated]

1. The Dan Ryan, Calumet and Interstate 57 extensions have isolated Roseland from the rest of Chicago's south side and carries shoppers farther away. This combined with racial tensions and lost steel-industry jobs (within the past 30 years) have basically crippled the area.
2. Two non-profit organizations, Neighborhood Housing Services and Roseland Christian Community Homes, are redeveloping the area between 110<sup>th</sup> St./121<sup>st</sup> St. on Michigan Ave. Infrastructure improvements and beautification along the commercial street are some of them improvements to the strip of land.
  - a. NHS has put \$12 million in lending and other services.
  - b. Roseland Christian Community Homes has rehabbed about 36 abandoned houses and sold them under an Adopt-A-House program.
3. There are three health facilities in Roseland: Roseland Community Hospital, Halsted Terrace Nursing Center, and Noble Hope Rising House.
  - a. Roseland also has 13 child-care facilities.

IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

A. Nonprofits

1. View III above

B. Churches

1. Roseland has over 100 places of worship.

C. PD (arts and non-arts when there are both)

1. Neighborhood has 5 parks.
  - a. See III. A.

D. Library activities

1. Pullman Branch Library (11001 S Indiana Ave.)
  - a. No adult art activities offered at the Pullman Branch for 2001. The branch does have a meeting room that holds 75 people

E. Park District

1. Adult art activities offered in Roseland for the summer of 2000
  - a. Ceramics and Music at Palmer Park
2. Adult art activities offered in Roseland for the summer of 2001
  - a. Ceramics, Sewing, and Photography.

F. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers located in region.

1. Take 5: A Poetry Café
  - a. Sponsored and held by the Chicago Police Department at the 5<sup>th</sup> District Auditorium.
    - It's a place where cops and civilians share their poetry.

V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [entertainment and leisure here only if not already in "I.B." above]

A. Washington Heights

1. African American Images (bookstore)
    - a. 1909 W. 95<sup>th</sup> St. (Maybe over the line into Beverly, but culturally part of the African American far south side.)
    - b. Afro centric Books, author talks, book signings, etc.
    - c. Public meeting space (Black Liberation Workshop forums held here)
    - d. Saturday Academy for academic skills and cultural awareness. (For kids)
  2. THE SOUL of POETRY Open Mic (regularly but not sure of frequency.
    - a. Big commercial bookstore 3 or 4 blocks west has weekly performance/poetry Open Mic weekly
- B. Pullman  
 C. West Pullman  
 D. Chatham  
 E. Auburn Gresham  
 F. Burnside  
 G. Libraries
1. There are 6 Chicago Public Libraries in this region.
    - a. Branches: Tuley Park Branch Library (Chatham), Whitney Young Branch Library (Chatham), Pullman Branch Library (Roseland), Thurgood Marshall Branch Library (Auburn Gresham), Brainerd Branch Library (Auburn Gresham/Washington Heights), and the Woodson Regional Branch Library (Washington Heights)
      - These branches offered the following adult art activities during 2001: Book Discussions, Stepper's Dance Classes, Toy Making Workshops, and a Writing Group.
- H. Park District
1. Approximately 8 adult art activities in the region at park districts during the summer of 2000.
    - a. They were: Ceramics, Music, and Gardening
  2. Approximately 10 adult art activities in the region at park districts during the summer of 2001.
    - b. They were: Photography, Ceramics, Sewing, and Gardening.
  3. West Pullman Park
    - a. Spring 2000 adult art activities offered include: Crafts (Millinery), Sewing (up to tailoring), Woodcraft (cabinet making and more), Dance, and Music (55 and over choir, Piano).
    - b. Non-arts recreational activities including swimming, lifeguard training, aquatic exercise, basketball, bowling and Special Olympics training.
    - c. CAPS meetings and GED classes
    - d. Site collected folder has Spring 2000 schedule, earned income tax credit flyer, and big brothers big sisters 5K walk, Garfield Park conservatory flowers show flyer, and CPD Summer 200 Fun Guide (The whole book).
- I. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers located in this region.
1. A. Philip Randolph/Pullman Porter Museum Gallery (Pullman)

## Far North Side

Region = North Park, Albany Sq, Lincoln Sq., Uptown, Edgewater, Rogers Park, West Ridge. Evanston and Skokie were included in the regional section V, but not in any statistical information.



I. Region: general history and description [This section as written is not about entire Northwest corner of the city, but just West Ridge, so really it belongs below in the neighborhood section, III.]

A. Economic base and Institutions

1. There is no heavy manufacturing in West Ridge
2. The area is dominated by residences, schools, and religious institutions.
3. Main business street, Devon Ave. East Indian shopping district, Indians come from out of state to shop. Jewish shops into the 1970's
  - a. Most businesses are ethnic businesses (Jewish, Middle Eastern, South Asian, and Korean).
  - b. Businesses include: garment shops, restaurants, groceries, and other imported good stores.
4. Tensions over ethnic turnover, including establishment of different chamber of commerce.
5. Old Edgewater Golf Club recently (when?) re-developed into Warren Park
6. Indian Boundary Park, opened 1922, has zoo, duck pond, and theater.

B. Non-arts activities institutions that characterize region [see above]

(CCFB, neighborhood files in gray cabinet: especially online Tribune Home Section)

II. Demographics

A. Region

1. History of demographics [NA]

2. Current Total Population = **389,171**

a. Increased by 28,699 or 8% since 1990 census

b. Hispanic = **25%**

- Increase by 25,126 or 35% since 1990 census

c. Non-Hispanic White = **42%**

- Decrease by 25,657 or 14% since 1990 census

d. Non-Hispanic Black = **13%**

- Increased by 3,995 or 9% since 1990 census

e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **15%**

- Population has increased, but are unable to tell by exactly how much due to data of 1990 census

f. Other/Pacific Island

American Indian

Alaska Native

= **2%**

B. Neighborhood

1. History

a. Indian tribes lived in West Ridge before the Europeans arrived.

b. Settlement dates back to 1830's with acquisition of 1,600 acres by Philip Rogers

c. Original settlers were German and Luxembourg's

d. 1920's population increased dramatically with Germans, Swedish, and/or Northern Europeans

e. 1950/60's Jewish and Irish Catholic population increased.

f. 1980's population became more ethnically diverse and younger as WWII generation left.

2. Current

a. "...One of the most culturally and economically diverse (neighborhoods) in Chicago and the nation." (Chicago Historical Society online)

b. More than one in four residents are Asian, Hispanic or black (1990 census).

- c. 72.7% of residents were white, 3.1% were black, 7.6% were Hispanic, and 16.6% were other (1990 census).
- d. Nonwhites concentrated in the east of West Ridge in multiunit apartment buildings. (1990 census)
- 3. The following was taken from the 2000 Census
  - a. Total population = **73,199**
    - Increase by 7,825 or 12% since 1990
  - b. Hispanic Population = **16%**
    - Increased by 5,955 or 103% since 1990 census
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **50%**
    - Decreased by 10,695 or 23% since 1990 census
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **7%**
    - Increased by 2,917 or 132% since 1990 census
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **22%**
    - Population has increased, but are unable to tell by exactly how much due to data of 1990 census
  - f. Other/Pacific Islander  
American Indian  
Alaska Native = **5%**  
(CCFB, NIPC: Summary 2000..., UC Map collection)

### III. Neighborhood general

- A. Appearance, street level [see I.A. above]
  - 1. Once considered a “Suburb in the City”, now dealing with urban ills like crime. Ethnic tensions gave way to concern with these urban ills as 80’s came to a close.
  - 2. Honorary street names show diversity: “Ghandi Marg, Mohammed Ali Jinnah Way, and Golda Meir Boulevard
  - 3. Single family homes, two flats, and large apts. Built since WWII
  - 4. Some residents near Indian Boundary Park live in large castle-like apartments.
  - 5. Participant comment that neighborhood is really music friendly. (He means to musicians playing outdoors and attributes it to proximity to Old Town School).
- B. Non-art/nonprofit institutions [see I. A. above]
  - 1. About 12 day care centers
  - 2. Two nursing centers (senior citizens).
- C. Churches
  - 1. Approximately 43 churches in this neighborhood
- D. Around Green Briar Park
  - 1. Along Peterson: ATI Medical, Skybird Travel and Tours, Athena Hellenic Society: Center for Seniors, Korean business (can’t read name), Katsu Japanese Restaurant, ABK Medical Center, Sinai Health First
  - 2. Well maintained
  - 3. West on Peterson: hair salon, boarded up building, Day Care Center (might be closed), hot dog stand, another travel agency, trash on the street
  - 4. Houses on three sides
    - a. Bungalows and Apt buildings

5. North a block is public school, two flats, and well-maintained courtyard building with Indians and Latinos
6. Participant comment on area: one block north is nice; one block south is “hell.”

#### IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

- A. Ethnic places/activities
  1. Many garment shops, restaurants, groceries, and other imported goods stores.
  2. Art Galleries
    - a. Sunshine Art Gallery (1925 W Thome)[only one on file]
- B. Park District
  1. Park district art activities for adults offered in West Ridge for the summer of 2000.
    - a. Jewelry making, music (west African drumming and percussion ensemble), and gardening
  2. Park district art activities for adults offered in West Ridge for the summer of 2001
    - a. Jewelry making, music (west African drumming and percussion ensemble), and gardening.
- C. Library
  1. Library art activities offered in West Ridge’s Northtown branch (6435 N California) for 2001
    - a. Monthly book discussion
- D. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers located in West Ridge
  1. Indo-American Center

#### V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [include West Ridge in numeric totals]

- A. Evanston
  1. Professional Theater in Evanston, e.g. Piven Theatre on Noyes
  2. Evanston has annual ethnic arts Fest, 15 years old, summers on the lakefront.
  3. Fleetwood Jordain Theatre (and ?community center) in Evanston
    - a. Black Community Theatre
    - b. Unpaid actors, but all are “arts graduates”
    - c. Material must deal with Black experience
    - d. 4 productions a year (*Evanston Round Table*, Oct 27<sup>th</sup>, 1999)
  4. Evanston Symphony Orchestra at ETHS
  5. Northwestern University music and theater department events
  6. Craft activities
    - a. After hours beading parties with friends at Beadazzled: a bead emporium
    - b. Knitting classes at CloseKnit (store)
  7. Evanston Art Center, 2306 Sheridan Road
    - a. Adult, family, and youth art activities
    - b. Adult classes in painting, drawing, metal sculpture, figure sculpture, fiber, printmaking, photography, jewelry, and ceramics
    - c. Seminars and workshops in things like creating mosaics (for adults) and garden art (for families)
    - d. One time only opportunity to work on site specific piece, assisting nationally known artist Herb Parker with rammed earth “Grosse Point Passage” recruiting flier from April 2000
    - e. Forums on art topics (see Evanston Art Center and Evanston Public Lib files for more info).
  8. Evanston Public Library

- a. Nationally known poets read at Evanston Public Library and Evanston and Skokie bookstores.
  - b. Reel time Independent Film and Video Forum.
  - c. The Art of the Story exhibit. Art by 80 illustrators of children's fiction.
9. Mcgaw Evanston YMCA
- a. Youth Theater Program.
  - b. No adult arts activities listed Winter 1999/2000
  - c. 2000 Holiday Ceramic Sale
10. Annual Evanston mayoral arts awards
- a. Past recipients: Bea Rashid of Dance Center Evanston, Eve Alfille of the Alfille Bijoux d'Art, Art Encounter, Chie Curley and Barbarra Goldsmith of Noyes Gallery, Northlight Theater, Gus Giordano, North Shore Choral Society, Evanston Art Center, and Ron Isaacson of Mindscape Gallery.
  - b. "Contribution to the community through leadership and excellence in the arts" (Flyer from Evanston Main Public Library). Nominations received at the Evanston Art Center.
11. Noyes Cultural Art Center in Evanston (Tenants)
12. Actors Gymnasium Circus and Performing Arts School
13. Art Encounter, visual arts organization with classes and workshops
14. Everybody Move, Inc., early childhood movement and music
15. Evanston Art Center leases three studios at the Noyes Cultural Art Center.
16. Figurative Art League, visual arts organization with workshops.
17. Next Theater Company, theater production company.
18. Light Opera Works, Light Opera Production Company.
19. Kids Can Dance, performing organization.
20. There are arrays of other individual tenants that specialize in different areas of the arts.
21. Dance Center Evanston
- a. Specialize in training the youth in a challenging atmosphere.
  - b. Director Bea Rashid
22. Giordano Dance Center in Evanston
- a. Founded 48 years ago by Gus Giordano
  - b. Offer diverse dancing styles: Jazz, Tap, Hip-Hop, Modern, Ballet, Social Dance and Children's Dance classes.
23. Music Institute of Chicago (Evanston Campus)
- a. Instrumental and vocal training for age two to adult
- B. Skokie
1. North Shore Arts Festival
- a. July 28-29 2000.
  - b. At the Niles North High School parking fields
  - c. Sponsored by Skokie Chamber of Commerce.
  - d. 250 "award winning" artists, everything from painting to photography, stained glass and jewelry.
  - e. Live musical entertainment.
- (Taken from Streetwise, July 23, 2001 pg. 10)
- C. Lincoln Square
1. Old Town School of Folk Music (Lincoln Square)

- a. A non-profit organization that hosts concerts sponsored by WXRT radio, WBEZ radio, The Guild Complex, etc...
  - b. Offer music classes for various types of instruments, dance classes, and workshops for all ages.
  - c. “Chicago Folk and Roots Festival” add (Chicago Jewish News obtained at Whole Foods in Evanston).
  - d. Sept. 2000 Ruth Page Dance Series performance at Northside College Preparatory High School: performing org. included Ensemble Espanol Spanish Dance, Luna Negra Dance Theater, and The Moose Project. (Street Wise, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> 2000, p.13)
2. Nervous Center (4612 N Lincoln)
- a. Jazz and experimental music coffee house (basement location).
  - b. Started as the owners’ band practice space as coffee house booked nationally known jazz musician Ken Vandermark for their Thursday night series.
  - c. Became important venue after Lunar Café stopped staging live music.
    - Their lease agreement contracted them to pay for any increase in property taxes. That combined with the noise complaints forced them to go out of business in January of 2001.
 (Taken from Reader, “Post No Bills” article, on 12/8/00.)

#### D. Rogers Park

- 1. Loyola University (Rogers Park)
- 2. Artists in residence: LIRA ENSEMBLE: Performing Arts of Poland and America.
  - a. Lira Ensemble includes: The Lira Singers, The Lira Chamber Chorus, The Lira Chamber Orchestra, The Lira Children’s Chorus, and The Lira Dancers. (Flier.)

#### E. Uptown

- 1. For profit organizations
  - a. The Green Mill (Bar/nightclub)
    - Location where Poetry Slams began
- 2. Nonprofits
  - a. Truman College (1145 W Wilson)
  - b. Beacon Street Gallery
    - Theater and performance space for professional and community based arts, e.g....Internationally known American Indian artists (2 shows and 2 sets of artists listed) and opening for elementary school based mosaic project with student participation (Materials on file do not seem to indicate that students are present in the Beacon Street Gallery space. )
    - Beacon Street programs include : exhibitions on local and international contemporary folk and ethnic artists, women and emerging artists. Performances by company members and guest artists. Education in multi disciplinary arts.
  - c. Multi-Cultural Arts Center
    - Producers of the Art of A T-shirt Exhibit, artists display their art on t-shirts in public libraries
  - d. Scrape Mettle Soul at Margate Park
  - e. The People’s Music School (931 W Eastwood)
    - Provide free lessons for ages 5 to 76 with 200 students per term, most 5-12 years old.
    - Performance ops. in ensembles
    - Student volunteers help sustain org

- f. Women in the Directors Chair (941 W Lawrence)
  - Organization dedicated to “fostering civic dialogue on social justice issues through a range of unique programs that support and present innovative alternative media made by women and girls” (Mission statement taken from newsletter obtained from Uptown community).
  - Participating Organization in Uptown Stories: series of performances and community forums to celebrate the rich history of immigrant Community in Uptown. 2001 at Arai Middle School Field, 900 W. Wilson.
  - WIDC Community Center: video library with 700+ tapes of films by women and girls, viewing room with 100 chairs. Looks to be at Lawrence location
- g. Kumba Lynx: Poetry and performance for kids drawing on ethnic traditions
- h. Japanese American Service Committee, 4427 N. Clark
  - Annual holiday festival, includes Santa, sale of works by Japanese Am Artisans

F. North Park

G. Albany Park

H. Edgewater

2. Chase Park (information obtained at the park district)

- a. Activities offered during the spring/winter of 2000.
  - Plasticene (physical therapy company)
    - Free theater classes include:
      - ◆ Physical theater workout: condition class teaches yoga, body puzzles, and contact improvisation
      - ◆ Inventing instruments: Invent and build own instruments to generate sonic environments
      - ◆ Ensemble creation: Create theater through movement and partnering
      - ◆ Storytelling and performance: Use material from your own life and heritage to create a story-piece
      - ◆ Sculpture and performance: Create and use objects to build characters and environments for theater
- b. Other activities offered at Chase Park during spring/winter of 2000.
  - Theater (youth performance, adults, set and costume production), and Crafts (adult).

I. Park District

1. 29 Arts classes or activities at parks in the region during summer 2000.

- a. Adult activities in the region offered at the park districts.
  - Drafting for weavers, weaving class/studio, woodcraft, jewelry making, music (band, west African drumming, percussion ensemble, ensemble-jazz), gardening, Dance (ballet, modern, and jazz), drawing (beginners, still life, and illustration), multimedia, painting, pottery, theater, writing workshops, and photography.

2. 24 arts classes or activities at parks in the region during summer 2001.

- a. Adult activities in the region offered at the park districts.
  - Weaving, woodcraft, artists of the wall festival, jazz city concert, jewelry making, music (beginning band, west African drumming, percussion ensemble, and piano) gardening, pottery, dance (ballet, modern, and jazz) writing workshop, theater (acting and storytellers network), photography, garden club.

J. Libraries

1. There are 8 Chicago Public Libraries located in this region

- a. Branches: Rogers Park, Edgewater, Bezazian, Uptown, Albany Park, Mayfair, Northtown, and the regional headquarter library Sulzar.
    - These branches offered the following arts activities during 2001: Writing workshop (how to write a mystery novel, journal writing as a part of creative writing), book discussions (monthly), African symbol making, dance performances (salsa, meringue, and Mexican folk dances), toy making workshops, open mics (poetry), opera discussions, polish Christmas decorations, stepper's dance classes and Friends of the Gamelon.
- K. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers
1. Gerber/Hart Library (Rogers Park)
    - a. Incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1981 for the depository of records and papers of lesbian and gay organizations and individuals, and other resources bearing upon homosexuality in American society, but concentrating on the Midwest region. (Taken from website ([www.gerberhart.org](http://www.gerberhart.org)))
  2. Ethnic Food Tours (Rogers Park)
  3. North Lakeside Cultural Center (Rogers Park)
    - a. Offers visitors a unique experience of participating in cultural exchanges in the intimate parlor setting of days gone by. Presents 10 art exhibits a year, authors reading from their own works, new and emerging performing arts, and concerts featuring all disciplines of music, dance and drama. (Taken from website at [www.ci.chi.il.us/culturalaffairs...velopment/communitycenters/nlkeside.htm](http://www.ci.chi.il.us/culturalaffairs...velopment/communitycenters/nlkeside.htm))
  4. Indo-American Center (West Ridge)
    - a. Established in 1990 to help, nearly 10,000 people annually, adjust to their environment. Most of these people lack vocational and language skills and struggle to make ends meet. However, the center is open to all ethnicity's regardless of race or language. South Asians, Europeans, Middle Eastern, and others use their services. (Taken from website at <http://www.indoamerican.org>)
  5. American Indian Center (Uptown)
    - a. Examination of captivating Native American traditions through stirring presentation. (Taken from website at [www.aic-chicago.org](http://www.aic-chicago.org))
  6. Beacon Street Gallery & Theater (Uptown) (SEE IV. D above).
  7. Japanese American Service Committee (Uptown)
    - a. An evocative repository of Japanese and Japanese-American history, social services and traditions in Chicago. (See V E.)(Taken from website of Chicago Neighborhood Tours at [www.chgocitytours.com](http://www.chgocitytours.com))
  8. People's Music School (Uptown)(See IV. D above)
  9. Lincoln Square Chamber of Commerce (Lincoln Square)
    - a. Since 1948, the Lincoln Sq. Chamber of Commerce continues to work diligently to maintain the vital connections between the community and the businesses that serve it. The chamber encourages investments, retail development, and capital improvements in this neighborhood. (Taken from website at [www.lincolnsquare.org](http://www.lincolnsquare.org))
  10. Old Town School of Folk Music (Lincoln Square) (SEE IV B.)
  11. Swedish American Museum Center (Edgewater)
    - a. Established in 1976 to preserve Swedish-American heritage in Chicago.

## South West Side

The following is a narrative describing the community and its informal art activities written prior to the transition to outline form. The community theater group has been operating in the same neighborhood for 12 years, and has moved a number of times from its original park gym location, first to a public school assembly hall, next to a music school and, finally to a stage in the basement of a small protestant church, where it has been for the last eight years. The theater group is managed by a board of directors comprised of eight people, most of whom also serve as part of the production crew. With audiences per show averaging about 40 people, the group pays the church a small percentage of ticket sales as “rent”.

The region of Chicago and adjacent suburbs that surround the community theater’s Church location continue to be characterized by a manufacturing and transportation industrial base, despite manufacturing job losses in the metro area over the last 30 years. A railroad switching/transfer yard (?) and it’s adjacent allied industries provide numerous jobs, while an international airport is the largest employer in the region. (CCFB 108) Popular national brands of cookies and candy are still produced in the area. The ethnographer passed both welding and fastener manufacturing businesses while driving to rehearsals. In addition, large numbers of Chicago’s police, firemen, and other city workers make their homes in the residential neighborhoods of this region of the city. (Chicago Tribune: Homes – Internet edition p.3)

Historically the region has been populated by Whites, first by immigrants from Central Europe, and later others from Eastern and Southern Europe. (CCFB 185) The 2000 U.S. Census shows that the Western Chicago and suburban parts of the region continue to be more than 50% Non-Hispanic Whites. One suburb, immediately adjacent to the city, is over 50% Hispanic. In Chicago the northeastern and some of the eastern neighborhoods of the region are now over 50% Hispanic, while in the Southeast and parts of the east African Americans make up more than 50% of the population in some neighborhoods. In the case of African Americans, during the 1980’s and 1990’s they moved in from adjacent regions of Chicago. Hispanic immigration into the greater Chicago region, particularly from Mexico, has driven Hispanic population growth in a number of neighborhoods and suburbs across the Chicago land region. (*NIPC: summary of 2000 census...* and University of Chicago Map Collection, March 2001)

In the immediate neighborhood of the Church, the population is still predominantly Non-Hispanic White, with Hispanics making about 21% of the population and Non- Hispanic African Americans not reaching 1% of the population. None-the-less the minority population rose from 8% to 24% of the total population, driven by Hispanics moving into the area. (NIPC *ibid*) The population of the Chicago Community Area (CCA) actually rose 3.9% between 1990 and 2000 driven by the strength of the transit industry and the Hispanic influx. (Chicago Tribune: Homes – Internet Ed 1-2) (Chicago Tribune 3/15/01 1:7) Thus far “white flight” does not appear to be an issue, and house values have risen 2% each year in recent years. There is concern about rising crime attributed to Latino gangs. The local CAPS organization is very active with citizen “night walks” periodically scheduled as needed. (Pairs of residents walk the neighborhood after dark.) Since 1988, an equity assurance program has insured participating residents against the possibility of falling home values. Residents who pay \$125 for a one time appraisal - and who stay in their homes for at least five years - can collect the difference between what they paid for their home and what it sells for, if the value drops. The program is funded only in selected areas of the city and suburbs by property tax set aside programs and costs each home owner about \$20 each year. (Tribune: Homes Internet edition Mannion p.4 and Henderson on Chicago Lawn p.3)



**Feel of area: visual/cultural**

Single family homes dominate the neighborhood of the theater/church, mostly one story brick and frame houses with small well kept yards and simple landscaping, i.e. hedges and grass, but no elaborate gardens. A few yards and stoops have ornaments like plastic swans or concrete geese wearing seasonal outfits. Many homes display store bought decorations that change with the holidays.

There are two or three corner bars with “Michelob” signs hanging out front and even one without a sign so you have to be a local to know it is even there. One larger bar/club has Karaoke night once a X, as the Karaoke machine and the host works a circuit around the larger region. [More here on Karaoke including theater participation?] A few years ago residents banded together to successfully close down a bar around which there was always trouble with noise, litter, and bad behavior. (Mannion p.3) Another gathering spot reflects the ethnic make up of the neighborhood, the XX Polka Club. Typical area restaurants include burger, pizza, and Italian beef stands, as well as family style establishments.

**Activities**

Returning to describing the larger region, in its Chicago portion it includes approximately 40 city of Chicago parks and playlots. From an inventory of Chicago Park District (CPD) activities in the summers of 2000 and 2001, drawn from CPD publications, it appears that the majority of activities during those summers were for kids or kids with parents, but there were numerous activities for adults with some aimed at specifically Seniors. Most adult activities were sports or exercise options with clubs and arts options in the mix. In the larger approximately 40 park region around the Church/theater the arts offerings were classes in pottery (two classes both summers), woodcraft, sewing ('01 only) dancing ('01 only), painting ('00 only) and gardening (two locations). There does not look to have been a drop off in offerings from 2000 to 2001, as was observed at the level of the city parks as a whole; in fact two new activities replaced the loss of painting. This is also not necessarily an exhaustive list of the arts in the Chicago parks in this region. Arts groups use CPD facilities, but if these groups are not a CPD funded and operated, they are not listed in park district schedules. The quilting guild, another case study in our research, is an example of this circumstance in another region of the city. Their meetings five times a month in a CPD Fieldhouse do not show up in any park district materials. The neighborhood of the theater has a new park fieldhouse. While it had no adult arts offerings in the summers of 2000 and 2001, X, and X were offered in Spring 2000.

The larger region of Chicago around the theater/church also has 14 Chicago Public Libraries. In 2001 these libraries offered adult arts related activities that included book discussions (eight locations), gardening (three locations), African symbol making (two locations), steppin' (dance) classes (one location), gardening-Bonsai (one location), Polish Christmas Decoration making (three locations), Polish Paper Cutting (two locations), and a toy making workshop (two locations). At four of the book discussion location there were not only groups to discuss books on a monthly basis, but also separate discussions of *To Kill and Mockingbird*, the Mayors summer reading recommendation for the city. One of the libraries held both the regular and TKAM discussions in Spanish. [Elena material] The neighborhood of the theater has a new library completed only four years ago, with five times the space as the two storefront locations it replaces. Adult arts related activities in 2001 at the library are included in the totals above, and included book discussion and gardening. In 2000, and possibly up to the present, the library offered monthly Saturday morning Internet use classes. An Eastern European Cultural Center offers additional opportunities for residents of the larger region to engage in the arts, sponsoring a folk dance troop and offering classes in the folk arts of the namesake ethnic

group. The region also has an arts center that conducts and hosts activities and performances in the visual and performing arts. [More on informal and formal at Beverly Art Center here]

### **Theater**

Facilities at the art center include an auditorium used by a community theater group. Another community theater group in the region uses the park district facilities in one of the suburbs adjacent to Chicago, while a third uses a suburban high school's modern auditorium. A suburban community college 8-10 miles from the case study location has new state of the art facilities for the performing and visual arts. This school offers a full range of professional arts events over the course of the year, but student works are also performed and displayed. Community theater productions are also occasionally staged, and local visual artists given the opportunity to display works in the galleries. [Check "Comm: art capacity" code and/or Moraine Valley College materials to confirm this.]

There are at least six Catholic and other Christian Churches in the neighborhood of the Community Theater, including the church that houses the theater.

- These six in a consortium to promote themselves collectively.
- Some share biannual ecumenical service
- Besides STAR, one other with "drama group"
- 4 with adult/senior/ or unspecified choir
- 2 with children's choir
- kids crafts at STAR church
- numerous religious ed activities for all ages spread across all 6
- "Coffee Break" at Protestant Church
- Other activities across six: "Christian exercise, senior clubs and activities, CAPS meetings, (Various) Anonymous meetings, religious fraternal orgs, Scouting, charitable activities including food services and collection for poor and homeless, Clubs and guilds, "family night", "letter writing campaign" at Presbyterian, and Catholic Grammar school (list not quite inclusive, see "Churches ...!" brochure in STAR file)
- Others don't recognize, for example "Tabitha Circle"



## Appendix II

### Community background and arts opportunities

The information in the following outlines was derived from: 1) printed materials gathered during fieldwork (e.g. community newspapers; entertainment publications like the *Chicago Reader*; show announcements, brochures, fliers, booklets and any other written materials distributed at stores, restaurants, libraries and museums; and event programs, just to name some of the major sources in this set), 2) field notes written by the ethnographers, 3) *The Chicago Community Fact Book 1990*, 4) *The Chicago Tribune* online (especially the Home section), 5) over 100 selected articles from city and suburban newspapers, 6) The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission's *Summary of 2000 Census*, and 7) maps of census data available online from the University of Chicago Map Collection.

At an even more general level than the section headings below, the outlines are organized based on a distinction we make between regions and neighborhoods. Regions are made up of a cluster of multiple neighborhoods, which in turn correspond to "Chicago Community Areas" recognized by the federal and local governments as official divisions of the city for census tabulation purposes. The neighborhoods in a region are listed at the beginning of each outline. The specific neighborhood within each region and for which we provide more detailed information was the home of a case study activity included in the study. We do not reveal which neighborhood listed within each region is the case study neighborhood so as to protect the anonymity of the activity and thereby study participants.

### Bronzeville

Region Includes: Oakland, Douglas, Fuller Park, Washington Park, and Grand Boulevard. For our purposes here it is called Bronzeville even though it is larger than the historically defined area of African American residence when it was restricted.

#### I. Region: general history and description

##### A. Economic base and Institutions

1. The Bronzeville area is currently being redone/restored. A majority of CHA high-rises from 35<sup>th</sup> to 55<sup>th</sup> are being torn down and the low-income residents are being relocated.
  - a. Goal of program is mixed income communities. Early reports are that some residents are ending up in middle class areas, one resident moved to a middle class part of North Kenwood and reports discomfort by being surrounded by all neighbors with money. (Sun-Times 5/25/01 pg. 19A).
  - b. Social services through CHA being privatized. Number of provider locations and range of services has increased during the 90's.
2. Douglas was one of the city's earliest settlements and is one of the oldest and most historic neighborhoods in the city of Chicago.
3. Besides the high-rises along State, other public housing developments in Bronzeville include... Ida B. Wells Housing Project, Dearborn Homes, Prairie Ave. Courts, Darrow Homes, and Madden Homes.
  - a. These also are going through the same phases of demolition and or refurbishment as the Robert Taylor and Stateway.

4. At Ellis and 39<sup>th</sup> one can see the destruction of the Madden homes to the north of the intersection, while middle class African American residents of the community use the new running track and restored park to the south of 39<sup>th</sup> St. Not that I have seen kids in the playgrounds while going by on the bus in the morning on school days, but mostly older adults using the track to walk with a few others actually running.
    - a. Overall, elegance and shabbiness stand parallel
  5. Middle class wealth is concentrated between 26<sup>th</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> Streets, along and east of Michigan Ave. over to the Lake and adjacent to Michael Reese Hospital, which played a role in its development. This Prairie Shores/Lake Meadows and South Commons area contained 86% of the white population of Douglas in 1980.
    - a. "The Gap" current name for area from 26<sup>th</sup> at 35<sup>th</sup> continues to develop into the '90ies
  6. Housing rehabilitation is underway championed by upwardly mobile, African-American professionals along King Drive and along Washington Park Court and Vincennes Ave.
    - a. Catalyzed by 1992 parade of homes on Indiana and Prairie.
  7. South Shore Bank has expanded operations into the area, 1996, expanding north from their older service area in South Shore and Auburn-Gresham. They have issued \$4 million in loans to homeowners and small-scale developers in that time. Homes in need of work are selling for \$100,000.
  8. In 1990, within Oakland community area, only 2% of units were single-family buildings. And only 6% of buildings were occupied by their owners. Oakland has only 55% of the housing stock it once had in 1950, which was already near the end of the period of its succession to being an African American community.
    - a. Between 1980 and 1990 Oakland went from 17,000 to 7,000 residents. The area is ripe for redevelopment as land is abundant, downtown is nearby, and suburban land prices are rising.
    - b. The redevelopment that has occurred is not without tension as newer middle class African American residents don't want to see CHA replacement housing build in the area, as they feel there is already enough subsidized housing in Oakland. (Chicago Tribune On-Line)
    - c. In terms of income, racial make up, property values, etc.... Oakland has been a continuous region with North Kenwood to its south. Before the '90's, even middle class wealth was concentrated south of 47<sup>th</sup> St, where there are palatial mansions down to Hyde Park proper, and closer to the lake high rise coops, etc. But since 1990 some of the most extensive redevelopment has been in North Kenwood with less in Oakland, so wealth is moving north in a continuous front.
  9. The long-term effects of deindustrialization, discrimination, and disinvestment will not go away easily in this region. However, efforts by community groups and residents are trying to preserve and restore the rich cultural and economic life of the neighborhood and are contributing to positive social change.
    - a. Kennedy King reconstruction bringing the college closer to the Washington Park neighborhood.
- B. Non-arts activities institutions that characterize region
1. Michael Reese Hospital
  2. Illinois Institute of Technology
    - a. An improvement campaign was announced in 1996 for their residential units. Planned for \$120 million in improvements
  3. Bronzeville Military Academy

4. St. XX Catholic High School (North of 35<sup>th</sup> and State, west of IIT)
5. New Police HQ at 35<sup>th</sup> and State, part of redevelopment plans
  - a. CHA police were to changeover to Chicago Police officers in October of 1999 (Taken from Chicago Tribune 10/19/99).
6. “Midnight College”
  - a. Plan for CHA that resembles the Midnight Basketball campaign. Would give the youth a chance to learn marketable skills instead of doing other activities (Taken from article in the Chicago Tribune 5/29/99).

