

A STUDY OF SOME ASPECTS OF INTEREST IN ART IN
RURAL AND URBAN AREAS IN KANSAS

by

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B. S., Kansas State University
of Agriculture and Applied Science, 1956

A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Architecture and Allied Arts

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

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THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

An increasing interest in art by laymen has been noticeable for a number of years prior to this study. Although many are aware of this rise in interest, very little study has been made of these people who are interested in art solely for the pleasure and satisfaction it brings them. The increase in number of and attendance at art exhibits in small communities, the appeals for assistance to art centers and universities, and the rise in enrollment in university extension art classes all serve to point up increasing interest in this field.

The Problem

Statement of the Problem. The purpose of this study was (1) to gather information about the amateur artists of Kansas in the areas of sex, age, socio-economic status, educational level, art backgrounds and art attitudes; (2) to assemble this information in a meaningful manner, and (3) to draw conclusions and point out patterns which emerged from the information received.

Importance of the Study. With the increase in leisure afforded many people in the last few years, the problem of use of this leisure becomes more and more important. Most people have, at one time or another, a desire to draw and paint, but due to circumstances, this desire is seldom fulfilled. Now, many people are using this increase in leisure time as an opportunity to fulfill their creative desires along these lines.

This previously mentioned grassroots appeal for help to educational institutions and agencies has created many problems. One of the most important of these is lack of information as to backgrounds, desires, and needs of these amateur artists.

The information gained from this study should be of value to the institutions and agencies interested in working with these people. Among these interested agencies is the Department of Continuing Education, Kansas State University. Through this investigation, the Department of Continuing Education should gain valuable information in regard to the types of offerings which best meet the needs of these amateur artists, where the interest in art would warrant an adult education art class, and whether a home study program in art appreciation would be feasible.

The Kansas Rural-Urban Art Program should also be interested in the results of this survey. This organization, sponsored jointly by the Department of Architecture and Allied Arts, Kansas State University, and the Department of Continuing Education, Kansas State University, was organized to help bridge the gap between the geographically isolated art enthusiast, and that which he seeks.¹ Information gained by this survey can be used by this organization to assist in developing its exhibition program, and in its dissemination of information to the amateur artists of Kansas.

Definitions of Terms Used

Amateur. The definition of the word "amateur" in regard to a painter or artist has long been subject to controversy. Since, as the findings of this survey indicate, a number of so-called amateurs do sell their work, the question arises as to where the line should be drawn between the amateur and the professional.

¹Ernest G. Peck, A Report on the Kansas Rural-Urban Art Program, p. 2.

Kaplan stated that:

1. A professional is accepted as such by his circle of patients, clients, or audience. He has authority because of recognized technical leadership.
2. The function of a professional is to make his special knowledge available to critical audiences. He exposes himself to professional critics for evaluation. What the amateur does to the art is not so important as what the art does to the amateur.
3. The professional occupies a key status in his area of specialization. A banker who collects stamps is still a banker, not a philatelist.¹

The amateur painter, then, for purposes of this study, is one who paints primarily for pleasure and satisfaction. Even though he may sell his work frequently or occasionally, he has a primary identity in some other area. This area is generally the source of his livelihood.

Painter and Artist. Throughout the report of this investigation the terms "painter" and "artist" were used synonymously. The terms refer to one who purports to express himself creatively through the painting or drawing of pictures.

Organization of the Remainder of the Thesis

The remainder of this thesis is organized by sections, with each section including text and tables which are related as to general type of information covered.

A resume of history and previous research concerning the problem is presented. The contributions of previous research in this area are enumerated and discussed.

¹Max Kaplan, Leisure in America: A Social Inquiry, p. 205.

Next discussed are the methods of procedure, sources of data, and treatment of the findings, from the inception of this survey to its conclusion.

The text of the thesis is divided into three sections. The first specifically treats information of a biographical, or personal, nature, for background purposes. Age, sex, education, and socio-economic level are examples.

The second section is a continuation of the report, specifically presenting information regarding formal art training and background of the amateur artists studied, and including data as to the type of training or instruction these people desired.

The third section explores the attitudes of these amateur artists toward their painting, the amount of time spent actively engaged in art activities, the media used most frequently, and the types of painting they preferred.

Following the three text sections is a summary, restating the developments of previous chapters, and showing the more important findings and conclusions of the entire survey.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As previously stated, the primary purpose for making this survey was that the information contained herein had not previously been gathered and compiled. Research in this area resulted in very little information along the lines pursued by this study, either as applied to Kansas, or as applied to amateur artists in general. As an example of this, Leisure in America: A Social Inquiry devoted only nine pages to the part art played in leisure time activities.¹

Other sources on the subject of the amateur artist were limited to a few articles written in general terms, mostly in conjunction with discussions on adult education. Any contributions these articles may have made were so general in nature as to serve little purpose in this investigation.

The one exception was an article by Wasserman, in which he set forth some sound theories regarding this previously mentioned increase in interest in painting and drawing by the layman.² He stated:

There is ample evidence that more and more people are looking for creative and appreciative art experiences. Among the evidence are expanding sales of art materials to non-professional users, increasing museum and gallery attendance, larger purchases of reproductions, the growing coverage of art news and events in national magazines and local newspapers, and increasing subscriptions (by lay persons) to art-oriented periodicals. Perhaps the most significant development has been the staggering and widespread growth of art offerings and enrollments in adult education programs in the past several years.³

¹Max Kaplan, op. cit.

²Burton Wasserman, "The Role of Art in Adult Education," American Artist, October, 1958, p. 14.

³Ibid.

