Part II

ON HISTORY

3

The First Thirty Years

BEGINNINGS

The Setting

1940s survey. Electric Interchange. Information. Ideas. Potential. Only beginnings bring forth such rapt attention and such energy. Later, 1956. Several cities, East to West. Providence, Rhode Island; five two-hour seminars. Temperature well over 100°, no air conditioning, over 400 people at the convention, and only one elevator operating. "Miserable as the body was, I found myself swept up by the arts council dream."[1]

There are many who suppose that the current community arts movement was thrust into being by the coming, in the mid-1960s, of the National Endowment for the Arts. Not so. The ferment and activity out of which the government usually makes responsive moves was present in the arts as in other areas of humanistic activity for many years prior to 1965. Such formal developments as a congressional act only follow quite naturally. Actually, the need for a new public support system for the arts was felt almost as soon as the short-lived Works Progress Administration (WPA) disappeared entirely in 1943, and certainly was on the horizon with post-World War II planning.

In fact, there were, before the present time, at least three eras identi-

fied with increased activity in community arts – pre-World War I, the WPA, and the 1950s. The first instance, the Teddy Roosevelt era, saw activity related to the emergence of little theaters, community choruses, and community bands; many municipal arts commissions; the development of the settlement house as a neighborhood arts center; and university extension programs in the arts – all of which accompanied the vitality of the political and social activities of the day. Many public schools started to require music and art instruction. Originating in this era, the community music schools (now called community schools of the arts by their national guild), mostly due to respect for age and structure, have an institutional aura – more aligned with the traditional arts institutions than with the present community arts movement.

The second growth period has been recognized as the WPA arts era, when the artists' unemployment program set in motion arts activity of unprecedented density and in many forms. But, as was said, the short-lived activity all but disappeared with the withdrawal of federal funds, for it had not really taken root.

The third period in this century is represented by the so-called explosion of popular culture of the 1950s. The characteristics motivating it seem related to a search for value and meaning in life and the presence of a spiritual vacuum – no particular focus. Community-minded people supported the arts, and in the 1950s they seemed here to stay – sheer numbers created some impact. Some say that the base was broadening then. They would also ascertain that there was enough breadth to cause Congress to support the legislation that created the National Endowment for the Arts in 1965.

Prior to this century, there were some parallels in American cultural development to the twentieth-century movements noted above. The evolution of the public education system and public library system relates to a search for knowledge and increased leisure time, as conditions grew more stable in the colonies. The lyceum of the period between about 1826 and 1839, "to diffuse useful knowledge or information and improve public schools,"[2] and local mutual educational associations engaged the educational leadership of the day, many of whom were the town and village leaders. The development of such enclaves is one thing, but the development of a state and national system makes one respect the tenacity of those early people, for transportation and communication were a great deal more difficult than they are today.

The development of the library systems as we know them today is a separate and complicated subject. However, one form of library emphasized the "provision of scholarly newspapers and magazines as its essential service while also sponsoring frequent cultural and recreational programs as another aspect of its activity."[3] That was the athenaeum. The history of each athenaeum varies according to city and leadership, but the one in Boston, established in 1807, "remains the most impressive of them all, and pro-

vided the model for many more, including those still in existence in Salem and Philadelphia."[4] It is true that in some of our smaller towns today library sponsorship of cultural activities is quite common. However, the arts council movement, per se, seems to have no roots in base of fact with these prior aspects of our cultural history.

One more historical reference needs to be made: that to the Chautauqua, which swept rural and suburban America between 1874 and 1925. "No other major sociocultural movement in America was built up so painstakingly—half a century in the building—and vanished so swiftly and completely."[5] It is estimated that in 1924, 12,000 towns participated, and 35 million people are thought to have participated. Its "permanent" hold on American life was widely acknowledged by writers and analysts. But times change. Cars, highways, and bus lines could get people to cities. The movies provided continuous entertainment, and radios were soon in almost every home. People didn't need to stir from their own firesides to hear great orchestras, concerts, and lectures.

But never after would rural America be the same. Community leaders, "as an inherent aspect of their duty as leaders," were required to see that the best things in life should be made available to their towns. The talent, which was eclectic at best—lectures and productions of all kinds—represented the total range of cultural possibility, and the quality was uneven. But horizons were expanded, and the cultural seeds were planted in a way that meant there was no turning back. Adult education, practically unknown before the Chautauqua movement, took some of its direction from the pattern of follow-up courses originated at Lake Chautauqua, and by the end there were summer schools, extension courses, and correspondence study throughout the nation.

