

**A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL GESTALTS:
AN INTUITIVE READING IN HARLAN COUNTY, KY**

by

Elizabeth Joan Fox

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APPROVED:

Dr. Patrick A. Miller, Chairman

Professor Dean R. Bork

Dr. Jean Haskell Speer

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(ABSTRACT)

This thesis outlines and undertakes a phenomenological investigation of dwelling in Harlan County, Kentucky, which is located in the central Appalachian coal region. After comparing the phenomenological method of inquiry to other methods of landscape evaluation, this method proved to be a useful tool for understanding dwelling, a concept that is difficult to define or pinpoint through the other methods. Experiencing the front yards of homes in this county was deemed an appropriate vehicle for undertaking this study.

Empirical findings, derived from the phenomenological method of inquiry, were used to elucidate the emergence of patterns concerning dwelling. A conserver pattern emerged from the patterns observed. This conclusion is used to support the recommendation that phenomenological investigations be used in the classroom to aid students in the process of the reading the landscape for clues to more appropriate design decisions for dwelling.

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.. I would like to thank the Olivers for letting me live at Trossachs and renovate Thornhill.

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Figure 1. "To see is to forget the name of the thing one sees". Paul Valery

INTRODUCTION

Our human landscape is our unwitting autobiography, reflecting our tastes, our values, our aspirations, and even our fears, in tangible, visible form. We rarely think of landscape that way, and so the cultural record we have "written" in the landscape is liable to be more truthful than most autobiographies because we are less self-conscious about how we describe ourselves. Grady Clay has said it well: 'There are no secrets in the landscape.' All our cultural warts and blemishes are there, and our glories too; but above all, our ordinary day-to-day qualities are exhibited for anybody who wants to find them and knows how to look for them (Lewis, 1979, p.12).

The arrangement and decoration of objects within the front yard manifest regional characteristics and cultural patterns, just as the thoughts and behaviors of a person exhibit the actions and patterns of a larger family. The approach for testing this hypothesis is to develop a potential method of inquiry based on the philosophy of Phenomenology(*)¹ that is grounded in the thinking and writings of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. The premise for this study is that every person uses objects and surrounds himself/herself with these objects revealing personal and social patterns of behavior.

The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole, and to other individuals within that process (Mead, 1934, p. 135).

¹ the * identifies a word that is defined in the glossary.

The question posed in this thesis is: is it possible to identify and assess these patterns of the home, through a phenomenological investigation, to come to an understanding of the meaning of dwelling (*) and daily living in Appalachia?

Dwelling is not primarily inhabiting but taking care of and creating that space within which something comes into its own and flourishes. Dwelling is primarily saving, in the older sense of setting something free to become itself, what it essentially is ...Dwelling is that which cares for things so that they essentially presence and come into their own... (Heidegger, in Devall, 1985, p. 98).

We display objects to define our sense of place and to express the past and pride in a situation or location. Therefore, by observing people engaged in organizing surroundings, displaying physical objects, and developing attitudes toward the physical world, we can draw inferences about the relationship between the phenomenon of yard art and the cultural patterns of a community. The study area for this project is Harlan County, Kentucky, which is located in the central Appalachian² coal region of southeastern Kentucky (see figures 2 & 3).

² Appalachia is usually considered to consist of West Virginia and portions of eleven other states: New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, and Georgia. The Central Appalachian coal region is most often defined as including sixty counties in eastern Kentucky, northern Tennessee, southwestern Virginia, and southern West Virginia.

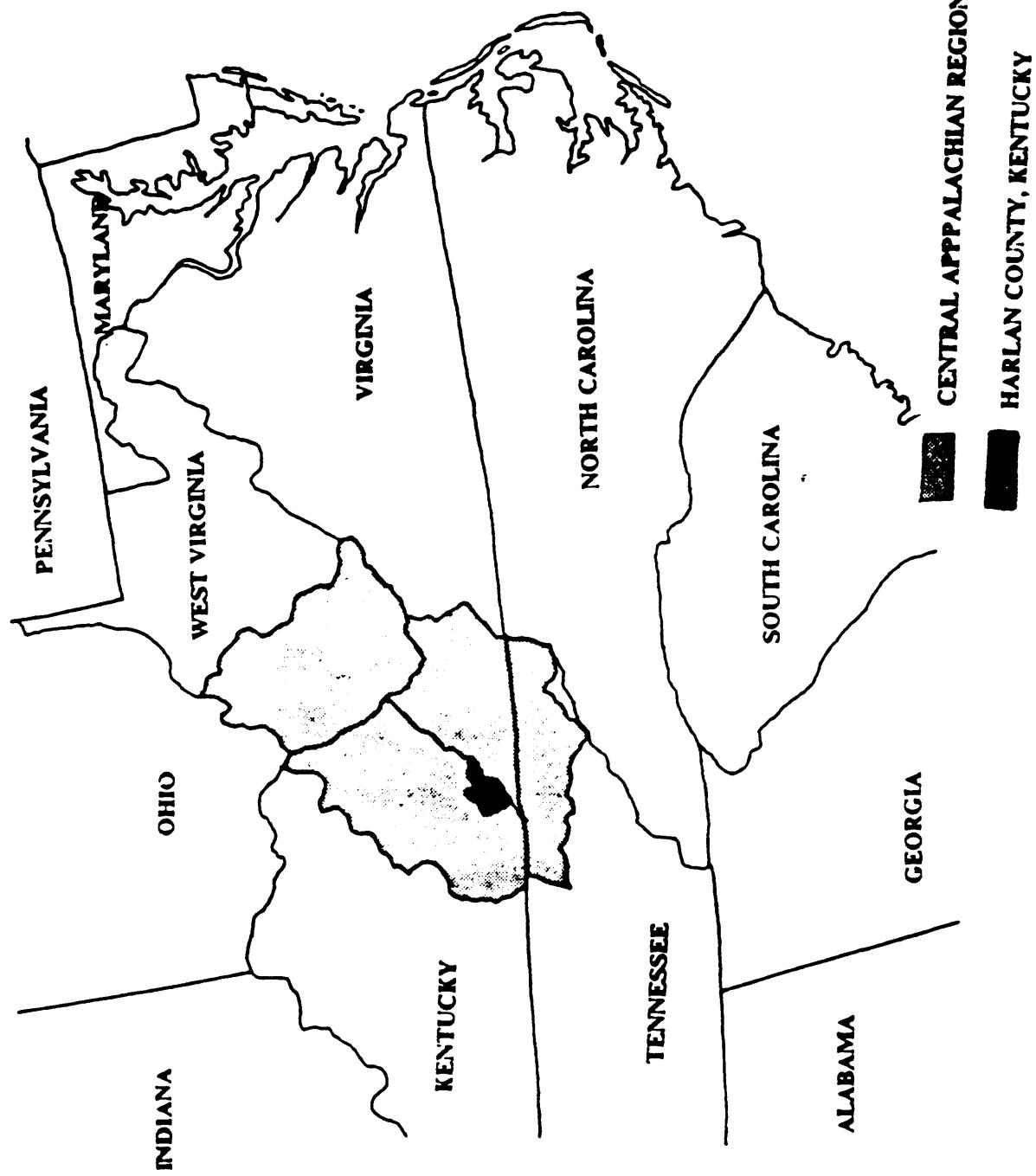


Figure 2. Central Appalachian Region

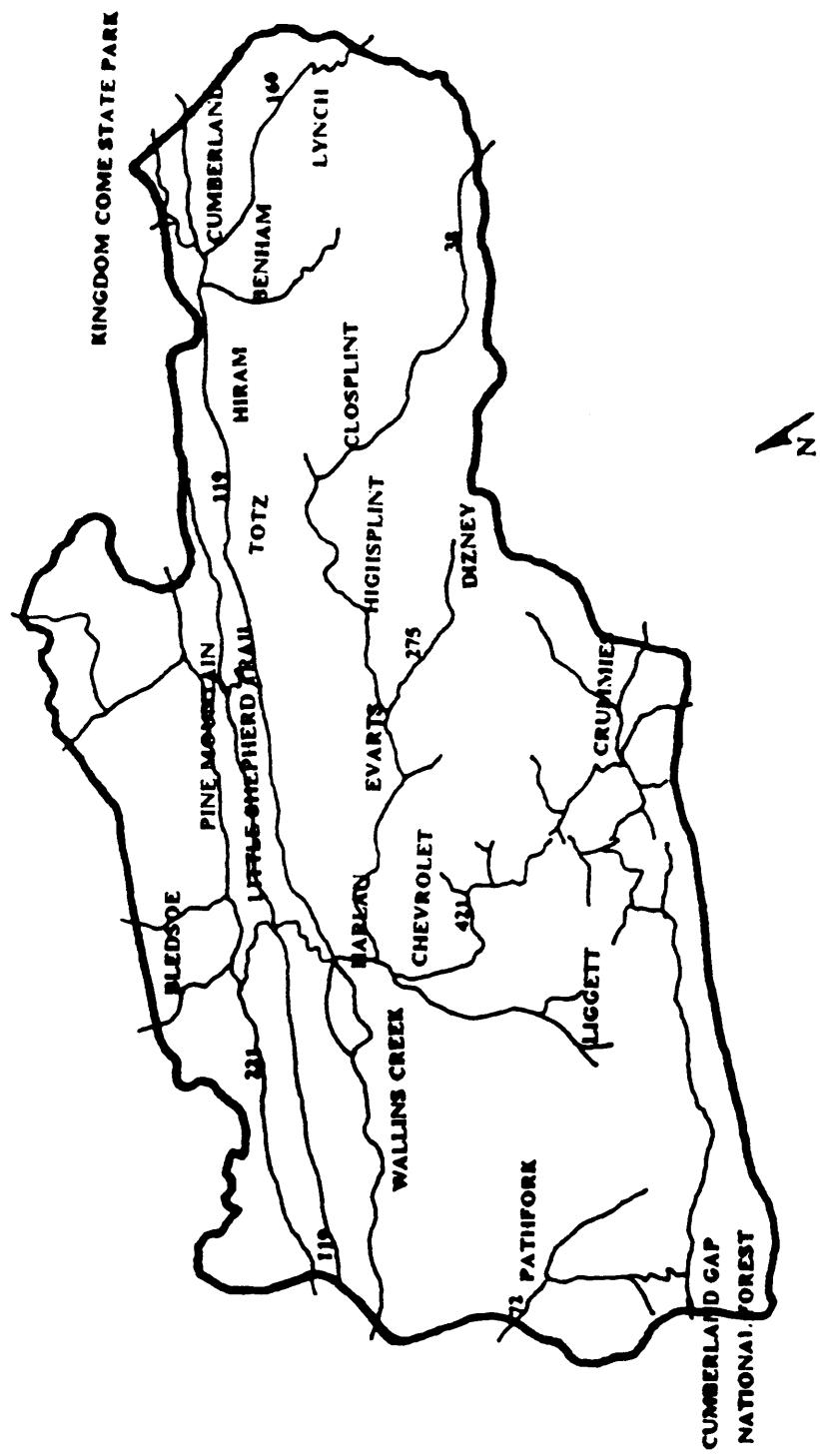


Figure 3. Harlan County, Kentucky

J.H. van der Berg said: "Who wants to become acquainted with man should listen to the language spoken by the things of his existence" (1955, p.32). This study deals with material culture (*) and can be further defined as the study of things. These things have been largely unrecorded. The image, type, quality, and expense of things can indicate economic, social, cultural, political, and sexual ideologies which, in fact, are largely unrecorded by society. Culture, as a combination of these things, incorporates all aspects of life: behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, and values of a person and the community. Through an examination of the material culture found in yards, I am attempting to trace patterns of daily living in Harlan County.³

If we can create a language with which to speak of the way we experience the front yards of homes in Harlan County, we may be able to add to the understanding of the significance of dwelling, both as a physical and experiential phenomenon. "Once you realize that the only thing which matters is the reality of the situation..., and not your images of it; you are able to relax, and allow the patterns of the language to combine themselves freely in your mind, without trying to impose an artificial image on their combination" (Alexander, 1979, p.540).

It is necessary to assume at this point, and prove in the end, that people in a community behave in certain publicly and morally accepted ways, and that these levels of behavior can be broken down to the structure of the home life within a community and further broken down to a minimal element of being which is the object of investigation. The phenomena for this study are the care and attention found in the residents' decoration of their front yard.

Do these activities of decorating the yard and defining dwelling point to wider patterns of meaning in regard to people's relationships with place and environment? Do such experiences of daily living, for example, say something about feeling responsible and caring for a place? About the essential nature of spatial behavior? About the relation between community and place? About improving

³ For further information on the study of material culture the reader is directed to Deetz (1977), and Bronner (1985,1986).

places, so they might become more satisfying and liveable environments, both humanly and ecologically?

Person-Place Bond

A satisfying human existence involves links with the locality in which one chooses to live. A sense of personal satisfaction and a sense of community are both inescapably grounded in place. Yet, there is a fundamental contrast between the insider's ways of experiencing place and the outsider's conventional ways of describing them. We need to think about places in the context of two reciprocal movements that can be observed among most living forms; home and horizons of reach outward from that home. For this project the horizon of reach is the front yard.

Experientially it seems that people are bound to a locality. So we need to focus on people's day-to-day experiences and behaviors associated with places, spaces, and environments in which they live and move. Our search is for basic patterns that epitomize human behavioral and experiential relationships with the everyday world through examination of the front yard.

What is the nature of everyday activities in space? Psychologists, sociologists, geographers, and planners have helped establish an interdisciplinary field that has been called environmental psychology, environmental sociology, human ethology, and behavioral geography (Seamon, 1979, p.17). They have explored such themes as spatial behavior, territoriality, place preference, attitudes toward nature, and the physical environment. This research reflects a strong need both by social sciences and design professions to understand the structures and processes that underlie a person's or group's environmental behavior.

Much of social science in the last several decades seems to suppose that people are now easily able to transcend physical space and environment because of advances in technology and science.

The communities with which he associates and to which he belongs are no longer only the communities of place to which his ancestors were restricted; Americans are becoming tied to various interest communities rather than to place communities (Webber, 1970, p.536).

Scholars speak about a growing sense of homelessness and alienation (Yancey, 1971). They speak of people's increased disrespect for communities and the natural environment. A phenomenological perspective indicates that this deepening malaise may have partial roots in the growing rupture between people and place.

Understanding the person-place bond has threefold value:

1. It fosters a growing interest in the essential nature of our own day-to-day dealings with environments and places in which we move and live.
2. Such understanding provides a tool whereby environmental designers and policy makers might discover a new perspective or approach for tackling projects and plans for specific places and environments.
3. This understanding might serve as a framework around which concerned people living in a specific place can ask questions in regard to how they themselves might make that place a more satisfying human environment.

So, how can we go about reading and understanding the common landscape of the home and come to an understanding of the person-place bond?

Cosmography (*)

In trying to read and assess the landscape, we can ally ourselves with:

1. A scientific or positivist rationale (e.g., Schaefer, 1953; Bunge, 1966),

2. A perceptual orientation derivative of psychology (e.g., Saarinen, 1969; Downs, 1970),
3. A phenomenological or humanistic orientation (e.g., Relph, 1970; Tuan, 1971; Buttiner, 1974; Relph, 1976; Seamon, 1979), or
4. An historical or idealist tradition (e.g., Sauer, 1925).

There is little or no agreement on a stance that will encompass the largely physical background of the study of daily living, satisfy demands for the explanation of events in the life-world (*) by the derivation of laws and theoretical principles, and still serve as a framework for more recent phenomenological investigations of such topics as dwelling, encounter, and sense of place (Entrikin, 1977).

This poses a number of questions: is the goal of studying the patterns of place to explain events or to understand events in a wider context? What exactly do we do when we study place? Does this study have an independent, theoretical origin from other methods of inquiry? I suggest that the role of landscape architects in reading a place is the interpretation of a place: the comprehension of meanings openly expressed by signs and symbols, as well as those meanings that are only implicit in the place taken as a whole.

Outline of the Process

At this point it may be worthwhile to set aside other questions concerning the relationship of patterns and meaning until later. There is no neutral ground here. To understand how I see, you must understand how I mean something in my language. So here is how I plan to go about seeing and recording the experience of the phenomena of decorations in the front yard and analyzing the patterns that evolve from an intuitive reading in Harlan County.

The introduction presents the hypothesis for this project: the arrangement and decorations of objects within the front yard manifest regional characteristics and cultural patterns. There are many ways for investigating this premise. I have chosen to study the phenomenon of yard decoration, phenomenologically.