Wasserman also cited reasons adults become interested in art. These reasons were of value in this investigation as an insight into why a layman, with a primary identity separate from art, spends time and money in the pursuit of artistic endeavors. Adults become interested in art, according to Wasserman, for the following reasons:

1. Some look to learning in art as a kind of escape. They can put aside family and job responsibilities and "let their hair down".
2. Provides opportunities to meet new people with interests in common.
3. Allows people to nurture their interest in art.
4. In addition to cultivating their own potentials, adults also tend to develop a greater appreciation for the work of others.¹

Also of interest as background to this investigation was the statement that these adults who do spend time studying art reported that there was a definite change in their standards of taste as a direct result of their learning experiences. These adults knew better what they preferred, and were proud of their knowledge as to "why such factors as sensitivity, integrity, expressiveness, originality, and adherence to design principles determine their preferences."²

This investigator, having worked with amateur artists as an extension class instructor for six years prior to this study, felt that this experience with these people had resulted in at least some insight into their problems and needs. This experience has been drawn upon and correlated with data collected in the study in some of the conclusions expressed in the final chapter.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE, SOURCES OF DATA, AND TREATMENT OF THE FINDINGS

Method of Procedure

Information regarding the desires, needs, and backgrounds of Kansas amateur artists seemed best procurable by the use of a questionnaire.

A tentative questionnaire was developed and sent to the Department of Architecture and Allied Arts, Kansas State University, for approval. Since the Department of Continuing Education, Kansas State University, was interested in the information to be gathered, the tentative questionnaire was forwarded on to that department for further suggestions and criticism. After incorporating many of the suggestions from the two departments, the final questionnaire was drawn up, mimeographed, and assembled.

The suggestion had been made that a cover letter on Kansas State University stationery, over the signature of Professor John F. Helm, Jr., Department of Architecture and Allied Arts, would perhaps lead to a better return. This suggested letter was drawn up and included with each questionnaire.

Sources of Data

A list of names and addresses of Kansas amateur artists was obtained from the Kansas Rural-Urban Art Program. Supplementing this list were rosters of amateur art exhibitions, and membership lists, obtained by letter, of a number of amateur art associations and guilds throughout the state. Also adding greatly to the mailing list were names and addresses returned in answer to the last item on the questionnaire.

One thousand questionnaires were mailed in unsealed envelopes. A

stamped, self-addressed envelope was not included, as it would (1) add to the postage on each questionnaire, and (2) the cost of the return postage and envelopes was prohibitive to the investigator.

Two hundred and fifty-two usable questionnaires were returned, or 25 per cent of those mailed. This number was judged an adequate quantity from which to draw valid statistics and conclusions.

The number of items on the questionnaire was limited to those thought to be of most importance. Although many more questions could have been included, they were omitted for fear that questionnaire response would be impaired.

Treatment of the Findings

As the completed questionnaires were returned, the responses were recorded by counties, in order to make geographical comparisons. Answers to open-ended questions were coded to implement recording.

After three months, when it became apparent that the return was completed, the results were compiled. It was noted that there was some variation in the completion of the items on the questionnaire. Some of the questionnaires were completely filled out, and some left certain items unanswered. This necessitated including in the tables the number of responses to each question, and the percentages were drawn from this number.

Conclusions, trends, and patterns drawn from these findings were then presented as the text of this thesis.

FINDINGS REGARDING PERSONAL BACKGROUNDS OF THE AMATEUR PAINTERS STUDIED

Findings Discussed

This chapter is devoted to the presentation of biographical, or personal background data. Such information includes breakdowns as to age, sex, socio-economic status, and educational level. The chapter also presents findings regarding origins of the amateur artists' interest in painting, and length of time the artists have been painting.

Sex. Female amateur artists far outnumber the male. Out of 252 responses to the question, 227, or 90 per cent, were female, and only 25, or 10 per cent, were male. This preponderance of women tended to support Wasserman's contention that painting provides an opportunity to get away from family responsibilities, and to "let their hair down".¹

Age. By reference to Table 1, it can readily be seen that over 50 per cent of the amateur painters studied were in their forties and fifties.

Table 1. Amateur artists in regard to age.

Age divisions	Number in each age division	Per cent
Under 20	3	1.2
21 - 30	18	7.8
31 - 40	44	19.0
41 - 50	55	23.2
51 - 60	70	29.4
61 - 70	34	14.1
Over 70	13	5.3
Total	246	

¹Wasserman, loc. cit.

This observation, coupled with the high percentage of women involved, pointed up the probability that most of these painters were forced to wait until their families were raised before finding the time to participate in art activities. Another possibility was that these middle-aged persons turned to art to fulfill the need for a leisure time activity.

Occupation. Reference to Table 2 shows that over 65 per cent of these amateur painters were homemakers. This is explored further in Table 3. Of those other than homemakers, professional people made up the largest single group. This seemed to indicate that these professional people (doctors, teachers, lawyers, ministers, and dentists), were interested in an avocation which called for a certain creative output.

Table 2. Amateur painters in regard to occupation.

Occupation	Number in each occupation	Per cent
Professional	27	10.9
Business	12	4.8
Farmer	1	.5
Secretarial	12	4.8
Skilled worker	19	7.7
Homemaker	163	66.1
Retired	13	5.2
Total	247	

The large majority of homemakers shown in Table 2 made desirable a further breakdown of statistics to determine the socio-economic status of these women. Table 3 shows the occupation classifications of the homemakers' husbands. The largest group, totaling about 40 per cent, was made up of farmers' wives. One theory regarding this fact was that the winter and early spring seasons, which are the slack seasons for farmers and ranchers, are the seasons during which many art activities flourish. These are the

seasons for adult education art classes and for art exhibits. Stretches of time for continuous work were available to the farm housewife. Wives of business and professional people formed the groups with the next highest percentages. Leisure time available to these women on the higher socio-economic levels must also be considered a factor in their high percentage standings.

Table 3. Amateur painter homemakers in regard to occupations of husbands.

Husband's occupation	:	Artists' husbands in each occupation	:	Per cent
Professional		32		19.4
Business		33		20.1
Farming		65		39.7
Skilled worker		16		9.8
Retired		18		11.0
Total		163		

Education. The general level of education among the amateur artists studied, as shown in Table 4, was higher than one would have imagined. The amateur artists' overall educational average was 13.4 years of school completed, or well into the sophomore year of college. The average number of school years completed for Kansas adults in 1960 was 11.7 years.¹ The amateur artists, then, was on an educational level which was almost two years above the average.