## II. Demographics

### A. Region

1. History of demographics
  - a. Population decline of about 9% from 1980 to 1990.
  - b. Native Americans once used a trail (now Vincennes Ave) that became an important commercial route to the city.
2. Current Total Population = **78,152**
  - a. Decreased by 20,383 or 20%
  - b. Hispanic Population = **1%**
    - Decreased by 1,583 or 65
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **3%**
    - Increased by 231 or 13%
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **93%**
    - Decreased by 22,223 or 23%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **2%**
    - Increased by 590 or 63%
  - f. Other/Native American  
Native Hawaiian  
Alaskan Native = **less than 1%**

### B. Neighborhood

1. History
  - a. German Jewish families began moving into neighborhood around the turn of the century. The Irish-American community also once had a strong presence in this case study neighborhood.
2. Current Total Population = **28,006**
  - a. Decreased by 7,981 or 21%
  - b. Hispanic Population 236 = **less than 1%**
    - Increased by 90 or 62%
  - c. Non-Hispanic White 173 = **less than 1%**
    - Increased by 77 or 80%
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **99%**
    - Decreased by 8,204 or 23%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **less than .05%**
    - Decreased by 8 or 28%
  - f. American Indian/Alaskan/Hawaiian = **less than .05%**
    - Numbers/percentages were very insignificant
  - g. Median household income was \$7,907 in 1990 according to MCIC website.

### III. Neighborhood general

#### A. Appearance of street, homes

1. Well-preserved graystone, sandstone, and red brick buildings along King Drive suggest the former architectural grandeur of this community. This case study neighborhood is considered the heart of Bronzeville (region). Some of the structures have been restored and preserved by middle class African American buyers during the last two decades
2. Rebuilt CTA greenline, including new stations, runs south along State to 39<sup>th</sup> and then curves east to run south just west of King Drive ending at 63<sup>rd</sup> St. New stations are clean and modern with electronic ticker signs and voice announcements of incoming trains.
3. Compared to even three years ago, walking or driving around State St, Wabash, and Michigan Ave., south of 38<sup>th</sup> and north of 51<sup>st</sup>, the area feels depopulated. I walked around the area a few times, never going north of 45<sup>th</sup> on Wabash, or State, and not south of 51<sup>st</sup>. Yes I encountered people, but it was often just a handful. Two men on a stoop by St Elizabeth Preschool on Michigan Ave, where the only people I saw on the street between 45<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> walking up around one in the afternoon on a weekday. Another African American man, at around 10 in the morning, between Wabash and Michigan on 45<sup>th</sup> asked if I was looking for the Urban League and was surprised to hear me say a friend's house.
4. Getting off the bus at Michigan and 46<sup>th</sup> there are two boarded up buildings on the east side of the street that have signs out front announcing the rehab work that is going to be done. In this area, specified one points back, there are old two and three flats that are lived in, ones that are boarded up, and ones that are renovated, frequency in that order. On Michigan between 46<sup>th</sup> and 47<sup>th</sup> and going all the way across to Wabash on the East Side, are the Michigan Blvd Garden Apartments which are boarded up and closed.
  - a. Michigan Blvd Garden Apartments (47<sup>th</sup> and Michigan) closed Approx. two years ago for mismanagement of services, including heat. (Private contractor working for CHA mismanaged)
  - b. Dorothy Tillman played significant role in closure and relocation, expressing concern for residents' safety
  - c. Huge building now sits empty and boarded up not far from emptying out Robert Taylor Homes
  - d. Michigan Blvd Garden Apartments were one of the earliest experiments in Public Housing. Built in the twenties or early thirties by Julius Rosenwald for middle class African American families. They once were a prestigious place to live.
  - e. Stores still opened on 47<sup>th</sup> St side, but looking run down and unkept.
  - f. Some empty lots along Michigan especially north of 47<sup>th</sup> and South of 38<sup>th</sup> are overgrown creating a jungly look in the spaces between structures. This is especially true around the area of 39<sup>th</sup> and Michigan and Indiana, where the L and an old railway right of way cuts through. Of course the Donnalley Youth Center is also at 39<sup>th</sup> and Michigan, and its sculpture garden/playground with a colorful mural behind it commemorates black immigration to the city creates a huge spot of color and dynamic energy that is on display to anyone on the L platform at 39<sup>th</sup> and Indiana. The garden/playground itself is behind a tall iron fence, only accessible by going through the building, which looks like an elementary school.
  - g. On the east corner of 39<sup>th</sup> is a brick structure going up, looks like it might just be a garage. This anchors the end of a row of lived in homes that seem well kept up and large, two and

three story wooden Queen Ann and brick homes. The first home in this row is a wooden frame mansion with a sign out front that says “Ancient Egypt Museum” and that it is opened by appointment. Farther up is a brick home with downstairs business. The ornate sign with flamboyant lettering just says “Monet’s.” The next house is the South Side Community Art Center (SSCAC).

5. The SSCAC is in a large stone mansion, at least three stories tall with a gallery of windows along its upper edge. It sits on its own lot all the way around. On the left in the yard is a brown rust metal sculpture of a human head on a kind of angular, pyramid shaped body. On the other side of the stairs is a black cylinder with white designs painted over the whole thing. It has a cone on top painted as the roof of a grass hut. It has the overall look of a sculpture of an African hut/building.
6. NWA program participants all drove to the meeting at Hall Branch, 4801 S. Michigan, the day it was noted by SF. While it seems they usually drive, they were particularly concerned that day about reports of a rapist on the Southside and talked about making sure they offered rides to anyone who didn’t have one until the guy is caught.
7. There was little tension between artists and people on the street when they were doing a neighborhood photo shoot for JOT. A man told them to go take pictures on the north side of Chicago. Participant said he didn’t realize there were people doing that already for the JOT. Another participant reported of this shoot that she found a rose blooming in a yard in December and had the person with the camera take a picture of it with her hand supporting it. It made the JOT.
8. Going north from 51<sup>st</sup> on Wabash, one encounters new townhouses at 50<sup>th</sup> St. and a new Apt building at 48<sup>th</sup>. There is also a large Christian organization/social service agency complex in this stretch, and when they have events people double park into Wabash making it almost impassable. It is like they don’t expect anyone else to need the street, and it is a parking lot for their events.
9. North of 46<sup>th</sup>, after passing the empty MBG apartments, there is another Christian complex on the West Side of the street. This is the Christian Missionary Church. They are renovating the school building at the corner of 46<sup>th</sup> to be a daycare for 3-5 year olds. Maybe a Head Start, I don’t recall. North of this is the church proper, and a sign saying you can listen to their services on WGCI on Sunday Mornings. On the East Side of Wabash in this block is a row of homes. The two nearest the corner are boarded up, with Danny Davis campaign signs plastered on the boards. Soon after these is a newly renovated red brick three flat, with new windows, landscaping, and a wrought iron fence. The rest of the homes are in various stages of repair and disrepair. One of those that looks like it has not been painter for a few years is a two flat in the middle of the block. This is the home studio of one of the artists in the study, where he would host open studios, inviting people into his home for food and to see his work.
  - a. Going north on the block, the next house looks a little spiffier, and has a Caldwell Banker for sale sign in the yard. One time I visited the painter, a realtor waited ‘til I reached the stoop of the house I was going into next door, so she would get me in the picture of the home for sale. Or at least that is how it seemed to me.
  - b. Another time I saw a young, well dressed couple come out of a house up the block and put a child already sitting in a car seat into their late model American Car and leave.
  - c. Across 45<sup>th</sup> on the West of Wabash is a stone Mosque building with some bright colored tile in the corners and edges. It looks very new, or at least clean. Around the corner on 45<sup>th</sup> heading to Michigan is what looks like a garage, but says it is a hand car wash. It



didn't look opened, but I didn't try going in. There was a new vinyl banner across the front of the buildings advertising cellular phone service for sale. Opposite this, on the South of 45<sup>th</sup>, is a large limestone Funeral Home and Chapel.

- d. The east side of state Street between 45<sup>th</sup> and 47<sup>th</sup> feels almost as empty as the West side. There is a lone liquor store at 45<sup>th</sup>, with the clerk behind a bullet proof screen and bars. Further south is a sausage factory and a lone outdoor payphone, which works, before you reach 47<sup>th</sup>, but there are no buildings across the street from this phone.

6. Other general features

- a. This case study neighborhood has 10 parks within its borders
- b. Chicago Rock Island Railroad, along with the Dan Ryan expressway, runs to the west of this case study neighborhood.

B. Economic Base and Non-art/nonprofit institutions

1. Nearly 2/3 of population was living in poverty during 1990 and unemployment was at 34% in April of 1990 (Community Fact Book 1990)
2. Mid-South Planning and Development Commission and The Black Metropolis Tourism and Convention Council trying to do some redevelopment that minimizes displacement and preservation of historical character.
3. MSPDC in cooperation with Jaime Kalven's Neighborhood Conservation Corp (NCC) are restoring the Overton Building at 3619-27 South State. NCC provided the labor for interior demolition work, men mostly from nearby Stateway Gardens. (Project could be done, or failed, I don't know. Reference from Hyde Park Co-op *Evergreen*, "Up on the Roof: A View of Bronzeville from the Overton Building", March 1998, Vol. 51. no.3. It is mostly a reprint of statements by J. Kalven at initiation of project.
4. BMTCC has helped get 8 buildings placed on the National Historic Register. It has purchased the Supreme Life Building to convert it to a point of entry visitors center for Bronzeville with commercial tenants as well. BMTCC sees the poor current residents of Bronzeville working in the tourist services industry or being entrepreneurs starting business that serve ethnic based tourism to the area. ("Bronzeville Past, Present, and Future" an interview with Harold Lucas in the *Evergreen*, oct.98, p.6.)
5. Alderman Tillman plans redevelopment of 47<sup>th</sup> St around African American arts and culture, restoring the 47<sup>th</sup> street corridor to its historical status as a center of African American entertainment and arts in the city. Cornerstones of redevelopment so far planned include a new expanded home for Little Black Pearl Arts Workshop (over the line into Kenwood from current home in Oakland), and a new home for Muntu Dance Theater. The two projects will run \$15 million dollars, offering employment to local minority contractors. \$2.5 million will come from empowerment zone funding. The Irony is Jerry's Palm Tavern will be destroyed, last important remaining spot from Bronzeville's entertainment heyday. Billy Holiday et al could be seen there after performing at the nearby theaters and ballrooms which are now gone.
  - a. Second City 47<sup>th</sup> ST. locating is a part of this plan.
  - b. Second City and Alderman Tillman wants to "foster the talent in our community". Second City aware of derth of black top talent in Hollywood, own main stage is all white, so going to where the black talent is located. (Chicago Sun-Times Thursday June 29, 2000 pg. 3) (Also see Grand Boulevard Section IV K.)
6. Members of Hall Branch writing group have an awareness of this history, and talk sometimes nostalgically of Bronzevilles past. One participant talked to SF about a shop that used to be on 47<sup>th</sup> where a man cut silhouettes of patrons without sketching first. He could just cut. Another

woman said she saw told her father used to come to Bronzeville to play the piano and he had the reputation as a pianist. Finally a third reported she grew up at Stateway Gardens and an older woman talked about moving into a small kitchenette with her whole family during the 1950's. It was on Lake Park, which is by the lake, east of Michigan Ave.

7. Center for New Horizons
  - a. nonprofit providing daycare, welfare to work, and other social services.
8. There are two health care facilities located in Grand Boulevard
  - a. Provident Hospital
    - Nation's oldest black hospital, which was founded by Dr. Daniel Hale Williams in 1891. New Provident Hospital was completed in the '90's as a satellite county hospital. It is a modern facility with a parking garage structure behind it. Both stand in eerie contrast to the old hospital building just west of them at 51<sup>st</sup> and King Drive, which is gutted and falling down and has a high forbidding cyclone fence around it.
9. There are also 17 child-care facilities located in Grand Boulevard.

#### IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

- A. Ethnic places/activities
  1. Bud Billiken Parade
  2. Proceeds along King Dr. and attracts near 1 million spectators.
- B. Nonprofits
  1. Farren Fine Arts Elementary School (5505 S State)
  2. Ravinia sponsored art education program.
- C. Churches
  1. There are 78 places of worship in Grand Boulevard
- D. Park Districts
  1. Grand Boulevard has one Chicago Park District art activity listed (Taylor Park)
    - a. Summer 2000 adult art activity includes: Music
    - b. Summer 2001 adult art activity includes: Music
- E. Library
  1. The Hall Branch (4801 S Michigan Ave.) is the only Chicago Public Library located in Grand Boulevard.
    - a. Offered such art related activities such as: Book Discussions, Open Mics, and Writing Groups.
- F. Theaters
  1. Regal Theater (47<sup>th</sup> and Grand Boulevard)
    - a. Served African-American entertainment tastes and became nationally known. Demolished in 1970.
  1. There are no sites listed
- G. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers
  1. Black Metropolis Convention and Tourism Council
  2. CYC/Elliot Donnelly Youth Center
- H. Some Like It Black (4500 S Michigan)
  1. Hosts free style poetry and open mics.
- I. Second City in Grand Boulevard
  1. Second City was planning to open a South Side branch to showcase a more diverse talent base (Taken from Sun-Times, Thursday 6/29/00, pg.3).

## V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts activities

### A. Fuller Park

- a. There are no sites listed

### B. Douglas

- a. 2 Multi-Media/Non-Specific sites, 2 Music sites, and 1 Fiber/Textile site

### C. Oakland

- a. There are no sites listed

### D. Washington Park

- a. 1 Multi-Media/Non-Specific sites, 1 Fiber/Textile site, 1 Pottery/Sculpture site, 1 Visual Art site, and 1 Craft site

### E. Parks

#### 1. There are approximately 22 parks located in this region

- a. Washington Park, the park proper, is in the Washington Park community, but I included it in Hyde Park's outline as many arts events are at DuSable way to the east end of the park by Cottage Groove Ave. This is not to say African American's from the west of Hyde Park do not come to the large summer festivals in Washington Park. In fact just this last summer we couldn't drive through the throngs of people coming East to a festival in the Park.
- b. Burnham Park, the Eastern edge of Douglas and Oakland, is pencil thin and cut off from the communities by Lake Shore Drive and the Metra Electric tracks. Accessing the parks requires going to one of a few narrow opened air overhead pedestrian bridges over these obstacles. (Kamin, Blair "A Flawed Jewel: The Lakefront needs help, and the City of Chicago has a rare chance to remold it for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – but where is the vision?" *Chicago Tribune*, 10/26/98, Sec.5, p.10)

### F. Park Districts adult art activities

1. There were approximately 4 adult art activities offered in this region during the summer of 2000
  - a. They included: Music, Arts and Crafts, Photography, Woodcraft, and Dance.
2. There were approximately 3 adult art activities offered in this region during the summer of 2001
  - a. They included: Music, Arts and Crafts, Photography, Sewing, and Dance.

### G. Libraries

1. There are 4 Chicago Public Libraries in this region.
  - a. They include: Chicago Bee Branch Library (Douglas), King Branch Library (Douglas), Hall Branch Library (GB), and the Robert Taylor Branch Library (Washington Park)
    - These libraries offered art related activities such as: Book Discussions, Writing Groups, and Open Mics.

### H. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers

#### 1. 3 Listed

- a. Pilgrim Baptist Church
- b. Little Black Pearl Workshop
- c. DuSable Museum of African American History
  - See write up on DuSable under Hyde Park. At the East End of Washington Park, so in reality more part of Hyde Park Community.

## VI. Other case study activity in the region.

### A. South Side Community Art Center.

1. Interior gallery space is historic landmark, example of early Bauhaus design. It is covered in thick cedar paneling that is flush across the plain of the walls, but still has a warm, rough look.
2. Started by Roosevelt as New Deal Location for African American artists. Eleanor Roosevelt at dedication.
3. Regular shows of painting, photography, other visual arts in first floor gallery. Classes offered as well, for adults and kids. I saw one student being taught one time I went by, and another time 4-5 on their way out at the end of class. (Exp of show: paintings by XX in April 2001. Rebecca talked to him at a festival in Washington park behind DuSable Museum in 1999. He was selling at festival. His show at SSCAC was highlighted on Artbeat.)
4. At least one home painting gallery.

### B. For the moment Little Black Pearl is still in Douglas at 4200 D. Drexel. They offer adult and children's arts and crafts programming, e.g. pottery classes. Some classes offered in facilities at nearby King High School. First floor of LBP facility includes a shop that sells the works of young artists learning there, it is part of a deliberate program of teaching entrepreneurial skills with the art.

1. Example of marketing event at LBP: "Little Black Pearl: Chicago Auction" Saturday. April 1, 2000. Includes ceramics, mosaics, paintings, functional art objects, and furniture. This info on a card announcement received at home by RS.

## South Lake Front

Region Includes: Hyde Park, Kenwood, Woodlawn, South Shore, and South Chicago.

### I. Region: general history and description

#### A. Economic base and Institutions

1. Many New homes have been built in Kenwood and Hyde Park after several decades in which only a handful of new homes were built
2. Plan to build over 300 new homes, and rehab hundreds of apartments for sale or rent, was started in 1995.
3. New developing is a welcome site since the region has experienced disinvestment over the last 45 years
  - a. Over the next 15 years, various groups plan to create or rehabilitate 4,000 homes and rental units, but this would not take place without an anchor community like Hyde Park.
4. Number of homes and population in Kenwood has continued to decrease.
5. High contrast between affluent, mansion lined streets, of south Kenwood, and the poverty on and north of 47<sup>th</sup> St, where most of the new development initiatives are concentrated.
6. North Kenwood and Woodlawn have experienced high crime rates
7. North Kenwood, the former Judd Elementary School will become a Park District facility named Kennicott (Communities original founder) Park.
8. Oakenwald Ave in North Kenwood is a middle class African American enclave north of 47<sup>th</sup> Street. It has an arts presence in its 4-block stretch north of 46<sup>th</sup> and south of 42<sup>nd</sup> butted up

against the Metra Tracks and LSD. This area includes Studio Bronzeville with painting lessons; a stained glass studio, Kenard Stained Glass Studio where one can take lessons as well; and the home of a well known African American film director all in the same few blocks. (I think the director is named Dash, and directed *Daughters of the Dust*) Around the corner on Woodlawn is the new Kenicott Park with a renovated elementary school in it as a new park building (mentioned above), and this is all just north of the 47<sup>th</sup> St Coop Shopping Center.

9. Woodlawn has major plans for rebuilding that include: housing, commercial/retail, parks/recreational (green spaces along 61<sup>st</sup> and community gateway at 63<sup>rs</sup> and Stoney Island), transportation (CTA construction, renovation of Metra stations, and commuter parking). Spear headed by local community development corporations.
  10. South Shore has a dichotomy like Kenwood between its wealthiest residents in Jackson Park Highlands and pockets of poverty in the area. Most housing 77% in multiunit structures, mostly b/c lakefront luxury high-rises became crowded low-income housing starting with racial turn over as early as the 50's but not complete until 1980 when over 90% of the population was African American.
  11. South Shore Bank tried to leave community in the 1970's but a consortium of churches, national foundations, and residents blocked the move. SS Bank has been the leader in stabilizing the area since, including the redevelopment of the shopping area at 71<sup>st</sup> and Jeffery. The bank currently has for profit and not for profit subsidiaries.
  12. Nation of Islam has a Mosque and religious school on Stony Island Ave in South Shore. N of Islam also owns and operates at least one retail business in South Shore, and perhaps more. (clothing store)
  13. Commercial district in South Shore centered at 71<sup>st</sup> and Jeffery. Lots of small retail shops and groceries.
  14. Lakefront is a valued recreational resource by residents, Rainbow beach park and the area around the SS Cultural Center are wider than Burnham park to the far north, and of course South Shore residents can enter Jackson Park from the south. The beach house at 67<sup>th</sup> St is newly renovated, but there have been beach closing problems in recent years due to high ecoli reading.
  15. South Chicago mostly African American and Hispanic. Has been since 1890's. At lakefront is site of former US Steel Southworks. May be redeveloped as a park. Huge site. Not used now. Efforts by nonprofits in community to rehab and stabilize housing stock. Some success. 11.3% unemployment even in 1998. Only 17.6% managers or professional in workforce. Rest are service professions and blue collar of some sort, including sales, etc.
    - a. Bowen High School "tries to stay competitive with area academic HS" It offers specializations in teaching, tourism, and has a visual and performing arts center.
  16. Lots of daycare centers and churches in South Chicago, longer list than some other print outs of areas.
- B. Non-arts activities institutions that characterize region
1. Operation Push at 48<sup>th</sup> and Drexel
  2. New Coop shopping center at 47<sup>th</sup> and lake Park
  3. Arts corridor redevelopment along 47<sup>th</sup> west of Woodlawn going into Grand Blvd community area (see GB outline)
  4. Kenwood Academy
  5. Rebecca Crown Center (South Shore)
  6. South Side YMCA (6330 S Stony Island Ave)

7. Harriet Harris YWCA in Woodlawn
8. See Hyde Park neighborhood below, sec. III

## II. Demographics

### A. Region

1. Current Total Population = **175,521**
  - Decreased 1,053 or 1%
- b. Hispanic Population = **7%**
  - Decreased by 2,435 or 15%
- c. Non Hispanic White = **11%**
  - Decreased 3,748 or 17%
- d. Non-Hispanic Black = **77%**
  - Increased by 1,199 or 1%
- e. Non-Hispanic Amer. Indian = **less than 1%**
  - Decrease by 11 or 4%
- f. Non-Hispanic Asian = **3%**
  - Cannot tell exactly how much increased due to the 1990 census format, but did increase some where around 25-40%.
- g. Other/Hawaiian = **less than 1%**

### B. Neighborhood Demographics

1. History
  - a. Largest ethnic groups (in order of largest to smallest) in the beginning were: Irish, Germans and Russian Jews.
  - b. Long standing diversity
2. Current Total Population = **29,920**
  - a. Increased by 1,290 or 5%
  - b. Hispanic Population = **4%**
    - Increased by 335 or 37%
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **44%**
    - Decreased by 1,420 or 10%
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **38%**
    - Increased by 576 or 5%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Amer. Indian = **less than 1%**
    - Decreased by 35 or 53%
  - f. Non-Hispanic Asian = **11%**
    - Asian population increase accounts for the bulk of rise in Hyde Park population. (Taken from Chicago Weekly News, April 5, 2001. Pg. 7)
  - g. Other/Nat. Hawaiian = **less than 1%**

## III. Neighborhood general

### A. Appearance of street, homes, etc

1. Very little vacant room left from all of the development. Brownstone apartments many dominated by UC students are common. By brownstones in mean the large three story buildings, U-shaped buildings, with courtyards. Hyde Park also has single-family homes, town houses, and three and two flats all in abundant numbers.

2. Washington and Jackson Parks linked by Midway are holdovers from world's fair of 1893. These amenities plus green residential streets gives Hyde Park one of the more park like feelings of any neighborhood in the city.
3. Along Woodlawn south of 55<sup>th</sup>, heading south towards Rockefeller are numerous large single-family homes, really mansions of different styles with brick construction predominating. Some are faculty and other residents' housing, like the Erico Fermi house with its historical marker out front and lived in by a retired couple of Anthropologists formerly of UC and UIC. In the blocks between 56<sup>th</sup> and 58<sup>th</sup>, the houses are used by the university or organizations as offices or housing. The Department of Special Events, and the DU fraternity house are among these. Just north of 58<sup>th</sup> there is a 50ies style dorm for the Chicago Theological Seminary. The Seminary has a large red brick building with brick spire over its chapel along the north side of 58<sup>th</sup> St, north of Rockefeller chapel. At the very north corner of 58<sup>th</sup> St., just south of the CTS dorm is Frank Lyod Wright's Roby House, considered an archetypal example of his prairie style design. This home used to be the alumni offices of the University, but within the last ten years was bought by the FLW Home and Studio foundation out of Oak Park Illinois, and today is a museum and gift shop.
4. Just north of Rockefeller, but still south of 58<sup>th</sup>, so in the same piece of greenspace as the Chapel, is the Oriental Institute and Museum. Modern climate control was installed in the galleries and storage areas within the last five years as part of a major renovation. Exhibits were removed as part of the process, and are now slowly being redesigned and reinstalled as funds become available. West of Rockefeller is the University President's home, and then the main quadrangle of the campus. East of Rockefeller is a 1950's style, institutional looking dorm called Woodward Court. This building is slated to be torn down in the next year to make way for a new business school building. Its capacity has been replaced by the brand new Palavsky (sp) dorm at 56<sup>th</sup> and University. Also to the east is Ida Noyes Hall, one of two campus student centers. It has a new movie theater, built in the last decade, also named for Palavsky one of the Universities major benefactors. The Documentary Film Society operates the theater showing popular almost current run films, classics dramas, and documentaries, along with any genres I'm forgetting here. Ida Noyes is where student arts groups, among other registered student organizations not affiliated with departments, have space for their activities. One can learn Kapoera(sp), the Brazilian marshal art, and various kinds of folk or other dancing at Ida Noyes through RSO's that sponsor them. Really anything an RSO wants to do regularly that requires a ballroom or large opened wooden floor space is in Ida Noyes. The building also has a swimming pool, "The Pub", and offices for career and placement services. University Theater, another major space using student organization is located in Renold's Club at 57<sup>th</sup> and University Ave. Ida Noyes, like Rockefeller Chapel, can be rented by private parties for weddings or other social functions. (Rumor has it that the Dean of the Chapel in the 1980's was forced out in the early 90's for not wanting to allow Chrisy Heffner to use Rochefeller for her wedding. I was told he hadn't wanted to let just anyone use the chapel for a wedding, that it was a sacred space that should only be used for appropriate purposes by Christians or people/activities that were appropriately dignified. I only mention this to show that it's use is not uncontested or say as unidiological as a Park District.)
5. South of Rockefeller is the Midway Plaisance(sp), which was home to the carnival rides of the 1893 World's Fair and it a part of the university campus today, while still connecting Washington and Jackson Parks. The Chicago Park District has opened an ice skating ring on the Midway in the sunken middle section just south and west of the Chapel.

## 6. General features

- a. Current commercial re-development plans center on 53<sup>rd</sup> St. TIF District. Improvement of this area, including bringing in upscale stores like the Gap and Crate and Barrel are controversial and considered to be forms of gentrification by residents interested in maintaining a mixed income community. (TIF District is established, but the actual plans are still in debate)
- b. Newly developed Cornell Square.
- c. Offers 60 condominiums, townhouses and single-family homes.
- d. There are 13 parks in Hyde Park
- e. One of communities' biggest growth period in several decades as far as new development occurred recently (Printed in Tribune Homes 6-3-1995 date)
  - Most of new homes selling for over \$200,000 (Printed in Tribune Homes 6-3-1995 date)
  - Similar homes in Hyde Park are 20 to 25 percent lower than they are in Lincoln Park
  - Many new home buyers are from outside of the community

## B. Economic Base and Non-art/nonprofit institutions

1. There are 6 Child-Care facilities in Hyde Park
2. There are 12 health facilities in Hyde Park
3. Southeast Chicago Commission
  - a. Hyde Park-based community service group (they are fairly law enforcement and building code enforcement oriented)
4. Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference
  - a. Formed to halt urban decay and encourage racial integration.
5. UC
  - a. The university influence is shown in the fact that Hyde Park is near the top of the educational attainment and white-collar occupation percentage distributions for the city.
  - b. About 65% of 1,400 faculty members at UC live in Hyde Park
  - c. On average, it takes residents about 24 minutes to get to work. Reflective of the university, its hospital, and libraries and dormitories as an employer.
6. UC Hospitals
7. Museum of Science and Industry
8. Oriental Inst. and Museum
9. Lab School
10. Churches: there are 24 places of worship in Hyde Park
  - a. Second only to Berkeley California in number of Seminaries: Lutheran School of Theology, Catholic Theological Union, McCormick Seminar, Chicago Theological Seminary, UC Divinity school, and associated organizations with these institutions.
  - b. Number of communal homes for Catholic religious orders: Scalibrinians, Jesuits, Xavierians, and two more order have houses in the neighborhood.
11. The Hyde Park Neighborhood Club
  - a. Programming for children and seniors

## IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

### A. Bars, restaurants, Stores



1. Jimmy's Woodlawn Tap
    - a. Holds a weekly poetry slam where poets compete and the audience is the judge (Taken from Evergreen newspaper, Feb. 2001, pg. 5)
    - b. Some years Jimmy's has been home to Off Campus improve comedy troop. Also, to the best of my knowledge, there is still Jazz on Sunday nights.
  2. Jazz Barber Shop (1602 E 53<sup>rd</sup> St.)
    - a. Offer haircuts with community outreach and live jazz. Plans to help the community include the owners' plans to hire a high school student for the summer and match every dollar the kid makes to go towards college tuition. (Taken from Sun Times 1-4-99, pg. 29)
  3. Co-op Shopping Center (55<sup>th</sup> and Lake Park)
    - a. Public rooms used by Hyde Park Knitting Club for monthly meetings (not sure this is exact club name.)
  4. Boyajian's Bazaar
    - a. Sells imported ethnic arts and crafts items, clothing, bells, incense, carvings, etc. Largest stock is of varieties of lose beads. Tried having jewelry making class in store once, but decided he didn't have the room and now just offers on the spot help to buyers.
  5. Brush Strokes (A Pottery Bar)(1369 E 53<sup>rd</sup> ST)
    - a. Paint/Create your own pottery
- B. Nonprofits
1. Chicago Theological Union
    - a. Art Gallery: offerings included the Jesus 2000 touring exhibit with works depicting Jesus from around the world by full time and part time artists.
  2. Blue Gargoyle Community Services Center (inside a Church at 57<sup>th</sup> and University)
    - a. Jazz band in first floor meeting room about once a week, all through the nineties. Don't know if it is still there.
  3. University of Chicago
    - a. Music department events: Mandel Hall, Goodspeed Hall, and Rockefeller Chapel
    - b. University Organizations: WHPK, photography club, university theater, and other Registered Student Organizations (RSO).
    - c. Visual Arts at Renaissance Society, Smart Gallery, and Midway Studios.
    - d. Faculty informal, Quadrangle Club Revel (faculty skits and comedy), graduate students also do GSB follies.
- C. Park District Arts
1. There are no adult art activities mentioned for Hyde Park in Elena's summary
  2. Midway Plaisance Parkway
    - a. Carifete (Carnival)
      - Carnival's attractions: pulsating music, hundreds of dancers, thousands of spectators, arts/crafts, authentic Caribbean Cuisine, and to end the carnival a parade in the streets (which is the highlight of it all).
      - Summer arts festivals and concerts in Washington Park, usually behind DuSable Museum.
- E. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers
1. None mentioned
- F. Hyde Park Recording Studio
1. State of the art equipment
    - a. 5110 S. Woodlawn

- b. flier on CTA bus seat
- c. Street posted flier for recording or music video production
- d. Hyde Park location claimed, no address
- e. Not sure if same as place above, this one advertises video production as well and has a different phone.

G. Piano Lessons: Hyde Park Teachers Network

- 1. Multiple teachers come to your home.

H. 57<sup>th</sup> Street Books

- 1. Poetry and Book readings, promotional but often extended and by local as well as national authors. Local writer and illustrator in case study denied a reading despite book being stocked. May have been content driven denial.
- 2. Co-op members can put their open publications – Zines, books of poetry, etc – up for sale.

I. Site Collected folder from 57<sup>th</sup> St. Books

- 1. Flier for pottery show opening at Hyde Park Historical Society
- 2. WHPK show schedule.
- 3. Geographically defined community papers and specific constituency paper
- 4. Fliers for north side events at Historical Society, Film Center, maybe one more.

J. Visual Art and Poetry Spaces in private residences, but with events opened to the public or by invitation.

- 1. A woman has a gallery space in her home at 51<sup>st</sup> and Woodlawn where a case study participant reported showing paintings and reading poetry.
- 2. See VII. Below

K. Court Theater (5535 S. Ellis Ave)

- 1. Professional Equity Theater

L. Hyde Park Art Center (5307 S Hyde Park Blvd.)

- 1. Adult art activities offered include bookbinding and papermaking, printmaking, poetry classes, photography, ceramics, stained glass, studio art, drawing, water coloring, and oil painting.
- 2. Instructors have BFAs, BAs, or MFAs.

M. Off-Off Campus

- 1. Performs at University Church (5565 S University Ave)
- 2. Mario's recollection is that they started in the late 80's as a Second City course at U of C. Not sure how troop renews it's numbers, if it trains new improvisers itself.

N. Joan's Studio (1438 E 57<sup>th</sup> St.)

- 1. Offer classes in the performing arts.

O. Artisans 21 Gallery

- 1. Artist operated cooperative store at 51<sup>st</sup> and Harper in the Harper Court Shopping Center. Quilters, weavers, jewelry makers, ceramicists, stained glassmakers, etc all sell their work together out of this location, including taking turns selling.

V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [entertainment and leisure here only if not already in "I.B." above]

A. Kenwood

1. Little Black Pearl Workshop

- a. Future home in Kenwood at 1060 East 47<sup>th</sup> St.
- b. The building at the new location will be restored as part of a \$4.6 million project. It will include space for arts and crafts programs for adults and youth, and a café. Training will

also be given to young artist-entrepreneurs. The project is expected to generate employment opportunities for minority contractors, artists and local residents.

- c. The Empowerment Zone provided \$1.5 million in funding for the Little Black Pearl
2. Co-op shopping center (47<sup>th</sup> and Lake Park)
  - a. Co-op markets music fair (? Sept 2001), included performers from West Side School of Blues and sales of sheet music and books about music.
  - b. Music and Dance offerings for ethnic commemoration months. For example: Kopano Performing Arts Co., performed African dance for families
  - c. Arts and Crafts Benefit Bazaar (March 2001).
  - d. Latin Folk music and sales of arts and crafts.
  - e. The newly established Kenicott Park in North Kenwood behind the new Coop shopping center, for 2001 lists a variety of activities including theater, dance, visual arts, upholstery/woodworking, music, and arts and crafts. One can't tell in the guide which are for adults, but adult activities for the whole region are listed under PD below and increased from 2000 to 2001.

#### B. Woodlawn

1. Living Room Café (64<sup>th</sup> and Cottage Grove)
  - a. Established about five years ago, they provide meals, atmosphere support, and a friendly for the homeless. Help homeless define and achieve goals, find housing/employment, and with substance abuse. Modeled after Inspiration Café on the North Side.
  - b. New funding by the Chicago Community Trust has allowed them to plan to expand their program in the near future
2. The Woodlawn Express Coffeehouse (First Presb Church, 6400 S. Woodlawn)
  - a. Fliers for one time event, do not know how regular it is as a venue. "A forum on Community and the Arts with Oscar Brown Jr. and others. March 25<sup>th</sup> 2001.
  - b. Poetry (Baba Groit Leonard Lucas and others), Music (The Jackson Park Drummers and others) and Open mike.