The Evaluation of Landscape Assessment Models chapter is an effort to contribute to the body of knowledge of landscape assessment by compiling a list of models currently used in the field. This chapter is divided into four sections, separating the models based on the method of assessment that they employ: ecological, visual, or interpretive. Each of the models is evaluated based on the criteria of reliability, sensitivity, validity, and utility. In the conclusion of this chapter, issues concerning social space, and housing and identity are examined. The purpose of this thesis is to develop a potential method of inquiry, through gathering and assessing the patterns in the landscape phenomenologically. There are several problems associated with evaluating this model by traditional means and they will be discussed later. If a method is to be used then it must be evaluated so that one can determine if it is the best method to use.

The Method section discusses issues in the field of Phenomenology and defines and delineates the steps of the phenomenological investigation. Through a process of simultaneous perception, I attempt to draw the reader into the investigation of the phenomena of decorations in the front yards of homes. The following section leads into a discovery and analysis of the patterns that emerge from the investigation. A number of issues are investigated: what is yard art in Harlan County? What is the relevance of the phenomenon? Why is the yard a better place to search for patterns of dwelling in a community?

In the Conclusion section, I will pose further questions for research in this field, question the importance of phenomenology for landscape architects, both academically and professionally, and discuss environmental hermeneutics, an alternative method for undertaking a project such as this investigation. I have included a glossary in this thesis to define the terms that are pertinent to this investigation.

EVALUATION OF LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT MODELS

Among designers there is a search for some consistent standard by which we can assess environments, what is being done to them, and how we exist within them. The measurement of public opinion is a popular technique, as is the inventory of the physical landscape. Beyond the general recognition that certain landscapes are more visually attractive than others, no consensus exists on the relevant focus for the significance of dwelling in the environment and the different acts of interpretation that it demands.

This paper addresses itself to that manifold challenge. First, it summarizes several landscape assessment models. This discussion is by no means conclusive because the field is very active and new issues and methods appear frequently. This classification is useful in providing an overview of the options and methods available for reading the landscape and in identifying common and distinguishing features of the various techniques. A method must not only provide reliable and sensitive measures, but the measure must reflect changes in the property that the system purports to measure. This criterion for validation has a high intuitive appeal: the method of assessment should measure landscape quality but it is often very difficult, especially when the property being measured is not clearly defined. Validation of a landscape quality assessment method is a contin-

uous process. Perhaps the best that a model can hope to achieve is a consensus of researchers and practitioners that the model measures some landscape quality. Perhaps the most important criterion is the extent to which the measures of landscape quality can be integrated with other environmental quality measures (Arthur et al., 1977; Wohlwill, 1976).

It may be helpful at this point to come to an understanding of landscape quality. Landscape, as defined by Webster's, "is an expanse of natural scenery seen by the eye in one view" (1960, p.820). The definition of landscape quality, as it applies to the methods of assessment, is: any of the features that make something (a landscape) what it is: characteristic elements, attributes. This definition, seeking to determine the character of the landscape, amounts only to a procedure of identifying and labelling landscape types and elements or properties that define each type.

A second definition that may be closer to what this paper addresses is: the degree of excellence that a landscape possesses in displaying patterns that define the relationship between people and place. As long as quality distinction is to be made, neither definition (nor approach) can avoid basing landscape assessments on human, subjective judgments. (Daniel, 1976).

There are many landscape assessment methods in use. They vary in scope from site-specific models to regional-scale assessments. They are based on expert judgments and user-based models. For the purpose of this project, I have identified five conceptual models: Ecological, Aesthetic, Psycho-physical, Psychological, and Phenomenological A very similar classification of landscape assessment methods has been developed by Zube and his associates (Zube, Sell, and Taylor, 1982).

This chapter of the document is divided into four sections. The first section contains a description of the Ecological model. The second section describes and evaluates the visual quality assessment models: Aesthetic, Psycho-Physical, and Psychological. The third section, landscape interpretation, describes the phenomenological model. These models are described in general terms and evaluated according to the criteria of: reliability, sensitivity, validity, and utility. The final section is devoted to concluding remarks about landscape assessment models. The following table (fig. 4)

is an overview of each model and is included as a tool for comparing the evaluation criteria of each model.

MODEL AND PREMISE:	SCENIC QUALITY	Reliability	EVALUATION SENSITIVITY	ONC RITE RELIABILITY
ECOLOGICAL: a balance of natural processes is good	(defined by) environmental features	depends on consistency and accuracy of expert	difficult to determine if results are ordinal	gains validity if public perception is reasonable criteria
AESTHETIC: landscape can be described in terms of visual attributes that determine landscape quality	combination of visual attributes	depends on the consistency and accuracy of the expert	limited because of the categorical nature of assessment	relationship between visual features and scenic quality not determined
PSYCHO-PHYSICAL: person's perception of landscape quality based on objective measure of physical feature of the landscape	a mathematical relationship; landscape features and perceptual judgements of humans	extensive evaluation has been conducted	very sensitive to subtle landscape changes	use of public panels a compelling reason
PSYCHOLOGICAL: scenic quality is closely related to psychological dimensions	cognitive reactions feeling/percep. of people	reproducible based on perceptions	very sensitive reveal differences along many dimensions	not efficient now, but could be in the future
PHENOMENOLOGICAL: detailed, personalized assessments are the proper objective for landscape interpretation	intimate encounter between a person and landscape	sacrifices reliability for high levels of sensitivity	extremely sensitive	undetermined potential tool for education
				not efficient, but educational

Figure 4. Table of Landscape Assessment Models

Ecological Assessment Model

Ecological Model

This model is based on the premise that a balance of natural processes is good. Natural amenities are most often the object of the assessment and naturalness is frequently an important dimension of the evaluation. Methods based on the ecological model (e.g., Leopold, 1969; McHarg, 1967) place primary emphasis on naturalness. As a group, these methods tend to define the aesthetic quality of the landscape in biological terms, and they generally treat any evidence of human influence as a negative aesthetic factor. Implicit, in this model, is that human intrusions in the landscape are a distraction to the scenic quality of a site.

Assessments are usually carried out by an expert who is typically trained in ecology or some other branch of the biological sciences. The expert judgement is applied to the physical and natural aspects of the landscape, and is, therefore, considered more objective. Emphasis is on the classification and mapping of land areas in terms of their ecological classes or functions (e.g., riparian zones, grasslands, edges). Premiums are frequently assigned for areas that are classed as critical environments (such as bird-nesting areas) or as being high in ecological diversity. Human elements, ranging from litter to bridges and homes are typically assigned negative values. The impact of management or development on aesthetic values is assessed in terms of the degree of disturbance of natural elements. By the ecological model, landscape quality is anchored at the high end by pure ecosystems, undisturbed by humans. The low end of the scale is defined by landscapes evidencing disruptive, incompatible human developments. Distinctions between natural environments at the high end of the scale may be based upon ecological constructs such as diversity and uniqueness, habitat classification, or successional stage. Within human influenced environments, distinctions are based on the intactness and visibility of human impact. Some distinctions are based upon qualitative judg-

ments, regarding the appropriateness of a development, despite equivalent physical impacts (a hiking trail may be evaluated as having less negative aesthetic effect than a pipeline).⁴

Evaluation

Because the ecological model typically relies on expert judgment, reliability depends on the consistency and accuracy of the individual applying the method. Direct reliability testing could be accomplished by having a number of experts independently assess the same landscape areas, but this has not been done. Perhaps it is expected that biological classifications will be applied consistently by trained experts. This may not be a safe assumption. To date, there is no direct evidence of the reliability of methods based on the ecological model. The sensitivity of these methods is also difficult to determine because the results of the method usually depend upon categorical or ordinal classifications of spatially delineated areas. Also, applications have been tailored to specific areas or projects (e.g., the effect of a dam on a river system).

A major underlying assumption of the ecological model is that landscape quality is directly related to naturalness, which is defined as the health and diversity of the natural landscape. This assumption has not been subjected to any direct test. If public perception and aesthetic judgment are accepted as reasonable criteria for assessing landscape quality, the ecological assumption gains some support from the tendency of natural areas to be preferred over the built or developed areas (Brush and Palmer, 1979; R. Kaplan, 1975). On the other hand, Daniel et al. (1973) found that forest areas recognized as being managed were judged as more scenically attractive than forests in wilderness areas. Therefore, the ecological assumption requires very specific relationships, a direct correlation, of ecological diversity and landscape quality.

⁴ A good example of the use of this model is L. Leopold's "uniqueness ratio" based primarily on ecological measures of the landscape. He begins with an assumption that a unique landscape is of more significance to society than a common one. Where this assumption is based is unclear. Leopold and Marchand (1968) developed a uniqueness index of landscapes using river landscapes in several western states.

A major factor affecting the utility of ecological methods is the relative lack of sensitivity in distinguishing among alternative human developments. If the alternatives for land management are to manipulate or not manipulate the environment, the ecological models will almost invariably indicate against manipulation. When the real question is how to manipulate, the ecological models will favor doing as little as possible.

Visual Assessment Models

Aesthetic Model

The most widely used methods of assessing the landscape have been developed within the design tradition of landscape architecture. A basic tenet of the aesthetic model is that the landscape can be described in terms of visual attributes that are separate and distinct from the natural attributes of the site. The scenic value of the landscape is defined in terms of the combination of the visual attributes present.

These properties are defined as basic forms, lines, colors, and textures, and their interrelationships. Expert judgments on the variety, harmony, unity, and contrast among the basic landscape elements are the principal determinants of aesthetic value. These abstract aesthetic determinants are assumed to transcend different landscapes and to transcend individual and cultural differences among landscape observers. This analysis is assumed equally applicable to natural and human-influenced landscapes, individual landscape scenes, and regional landscape types, forests, deserts, and jungles. The abstract elements are taken to be aesthetic universals.

The aesthetic model approaches all landscape assessment problems in essentially the same way. Landscapes are first analyzed into their abstract properties, such as form, line, color, and texture. The relationships among these elements are then inspected to classify each landscape area or scene. The emphasis is upon classifying each area in terms of variety, unity, and integrity. This analysis requires formal training, so the method is almost always applied by an expert, typically a landscape architect.

The expert may use photography, maps of topography, or direct visual inspection, but it is left to his or her trained judgment to ascertain the relevant formal features and the interrelations represented by the landscape. A roughly ordinal classification results with monotonous landscapes in the lowest categories and landscapes exhibiting greater contrast and variety of features in the highest category.

The effects of human influences are assessed in the same formal terms, with the emphasis on the contrast or harmony of elements of the human effect with those of the natural surroundings. Again, the relative contrast or harmony must be judged by an expert trained to analyze the landscapes' basic forms, lines, colors, and textures. Contrasting structures may increase the scenic quality of a monotonous landscape. On the other hand, landscapes already exhibiting higher levels of variety and contrast may be damaged scenically by the introduction of a strongly contrasting feature.⁵

Evaluation

As for any expert judgment method, reliability of the aesthetic methods must be gauged in terms of agreement between independent experts or between different applications by the same expert. A straightforward approach would have several landscape architects independently assess the same

⁵ A good example of the use of this model is the Visual Management System (VMS) developed by Litton (1968) for the USDA. VMS is a methodology that has been developed with the express purpose of evaluating scenic resources within a land management framework (USDA, 1974). The method assesses and maps landscape quality through a categorical classification system. Landscape classification schemes are based on land character, distance from the viewer, and visual variety.

landscape and then compare their results. The literature reveals no instance in which such a test has been applied in large-scale studies. There have been several studies of agreements between landscape architects in the assessment of individual scenes, usually represented by color slides, with mixed results.⁶

The sensitivity of the aesthetic method is necessarily limited by the categorical nature of the assessment. Landscapes are generally classed into one of three general categories depending on their characteristics. These categories are roughly ordinal, yielding a high-, medium-, or low-type of scenic quality classification. It is clear that reliability and sensitivity should be assessed both in terms of agreement between landscape architects and in terms of the consistency of application to different landscapes. I could not find any example, in the literature on this model, that showed that these evaluation bases has been explored to any significant extent.

Unless an assessment method is sensitive and reliable, it cannot achieve an acceptable level of validity. Even if the aesthetic methods were found to be reliable and sensitive, however, there are several questions that must be addressed regarding their validity as landscape assessment methods. One question concerns whether the analysis of the landscape into a set of abstract elements captures all of the aesthetically relevant aspects of the landscape. That is, do form, line, color, and texture and their interrelationships, harmony, variety, contrast, unity, etc. exhaust the list of scenically relevant characteristics of the landscape? A related question focuses upon the nature of the relationship between expert assessments of these properties and landscape scenic quality. The model assumes, and the methods imply, that the relationship is direct: the formal properties determine the landscape quality. But variety can be added to the landscape in a way that is clearly not aesthetic and unity can produce monotony. Perhaps more complex qualifications are needed, such as unity

⁶ Arthur (1977) presented slides of ponderosa pine forest scenes to professional and student landscape architects. All observers saw the same slides and were required to express their judgments on a five-point rating scale. These factors led to a greater agreement than could be achieved in much less constrained 'field' situation, where individual experts assess relatively large land areas. Also, reliability was expressed in terms of rater-to-rater agreement on an individual basis. See Buhyoff (1981) for another example. The reliability was expressed in terms of overall (average) panel agreement. Feimer et al., (1981) conducted a study of this method which may be of further interest.

with variety. In any event, the relationship of these formal elements to scenic quality must be more precisely specified and tested.

Several studies provide evidence of the validity of aesthetic landscape assessments. All of these studies have compared expert (landscape architects) judgment of variety, or related dimensions such as unity or complexity, with general panel's judgment of scenic beauty. Color slides of landscape scenes were used in all of these studies. Correspondence between landscape architects' judgments and public judgments have ranged from moderate (Arthur, 1977; Craik, 1976; Zube, 1973, 1974; Zube et al., 1975) to very low (Buhyoff, Wellman, Harvey, & Fraser, 1978). Even these low levels of agreement were achieved only by comparing the combined (averaged) judgments of a number of experts with the judgments of groups of public observers.

The principal evidence of the utility of the aesthetic methods is that they are so widely used. Although the reliability, sensitivity, and validity of these methods has not been demonstrated, they do offer the potential advantage of economy. Rather large-scale landscape assessments can be accomplished by one or two qualified landscape architects. Perhaps the most serious question regarding the utility of the aesthetic methods concerns their validity. How well do these landscape assessments reflect 'true' values in the landscape? There is some question whether landscape architects agree with each other in their assessments and even more questions regarding the relationship between these assessments and public preference.

Psycho-physical Model

Classical psycho-physics (e.g., Fechner, 1860) sought to establish precise quantitative relationships between physical features and human responses. The emphasis was upon simple stimuli such as lights, sounds, or objects that were varied on a single dimensions such as brightness, loudness, or weight. The response of the observer was constrained to a simple choice, yes-no judgment based

upon the perception of the relevant properties of stimuli presented. Contemporary psycho-physical methods have focused upon articulating functional relationships for a broader range of physical stimuli and psychological responses.

Psycho-physical methods of landscape assessment often seek to determine mathematical relationships between the physical characteristics of the landscape and perceptual judgments of human observers. Landscape assessments are based on the reactions of persons representative of viewers to and visitors of the landscape. The relationships of interest are those between physical features of the topography (e.g., vegetation, water, slope, etc.) and psychological responses (judgments of preference, aesthetic value, or scenic beauty). Efforts may focus on a single dimension of landscape variation, such as area of insect damage to a forest (Buhyoff et al., 1981), or may encompass any landscape variations that contribute to explaining or predicting human, perceptual response (e.g., Arthur, 1977). Psycho-physical methods have been applied with increasing frequency in recent years, both as a research tool and in practical settings. In many cases landscape settings are simply scaled in terms of percent choice or average rating and their physical characteristics are described in general terms. The psychological (perceptual) response is usually limited to a single dimension, with scenic quality, scenic beauty, or landscape preference the most often employed. Other dimensions can and have been used, including perceived naturalness or conversely, evidence of human disturbance (Daniel et al., 1973) or the fitness of a development to its surroundings (Wohlwill, 1976).

The goal of the psycho-physical methods is to develop models that provide accurate and reliable predictions of persons' perceptions of landscape quality based on objective measures of physical features of the landscape. When this goal is achieved, the need for direct assessment of landscapes by observer panels will decrease.⁷

⁷ Daniel and his associates (Anderson, 1981; Arthur, 1977; Daniel et al., 1973; Schroeder & Daniel, 1980) have developed and tested a psycho-physical method for assessing the scenic beauty of forest landscapes. This method has been applied to measure differences in the scenic consequences of alternative forest watershed treatments, harvest prescriptions, and to evaluate alternative forest road alignments. The reader is directed to these sources for a better understanding of this method than this brief section will allow.

Of all landscape assessments, psycho-physical methods have been subjected to the most rigorous and extensive evaluation. Test-retest reliabilities within and between observers, consistency between response methods and precision of measurement have all been empirically verified on several occasions (e.g. Daniel et al., 1977; Zube, 1974).