Number of Years Artists Had Been Painting. Information presented in Table 5 shows that 60 per cent of these amateur artists had been painting

¹U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census Population: 1960. General Social and Economic Characteristics, Kansas. Final Report PC(1)-18C, p. 174.

Table 4. School years completed by amateur artists.

Last completed school year	:	Number completing each year	:	Per cent
Under 12		20		8.5
12		94		39.6
13		19		7.9
14		29		12.2
15		21		8.8
16		38		15.9
17		10		4.2
Over 17		7		2.9
Total		238		

for less than ten years. Of this group, over half had been painting only five years or less. These figures tended to verify the previous contention that a sharp rise in the number of amateur painters had taken place in the few years prior to this study. Again referring to Table 1, which showed that the majority of amateur painters were in their forties and fifties, it follows that many persons did not take up painting until they were in the middle years.

Table 5. Number of years amateur artists have been painting.

Number of years painting	:	Number in each five- year division	:	Per cent
5 years or less		71		31.8
6 - 10 years		67		30.0
11 - 15 years		26		11.6
16 - 20 years		27		12.1
21 - 25 years		10		4.5
26 - 30 years		8		3.6
30 years or over		14		6.4
Total		223		

Origin of Interest in Painting. The desire to paint or express oneself graphically is often felt at an early age. This statement can be born out by Table 6, which indicates that 45 per cent of the amateur artists studied, the large single percentage, said that they were "always interested". The second largest group, 16 per cent, stated they became interested in art because of course opportunities. These people must have some relation to the first group. It is difficult to imagine this many persons enrolling in art courses if they had not been "interested" in art previously.

Table 6. Origin of interest in painting.

Reasons stated by painters	:	Number stating each reason	:	Per cent
Teacher influence		17		7.4
Always interested		104		45.4
Health reasons		4		1.7
Need of hobby		20		8.4
Course opportunity		37		16.1
Parental influence		14		6.1
Art exhibit		5		2.2
Acquaintance influence		27		11.8
Needed credit		2		.9
Total		230		

This section presents the data collected regarding the biographical, or personal backgrounds of the amateur artists studied.

The findings shown in this section include the following points:

1. Females constituted a large majority of Kansas amateur artists.
2. Over one-half of the amateur artists studied were in their forties and fifties.

3. Over 65 per cent of these amateur artists were homemakers, and both groups, the homemakers and those engaged in occupations, were generally in the middle to upper socio-economic levels.
4. The amateur artists studied were above average in level of education.
5. The majority of Kansas amateur artists had been actively engaged in art activities for less than ten years.
6. When asked how they had become interested in art, by far the largest single group said that they had been "always interested".

FINDINGS REGARDING ART TRAINING BACKGROUND AND THE DESIRE FOR FURTHER ART TRAINING

Findings Discussed

This section explores the information gathered from the questionnaire in regard to the formal art training these Kansas amateur artists had received, and their desire for further training.

Formal Art Training. The data indicated that, out of 248 responses, 193, or 78 per cent, had received formal art training of some type. The artists responding who had received no formal art training totaled 55, or 22 per cent. Table 7 indicates the type of classes attended or taken by those 193 persons who indicated that they had received formal art training. Since many of those responding had received more than one type of training, the table is a comparison of those types of training which attracted the largest number of artists. The largest group attended organized art classes,

Table 7. Types of classes taken by those who have had formal art training.

Type of training	Number having each type	Per cent
High school	48	16.2
College	67	22.7
Art school	24	8.1
Organized classes	121	40.9
Correspondence	19	6.4
Private lessons	17	5.7
Total	193	

which included university extension adult education art classes, private groups which hired an instructor, and classes affiliated with community recreation programs.

According to Table 7, art in college ranked high. This seemed to indicate a carry-over of a previous association with art into later life.

Amount of Training. In order to get a meaningful picture of the amount of training the Kansas amateur artists had received, a common denominator had to be found for purposes of comparison. The amateur artist was asked how many hours per week, for how many weeks, he had received training. These answers were then converted into actual hours spent in training situations. The hours themselves mean little, but the breakdown indicates a general pattern in regard to the amounts of training received.

Table 8 shows that the largest percentage of amateur artists had received less than 100 clock hours of training, and over half of these had had less than 50 hours. At the other end of the scale, about 20 per cent had had over 500 hours of training. This last group was generally made up of those who had had art in high school, college, or art school, on a semesterly or yearly basis, but were not professional artists. These large

blocks of hours spent in training would tend to weight a straight hourly average of all amateur painters, and make this average misleading. For this reason, an hourly average was not included.

Table 8. Total clock hours of formal training.

Hours of formal art training	:	Number of artists in each division	:	Per cent
1 - 50 hours		36		27.2
51 - 100 hours		22		16.5
101 - 200 hours		33		24.8
201 - 300 hours		6		4.5
301 - 400 hours		4		3.0
401 - 500 hours		6		4.5
Over 500 hours		26		19.5
		Total	133	

Amount Spent on Instruction. The amount of money that Kansas amateur artists spent on art training and instruction per year is shown in Table 9. According to notes and comments written on many questionnaires by those responding, these averages shown in the table covered a five to ten year period. The table shows that the largest percentage group of those who had had training had spent nothing for training during the last few years prior to this study. Their formal training, then, generally had come earlier in their lives, and much of the painting had been done on an individual basis during later years.

Lack of Instruction. The amateur artists studied were asked if they thought that the lack of qualified criticism and instruction had hampered improvement in their work. The replies indicated that, of the 220 responding, 165 or 75 per cent, felt that this lack of qualified criticism and instruction had hampered their work. Those feeling that their work had not suffered

Table 9. Amounts spent per year for instruction by those who had received formal art training.

Amount per year	Number spending each amount	Per cent
\$0	41	29.5
\$1-\$10	15	10.8
\$11-\$20	25	18.2
\$21-\$30	11	7.1
\$31-\$40	18	12.2
\$41-\$50	15	10.8
\$51-\$100	9	6.5
Over \$100	6	4.9
Total	140	

totaled 55, or 25 per cent. This indicated a definite lack of, and need for, instructional opportunities for these amateur artists.