#### C. South Shore

1. South Shore Cultural Center
  - a. Offer cultural activities, art exhibit, concerts, banquets, weddings, receptions, and community meetings. Some of their events include: African-American Heritage Month, Robeson Theater Series, Outdoor Jazz Festival, Pre-Kwanza Celebration, and Summer Day Camps. Also cultural programs and classes for all ages in dance, drama, music, art, film and literature.
  - b. Paul Robeson Theater Series (7059 South Shore Dr.)
    - Offers quality theater experiences in an affordable neighborhood venue
  - c. Black Ensemble Theater
    - Theater company that performs at the Robeson Theater.

#### D. South Chicago

1. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers
  - a. New Regal Theater (S. Shore)
  - b. South Shore Cultural Center, CPD (S. Shore)
    - The mission of the Chicago Park District's South Shore Cultural Center is to become one of Chicago's premier cultural institutions providing a wide variety of cultural programs, professional performances, exhibits and arts oriented educational and leisure activities for the community.

- c. ETA Creative Arts Foundation (S.Shore/G.Grand Crossing) (75<sup>th</sup> and Chicago)
    - Seeks to be a major cultural resource institution for the preservation, perpetuation and promulgation of the African American aesthetic in the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois and the Nation. ETA provides professional opportunities by way of training and performance for the development of both youth and adults as artists.
    - Perform stage readings/singing/dancing, since 1975, for controlled audiences as a part of test marketing to stay in touch with their audience. (Taken from article in “Tempo” section of Tribune, 4-4-01) In Tribune article class of young adults from Olive-Harvey College was audience.
  - d. Dusable Museum of African American History
    - Technically in Washington Park Neighborhood, but geographically separated from that community by the whole east west expanse of Washington Park where it sits on the Hyde Park end just west of Cottage Grove.
    - Founded by Dr Margaret Burroughs, whose work was shown there in a retrospective exhibit of Ethiopian “Art that Heals...” This is the exact genre that one of the individual visual artists cited as a primary influence on his own work. He saw show I believe, but was into Ethiopian healing scrolls before exhibit.
    - Rising Stars of Jazz 1999-2000. Partnership concert series with Ravina. It looks like all the concerts were at DuSable though. Definitely professional musicians.
    - Youth arts programs, music events and other receptions etc. that are companion to Ethiopian exhibit, including folk music group from Ethiopia.
    - Looks like Muntu and Dance African have had events at DuSable
    - “Enter the Cipher”- biweekly poetry, music, and art events. I think “Enter the Cipher” may also be the troop of poets associated with the events. At least that is how I understand the confusing entry. –M.L.
2. Site collected folder 1999
- a. Above info on DuSable, from their magazine and fliers
  - b. Afrocentric and Afrocentric regional publications. Some newspaper type and others slicker magazines, like two below.
  - c. Interesting exp: *Underground Chicago: Guide to African American Entertainment and Travel* It is a slick color magazine, 8 1/2 x 11.
  - d. *The Truth: Hip Hop at Its Best*, Premier Issue. African American Hyde Park resident is publisher. Has his own profile inside in the local profile section. Cover story on Common and his “migration” to New York. Few articles inside include one on Chicago scene being about to “blow up.”

#### E. Libraries

- 1. Blackstone Branch (Kenwood), Bessie Coleman Branch (Woodlawn), South Shore Branch (SS), Southeast Branch (S.Shore), and South Chicago Branch (S. Chicago).
  - a. Adult Art Activities offered at these branches: Book Discussions and Dance Performances with the usual meeting rooms.

#### F. Park District

- 1. There were approximately. 11 adult art activities offered in the region during the summer of 2000
  - a. They include: Music (hip-hop), Dance (line-dancing, African, Ballroom, and Tap), and Ceramics.

2. There are approximately 14 adult art activities offered in the region during the summer of 2001.
  - a. They include: Music (Jazz band), Dance (line-dancing, Latin, Ballroom, Steppers, and African), Visual Art (Galler opening).
3. There are approximately 11 parks in the region including the lakefront.
  - a. Same as in "IV." (See above).

#### VI. Other case study's activities

- A. Hyde Park Quilting Guild (HPQG), which meets at ST Paul and the Redeemer Church at 49<sup>th</sup> and Dorchester, so technically it is in South Kenwood. This church's architecture is in a '60s wooden tall triangle style. It has a square, flat structure at the back with meeting rooms, etc. where the guild actually meets. In fact the meeting room was quite posh, with overstuffed chairs and dark wood accents. It would not comfortably fit more than 25.
  1. There is quilting also at Montgomery Place, an Episcopally run nursing home, retirement community by the lake at 56<sup>th</sup> St.
- B. PQG has their annual show at the United Church of Hyde Park, at 53<sup>rd</sup> and Blackstone Ave. This is in the heart of the 53<sup>rd</sup> St Shopping district and within a block of Artisans 21 to the north, and the area slated for new stores if the TIF district planning goes as some developer hope. It is an imposing limestone grey structure with impressive stained glass windows, and has the feel of not being that tall, but that might be a result of its overall stone mass. Sales from this year's quilt show benefited the fund to restore the church's organ.
  2. See I.A. above bullet point #8 counting from the top. Also another individual artist interviewed lives and shows his work out of his apartment in South Kenwood's Madison Park area.

## North Lake Front

Region Includes: Lakeview, Lincoln Park, North Center, West Town, Near North Side, and Logan Square.

### I. Region: general history and description

#### A. Economic base and Institutions

1. Region is the epicenter for Bars/Nightlife in Chicago
2. Wrigley Field is located within this region
3. Chicago's elegant "Gold Coast" is found in this region
4. Lakeview just north of Lincoln Park is home to "Boystown" concentration of gay and lesbian population in the city. Annual gay pride parade, and 2<sup>nd</sup> annual march against antigay Hate, Oct 7<sup>th</sup> 2001. (*Street Wise*, Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>, p.8 "Activists Talks about Organizing and Police Brutality")
  - a. Broadway United Methodist Church: pastor in trouble with Methodist's for doing same sex marriages.
  - b. Site collected folder has almost exclusively Church related materials strictly speaking, with the AIDS Walk and other G/L issues materials mixed in. So no really art promotion visible in the folder here.
5. Pending merger of Illinois Masonic and Ravenswood Hospitals

6. Lakefront SRO operates nine SROs in Uptown, Lakeview and the Near South Side communities.
  - a. Trying to get one more at 3208 N. Sheffield, facing other developers opposition/competition for site. Lakeview SRO would preserve Diplomat Hotel. Other developer would build 24 luxury condos. (Inside, “Future of affordable housing in Lake View rests on transient hotel, p.1, nov.8<sup>th</sup> –14<sup>th</sup>.)

## II. Demographics

### A. Region

1. Current Total Population = **433,993**
  - a. Increase by 15,710 or 4% since 1990 census
  - b. Hispanic Population = **27%**
    - However, 82% located in West Town and Logan Sq.
    - Decreased by 21,296 or 15% since 1990 census.
  - c. Non-Hispanic White Pop = **60%**
    - Increased by 26,164 or 11% since 1990 census
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black Pop = **8%**
    - Non-Hispanic Decreased by 1,519 4% since 1990 census
  - e. Asian Pop = **4%**
    - Population has increased, but are unable to tell by exactly how much due to the way the data was formatted in the 1990 census
  - f. Other/Pacific Islander  
Native American  
Alaskan Native = **less than 1%**

### B. Neighborhood

1. History
  - a. Early immigrant neighborhood
  - b. Settlers included Germans, Irish, Poles, Rumanians, Hungarians and Italians.
  - c. Most factories adjacent to the Chicago River
  - d. Population reached 95,000 by 1920.
  - e. One of the few Chicago communities to increase in population from 1980-1990
2. Current
  - a. Non-Hispanic Whites dominate the community, making up almost 85% of the demographic
  - b. The number of Hispanic, Non-Hispanic Black and Non-Hispanic Asian are almost equal, within 1% of each other
  - c. The number of Hispanics has noticeably dropped since the 1990 census, 21,296 people.
  - d. Total Population = 64,320
    - Increased by 3,228 or 5% since 1990 census
  - e. Hispanic Population = **5%**
    - Decreased by 727 or 21% since 1990 census
  - f. Non-Hispanic White Pop = **84%**
    - Increased by 2,372 or 5% since 1990 census
  - g. Non-Hispanic Black Pop. = **5%**
    - Decreased by 267 or 7% since 1990 census
  - h. Non-Hispanic Asian = **4%**

- Population has increased slightly, but unable to tell exactly how much due the way the information was formatted in the 1990 census
- i. Other/Pacific Islander
  - American Indian
  - Alaskan Native = less than 2%
 (CCFB, NIPC: Summary 2000..., UC Map collection)
- 3. The information below was taken from the 1996-2000 Metro Report MCIC Table #24
  - a. The median household income for Lincoln Park is \$61,500, compared to the Metro areas \$44,700, Chicago \$34,700, and suburbs \$49,700.
  - b. The age of respondents for this report were:
    - 16 to 30 = 36%
    - 31 to 40 = 34%
    - 41 to 50 = 12%
    - 51 to 60 = 10%
    - 60 & up = 7%
    - A majority of these people were under 40. 53% of the people surveyed were born after 1965.
  - c. The household composition reported that almost 60% of the houses were made up of 2+ adults over 18 yrs of age. The next closest category was with children 0-17, that group made up 16%.
  - d. 32% of the people surveyed were married
    - The married family status found that 60% of the people surveyed were single with no children
  - e. Of the respondents, the top four ethnicities were German 32%, Irish 26%, England/Wales 24%, and Scottish making up 11%. The rest surveyed had single digit percentages.
  - f. 60% of the respondents reported that they were born out of state while only 35% were born in Illinois. Of those numbers, 54% were 18 to 30 when they moved to Illinois, 31% were 0 to 17, and 16% were 31 and up
  - g. More than half (41% college graduate and 29% Graduate Degree (9% some Graduate school)) either have their Bachelors or Masters Degree.
  - h. Political Affiliation
    - Democrat = 41%
    - Independent = 31%
    - Republican = 24%

### III. Neighborhood general

#### A. Appearance of streets, homes, etc.

1. North lakefront is dense with people. Little empty space for building, due to the number of high-rises, etc. One participant said it was "overpopulated" and this made it impersonal.
2. Two bedroom townhouses fall in the price range of \$250,000 to \$400,000.
3. This neighborhood offers single-family homes, townhouses, condos, and apartments.
4. The LP Conservation Association, est. in 1954, has struggled to preserve historical houses and limit some of the high-rise development.
5. At least three participants lived in Lincoln Park comm. or Lakeview, one in restored brick six flat, other two in more modern condo buildings. All nice/posh places with amenities.
6. LPCC

- a. LP Cultural Center is in LP proper, west of the Zoo and south of Conservatory.
  - b. Park is very manicured, especially coming south from Conservatory west of the Zoo. Painters talked about seeing an outdoor painting class in “Grandma’s Garden,” a specific garden area of the Park. Some expressed the desire to paint some the more picturesque parts of the park and nearby Lake, and the teacher discussed his own wish to teach an outdoor painting class, which never got off the ground.
  - c. Outside the LPCC the lawn had artfully painted birdhouses in the trees, giving it an “exotic” feel according to RS. Also the flower boxes of the building were nicely painted and planted, with many of the same ornamentals as she had seen at another park, so it is part of overall beautification.
  - d. “Keeper of the Parks” sign appeared near LPCC. It included a name and number to call if there was problem with the appearance of the park.
  - e. Outdoor café not far from LPCC always crowded, despite lots of loud traffic on street.
  - f. Park is well used: from LPCC RS saw joggers, walkers, bikers, bladders, dog walkers, families with toddlers, etc.
  - g. Usually one or a handful of people sitting on steps of LPCC, talking, eating, reading
  - h. On evenings of painting class, lots of kids and adults going in and out of the building in their Karate robes were always easy to spot
  - i. Music presence visible in Park, loud live music from Nature Center on a Thursday singles night, other painters complained of loud music from Zoo for special events, worried it was bad for animals. Jazz concert on lawn outside LPCC attracted audience of about 50 people, mostly middle class whites of various ages, some with babies – some probably just heard music and came. (Don’t know if Zoo events had live music.)
  - j. Visible art and recreation promotional efforts
    - Snow fence extending from LPCC has signs for walking club, the Cultural Fair in July at the LPCC, and “Register now for summer programming” on another.
    - Light post banners near the LPCC: one for PD in general, one for Chicago Botanical Garden, and one for Chicago Dance Medium, which does have activities at the LPCC. Not clear in field notes if this was announced on the banner. Another banner, further south in the Park, said “Art in the Parks (by Kids)”. That is the field notes indicate uncertainty about exactly what the banner said, but she thinks it was explicitly announcing kids art.
  - k. Parking was difficult in crowded area, although sometimes it was possible to nearby street parking. Later in class teacher told them they could park in LPCC driveway, which RS did. On a return trip after field study period, ?new signs out front restricted street parking to 15 minutes for pick up and delivery.
7. There are paintings on the rocks along the lake. Keith Hering at Belmont. Drumming participant worried that the art on the lake rocks in Chicago is going to be lost with the redoing of the stone shoreline. (Low relief sculpture on south side at ?35<sup>th</sup> and 55<sup>th</sup> streets. Maybe more threatened as south lakefront being redone first.)

B. Economic Base and Non-art/nonprofit institutions [only if no arts activities associated]

1. Commercial streets are lined with upscale stylish boutiques, trendy restaurants, bars, nightclubs, coffee houses and theaters.



2. During the 80's, rising property values and aging plants encouraged the conversion of industrial sites to loft and condominium housing and commercial development...I.E. River Point Shopping Center.
3. To halt the loss of manufacturing jobs in Chicago, the City Council set aside 41 acres west of Clybourne as a planned manufacturing district.
4. In 1997, the sale of single-family homes, townhouses, and condos topped more than \$430 million.
5. Parking, high rents, and property taxes have pushed some residents away for the Lincoln Park and into other nearby areas.
6. Development of neighborhood has increased annually, and some of the older community is getting sick of all of the boutiques and restaurant going up. Some of the older community feels like they built up the community, and now younger people are moving in and do not have respect for it. That, combined with the number of out-of-state tourists flocking to Lincoln Park, is making some people think twice about staying in the community.
7. DePaul (college) was founded in 1907 (Lincoln Park campus), but the college was originally founded in 1898 and went by the name of St. Vincent College.
8. Children's Memorial Hospital
9. Columbus Hospital
10. Grant Hospital
11. LP has 9 child-care facilities
12. Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum (Chicago Academy of Sciences)
  - a. In Lincoln Park, new, has nature programming.
  - b. Offer various summer camps to teach children about nature and the environment in which they live. Accommodate ages 5 to 10.
  - c. See site collected folder named "Nature Museum" Site collected data all pertains to nature, parks, environmental Ed.
13. Churches
  - a. This neighborhood has 32 churches.

#### IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

##### A. Bars, restaurants

###### 1. Jillian's Bistro (674 W Diversy)

- a. Features local artists along with monthly wine tasting and art shows. Owner, Jillian Bourne, hosts cocktail parties on the last Thursday of each month for the featured artist of the month. Jillian's Bistro offers wine from around the world, artists from around the corner, and a "Lincoln Park Comfort Food" them with dishes like various pastas and meat entrees. Article starts off by asking artists the question, "Are you a budding artist and the Art Institute keeps giving you the runaround about showing your stuff"? (Add from UR 3/19/01)

##### B. For Profit: stores, bars, restaurants

###### 1. Lincoln Park Bookstore

- a. Site collected data: bookshelf ordering info, nothing else

###### 2. Dr Wax (record store)

- a. Site collected folder: multiple arts and entertainment papers for the local scene, plus arts and entertainment publication aimed at specific young audiences, e.g. *accelerated culture*:

*Velocity*, “Chicago Hip Hop Life.” Also flier for dance Chicago and what look to be Zines, e.g. *Lumpen Magazine*

#### C. Nonprofit Arts

1. Chicago Historical Society
2. Contemporary Arts Workshop (542 W. Grant PL)
  - a. Threatened with elimination by rising property taxes, assessments jumped late 2000/early 2001. (Could be gone already???)
  - b. Current location since 1960, pioneering art space in Lincoln Park
  - c. 20 studio spaces especially for up and coming artists
  - d. Article highlights young Russian Am artist who is now represented by prestigious gallery, and older artist who have been in building since 1967 but doing art full time only recently.
  - e. No classes offered for 25 years.
  - f. Fighting reassessment, including launching website and getting public support letter from CAC, etc.
  - g. Nonprofits taxed often at higher rates than residential and mixed-use buildings.
  - h. Owned and operated by Kearney’s, husband and wife team. She – art management degree from Harvard. He – well known scrap metal animal sculptor with work all over city including Tin Man and Lion at Oz Park.  
(*Inside*, “Art Workshop Fighting to Stay in Lincoln Park,” vol.34, #8, January 31- Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> 2001)

#### D. Park District

1. Adult arts activities offered in this neighborhood for the summer of 2000.
  - a. Dance (Ballet and Jazz), Drawing and Painting, Gardening, Jewelry Making, Music (Piano), Paper Arts, and Stained Glass.
2. Adult arts activities offered in Lincoln Park for the summer of 2001.
  - a. Drawing and Painting, Arts and Crafts, Lapidary, Stained Glass, Woodcraft, Dance (Ballet and Jazz), and an Art Fair.
3. LP (neighborhood) has 19 recreational parks (not park districts)
4. Site collected folders from Lincoln Park Cultural Center (Lpc).
  - a. Chuck full of the stuff we have come to expect at the PD sites, sports, recreation, and arts activities at that site. Public safety and service info for youth and seniors, entertainment at the site, announcements for Ping Pong and other city wide PD programs, activities at other institutions that might be of interest to park patrons i.e. Chicago Botanic Gardens classes (not a lot of other examples like this). Materials for other orgs that offer classes at center, e.g. newsletter for Karate org that offers the classes at Lpc, events at UG’s gallery, etc. And a fall PD activities guide.

#### E. Library activities

1. One library in Lincoln Park (1150 W Fullerton)
  - a. Offer monthly book discussions

#### F. Theaters (from league of Chicago publication)

1. Steppenwolf
2. Second City
3. Royal George
4. Chicago Park District’s Theater on the Lake
5. St. Sebastian Theater
6. Shattered Globe Theater

7. Victory Gardens

- a. Site collected folder: 5 VG activity pieces including stage bill and class catalog for VG Training Center. One gallery opening announcement.
- b. VG has the annual musical/play by auction to raise money for its operations, so amateurs get to pay to perform in production at VG with its profession staff, facilities, etc. (See Artbeat tape)

8. Apollo Theater

G. Zoos

1. Lincoln Park Zoo

H. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers located in Lincoln Park

1. None are listed

I. Art Galleries/Centers

1. Lill Street Art Center (1021 W Lill)

- a. Offer adult/children art classes and weekend workshops that include: (ADULT) clay classes, jewelry making, painting and drawing, (CHILDREN) clay classes, drawing and painting, multi-media art, (WEEKEND WORKSHOPS) super bowl Saturday, heart boxes, 2001: a clay odyssey mini tea sets, seder plates, Easter baskets, herb garden sets, and salsa bowls.
- b. Also have a gallery that includes such items for sale as jewelry, ceramics, glass, tabletop accessories, children's toys, holiday wear, and unique made artists gifts. (Information taken from an advertisement found in the *Reader*, filed under Lill St in Ref file)

J. Schools

1. Francis Parker Evening Courses (330 W Webster)

- a. Offers creative courses on subjects as varied as COOKING, WATERCOLOR PAINTING, astrology, sign language, spinning, politics, language, business, recreation, and a class on kids, parents, and the Internet. Classes are organized and taught by volunteers and proceeds go to the Francis W Parker School Scholarship Fund.

V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [entertainment and leisure here only if not already in "I.B." above]

A. Near North Side

1. Theaters (From League of Chicago Publication)

- a. Chicago Shakespeare Theater
- b. Museum of Contemporary Art
- c. American Girl Theater

B. West Town

1. Intuit: The Center for Outsider Art

- a. *See magazine publication inside North Side folder*

2. National Poetry Slam 1999

- a. Preliminary rounds at various Wicker Park venues, with the finals in the Loop.
  - Locations in Wicker Park: Roby's 1944 W. Division, Guild Complex/Chopin Theater 1543 W. Division, Subterranean Café 2011 W. North Ave., the Note 1565 N. Milwaukee Ave., Phyllis' Musical Inn 1800 W. Division.

3. Lady Fest Midwest Chicago

- a. A multi-disciplinary, four-day Fest that showcased the work of female artist, performers, musicians, and activists primarily from Chicago and its surrounding regions. Took place

on August 16-19, 2001 with the majority of the events happening in Wicker Park (West Town), Logan Square, and Humboldt Park areas along Milwaukee Ave. The Fest expected to draw over 2000 people on the local and national levels.

- Fest receives fiscal sponsorship from the Women in the Directors Chair (Uptown) organization.

4. Theaters (From League of Chicago Publication)

- Chopin Theater
- Wing & Groove Theater Company
- Vittum Theater
- Chicago Dramatists

C. Logan Square

1. Lady Fest Midwest Chicago

- See section V B (West Town).

2. Theaters (From League of Chicago Publication)

- Trap Door Theater

D. Lakeview

1. Discovery Center (2940 N Lincoln)

- Offer adult growth classes in business/finance, mind and body, language, relationships, arts, sports, etc. Includes flirting techniques and wine tasting classes.
- From a quick look at the site-collected folder, almost all the art classes – painting, photography, lots of different dance classes, jewelry making, stained glass making, etc – are at the Lincoln location. Exceptions include dark room training, writing, and acting courses, which still look to be North side as far west as Damen and Irving Park for locations. Looks like they contract with artists, or arts orgs to offer classes at the alternative sites.

2. Theater (From League of Chicago Publication)

- American Theater Company
- About Face Theater
- WNEP Theater
- Bailiwick Arts Center
- Theater Building/New Tuners
- Broadway Theater
- Timeline Theater Company
- Briar Street Theater
- Chicago Opera Theater
- Comedysportz
- Live Bait Theater
- Mercury Theater
- Strawdog Theater Company

3. Jane Adams Hull House Lakeview Center

- Ceramics, photography in addition to day care and swim lessons
- Closing soon no longer fits org. mission and finances.

(Reader, 10/19/01, p.8, neighborhood news. Filed under art in neighborhoods)

E. North Center

1. Theater (From League of Chicago Publication)

- The Viaduct

## F. Libraries

1. There are 9 Chicago Public Libraries in this region
  - a. They are: Lincoln-Belmont Branch (1659 W Melrose St.), Merlo Branch (644 W Belmont), Lincoln Park Branch (1150 W Fullerton), Near North Branch (310 W Division), Damen Ave Branch (2056 N Damen), Logan-Square Branch (3255 W Altgeld), Eckert Park Branch (1371 W Chicago), Midwest Branch (2335 W Chicago), and the West Town Branch (1271 N Milwaukee)
  - b. There is no Chicago Public Library in North Center.
  - c. The above branches offered the following arts activities during 2001: African Symbol Making, Book Discussions, and Polish Christmas Decorations.

## G. Park Districts

1. 29 adult art activities offered at the Chicago Park Districts in the region during the summer of 2000.
  - a. Painting, Stained Glass, Theater, Dance (Ballet and Jazz), Drawing and Painting, Gardening, Jewelry Making, Music (Piano), Paper Arts, and Ceramics
2. 28 adult art activities offered at the Chicago Park Districts in the region during the summer of 2001.
  - a. Woodcraft, Painting, Stained Glass, Drawing and Painting, Arts and Crafts, Lapidary, Dance (Ballet and Jazz), Art Fair, and Ceramics.

## H. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers located in the region

1. Near Northwest Arts Council (Logan Sq./West Town)
  - a. Encourages partnerships between artists, schools, businesses, and community development corporations. Programs include marketing and research, international artists exchange and cooperative arts development. Member of the National Association of Artist's Organizations. (Taken from website [cityofchicago.org](http://cityofchicago.org))
2. Inside Art (West Town)
  - a. Monthly shows of work by emerging artists and is rented together with its private garden for parties and meetings. Educational programming helps people discover local art scene. (Taken from website at [homepage.interaccess.com/~jentes/index.htm](http://homepage.interaccess.com/~jentes/index.htm))
3. Museum of Puerto Rican History and Culture (West Town)
4. Polish Museum of America (West Town)
  - a. Offers art, history, and culture of Poland and of the Polish-American community. Special exhibits showcase significant examples of Polish art and culture. (Taken from [pma.prcua.org](http://pma.prcua.org))
5. Puerto Rican Arts Alliance (West Town)
  - a. Mission: "To support Puerto Rican art and culture in Chicago and to promote the historic and cultural contribution of the Puerto Rican community at large." (Taken from website)
6. Ukrainian National Museum (West Town)
  - a. Includes artifacts, a library, and archives detailing the heritage, culture and people of Ukraine. (Taken from website at [ukrntlmuseum.org](http://ukrntlmuseum.org))

## VI. Regional case study activity [i.e. theater in the region of the theater case study]

- A. See Discovery Center, Lill Street Gallery, Francis Parker School, etc. above in sections IV. and V. for painting classes.
- B. Latin School (adult drawing courses)  
(Sources same as "IV." above and fieldnotes.)

## North West Suburbs

Region: NW Suburbs, besides locations in Mt. Prospect data gathered in Arlington Heights and Wheeling. Region demographics done for Arlington Heights, Des Plaines, Elk Grove Village, Prospect Heights, Rolling Meadows, and Wheeling.

### I. Region: general history and description

#### A. Economic base and Institutions

1. N/A

#### B. Non-arts activities institutions that characterize region

2. N/A

### II. Demographics

#### A. Region

1. Current Total Population = **301,924**

a. Increased by 18,901 or 7%

b. Hispanic = **12%**

• Increased by 19,589 or 112%

c. Non-Hispanic White = **77%**

• Decreased by 16,368 or 7%

d. Non-Hispanic Black = **1%**

• Increased by 1,811 or 68%

e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **8%**

• Increased by 10,347 or 77%

f. Other

American Indian

Native Alaskan\Hawaiian = **less than 2%**

g. Over the next two decades this region is projected to add 1.5 million people to a total of 9 million, according to the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission. *See Appearance of street in section III A. for more information of what this means to the area.*

#### B. Neighborhood

##### 1. History

a. Growth had been phenomenal, at the outset of WWI there were 300 citizens, beginning of WWII there were fewer than 2,000. Now (1990) there are more than 50,000

b. German immigrants were one of first to settle, other than Yankees and New Englanders.

##### 2. Current

a. The median family income is twice that of Chicago.

b. Current Total Population = **56,265**

• Increased by 18,901 or 7%

c. Hispanics = **12%**

• Increased by 3,209 or 94%

d. Non-Hispanic White = **74%**

- Decreased by 4,174 or 9%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Black = **2%**
    - Increased by 420 or 75%
  - f. Non-Hispanic Asian = **11%**
    - Increased by 2,900 or 86%
  - g. Other = **less than 1%**
    - American Indian
    - Hawaiian
- (CCFB, NIPC: Summary 2000, UC Map collection)

### III. Neighborhood general

#### A. Appearance of street, homes [is decoration or art visible?]

##### 1. RS description of Lyons center and area:

- a. I passed a big Brudno's (spelling?) art supply store on ?Rand. I arrive and the park is beautiful: mature well-designed landscape and modern building and big landscaped parking lot. It's in a residential area, at least to the north, which is where I came from. Big maple trees and medium sized homes, well maintained and landscaped. Don't see many people (unseasonably cold weather-in the 40's) until I get to the parking lot. Three cars are parking and there are more than 30 cars in the lot. A black woman and ?high school aged ?son (they and a family group of ?East Indians are the only people of color I saw) are entering along with a middle aged woman and a couple in their ?30's (This is the "new" site with a stage in a basketball gym, as opposed to the newer building RecPlex where both rehearsals were held, and is actually a newer building, but without a stage and more space competition. Its surroundings are described next.) It takes me about 1 « hours to get there and find the place. I take Touhy west and then Dempster but it jogs or something and I have to swing back to find it. Meanwhile I go by another large park building for an adjoining suburb (DPL) and it's quite elegant and subtle looking, set back from the road, new, with low-level modern lighting in the parking lot and lots of cars and one doorway has a large theater sign on it, subtle in concrete relief or something. There are no big lights or loud brush signs; it looks more like a country club or feels like that, or a corporate campus. I arrive at the XXX park building and it's also new and huge but a little more theme park feel in that there is a neon sign at the entrance but also large dried grass plantings there and the building is more open and lit up and has large hand painted shamrocks and St. Patrick day sayings in the windows in bright colors. Lots of windows; two stories. The parking lot is huge and is landscaped with trees and there are 150 or so cars. And it's inviting. I park and notice the people coming and going. Several women, each with two or three kids, and then several men by themselves, young or middle aged, carrying gym bags. The cars are mostly new and include mini-vans, sports utility vans and coupes. Even though there are lots of cars, I can park easily not far from the door. Later I see there are actually two main doors so no one has to park far from the door. It's well planned. I walk in and the doors have 4 or 5 printed posters about community band this Sunday at high school performing and a soccer poster, etc. Inside there's a hall like coming into a mall and the see the information desk which is huge and in the center where it's like an atrium with stairs going up to second floor; lots of windows so you can see into the fitness center (the exercise machines room) on the second floor and a track at the top of a basketball court kind of gym and on the first floor are closed off rooms plus a

swimming pool with windows all one wall and then in the center there is also a table and chairs area with vending machines. I don't ever see anyone actually sitting there. Lots of carpeting everywhere and modern armless, upholstered bench chairs.... (Skip to end of observation)...As I leave, there are dozens of Latinos, mostly men and toddlers, younger grade school kids, leaving the softball field to the south of the building. Some of the men are in uniform, and are standing around talking in the parking lot, and gathering the children together in order to leave. It's very hot, like 90 degrees, the hottest and most humid day of the year.

## 2. General Info

- a. Over the next two decades this region is projected to add 1.5 million people to a total of 9 million, according to the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission. Suburban traffic is already a problem in this area. Suburban traffic is the main problem in Chicago land suburbs according to a poll by the Tribune. The survey was given to 930 randomly selected residents over the summer and indicated that traffic is particularly troublesome in Lake, DuPage, and NW Cook County. Property taxes outranked traffic in the South and Southwest Cook and Will Counties.
- b. Homeowners have up-graded or expanded their homes instead of moving to a larger adobe in another community. The community's homes are very diverse. This gives the citizens the ability to stay in the community if you want to move up.
- c. Lots in the community are relatively large allowing owners to double and sometimes triple their houses size. Community has a very broad selection of housing sizes and styles.
- d. Mt. Prospect got its name from the city's altitude, which is the highest in Cook County, and because of Era C. Egelston's optimism about future returns on his initial investment in village land.
- e. Mt. Prospect is a mix of its two neighboring suburbs, working class Des Plaines and upwardly mobile Arlington Heights.
- f. Housing is also a mixture of old and new with almost 3/5 of the housing units in single-family dwellings. The median value of these units is \$150,000 making it among the top 10 of Illinois suburbs with 25,000 or more residents. Example: Old Orchard Country Club Homes.
- g. Plans for the commercial district of the community include re-developing of the Triangle Area (triangle bounded by Central Rd., NW Highway, and Main Street)
- h. Downtown Mt. Prospect is being revitalized with the Clock tower Condominiums. Prices range from \$196,000 to \$346,000. Plans also include shops and lofts at Village Center on Emerson ST. and NW Highway and sprucing up of old shops along Busse Rd. (Today's New Homes 8-9-00 p.11)

## B. Economic Institutions and Non-art/nonprofit institutions [only if no arts activities associated]

1. Randhurst Shopping Mall was the nation's first totally enclosed/air-conditioned mall (1962). The mall was the first and for many years the largest of its kind.
  - a. Upgraded in the mid 1990's by adding a new 16-screen cinema, restaurants, a home center store, and a new appliance superstore.
2. Many programs provide more services to the elderly including a subsidized cab fare, a modern senior citizen housing project, a Central Village, and a condominium complex for mature adults.
3. Kensington Center, 300-acre industrial park, provides almost 2.8 million square feet of office, warehouse, and light assembly space. Tenants include Mitsubishi Electric Sales America, Inc.,



G.D. Searle Company, and the Nutrasweet Company. Other large businesses in this neighborhood include WCI Financial Corporation, Hyundai, AM Multigraphics Company, and Centel and TDK Corporation of America.

4. School systems are strong according to citizens.

- a. At Forest View Educational Center (2121 S Goebbert Rd. Arlington Heights). Presented by High School Districts 214's Community Education Multicultural Partnership Committee. Event designed to recognize Hispanic Cultural heritage within the U.S. Offers food and performances by dance companies.

5. Hispanic Festival

- a. Little City Foundation Multi-Disciplinary Arts Center (Palatine)
  - Invited artists with developmental disabilities from around the world to participate in a virtual art exhibit.

IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

A. Ethnic places/activities

1. Hispanic Festival

- a. At Forest View Educational Center (2121 S Goebbert Rd. Arlington Heights) Dance and Music performances.

B. Nonprofits

1. There are apx. 10 child-care facilities in this neighborhood.

C. Churches

1. There are approximately 27 places of worship

D. PD (arts and non-arts when there are both)

1. Lyons Rec. Center (?Mt. Prospect. Park Dist)

- a. Location of DRAMA performances

2. Site collected folder for Rec Plex

- a. Tennis club, charity athletic events, child care and activities in the PD, pet magazine, garage sale flier, public works tour flier. No art materials.
- b. Mt. Prospect Veterans Memorial Band Shell offers concerts that are presented by businesses such as Mt. Prospect Bank and Motorola.
- c. Flyer for Sousa. Sousa opened the 2000 band shell season.
- d. Multi-Cultural Celebration at the Forest View Educational Center. Festival offers entertainment (Music, Dance, Performances), Ethnic Crafters (Jewelry, Beaded Jewelry, Crafts, Art, Wood Crafts, painting), and food.
- e. Drama's talent showcase at the RecPlex Music Room. Showcase for music, dance, poetry, dramatic readings, comedy, or magic
- f. Puppet Play at Forest View Educational Center Theater
- g. Ballroom Dancing at Heresy H.S.
- h. The RecPlex has space available to rent for any type of party. Taken from a flyer.
- i. Kids theater offered by PD
- j. Etched in Stone flyer. Offers people the chance to buy a brick and engrave a message or name onto it. The bricks will then become touchstones when laid in the entrance walkways of RecPlex.
- k. Materials for Youth sport activities include Baseball Camps, babysitting, kids guide to fun, soccer, preschool, basketball camps, and soccer camps.

- l. Materials for Adult sport activities include Amateur athlete, Gym Memberships, Personal Trainers, Fitness Testing, Tennis, Bike Riding, Aerobics, and Fitness Center Info. Pool Hours, and a Windy City Sports 2000 magazine.
- m. Other materials include Garage Sales, Children's Book Fairs, Children Manners Classes, Lifestyle and Weight Management Classes, and Dog Training Classes.