Evaluation

Reliability of psycho-physical methods can be gauged in terms of agreement between observers. Most direct tests have compared average judgments of observer panels and have found high levels of agreement (e.g., Buhyoff et al., 1981; Daniel et al., 1977). The pattern of high reliability of measures is coupled with substantial levels of sensitivity. Psycho-physical methods have consistently been able to provide different landscape assessments for landscapes that vary only subtly. Scenic effects of different levels of insect damage, changes in the size or density distributions of trees, or variations in landscape management patterns have been successfully assessed. Recent studies have shown that the scenic effect of very subtle changes in atmospheric conditions, like air pollution, can be measured for a constant landscape scene (Latimer, Daniel, & Hogo, 1980).

The reliability and sensitivity of psycho-physical assessments and prediction models have consistently been confirmed. The central assumption of this model is that the aesthetic judgments of public panels provide an appropriate measure of landscape quality. Some would argue that more sensitive, more educated, expert judgments are valid indicators of aesthetic merits (Carlson, 1977). Given the high consistency that is generally obtained among diverse public groups in their assessment of scenic quality, there are compelling arguments for using public judgments as a basis for assessing landscape quality.

In the short term, psycho-physical assessments are not highly efficient. If every landscape or landscape modification must be represented and subjected to the inspection and judgment of panels of public observers, considerable time and expense is required. What makes this model useful in many

management contexts is qualitative precision, objectivity and a basis in public perception and judgment.

Psychological Model

Rather than defining landscape quality in terms of environmental features, the psychological model refers to the feelings and perceptions of people who inhabit, visit, or view the landscape. The emphasis is upon the cognitive and affective reactions evoked by certain landscapes. This approach to landscape assessment attempts to understand the reasons people react the way they do toward certain landscapes. A high quality landscape is one that evokes positive feelings, such as security, relaxation, warmth, freedom, or happiness. Low quality landscapes are associated with stress, fear, insecurity, or other negative feelings. The scenic quality of the landscape is generally viewed as but one of several dimensions of human response to views of the natural environment. Frequently, the aesthetic dimensions are found to be closely related to other psychological dimensions: a landscape that is judged as scenically beautiful also tends to elicit positive feelings of freedom, happiness, and a sense of well-being.

The conceptual and methodological base for this approach to landscape assessment is in psychological models associated with personality theory, and to a lesser extent, clinical and humanistic psychology. Characteristically, reactions to various landscapes are assessed by having observers rate each setting based on perceptual, cognitive, and affective scales. For example, landscape scenes represented in color slides might be rated on the dimension of size, openness, complexity, value, beauty, or stress. The number of observers checking each trait is an index of how strongly a landscape evokes that feeling. Sometimes open-ended interviews are used.

The assessment of each landscape may be presented in terms of its location in a multidimensional space (e.g., Dearinger, 1979) or as a "profile" of values along each dimension (e.g., Lowenthal &

Riel, 1972). Beauty may be one of the several dimensions along which landscapes can be systematically ordered. Interrelationships among these various dimensions may be investigated to define higher dimensions, especially potency, evaluation, and activity. For example, landscapes that are judged to be beautiful are also more relaxing, less fearful (or vice versa).

The relationships between perceptual, cognitive, and affective scales and the preference scale are used as a basis for inferences regarding the psychological features of the landscape that determine human landscape preference. The motivation for these studies is sometimes practical, as when alternative sites are being studied. More often, however, the goals are theoretical; the investigator seeks to discover and describe the psychological basis for landscape preferences.⁸

Evaluation

In a typical application of psychological methods, panels of observers view and rate landscape scenes or settings on a number of different psychological scales. Landscapes may be verbally described, represented by color slides or sketches, or visited directly. Each observer gives a rating (or scale value), for each landscape on each dimension specified. Reliability then can be assessed in terms of the consistency with which a given landscape is assigned the same or similar scale values from one observer to another. The level of observer agreement in the scaling of landscapes has generally been moderate to high. An important advantage to these methods, then, is that reliability can be determined and has generally been found to be relatively high.

Psychological methods may be viewed as highly sensitive in that they reveal differences among landscapes along different dimensions of human reactions. Because psychological methods use

⁸ A good example of this method is a series of studies by R. Kaplan, S. Kaplan, and associates (e.g., R. Kaplan, 1975; S. Kaplan, 1975; S. Kaplan, R. Kaplan, & Wendt, 1972). A basic method in these studies is to identify relevant perceptual variables in photographs of landscapes. Preference ratings are obtained from observers and analyzed for relevant perceptual dimensions. The object of this process is not only to identify and correlate perceptual dimensions of the environment, but also to predict landscape preferences with respect to those dimensions.

multiple observers and yield one or more quantitative scale values for each assessed landscape, their reliability and sensitivity can be precisely determined. This is an important advantage, since users of these assessments can know the degree of precision and confidence in the landscape values produced. Thus, if the methods were to prove insensitive for differentiating a particular set of landscape settings, at least this could be discovered.

Psychological methods, like the psycho-physical methods, base landscape assessments on the reactions and judgments of the people who experience and/or use landscapes. In this regard there is an important element of validity inherent in the methods. Although some will argue that the reactions of landscape users should not be the basis for landscape quality assessments (e.g., Carlson, 1977), few would argue that user preferences are not an important consideration. I agree with Carlson in that common landscape users may not be high in environmental or aesthetic sensitivity and that the aggregation of opinions expressed by common landscape users may lead us into greater triviality. But I also believe that when this method of landscape assessment is intended to guide management decisions for public lands, users provide an appropriate basis for measurement.⁹

The utility of the psychological assessments depends on how well the psychological dimensions can be tied to the physical features of the landscape on the one hand (Wohlwill, 1976) and to the relevant aspects of realistic human responses to the landscape on the other (Seamon, 1979). Even if this process has not been completed, the general links seem clear and the needed links can be identified. Thus, future work could be directed toward determining the needed relationships between psychological assessments and relevant environmental characteristics.

⁹ Ward and Russell (1981) provide another source of support for the validity of psychological methods. They found that landscape assessments are very similar, whether rating scales or adjective checklists are used, to express observer reactions. Daniel and Ittleson (1981), though, have shown some inconsistencies in the Ward and Russel report and may be of interest, if more information of the validity of this method is sought.

Landscape Interpretation Model

Phenomenological Model

Both the psycho-physical and psychological models place considerable emphasis on the role of the observer in interaction with the landscape. The phenomenological model places even greater emphasis on individual subjective feelings, expectations, and interpretations. Landscape perception is conceptualized as an intimate encounter between a person and the environment. The person brings many things to this encounter, including an environmental history, a particular personal context, a special sensitivity and openness to the environment, and a particular set of intentions and motivations for being in that place at that time. All these, the phenomenologists argue, must be taken into account in landscape assessment (Schultz, 1970; Ihde, 1971).

The principal method of phenomenological assessment is the detailed personal interview or verbal questionnaire. Often the individual experiences and impressions of the investigator are the source for assessments. Assessments may be conducted on-site, but are more often conducted by asking the respondent to recall or think about a place or a type of place. Responses are generally verbal, though sketches or cognitive maps may be used. Analysis is very particular and detailed, focusing on person-landscape-context complexes rather than on comparative assessments of different landscapes. Emphasis is upon determining the meaning and significance of various aspects of the environment to the particular person. Individual impressions may be inspected and their content analyzed in an effort to discover common features of landscape experience. Unlike psychological methods, impressions are rarely averaged or subjected to reliability tests.¹⁰

¹⁰ An account of phenomenological methods can be found in Spiegelberg (1965). The most extensive literature on applications of the phenomenological model is devoted to studies of developed landscapes (e.g., Lowenthal, 1972; Lynch, 1960; Saarinen and Cooke, 1971), or to perception of environmental hazards (Burton and Kates, 1964). There is some discussion addressing perception and experience in natural landscape settings (e.g., Tuan, 1974), but there are few specific studies seeking to assess natural landscapes. The work by Seamon (1979) is very suggestive of a phenomenological approach to landscape assessment.

Evaluation

Phenomenological approaches (Seamon, 1979; Buttmer, 1976) have largely sacrificed reliability in favor of achieving high levels of sensitivity. In effect, every landscape encounter is viewed as being so multi-faceted and so influenced by personal, experiential, emotional, and intentional factors that each encounter is unique. Consistency of experience is neither expected nor sought by the phenomenological methods. Instead, every person-landscape-context situation produces a distinct multidimensional representation that seeks to capture all the personal qualitative features of an individual's landscape experience.

Generalizations are derived by analysis of detailed subjective accounts of landscape experiences. These accounts may be collected by interviews (Seamon, 1979) with inhabitants or visitors to an area or, as in this project, by introspection of the investigator. Categories of landscape experience tend to be very abstract - such as inside-outside.¹¹ The analytic procedures and the conceptual categories derived tend to be highly idiosyncratic to the specific investigator, making it difficult to determine consistencies across different assessments.

As a system of measuring landscape qualities and characteristics, phenomenological methods may err by including too much. By emphasizing very particular personal, experiential and emotional factors, the visual properties of the landscape become only tenuously associated with landscape experience. Potentially, a use for these methods could be through educational programs designed to increase observers' environmental sensitivity.

Seamon (1979) used 'environmental interest groups' to study examples of everyday environmental encounters. Members of the group met twice a week to discuss their personal experiences. Discussions were directed by selecting topics, such as "movement in space," "centering," and "emotions related to space." The contents of these discussions were analyzed to determine different levels of environmental experience. Distinctions were drawn between "insideness" and "outsideness."

¹¹ See Seamon, *The Geography of the Life-World*, 1979.

Perhaps the phenomenological model provides a more valid conceptualization for landscape assessment than the other models that place more emphasis on the role of objective landscape features. There is no direct way to decide this issue. However, this method brings certain theories to light. The assessment of the visual landscape is an immensely more complex task than has been envisioned by the other models. Assessments must be sensitive to the details of the environment and must also take into account the very large array of individual psychological factors as well. I believe that landscape assessment is more complex than we understand and that landscape assessment may require much more psychological analysis of the observer and much less measurement and description of the landscape.

In many respects, phenomenological methods are not landscape assessment methods at all. They are not often used to provide measures or relative rankings of the excellence of various landscapes, and the results of a phenomenological analysis would be very difficult to use in deciding upon a particular land management plan. On the other hand, this method has been used extensively in comparisons of various regions of the world, cities, and particular built environments (Lowenthal & Riel, 1972; Lynch, 1960; Saarinen & Cooke, 1971). Furthermore, in the context of the natural landscape, many of the public's efforts to express the values they seek to preserve in the landscape have the personal, experiential flavor of the phenomenological analysis. Writings in this vein, as those of Thoreau, Muir, and A. Leopold, have been very influential in shaping Western standards of landscape quality. Thus, this approach should be considered in order to leave open as many options as possible at what is still a very early stage in the development of landscape assessment methods.

Utility of the Method

Phenomenological assessment of the characteristics of the landscape may be too sensitive to be useful. In many respects this method is analogous to a scale that fluctuates so continuously that no reading or recording is possible. When comparative evaluations of different landscape settings

are sought a phenomenological method may yield as many different assessments as there are combinations of contexts and observers of each landscape.

The efficiency of phenomenological methods is low in comparison to other methods, but low efficiency may be necessary if personalized assessments are taken to be the proper objective for landscape assessments. Also, assessments may have to change as observers change their experience with the landscape; in effect, no single assessment could be taken as final. There is philosophical and theoretical justification for this approach but practical implications for the public exclude this type of assessment on a large scale. Perhaps such assessments, in a research context, such as this investigation of an intuitive reading of a community, could serve to cross check other more restricted, but efficient assessments by helping to identify potentially important landscape-observer-contextual factors that might otherwise be overlooked. Probably the greatest value of these phenomenological investigations is the way landscapes are understood concerning matters of identity, experience and emotions. If nothing else it encourages us to preserve a wide array of different kinds of landscapes to encourage a breath of experience and understanding for the people who encounter them.

Conclusion

Many different landscape assessment techniques have been developed. Methods differ substantially in their details, but many can be related by common, underlying conceptual frameworks. The models discussed in this section are distinguished by their approaches to several issues in landscape assessments: the definition of landscape quality; the determination of aesthetic attributes of the landscape; the involvement of the observer and the importance of observer perceptions, feelings, and interpretations; and the relationship between landscape quality and other human social needs and values.

In assessing the landscape, all models acknowledge that the actual landscape plays some role, but each model characterizes the landscape somewhat differently. All models assign some role to humans, but there are substantial differences in the nature and importance of the human contribution to determining landscape quality. The first two models, ecological and aesthetic, place humans in a peripheral position, with landscape quality determined by the features of the environment. The psycho-physical and psychological models place humans in a more central position; landscape quality is determined by the effects of the landscape on people. Yet, each of these models characterizes differently the role of humans. The phenomenological model places humans as central to understanding their role, their values and landscape quality.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Researchers and theoreticians from a wide variety of disciplines have studied the meaning of dwelling in the world. Some have focused on visible behavior such as personalization and marking (Boudon, 1969; Hansen and Altman, 1976; Haumont and Raymond, 1975), whereas others have focused on historic aspects such as demographic and economic factors (Barbey, 1980; Gauldie, 1974; Murand and Zylberman, 1976). Still others have examined how dwellings reflect culture (Clerc, 1967; Heller, 1979; Verret, 1979). Underlying many of these perspectives is an interest in the subjective experience of dwelling and the role of the dweller as the subject who confers meaning upon the world.

Traditionally, communities and residential areas have been studied within the framework of land use structures (Muth, 1969). Norms and guidelines have been developed for the "rational" allocation of space and service functions throughout such areas (Harvey, 1970). Of late, serious efforts have been made to explore this problem from the viewpoint of the resident. Studies have attempted to explore the dynamics of spatial behavior in "micro-environmental settings" (Proshansky et al., 1970), and several design implications have emerged from such behavioral research (Sommer, 1969; Alpaugh, 1970).

Some studies suggest that there is an important relationship between physical design and social behavior (Rainwater, 1966; Yancey, 1971); others hold that little or no relationship is found between architectural design and social life (Gutman, 1966).

Meanwhile, we, landscape architects, are charged with responsibility for investigating or designing residential environments and comb through literature for insight into practical issues, often only to abandon it when we find traditional standards or political pressures better guides for action than research (Reade, 1969). We find ourselves constrained by a predominately Cartesian view of knowledge (*) and by a managerial perspective on life that this view has fostered. We tend to think in terms of systems, of states of being, whether on the demand side (interaction networks, behavior patterns) or on the supply side (building design, service networks).

Dwelling cannot be defined adequately in terms of systems or states of being. For life in residential areas involves a dialogue of behavior and setting, of supply and demand; it is thus essentially a condition of becoming. Such condition is seen to arise when residential communities engage in creative dialogue with environments, molding, re-creating, and eventually appropriating them as home.

Slowly it is becoming our house. With each new coat of paint, each box unpacked, each tile set into place, we begin to feel our presence in its past...We treat the house, the house which is slowly becoming ours, with some respect. We, after all, have moved into it. It may be our new house, but we are its newcomers...Yes, other families have settled here, other lives have been played out here. But now it is our time. We renovate, renew this structure, make changes. Slowly it is becoming ours. (Goodman, 1982).

In this existential view, we can no longer be considered solely as manipulator of supply; neither can the academician be seen as an investigator of residential/community satisfaction. Least of all can the citizen be considered passive to the social or technological processes. This view demands that all be involved in the process itself.

For such a joint involvement in the becoming of residential areas, a radical new education is needed. We need a framework for investigation and reflection that does not segment parts of the community as Cartesian practices have done. And we need an empathetic understanding of life as existential

reality, as lived experience. An existential view of livability challenges the traditional rift between theoretical and applied disciplinary orientations. It calls for a unified interdisciplinary approach to the study of environmental experience. Its essential focus on meanings of phenomena in lived experience radically questions the assumptions and premises on which "objective" scientific analysis is traditionally based, and openly invites subjective involvement in the reality to be investigated.

Observation and Interpretation

Following a framework suggested by Beck (1975), I argue that, as landscape architects, we might pursue our study in a context that demands that we be both actors in and spectators of the social world into which we inquire. As such, we are required to participate in two different kinds of mental events: 1) 'seeing' in the sense that we see an action to be meaningful to us in a commonsense fashion, and 2) 'seeing' in the sense that an observer or spectator perceives an action and is able to interpret it correctly - i.e., we are able to give an account of it.