> The name Chautauqua, in a restricted sense, applies to this institution and the lake its grounds adjoin. But the use of the name has not been so restricted. Other enterprises, some closely, some at best remotely related, have called themselves Chautauquas. These enterprises fall into two main divisions. Imitative assemblies quickly sprang up in fixed localities in all parts of the country, and Chautauqua as parent cordially shared its name with them and gave them its support. By contrast, the travelling tent companies that brought circuit programs by rail or truck or automobile to thousands of American towns and villages during the early decades of the twentieth century simply appropriated the title of Chautauqua. To literally millions of Americans, "Chautauqua" has meant these circuit companies rather than the institution in New York. Many who still retain memories of the circuits, with vague if any knowledge of the assembly whose title they adopted, ask what Chautauqua was, how it started, and whether it still exists.[6]

Although the arts council development has not been the "tent" circuit, some of the spiritual seeds were well sown in this era, and the move-

ment in rural and small communities has some of the same elements of the Chautauqua. One of the main functions is to bring to rural America the cultural offerings available in the cities. The systems for bringing artists and touring companies are far more complex; the costs are higher and fund-raising is multifaceted, but the local leadership must still act in the spirit of civic consciousness. No longer can the whole endeavor depend on a few private individual sponsors.

The Chautauqua movement as a national phenomenon disappeared almost overnight. Remnants as solid as Chautauqua, New York, and revivals such as that of Chautauqua, Devil's Lake, North Dakota remain. Some of the tangential and deeply rooted needs of rural communities are still served by the bevy of sponsored events. The traveling theater group, speaker, or musician is only updated by the present transportation and sponsorship systems, which in some ways make life easier but in many ways change the whole ambience. The distinctions and subtleties of the lyceum and Chautauqua movements extend far beyond this discussion but are irrelevant to the arts council movement.

Today's renaissance of the arts in America is much more complex. This is attributed to the alterations in the traditional work pattern and retirement possibilities, which lead to greater numbers of leisure hours. And it may also be attributed to the need for spiritual renewal and clarification. Broadening potential participation in the arts and redefining values are inherent in all of the eras, but this one, perhaps learning from the experiences garnered before, seems to have a better handle on institutional arrangements that might be of assistance to survival.[7]

The community arts council fits into this picture. There were several ways in which communities became concerned with planning in the arts area. The most concrete comes from the Junior Leagues of America's leadership in exploring the possibilities for planning and coordination, as the councils of social agencies had been doing for the fields of health and welfare. It developed out of the feeling of frustration whenever local Junior Leagues, upon investigating the possibilities of new community projects, found it difficult to identify the resources and unmet needs in the cultural field. Virginia Lee Comer, during many of the years (1936–49) she was on the national Junior League staff (the national organization is now called the Association of Junior Leagues), spearheaded a move as Senior Consultant on Community Arts to help communities organize themselves locally to meet the potential in this area of community activity. The publication, *The Arts and Our Town*, which appeared in 1944, was a community survey manual still valid today. But communities had to mobilize their own forces to do the work and use the results. They did in places as divergent as Vancouver, British Columbia; Corpus Christi, Texas; Louisville, Kentucky; Wichita, Kansas; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Binghamton, New York. The

survey was the first to assemble facts, to show what cultural facilities existed, and to encourage their fuller use. Secondly, it was to reveal gaps and thus to point the direction for new programs.

The survey was inclusive, examining

> all aspects of participation in the arts and also opportunities for appreciation of them, and included agencies whose sole purpose is to provide cultural opportunity, such as museums, and those whose programs may touch cultural fields, such as radio stations and civic clubs. In addition, organizations of large groups of people such as housing projects, unions, churches, etc., have been included, since they are channels through which large numbers can be informed of existing facilities and services and may themselves have developed activities.[8]

Art councils started to emerge from this community planning – permanent coordinating organizations, tailored to the needs of their individual communities. The arts were unexplored territory in terms of cooperative effort. Miss Comer, with strong arts training, saw that when such a cooperative effort emerged, it might relate directly to other overall planning bodies such as city planning commissions or councils of social agencies, and fill a need whenever a community was moved to open up more creative and recreative opportunities to more people. She discussed its uses for the leisure-time divisions of the councils of social agencies and improvement of cultural facilities. She projected that an arts council