E. Library activities

1. Mt. Prospect Public Library (10 S. Emerson St.)
  - a. Randhurst Fall art and Craft Fair (Elmhurst and Rand Rd. Sept. 18-19)

V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [entertainment and leisure here only if not already in "I.B." above]

A. Arlington Heights Library

1. Site collected folder:

a. Arts activities

- Fashion Design at Harper College offers beginning in advance classes. Also offer Floral Design classes.
- Community Education Travel Newsletter. Offer Fall tours that feature color and culture. Some destinations include Istanbul, Prague, Spain, Morocco, Africa, and a Lake Michigan Amish Tour.
- Newcomers of Arlington Heights are invited to sign up for various activities on a single sheet of paper found at the library. Out of the 14 activities, only one (arts and crafts) is art orientated.
- Flyer to become a member of The Barrington Community Associates of The Art Institute of Chicago. Offer various adult art classes that deal with art history and art in general. No activities really mentioned.
- Flyer for The Palatine Concert Band (150 E Wood Street). Trying to sell subscription events.
- Northwest Cultural Council (Rolling Meadows)
  - Executive Directors Report includes in the calendar of events art, dance, literature, music, and theater.
  - Poetry Workshops sponsored by the Northwest Cultural Council at Stonehill Sq. in Rolling Meadows. Basically a flyer for sign-up.
- Park District adult art activities at Loyola Park (1230 W Greenleaf) include Crafts, Weaving, Woodcraft, Basket Weaving, Watercolors, and drawing
- Newspaper and booklet publications included The Arlington Heights Journal, Icare (Guide to Chicagoland Charities and non-profit organizations), Senior News, Chicago Reader, Shore Leave, The Monthly Aspectarian, Sroboda's Business Magazine, and Harper College Spring 2000 class offerings.
- Other materials covered: Health, Food, Child rearing, singles/social events, job training, pets care, sons of the American Revolution membership,

B. Wheeling Library

1. Site Collected Folder:

- a. The Library Cable Network (flyer), CH. 24, airs the Chicago Zither Band, one of the oldest community orchestras in the Chicago area. No mention of where they perform, just that it is on TV.
- b. Other arts fliers highlighted elsewhere in outline.

- c. BookPage newspaper, Published in Tennessee, most of contents stuff inside is for promotions.
  - e. Other materials collected concerned Library and School Fundraising, scholarship applications, computer training/introduction, child care-childhood, learning centers, parenting, real estate, health and safety, and charity organization fundraisers. Also a copy of Chicago Jewish News. Much of this material announced events.
  - f. 100 Years of Pop Tunes, David Keer Booth and accompanist perform show tunes. In library meeting room, Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> 2000.
  - g. Lectures on African American literature and visual artists. Two events in February 2000
  - h. Storyteller, Shanta, tells stories using music, ritual, etc. Feb 13<sup>th</sup>, 2000. Picture of Shanta looks to be African American and/or Native American.
  - i. New Library in Des Plaines (From newsletter of North Suburban Library Foundation, picked up at Wheeling Lib.)
- C. College of Lake County, Grayslake (out of region)
- 1. Lots of arts offerings, both professional, student, and in between, maybe informal
    - a. Example of possible informal: “Community Gallery of Art” fine art exhibition by its approximately 80 members. Member dues go to gallery endowment.
- D. Pleasant Dale Park District
- 1. The village of Willow Springs wants to be compensated for the \$24,000 in property tax revenue it lost when the district purchased the Chalet City Club on May 25, 2000. The most contentious plan is to allow the 2000 Willow Springs residents who are not park residents to participate in park programs at the Chalet at resident rates for two years. The estimated cost of such a discount is \$109,000 a year. (The Doings Newspaper 8-10-2000 p. 13WS)

## West Side

Region includes: Near West Side, Lower West Side, South Lawndale, Bridgeport, Armour Square, McKinley Park.

### I. Region: general history and description

#### A. Economic base and Institutions

- 1. High concentration of public housing, almost 20% of city’s total (Near West Side)
  - a. Jane Addams Homes built in 1938 by the WPA
- 2. Comiskey Park (Bridgeport)
- 3. Chinatown (Armour Square)

#### B. Non-arts activities institutions that characterize region

- 1. The Great Chicago Fire started in this region (Near West Side)
- 2. Area has been the center of conflict and labor strikes, including the Haymarket Affair on May 4, 1886. (Near West Side)
- 3. Hull-House, founded in 1889, was Chicago’s first social settlement. (Near West Side)(house is still there as a landmark)
- 4. Region produced four Chicago mayors (Bridgeport)
- 5. Many new homes are being built by Chinese immigrants who left Hong Kong (Bridgeport)
- 6. Racial controversy stirs this region especially at the Hamburg Athletic Association (On S Emerald). Its reputation is woven with implications of political scandal and prejudice desires

to keep blacks out of the Bridgeport bungalows and the Bridgeport boys in the political bosses' chair. Hamburg is the oldest chartered organization in IL at 92 yrs. (Bridgeport)

7. There are no public schools anymore in Bridgeport
8. Tension continues between working class what communities and African American communities East of, and around Armour Sq. and Bridgeport. After 1997 Leonard Clark beating two years later an African American 19 year old beat to death a White Sox Fan leaving Comiskey Park. (The victim was a resident of southwest side Burbank.) As the perpetrator vacillated between saying robbery and having a bad day were his motives, police considered pressing hate crime charges against the offender. I don't know the final outcome. (Story from Chicago Tribune, Wed, Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1999, p.1)
9. Many in the Lower West Side feel threatened by the creeping gentrification of the area. Northeast of the Pilsen community, characterized by Mexican Immigrant working people, the Univ. of IL continues its expansion into the Maxwell St. area, and the redevelopment of Chicago Housing Authority's ABLA continues. With the expansion of the University has also come continued building of new homes north and east of the lower west side. Also in the immediately west Near South Side community, luxury homes, row houses, and high-rise condos continue to go up even with the economic slow down of the fall of 2001. The Mexican Community fears being boxed in and squeezed out, even as it has an ambivalent relationship to community redevelopment within its own borders
10. Our Lady of Pompeii, Catholic Shrine on Harrison between UIC academic and Hospital Campuses, closed its school and lost its parish within the last X? years. Now they are considering reopening school due to increased demand for Catholic education in the central city. Interviewed in article do not talk about growing Hispanic pop to the south in Pilsen, but suburban Non-Catholics coming back to the center city and knowing the value of a Catholic education. Note: St. Ignatius is at Blue Island and Racine, so in same area. (Near West Side)
11. New commercial development in the region over the past few decades including the Riverside Square (Ashland and Archer in McKinley Park)
  - a. McKinley Park (Recreation) received \$2.5 million in the 80's for a renovation. (McKinley Park)
12. Many community groups in this region
  - a. McKinley Park Civic Association. They address local problems as well as sponsor an annual Memorial Day Parade.
  - b. Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) program brings together the 9<sup>th</sup> District police dept., city officials, and residents at a monthly meeting to discuss issues affecting the community. Police use these meetings to help increase their street presence in certain areas. (McKinley Park)
  - c. Chinese American Civic Council, in existence over 40 years. (Armour Sq.)
    - Members on board of Chinese Community Center, and serve on other civic boards and planning committees.
13. Annual Chinatown parade celebrating birth of People's Republic of China. [Taiwan supporters tried to block parade for 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mao's declaration of independence in 1999, but failed. I think it was a legal block they tried, b/c no protester supporting Taiwan were at the parade, the proceeds of which went to relief efforts in Taiwan after an earthquake. (Chicago Sun Times, 9/27/01, p.10) (Armour Sq.)
14. Cook County Jails

- a. Eric Dean Spruth has visited the jails for the last nine years and provides art therapy to hundreds of inmates suffering from psychiatric disorders. This program helps mentally-ill inmates better understand their thinking and behavior by helping them to open up creatively. Spruth also is a volunteer to a variety of organizations, runs the poetry programs for the Illinois Department of Corrections, along with working with youngsters at the Cook County Juvenile detention facility. He also works with a private practices group called Associates for Life's Challenges, where he uses art therapy for family and relationship counseling.  
(CCFB, neighborhood files in gray cabinet: especially online Tribune Home Section)

## II. Demographics

### A. Region

#### 1. History of demographics

- a. Early settlers included the Irish (Near West Side/Garfield Park) along the river, and eventually Germans, Scandinavians, Italians, Jews, Greeks, African Americans, and Mexicans came to the area.
- b. By 1980, East Garfield Park became virtually an all black community of almost 31,000. About 43% of them were living below the poverty level.

- 2. Current Total Population = **243,209**
  - a. Increased by 16,228 or 7%
  - b. Hispanics = **57%**
    - Increased by 12,308 or 10%
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **16%**
    - Decreased by 6,480 or 14%
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **16%**
    - Decreased by 593 or less than 1%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **9%**
    - Increased by APX. 8,537 or 60%
  - f. Native American = **less than 1%**
    - Hawaiian
    - Other

### B. Neighborhood

#### 1. History

- a. Early settlers were Native Americans (Pilsen acted as a crossroad between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River). In time, European immigrants (Czech, German, Poles, Croatsians, Lithuanians, Italians) came into the area for work.

- 2. Current Total Population = **44,031**
  - a. Decreased by 1,623 or 4%
  - b. Hispanic = **89%**
    - Decreased by 1,083 or 3%
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **8%**
    - Decreased by 1,219 or 25%
  - d. Non-Hispanic. Black = **2%**
    - Increased by 370 or 9%
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **less than 1%**
    - Increase by about 50 or 75%

- f. Other = less than .05%  
  - American Indian
  - Hawaiian
- g. Pilsen is one of the largest Mexican communities in the United States  
 (CCFB, NIPC: Summary 2000, UC Map collection)

### III. Neighborhood general

#### A. Appearance of street, homes, etc.

1. Coming south on Blue Line, after leaving UIC Hosp Campus, first rail yards, then open space with trash, finally as the 18<sup>th</sup> St stop approaches you can see a dense cluster of interesting buildings: church spires, residential, and commercial.
2. Street vendors with carts. Seems to always be at least one in Harrison Parkway by Museum. Most recent visit, there was a woman in her ?30ies selling hot dogs and talking to a man to pass the time. As recently as 1999 the regulation of these vendors was a hotly contested issue in city council, and up until that time further regulation of their activities had been blocked. Don't know what has happened since. (Chicago Sun Times, "street performers, vendors targeted", Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, p.10)
  - a. After school lets out tons of kids on the streets going home, etc.
3. 18<sup>th</sup> St commercial district with bakeries, restaurants, groceries, drug stores, etc.
4. Resurrection Project's Guadalupano Center on 19<sup>th</sup>, with colorful murals on the old St. Vitus Church building and other buildings that the organization uses for its offices. Plaza space between their buildings where kids play.
5. Lots of older homes in area, many well kept with small gardens. Often you can still see old first floor, from before street level was raised in Chicago, now a sort of half basement, and the house stairs go up to old second floors.
  - a. Some modest new homes, especially around 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> and the Blue Line. These have been built by TRP with HUD funds for affordable housing. Some funding came through UIC Neighborhood Initiatives, as part of effort to be good neighbor and advance urban mission of the school. More cynical might say Neighborhood Initiative part of effort to quite opposition to Maxwell street destruction and continued creep of University and its community south.
6. Artwork at 18<sup>th</sup> Street Blue Line Stop, both on platform and entering station. Even the vertical rises of the stairs are painted. Brighter in the late nineties, starting to fade.

#### B. Economic Base and Non-art/nonprofit institutions [only if no arts activities associated]

1. Early settlers came into neighborhood to build the Southwestern Plank Rd., Illinois and Michigan Canal, and the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad.
2. Resurrection Project
  - a. Guadalupano Family Center on 19<sup>th</sup> St. Partnership with Chicago Commons including a daycare center for 200 kids, and arts space mentioned again below. Also offers space for dance, music, etc. I believe that some arts groups in residence already. –M.L.
3. Other community development corporations and community nonprofits including 18<sup>th</sup> St Development Corporation.
4. Chicago Historical Society and neighborhood partners have come together to form the series/exhibit "Neighborhoods: Keepers of Culture"

- a. Community programs will complement the exhibit using art, theater, music, food, lectures, panel discussions, and tours to introduce many different facets of the neighborhoods past and present.
- b. Exhibit was at CHS and then traveled to the Mexican Fine Arts Museum (1852 W 19<sup>th</sup> St) in the summer of 1997.

#### IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

##### A. Bars, restaurants, stores, etc.

##### 1. Jumping Bean Café has art/poetry events

##### a. On 18<sup>th</sup> Street

- One of the summer festivals is on the street out front (or at least it was in the late 90's)

##### B. Ethnic places/activities

##### 1. Fiesta Del Sol on 23<sup>rd</sup> St

- a. Attracts Hispanics from entire Midwest, attendance numbers for the full (multi-day) Fest is close to 100,000. Professional/Commercial entertainment, not sure if there is any informal stuff that gets space??

##### 2. Posadas near Christmas time

##### 3. Day of the Dead celebration

##### 4. Neighbor Space, a non-profit corporation that buys and expands open space throughout Chicago, plans to open an art park in Pilsen (1835 S. Carpenter) that will feature Mexican themed art by neighborhood residents. (Sun-Times 2-23-99 p.14)

##### C. Churches

1. Six Catholic churches started the "Resurrection Project" to improve the quality of life in the mostly Mexican community of Pilsen. The Project builds and sells homes to low-income families and has helped close 240 mortgages, made home improvements, and refinanced loans. All of this has put \$16 million into neighborhood investment. In 1999, the Project won the Sara Lee Foundation's Chicago Spirit Award.

##### D. Library

##### 1. There is 1 Chicago Public Library in the Lower West Side

- a. Lozano Branch: Offers adult art activities such as "Favorite Books Mural" and Piñata Making.

##### E. Parks (recreation)

##### 1. There are apx. 5 to 7 parks in the neighborhood

##### F. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers

##### 1. Mexican Fine Arts Museum (1852 W 19<sup>th</sup> St.)

- a. Has become the nation's largest Latino cultural institution

- Recently opened its newly expanded facility with exhibitions, programs and events. Expansion tripled the size of museum space. Includes 5 exhibition galleries, extended educational programs and classrooms, on-site permanent collections, storage, a larger gift shop, office space, and an improved entrance for the physically challenged. (Taken from Extra 5-23-01 p.2)

- Black tile frieze around upper edge of building, "smakes" up and down.

##### G. Site collected folder: Harrison Park activities schedule for fall 2000, announcement for Casa Guatemala benefit/dialog event with music as part of the festivities (in Uptown), invitation to Mexican American families to participate in a history documentation "book" project (involvement

would be donating pictures etc.), flier for a commemorative ceremonial dance to be held August 20<sup>th</sup> in Harrison Park, a Chicago city map, gay chamber of commerce directory, a coupon for a free Spanish/English dictionary, and a copy of a newspaper El Otro. The picture on the front of the paper is of a Chicago Mural depicting the cultural class for Mexicans coming to the US, but it is an apocalyptic scene with flying skeleton creatures, and fire, with a countryside on one side and an apt building on the other and the clash in-between.

#### H. Park District

1. There were approximately 7 adult art activities offered at the Park Districts during the summer of 2000

a. They included: Photography, Arts and Crafts, and Music at Dvorak Park.

2. There were approximately 5 adult art activities offered at the Park Districts during the summer of 2001

a. They included: Photography and Arts and Crafts at Dvorak Park

3. Fall 2000 schedule at Harrison Park

a. Adult art activities include Arts and Crafts, Ballet, Cooking Club, Dance, Sewing, Holiday Crafts, Instrument Instructions, and Music.

#### V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [entertainment and leisure here only if not already in "I.B." above]

##### A. Near West Side

1. Experiential Maxwell Street: A community Inspired Show of a Neighborhood's Art and Culture.

a. A multi-media show that features art, sculpture, and photography done by the people of Chicago's Maxwell Street. Opening evening festivities include music, art, and film. This show is to help save Maxwell Street from destruction by UIC and Daley.

##### B. Bridgeport

##### C. Armour Square

##### D. McKinley Park

##### E. South Lawndale

##### D. Library

1. There are 8 Chicago Public Libraries in this region: Roosevelt Branch (Near West Side), Mabel Manning Branch (Near West Side), Marshall Square Branch (S. Lawndale), Toman Branch (S. Lawndale), Lozano Branch (Lower West Side), Chinatown Branch (Armour Square), McKinley Park Branch, and Daley Branch (Bridgeport).

• Adult art activities offered: Open Mics, Stepper's Dance Classes, Workshops (How to write a mystery novel, Toy Making), Writing Groups, Book Discussions, African Symbol Making, Favorite Books Mural, Piñata Making, Dance Performances, Gardening, and Polish Folk Art of Paper Cutting.

##### E. Parks (Recreation)

1. There are approximately 34 parks in the region

##### F. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers

1. Duncan YMCA/Chernin Center for the Arts (Near West Side)

2. Jane Addams Hull House (mentioned in regional description above I) (Near West Side)

3. Chinatown Chamber of Commerce (Armour Square)

4. Chinese American Service League (Armour Square)

##### G. Park Districts



1. There were approximately 9 adult art activities offered in the region during the summer of 2000 at the Park Districts
  - a. They included: Photography, Arts and Crafts, Arts and Culture, Woodcraft, Music, and Gardening at Dvorak Park (Lower West Side), Mcguane Park (Bridgeport), Wilson Playground (Bridgeport), Skinner Park (Near West Side), Altgeld Park (Near West Side), and Piotrowski Park (S Lawndale).
2. There were approximately 7 adult art activities offered in the region during the summer of 2001 at the Park Districts.
  - a. They included: Arts and Crafts, Photography, Woodcraft, and Gardening at Skinner Park (Near West Side), Dvorak Park (Lower West Side), McGuane Park (Bridgeport), and Wilson Playground (Bridgeport) (Same as in “IV.” Above).

## Far South Side

Region Includes: Ashburn Gresham, Chatham, Burnside, Pullman, West Pullman, Roseland, and Washington Heights.

### I. Region: general history and description

#### A. Economic base and Institutions

1. With railroads (“the crossing”) and factories, the region can be classified as an industrial one.
2. Significant demolition and re-development on South and Southwest sides of Chicago, most of which looks to be North of Roseland.
  - a. Example: Kennedy King demolition and rebuild
3. No newspaper articles on file for re-development in Roseland. Check field notes for examples.

### II. Demographics

#### A. Region

1. Current Total Population = **224,633**
  - a. Decreased by 13,065 since 1990 census
  - b. Hispanic Population = **1.6%**
    - Increased 297 since 1990 census
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **1%**
    - Decreased 1,343 since 1990 census
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **97%**
    - Decreased 13,791 since 1990 census
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian  
Other/Hawaiian Islander  
American Indian = **less than 1%**

#### B. Neighborhood

##### 1. History

- a. Originally settled by North Hollanders in search of suitable land for truck farming
- b. Neighborhood originally named Hope in 1862, changed to Roseland in the 1870’s by local residents.

- c. The establishment of the Pullman factory brought in the Swedish, German, Irish, and English.
  - d. By 1970, neighborhood was experiencing a number of ills: unemployment, inflation, mortgage defaults, business failures, and gang-related problems.
2. Current
- a. Only about **13%** of the population have a college degree.(based on 1990 census)
  - b. Only about half of the Roseland residents (**52%**) were employed, **11.1%** were unemployed, and **37.1%** were not in the labor force according to the 1990 census.
  - c. Current Total Population = **52,723**
    - Decreased 3,770 since 1990 census
  - d. Hispanic Population = **.06%**
    - Increased 80 since 1990 census
  - e. Non-Hispanic White = **.05%**
    - Decreased 154 since 1990 census
  - f. Non-Hispanic Black = **98%**
    - Decreased 4,093 since 1990 census
  - g. Non-Hispanic Asian  
Other/Hawaiian Islander  
American Indian = **less than 1%**  
(CCFB, NIPC: Summary 2000, UC Map collection)

### III. Neighborhood General

#### A. Appearance of street, homes

1. 60% of housing units are single-family dwellings, and despite the mortgage defaults, about 2/3 of them are owner occupied. (1990 community fact book)
2. Housing is a mix of wood frame homes – one story with attics and two story but no huge mansions – and modest brick homes. Houses in the blocks around Fernwood Park are in various degrees of repair, some boarded up, some needing paint and repairs but lived in, others well kept and in good condition. The cars vary in age and their condition often corresponds to the condition of the house they are in front of. At the north end of the park, near the terminus of Lowe St., which ends because of the park, a red brick home was being renovated, with new windows installed. I noticed both members of the two-man crew were white.
3. Fernwood Park itself is surrounded by homes on all four sides, covers a four-block area, and is enclosed in a fairly new black iron fence. I didn't see many people in the park proper, even on the few Saturdays was there, although there are some dog walkers or people talking. It is nicely green and inviting in appearance. It is the park building that is heavily used. It has swimming, basketball, girlschouts, and a variety of other activities including ping-pong in the summer of 2001. Space is available for rental for special events; the guild and a school both used the gym at times I was there. (Not sure the guild had to pay. I believe the school did.) The building is red brick, in good repair, and fairly new, maybe from even as recently as the 80's. Just in the fall of 2001 an expansion of the park lot was completed immediately adjacent to the building, reducing just a little the parks green space. Landscaping right around the fieldhouse is done with evergreens and shrubs; I don't recall any large beds or pots of flowers.
4. The empty lot at 103<sup>rd</sup> and Lowe has a sign announcing the future home of X Missionary Baptist Church. I never noticed construction during the period of fieldwork. There is a storefront church not more than another block west on 103<sup>rd</sup>.

5. 103<sup>rd</sup> St is the commercial strip for the neighborhood of the Park. Businesses coming west from Michigan Ave to Halsted include convenience stores, groceries (some large but not chains store like Jewel), laundromats, day care centers, liquor stores, and video rental. There are a number of empty lots along 103<sup>rd</sup>, and near the railroad tracks west of normal quite a bit of open space.
6. Railings east to the east and interstate 57 to the north cut off most residential streets, so drivers have to use Wallace or Normal to travel north and 103<sup>rd</sup> to go east.
7. There are an entire section of north south streets named Harvard, Princeton, Yale, etc. These contrast with the number of honorary brown street signs in Roseland. Wallace in front of the Park is Honorary Myia White St. Vincennes at the Dan Ryan and 95<sup>th</sup> is Lou Rawls X. Other streets are renamed for ministers. I didn't not whether any of the Ivy League streets were among the renamed.
8. East of Michigan, into the Pullman community area, people sell goods out of their cars in a church parking lot, and a man sells used furniture out of a truck parked in an empty lot.
9. I don't know crime rates for the area, but a quilter commented that the parking lot in the shopping center at 87<sup>th</sup> is no place to leave a car for three days. Panhandling was common on the L traveling south, and news reports during the time of fieldwork included the story of a man getting into an on foot shoot out and chase with police that ended near the 95<sup>th</sup> street L stop.
10. 95<sup>th</sup> St L stop: at L stop one sees mostly African American's switching from trains to buses and vice versa. A few whites, and a few more Asians pass through the station. In the case of the former, I saw mostly what construction workers or CTA employees. The Greyhound Bus does stop at 95<sup>th</sup> to pick up riders. I noticed Texas as one of the destinations. This also tends to bring a few whites to the station.
  - a. Some of the CTA buses going to and from the station were painted to promote art nonprofits. One a moving mural of kids art, or kidesque art, promoting Little Black Pearl arts workshop, and another promoted Gallery 54 at the Athenaeum.
11. The following two points are RS's descriptions of the area around St. James, taken directly from her field notes.
  - a. I exit at 87<sup>th</sup> street, going by a large shopping mall with a Toys R Us, Marshalls, and a clothing store for large women. Some of the stores are not filled. And on the periphery of the property behind the mall, along the street there's a lot of litter that looks like it has been there forever. I see the church, which is on the corner and has a large bell tower; it's orange brick and fairly new, about 4 stories high. I turn at the corner and drive around the block, seeing that the lot behind the church is full. The street the church is on has mostly brick one and two story small, well-kept homes on it; most with wrought iron fences. There's a vacant lot at the north end. On the west side of the block, i.e. that street, there are a couple homes that are wooden and less well made, plus more vacant lots. The church has a metal sign near the door with the name of the church and the minister but there are no times for the services listed. The lawn and the evergreen foundation plantings are well maintained. Across the Dan Ryan I can see that there are more brick homes and 1 apartment building.
  - b. On the entrance to the Dan Ryan there's a not flashy, black and white big billboard (billboards are rare; the other two I saw in the area are the same Jesse White Secretary of State organ donor ones that have a black girl depicted.) that says: "Wake up Black Men, Your children are killing themselves". There's an image of a big gun coming out

of each of the baby buggies that are facing each other. This is near the Gillespie public grade school. (I go home and change clothes and return to the church, driving around in the neighborhood a little) 10:00 I see that it's a security guard in the brown jacket and pants who I had seen by the church door; this time he's walking south on the street away from the church, but later he's back by the church door. There are signs that hang along the light posts in the area to the south and west that say "Lilydale: A Landmark Community Association. I also see to the west and south that there is housing that looks like CHA low rises but I don't see any CHA designation. There's a big sign that says Princeton Park. I can't tell if the housing like this along 95<sup>th</sup> is the same as what's west of the church]. So there's a strip of more middle class homes near the church but then nearby is the low-income housing. One street leading to the low-income housing is torn up, like it was being resurfaced but never finished. It's gravel and has large potholes everywhere and the manhole covers protruding above grade. It has that look of being unfinished for a long time. I drive along 95<sup>th</sup>, going west. 95<sup>th</sup> is about 3 blocks south. There are small businesses: nail sculpting, Allstate Insurance, storefront churches that don't seem to have much activity around them. Then I come to Trinity United Church of Christ [See AFO field notes, for a description of this area also. Also, Isabel, in CCAP, said she goes there. And I think that's where participant FD goes also. It has several parking lots and buildings, including a child care building (sign says that) and a building that has a sign that says: Human Enterprise and Development Center. There are people coming and going from the church. Well-dressed people, all African American. Further on 95<sup>th</sup> is the large new Woodson Regional Public Library. Gwendolyn Brooks and other's names are prominently displayed in the architecture. At a major intersection a middle aged black man is washing windows. I give him 50 cents and he asks for a dollar. I see the car driver behind me gives him a dollar. I drive back to the immediate church area (study site, i.e.). A couple blocks away, behind the church, and among the homes so you almost miss it (I notice it because of the parking lots (?2) that are full), is a small new looking Progressive Baptist Church. I see someone coming or going. The street trees in the area, including lots of ?silver maple, look like they're a good 20 or more years old, i.e. mid-sized trees. The parkways and yards are clean, and the vacant lots (which are fewer in the residential area than on the business strip, are littered but look like they've been cleaned in the last year or two, i.e. not totally neglected.) I see 2 different men in their ?20's walking (dressed casually, and with stocking hats.) from the west toward the east. They're noticeable because except around the churches I don't see others walking around on the street. They both look like they're headed somewhere as pedestrians, i.e. don't seem to be coming from a parked car and going into a house. There is, I notice a large bus terminal (?Trains too??) at 95<sup>th</sup> and the Dan Ryan. Directly behind the church, on the other side of the alley, are two homes with garages that have signs and one has a wrought iron fence with a cross on it. The sign on the corner building says E.A. Hawkins Education Center and the adjacent one says Dorothy Hawkins Community Service Center. It has a parking lot to its side that opens to the alley, by the church. The church itself has an attached low building and the house adjacent to it has "W.L. Johnson Parish House" on letters (?above the door). I park on the street to the south of the church. I can see the side parking lot and also the side door. No one comes or goes from that door. An old guy (?70s) pulls up in an old

well kept Cadillac that has a dent in the side, and parks on the street, leaving the car running.) 10:30. I circle around and park in front of the church, near where I was before, so I can see people entering and 1 person leaving. There are Chevrolets, Volvo, Lincoln, Buick, and Mercedes SUV parked here or on the side. There's a jovial man (?40s) entering the front door with a purple (choir) robe over his arm. [I note this because at the very large Black church I observed (CUT) in December 1999, it appeared there were separate entrance that the choir used).

B. Economic base and Non-art/nonprofit institutions [only if no arts activities associated]

1. The Dan Ryan, Calumet and Interstate 57 extensions have isolated Roseland from the rest of Chicago's south side and carries shoppers farther away. This combined with racial tensions and lost steel-industry jobs (within the past 30 years) have basically crippled the area.
2. Two non-profit organizations, Neighborhood Housing Services and Roseland Christian Community Homes, are redeveloping the area between 110<sup>th</sup> St./121<sup>st</sup> St. on Michigan Ave. Infrastructure improvements and beautification along the commercial street are some of them improvements to the strip of land.
  - a. NHS has put \$12 million in lending and other services.
  - b. Roseland Christian Community Homes has rehabbed about 36 abandoned houses and sold them under an Adopt-A-House program.
3. There are three health facilities in Roseland: Roseland Community Hospital, Halsted Terrace Nursing Center, and Noble Hope Rising House.
  - a. Roseland also has 13 child-care facilities.

IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

A. Nonprofits

1. View III above

B. Churches

1. Roseland has over 100 places of worship.

C. PD (arts and non-arts when there are both)

1. Neighborhood has 5 parks.
  - a. See III. A.

D. Library activities

1. Pullman Branch Library (11001 S Indiana Ave.)
  - a. No adult art activities offered at the Pullman Branch for 2001. The branch does have a meeting room that holds 75 people

E. Park District

1. Adult art activities offered in Roseland for the summer of 2000
  - a. Ceramics and Music at Palmer Park
2. Adult art activities offered in Roseland for the summer of 2001
  - a. Ceramics, Sewing, and Photography.

F. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers located in region.

1. Take 5: A Poetry Café
  - a. Sponsored and held by the Chicago Police Department at the 5<sup>th</sup> District Auditorium.
    - It's a place where cops and civilians share their poetry.

V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [entertainment and leisure here only if not already in "I.B." above]

A. Washington Heights

1. African American Images (bookstore)
    - a. 1909 W. 95<sup>th</sup> St. (Maybe over the line into Beverly, but culturally part of the African American far south side.)
    - b. Afro centric Books, author talks, book signings, etc.
    - c. Public meeting space (Black Liberation Workshop forums held here)
    - d. Saturday Academy for academic skills and cultural awareness. (For kids)
  2. THE SOUL of POETRY Open Mic (regularly but not sure of frequency.
    - a. Big commercial bookstore 3 or 4 blocks west has weekly performance/poetry Open Mic weekly
- B. Pullman  
 C. West Pullman  
 D. Chatham  
 E. Auburn Gresham  
 F. Burnside  
 G. Libraries
1. There are 6 Chicago Public Libraries in this region.
    - a. Branches: Tuley Park Branch Library (Chatham), Whitney Young Branch Library (Chatham), Pullman Branch Library (Roseland), Thurgood Marshall Branch Library (Auburn Gresham), Brainerd Branch Library (Auburn Gresham/Washington Heights), and the Woodson Regional Branch Library (Washington Heights)
      - These branches offered the following adult art activities during 2001: Book Discussions, Stepper's Dance Classes, Toy Making Workshops, and a Writing Group.
- H. Park District
1. Approximately 8 adult art activities in the region at park districts during the summer of 2000.
    - a. They were: Ceramics, Music, and Gardening
  2. Approximately 10 adult art activities in the region at park districts during the summer of 2001.
    - b. They were: Photography, Ceramics, Sewing, and Gardening.
  3. West Pullman Park
    - a. Spring 2000 adult art activities offered include: Crafts (Millinery), Sewing (up to tailoring), Woodcraft (cabinet making and more), Dance, and Music (55 and over choir, Piano).
    - b. Non-arts recreational activities including swimming, lifeguard training, aquatic exercise, basketball, bowling and Special Olympics training.
    - c. CAPS meetings and GED classes
    - d. Site collected folder has Spring 2000 schedule, earned income tax credit flyer, and big brothers big sisters 5K walk, Garfield Park conservatory flowers show flyer, and CPD Summer 200 Fun Guide (The whole book).
- I. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers located in this region.
1. A. Philip Randolph/Pullman Porter Museum Gallery (Pullman)

## Far North Side

Region = North Park, Albany Sq, Lincoln Sq., Uptown, Edgewater, Rogers Park, West Ridge. Evanston and Skokie were included in the regional section V, but not in any statistical information.

I. Region: general history and description [This section as written is not about entire Northwest corner of the city, but just West Ridge, so really it belongs below in the neighborhood section, III.]

A. Economic base and Institutions

1. There is no heavy manufacturing in West Ridge
2. The area is dominated by residences, schools, and religious institutions.
3. Main business street, Devon Ave. East Indian shopping district, Indians come from out of state to shop. Jewish shops into the 1970's
  - a. Most businesses are ethnic businesses (Jewish, Middle Eastern, South Asian, and Korean).
  - b. Businesses include: garment shops, restaurants, groceries, and other imported good stores.
4. Tensions over ethnic turnover, including establishment of different chamber of commerce.
5. Old Edgewater Golf Club recently (when?) re-developed into Warren Park
6. Indian Boundary Park, opened 1922, has zoo, duck pond, and theater.

B. Non-arts activities institutions that characterize region [see above]

(CCFB, neighborhood files in gray cabinet: especially online Tribune Home Section)

II. Demographics

A. Region

1. History of demographics [NA]

2. Current Total Population = **389,171**

a. Increased by 28,699 or 8% since 1990 census

b. Hispanic = **25%**

- Increase by 25,126 or 35% since 1990 census

c. Non-Hispanic White = **42%**

- Decrease by 25,657 or 14% since 1990 census

d. Non-Hispanic Black = **13%**

- Increased by 3,995 or 9% since 1990 census

e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **15%**

- Population has increased, but are unable to tell by exactly how much due to data of 1990 census

f. Other/Pacific Island

American Indian

Alaska Native

= **2%**

B. Neighborhood

1. History

a. Indian tribes lived in West Ridge before the Europeans arrived.

b. Settlement dates back to 1830's with acquisition of 1,600 acres by Philip Rogers

c. Original settlers were German and Luxembourg's

d. 1920's population increased dramatically with Germans, Swedish, and/or Northern Europeans

e. 1950/60's Jewish and Irish Catholic population increased.

f. 1980's population became more ethnically diverse and younger as WWII generation left.

2. Current

a. "...One of the most culturally and economically diverse (neighborhoods) in Chicago and the nation." (Chicago Historical Society online)

b. More than one in four residents are Asian, Hispanic or black (1990 census).