While acting as a spectator of a particular event, we can interpret our seeing as possible clues to what is going on in the actor's mind; but obviously, we cannot bring the same conception to bear on the event as the actor can. Seeing, as an event for the spectator, is not the same as seeing for the actor. But, if our goal is to read the place, we must come to interpret this optical data. A question at this point is how does the landscape architect, as spectator, come to agree with the actor as to the meaning of a particular act?

In what sense can we be said to see the same things as the actors and yet not see the same thing? One way out of this dilemma might be to hold that in any real 'seeing', there is some 'brute data' or a 'given' that is embedded in the actual experience of observation and remains constant and unaltered. The 'given' then is that which should arbitrate between two different accounts of 'seeing' the same thing.

Common sense would indicate that there can be no such immunity to conceptual change: beliefs, mind sets, expectations, and, more importantly, language itself exercise an enormous role in determining the patterns of anything that is sensuously experienced. If the 'given' were embedded in a particular concept, such as decorating a front yard, and, if a language were available to exactly describe that 'given-ness,' there would presumably be no need for the actor to differentiate between decorating the yard and dwelling. They would automatically be dwelling for the spectator. The fact that they are not indicates that while for the spectator such decorating of the yard is merely that, for the actor the act of decorating the yard, when it is pointed out as such by the spectator, is more like a set of hypotheses such as follows:

1. People acting so as to place objects in the front yard are usually engaged in defining dwelling.
2. People are decorating their yard. Therefore, these people are engaged in defining dwelling in the world.

Moreover, there can exist considerable ambiguity in such sets of hypothetical statements and it is exactly within this ambiguity that the problem of meaning arises for the spectator. On the one hand, the actor 'sees' what the spectator sees, i.e., they both see the yard, but the spectator reports such an event to him/herself differently, since he/she not only categorizes but hypothesizes about the contents of the experience.

Crucial to this problem of ambiguity is that even given the same categories as the actors it is possible for the spectator to derive different hypotheses.

The upshot of this is that, even if observation is construed as categorized, hypotheses about these categories can be ambiguous. Second, if we are to begin to make any sense of this ambiguity we must drop the basic premise that the 'given' or 'brute data' alone is sufficient to differentiate between conflicting hypotheses.

In short, to get at the meanings inherent in different situations, we must consider that language itself is partly constitutive of the situation that we study. There is in this sense something very artificial about a reality that is construed as something 'given' along with a separate language in which to describe the 'given.' It is more likely that the 'given' (if it even exists) and its terminology are continuously bound together.

Phenomenology

This project differs from research on observation and interpretation because it makes use of phenomenology, a way of study that works to uncover and describe things and experiences, as they are in their own terms. Behavioral geography, Seamon's term (1979), conventionally begins with a particular theoretical perspective (territoriality, spatial cognition) and a set of definitions and assumptions (home ground, territory as a function of aggression). Phenomenology, in contrast, strives to categorize and structure its theme of study as little as possible. It seeks to understand and describe a phenomenon as it is in itself, before any prejudices or *a priori* theories have identified, labelled, or explained it. In addition, phenomenology strives for a holistic view of the phenomenon it studies and seeks to understand the interrelatedness among the various portions of environmental experience and behavior. "Phenomenology," writes Giorgi, "is the study of phenomena as experienced by man. The primary emphasis is on the phenomenon itself exactly as it reveals itself to the experiencing subject in all its concreteness and particularity" (1970, p.9).

Phenomenology explores the things and events of daily experiences. Keen explains: "Its task is less to give us new ideas than to make explicit those ideas, assumptions, or implicit presuppositions upon which we already behave and experience life. Its task is to reveal to us exactly what we already know and that we know it, so that we can be less puzzled about ourselves" (1977, p.18).

Seeing and Not Seeing

What is the hardest thing of all?

That which seems the easiest: to use your eyes to see what lies in front of them (Goethe, 1970).

If we are striving for defining patterns and cultural characteristics in Harlan County, then we must force ourselves to see sensitively and this requires a social context. The very act, though, of isolating elements for observation removes the most important and problematic aspect of the environment and the landscape, which is the integration of form in total context. Unless we can develop a method for seeing, understanding, and identifying the values by which to judge environments and the actions of man in creating those environments, we as designers, builders and planners will just muddle through. Pierce Lewis (1979, p.84) has developed a set of seven axioms for understanding the essential nature of man within the world:

1. The culture of a people is reflected in its ordinary vernacular landscape.
2. Most items in the human landscape reflect culture in some way.
3. Common landscapes are by their very nature hard to study by conventional academic means.
4. In trying to unravel the meanings of contemporary landscapes, history matters.
5. Elements of the landscape must be studied within their locational context.
6. Most cultural landscapes are intimately related to physical environments.
7. Most objects in the landscape do not convey messages nor their meanings in an obvious way.

Private houses and public places are meant to be seen. They have been decorated or landscaped for some sort of visual experience. As stated before, this paper deals with material culture that can be further defined as the study of things; so these things must be investigated in a social context, if we are to discover the patterns, that characterize the culture. But why is it the role of the designer or planner to look and unravel the meanings rather than the residents of the community, who as

Lewis says create a landscape of ordinary run-of-the-mill things that provide strong evidence of the culture (1979)?

As the English poet John Betjeman wrote: "Nature is kind, She causes her creatures to adapt themselves to their surrounding; to certain fish in the deepest part of the ocean She gives enormous eyes with which to pierce the watery deep. To the town dweller of today She has given a kind of eye which makes him blind to the blatant ugliness by which he is surrounded" (1971, p.14). If the residents can conquer this "blindness" they could see environments which are best ignored. Until one can recognize this selective insensitivity, commonly called a coping device, toward the landscape, it is impossible to discuss with them what is significant in the environments let alone understand or create places of value and meaning for the residents. The reason for this "blindness" and the decline of our environmental values probably lies deep within our technological society.

It is curious to see this "blindness" existing in the central Appalachian coal region where man's impact on the environment is so pervasive. There are areas such as a no-mans-landscape of vacant lots, unreclaimed strip mines, and exposed dumps which exist next to or nearby carefully attended yards and designed spaces. The residents seem "blind" to these places.¹²

¹² This observation is not peculiar to Appalachia; it occurs in our urban and suburban landscape as well. "In normal daily existence people are caught up in a state of affairs which the phenomenologist calls natural-attitude - the unnoticed and unquestioned acceptance of things and experiences of daily living" (Seamon, 1980, p.149).



Figure 5. Unreclaimed Strip Mine



Figure 6. Coal Tipple in Totz



Figure 7. Reclaimed Strip Mine



Figure 8. Downtown Cumberland

Understanding Dwelling

A cartoon in the New Yorker shows a man and a woman seated in a dimly lit bar. The man, in a suit, impresses upon the woman that "I've tried to express myself clearly, but for a truly definitive statement of me you'd have to see my new living room" (1987). This cartoon may serve to caution one concerned with dwelling and identity. We must recognize the rightful fit between personal identity and the home. Consideration should be given to the social nature of the self and the relative function of the house, in our case the yard, as a symbol.

To discuss the front yard, or place in general, we have to freeze the dynamic process at an imaginary moment in order to take a still picture. Traditionally, the observer who explores place speaks of housing, whereas the resident of that place lives the process of dwelling.

Whatever its source of explanation, literature on dwelling reveals several consistently recurring themes, and there are many dimensions to meanings ascribed to place: symbolic, emotional, cultural, political, and biological. People's sense of both personal and cultural identity is intimately bound with place identity. It is part of the fabric of everyday life and it's taken-for-granted (*) routines. In *The Poetics of Space* Bachelard, a twentieth-century philosopher, claimed that the relationship between place and personality is so intimate that to understand oneself a topoanalysis, the exploration of self identity through place, might yield more fruitful insight than psychoanalysis (1964, p.167).

METHOD

Up to this point, I have attempted to raise questions and draw links between an understanding of dwelling in the world and various assessment methods for understanding the landscape. An understanding of the historic development of phenomenology and a description of this method may be helpful at this point.

Immanuel Kant, 18th century German philosopher, coined the term phenomenology. He distinguished objects and events as they appear in our experience from objects and events as they are in themselves, independently of the forms imposed on them by our cognitive faculties. The former, he called, phenomena; the latter, things in themselves. Kant thought that all we ever know are phenomena. During the next generation of philosophers, notably Hegel, there was a movement to disprove Kant. Hegel defined phenomenology as the science in which we come to know mind as it is in itself through the study of the ways in which it appears to us.

In the middle of the 19th century, the definition of phenomenon was further extended until it became synonymous with fact or whatever is observed to be the case. As a consequence, phenomenology acquired the meaning that it possesses most frequently today - a purely descriptive study of any given subject matter. The changes described so far are all due to the extensions of the meaning of phenomenon. Frequently, it was recommended as a descriptive study that was to pre-

cede any attempt to provide explanation of the phenomena. But since Husserl employed the term in the early 1900s, it has become the name of a way of doing philosophy - using the phenomenological method. At the same time, however, the older sense of the term persists. Phenomenology is therefore used in two distinct senses. In its wider sense it refers to any descriptive study of a given subject. In the narrower sense it is the name of a philosophical movement. This thesis will deal with phenomenology in the first sense.

After an introduction and description of the phenomenological method, I will undertake a phenomenological investigation of environmental gestalts though an intuitive reading of the landscape of the home in Harlan County, KY. I will present the phenomena observed through a narrative account. A narrative description seems to be the best way to capture the essence of the phenomena studied for this thesis.

Introduction to Phenomenology

Traditionally, phenomenology has been practiced in three ways: the phenomenological description, the eidetic approach (*), and the hermeneutic approach(*). These three aspects do not completely capture the essence of the phenomenological method but they are the most widely explored (Spiegelberg, 1971). This project partakes of these three aspects and it is intended as a contribution to the phenomenology of dwelling.

Phenomenological description aims at retrieving through thought the original fabric of experience, the life-world that is assumed by our representations and by scientific knowledge. It seeks to intuitively discern various appearances of things for the subject. Take the experience of fire. Before I had ever heard any explanation about the phenomenon of combustion, I had already experienced fire in different situations in my own life. The phenomenological description of fire aims at grasping the various states or orientations that, in various situations, represent my encounters with fire. It

is through these various appearances that the essential or ideal meaning of fire is constituted for me. This means that any description derives from the intention to find out what is intrinsic (called eidetic approach) to the phenomenon and therefore to eliminate what is incidental.

Thus, the eidetic method, by asking what makes a phenomenon what it is, raises the question of its meaning or, rather, what makes sense in the phenomenon. It is precisely the uncovering of meaning that is the purpose of hermeneutics, which aims to reach the single or multiple meanings hidden beyond what is immediately given. Hermeneutics is based on the idea that phenomena and human experiences are not immediately accessible and therefore call for an interpretive reading. This is why language, for hermeneutics, is so important. This is especially true of the work of Martin Heidegger who undertakes a kind of phenomenology of words. His undertaking is particularly important for us because it deals primarily with dwelling.

It is language that tells us about the essence of a thing, provided that we respect language's own essence. In the meantime, to be sure, there rages around the earth an unbridled yet clever talking, writing, and broadcasting of spoken words. Man acts as though he were the shaper and master of language, while in fact language remains the master of man (Heidegger, 1971, p.176).

Heidegger's hermeneutics assert that the being's primal spatiality is antecedent to the formation of any concept or knowledge of space as it is studied in science (*), for space is neither a separate entity nor an external object (Heidegger 1958).

Understanding Phenomenology

What is obvious? It is that which is taken for granted and never spoken of as such; yet, the obvious everywhere and always guides and supports our culture. The obvious is that which we already agree - the base from which all action, individual and social proceeds. Since it is never explicitly discussed nor articulated, the obvious is the most difficult to identify, even though in a disguised manner it lies all around us. To uncover the obvious we must take a step back from the assumptions and attitudes that entwine us (Grange, 1977).

St. Augustine sets up the dialectic of knowing by stating that: "In order to find out, I must in some sense already know; in order to know, I must find out." Phenomenology begins with an empirical observation directed at a whole field of possible experiential phenomena. It attempts to see things in a particularly open way: to recapture the original sense of wonder in the world. Phenomenology is the process of letting things manifest themselves. Edmund Husserl, the founder and originator of the method that became Phenomenology, said, "To the things themselves" (1960 p.62). Martin Heidegger elaborated upon this maxim: "That which shows itself in itself, the manifest" (1962, p.50). Phenomenology is a way of thinking that enables us to see clearly "something" that is right before our eyes but is somehow obscured.

As Heidegger defines our existence in the world, it is not a rejection of scientific knowledge; rather, it is an attempt by man to understand the relationship between scientific and prescientific consciousness (1962, p.50). Scientific inquiry has the distinctive feature of curiosity (*), which causes us to ask further questions in a restless state of inquiry. The mark of the prescientific attitude is wonder (*) or awe. What we understand of the world is derived from both curiosity and wonder. Phenomenology limits itself to the realm of ordinary experience (Wittgenstein, 1975). What is important is that one must carefully delimit the field of experience in such a way that the focus is upon describable experiences as they show themselves.

The meanings that arise from the phenomenon or actual experience a person has with an object are hard to grasp because it is a personal thing. The phenomenological method of study for understanding these experiences involves an internalized view. There are many levels of observation and knowledge of the experience. Certainly, the lowest level would be no experience with an object at all. The next level would be referential through reports, articles, or persons (all of which select the information they believe important for us to know). The highest level of knowledge is through direct experience with the object. In conducting a phenomenological investigation, students should set aside referential knowledge and momentarily divest themselves of memories of the object. Whether or not knowledge can be set aside is beyond the point of this study. The phenomenologist makes the attempt, because experiences by their very nature are things of the here and now.

Phenomenological Method

The phenomenologist makes the world of everyday life a focus of attention. We must first look carefully at what is experienced and how it is experienced. Our first question is: what are we to investigate? "The things themselves" indicates an open field including all phenomena (only as it is experienced). This means that we can attend to all the usual furniture of experience but these objects are only to be attended to solely as occurring within our experience. What seems confusing at first is that the given objects of experience may appear in different ways (perceived through the senses, imagined, remembered). Yet, this is precisely the first point: the whole of experience may be thus surveyed in its infinite field.

The *first step* is to make a catalogue of momentary experience, trying to note as much as possible of what occurs within the short span of experience. This can be done in much the same fashion as writing in a stream of consciousness, popularized by James Joyce, by mapping the front yards, by interviewing people, or using simultaneous perception (*). Although a short experience span is complex, not everything stands out equally or is equally demanding. This flow of events has at least a minimal structure or pattern. This first step brings with it the realization of the complexity and immensity of the visual field.

We must make ourselves as aware as we can of the qualities of the environment we experience by teaching ourselves to see them well: looking for the patterns the people create in their landscape.

The second important point to remember is that what is sought is what is immediate or present to the experiencer, a direct experience not one just imagined or remembered. Such phenomena as appearances are certain, that which is present is certainly present to the experiencer. At this point some questions arise:

1. Is there a difference between what is really the case and what only appears to be the case?

2. Is the present experience illusory?
3. Is this phenomena dependable, as a basis for knowledge?

All of these questions, while relevant and important, must be suspended at first, if phenomenological investigation is to be entered into at all. Phenomenology calls on us to pretend that what we have as primary, as first given, is the immediate experience and that we must look carefully at it.

The *second step* of the process for this study is to attend to the phenomenon of experience as it appears. "Describe it, don't explain it" (Wittgenstein, 1975, p.109). This may seem trivial and simple at first but the process is specific and rigorous. To describe phenomena phenomenologically, rather than explain them, amounts to selecting a domain for inclusion and a domain for exclusion. This step begins to specify the initial goals of phenomenology. What is excluded is explanation that is any type of theory, idea, or concept that attempts to go beyond the phenomenon to give a reason for it or account for it.

Such a beginning may seem paradoxical. The paradox consists in the fact that without some idea, even generally, of what and how one is to look at a thing, how can anything be seen? Yet, if what is to be seen is to be seen without prejudice or preconception, how can it be circumscribed by definition? So the first step in the investigation is toward the things themselves. That is the phenomenon which is present to experience. The primary importance here is careful looking. This careful looking precedes classification and systematization in phenomenological investigations.

The *third step* is not to assume a hierarchy of realities; this is what Husserl called the 'suspension of belief' (1960, p.33). It requires looking to precede judgment until all the evidence is in. Included are all the phenomena of experience, excluded are all the judgments.

The steps for phenomenological investigation of yard art so far are:

1. To attend to phenomenon as and how it shows itself.

2. Describe, do not explain, the phenomenon.
3. Do not assume a hierarchy of phenomena, initially all phenomena occur at the same level.
No judgments about them.