Painters Having Access to Art Classes. When the amateur artists were asked if they had access to any art class in their immediate area, 132 of the 236 responding, or 56 percent, indicated that they did. Forty-four per cent, or 104, did not have access to a class at the time of the study.

Table 9 breaks down the above percentages according to east-west geographical thirds of Kansas. Of those persons living in Eastern and Central Kansas, about 64 per cent did have access to a class, and 36 per cent did not. In western Kansas, however, the situation was reversed. Almost 70 per cent of the amateur painters did not have access to a class, and 30 per cent did. This situation was no doubt due to the fact that the "cultural centers" are located in the urban areas of eastern and central Kansas, and that western Kansas is geographically isolated from these centers and the instructional opportunities they offer.

Table 10. Painters having access to an art class with regard to different sections of Kansas.

Section of Kansas	Number answering	Number having access		Per cent having access	
		yes	no	yes	no
Eastern	97	62	35	69.4	35.1
Central	83	53	30	63.8	36.2
Western	56	17	39	30.2	69.8
Total 236					

Amateur Artists Enrolled in a Class. At the time of this study, 73 per cent, or 180 of the 248 amateur artists responding to the question, were not enrolled in an art class. Those who were enrolled totaled 68, or 27 per cent. Since, as previously pointed out, 56 per cent of the painters questioned did have access to an art class, and 27 per cent were enrolled, approximately one-half of those who did have access to a class were enrolled

Table 11 indicates the type of classes in which those painters taking work were enrolled. The results showed that over half of these were enrolled in college extension art classes. This indicated that college extension art classes were playing the largest role in meeting the educational needs of these amateur painters at the time of the study.

Table 11. Types of classes in which those painters taking work were enrolled

Type of work being taken	Number taking each type	Per cent
College extension	36	52.9
Private group	22	32.4
Individual lessons	2	3.0
Correspondence	3	4.3
College	5	7.4
Total	68	

Painters Who Considered Participating in an Accessible Class. The number of painters questioned who were not enrolled in an art class at the time of the study was 180, as previously stated. When asked if they would consider participating in a class if it was taught by a qualified instructor, and was easily accessible, 152, or 84 per cent, said they would. Those who indicated that they would not totaled 28, or 16 per cent. These replies indicated the apparent need for more adult education art classes at the time of the study.

Class Instruction Fees. Those painters who had indicated an interest in an art class were asked how much they would pay for 60 minutes of class instruction. The results did not strongly favor one amount over the others, but the overall average, when compared with the cost of college extension art classes at the time of this survey, was high. A college extension art class, meeting for 14 sessions for 3 hours per session, cost twenty dollars at the time of this study.¹ The cost per 60 minutes of instruction in such a class, then, was forty-eight cents. The average amount these artists would pay, as shown by Table 12, even if the "going rate" was figured at fifty cents, would be much higher. These painters were willing to pay a comparatively high price for the opportunity to participate in art instruction.

Painters Interested in Obtaining College Credit for Classes. Although this question was intended for those who had indicated interest in a class, 200 responses were recorded, where only 152 had said they were interested in a class. Of the 200 responses, 96, or 48 per cent, expressed interest

¹Kansas State University, "Schedule of Fees", Sept., 1961.

Table 12. Money painters would pay per 60 minutes of class instruction.

Money per 60 minutes	Number in each division	Per cent
Under \$1.00	9	8.4
\$1.00	30	28.4
\$1.50	11	10.4
\$2.00	25	23.6
Above \$2.00	4	3.7
"Going rate"	27	25.5
Total	106	

in college credit for a class, and 104, or 52 per cent, were not interested. This percentage which indicated those not interested in credit was higher than the percentage of non-credit enrollees in Kansas State University Extension Art Classes at the time of the study. Only 22 per cent were enrolled for non-credit at that time.¹

Background in Art Appreciation. Table 13 shows the amount of studying or reading done in relation to the history and development of art, or art appreciation. The results showed that the largest group made only a small amount of study along these lines. That group of painters having done virtually no art appreciation study, and the group that had done "an appreciable amount" ranked next, and were about the same size. Those who had done "an extensive amount" of reading or studying along these lines made up only four per cent of the total. This indicated that most of the amateur painters studied, by not being greatly concerned with, or even aware of, different schools and trends in painting, worked in their own

¹Department of Continuing Education, Kansas State University, "Student Status Reports", Fall, 1961. Spring, 1962.

individual manners and expressed their ideas in their own ways. It also indicated, however, that for a greater understanding and appreciation of art, more opportunity for study along these lines was needed.

Table 13. Amounts of art appreciation study done by amateur painters.

Amounts of study done	Number having done each amount	Per cent
Virtually none	63	25.4
Small amount	112	45.1
Appreciable amount	62	25.0
Extensive amount	11	4.5
Total	248	

Those Feeling an Art Appreciation Study Would be Beneficial. The amateur painters were asked if they felt that they would benefit from a study of art appreciation. Of the 227 answering, 172, or 76 per cent, said that they would, and 55, or 24 per cent, felt that they would not benefit. This response, when compared to Table 13, indicated that, although most felt that they would benefit, not many had actually devoted much time to art appreciation study.

Interest in Courses in Art Appreciation. When asked if they would be interested in a course in art appreciation if one were offered in their community, 69 per cent, or 147 of the 212 responding, said that they would. Those not interested totaled 65, or 31 per cent.

As previously stated, the largest percentage of amateur artists had made little or no study relative to art appreciation. Further, 76 per cent of those answering thought that they would benefit from such a study. Since 69 per cent of those artists answering indicated an interest in an art appreciation course, one would be led to believe that the main reason that

so many had not studied art from the appreciation standpoint was that they lacked the opportunity to do so.

This section covered data concerning the formal art training that those Kansas amateur artists studied had received, and presented the findings regarding these artists' desire for further training.