- c. 72.7% of residents were white, 3.1% were black, 7.6% were Hispanic, and 16.6% were other (1990 census).
- d. Nonwhites concentrated in the east of West Ridge in multiunit apartment buildings. (1990 census)
- 3. The following was taken from the 2000 Census
  - a. Total population = **73,199**
    - Increase by 7,825 or 12% since 1990
  - b. Hispanic Population = **16%**
    - Increased by 5,955 or 103% since 1990 census
  - c. Non-Hispanic White = **50%**
    - Decreased by 10,695 or 23% since 1990 census
  - d. Non-Hispanic Black = **7%**
    - Increased by 2,917 or 132% since 1990 census
  - e. Non-Hispanic Asian = **22%**
    - Population has increased, but are unable to tell by exactly how much due to data of 1990 census
  - f. Other/Pacific Islander  
American Indian  
Alaska Native = **5%**  
(CCFB, NIPC: Summary 2000..., UC Map collection)

### III. Neighborhood general

- A. Appearance, street level [see I.A. above]
  - 1. Once considered a “Suburb in the City”, now dealing with urban ills like crime. Ethnic tensions gave way to concern with these urban ills as 80’s came to a close.
  - 2. Honorary street names show diversity: “Ghandi Marg, Mohammed Ali Jinnah Way, and Golda Meir Boulevard
  - 3. Single family homes, two flats, and large apts. Built since WWII
  - 4. Some residents near Indian Boundary Park live in large castle-like apartments.
  - 5. Participant comment that neighborhood is really music friendly. (He means to musicians playing outdoors and attributes it to proximity to Old Town School).
- B. Non-art/nonprofit institutions [see I. A. above]
  - 1. About 12 day care centers
  - 2. Two nursing centers (senior citizens).
- C. Churches
  - 1. Approximately 43 churches in this neighborhood
- D. Around Green Briar Park
  - 1. Along Peterson: ATI Medical, Skybird Travel and Tours, Athena Hellenic Society: Center for Seniors, Korean business (can’t read name), Katsu Japanese Restaurant, ABK Medical Center, Sinai Health First
  - 2. Well maintained
  - 3. West on Peterson: hair salon, boarded up building, Day Care Center (might be closed), hot dog stand, another travel agency, trash on the street
  - 4. Houses on three sides
    - a. Bungalows and Apt buildings



5. North a block is public school, two flats, and well-maintained courtyard building with Indians and Latinos
6. Participant comment on area: one block north is nice; one block south is “hell.”

#### IV. Neighborhood entertainment, leisure, arts

##### A. Ethnic places/activities

1. Many garment shops, restaurants, groceries, and other imported goods stores.
2. Art Galleries
  - a. Sunshine Art Gallery (1925 W Thome)[only one on file]

##### B. Park District

1. Park district art activities for adults offered in West Ridge for the summer of 2000.
  - a. Jewelry making, music (west African drumming and percussion ensemble), and gardening
2. Park district art activities for adults offered in West Ridge for the summer of 2001
  - a. Jewelry making, music (west African drumming and percussion ensemble), and gardening.

##### C. Library

1. Library art activities offered in West Ridge’s Northtown branch (6435 N California) for 2001
  - a. Monthly book discussion

##### D. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers located in West Ridge

1. Indo-American Center

#### V. Regional entertainment, leisure, arts [include West Ridge in numeric totals]

##### A. Evanston

1. Professional Theater in Evanston, e.g. Piven Theatre on Noyes
2. Evanston has annual ethnic arts Fest, 15 years old, summers on the lakefront.
3. Fleetwood Jordain Theatre (and ?community center) in Evanston
  - a. Black Community Theatre
  - b. Unpaid actors, but all are “arts graduates”
  - c. Material must deal with Black experience
  - d. 4 productions a year (*Evanston Round Table*, Oct 27<sup>th</sup>, 1999)
4. Evanston Symphony Orchestra at ETHS
5. Northwestern University music and theater department events
6. Craft activities
  - a. After hours beading parties with friends at Beadazzled: a bead emporium
  - b. Knitting classes at CloseKnit (store)
7. Evanston Art Center, 2306 Sheridan Road
  - a. Adult, family, and youth art activities
  - b. Adult classes in painting, drawing, metal sculpture, figure sculpture, fiber, printmaking, photography, jewelry, and ceramics
  - c. Seminars and workshops in things like creating mosaics (for adults) and garden art (for families)
  - d. One time only opportunity to work on site specific piece, assisting nationally known artist Herb Parker with rammed earth “Grosse Point Passage” recruiting flier from April 2000
  - e. Forums on art topics (see Evanston Art Center and Evanston Public Lib files for more info).
8. Evanston Public Library

- a. Nationally known poets read at Evanston Public Library and Evanston and Skokie bookstores.
  - b. Reel time Independent Film and Video Forum.
  - c. The Art of the Story exhibit. Art by 80 illustrators of children's fiction.
9. Mcgaw Evanston YMCA
- a. Youth Theater Program.
  - b. No adult arts activities listed Winter 1999/2000
  - c. 2000 Holiday Ceramic Sale
10. Annual Evanston mayoral arts awards
- a. Past recipients: Bea Rashid of Dance Center Evanston, Eve Alfille of the Alfille Bijoux d'Art, Art Encounter, Chie Curley and Barbarra Goldsmith of Noyes Gallery, Northlight Theater, Gus Giordano, North Shore Choral Society, Evanston Art Center, and Ron Isaacson of Mindscape Gallery.
  - b. "Contribution to the community through leadership and excellence in the arts" (Flyer from Evanston Main Public Library). Nominations received at the Evanston Art Center.
11. Noyes Cultural Art Center in Evanston (Tenants)
12. Actors Gymnasium Circus and Performing Arts School
13. Art Encounter, visual arts organization with classes and workshops
14. Everybody Move, Inc., early childhood movement and music
15. Evanston Art Center leases three studios at the Noyes Cultural Art Center.
16. Figurative Art League, visual arts organization with workshops.
17. Next Theater Company, theater production company.
18. Light Opera Works, Light Opera Production Company.
19. Kids Can Dance, performing organization.
20. There are arrays of other individual tenants that specialize in different areas of the arts.
21. Dance Center Evanston
- a. Specialize in training the youth in a challenging atmosphere.
  - b. Director Bea Rashid
22. Giordano Dance Center in Evanston
- a. Founded 48 years ago by Gus Giordano
  - b. Offer diverse dancing styles: Jazz, Tap, Hip-Hop, Modern, Ballet, Social Dance and Children's Dance classes.
23. Music Institute of Chicago (Evanston Campus)
- a. Instrumental and vocal training for age two to adult
- B. Skokie
1. North Shore Arts Festival
- a. July 28-29 2000.
  - b. At the Niles North High School parking fields
  - c. Sponsored by Skokie Chamber of Commerce.
  - d. 250 "award winning" artists, everything from painting to photography, stained glass and jewelry.
  - e. Live musical entertainment.
- (Taken from Streetwise, July 23, 2001 pg. 10)
- C. Lincoln Square
1. Old Town School of Folk Music (Lincoln Square)

- a. A non-profit organization that hosts concerts sponsored by WXRT radio, WBEZ radio, The Guild Complex, etc...
  - b. Offer music classes for various types of instruments, dance classes, and workshops for all ages.
  - c. “Chicago Folk and Roots Festival” add (Chicago Jewish News obtained at Whole Foods in Evanston).
  - d. Sept. 2000 Ruth Page Dance Series performance at Northside College Preparatory High School: performing org. included Ensemble Espanol Spanish Dance, Luna Negra Dance Theater, and The Moose Project. (Street Wise, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> 2000, p.13)
2. Nervous Center (4612 N Lincoln)
- a. Jazz and experimental music coffee house (basement location).
  - b. Started as the owners’ band practice space as coffee house booked nationally known jazz musician Ken Vandermark for their Thursday night series.
  - c. Became important venue after Lunar Café stopped staging live music.
    - Their lease agreement contracted them to pay for any increase in property taxes. That combined with the noise complaints forced them to go out of business in January of 2001.
 (Taken from Reader, “Post No Bills” article, on 12/8/00.)

#### D. Rogers Park

- 1. Loyola University (Rogers Park)
- 2. Artists in residence: LIRA ENSEMBLE: Performing Arts of Poland and America.
  - a. Lira Ensemble includes: The Lira Singers, The Lira Chamber Chorus, The Lira Chamber Orchestra, The Lira Children’s Chorus, and The Lira Dancers. (Flier.)

#### E. Uptown

- 1. For profit organizations
  - a. The Green Mill (Bar/nightclub)
    - Location where Poetry Slams began
- 2. Nonprofits
  - a. Truman College (1145 W Wilson)
  - b. Beacon Street Gallery
    - Theater and performance space for professional and community based arts, e.g....Internationally known American Indian artists (2 shows and 2 sets of artists listed) and opening for elementary school based mosaic project with student participation (Materials on file do not seem to indicate that students are present in the Beacon Street Gallery space. )
    - Beacon Street programs include : exhibitions on local and international contemporary folk and ethnic artists, women and emerging artists. Performances by company members and guest artists. Education in multi disciplinary arts.
  - c. Multi-Cultural Arts Center
    - Producers of the Art of A T-shirt Exhibit, artists display their art on t-shirts in public libraries
  - d. Scrape Mettle Soul at Margate Park
  - e. The People’s Music School (931 W Eastwood)
    - Provide free lessons for ages 5 to 76 with 200 students per term, most 5-12 years old.
    - Performance ops. in ensembles
    - Student volunteers help sustain org

- f. Women in the Directors Chair (941 W Lawrence)
  - Organization dedicated to “fostering civic dialogue on social justice issues through a range of unique programs that support and present innovative alternative media made by women and girls” (Mission statement taken from newsletter obtained from Uptown community).
  - Participating Organization in Uptown Stories: series of performances and community forums to celebrate the rich history of immigrant Community in Uptown. 2001 at Arai Middle School Field, 900 W. Wilson.
  - WIDC Community Center: video library with 700+ tapes of films by women and girls, viewing room with 100 chairs. Looks to be at Lawrence location
- g. Kumba Lynx: Poetry and performance for kids drawing on ethnic traditions
- h. Japanese American Service Committee, 4427 N. Clark
  - Annual holiday festival, includes Santa, sale of works by Japanese Am Artisans

F. North Park

G. Albany Park

H. Edgewater

2. Chase Park (information obtained at the park district)

- a. Activities offered during the spring/winter of 2000.
  - Plasticene (physical therapy company)
    - Free theater classes include:
      - ◆ Physical theater workout: condition class teaches yoga, body puzzles, and contact improvisation
      - ◆ Inventing instruments: Invent and build own instruments to generate sonic environments
      - ◆ Ensemble creation: Create theater through movement and partnering
      - ◆ Storytelling and performance: Use material from your own life and heritage to create a story-piece
      - ◆ Sculpture and performance: Create and use objects to build characters and environments for theater
- b. Other activities offered at Chase Park during spring/winter of 2000.
  - Theater (youth performance, adults, set and costume production), and Crafts (adult).

I. Park District

1. 29 Arts classes or activities at parks in the region during summer 2000.

- a. Adult activities in the region offered at the park districts.
  - Drafting for weavers, weaving class/studio, woodcraft, jewelry making, music (band, west African drumming, percussion ensemble, ensemble-jazz), gardening, Dance (ballet, modern, and jazz), drawing (beginners, still life, and illustration), multimedia, painting, pottery, theater, writing workshops, and photography.

2. 24 arts classes or activities at parks in the region during summer 2001.

- a. Adult activities in the region offered at the park districts.
  - Weaving, woodcraft, artists of the wall festival, jazz city concert, jewelry making, music (beginning band, west African drumming, percussion ensemble, and piano) gardening, pottery, dance (ballet, modern, and jazz) writing workshop, theater (acting and storytellers network), photography, garden club.

J. Libraries

1. There are 8 Chicago Public Libraries located in this region

- a. Branches: Rogers Park, Edgewater, Bezazian, Uptown, Albany Park, Mayfair, Northtown, and the regional headquarter library Sulzar.
    - These branches offered the following arts activities during 2001: Writing workshop (how to write a mystery novel, journal writing as a part of creative writing), book discussions (monthly), African symbol making, dance performances (salsa, meringue, and Mexican folk dances), toy making workshops, open mics (poetry), opera discussions, polish Christmas decorations, stepper's dance classes and Friends of the Gamelon.
- K. Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers
1. Gerber/Hart Library (Rogers Park)
    - a. Incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1981 for the depository of records and papers of lesbian and gay organizations and individuals, and other resources bearing upon homosexuality in American society, but concentrating on the Midwest region. (Taken from website ([www.gerberhart.org](http://www.gerberhart.org)))
  2. Ethnic Food Tours (Rogers Park)
  3. North Lakeside Cultural Center (Rogers Park)
    - a. Offers visitors a unique experience of participating in cultural exchanges in the intimate parlor setting of days gone by. Presents 10 art exhibits a year, authors reading from their own works, new and emerging performing arts, and concerts featuring all disciplines of music, dance and drama. (Taken from website at [www.ci.chi.il.us/culturalaffairs...velopment/communitycenters/nlkeside.htm](http://www.ci.chi.il.us/culturalaffairs...velopment/communitycenters/nlkeside.htm))
  4. Indo-American Center (West Ridge)
    - a. Established in 1990 to help, nearly 10,000 people annually, adjust to their environment. Most of these people lack vocational and language skills and struggle to make ends meet. However, the center is open to all ethnicity's regardless of race or language. South Asians, Europeans, Middle Eastern, and others use their services. (Taken from website at <http://www.indoamerican.org>)
  5. American Indian Center (Uptown)
    - a. Examination of captivating Native American traditions through stirring presentation. (Taken from website at [www.aic-chicago.org](http://www.aic-chicago.org))
  6. Beacon Street Gallery & Theater (Uptown) (SEE IV. D above).
  7. Japanese American Service Committee (Uptown)
    - a. An evocative repository of Japanese and Japanese-American history, social services and traditions in Chicago. (See V E.)(Taken from website of Chicago Neighborhood Tours at [www.chgocitytours.com](http://www.chgocitytours.com))
  8. People's Music School (Uptown)(See IV. D above)
  9. Lincoln Square Chamber of Commerce (Lincoln Square)
    - a. Since 1948, the Lincoln Sq. Chamber of Commerce continues to work diligently to maintain the vital connections between the community and the businesses that serve it. The chamber encourages investments, retail development, and capital improvements in this neighborhood. (Taken from website at [www.lincolnsquare.org](http://www.lincolnsquare.org))
  10. Old Town School of Folk Music (Lincoln Square) (SEE IV B.)
  11. Swedish American Museum Center (Edgewater)
    - a. Established in 1976 to preserve Swedish-American heritage in Chicago.

## South West Side

The following is a narrative describing the community and its informal art activities written prior to the transition to outline form. The community theater group has been operating in the same neighborhood for 12 years, and has moved a number of times from its original park gym location, first to a public school assembly hall, next to a music school and, finally to a stage in the basement of a small protestant church, where it has been for the last eight years. The theater group is managed by a board of directors comprised of eight people, most of whom also serve as part of the production crew. With audiences per show averaging about 40 people, the group pays the church a small percentage of ticket sales as “rent”.

The region of Chicago and adjacent suburbs that surround the community theater’s Church location continue to be characterized by a manufacturing and transportation industrial base, despite manufacturing job losses in the metro area over the last 30 years. A railroad switching/transfer yard (?) and it’s adjacent allied industries provide numerous jobs, while an international airport is the largest employer in the region. (CCFB 108) Popular national brands of cookies and candy are still produced in the area. The ethnographer passed both welding and fastener manufacturing businesses while driving to rehearsals. In addition, large numbers of Chicago’s police, firemen, and other city workers make their homes in the residential neighborhoods of this region of the city. (Chicago Tribune: Homes – Internet edition p.3)

Historically the region has been populated by Whites, first by immigrants from Central Europe, and later others from Eastern and Southern Europe. (CCFB 185) The 2000 U.S. Census shows that the Western Chicago and suburban parts of the region continue to be more than 50% Non-Hispanic Whites. One suburb, immediately adjacent to the city, is over 50% Hispanic. In Chicago the northeastern and some of the eastern neighborhoods of the region are now over 50% Hispanic, while in the Southeast and parts of the east African Americans make up more than 50% of the population in some neighborhoods. In the case of African Americans, during the 1980’s and 1990’s they moved in from adjacent regions of Chicago. Hispanic immigration into the greater Chicago region, particularly from Mexico, has driven Hispanic population growth in a number of neighborhoods and suburbs across the Chicago land region. (*NIPC: summary of 2000 census...* and University of Chicago Map Collection, March 2001)

In the immediate neighborhood of the Church, the population is still predominantly Non-Hispanic White, with Hispanics making about 21% of the population and Non- Hispanic African Americans not reaching 1% of the population. None-the-less the minority population rose from 8% to 24% of the total population, driven by Hispanics moving into the area. (NIPC *ibid*) The population of the Chicago Community Area (CCA) actually rose 3.9% between 1990 and 2000 driven by the strength of the transit industry and the Hispanic influx. (Chicago Tribune: Homes – Internet Ed 1-2) (Chicago Tribune 3/15/01 1:7) Thus far “white flight” does not appear to be an issue, and house values have risen 2% each year in recent years. There is concern about rising crime attributed to Latino gangs. The local CAPS organization is very active with citizen “night walks” periodically scheduled as needed. (Pairs of residents walk the neighborhood after dark.) Since 1988, an equity assurance program has insured participating residents against the possibility of falling home values. Residents who pay \$125 for a one time appraisal - and who stay in their homes for at least five years - can collect the difference between what they paid for their home and what it sells for, if the value drops. The program is funded only in selected areas of the city and suburbs by property tax set aside programs and costs each home owner about \$20 each year. (Tribune: Homes Internet edition Mannion p.4 and Henderson on Chicago Lawn p.3)

**Feel of area: visual/cultural**

Single family homes dominate the neighborhood of the theater/church, mostly one story brick and frame houses with small well kept yards and simple landscaping, i.e. hedges and grass, but no elaborate gardens. A few yards and stoops have ornaments like plastic swans or concrete geese wearing seasonal outfits. Many homes display store bought decorations that change with the holidays.

There are two or three corner bars with “Michelob” signs hanging out front and even one without a sign so you have to be a local to know it is even there. One larger bar/club has Karaoke night once a X, as the Karaoke machine and the host works a circuit around the larger region. [More here on Karaoke including theater participation?] A few years ago residents banded together to successfully close down a bar around which there was always trouble with noise, litter, and bad behavior. (Mannion p.3) Another gathering spot reflects the ethnic make up of the neighborhood, the XX Polka Club. Typical area restaurants include burger, pizza, and Italian beef stands, as well as family style establishments.

**Activities**

Returning to describing the larger region, in its Chicago portion it includes approximately 40 city of Chicago parks and playlots. From an inventory of Chicago Park District (CPD) activities in the summers of 2000 and 2001, drawn from CPD publications, it appears that the majority of activities during those summers were for kids or kids with parents, but there were numerous activities for adults with some aimed at specifically Seniors. Most adult activities were sports or exercise options with clubs and arts options in the mix. In the larger approximately 40 park region around the Church/theater the arts offerings were classes in pottery (two classes both summers), woodcraft, sewing ('01 only) dancing ('01 only), painting ('00 only) and gardening (two locations). There does not look to have been a drop off in offerings from 2000 to 2001, as was observed at the level of the city parks as a whole; in fact two new activities replaced the loss of painting. This is also not necessarily an exhaustive list of the arts in the Chicago parks in this region. Arts groups use CPD facilities, but if these groups are not a CPD funded and operated, they are not listed in park district schedules. The quilting guild, another case study in our research, is an example of this circumstance in another region of the city. Their meetings five times a month in a CPD Fieldhouse do not show up in any park district materials. The neighborhood of the theater has a new park fieldhouse. While it had no adult arts offerings in the summers of 2000 and 2001, X, and X were offered in Spring 2000.

The larger region of Chicago around the theater/church also has 14 Chicago Public Libraries. In 2001 these libraries offered adult arts related activities that included book discussions (eight locations), gardening (three locations), African symbol making (two locations), steppin' (dance) classes (one location), gardening-Bonsai (one location), Polish Christmas Decoration making (three locations), Polish Paper Cutting (two locations), and a toy making workshop (two locations). At four of the book discussion location there were not only groups to discuss books on a monthly basis, but also separate discussions of *To Kill and Mockingbird*, the Mayors summer reading recommendation for the city. One of the libraries held both the regular and TKAM discussions in Spanish. [Elena material] The neighborhood of the theater has a new library completed only four years ago, with five times the space as the two storefront locations it replaces. Adult arts related activities in 2001 at the library are included in the totals above, and included book discussion and gardening. In 2000, and possibly up to the present, the library offered monthly Saturday morning Internet use classes. An Eastern European Cultural Center offers additional opportunities for residents of the larger region to engage in the arts, sponsoring a folk dance troop and offering classes in the folk arts of the namesake ethnic

group. The region also has an arts center that conducts and hosts activities and performances in the visual and performing arts. [More on informal and formal at Beverly Art Center here]

### **Theater**

Facilities at the art center include an auditorium used by a community theater group. Another community theater group in the region uses the park district facilities in one of the suburbs adjacent to Chicago, while a third uses a suburban high school's modern auditorium. A suburban community college 8-10 miles from the case study location has new state of the art facilities for the performing and visual arts. This school offers a full range of professional arts events over the course of the year, but student works are also performed and displayed. Community theater productions are also occasionally staged, and local visual artists given the opportunity to display works in the galleries. [Check "Comm: art capacity" code and/or Moraine Valley College materials to confirm this.]

There are at least six Catholic and other Christian Churches in the neighborhood of the Community Theater, including the church that houses the theater.

- These six in a consortium to promote themselves collectively.
- Some share biannual ecumenical service
- Besides STAR, one other with "drama group"
- 4 with adult/senior/ or unspecified choir
- 2 with children's choir
- kids crafts at STAR church
- numerous religious ed activities for all ages spread across all 6
- "Coffee Break" at Protestant Church
- Other activities across six: "Christian exercise, senior clubs and activities, CAPS meetings, (Various) Anonymous meetings, religious fraternal orgs, Scouting, charitable activities including food services and collection for poor and homeless, Clubs and guilds, "family night", "letter writing campaign" at Presbyterian, and Catholic Grammar school (list not quite inclusive, see "Churches ...!" brochure in STAR file)
- Others don't recognize, for example "Tabitha Circle"





### **APPENDIX III: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

Toward the end of the field research period, the team designed and administered the written survey, A Survey of the Arts in Everyday Life, which was completed by 165 of the 310 case study participants (a 53 percent response). The University of Illinois Survey Lab also assisted in the survey design. As part of our strategy for the triangulation of data sources, we designed the instrument to test our findings and to gather data additional data on areas such as participant's participation in civic life. The questionnaire contained 67 questions divided into broad topical areas such as organizational dynamics, networks, resources and barriers, and visibility of arts, in addition to demographics. The sampling goal was to get a census of all of the participants at each case study location at a given moment in time. At locations where there was a high turnover in participants, survey-takers were sometimes people who had not participated in the fieldwork. At locations where there was low turnover, a lot of the people who participated in the fieldwork also completed a survey. Most of the questionnaires were mailed to participants, although two other delivery methods were also used. At some sites the questionnaires were hand-delivered along with mailers so that they could be easily returned via the post office. In a couple of cases, the instrument was sent, completed, and returned electronically.

Following are a copy of the survey instrument and several charts displaying significant survey data.

**APPENDIX III**  
**Part 2**

**A SURVEY**

**OF**

**THE ARTS IN EVERYDAY LIFE**

**The Chicago Center for Arts Policy at Columbia College**

**Instructions:** Please answer all questions to the best of your knowledge. None of the questions depends on you having special expertise beyond your own experience. Our definition of art covers a broad spectrum, including everything from singing, painting and acting, to quilting, woodcarving and stage managing, etc. It also stretches from art created collectively to that done by individuals working alone; and includes art created in all types of locations, from homes and churches to theaters and galleries. Unless otherwise instructed, choose the best single response to each question. Your answers can be typed right onto the questionnaire by opening the attached file and typing your answers into the questionnaire; most of the time you will be typing an “X” or a number to indicate your answer. We ask that you please return the completed questionnaire within two weeks by return email. If you would prefer to print out the questionnaire and mark your answers with pen or pencil, then please mail it back to us at Chicago Center for Arts Policy at Columbia College, Informal Arts Study, 600 S. Michigan, Chicago, IL 60605-1996.

1. What art activity are you currently involved in?

- \_\_\_ Dance; what specific Dance forms? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Drama; what specific Drama forms? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Music; what specific Music forms? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Writing; what specific Writing forms? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Sculpture; what specific Sculpture forms? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Visual art; what specific Visual Art forms? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Textile arts; what specific Textile Art forms? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Jewelry, ceramic, glasswork, woodworking etc.  
    what specific forms? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. How long have you been engaged in this art activity?

\_\_\_\_\_ years

3. Typically, how much time do you spend on the following ?

- a. Making art by yourself? \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week
- b. Making art with an arts group or art friends? \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week
- c. Taking art classes or training? \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week
- d. Travelling to and from art activities and classes? \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week
- e. Preparation (e.g., acquiring materials, supplies) \_\_\_\_\_ hours **per month**
- f. Performing or exhibiting \_\_\_\_\_ hours **per month**

## Organizational Dynamics

If you're a member of more than one art group, choose one and answer for that group only.

4. Are you currently part of an art group or do you now practice art only as an individual?

- Art group
- Individual → SKIP TO QUESTION 11
- Both

5. What are the tensions in the group, if any? (**Check all that apply.**)

- Money
- Space
- Retaining members
- Leadership
- Audience
- Supplies
- How frequently the group should have public presentations
- Range of skill levels
- Balancing inclusiveness (recruitment) with high production quality
- Other. (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Most of the time, how are decisions made? (**Check One.**)

- Consensus
- Hierarchy (e.g. chairperson or officers or committee decides)
- Majority rule (votes are taken)
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Approximately what percentage of its time does your group spend on recruitment, promotion and publicity?

\_\_\_\_\_ %                      \_\_\_\_\_ Don't Know

8. Where has your group traveled to display or perform artwork? (**Check all that apply.**)

- Around Chicagoland
- Nationally
- Internationally
- We don't travel to display or perform

9. Who organizes and arranges activities for your arts group?

- Full time staff. If yes, are they paid?
- Part time staff
- Organizations/institutions
- Teachers/instructors with professional training
- President or other officer or committee chair
- Group members
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

10. On a scale between 1 and 7, how active are you in the administration of your group?  
**Circle a number between 1 (Not at all active) and 7 (Very Active).**

- |        |   |   |   |   |   |        |
|--------|---|---|---|---|---|--------|
| 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7      |
| NOT    |   |   |   |   |   | VERY   |
| AT ALL |   |   |   |   |   | ACTIVE |
| ACTIVE |   |   |   |   |   |        |

**Networks:**

11. In a typical month how many times do you interact with other artists (counting artists both inside and outside your group)?

\_\_\_\_\_ times per month

12. In a typical month, how many times do you interact with formal arts organizations (In these kind of studies, formal arts organizations include the more commercial, or highly structured organizations such as record companies, the Art Institute, Old Town School of Folk Music, Steppenwolf Theatre, and Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs.)

\_\_\_\_\_ times per month

13. Some artists meet people different from themselves in the course of their arts activities. Check below the ways in which people you have met differ from you. Include all your past and present arts activities.

- Age
- Race or Ethnicity
- Occupation
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- World view
- Neighborhood where they live
- Skill level
- Income level
- Religion
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

14. On a scale between 1 and 7, how much more or less diverse is your workplace than the people in your arts activities? **Circle a number between 1 (Much Less Diverse) and 7 (Much More Diverse).** (If not currently employed, consider your last workplace.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Much Less Diverse			Equally Diverse			Much More Diverse

15. On a scale between 1 and 7, how comfortable are you discussing issues such as racism, homophobia, class bias, age bias, etc. with people in your arts groups or with your artist friends? **Circle a number between 1 (Very Uncomfortable) and 7 (Very Comfortable).** **If you don't talk about these issues, check here \_\_\_\_.**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Comfortable						Very Uncomfortable

16. Which of the following benefits, if any, have you received from interacting with diverse people in arts activities? (Check all that apply.)

- New job opportunities
- New art opportunities
- New opportunities in nonart activities
- Exposure to places you wouldn't otherwise have traveled.
- Gaining new knowledge
- Greater understanding of different people
- Making new friends
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### Learning New Skills

17. In an arts-related environment, do you ever work with people with fewer skills or knowledge than yourself?

- Yes
- No

18. On a scale between 1 and 7, has your participation in arts activities made you more tolerant of people with fewer skills, less tolerant, or made no difference? **Circle a number between 1 (Much Less Tolerant) and 7 (Much More Tolerant).**

- |          |   |   |            |   |   |          |
|----------|---|---|------------|---|---|----------|
| 1        | 2 | 3 | 4          | 5 | 6 | 7        |
| Much     |   |   | No         |   |   | Much     |
| Less     |   |   | Difference |   |   | More     |
| Tolerant |   |   |            |   |   | Tolerant |

19. Since you've started doing arts activities, have your skills or abilities in the following areas improved? (Check all that apply.)

- Group (such as family, community, work) decision-making
- Giving and taking criticism
- Working collaboratively
- Problem solving
- Negotiating between individual and group needs
- Expressing long-term commitment
- Leading
- Delegating
- Building trust among people
- Ability to teach others
- Creativity
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



**Resources and Barriers:**

20. In your opinion, how important is each of the following resources for your arts practice – very important, somewhat important, or not at all important? **Fill in the blank with a number between 1 (Not At All Important) and 7 (Very Important).**

**Example:**   6   Time

- Time
- Equipment / Technology
- Organizations/Institutions

21. How satisfactory is the space you are currently using for your arts activities? **Fill in the blank with a number between 1 (Not at all satisfactory) and 7 (Very satisfactory).**

**Example:**   6   Size

- Size
- Amenities for your art practice (such as good acoustics, good light, good ventilation, etc.)
- Access to Space
- Relaxed Atmosphere
- Parking
- Storage
- Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

22. If any, what difficulties are there in using the space? **If there is more than one difficulty, rank the worst one ‘1’ and the second worst ‘2’.**

- Restricted access
- Competition with other groups for the use of space
- Cost
- Something else (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- No difficulties

**Level of Activities:**

23. Have you ever taught arts classes or offered training?

- Yes
- No → SKIP TO QUESTION 25

24. Where and what did you teach?

\_\_\_\_\_

25. Are you currently enrolled in classes or receiving training in the arts?

- Yes where? \_\_\_\_\_
- No

26. Have you ever applied for or received funding from any of the following sources?  
**(Check all that apply.)**

- Illinois Arts Council
- Local city or village governmental agency
- Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs
- Illinois Humanities Council
- Private Foundation
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

27. Has any of your art work been displayed or performed in the following ways? (**Check all that apply.**)

- Paid admission sites
- Free sites
- Commissioned sites
- Webcast
- Public space
- Other, (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

28. Now or in the past, have you retained or employed an agent, producer, manager or dealer?

- Yes
- No

29. As of today, what portion of your income comes from your participation in art?

\_\_\_\_\_ %

30. In an ideal world, what percentage of your income would come from your participation in art?

\_\_\_\_\_ %

31. In a typical year, how much do you spend on reference materials (CDs, manuals, etc.) and/or supplies (e.g. costumes, makeup, tools, musical instruments)?

\$\_\_\_\_\_ per year

32. In a typical year, how much do you spend on fees or registrations for classes or workshops?

\$\_\_\_\_\_ per year

33. In a typical year, how much do you spend for travel related to your arts activity (include local travel and travel outside of Chicagoland plus food and lodging)?

\$\_\_\_\_\_ per year

34. If you rent space for your artmaking, how much do you spend on rent for the space?  
\$\_\_\_\_\_ per year

35. Have you allocated space in your home for any of your arts activities?  
 Yes  
 No

**The following questions ask you to think about the presence or visibility of arts first in your neighborhood and then in Chicagoland.**

36. In a typical month, how many times do you happen to see or hear art in the neighborhood around you (excluding televised and taped performances)?  
\_\_\_\_\_ times per month

37. How many arts opportunities do you feel that there are in your neighborhood, not counting those oriented toward children's art?  
 Very many  
 Some  
 Only a few  
 None

38. Are you aware of how much the city government of Chicago (or your suburb, if you live in a suburb) spends in support of the arts?  
 Yes  
 No → SKIP TO QUESTION 40

39. How do you keep track of this information? **(Check all that apply)**  
 Through the news media  
 By attending public budget meetings  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

40. Which two of the following kinds of art activities would you like to see receive greater public funding? **Indicate your number “1” and “2” choices.**

- Art programs in schools
- Art programs in museums
- Art programs in galleries
- Art programs in libraries
- Art programs in the streets
- Art programs in parks

41. In which two sites would you **most** like to see more public space devoted to the arts? **Indicate your number “1” and “2” choices.**

- Parks
- Schools and libraries
- Streets and plazas
- Subways
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Chicagoland Art Scene:**

42. In which of the following ways do you find out about the arts activities that you attend as an audience member in the Chicagoland area?

- Newspaper
- Newsletter
- Internet
- Members of my art group
- Other artists
- Friends, relatives, other individuals
- Mailed announcements, flyers, brochures
- Posters/notices in public areas
- Broadcast (Radio & Television)
- Magazines
- School notices
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

43. Have you ever participated in art classes offered by any of the following sponsors?

- Church, synagogue, mosque, other religious facility
- Civic center
- Coffee house
- College facility
- Concert hall, opera house
- Dinner theater
- Elementary or high school facility
- Gallery
- Library
- Museum
- Nightclub/ Jazz club
- Park or other open-air facility
- Theater
- Town hall, city hall
- The "Y" (YMCA, YWCA, YMHA, YWHA, etc.)
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

44. In the last 12 months, have you seen displays or attended performances at any of the following facilities in the Chicagoland area?

- Church, synagogue, mosque, other religious facility
- Civic center
- Coffee house
- College facility
- Concert hall, opera house
- Dinner theater
- Elementary or high school facility
- Gallery
- Library
- Museum
- Nightclub/ Jazz club
- Park or other open-air facility
- Theater
- Town hall, city hall
- The "Y" (YMCA, YWCA, YMHA, YWHA, etc.)
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

45. In the last 12 months, have you seen displays or attended performances at any of the above facilities in the Chicagoland area more often because of your own arts experience?