David Seamon (1979) has written succinctly about this process:

In normal daily existence people are caught up in a state of affairs that the phenomenologist calls the natural attitude - the unquestioned acceptance of the things and experiences of daily living (Giorgi, 1970; Natanson, 1962). The world of the natural attitude is generally called, by the phenomenologist, life-world: the taken-for-granted pattern and context of everyday life through which a person routinely conducts his day-to-day existence without having to make it an object of conscious attention (Buttimer, 1976, p 277). Immersed in the natural attitude, people do not normally examine the life-world; it is concealed as a phenomenon:

In the natural attitude we are too much absorbed by our mundane pursuits, both practical and theoretical; we are too much absorbed by our goals, purposes, and designs to pay attention to the way the world presents itself to us. The acts of consciousness through which the world and whatever it contains become accessible to us and are lived, but they remain undisclosed and in this sense concealed (Giorgi, 1970, p. 148).

Through a change in attitude - the phenomenological reduction, as it is usually called - the phenomenologist seeks to make the life-world a focus of attention: "The acts, which in the natural attitude are simply lived, are now thematized and made topics of reflective analysis" (Giorgi, 1970, p. 148). An important tool in this reductive process is epoché (): the suspension of belief in the experience or experienced thing. The phenomenologist attempts to disengage him/herself from the life-world and re-examine its nature afresh in epoché "to bring precognitive 'givens' into consciousness... and enable one to empathize with the worlds of other people" (Buttimer, 1976, p. 281).*

Epoché does not mean that the phenomenologist rejects the world or his experiences of it. Rather he begins to question these things, as well as all concepts, theories, and models designed to describe and explain them. If we conduct epoché properly, we may discover that many events and patterns, which

we previously 'knew,' become questionable, while facts that we previously ignored or deemed insignificant emerge clearly and demand examination and description (Zeitlin, 1973).

Phenomenology is therefore a descriptive discipline. It attempts to question the taken-for-grantedness of the life-world and theories developed to depict it. Through epoché, the phenomenologist looks at human experience anew and records resulting discoveries as accurately as possible.

Phenomenology begins in silence. Only he who has experienced genuine perplexity and frustration in the face of the phenomena when trying to find the proper description for them knows what phenomenological seeing really means (Spiegelberg, 1971).

Relevance of the Phenomenon

Our acts are attached to us as its glimmer is to phosphorus. They consume us, it is true, but they make our splendor (Gide).

Now we must search for the criterion of relevance. At this point, we are describing infinitely the phenomenon we have in our field of vision. How can we get to the wonder of the phenomenon of dwelling in Harlan County? Husserl calls for the phenomenologist to look not just at the particularities but to delve into the essential features (essence) of phenomena, the structural features within phenomena. Essence, for Husserl, is a general character, that which a number of things have in common. It can sometimes mean a universal (some belong to it and others do not), and sometimes it means a condition without which a thing would not be what it is. Delving into the essential features of a phenomenon demands that it be looked at with particular interest, an interest that seeks out essential or structural features.

J. Hector St. John De Crevecoeur wrote: "In delineating the roads, houses, orchards, meadows and bridges arising out of a wild, woody uncultivated land I recognize that American technology was derived from Europe, yet was displayed in a new manner" (1963, p. 61). He saw patterns among

seemingly unrelated objects on the landscape and he associated the appearance of such objects with beliefs, customs, and values. He drew information about the identities of individuals by taking note of their material surroundings. His basic premise was that objects signify and influence mental concepts that are inherent in culture. Fundamental to his assumption is the belief that individuals who make and use objects will leave their cultural imprints on the objects. Once we have gathered our description of the experiences, we must search for the relevance of the phenomena we have experienced. Thus the *fourth step* of inquiry seeks out the structural features. It looks for the structure of things that appear in the way in which they appear. The repeated patterns that occur are significant and must be actively probed. This probing must take on a phenomenological form. Husserl calls these fantasy variations (1960). Thus, to solve a problem the phenomenologist must go through variations that will lead to an adequate insight or solution.

My method of probing relies upon perceptual experience for the most part (see fig. 5). In its simplest form the use of variations require obtaining as many sufficient examples or variations upon examples as might be necessary to discover the structural features that are sought, in this case cultural patterns. This method is not unknown to philosophy or science. Even empirical investigations seek out a series of examples prior to generalization. However, variations are employed in a systematic way and are the central methodological feature of phenomenological study. The variations must generally belong together and each step in the process of discerning variations must be complete before the next step is started. The question here is how difficult will it be to judge the point at which the number of variations is sufficient.

The variations are devices and should limit the phenomena. Ideally the number of variations should be infinite but I do not think this will be necessary nor practical, since a sufficient number of observations usually can yield the patterns and essential features.

INVESTIGATION

This section actually undertakes the first three steps of a phenomenological investigation, as described in the previous section: attend to phenomenon as it shows itself; describe, do not explain it; make no judgements about the phenomenon. The fourth step, searching for the criterion of relevance, will be investigated in the following section: Patterns.

Experiencing Places

Just driving through the mountain passes from Virginia into Kentucky almost always triggers in me a spontaneous and quiet change in perception. It alters what I know about my surroundings and about whatever is going on around me, and at the same time modifies my sense of what all these things mean to me. The change - one that is reasonably well known to all of us or is at least lodged somewhere in our memories - lets me gently refocus my attention, and allows a more general awareness of a great many things at once: sights, sounds, smells, and sensations of enclosure by the mountains, and balance on a small road, as well as thoughts and feelings. When this general kind of awareness occurs, I feel relaxed and alert at the same time. In addition, I notice a sort of unhurried feeling - a feeling that there is time enough to savor all the sights and sounds and other sensations coming from these mountains and the people who dwell here.

Our habitual style of thinking is often said to be a stream of consciousness; but this feeling - I call it simultaneous perception - seems calmer, more like a clear, reflective lake. While our normal waking consciousness works to simplify perception, and so allows us to act quickly and flexibly by helping us to stay oblivious to almost everything around us, simultaneous perception broadens and diffuses the beam of attention across all the senses, so we can take in whatever is there to be re-

ceived. Using simultaneous perception, we can experience our surroundings and our reactions to them, and not just our own thoughts and desires.

One recent weekday morning around 9:30, I entered Harlan County from the southeast (see fig. 2), through the Cumberland Gap National Park. There are stores along the strip, in Middlesboro (Bell County), selling Indian and pioneer souvenirs recalling the days of Daniel Boone. Eventually, I connected with highway 119, the major artery running through Harlan County. After driving the length of 119 through the county, I left by the northeast corner through the town of Lynch and over the mountain into Appalachia, Virginia. I went south on US 23 and found my way back into Harlan across the Pennington Gap.

Here, there are towns and communities set in the hollows and valleys of green hills. A town of trees, two-story brick homes, church steeples, long rows of stone stores, and monuments surrounding the large courthouse. Two ways to enter this town, called Harlan, are over bridges. One is over the Cumberland River and the other is over railroad tracks that carry coal, not people.

The communities outside of the town are villages of trees, one-story wooden and tar-paper covered homes, red brick or clapboard general stores, a post office in a mobile home, and coal tipples surrounding each village.

Over both of these the thin blue haze, partly dust, partly smoke, but mostly moisture veils this area. And beyond the town and around the villages are small fields, zig-zag fences, old grey barns, new mobile homes, the weaving of small winding mountain roads, the sulferous creeks, the black coal mines, and scattered everywhere, the woods.

Through the town and into the hills, I would follow a certain road (221) for about twenty miles until I came to a church and a graveyard on the top of Pine Mountain. Graves on such steep slopes you feel that they might slide off instead of remaining for eternity facing the rising sun.

From the top of the hill I look down into a long green valley where a small stream meanders back and forth, in long lazy loops, in and out of tree-cover, through over-grazed pastures in which cows drift along the contours of the slope. All facing the same direction. Beyond the end of that particular valley, not in it but above it, in the woods, is a strip job and to the right a coal tipple.

I have gone down into that valley - a steep, yet pleasing sort of drive past small homes, little farms, springhouses, outhouses, pick-up trucks and mowing machines until I come to the great Cumberland River tributary called Poor Folk.

I cross the river, drive beyond Harlan, and up a winding road across a railroad track through a tunnel of woods. I call it a tunnel because the road is so narrow and winding and the bed of the roadway was cut from rock laying in its path. Sheer wall, seeping water from the hillsides and the branches of trees interlace their branches forming a canopy. At the far end of this living tunnel, beyond it and in the open under a shimmer of sun or the mist of these mountains, stands a house with two smaller houses nearby. This is an ancient and austere clapboard farmhouse, wider than tall, when seen from the road. There is a full garden in the front yard and I am separated physically from this house by a bridge over a small creek.

As I drive further along this road I enter Chevrolet, named for the car. Houses are lined up almost against the road like the tunnel of trees I had just passed through. Each house is identical in design and placement but paint, plants and objects have been used to identify or distinguish each house. One yard has a statue of St. Francis, surrounded by salvia, coleus, and marigolds, and the name Szorcsk on the mailbox. The next house has a line of tires painted white instead of the usual chain link fence. The next home is lined with zinnias along the foundation. As I leave the town I notice: while most of the houses get smaller and flimsier, a few get bigger and fancier. Along the road, unpainted clapboard homes, one-story high, but here and there, now and then, on a hillside, I see a brick house with white columns framing the entrance; the house is centered in a spacious park of lawn and shrub and tree approached by a steep and winding drive.

Along some roads, the shoulders rise up and houses are tucked into the rocks and trees. One house on 421, as you enter Dizney, has a sheer rock wall dropping down to the road for a front yard and the porch is filled with ceramic ducks, a blue gazing ball, potted geraniums, and wood climes. As you round the bend in the road a driveway cuts up the hill edged by phlox with a wooden 2-d woman bending over amidst the pink and white flowers. Everywhere, this time of the year, flowers are blooming in ordinary and strange places. While driving through Benham, I observed flowers in little red wagons, bath tubs, cut tires, automobiles, plastic swans, coffee cans, and more traditional beds as foundations planting, and around larger objects in the yard, such as a bird bath. Canna lilies against white aluminum siding, cosmos, zinnas, marigolds, salvia along the walk, around a birdbath. It appears that almost every yard and church has a rose of sharon near the doorway or front gate. Another characteristic of yards is the front gate; in most communities the yards of homes are defined by fences - chain-link, painted white rocks, or tires, a few are wooden. Most of the houses, outside of the communities, have wooden fences, are set back from the road, or have a creek that separates them from the road. People have defined the gate with wagon wheels or stumps. A large number of yards have a satellite dish placed prominently in the front yard - probably the best location for reception. One of the most colorful features in the yards or on the porches is the laundry drying on the line.

Even though Harlan is rural, there is a different feeling in the small towns in the mornings than driving on the sparsely populated roads. In towns, people are rarely out in the early morning. But, further out of the towns people are out working in their gardens while the mist is burning off.

Everywhere I drive there is kudzu vine along the banks of the road and even in some yards. Slowly creeping and encasing trees and houses - a lush vine in the summer but brown and deadening in the winter.

I love to drive along the small mountain roads edged on one side by a creek, with gleaming discarded aluminum cans and come upon a man carrying a bag, out to collect the cans. Is there a reciprocal relationship between people littering cans and others collecting them?

When you enter Harlan County from Virginia on 160, there is not one house visible from the road until I reach the town of Lynch. Then massive stone buildings rise up in this small hollow and the train tracks run along the creek's edge. The houses in Lynch have a different style from other homes in the county. There is something European about the slope of the roofs, the stone foundations and the open barn like shape. Maybe this is the product of the Italian stone masons that settled there. There is no play equipment in the yards.

PATTERNS

The landscape and the language are the same. For we ourselves are landscape and are land (Conrad Aiken).

The Home

Once we see our place, our part of the world, an area surrounding us, we have already made a profound division between it and ourselves. We have given up the understanding - dropped it out of our language, and so out of our lives - that we and our world create one another, depend on one another, are literally part of one another; that our land passes in and out of our bodies just as our bodies pass in and out of our land; that we and our land are part of one another, so all who are living as neighbors here, human and plant and animal, are part of one another, and so cannot possibly flourish alone; that, therefore, our culture must be our response to our place, our culture and our place are images of each other and inseparable from each other, so that neither can be better than the other (Berry, 1977, p.22).

The house, it is argued, is an extremely important aspect of the built environment, embodying not only personal meanings but expressing and maintaining the ideology of prevailing social orders. We need to approach the subject of home/identity in terms of the interrelationships between the individual, social worlds and the social structure. If one is to understand the meaning of dwelling for the people in Harlan County, one must take into account all three of these variables.

The central role of the social structure of a society forms both the supportive and constraining framework in which the behavior of individuals take place. The social structure in Harlan County is derivative of the history of the region and is embodied in the town of Harlan, the county seat. This place exhibits the signs and symbols of the community that can later be seen at the home level. Also, attention must be paid to social worlds, the different groups within a society with their shared attitudes, interests, values or experiences. These social worlds can be large or small; they provide a reference group for their members and are therefore influential in attitude formation. Some social worlds are more closely tied to dominant social structures than others. Examples of social worlds in the county are the settlements, coal camps and communities.

Finally, one must look at the individual, for it is individuals, acting collectively, who produce and reproduce the societal structures. Society wide values and attitudes toward housing are not autonomous nor mysterious in their origin but are rooted in individual consciousness and action.

In his book, *House, Form and Culture* (1969), Amos Rapoport argues that rather than simply examining the relationship between housing and identity, one must focus upon the broader issue of environment and identity. The house, although an important element in the environment, varies from group to group in degree of importance as an indicator of identity (Rapoport, 1969). Therefore, what constitutes cultural characteristics and the identity of a culture? Rapoport raises important questions about the nature of the relationship between identity, social structure and housing as a part of a general settlement pattern. I argue that, in order to understand patterns that emerge from both the use of the yard and its relationship to the home and street, one must understand the nature of the social structure in a community.

So first let us examine the county seat of Harlan County, then look at the settlement patterns of the smaller villages and coal camps and finally come to the investigation of the front yards of homes. Only through experiencing the community as a whole can we come to an understanding of the cultural characteristics and a definition of dwelling in the central Appalachian coal region.

The Town: Harlan

As two architectural historians put it:

It is largely through these public places that Americans have expressed their desire for splendor, and the visitor to our cities must go to the state houses, post offices, and courthouses to find the mural painting, sculpture, and ornaments that are missing elsewhere. If it were not for government patronage of the arts, admittedly spasmodic and causal, our communities would be much further from satisfying the needs for symbols of civic and national pride, which the people of a republic demand. (Tunnard and Reed, 1956, p.28).

The city itself can be a monument. The physical layout, the geometry and hierarchical ordering of forms, are architectural means to express an ideal of society. Harlan and Cumberland owe their morphology to the convenience of the survey grid (see fig. 10) and to the economics of growth in the coal industry. The religious and civic goals take visible shape in the architectural elements in these towns (see fig.11). The grounds around the courthouse are filled with historic markers, a monument to war-dead, and a black granite slab with the names of those who died in coal mining accidents. There is a large common space around the courthouse filled with benches and usual street furnishings. Even on cold, grey days people are milling around or seated inside the coffee shops that face the courthouse commons. This is a busy town and the courthouse, made of stone, sits in the center of the community. A few years ago, Harlan received recognition as a "Main-Street USA" town. Traffic has been re-routed to diminish congestion and some of the buildings have been renovated.