The information obtained included the following points:

1. Those artists studied who had received some formal training totaled 78 per cent of all those studied.
2. Of those amateur artists who had received some type of formal art training, 43 per cent had had less than 100 hours of class instruction.
3. Of the artists who had had formal art training, 30 per cent had not spent any money on instruction during the last several years prior to this study. This seemed to indicate that much of the amateur artists' training had come earlier in life.
4. Of the painters responding, 75 per cent felt that a lack of qualified instruction and criticism had hampered their work.
5. Of those responding, 56 per cent had access to an art class, but only 27 per cent were enrolled. Over half of those enrolled were enrolled in a college extension class.
6. Of those painters not enrolled in an art class at the time of the study, 84 per cent indicated that they would have considered enrolling in a class if one with a qualified instructor had been accessible.

7. The amateur artists studied indicated that they would have been willing to spend at least twice as much per 60 minutes of class instruction as the going rate for extension art classes at the time of the study.
8. About half of the amateur painters interested in enrolling in an art class were interested in receiving college credit for it.
9. The majority of these amateur painters had made little or no study of art from an appreciation standpoint, but 76 per cent said they thought they could have benefited from such study. Of the artists responding to the study, 69 per cent expressed interest in a class in art appreciation.

FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY REGARDING THE ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES OF KANSAS AMATEUR ARTISTS IN RELATION TO THEIR ART ACTIVITIES

Findings Discussed

This chapter explores the attitudes indicated by the amateur artists toward their painting, the amount of time these people spent actively engaged in art activities, their preferences concerning choice of the different art media, and the different styles in which they painted.

Purposes or Objectives of Art Interests. The artists questioned were asked for information regarding their attitudes toward their art. The purpose of this question was to determine if these art activities were approached in a serious manner.

Table 14 indicates the categories to which responses could be made. According to the information received, persons who painted or were engaged in other art activities strictly as a hobby constituted the smallest group.

This indicated that, while many outside art circles considered amateur painting to be largely just a hobby, it was considered by the painters themselves to be more than that. Table 14 indicates that these painters approached their art activities seriously, and with a concern for constant improvement.

Table 14. Purposes or objectives of activities or interest in art.

Purposes or objectives	: Number in each : : category :	Per cent
Strictly as a hobby without much concern for a greater knowledge or understanding of the fine points of composition, color, etc.	40	16.2
More than just a hobby, but can't afford the time or effort needed to delve deeply into a study of art.	75	30.3
As a field of definite interest in which you wish to obtain a more thorough understanding of art, including composition, color, and form, as well as technique.	78	31.3
As a field of great interest in which you are willing to invest time and money in serious study toward improving your understanding of, and ability in, drawing and painting.	55	22.2
	Total	248

Time Spent Engaged in Art Activities. The artists studied were asked to estimate the number of hours spent actively engaged in art activities. There were 187 responses to the question, none of which indicated that the painter spent no time so engaged. It was possible that a number of the artists not responding to this particular question spent no time engaged in art activities, but, since no figures were given, such information

could not be included in Table 15.

Table 15. Hours per month engaged in art activities.

Hours per month	Artists in each hourly division	Per cent
1-5	32	17.3
6-10	43	23.3
11-15	24	12.6
16-20	26	13.9
21-25	9	4.6
26-30	19	10.1
31-35	2	1.0
36-40	6	3.2
41-45	3	1.6
46-50	5	2.6
50-100	16	8.3
Over 100	2	1.0
Total 187		

Frequency of Sale of Work. Table 16 indicates the findings of the survey regarding how frequently the amateur painters studied sold their work. According to the information received, over half of the amateur painters had never sold any of their work. This fact, and information gained from the rest of the table, indicated that most of the painters worked largely for their own satisfaction and pleasure. Any monetary return for this work was incidental to most.

Table 16. Frequency of sales of paintings.

Frequency of sales	Number in each group	Per cent
Frequently	19	8.1
Occasionally	44	18.7
Rarely	47	20.0
Never	125	53.2
Total 235		

Frequency of Exhibition of Work. According to the data shown in Table 17, the largest single group of amateur artists exhibited their work "occasionally". Since 85 per cent did exhibit their work, the fact that exhibition of work did play an important part in amateur painting seemed obvious.

Table 17. Frequency of exhibition of work.

Frequency of exhibition	:	Number in each group	:	Per cent
	:		:	
Frequently		25		10.7
Occasionally		103		44.8
Rarely		68		29.4
Never		35		15.1
		Total 231		

Increased Exhibition of Work. These painters were asked if they would have exhibited more frequently if they had had the opportunity. Of the 201 responses to the question, 152, or 76 per cent, indicated that they would have liked to exhibit more had the opportunity presented itself. This indicated a lack of exhibition opportunities available to the Kansas amateur artists at the time of the study.

Preference of Media Among Kansas Amateur Artists. An explanation should be given here regarding the method employed in determining the relative usage of the different media.

Question 2h on the questionnaire read as follows:

Below is a list of different art media. Please place a number in the blank according to the amount of work you do with each medium.

Ex: If the largest percentage of your work is done in oil, then number one (1) would be placed in the blank preceding the word "oil". If watercolor is used next frequently, place number two (2) in front of the word "watercolor". If a medium is listed which is not used, place a zero (0) in front of it.

___ Oil	___ Ink
___ Casein	___ Pencil
___ Watercolor	___ Charcoal
___ Others (specify)	

Upon the return of a completed questionnaire, the medium listed as most frequently used was assigned seven arbitrary points. The medium used next frequently was assigned six points, the next five, and so on down the list of seven different media. Other media which were specified were listed, and treated in the same manner. In no instance were more than seven media listed on a questionnaire.

After all information was recorded in this manner, the total points each medium had received were added. Table 18 indicates the results in terms of the per cent of points each medium collected, as compared with the total points for all media.

The results indicated that oil paint was the most frequently used medium at the time of the study, and that watercolor ranked second.

Money Spent on Supplies and Equipment Per Year. The amateur artists were asked to indicate the approximate amount of money spent per year on art supplies and equipment. Table 19 is the result of the data received in regard to the question. The table shows that the percentages for each amount listed were fairly evenly distributed. The largest percentages

Table 18. Preference of media by point system.