> may well emerge as a familiar channel through which cultural agencies can become familiar with each other's programs, can plan and work together to stimulate people's appreciation of and participation in the arts, and [can] mobilize public opinion behind such cultural projects that need citizen backing. As such a council strengthens creative activities within itself, it will inevitably touch other planning organizations, serve them, and in so doing contribute to a rich and well-rounded community development.[9]

Unlike the organizational pattern of the Community Chests and Councils, the structural pattern for which was laid out by a central office in New York, the arts council development was molded to suit each community. There was as much diversity recorded in arts council activity in the early days as there is today. Thus the seeds were sown all over the country. Miss Comer's energy and consultation was sought from then on, and, directly or indirectly, much of that early history is the story of her travels and influence.

In notes that documented her thoughts upon leaving the Junior League staff in 1949, Miss Comer wrote,

> The task of strengthening the arts in our society becomes more imperative every day. From observation of numerous communities of every character –

old and new, large and small, industrial and suburban – in all parts of the country, certain general conditions are discovered that limit the effectiveness of the artist and the arts.

Although there are many evidences of brilliant leadership, by and large a lack of understanding of the community in which they function is true of the individual artist, the teacher, and those professional and lay people responsible for cultural agencies.

Even laymen well versed in the economic and social conditions which affect education, health, and welfare may fail to relate this knowledge to an understanding of the cultural situation. Unfortunately, evidence strongly points, also, to a lack of preparation for practical guidance on the part of many professionals.

Too often the individual artist is unable to appraise his environment and make a realistic evaluation of what he may expect from it and how he can most effectively pursue his creative activities within it. Too often he is without knowledge of techniques which would help in creating wider public interest (hence markets) for painting, sculpture, etc., and more understanding attitudes toward contemporary design, painting, and architecture.

Our social pattern rests on collaboration between layman and professional in a somewhat intricate community organizational structure. A poor understanding of this structure and how the arts may be related to it leads to many needless frustrations for creative artists and failures for organized programs.

Another adverse condition, found almost universally, is the isolation in which each of the arts and each cultural agency exists and functions. An understanding of the relationships between the arts is vital for aesthetic and technical reasons, but it is also important to the healthy growth of the arts in the particular community setting. As it is, there is little realization that there are problems, solutions to these problems, and potential resources which can be shared with benefit to all areas such as financing, program planning, building a wider public, and the all-important task of interpreting the arts.

It would seem that students who plan a career in any of the arts would benefit in life and career situations from the ability to analyze a community and to understand their professional relationship to it. A knowledge of organizational and developmental techniques which they could apply or pass on to the laymen would be advantageous.[10]

Although the Junior Leagues of individual communities have, over the years, individually involved themselves in cultural life through significant projects, there was no single or national influence as great as that of Virginia Lee Comer's work in those beginning years. That influence was additive, not a national mandate, and without her single-mindedness there might not have been a sense of national leadership at all. [It is not insignificant to note, however, that her position at the national Junior League offices was filled by Miss Kathryn Bloom, who continued the work. Miss Bloom's further contributions to the arts, especially arts in education, are documented elsewhere in this book (see Chapter 20).]

Individuals who have developed management skills through their Junior League work on community projects have become volunteer and professional leaders of arts councils as part of their personal interest and development even now, and would acknowledge the training ground provided by League opportunities. But the diversity in the development of arts councils became so great, and the field so large, that this thread of influence is only one among many through the years. In the 30 years since Miss Comer did her work, the League has sought to broaden its own image, has struggled to identify its own place in the broader community, and is still involved in those struggles today. There is little relationship between the League's efforts and the arts council's search for identity and place in the same community.

The thread that continues to nurture the newly developing organizational type came from the same field of social work mentioned earlier by Miss Comer. The coordinated arts programs developing in cities with community orchestras came to the attention of Helen M. Thompson, who started as editor of the newsletter of the ASOL and later became its Executive secretary. Because of her own professional training in the field of social work, she immediately saw the relationships between the value and strengths of coordinated social work programs and the new cultural development. In July 1950, when she became the Executive Secretary, it seemed "logical to widen the ASOL study of existing coordinating arts programs with special reference to the effect of these programs on the orchestras affiliated with them."[11] By 1952, an entire session of the ASOL national convention was devoted to discussion of the coordination efforts in several communities. By the next year, the Rockefeller Foundation, making its first ASOL grant, paid for a three-part study, one part of which was a survey of coordinated arts programs – their function and structure, and whether or not they offered logical solutions to the problems of symphony orchestras and other arts groups.