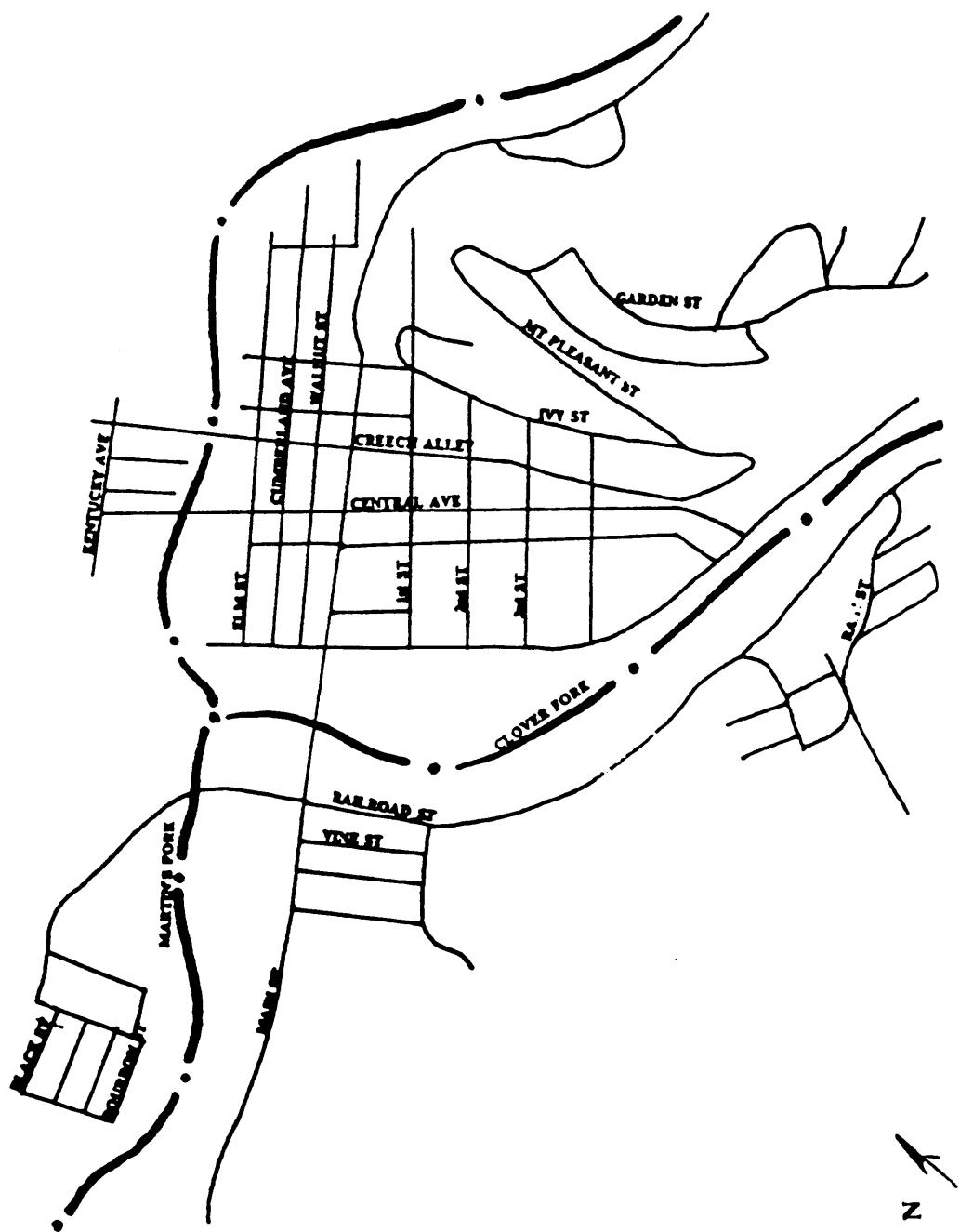


Figure 9. Harlan, Kentucky



Figure 10. The courthouse of Harlan County, Kentucky.

In Harlan you enter the town by a bridge and cross numerous bridges over the Cumberland River and railroad tracks. Both, the courthouse and the bridges are symbols in the community of growth and a tie to the past heritage of the region. The bridge is simultaneously a utilitarian fact and a symbol for connectedness or transition from one place to the next.

There are attempts to capture the character of a place by a specific scene or picture. Even small towns sell postcards, revealing a faith in the worthiness of their mainstreets, parks, and monuments. Postcards depict aspects of the town that are believed to do it credit. Occasionally, a typical street

scene is shown, but more often postcards stress the highlights - the parts that capture the attention, that have high imageability. Postcards tell us something about imageability. They probably reflect the values of the local businessman who sells them.

The postcards, see figures 12 - 15, display images of the past in Harlan County. These are the only postcards for sale in the county. Neighboring Bell County sells cards with more modern images of the Cumberland Gap, the downtown, and other sights in the community. Views of trains, strip-mines and mountains are a part of the past and present in Harlan County. I bought these cards at Creech's Drug Store, Cumberland Ave., Harlan.

BUFFALO BEND



Figure 11. Postcard

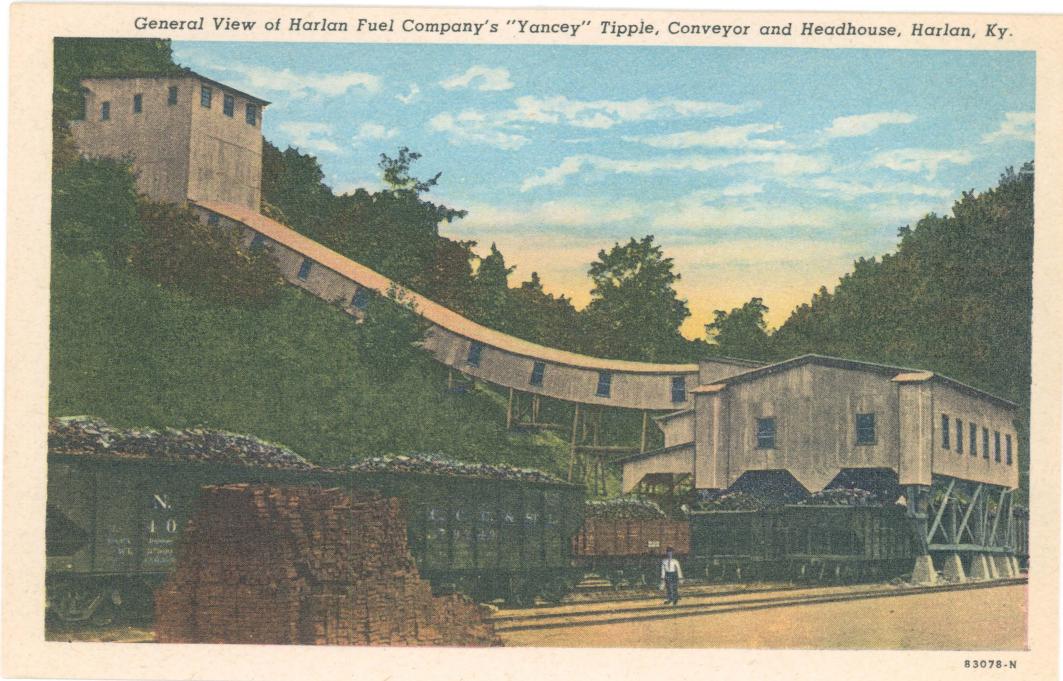


Figure 12. Postcard

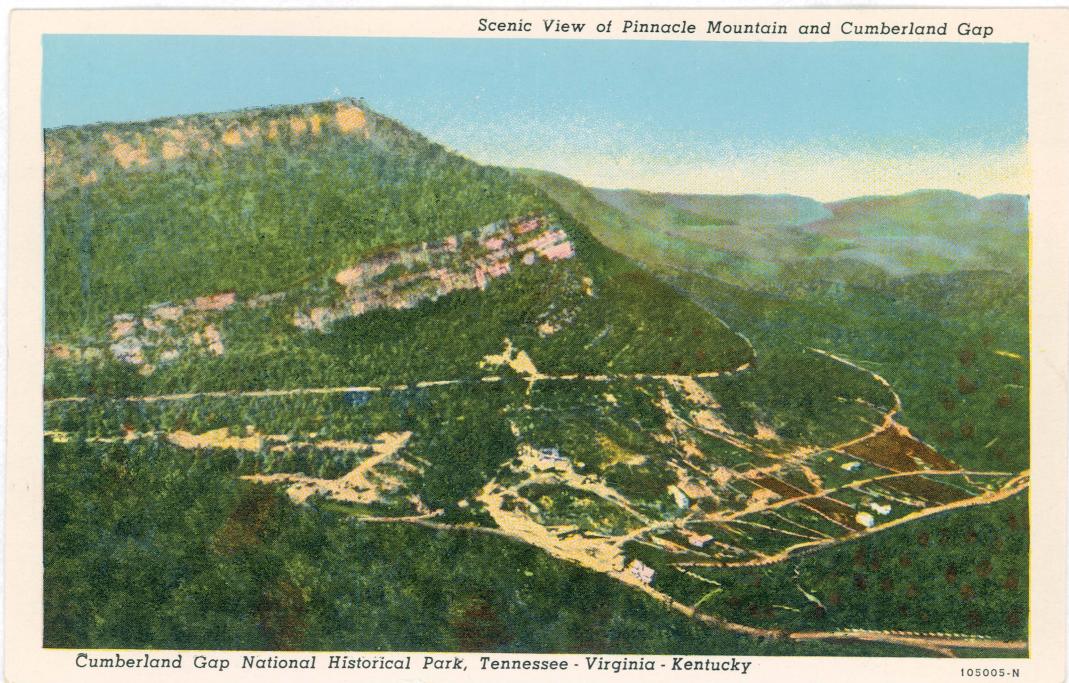


Figure 13. Postcard

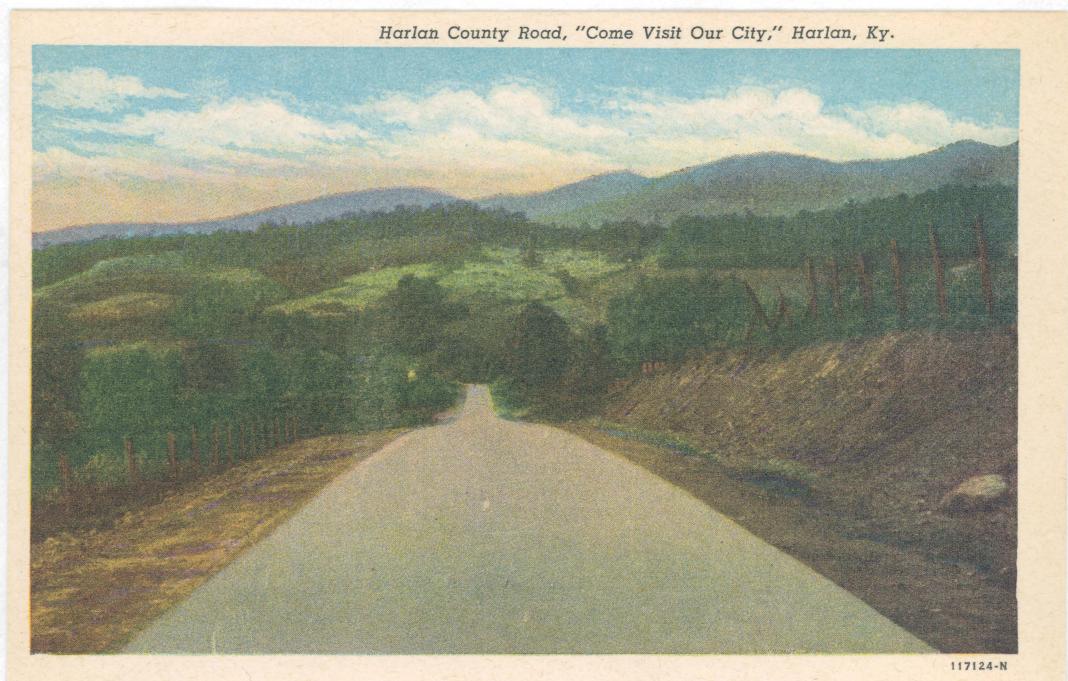


Figure 14. Postcard

The city is often known at two levels: 1) high abstraction, a symbol, or image captured in a postcard or slogan, and 2) through specific experiences, intimately experienced at the neighborhood level. Now, let's move to this neighborhood level to see patterns through the settlement patterns.

Settlements

The towns and settlements in Harlan County have three patterns in common: they are linear villages, they are ephemeral, and they are coal camps. The narrow valleys imposed the linear pattern on the settlements and because they were started as coal mining settlements, when the coal mines closed down, the settlements usually disappeared or remained as a small gathering of homes, a community.

The settlements are small communities. In most cases the population is less than 200, although Harlan has 4500, and Cumberland has 2600 people. An examination of a small group of communities will provide a more detailed picture of the settlement patterns. Some generalizations about these settlements:

1. Neighborhoods are based on coal company needs and family space. The houses are laid out in a linear fashion and the yard has restricted access by fences and hedges.
2. People tend to decorate their homes in these settlements more by their physical location to other homes and places of business nearby than to larger towns in the county.

Evarts and Dizney

Some of the villages have more flat land than in most areas and so several houses could be built in rows. In a few places there is even a rudimentary grid pattern. For example, Evarts occupies a rather large flat area, and has, in some places, 3 rows of houses (see fig. 16), as does Wallin's Creek and Baxter (see fig. 3 for locations of these settlements).

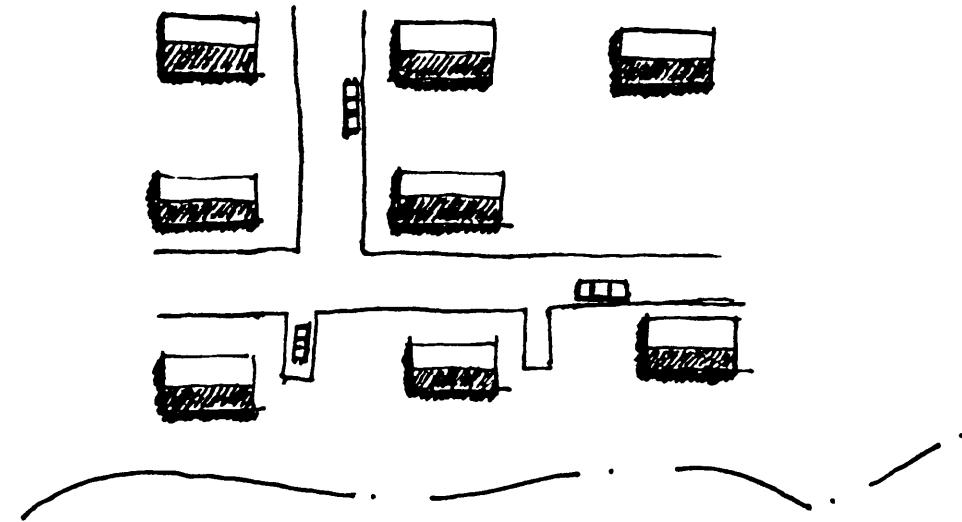


Figure 15. Diagram of settlement pattern in Evarts

The settlements, for the most part, are quite small. Many of the places are less than a mile in length. The residents live within walking distance to a store, usually a small family run grocery store, a post office and a coal tipple.

The communities are surrounded by woods, arrived at by small mountain roads. Most often groceries are bought at a family-run store and the post office is in a mobile home (see fig. 17). In Lynch, Italians immigrated during the coal mining boom in the early part of this century. They were stone masons and were hired to build the factories, stores and homes of residents in the coal camp of Lynch. Most of the town is built out of native stone, and the houses are architecturally influenced by Italian design (see fig. 18).



Figure 16. Post Office



Figure 17. Downtown Lynch

Because of limited space for settlements, the houses are often within a few feet of the railroad tracks or the road. In eastern Kentucky, the roads are a prominent feature of many of the coal camps. In Harlan County, the railroad was a dominant feature of transportation in the small settlements. For example, Chevrolet has rows of homes alternating with a line of track (see fig.19).

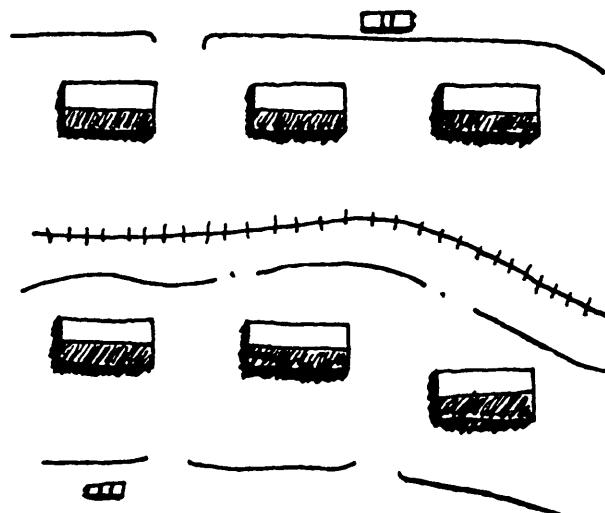


Figure 18. Diagram of settlement pattern in Chevrolet.

Why is an examination of the settlement patterns not enough to come to an understanding of dwelling? Why must we look to the home life? Let's examine these questions through the patterns that have emerged.

What is Yard Art in Harlan County?

Decorations in the front yard are specifically things that we experience visually, spatially, physically, and emotionally. There are two fundamental assertions that can be made about these decorations: 1) these decorations are a product of their culture and, as such, reflect human behavior and 2) the

pattern of this phenomenon can be examined in order to come to an understanding of the cultural patterns within the community.

In Harlan County, most people live in mobile homes, but there are also brick, wooden, and tar paper covered homes. The mobile homes, presumably, have been selected on the basis of economy, promotion, and ease of moving the houses. The qualities and locations are all much the same. The houses have been more or less mass produced and are meant to appeal to popular tastes and have been arranged in relation to the road and the topography. The people who live in these houses have the same fundamental concerns and happiness as anyone else: children are born and grow up, romances begin or end, people die of disease or old age. It only takes a part of one lifetime for a considerable attachment of care and emotion to be formed with these houses and the community. So, it is not surprising that most homeowners express their concerns and their identity in some way. In terms of the landscape this may take the form of garden ornaments arranged on the front lawn or a careful selection of paint colors and fenestrations or plant arrangements.