Media	:	Number of points each media	:	Per cent
Oil	:	1435	:	36.6
Watercolor	:	804	:	20.3
Pencil	:	561	:	14.3
Charcoal	:	445	:	11.4
Ink	:	333	:	8.5
Pastel	:	185	:	4.7
Casein	:	95	:	2.4
Others	:	62	:	1.6
Total points		3920		

Table 19. Average amount spent per person per year on art supplies and equipment.

Amount spent per year	:	Those spending each amount	:	Per cent
Under \$10	:	63	:	27.1
\$10-\$20	:	60	:	25.5
\$20-\$30	:	48	:	20.6
\$30-\$40	:	27	:	11.2
Over \$40	:	38	:	5.6
Total		236		

tended to be associated with the smaller amounts spent.

Amateur Artists' Access to and Membership in Local Art Associations.

Along with the increased art interest in the several years prior to this study can be noted an increase in art associations, guilds, or organizations. Out of 236 responses, 129, or 55 per cent of the amateur painters had access to an art organization of this type. Those not having access totaled 107, or 44 per cent.

Those who actually belonged to an art association at the time of the study totaled 90, or 37 per cent of those responding to the question. Those

who indicated that they did not belong to such an organization totaled 151, or 63 per cent of the 241 responding.

A comparison, then, of those who had access to an organization (129), as compared to the number who actually belonged (90), showed that 69 per cent of those who had access to an art organization actually belonged at the time of the study.

Artists Subscribing to, or Regularly Buying, an Art Magazine. The response as to whether or not these amateur painters subscribed to, or regularly purchased an art magazine indicated that 181 of 246, or 74 per cent, did not. Only 65, or 26 per cent of those responding, did subscribe to or buy art magazines. This tended to support the previous contention made in regard to art appreciation study, that these amateur painters were not greatly concerned with keeping up to date with the latest trends and happenings in the art world.

The Type, or Style, of Painting Done Most Frequently. The question concerning the five different types of painting described in the questionnaire, and also in Table 20, was asked in order to gain an idea as to the general trends of amateur painting. The results showed that, as a whole, the amateur painters of Kansas comprised a "conservative" group, compared to that type of painting being done on a nationwide scale at the time of this survey. Subject matter in the paintings was of primary importance to 92 per cent of the 236 responding, although there were at least some liberties taken with it. Only one of the artists responding painted in a completely non-representational manner.

Table 20. Type or style of painting done most frequently.

Type or style of painting	Number indicating each type	Per cent
As realistic as possible	59	25.0
Primarily realistic, but change motif to improve composition of color, line, or masses.	105	44.5
Simplify detail, but with subject matter still recognizable and of primary importance.	53	22.4
Subject matter subordinate to mood, feeling, composition, color, etc.	18	7.6
Completely non-representational, with subject matter of no importance, or completely non-existent.	1	0.5
Total	236	

This section covered data regarding attitudes and practices of Kansas amateur artists in relation to their art activities.

The information obtained included the following major points:

1. Art, to these amateur painters, was more than just a hobby, and these artists were willing to spend time, effort, and money to further this interest.
2. The average amateur painter spent approximately 20 hours per month actively engaged in art activities.
3. The large majority of painters seldom sold their work.
4. Most amateur painters exhibited their work occasionally, but would have exhibited more if they had had the opportunity.
5. Oil paint was the most frequently used medium, and watercolor ranked next.

6. Most amateur painters spent under thirty dollars a year for art supplies and equipment.
7. About 70 per cent of the amateur artists who had access to an art association, guild, or organization actually belonged to such an organization. Over 50 per cent of those responding did have access to such an organization.
8. Only 26 per cent of those painters responding subscribed to, or regularly purchased, an art magazine.
9. The Kansas amateur painters were generally "conservative" in their painting styles, and tended to hold the subject matter of a painting of primary importance.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this entire study has been to present significant information and data regarding the Kansas amateur artist. The use of a questionnaire appeared to be the most feasible method of obtaining this information from the large number of persons involved. The return of 25 per cent, or 252 of the questionnaires originally sent, was considered adequate to make this study valid.

Some of the more important findings concerning the amateur artists studied are as follows:

1. Females constituted a great majority of Kansas amateur artists.
2. The majority of amateur painters were in their forties and fifties.
3. The majority of painters were homemakers.

4. The large majority studied were in the middle and upper socio-economic classes.
5. The majority had been engaged in art activities for less than ten years.
6. Over three-fourths of the artists had received some type of formal art training.
7. Three-fourths of these artists felt that a lack of qualified instruction and criticism had hampered improvement in their work.
8. Those amateur artists not enrolled in an art class at the time of the study indicated that 84 per cent of their number would have considered participating in such a class if it had been accessible, and taught by a qualified instructor. About 50 per cent of these were interested in obtaining college credit.
9. This group generally was willing to spend time, effort, and money to further their art interests and abilities.
10. The average amateur painter spent about 20 hours a month engaged in art activities.
11. Most of these painters spent under thirty dollars a year for art supplies and equipment.
12. Most of the painters would have exhibited their work more often if they had had the opportunity.
13. Oil paint was the medium most frequently used by these amateur painters.

14. About 70 per cent of those amateur artists who had access to a local art association, guild, or organization belonged to such a group, but only 50 per cent of the total did have access.

15. Kansas amateur painters were "conservative" in their painting tastes, and tended to hold subject matter of primary importance.

This survey has indicated that, although most of these amateur artists have had some type of formal training, the demand for further training is great. As this demand for such experiences makes itself felt by adult education institutions, many problems are created for these institutions regarding the best manner in which to meet these needs.

Since the amateur artist of Kansas is generally a well-educated individual, the type of training which might be offered by any institution must be on a collegiate level of presentation. The fact that, to most of those studied, art was not just a hobby, but a definite field of interest, indicated that any training offered should be on a continuing basis in any community. The amateur artist, as he grows in ability and understanding, will want further training.