Representatives of all known arts councils were invited to hear a preliminary survey report at the 1955 ASOL convention, which thus became the first annual conference of arts council representatives. Among the outcomes of the convention were a service program for arts councils, inclusion of arts councils in subsequent conventions, and voting membership for them in the ASOL. These were critical moves in nurturing the embryonic efforts in the first decade of arts councils, which numbered more than 60 by 1958. A 1958 ASOL study emphasized 16 councils, but conclusions reached showed the potential strength of such coordinated community effort for most communities. At the 1955 convention, this potential strength was already recognized:

> What we are studying is the organized effort, through planning, to balance, coordinate, and expand the cultural activities of the community and

thereby to raise artistic standards and broaden the opportunities for public participation. . . .

What are the factors which have precipitated the organization of these councils? In the main, there appear to be five.

First there is the simple and obvious difficulty that if you have a number of organizations in the community all scheduling exhibitions, concerts, recitals, and lectures without knowing what the others are doing, you're bound to run into conflicts which do harm to everyone. Hence the need for some sort of clearinghouse for dates has provided the opening wedge for cooperation in many communities. That's what happened in Albany, and, over on the other side of the continent, that's where a beginning has been made in . . . Santa Barbara.

A much more significant factor, secondly, has been the recognition that there are serious inadequacies in the cultural life of the community.

A third precipitating factor is the wish to extend already existing cooperation into new fields.

The need for new sources of revenue and the belief that such sources can be tapped through joint fund raising have been a fourth factor in bringing arts groups together. This clearly was the reason in 1949 for organizing the United Fine Arts Fund of Cincinnati and for the creation the same year of the Louisville Fund.

The fifth of these precipitating factors is the common need for space, for physical plant—auditorium, galleries, classrooms, exhibition halls, and offices. The construction of a community arts center is common cause on which divergent groups can unite.

Those appear to be the chief circumstances out of which arts councils have developed. They are obviously not mutually exclusive, and can all be operative simultaneously; but usually one or the other of them has been dominant.[12]

The speaker concluded that there was no "neat formula for creating an arts council." More than 25 years later, there still isn't. Three examples cited at the 1955 convention show how some emergences might be described:

Consider Quincy, Illinois, an industrial community and farming center of about 50,000. . . . Somewhat isolated as it is, with no city of comparable size within a radius of 100 miles, it has created its own cultural life, and a remarkably rich one. A symphony orchestra, [a] chamber music society, a flourishing art club, and several other groups are active and work well together. For the most part the cultural leaders are friends, have known each other for years, and serve on each other's boards of directors. So the creation of a council was a natural outgrowth of a cordial spirit which already existed. Organizing the council presented no real problems. They agreed on the desirability of a council, drafted a charter and by-laws, and got themselves incorporated. Of course there was leadership, and it was exercised largely by one individual, but the council in Quincy could almost be said to have come into being over the teacups.

It was a Junior League survey of the community's cultural resources back in 1949 which provided the impetus for the council in Wichita. This booming prairie city of nearly 300,000 grew 46.4 percent in the decade between 1940 and 1950 and has one of the highest literacy rates in the country. When the arts survey report was published in 1950, recommending the creation of an arts council, it was placed in the hands of every important cultural and civic leader in the community. One month later a general meeting was called, with invitations going out to all the cultural groups. There the matter was discussed and it was agreed to form a council. Accordingly an interim committee was appointed to work out organizational details. The following spring at the first annual meeting, by-laws were adopted, officers elected, and the Community Arts Council of Wichita was on its way.

In one other city, the leaders of a number of the cultural groups became convinced that something had to be done to end the chaotic state of artistic activity in the city. Representatives of the leading arts organizations were called together under the aegis of one of the most venerable and well-established of these groups, whose prestige in the community was unassailable. Some of those in attendance appear to have come less out of belief in the desirability of cooperation than through fear of missing out on something. Indeed, it is reported that at least two of them were not even on speaking terms. Yet the leaders persisted, and at length through patience, diplomacy, and the sheer logic of the situation a council was born. It is a heartening thing that in that city the old animosities are reported to be dying out under the spur of a common task.[13]

These observations were only the first of about a half dozen studies over the next 20 years that would show continuous and steady growth in the numbers of arts councils, and the diversity among them.