- Yes
- No

46. How much has your attendance at artistic events or displays inspired your own arts activities?

- Very much
- Somewhat
- Very little
- Not at all

**Now we would like to know about your participation in other areas of civic life.**

47. Have you ever done the following? (Check all that apply.)

- Attended public forums, town meetings
- Attended a civic meeting or public hearing
- Attended block club meetings
- Contacted an elected official
- Contacted a newspaper
- Joined or gave money to an organization in support of a cause
- Participated in union activities
- Joined with coworkers to solve a workplace problem
- Voted in presidential and/or local elections
- Volunteered at least one day in church activities
- Helped poor, elderly or homeless
- Volunteered for community group or block club
- Volunteered for youth development group
- Volunteered for a school or tutoring program
- Volunteered for a school council or PTA
- Volunteered for a hospital or health organization
- Volunteered for an arts or cultural organization
- Volunteered for community crime prevention group
- Protested in a demonstration
- Signed a petition
- Joined a boycott
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

48. On a scale between 1 and 7 has your involvement in the arts made you more or less likely to participate in any of the above activities? **Circle a number between 1 (Much Less Likely) and 7 (Much More Likely).**

- |        |   |   |        |   |   |        |
|--------|---|---|--------|---|---|--------|
| 1      | 2 | 3 | 4      | 5 | 6 | 7      |
| Much   |   |   | No     |   |   | Much   |
| Less   |   |   | Change |   |   | More   |
| Likely |   |   |        |   |   | Likely |

49. Have you ever advocated on behalf of your own arts organization?

- Yes
- No

50. Have you ever advocated for art resources in general?

- Yes
- No

51. Has arts participation led you to aid in a cause for other neighborhood resources? For example, advocating for improvements in the parks or better housing conditions.

- Yes
- No

52. If you are currently employed, answer the following question. On a scale between 1 and 7, how much worse or better do your arts activities make you feel about your job? **Circle a number between 1 (Much Worse) and 7 (Much Better). If you are not currently employed, skip to question 53.**

- |       |   |   |           |   |   |        |
|-------|---|---|-----------|---|---|--------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4         | 5 | 6 | 7      |
| Much  |   |   | No        |   |   | Much   |
| Worse |   |   | Different |   |   | Better |

53. On a scale between 1 and 7, how much better or worse do your arts activities make you feel about your non-arts activities, other than your job? **Circle a number between 1 (Much Worse) and 7 (Much Better).**

- |       |   |   |           |   |   |        |
|-------|---|---|-----------|---|---|--------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4         | 5 | 6 | 7      |
| Much  |   |   | No        |   |   | Much   |
| Worse |   |   | Different |   |   | Better |



54. Why do you do arts activities? (Check up to the top 3 reasons.)

- For stress relief
- As an outlet for creativity
- To express myself
- To meet other people
- To communicate an idea
- "Because I have to"
- Because it makes me feel good
- Because it is fun
- To get people to imagine the world differently
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Finally, we would like to know a few things about your background and your household.**

55. Did you grow up in a home where there was active participation in the arts?

- Yes
- No

56. Please indicate the level of arts training you have received?

- In school (kindergarten-12<sup>th</sup> grade)
- College
- Apprenticeship
- One on one instruction
- Adult education classes (including workshops and group classes)
- Special classes
- Private tutoring
- Self-taught
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

57. What is the highest grade of school you have completed or highest degree you have received?

- Grades Kindergarten-8 which grade? \_\_\_\_\_
- Grades 9-11 which grade? \_\_\_\_\_
- Completed High School (or GED)
- Vocational or Trade School (after High School)
- Some college how many years? \_\_\_\_\_
- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Some Graduate School how many years? \_\_\_\_\_
- Graduate degree
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

58. Do you own or rent your home?

Own

Rent

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

59. What is your zip code? \_\_\_\_\_

60. In what year were you born? 19 \_\_\_\_

61. What is your marital status?

Married or living with partner

Widowed

Separated

Divorced

Never married

62. How many children under 18 are currently living at home?

\_\_\_\_\_ number of children

63. Are you currently working for income full-time, part-time, or not at all?

Full-time

Part-time

Not at all → SKIP TO QUESTION 66

64. What is your job title? \_\_\_\_\_

65. What is your occupation?

- Management Occupation
- Business or Financial Operations Occupation
- Computer or Mathematical Occupation
- Architecture or Engineering Occupation
- Life, Physical, or Social Science Occupation
- Community or Social Services Occupation
- Legal Occupation
- Education, Training, or Library Occupation
- Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, or Media Occupation
- Healthcare Practitioners or Technical Occupation
- Healthcare Support Occupation
- Protective Service Occupation
- Food Preparation or Serving Related Occupation
- Building and Grounds Cleaning or Maintenance Occupation
- Personal Care or Service Occupation
- Sales or Related Occupation
- Office or Administrative Support Occupation
- Farming, Fishing, or Forestry Occupation
- Construction or Extraction Occupation
- Installation, Maintenance, or Repair Occupation
- Production Occupation
- Transportation or Material Moving Occupation
- Military Specific Occupation

66. Which, if any, of the following describe your situation at this time?

- Retired
- Homemaker
- In school
- Disabled or ill
- Looking for work
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

67. In studies like this, households are sometimes grouped according to income. A household is defined as you, your spouse (if any), and your dependents (if any) as on Income Tax forms. What was the total income of all persons in your household over the past year, including salaries or other earnings, interest, retirement, and so on, for all household members?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000-49,999   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000-14,999    | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000-74,999   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000-19,999    | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000-99,999   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000-29,999    | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 or more |

- END -

**Thank you  
for  
completing the questionnaire.**

**Comments?**\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

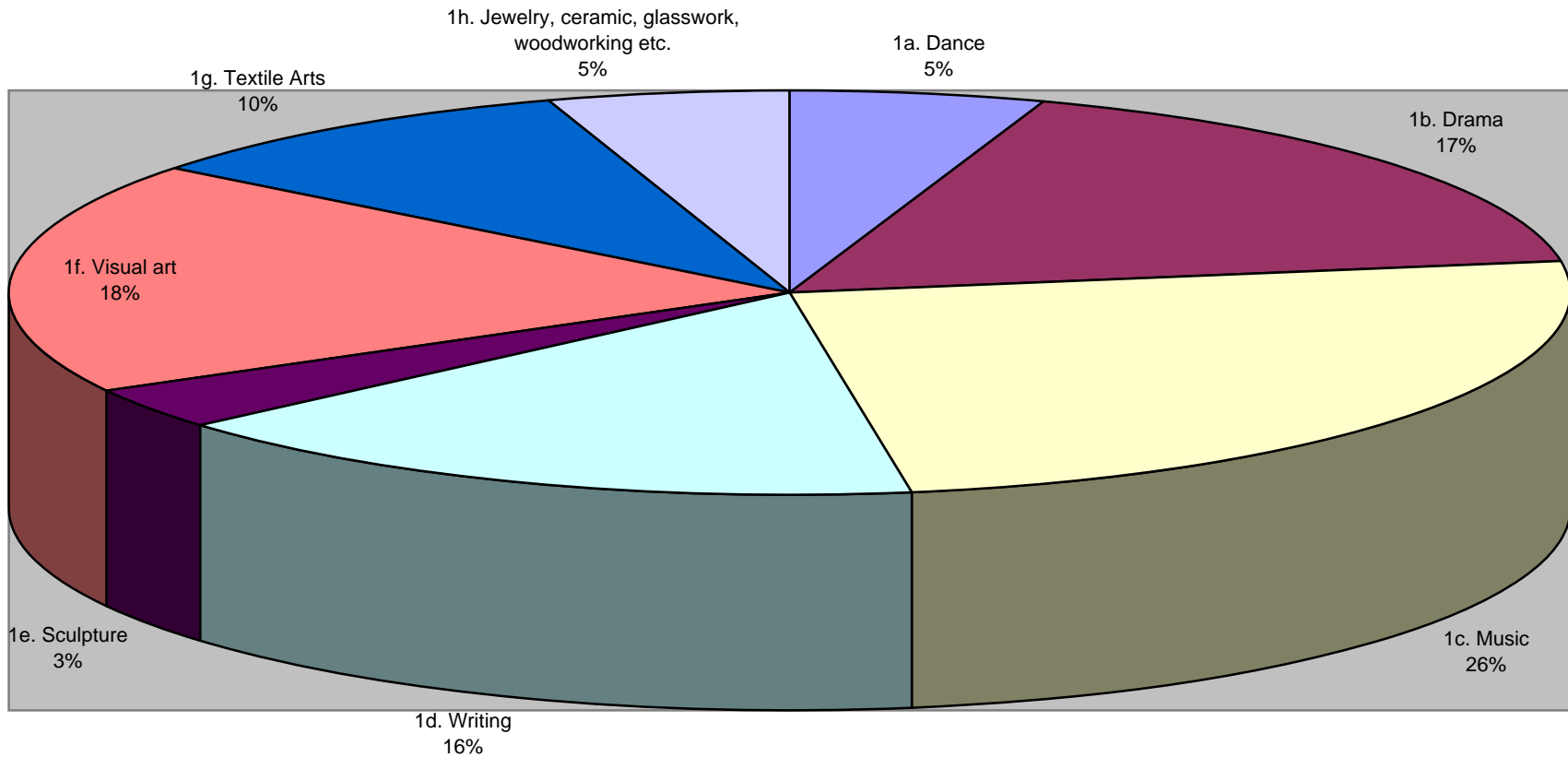
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

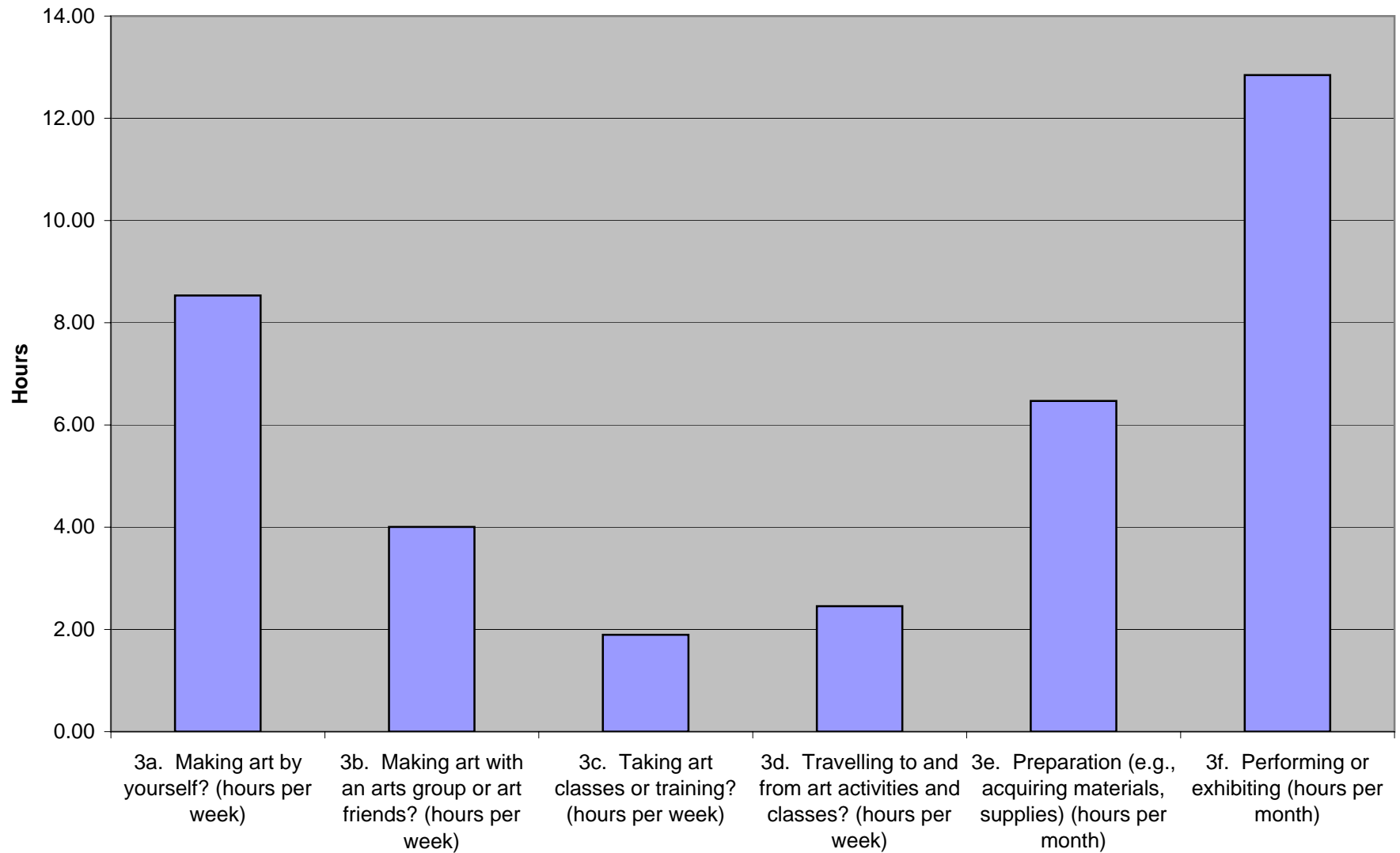
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

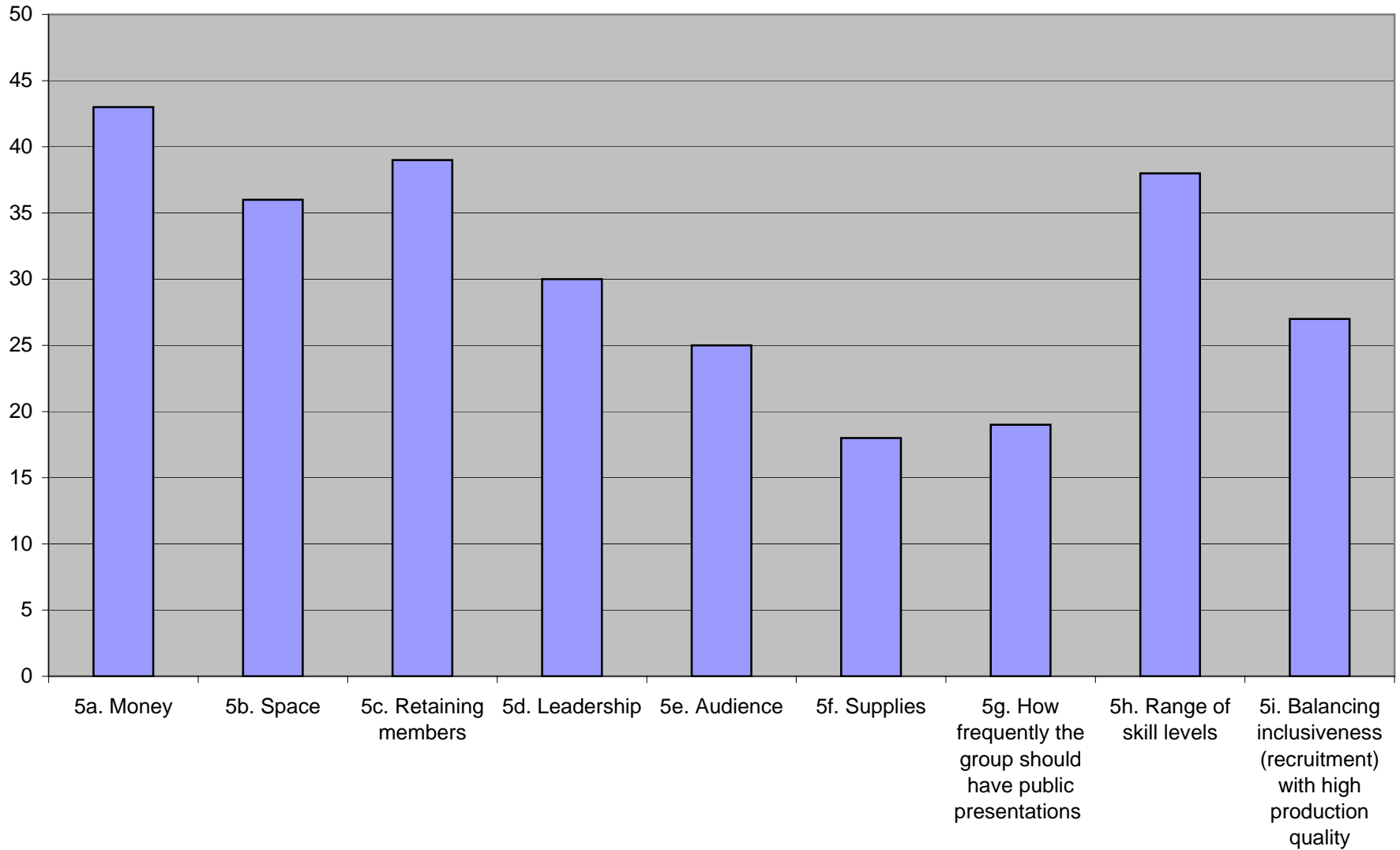
1. What art activity are you currently involved in?



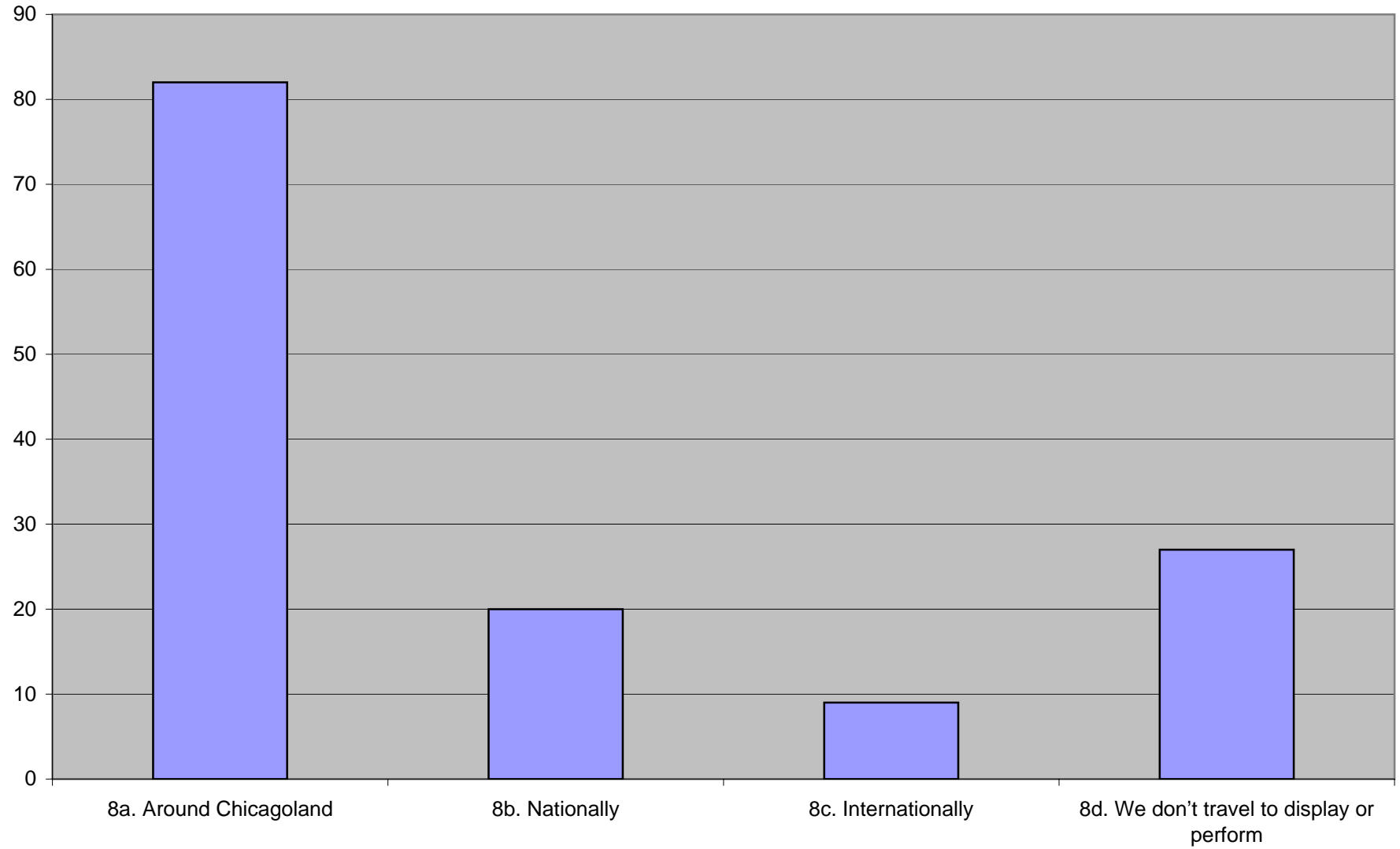
3. Typically, how much time do you spend on the following ?



5. What are the tensions in the group, if any? (Check all that apply.)

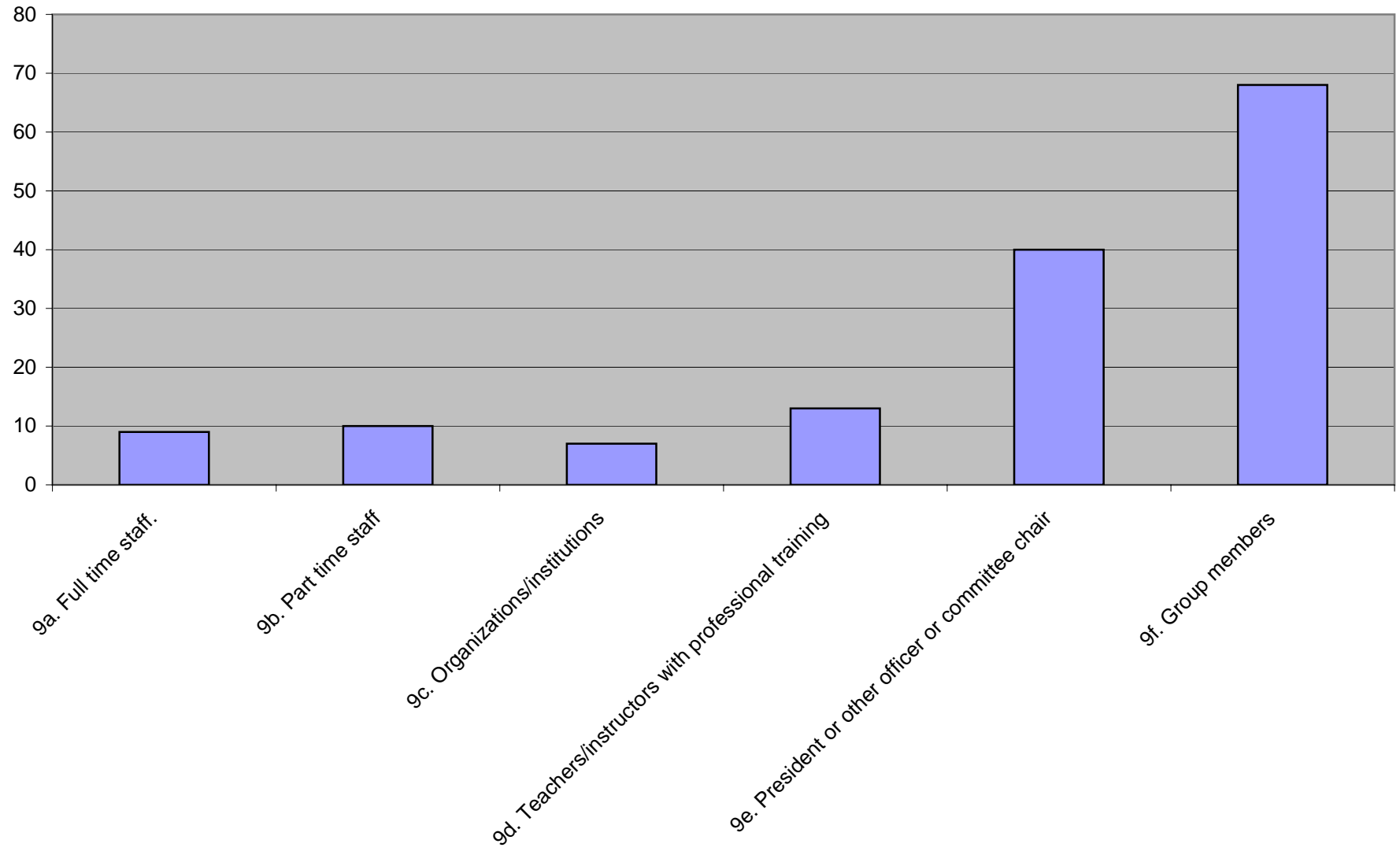


8. Where has your group traveled to display or perform artwork? (Check all that apply.)

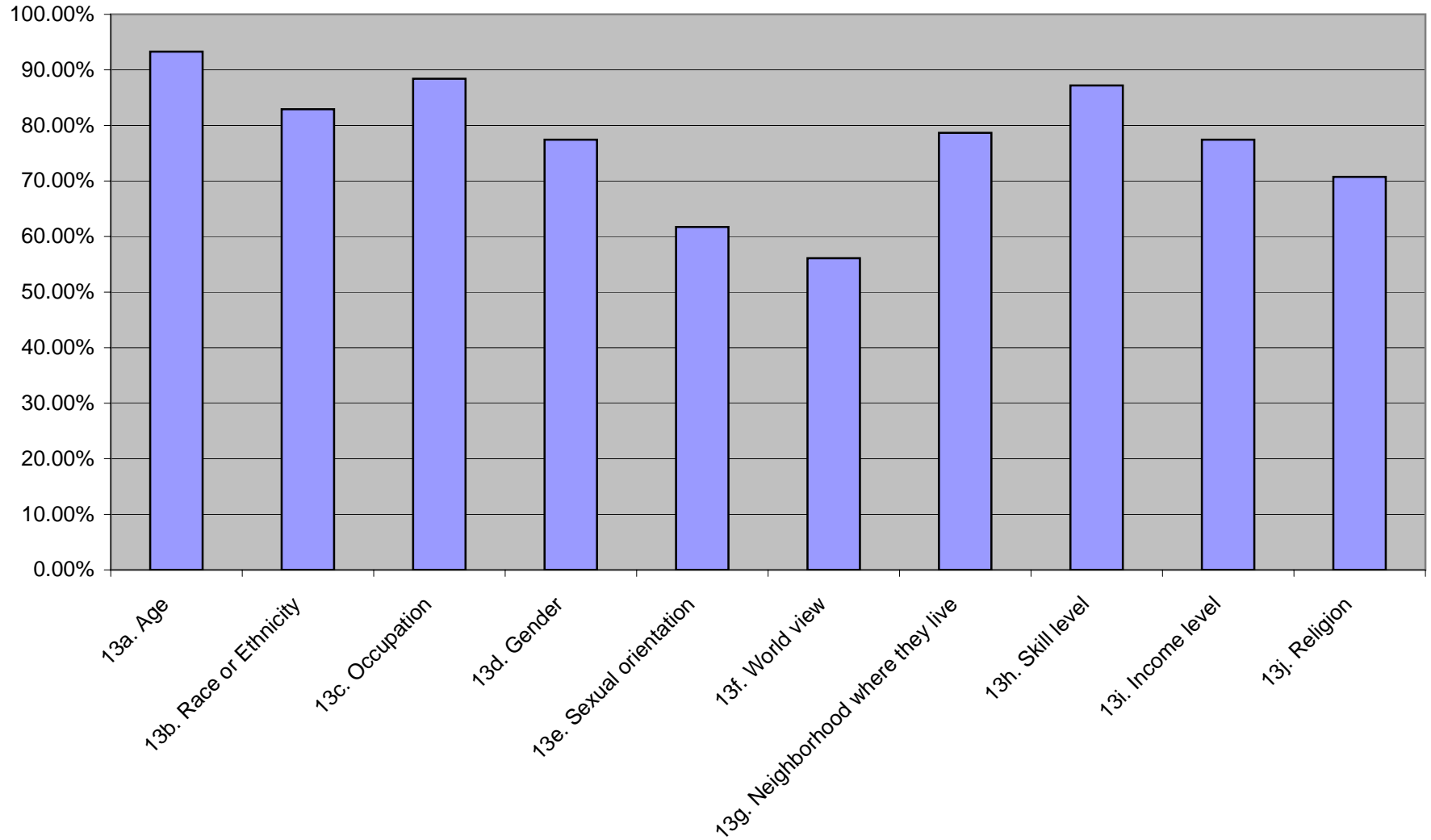




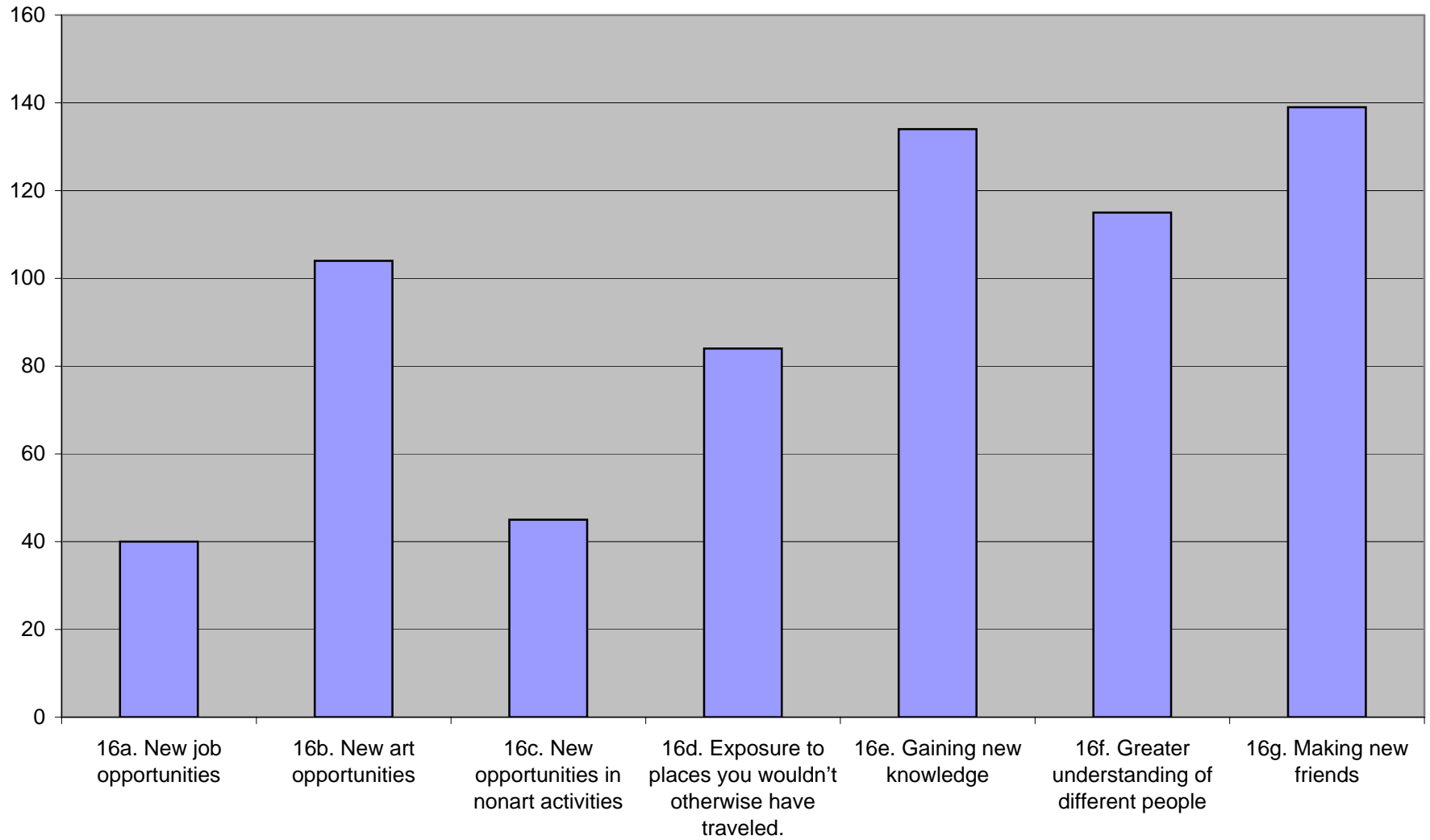
9. Who organizes and arranges activities for your arts group?



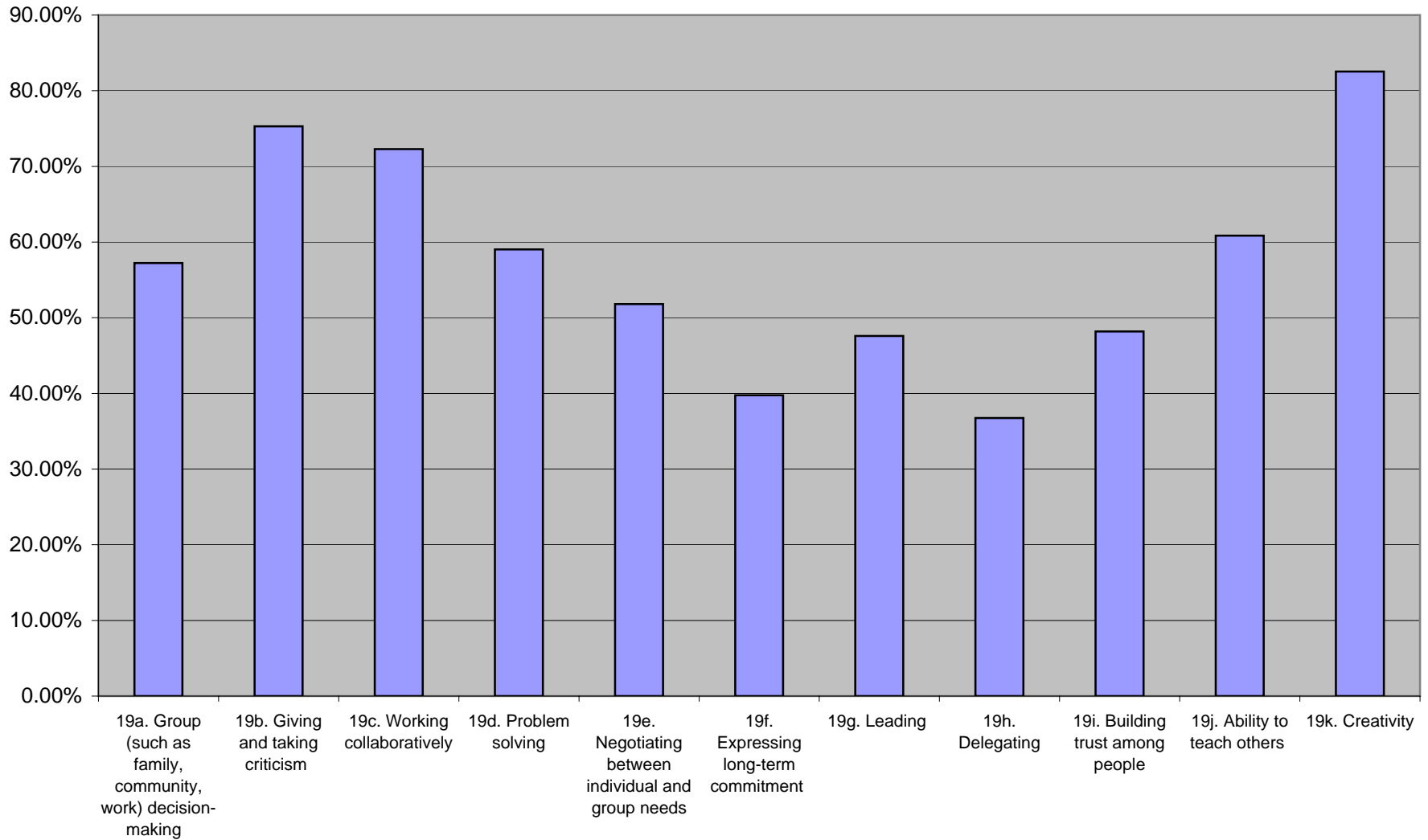
13. Some artists meet people different from themselves in the course of their arts activities. Check below the ways in which people you have met differ from you. Include all your past and present arts activities.