Financially, the cost to the amateur painter for any training probably would not be the primary factor in his decision to enroll. It is thought the primary influencing factor would be quality of instruction offered.

The basic problem for an institution offering instruction to the amateur painters of Kansas is one of finding enough qualified instructors who would be accessible to these people in their own communities.

This group was generally not well informed regarding the history of art, or of either past or present trends. The interest expressed in courses

in art appreciation, while not as great as that expressed in drawing and painting, should still be sufficient to warrant some adult education courses along these lines. It is doubted that a home study type of art appreciation course would be as successful as the group-meeting type. In a home study course, however, the problem of finding instructors would not exist.

The problem of providing these Kansas amateur artists with the instruction and assistance they desire and need is a complex one. Much careful study and experimentation will be required before a solution is found.

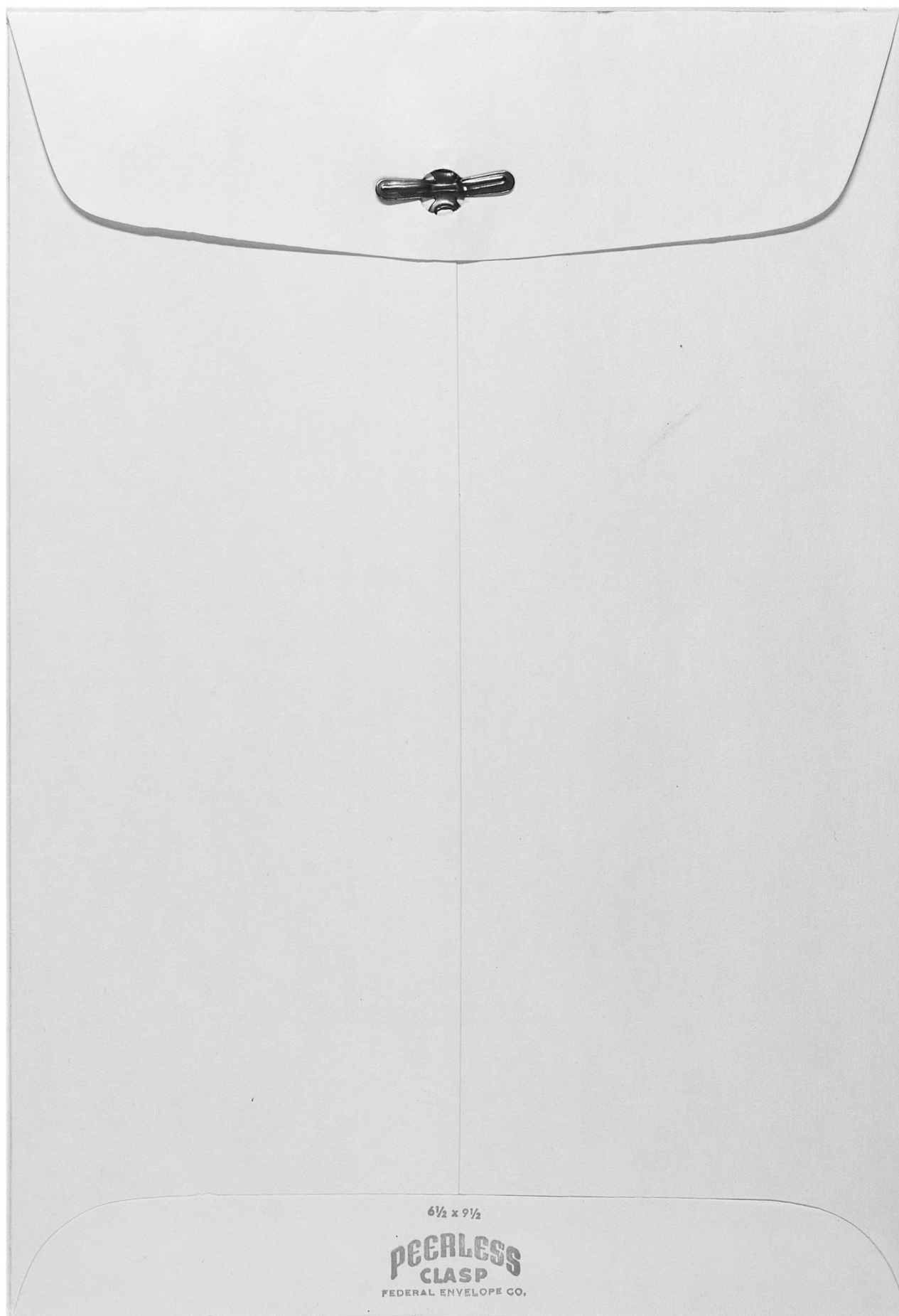
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to acknowledge the valuable aid rendered by Dr. John F. Helm, as the major instructor, and to extend appreciation to him and to Mr. Thomas Averill of the Department of Continuing Education who aided in drafting the questionnaire.

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APPENDIX



Kansas State University

Manhattan, Kansas

Department of Architecture and Allied Arts
Seaton Hall

All Amateur Artists in Kansas

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We are appealing to you for some assistance. One of our graduate students, Mr. Michael Williamson, is working on his thesis, which we hope will point out your needs, desires and art background as well as that of other amateur artists in the state. Mr. Williamson, who is presently art instructor in the Wellington High School, expects to complete his master's degree this summer. The attached questionnaire is being sent to quite a number of individuals. We hope that you will help us by answering. Information received will be analyzed and compiled for this thesis.

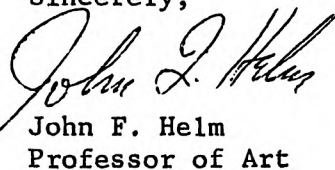
The number of Kansans who, like yourself, draw and paint for sheer pleasure and satisfaction is anyone's guess. Indications are that there are more like you than anyone knows. We would like to know more about you and other amateur artists. This information may make it possible for us to better understand your needs and desires. We hope that you will be able to receive more assistance through our University Extension, with better exhibition opportunities and even by mutual associations.