For the purpose of this study, there appear to be two patterns of motivation for decoration in the front yard: aesthetic and functional. The aesthetic yard contains plants (see fig. 20), and objects (concrete, plastic, wooden) (see fig. 21), arranged for viewing from the road or the house, which appear to enhance the visual quality of the property. The functional yard is defined as a place which has a business out front (see fig. 22) or advertises a business (see fig. 23), or yards where vegetable gardens and animals are kept. This latter category may occur because of a lack of space but, none the less, it occurs often. The final category of yard art is no expression by the residents toward the yard (see fig. 24). This is not meant to include abandoned property; rather, it a yard which has no overt expression of intent by the homeowner.



Figure 19. Formal Planting



Figure 20. Objects in the Yard

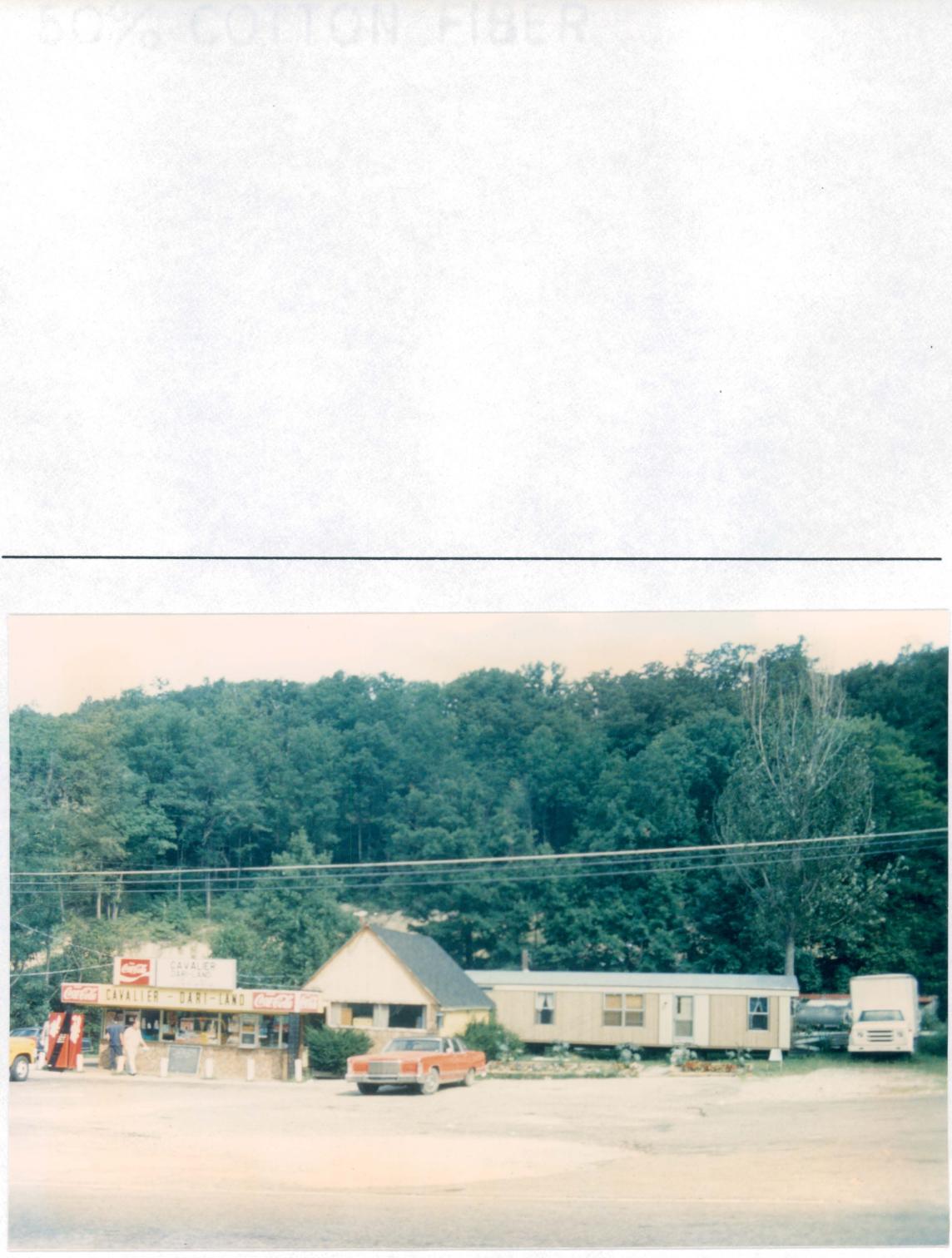


Figure 21. Business

GREETIN' BOND

50% COTTON FIBER



Figure 22. Advertises a Business



Figure 23. No Expression in the Yard

I believe the aim of this personalization of property is not to demonstrate conformity but to be different within the constraints of the natural and the built environment and within the self-imposed and unspoken conventions of the community. It is not easy to be genuinely different when almost everyone is following the same traditional motifs and uses mass-produced items for decoration, such as bird baths with sea horse legs. While each house and lot is a valued and visual environment and its decoration and landscaping are an expression of concern for appearance and for commitment to place, the yards show only a series of slight variations around limited themes that express certain patterns within the community. I believe that the residents of Harlan express a cultural characteristic that is derivative of their historical background and is expressed in current trends of yard decoration.

Conserver Society

We are what we have (Tuan, 1977, p.186).

Through examining the towns, settlements, and yards of the residents of Harlan County, there is much we can learn from the past. I believe the spirit of the mountaineer and the close ties of family and kin are evidenced in the structure of the communities. This relationship is seen at all levels: the towns, settlements, and the decoration in the front yard of homes. When just looking at yards, you can see that houses closer to each other tend to place more decoration (a personal expression) in their yards than do homes which are tucked into hollows away from communities. Yards filled with objects and businesses tend to be clustered together, whereas, yards with gardens and animals tend to be more isolated from other homes. The spatial relationship of the formal planting in yards is found in the larger homes usually set up on a hillside or far back from the road. Those homes with no personal expression are usually not mobile homes, are usually wooden and tend to be set back from the road and tucked into the woods. Although this type of house is not vacant, there is little porch furniture and rarely a car in the driveway.

The most important clue to the cultural patterns is found through an investigation of objects within the yard. These objects (for example see figs. 25, 26, 27) tend to be created for new uses from old objects: plow handles holding up mail boxes, wagon wheels defining a gate, tires painted white and lined up for a fence, tires cutup and old bath tubs used for planters, plastic bottles in a birdbath (see fig. 1). These are all examples of recycling and a conversion of functional objects for aesthetic use. Even refrigerators and old cars in yards speak of the conserver mentality of the Appalachian people. It speaks of a past. This discovery of the pattern of a conserver society through the study of the material culture shows the promise of new knowledge and new insights into people and the way they think and act. I believe these expressive acts are genuine communicative acts that have as their goal their own interpretation. The residents do not adopt a standard for living in another century, but they can express aspects, or patterns, of another time. The following discussion of the history of the Appalachian dwellers of the 19 th century is presented as support to the relevance of the phenomena observed through this investigation.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, descendants of the original English, German, and Scotch-Irish colonists moved deeper and deeper into the mountains. The first arrivals naturally occupied the choicest farmland, the valley bottoms, and coves between high ridges. Pressing against limits of subsistence, the early mountaineers suffered an inevitable decline in their economic standard of living. In response, they developed a way of life adapted to the physical environment.

Meanwhile, the mainstream of American life passed by these mountaineers, going around the rough and profitless Appalachian Mountains in pursuit of more easily exploitable wealth in the west. For over a century, the mountain settlements were left in cultural and economic isolation; overlooked by the managers of the great industrial development that was and still is altering the face of America.

Left to themselves, cut off by the lack of easy transportation and communication from the majority of Americans, the mountaineers retained much of their old manners, speech, and customs. Out of

touch with medical science, the mountain people learned to find remedies for their illnesses in the herbs and roots that grew in the wooded hills around them. Without the cash to buy tools or manufactured goods, too far from cities and towns where such things were available, they learned to make do with what they had or do without, and under the pressure of this necessity, they perfected their own arts and crafts.¹³

Lacking manufactured articles, these mountain pioneers made their own. Tools were made of wood or hand-forged metal. Their cabins and farm buildings were made from local timber, the logs split or squared by hand, and joined at the corners by dove-tail joints. Homegrown wool was carded, spun, and woven into cloth. Mills for grinding cane, corn, and other grains were built with native materials. Such things as latches and hinges might be made of wood or hammered together.

Primarily farmers, the mountain people kept chickens and hogs, ran cattle on the balds and did plowing with mules and horses. Meat was smoked or salted for storage, vegetables canned. Most families also had at least a few apple trees, and these apples could be stored for winter or converted into cider, applejack, or vinegar. The basic crop, however, was corn, which was easy to grow on the stony soil of the hillsides, did not require much cultivation, was convenient to store, slow to spoil, and adaptable to several uses: family consumption, feed for pigs, chickens, and horses. Mashed, fermented, and distilled into whiskey, corn also served as a cash crop for the mountain farmer. Whiskey was a compact, concentrated item for which there was, and still is, a firm demand and a reliable market. The people of the mountains utilized this simple method for converting their raw materials into a salable product. Two world wars and the Prohibition era assured boom times for the moonshiner.

Economically self-sufficient, the mountaineers by reason of their isolation from urbanized America that was growing up beyond the mountains retained and maintained a culture of their own as well,

¹³ Examples of the medical lore are: bloodroot and sassafras tea as a good tonic for the blood. For "female troubles" teas brewed with smooth sumac, brown cedar, yarrow, rock fern, or the inner bark of pine trees were thought to help. For the heart, a tea made from the lily-of-the-valley or purple foxglove (containing digitalis) was thought to be helpful. Pokeberry wine was thought good for rheumatism.

in which their music, their brand of Christian Fundamentalism, their manner of dress, and their modes of speech distinguished them sharply from the majority of Americans.

They have always been poor, by the standards of a prosperous commercial society. After 150 years of relative isolation, the community of the mountaineers has been broken down by the various arms of industrialization: logging mills, coal mines, and the damming of the rivers. This has had the long term effect of reducing the general standard of living of the native inhabitants. The intensified poverty resulting from industrial progress has bought in turn public welfare, reducing the people to a psychological dependency upon the government. One final step in the cultural breakdown is through commercial tourism, which has had the effect of diminishing the mountaineers to the status of historical oddities.

The features and patterns of the physical world are recognized as having a personal element. Their imprint on the landscape reflects not only functional necessity but creative tastes and aspirations as well. Spatial arrangements and physical form record how communities have evaluated their surroundings and made them over partly in accordance with idealized images and visual stereotypes. This is evidenced in Harlan County.

Environmental Hermeneutics

Amongst the most sinister phenomena in intellectual history is the avoidance of the concrete...people have had a conspicuous tendency to go first after the most remote things, ignoring everything they stumble over close by (Elias Cavetti).

With the establishment of industrial capitalism in the Appalachian mountains, separation of the individual from the land has become a way of being for these people. This is endlessly reinforced by the stream of visual images and can be seen in the writing of the region. History, taken alone for support for the relevance of the phenomena, is not conclusive. History, too, has as its own goal

interpretation as new facts emerge and opinions about events change. A question at this point: can the words tell us more than the images or the acts of the resident?

We, as landscape architects, are so sophisticated in directly interpreting and thus experiencing the landscape, that we proceed without noticing the metaphysical foundations of our perceptions. We jump into describing, sorting, analyzing, and synthesizing mountains, rivers, and so on. This may be true of a person investigating dwelling, phenomenologically. We forget that the subject matter we analyze (environment) already is given to us and interpreted in language. Such a fundamental area of study is possible only insofar as we critically work from the historical interpretation of environments, which itself is possible only insofar as mountains, rivers, and the rest show themselves, in language, to us as they are. We need to investigate further how it is that person and environment are both given together in language.

"Hit may be rough and rugged, but hit's a sweet home to us" (Campbell, 1921).

Where environmental disciplines see language as reporting environmental features or spatial patterns of cultures in an environment, what follows is analysis and correlation of those relationships and patterns. Where these disciplines see language and culture as creating the environment as a meaningful system, they systematically correlate forms and spatial environmental descriptions and meanings. Not that either of these methodologies are to be disparaged. Rather, such procedures need to be supplemented and grounded by a third project, one that utilizes the empirical research already done in this project and moves beyond it. Now that we have looked at the social structures, social groups, and the home we should turn to the language spoken by the people because the world is given to us in language by the people.

Since language enables us to hold a basic interpretation in mind, we can proceed from there to different interpretations. We call this new study hermeneutics, or more specifically, environmental hermeneutics (*). Environmental hermeneutics is the interpretation of the essential ways in which human ways of dwelling and essential features of environment occur historically for specific places (regions) and languages (dialects). This new study would be not only a mapping, but even more

importantly, a new regional-dialect discipline that would interpret the emergence, persistence, and changes in the relationship of language-scape and landscape.

She walked on, and soon came opposite Lister Tucker's house, where the yard gate lay fallen across the stepping stones that Lister's father had put there before Lister was born. The frost-blackened, wind beaten morning glory vines still clung to the strings Lister's wife had tacked to the porch last spring...Jaw Buster Miller's house was just over the next rise, but further back from the road. It was a nice looking house, with new paint and lots of windows, for Jaw Buster had long made steady money on the railroad gang. But now the uncurtained windows shone blindly in the sun like the unseeing eyes of the dead, all save one, and it was broken (Arnow, 1954, p.99).

Another example is from James Still:

One day Fletch and I came in from the buckeye thicket with our pockets loaded. Mother and Euly were working around a dead willow in the yard, stringing the twigless branches with saved eggshells. The eggs had been broken carefully at each end, letting the whites and yolks run out. The little tree was about five feet high, and the lean branches were already nearly covered with shells.

'I allus did want me an egg tree,' Mother said. 'I hear tell it's healthy to have one growing in the yard. And I figure it'll be brightening to the house...Eggshells hain't a grain o' good except to prettify with' (1940, p.173).

What really is required is undertaking this type of project in classes, workshops, and research papers, because it is not a practical nor efficient method for professional landscape architecture offices. Therefore, I would like to indicate four characteristics of this new way of interpretation and assessment of the landscape.

1. Environmental hermeneutics entails understanding what a specific local language is saying.
We need to work out the meanings and use of words carefully.
2. Environmental hermeneutics involves understanding the ontological aspects of the language event. The goal is understanding the essential environmental characteristics that are disclosed and concealed in local language. The focus is on particular regions, places, and features of the environment.

3. Environmental hermeneutics goes on to describe the essential features of the environment that show itself as it is (or fails to, or remains concealed). Also, care is taken to describe the way in which this happens for a particular language.
4. Environmental hermeneutics insists that the first three emphases must be allowed their historical dimension. Further interpretation and understanding are possible only where it is recognized, over time and in different epochs of language, essential features of environment are disclosed, or concealed, in complexly intelligent ways.

Taken together, these four characteristics of environmental hermeneutics indicate how it is that language enables the environment to come forward into experience. It is clear that understanding environment by way of language is part of a change that puts renewed focus on such themes as place and dwelling. The writings of the central Appalachian region are rich and varied in their description of the mountaineer and coal worker's relationship with the environment.

I would like to direct the reader toward seminal works which may further enlighten an understanding of dwelling in Appalachia and be used to conduct an investigation grounded in an environmental hermeneutic approach.

Harry M. Caudill's *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, published in 1962, remains the classic history of the coal industry's involvement in eastern Kentucky. Harriet Simpson Arnow, in *The Flowering of the Cumberland* (1963), gives a reminiscent look at the lifestyles of the pioneer and mountaineer. Kai Erikson, in *Everything in its Path* (1969), wrote a history of a community devastated by a flood caused by inadequate maintenance of coal sludge dams along Buffalo Creek. Two exceptional oral histories are: *Oh Appalachia*, by Shackelford and Weinberg, (1977), and *Generations: An American Family*, by John Egerton, (1983). This latter work is about a family in Harlan County. These works bring one closer to understanding of how people characterize their lives through their own words. Two excellent poets to read for descriptions of dwelling in the region are Still (1983), and Miller (1978, 1983).

Literature of the Appalachian region centers upon the mountaineer, their struggles with themselves, nature and the outside world. From the pages of novels such as *The Dollmaker*, by Harriet Simpson Arnow (1954), and *The River of Earth*, by James Still (1940), the people of Appalachia emerge as legendary figures. They cannot, however, be categorized or described simply. Nor can one come to a full understanding of dwelling from these pages alone. Undertaking the steps of an environmental hermeneutic approach might allow these words to reveal the essence of dwelling in Appalachia more fully than observation or historical interpretation. This type of study is beyond the scope of this thesis but I wanted to present it as a further direction for understanding the relationship between humans and the landscape.