Thus between 30 and 40 years ago, the roots were laid for the local arts council movement in America. The name "council" first came into use in England. As the explanation goes, to assure that the arts would not be among the first casualties of World War II, the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) was organized by the Pilgrim Trust, a private organization, shortly after the beginning of the war. One of its purposes was to see that art exhibitions and productions were taken to people who otherwise would not have them, being cut off by wartime conditions. After a very short time, the government "took a hand" in the operation, and early in 1940 the Ministry of Education took over the entire program. The successor to CEMA was the Arts Council of Great Britain, chartered as "a separate entity responsible to the Parliament through the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but otherwise completely independent and basically an agency that channeled arts grants in such a way that they will do the most good for the most people."[14]

The oldest cooperative arts venture in this country began operation in 1927 in Cincinnati, when Mr. and Mrs. Charles P. Taft were instrumental in founding the Cincinnati Institute of Fine Arts "for the purpose of stimu-

lating the development of art and music in the city of Cincinnati." The purposes of this organization have perhaps been emulated by virtually every arts council since. "It is the function of your institute to see that organizations already in existence are developed and given proper financial support, that their work is coordinated and directed in the most effective channels, and that new organizations are formed where other fields can be opened up."[15] Unlike the Arts Council of Great Britain, but in the American tradition, private monies were thought of as the full source of funds at that time.

And it was that way in America all during the emerging period of the 1940s and 1950s. What did happen in the 1960s, as the state and federal governments become more involved in developing extended support mechanisms for the arts, is that local governments began to consider administrative commissions whose functions were very similar to that of the private councils. San Francisco's, which was established in 1932, predates such commissions. This is not to say that there was no interest anywhere else on the part of local government in arts coordination until this time. The 1958 ASOL survey reflects such interests in Louisville, Kentucky; Waterloo, Iowa; and Binghamton, New York, and it must not be forgotten that some city government committees reviewed designs in their cities from the turn of the century. Still other cities have supported arts institutions with tax exemption and abatement. The contemporary local public agency as it is described in this book is a counterpart of the local private agency, and it is different mostly by virtue of technical structure, not function.

DEFINITIONS AND FUNCTIONS

Thus from a seemingly unlikely combination of activities, the community arts council movement began. It began almost simultaneously in a variety of communities, and it began as a group of organizations primarily concerned with the coordination and welfare of the arts organizations in the communities. If there are questions of the nature and function of these agencies in an arts era that is continually redefining itself, one must try to deal with questions that have never really been addressed. One of them is the nature of "community arts." We talk about them continually, and yet there are as many definitions as there are conversations. It is essentially easy to identify the broadest functions of the institutions for the performing and exhibiting arts. The oldest are about a century old; the newest are now emerging. Historically, their directions and policies were set by the few for the many and reflected the wisdoms of those who served on their boards of directors or gave money to support them. These institutions have definitions and functions that most of the public understands.

Until the early 1970s, "community arts" did not exist as an independent term. Until that time, it was always connected to an art form, as in "community symphony," "community theater," or "community chorus." It referred to an organization that served those citizens who wished to participate avocationally in an arts activity. The director might be paid; the participants were not. As noted, these organizations got their start in the early decades of the century. They also catered to a predominantly white middle- or upper-middle-class clientele.

"Community arts" emerged in the early 1970s as a generic term to cover all of the other organizations that had been formed – many in the troubled 1960s or later through CETA programs – to serve racial or ethnic populations along with what were eventually termed "special constituencies": senior citizens, teenagers, the hospitalized, and prisoners. There has been little or no communication between these two fields except occasionally through an arts council.*[16]

There are certain characteristics attributed to community arts groups. What are some of them? They are indigenous or grassroots, neighborhood, local. They provide the opportunity for participation and enjoyment. Process is important, as is working with the best available talent, professional or not. No standards are ultimately set, but quality is usually sought and many times attained. The emphasis is on the doing; there is little long-term policy making and sometimes there is no permanent home, although many community theaters, galleries, and other organizations pride themselves on the small physical space that is "home."

The community arts council is caught by the image conveyed by these characteristics. The community of the arts council is a total community, not one to stand only for the special interests of a segment of the community. Their dreams are of reaching all populations, and including all art forms in their range of interest – not that they have been able to achieve this in all cases, but this is the philosophy.