Please fill out this questionnaire and mail to:

Mr. Michael Williamson
700 West 22nd Street
Wellington, Kansas

With many thanks and kindest regards, I remain

Sincerely,


John F. Helm
Professor of Art

JFH:pw
Enclosure

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer each of the following questions to the best of your ability. If a question does not apply to you, just skip it and proceed to the next one.

1. Name _____ Mr. Mrs. Miss
Last First Middle
Initial (circle)
2. Address _____ Age _____
No. Street City
3. Occupation _____
If homemaker, also list husband's occupation _____
4. Circle last year of school completed.
12345678 9 10 11 12 1234567 Degrees granted _____
Elem. High School College Major _____
5. Approximately how many years have you been painting? _____ years
6. How did you happen to become interested in painting?

7. Have you ever had any formal art training?
(check answer)
☐ No
☐ High School
☐ College
☐ Art School
☐ Organized art classes
☐ Others (specify) _____
8. If you have had formal art training, how many hours per week for how many weeks?
_____ hours per week for _____ weeks
9. Do you feel that a lack of qualified instruction and criticism hampers improvement in your work?
☐ Yes
☐ No
10. Do you now have access to any art classes in your immediate area?
☐ Yes
☐ No
11. Are you now enrolled in an art class of any kind?
☐ Yes
☐ No
If you are, what type of class is it?

12. If you are not enrolled in an art class presently, would you consider participating in such a class if it were taught by a qualified instructor, and easily accessible?
- ☐ Yes
☐ No
13. If you are interested in an art class in your vicinity, how much would you be willing to pay per 60 minutes of class instruction?
- _____
14. Would you be interested in obtaining college credit hours for such a course?
- ☐ Yes
☐ No
15. Approximately how much money do you spend per year, on the average, for art instruction?
(Please list approximate figure) _____
16. How much studying have you done relative to the history and development of art (art appreciation)?
- ☐ Virtually none
☐ A small amount
☐ An appreciable amount
☐ An extensive amount
17. Do you feel that you would benefit from a study of art appreciation? (History, schools of painting, etc.)
- ☐ Yes
☐ No
18. Would you be interested in a course in art appreciation if one were offered in your vicinity?
- ☐ Yes
☐ No
19. Which of the following reasons best describes the purpose or objective of your activities and interest in art?
- ☐ A. Strictly as a hobby without much concern for a greater knowledge or understanding of the finer points of composition, color, etc.
- ☐ B. More than just a hobby, but can't afford the time or effort needed to delve deeply into a study of art.
- ☐ C. As a field of definite interest in which you wish to obtain a more thorough understanding of art, including composition, color, and form, as well as technique.
- ☐ D. As a field of great interest in which you are willing to invest time and money in serious study toward improving your understanding of and ability in drawing and painting.
20. On the average, how many hours per month would you say you spend actively engaged in art activities?
- _____ hours per month

21. How often do you sell your paintings?

- ☐ Frequently
☐ Occasionally
☐ Rarely
☐ Never

22. How often do you exhibit your work?

- ☐ Frequently
☐ Occasionally
☐ Rarely
☐ Never

23. Would you exhibit more often if you had the opportunity?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

24. Below is a list of different art media. Please place a number in the blank according to the amount of work you do with each medium.

Ex: If the largest percentage of your work is done in oil, then number one (1) would be placed in the blank preceding the word "oil". If watercolor is used next frequently, place number two (2) in front of the word "watercolor". If a medium is listed which you do not use, place a zero (0) in front of it.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oil | <input type="checkbox"/> Ink |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Casein | <input type="checkbox"/> Pencil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watercolor | <input type="checkbox"/> Charcoal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others(specify) _____ | |

25. Approximately how much money, on the average, do you spend per year on art supplies and equipment?

- ☐ under \$10
☐ \$10-\$20
☐ \$20-\$30
☐ \$30-\$40
☐ over \$40

26. Is there a local art association, guild, or similar organization in your vicinity?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

27. Do you belong to a local art association, guild, or similar organization?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

28. Do you subscribe to, or regularly buy, any art magazine?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

29. Check below the type of work you do most frequently.

- ☐ As realistic as possible.
- ☐ Primarily realistic, but change motif to improve composition of color, line, or masses.
- ☐ Simplify detail, but with subject matter still recognizable, and of primary interest.
- ☐ Subject matter subordinate to mood, feeling, composition, color, etc.
- ☐ Completely non-representational, with subject matter of no importance, or completely non-existent.

30. If you know of others who are interested in art, and who have not received a questionnaire, would you please note the names and addresses for us?

A STUDY OF SOME ASPECTS OF INTEREST IN ART IN
RURAL AND URBAN AREAS IN KANSAS

by

MICHAEL M. WILLIAMSON

B. S., Kansas State University
of Agriculture and Applied Science, 1956

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Architecture and Allied Arts

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1962

The purpose of this study was to gather and compile information relative to the amateur artist in Kansas. The rise in art interest by the layman, and the requests to educational institutions for assistance in furthering this art interest, pointed up the need for information as to the backgrounds, needs and desires of these amateur artists.

Questionnaires were sent to one thousand amateur artists in Kansas. The return of 252 questionnaires was judged adequate to make the study valid.

The results showed that the majority of the amateur painters were female, mostly housewives in their forties and fifties. They were in the middle to upper socio-economic levels, and had been painting for less than ten years.

Three-fourths had received some type of formal art training, but felt that the lack of qualified instruction and criticism hampered their work. Over 80 per cent would consider participating in an accessible art class if it was taught by a qualified instructor.

Those studied painted about 20 hours a month, and were willing to spend time, effort, and money to further their art interests. They worked most frequently with oil paints, spent under thirty dollars a year for supplies and equipment, and would have liked to exhibit more frequently.

The Kansas amateur artist was "conservative" in painting tastes, and tended to hold subject matter of primary importance.

In order to meet the needs and desires of these artists toward the furthering of their art interests, adult education institutions are faced with many problems. These institutions must find qualified instructors, develop drawing and painting and art appreciation courses, and offer these courses to the amateur artists in their own communities.