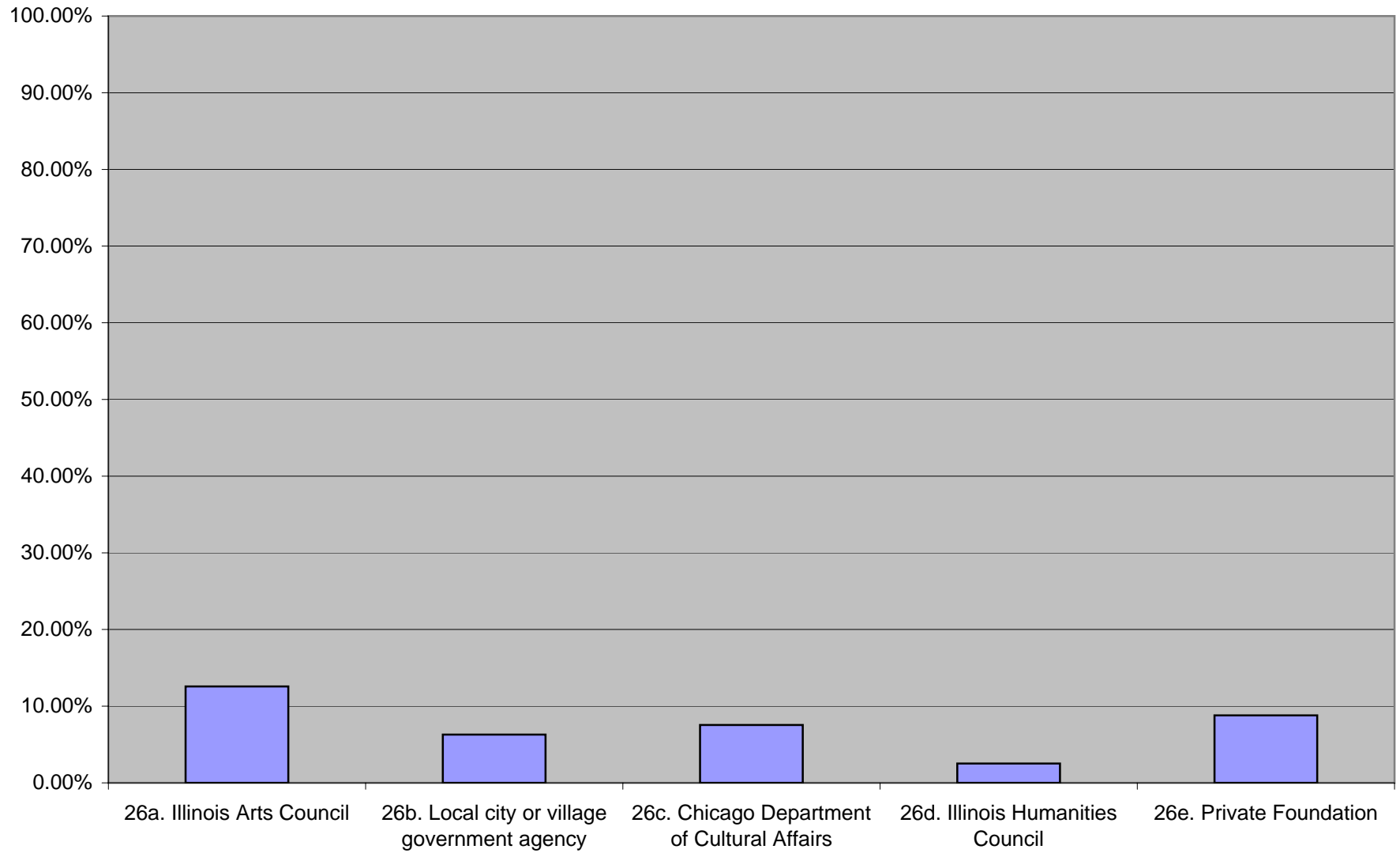
16. Which of the following benefits, if any, have you received from interacting with diverse people in arts activities?  
(Check all that apply.)



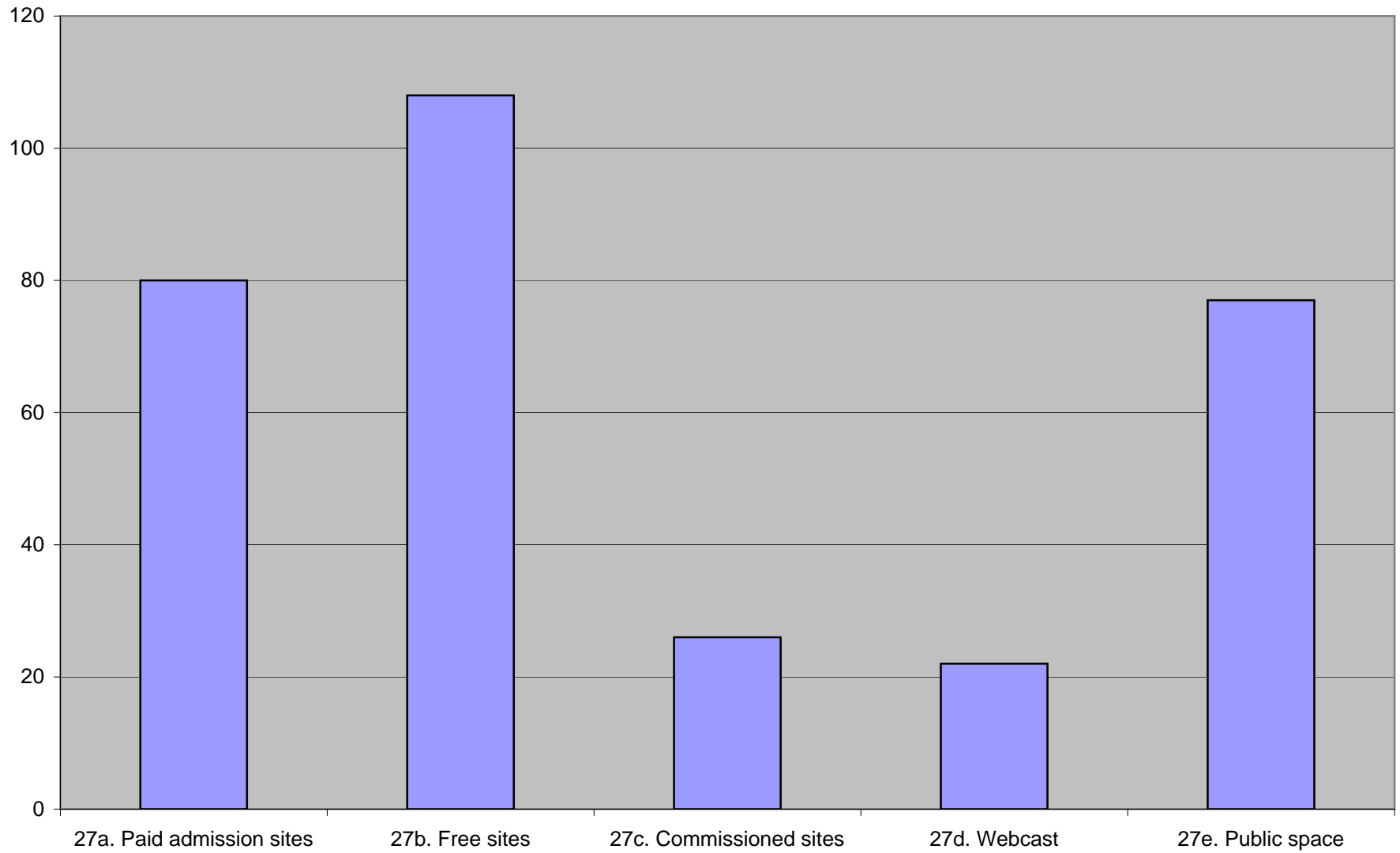
19. Since you've started doing arts activities, have your skills or abilities in the following areas improved? (Check all that apply.)



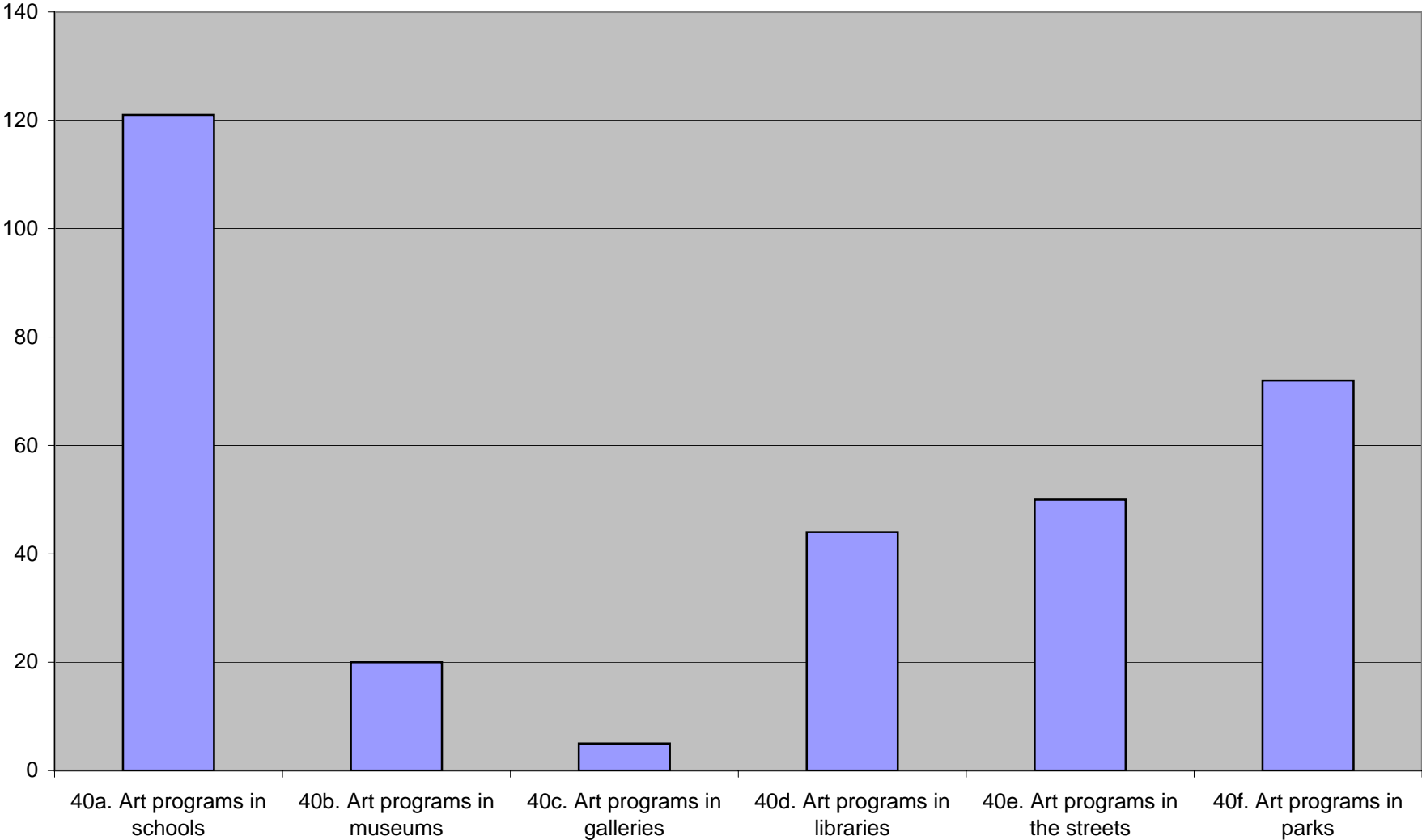
26. Have you ever applied for or received funding from any of the following sources? (Check all that apply.)



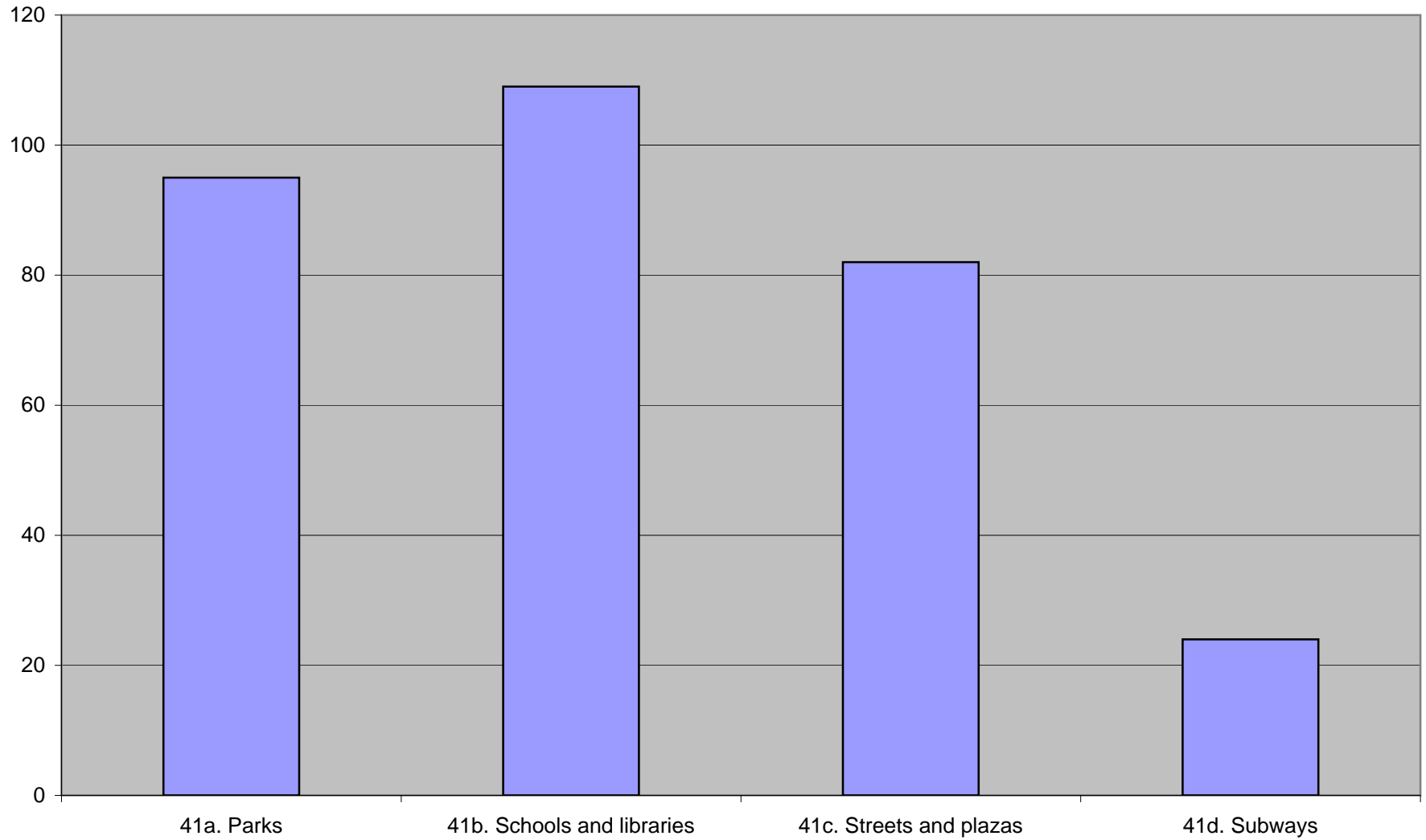
27. Has any of your art work been displayed or performed in the following ways? (Check all that apply.)



40. Which two of the following kinds of art activities would you like to see receive greater public funding? Indicate your number "1" and "2" choices.

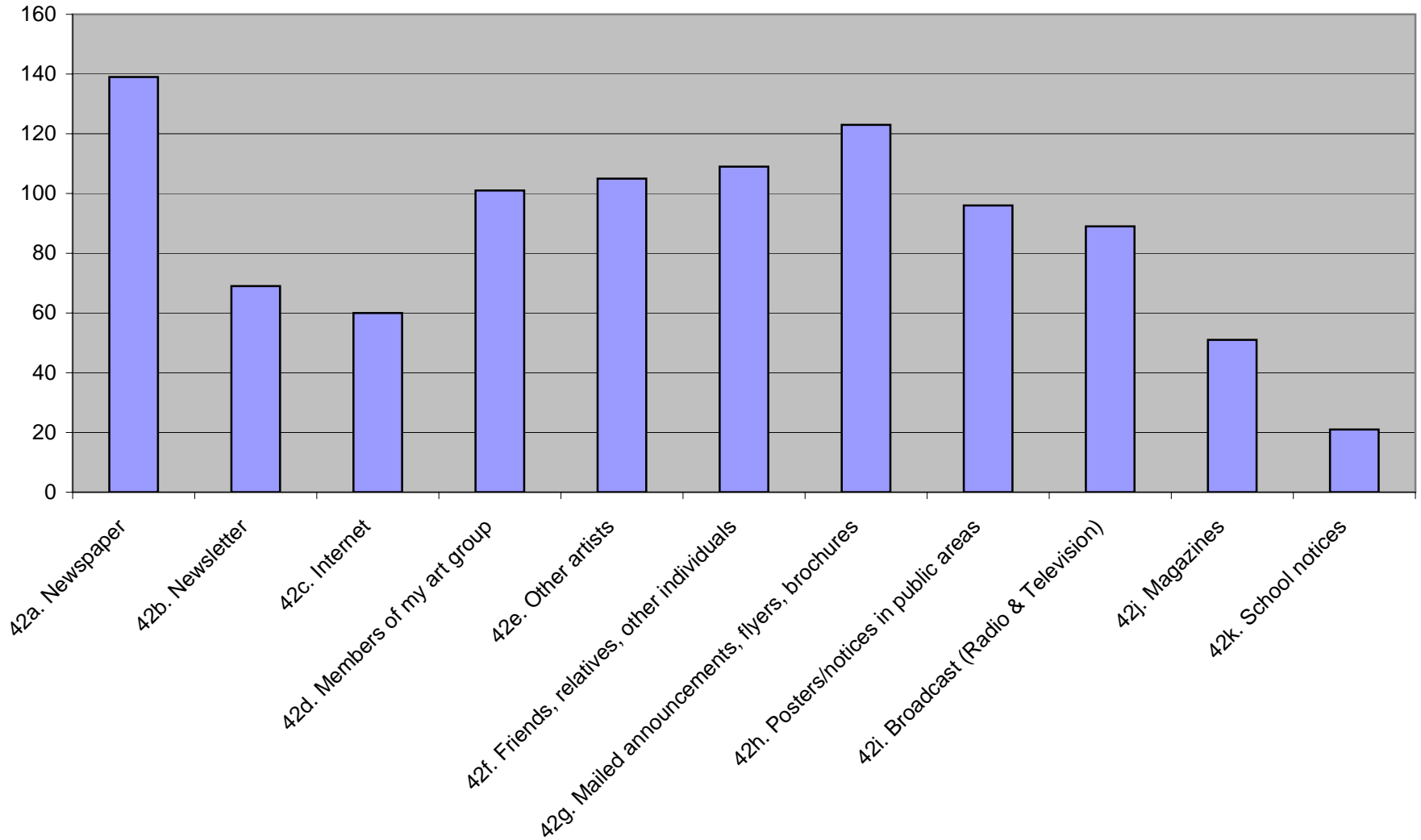


41. In which two sites would you most like to see more public space devoted to the arts? Indicate your number "1" and "2" choices.

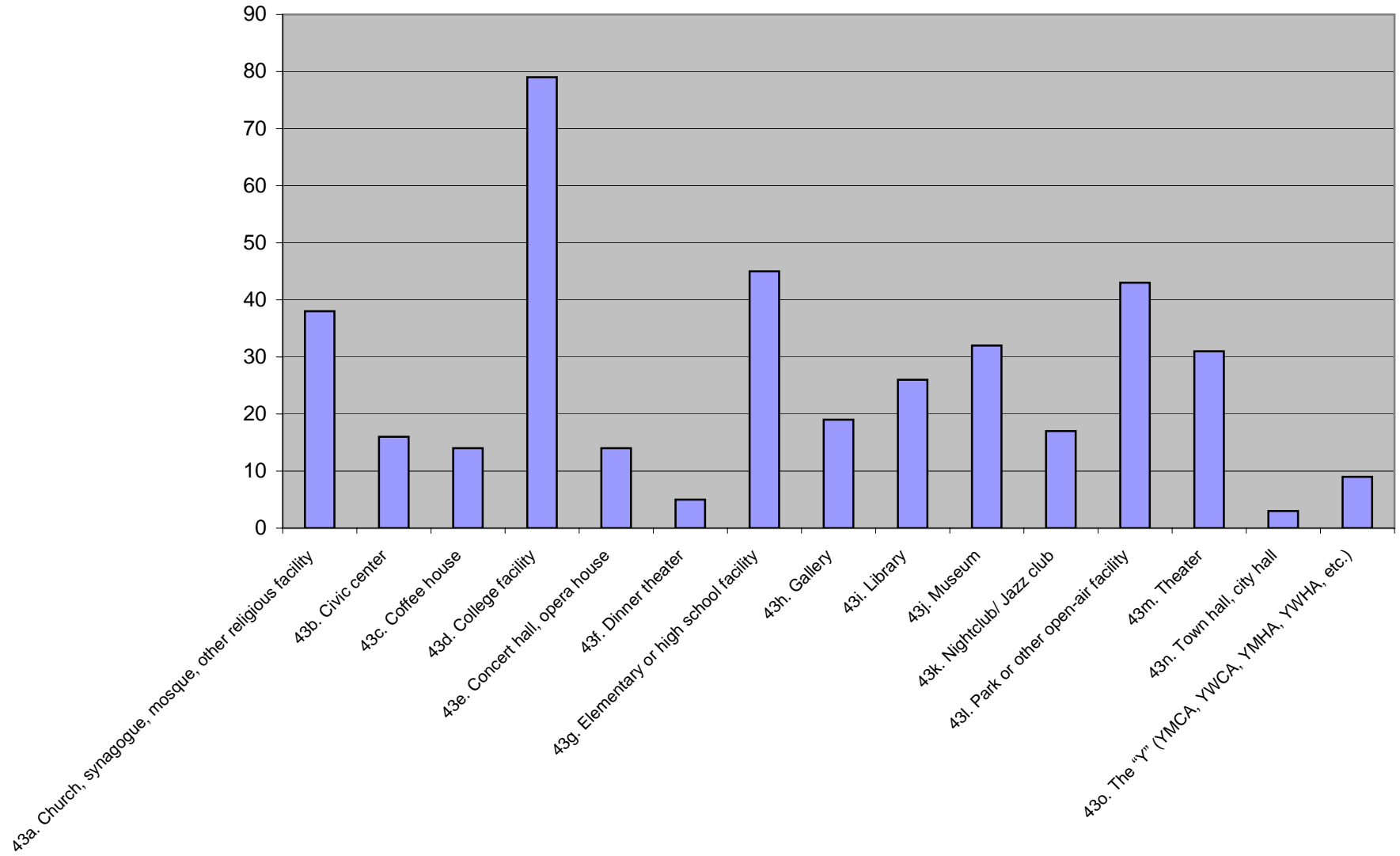




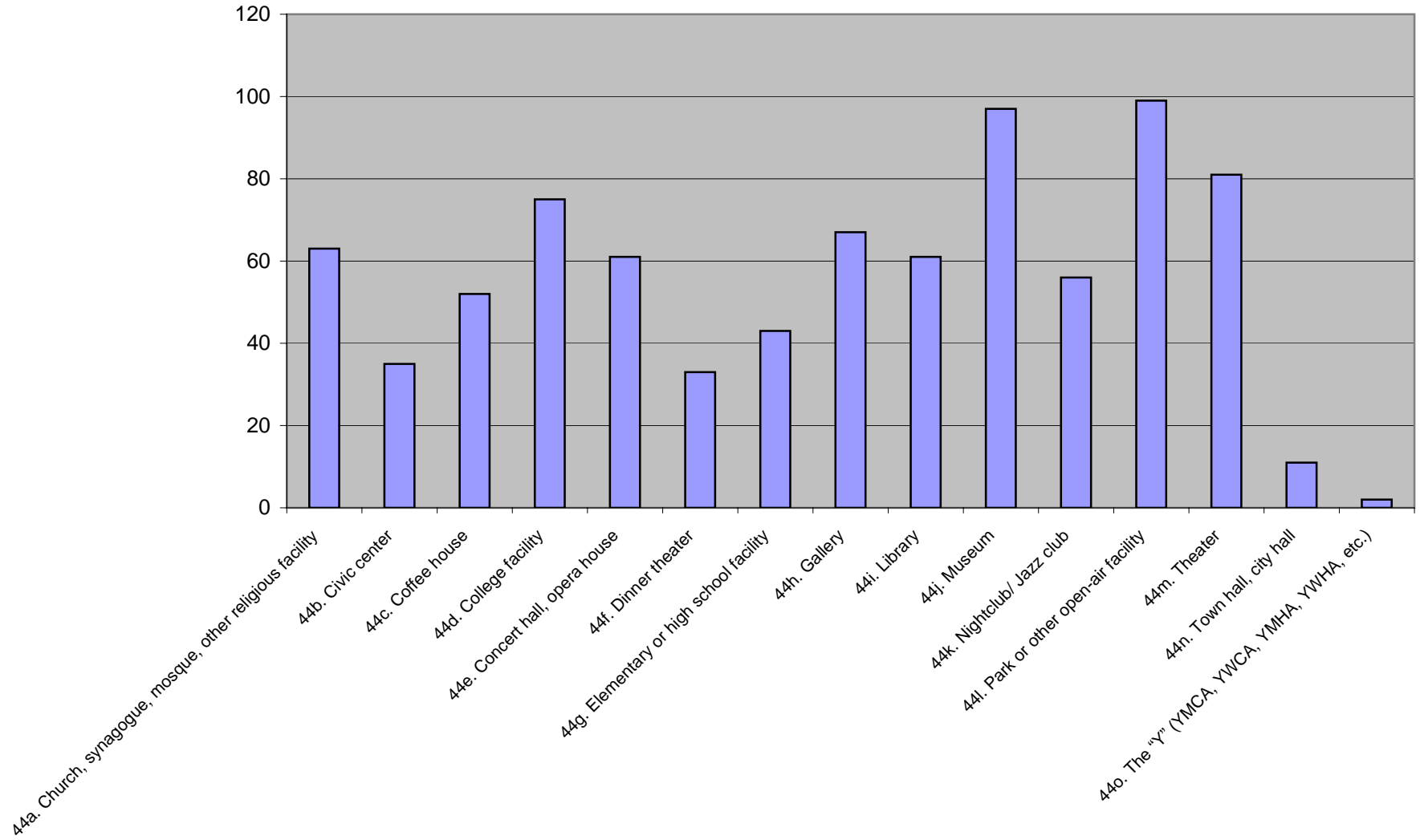
42. In which of the following ways do you find out about the arts activities that you attend as an audience member in the Chicagoland area?



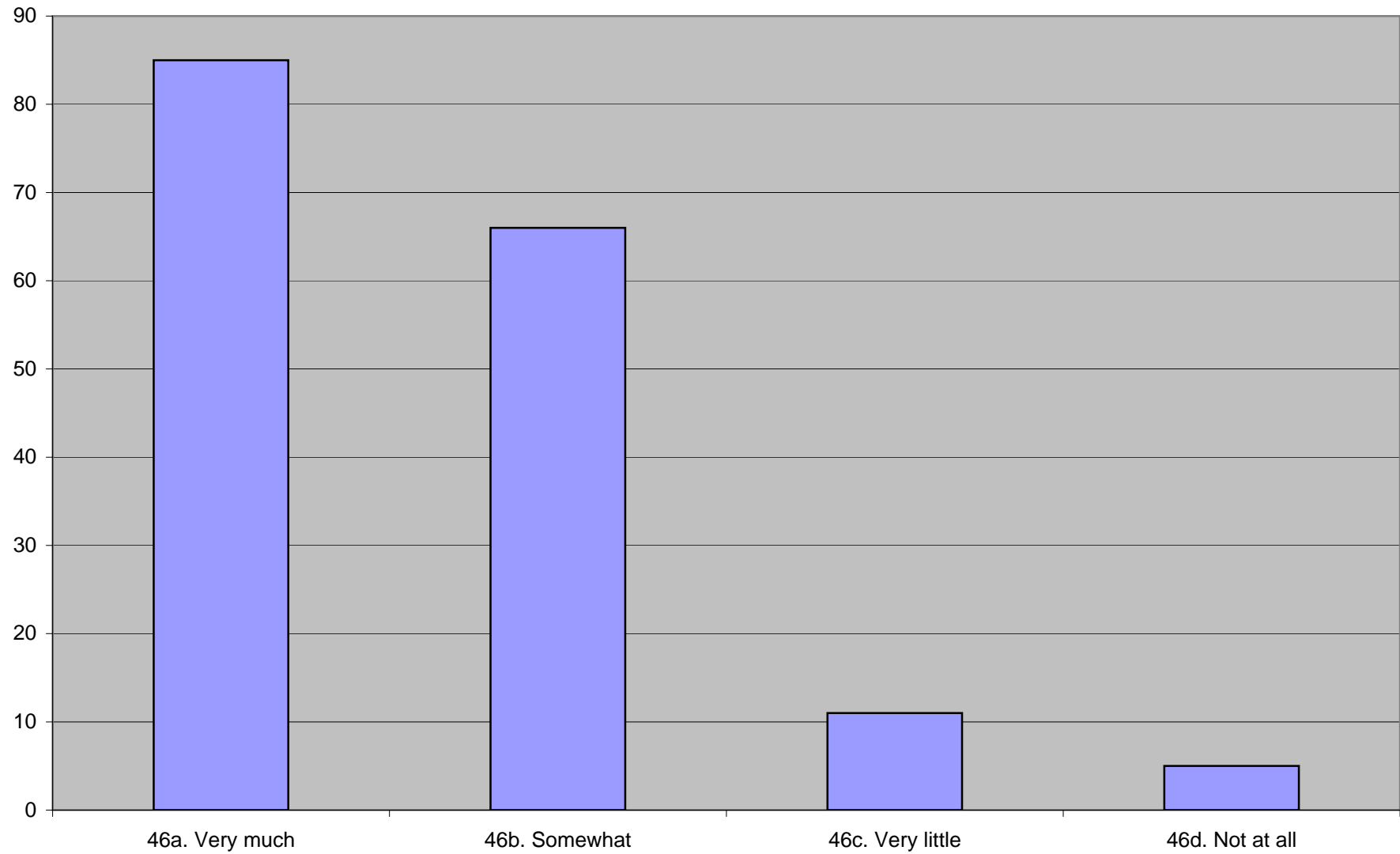
43. Have you ever participated in art classes offered by any of the following sponsors?



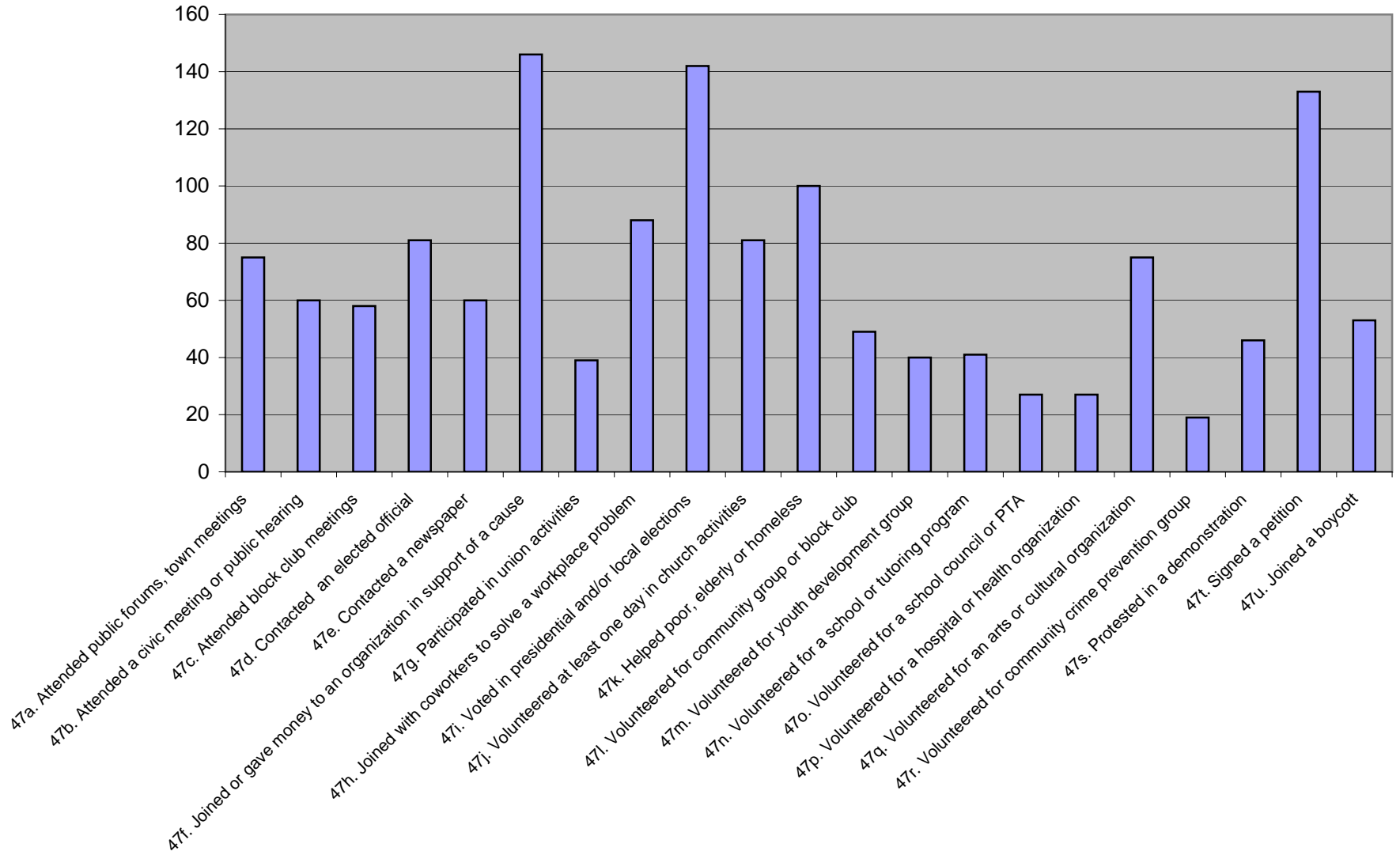
44. In the last 12 months, have you seen displays or attended performances at any of the following facilities in the Chicagoland area?