Figure 24. Yard Art

*CHIEFTAIN Bond
50% COTTON FIBER*



Figure 25. Yard Art

*GHEEFTAIN BOND
50% COTTON FIBER*



Figure 26. Yard Art

CONCLUSION

Review of the Process

Every effort to define space is an attempt to create order out of disorder: it shares some of the significance of the primordial act of creation and hence the sacred character of that act (Eliade, 1957).

I chose to experience front yards, instead of public meeting places, to locate the sense of place in Harlan County and the cultural characteristics within the community because public places, such as malls and downtowns, can have the values that designers and politicians wish to ascribe to them. Values and meanings do not always develop and flourish; some are invented or imposed. This can be done by drawing on an event in local history and elevating it to a legend. A town can create an entire environment with rebuilt forts or a Bavarian identity. It has the effect of switching it from a declining mining town to a prosperous tourist center. The problem is that, when personalities of places can be created so successfully and so enjoyably and especially when this relieves local economic hardship, it becomes difficult to say what is or is not genuine or significant.

In order to investigate the properties and patterns of yards and come to an identification and understanding of cultural characteristics in Harlan County, we must deal directly with the qualities

of the environment that have some form of appeal or significance for society. Our imprint on the landscape reflects not only functional necessities but creative tastes and aspirations as well. Spatial arrangements and physical form record how communities have evaluated their surroundings and made them over, partly in accordance with idealized images of how life was lived or should be lived. These features and patterns of the physical world are recognized as having an aesthetic element and the interpretation of the value of this aesthetic is very subjective. There is a complexity and difficulty in identifying and interpreting the nature and scope of the patterns that define dwelling which are found in a community.

We attain to dwell, so it seems, only by means of building. The latter, building, has the former, dwelling, as its goal. Still, not every building is a dwelling. Bridges and hangars, stadiums and power stations are buildings but not dwelling; railway stations and highways, dams and market halls are built, but they are not dwelling places. Even so, these buildings are in the domain of our dwelling (Heidegger, 1971, p. 145).

Reflections

Landscape, for all its appeal, cannot mediate the experience of the active insider and the passive outsider. Phenomenologists who proclaim a human-landscape concept, such as I have done, calling the dwellers of Appalachia a conserver society, need to recognize this as a point of departure, not a problem to be overcome, but a contradiction to be explored in its various contexts. John Barrell stressed the impossibility of capturing "the simultaneous presence of someone within the center of knowledge...and his absence from it, in a position from which he observes but does not participate" (1982, p.358). Such a feat is impossible: it originated as an outsider's perspective, it remains a controlling composition of the land rather than a mirror. Phenomenologists attempt to set aside this referential perspective, but again it is a paradox between the roles of the actor and the spectator.

I have argued that studied attention to the facts and forms of the home environment is central to the achievement of the discovery of patterns of dwelling. The intention of such observation runs

beyond science as we know it. It is to penetrate the 'essence' of landscape, to grasp a truth which is yielded only in the active engagement of the human subject with its object of contemplation.

This idea of seeing to the essence or heart of an object is one that has been reiterated by many thinkers at different times and places. Among others, we could include Thoreau, Muir, and A. Leopold.

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by the infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor...To effect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of contemplation (Thoreau, 1965, p.67).

Subject and object are united by a single act of intentionality very different from the aims of science that requires as a prerequisite to examination the separation of subject and object and a focus on the causal relationship between objects. To the phenomenologists, the objectification of the scientific procedure is alienating. The aim of this investigation is to overcome a personal alienation from the external world, to replace it with a unity of feeling and meaning.

The landscape merits detailed empirical attention and a penetration to its essence. Landscape meaning is therefore by no means a purely personal or incommunicable thing. It is apparent to all who take pains to study and learn from it in faith and humility.

Maybe my way of investigation should only be done on the natural landscape not the landscape of man, because in this mode of assessing the landscape, we use imaginative power to address profoundly human needs and experiences both within prevailing conventions and beyond them. And underneath the ideology of seeing (distance and separation is implicit in this type of assessment) there remains to give force to the image our own inalienable experience of home, of life and of dwelling. We need to appeal directly to these experiences of being in the landscape: entering the land rather than just seeing it.

As I gazed on the impressive scene, all the so called ruin of the storm was forgotten, and never before did these noble woods appear so fresh, so joyous, so immortal (Muir, no date given, p.257).

Further Research Questions

In this project, I have laid out a description of the key aspects of the phenomenological investigation, defined some directions for the phenomenology of dwelling, and shown how this perspective can be used to elucidate the experience of the phenomenon of yard art. The experience and the revelations of this investigation of dwelling in Harlan County represent only one phenomenon that can be examined from a phenomenological orientation. In this section, I would like to bring forth some further questions for research and explore the limitations of the phenomenological method.

In the *Poetics of Space* (1981), Bachelard successfully tackled the themes of the home as a fortifying, enclosing, and secret shelter, as a place for centered intimacy and solitude. His original contribution resides in his project to show that the house is one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories, and dreams of mankind. His description of full and well-ordered cupboards, chests, and closets should not be understood as a celebration of conventional order in the home but as an image that conveys his approach of "felicitous space" (p. 17) and therefore has complex links with his own culture. Conventional order is defined by social rules. It constitutes a basis and a reference for social communication as well as for expression of the self. But what is perceived as a disorderly house by a visitor is not necessarily perceived as such by the inhabitant. I believe that order refers ultimately to our relations to things surrounding us. Thus, this familiar arrangement of objects deserves to be studied in relation to conventional and socially defined order (Sauer, 1982).

Bachelard sought to grasp the dwelling experience without bringing in the practices underlying it. Several studies devoted to home practices evoked only briefly the effect of uses upon experience and never even raised the question of the relationship between being and doing, that is, between dwelling in and appropriating the home.

A question more closely related to this thesis is the perceived blindness of the residents of the central Appalachian coal region to the landscape that they live in. Perhaps the residents are in fact not blind, but rather powerless to evoke changes in the landscape because they are constrained by social and economic conditions. Over 50 percent of the land in Harlan County is absentee-owned. The mineral rights are controlled by coal companies that have the legal right to mine those minerals. Possibly, the reason behind the definition, of these Appalachian mountain dwellers in Harlan County as a conserver society, is because they hold fast to what they have; both customs and objects. They are powerless to evoke change and control the effects that industrialization has caused in their region.

These two research questions, the powerlessness of the dwellers in the landscape and the relationship between being and dwelling in the world, are broad-based and presented as a further direction for understanding the human-landscape connection through phenomenological investigations.

One potential danger of the phenomenological approach to understanding dwelling is that it may not be able to take into account the natural prioritization of aspects of the physical world in the way that the human mind does. However, most landscape assessments techniques do not do this either. In fact most of these techniques are relatively crude and static in their methods. I would like to argue that an experiential approach does exactly what I indicated above. It allows one to look at different relevant variables in different situations, weigh the variables differently, and even recognize the interaction between the variables.

Although, the phenomenological investigation presented in this thesis is a valid means for understanding this relationship between man and landscape, it is not conclusive. In order to have tested the patterns observed through simultaneous perception, an interview with the residents might have added insights and further patterns to the list. But I wanted to try a form of "pure" phenomenological investigation experiencing and recording the experience to discover patterns. This has brought me to the conclusion that a more pure form of investigation could have been undertaken through an investigation of environmental hermeneutics, as discussed in the last section.

My study has been completed satisfactorily, but the method cannot be evaluated conclusively. What I see is there. I see real patterns in the landscape. You cannot dispute these patterns and we cannot disagree about the results until you undertake the project. The fundamental principle of phenomenological method requires that one's conscious processes, as themselves given in perception, be acknowledged as genuine data. I believe that a language-landscape-contextual study is a better way to come to an understanding of dwelling and daily living in Appalachia. And so, an environmental hermeneutic would be both an area of specialization (a particular dialect and region), and a foundation for other areas of environmental study.¹⁴

Ending

The common and the ordinary must remain our primary concern... if only because it is from them that the uncommon and the extraordinary emerge and not from matters that are difficult and sophisticated (Hanna Arendt).

The notion of dwelling is the most taken-for-granted aspect of human existence. Contemplating the notion of inhabiting discloses our primitive relationship with the environment and thereby disrupts our natural embeddedness in the world. To study dwelling is to reflect on the alliance between person and world and move toward an understanding of human habitation. The home is our second body. Inhabiting is an intention, not merely a fact of nature. It is not just a somewhere, to find oneself somewhere, but to inhabit a place. It is the act of incorporation and is an active state. In the sense of dwelling, incorporation is the movement from the strange to the familiar.

¹⁴ There is a large body of literature in language geography, folklore, and history on the topic of environment and language. For an overview, see Terry Jordan and Lester Roundtree, *The Human Mosaic* New York: Harper and Row, 1982. But the vast majority of research, thus far, concerns itself with the accurate and scholarly collection and analysis of material. The interpretation of the modes in which language disclosed the environment remains to be done. Two works worth mention here, are: Joel Garreau, *The Nine Nations of North America* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981 and Marjorie Grene, *Landscape* in Ronald Bruzina (ed). *Phenomenology: Dialogues and Bridges* Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 55-60, 1982.

For information about the Appalachian dialects: James Robert Reese, *The Myth of the Southern Appalachian Dialect as a Mirror of the Mountains*, in *Voices from the Hills*, New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1975.

The labor of caretaking and personal expression turns a place into a home. We live in the world and are of the world.

The importance of the investigation undertaken in this thesis is the value of looking at a place as a comprehensive whole. The ability to transcend the factual, quantitative way which researchers and practitioners traditionally relate to places; leaves the mind free to react and offer insights about the patterns that emerge from experiencing the landscape. The most difficult aspect of this method is learning to detach oneself from our own dominating cultural life which can dull and condition our perceptual capacities. Using simultaneous perception, describing not explaining phenomena that exists in Harlan, helped me to break through many of these confinements. Phenomenology characterizes the processes of the mind as social and dynamic receiving visual stimuli as it shows itself.

A phenomenological method is an important tool for understanding the landscape. We are rarely asked to define dwelling in the world, but we are asked to create environments for dwelling. I see the phenomenological model of landscape interpretation as an important tool to be taught to students in the design professions. At some point in the educational process, students must be taught to observe the landscape and recognize the patterns that emerge from a place. The phenomenological model provides that tool.

The more often this type of investigation is repeated, the more one can learn about the potentials of this approach and its reliability and limitations for understanding place. If we can understand the particular sense of place and identify the elements and patterns that make one place different from another; we can work to protect those elements and patterns and introduce new ones to support the sense of place in the landscape.

"We seek meaning in the landscape because it is the repository of human striving...Meaning implies two things. One is order or harmony. We find meaning when we can discern order or harmony in the chaotic world of facts and remove the irritation and insecurity that chaos generates. Meaning also implies significance: a phenomenon has meaning because it is a sign to something beyond itself, to its own past and future, and to other objects. The significant object or event has the seeming capacity to condense the diverse strains of the universe into a thing within human reach.

Thus the comprehension of meaning involves the search for order and the search for significance. Clearly each discipline has its own conception of both order and significance but ultimately the goal is the same--understanding what the landscape means and has meant to various people" (Gold, 1982, p.105).

GLOSSARY

This difficulty (of making definitions) is increased by the necessity of explaining the words in the same language, for there is often only one word for one idea; and though it may be easy to translate words like bright, sweet, salt, bitter, into another language, it is not easy to explain them (Samuel Johnson).

TERMS DEFINITIONS

AESTHETIC

of or pertaining to sensuous perception. The theory or philosophy of taste, or of the perception of the beautiful in nature or art.

APPERCEPTION

perception characterized by clearness and by the relating of what is now and present to previously acquired.

ATTITUDE

is primarily a cultural stance, the position one takes toward the world. It has greater stability than perception and is formed of a long succession of perceptions (experience). Attitudes imply experience and a certain firmness of interest or value.

CARTESIAN PARADIGM

knowledge is acquired through a succession of elementary steps in which every following step is firmly based on the previous step.

COMMUNITY

common character, quality in common, identity, life associated with others, society, political or social unity.

CONSCIOUSNESS

is the sub-structure or root of all knowledge. The fundamental principle of phenomenological methods requires that one's conscious processes, as themselves given in perception, be acknowledged as genuine data.

COSMOGRAPHY

While physical science arises from the logical and aesthetic demands of the human mind, cosmography has its source in the personal feelings of man toward the world, towards the phenomena surrounding him (Boas, 1887, 139).

CURIOSITY

careful attention to details, desire to know and learn, a feeling of interest leading one to inquire about anything.

DWELLING

"I am, you are mean: I inhabit, you inhabit. The way you are and the way I am, the way we humans are on earth is the *buan*, the dwelling. Being human means being on earth as a mortal, that is, to dwell. (Heidegger, 1971, p.173).

EIDETIC APPROACH

any description derives from the intention to find out what is intrinsic to the phenomenon and therefore to eliminate what is contingent and incidental.

ENVIRONMENTAL HERMENEUTICS

A way of interpretation which evokes what things are and how they are related to other things in the webs of particular lives and places. There is a reciprocity between local language and essential qualities of place.

GESTALTS

The whole experience is more important than the sum of its parts. From the German meaning shape or form, appearance, nature: a structure of physical, biological or psychological phenomena so integrated as to constitute a functional unit with properties not derivable from its parts.

HERMENEUTIC APPROACH

phenomena and human experiences are not immediately accessible to understanding and therefore call for an interpretive reading.

HUMAN VALUES

an idea that is prized by the holder and for which the holder will make sacrifices to hold it (Speer).

IDENTITY

Dictionaries give multiple meanings, the two most relevant referring to the unchanging nature of something under varying aspects or conditions and the condition of being one thing and not another. Both seem relevant , but the latter seems to be more at the heart of the concept as it applies to this project. In some way, and somehow, the unit in question sees itself, and is seen by others, as being different to other units. This seems to involve both an inside (or contents) and a boundary to the outside, although that boundary does not have to be physical in nature.

INTENTIONALITY

A concept to distinguish between mental activities (such as thinking, desiring and hating) and physical phenomena. Husserl considers mental activity to "intend" its object, in the sense of focusing consciousness on it, and thereby bringing it to the attention of the subject (1946).

LIFE-WORLD

The world as we immediately experience it in our everyday life. It is the world as it is immediately given in our individual and social experiences, that in which things appear according to their sensual, sensible, and practical meanings (Husserl, 1970).

MATERIAL CULTURE

is usually considered to be roughly synonymous with artifacts, the vast universe of objects used by mankind to cope with the physical world, to facilitate social intercourse, and to benefit our state of mind. A somewhat broader definition is: that sector of our physical environment that we modify through culturally determined behavior (Deetz, 1977, p. 24).

PERCEPTION

is both the response of the senses to external stimuli and purposeful activity in which certain phenomena are clearly registered while others recede in the shade or are blocked out. Much of what we perceive has value for us, for biological survival, and for providing certain satisfaction that are rooted in culture.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL REDUCTION

is the entire process of suspending belief in the world and in one's self. As it is actualized, the natural common-sense world we live and act in is reduced into one totally devoid of subjective or empirical assumptions.

PHENOMENOLOGY

comes to terms with the world by accurately describing all its aspects as they appear in the subject's consciousness. It is a philosophy which doubts the truthfulness of all socially accepted knowledge until it is confirmed by a method emphasizing the consciousness of perceiving observers. It is concerned with that cognitive reality which is embodied in the processes of subjective human experience.

PLACE 'Place' places man in such a way that it reveals the external bonds of his existence and at the same time the depths of his freedom and reality (Heidegger, 1958).

QUALITY

with regard to the landscape, the degree of excellence which a landscape possesses in displaying those attributes which clearly define the character of a place.

SCIENCE

in general terms, in this paper, means those rational, self-conscious approaches to the study of the world which aim to provide systematic and factual accounts and explanations.

SIMULTANEOUS PERCEPTION

Our habitual style of thinking, sometimes called stream of consciousness, which broadens and diffuses our beam of attention across all the senses, so that we can see what there is to be seen.

TAKEN-FOR-GRANTED

The pattern and context of everyday life through which a person routinely conducts day-to-day existence without having to make it an object of conscious attention.

TOPOPHILIA

is the affective bond between people and place or setting. It is diffuse as concept, vivid and concrete as personal experience

WONDER

is something that causes astonishment. The emotion excited by the perception of something unexpected or inexplicable.

WORLD-VIEW

is conceptualized experience. It is partly personal, largely social. It is an attitude or belief system; this system implies that attitudes and beliefs are structured.

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