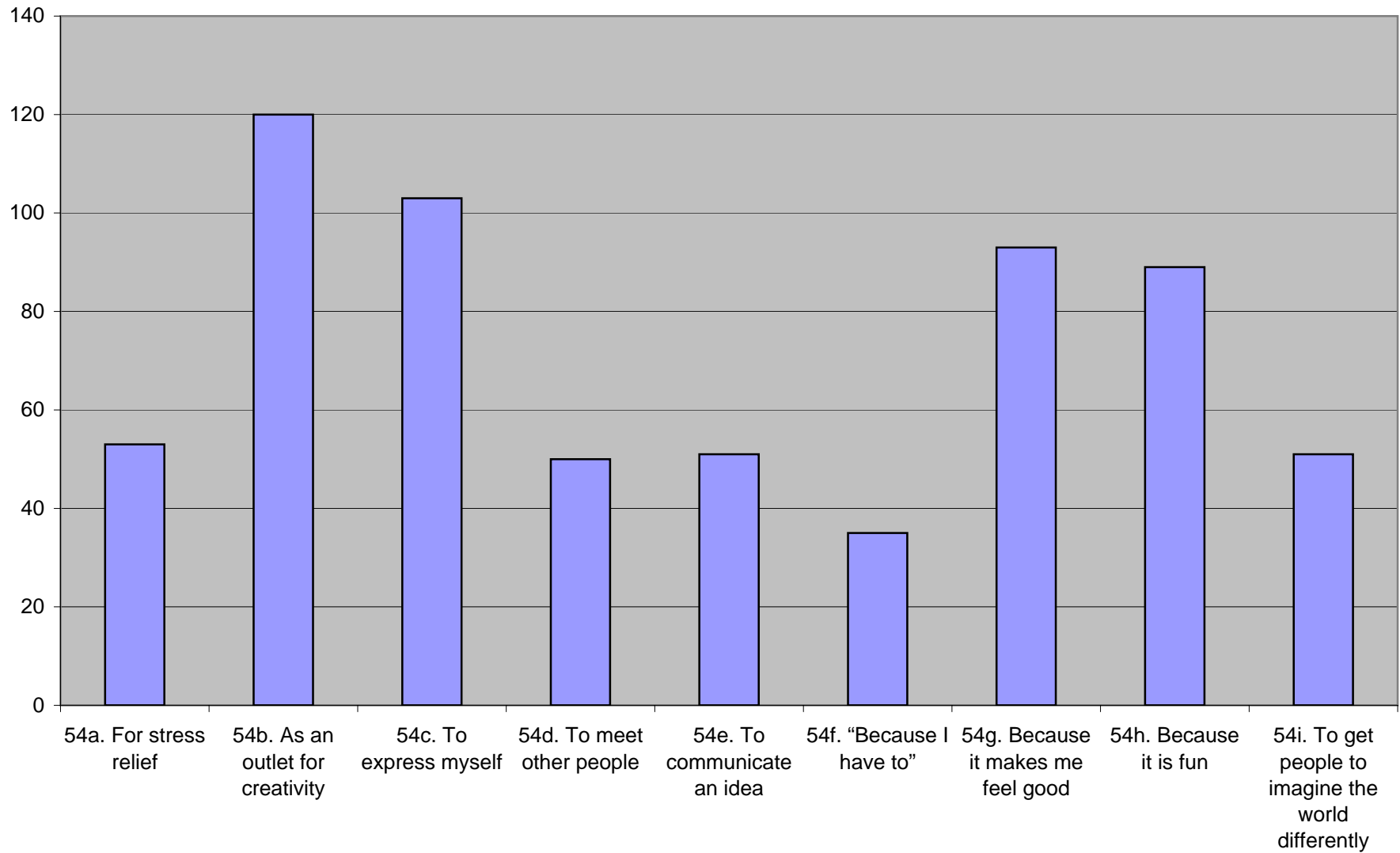
46. How much has your attendance at artistic events or displays inspired your own arts activities?



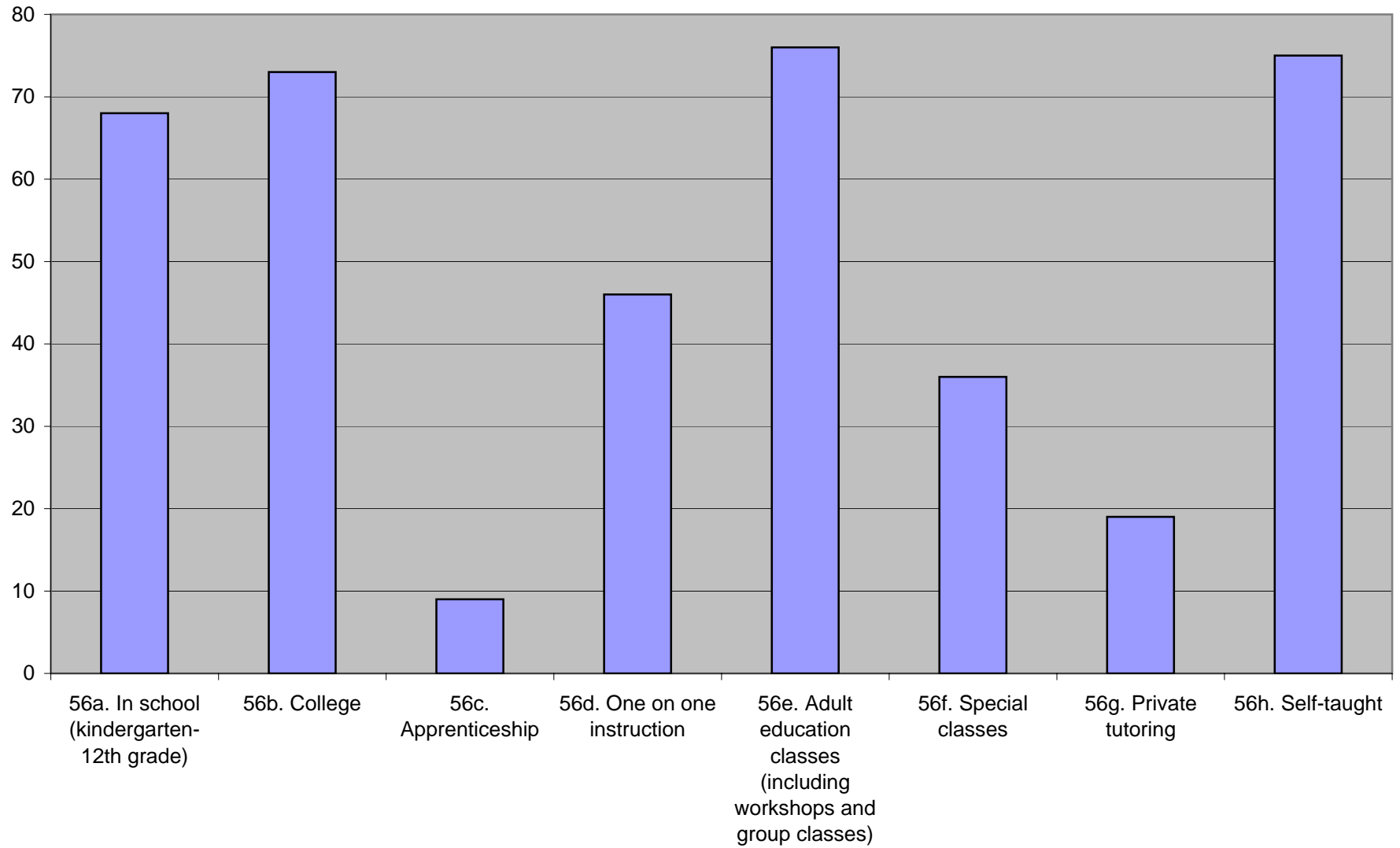
47. Have you ever done the following? (Check all that apply.)



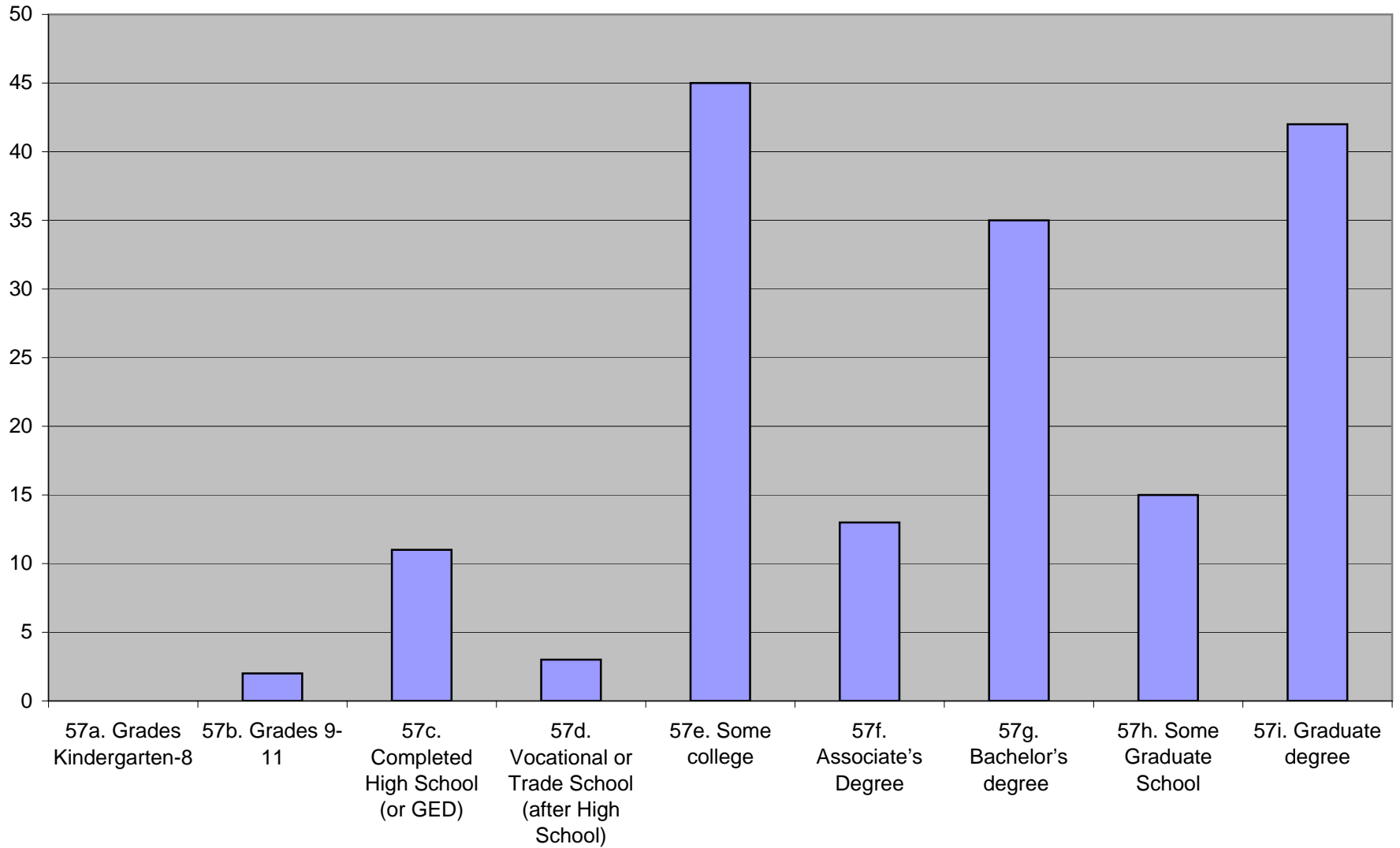
54. Why do you do arts activities? (Check up to the top 3 reasons.)



56. Please indicate the level of arts training you have received?

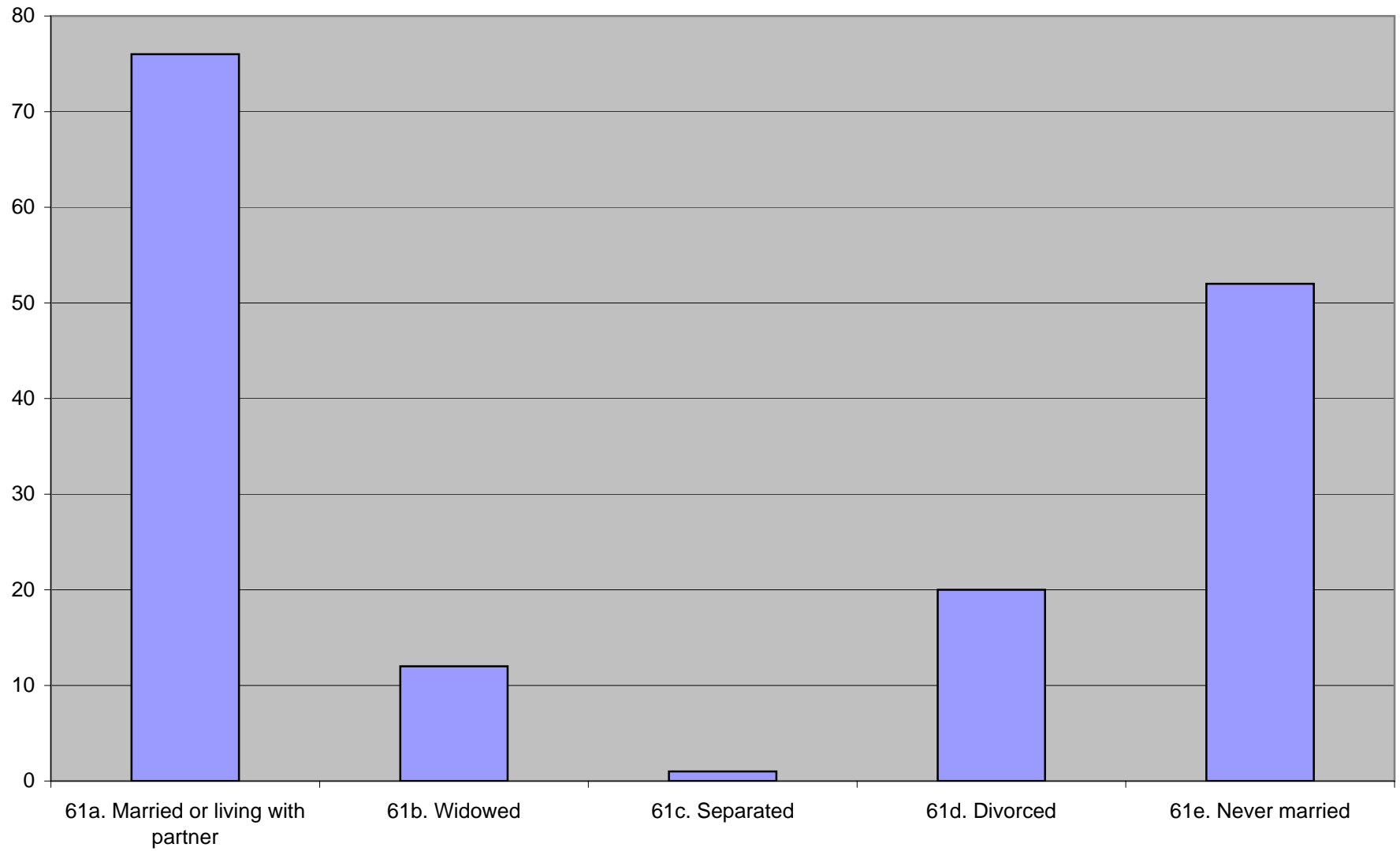


57. What is the highest grade of school you have completed or highest degree you have received?

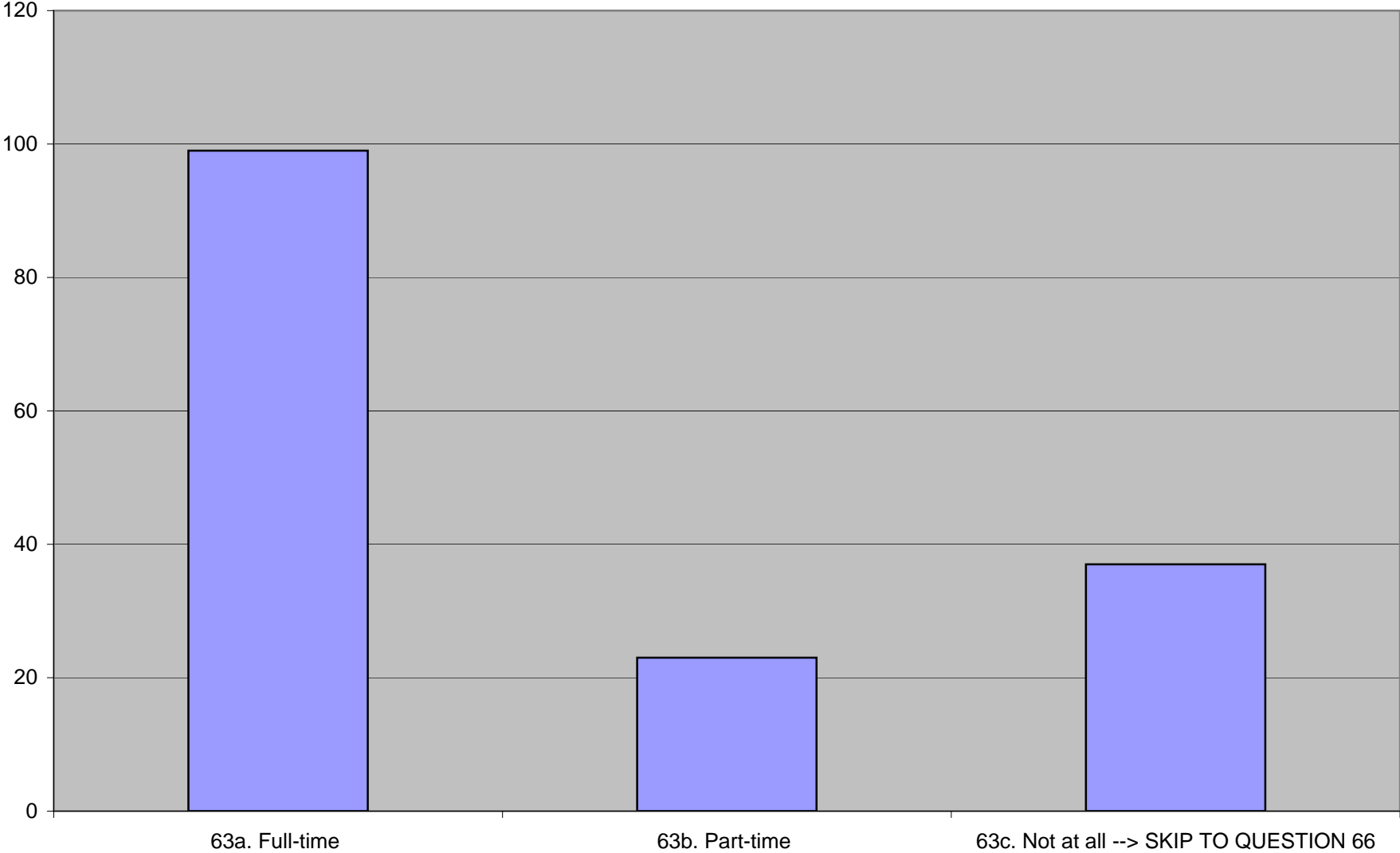




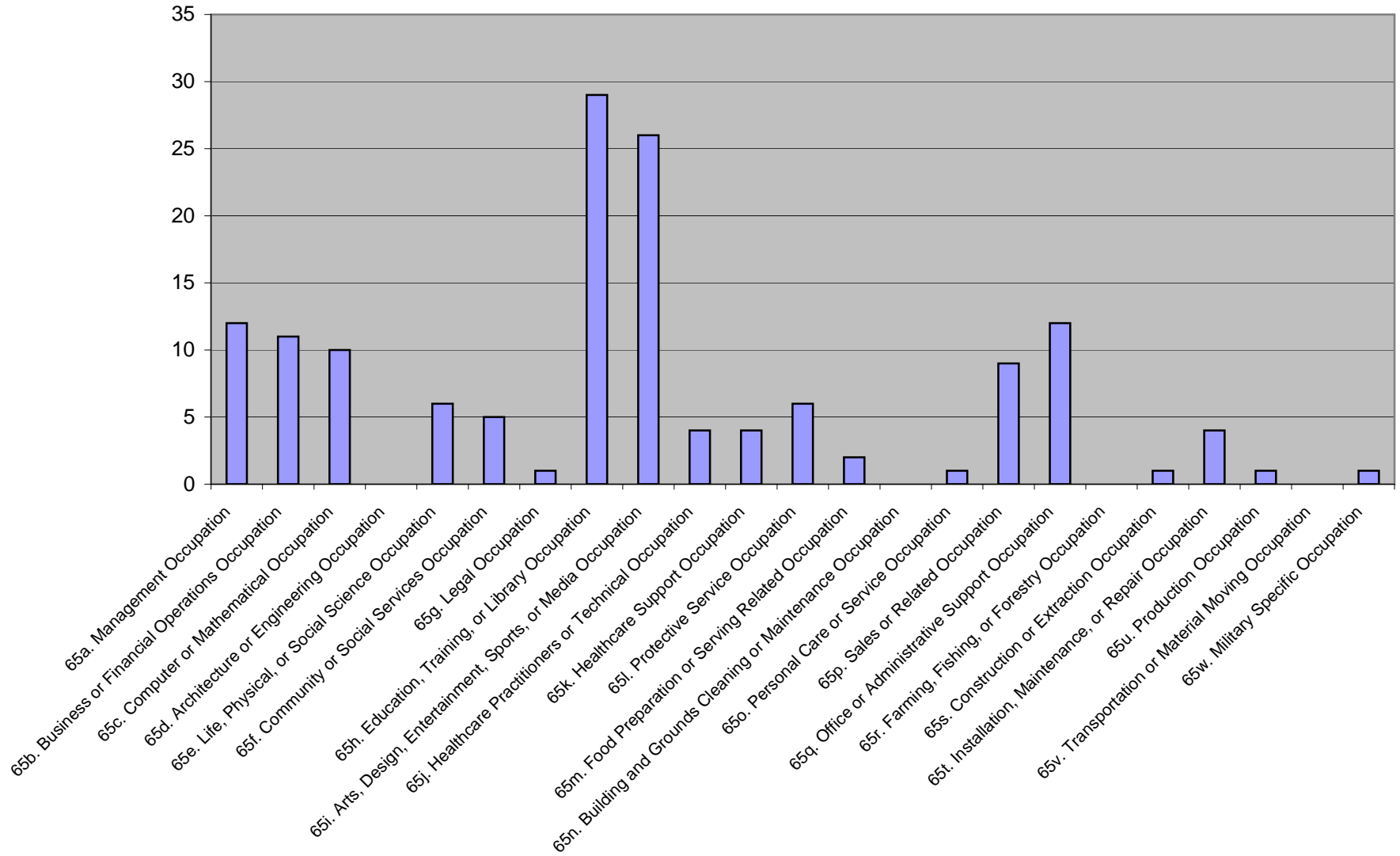
61. What is your marital status?



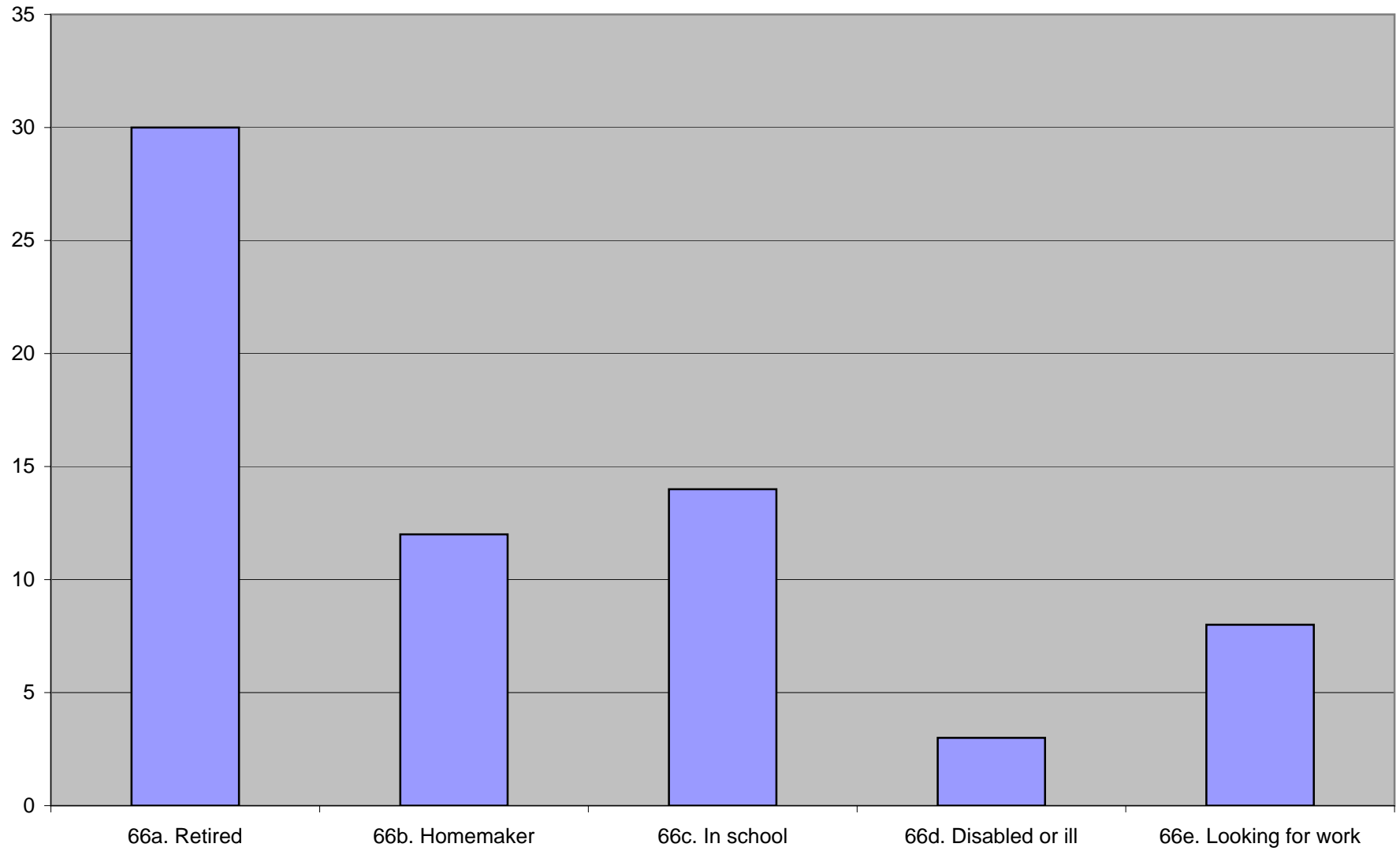
63. Are you currently working for income full-time, part-time, or not at all?



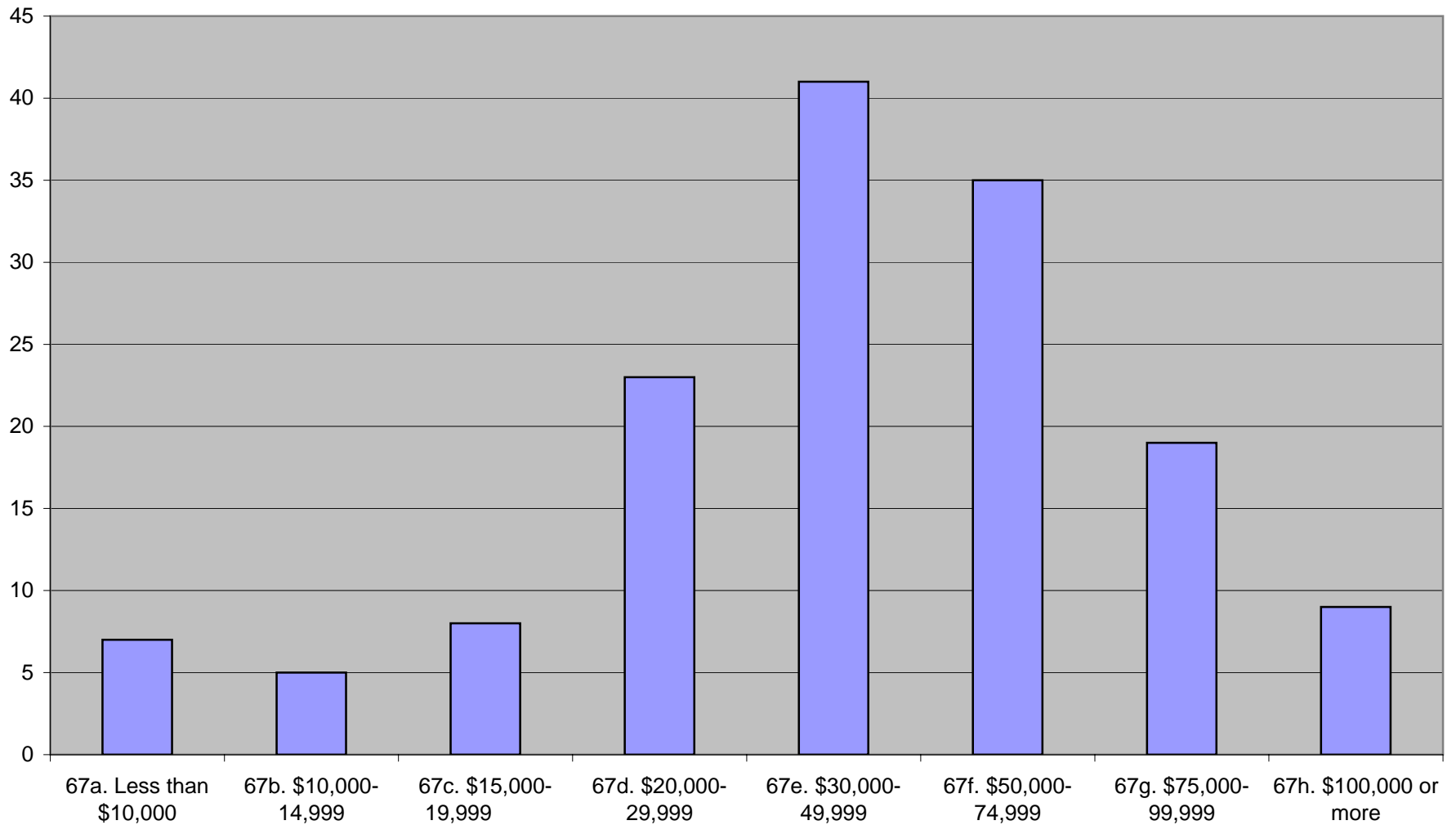
65. What is your occupation?



66. Which, if any, of the following describe your situation at this time?



67. In studies like this, households are sometimes grouped according to income. A household is defined as you, your spouse (if any), and your dependents (if any) as on Income Tax forms. What was the total income of all persons in your household over the



## APPENDIX IV PARTICIPANTS' TERMS FOR ARTISTS

### INFORMAL

Academic poet  
 Altruistic, positive  
 Amateur  
 Amateurish writing  
 Anarchist poetry  
 Apprentice  
 Artist  
 Artist, but an amateur  
 Artists without credentials (art school)  
 Arty: talk about literature, art, ideas  
 Aspire to professional careers  
 Avocation  
 Did it because it was fun  
 Beginner  
 Casual, relaxed, less professional  
 Cats rappin' in the street  
 Close to being professional  
 Come across as professionals  
 Community artists  
 Community of artists  
 Community theater  
 Credible writers  
 Do it for art's sake  
 Doesn't do it for a career  
 Experienced  
 Experts (been quilting a long time)  
 Flute player  
 Going platinum  
 Guitarist  
 Have an artistic bent  
 Highly gifted students  
 Hobby  
 Hobbyists  
 Independent route  
 Just for fun  
 Just people, not professionals  
 Learned by the seat of her pants  
 Making hip-hop beats  
 Master drummers  
 Music grandma  
 Musicians  
 Non-equity  
 Not a church play  
 Not Commercial  
 Not Competitive  
 Not experienced  
 Not professional  
 Not professional, just want to act  
 Not ready for prime time  
 Part-time  
 Part-time pursuers  
 People dedicated to theater not just the stage  
 People who just happened upon it  
 People who sang for the joy of it  
 Playing, literally  
 Poet  
 Poetry group  
 Professional (group) though not all actors are professional  
 Professional Amateurs  
 Professional quality actors  
 Recreational art  
 Rookies  
 Self-taught  
 Semi-professional, semi-community

Show-off  
 Someone with a regular job Songwriter  
 Street poet  
 Sunday painters  
 Talented artists  
 Technician  
 Theater addicts  
 Tribe of poets  
 Virgin poet  
 Vocalist  
 Volunteers  
 Writer

### FORMAL

A career  
 Academic poet  
 Actors who have to work for pay  
 Actress  
 Artists  
 Beyond just having fun  
 Cats  
 Dance Professor  
 Dancer  
 Disciple  
 Elitist  
 Famous hand quilter  
 Full company dancer  
 Full time pursurers  
 Going Gold  
 Going Platinum  
 Haiku purist  
 Intellectual snob  
 Main source of income  
 Musician, not just a hobby  
 Nationally known jazz musicians  
 North side actors  
 On the clock  
 Quilter who had a TV show  
 One who won quilting award  
 Other breed (have gone to acting school)  
 Paid  
 Principal dancer  
 Professional  
 Professional Director  
 Professional show people  
 Professional status  
 Professional, trained  
 Writer who published stories in newspapers  
 Quilting author  
 Quilts full time  
 Real artist  
 Real quilter  
 Sells quilts  
 Singer  
 Singer with major acts  
 Special  
 Take it serious  
 Too special  
 Union Musicians  
 Won awards  
 Writer