In an attempt to clarify a common terminology for the council-type agency, NACAA, the national service organization, has made a distinction between those multidisciplinary agencies that have as their purpose the provision of services and support to artists and arts organizations within the community (local arts agencies), and the recipients of such services and support, always referred to generically as community arts organizations.

*In fact, the Neighborhood Arts Programs National Organizing Committee (NAPNOC), a national organization open to neighborhood arts organizations and other groups and individuals who support the neighborhood arts movement, was organized in part precisely because such individuals felt that their community arts agencies had little in common with arts councils. The latter, they felt, were establishment-oriented and served either the wholly professional organizations or the establishment avocational groups such as the little theaters and community symphonies.

In 1982, NACAA changed its name to NALAA. A National Endowment for the Arts Task Force on Community Program Policy of 1979 agreed, for purposes of clarity, to use the term "local arts agency" to encompass the greatest range of support systems currently available at the local level. A local arts agency is defined as follows:

> a public or private not-for-profit organization, whose primary purpose is to provide a support system and network to develop, deliver, and sustain arts activities in the community. Its primary function is to provide some or all of the following services: support of individual artists, promotion of arts activities, grant making, space provision, and central administration services for arts organizations. A local arts agency often serves as a forum for citizens' opinions and acts as an advocate for public and private support of the arts. In addition, a local arts agency may sponsor programs in cooperation with local and neighborhood organizations, or on its own as a catalyst for audience development and new programming.[17]

These local arts agencies have a number of names, all indicating allegiance to these basic purposes – institutes, foundations, associations, federations, commissions, agencies, or cultural departments. No two are exactly alike.

In discussing the laboring over definitions, Charles C. Mark, veteran *Arts Reporting Service* editor, and one who has been a participant in and observer of the 30-year history of the arts council movement, recently identified the problem as one of trying to make a functional definition. He pled for a conceptual definition, such as this one: "a local arts council (agency, commission, allied council) is a nonprofit or governmental planning agency providing certain services to more than one art form and the community." As he says, "Whether a particular council raises money or provides facilities, offers programs or management services, it is all encompassed in the definition."[18] Since functionally these agencies have worked to support and advocate for the arts in the communities "to create a climate and conditions in which the arts can thrive,"[19] it is no wonder that the ways in which that has been accomplished vary widely, depending on the particular community's makeup and needs.

Each local agency deals with the realities of its local context, which normally includes the possibilities of large and small arts organizations and of arts in towns, neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and a range of social service agencies (such as senior citizen and handicapped centers – all of the real potential audiences. The councils that have identified needs of the community but lack a supply of arts organizations or artists have sought ways to bring them. They have identified what might be possible to in-

clude, and the communities have sometimes realized what it might develop what is needed indigenously because of local energy and interest.

The definition of "the arts" even in the 1960s was much more limited than it is today. Because of the long and illustrious Western tradition in painting, sculpture, music, dance (ballet, mostly), and theater, these were "the arts." One of the biggest contributions of the community arts council over the last 30 years is that it is this type of organization that has striven to bring more and more art forms and publics into the mainstream of the arts and to bring public awareness to their importance, while not diminishing the importance of the older, well-identified arts and arts institutions. They have, in addition, been proponents of a better life for artists; they have struggled to find employment, homes, studios, and markets while giving them the wherewithal to maintain a professional stance. The development of technical assistance to both organizations and individuals has been a major area of arts council concern.

The arts council has been a communications link between the arts and the public, the arts and business, the arts and government, and the arts and media in community after community. The arts council has been a catalyst for public discussion about the arts and arts issues, which had previously been seen as matters mostly for the private board rooms. Articulation has been forced through public hearings and the like, such as when local governments were asked to write about the inclusion of the arts and culture within the scope of city government.[20]

Historically as well, arts councils have broadened their own functions, which at first seemed to include mainly service to the arts organizations themselves, but which now encompass the relationship of the arts to community life.

Because of this broader view, councils have often been "on the line" about quality and quantity. The best councils are interested in nurturing the best, in developing the best processes, and in bringing opportunity where it is lacking. They have found that the "best" can include jazz, crafts, and many ethnic forms. They did not create these "community arts" – they have simply included them in their definitions of "art." Thus, if there is any confusion of terms, it arises mainly around the limits imposed by the term "community arts" and the total community. The arts council is interested in both.

While working to create an environment for these community arts to thrive, community arts councils have not forgotten and have often provided services important to the older and more established institutions. They encourage and give opportunity to both old and new, small and large; they try to be an example of good management. Yet their leadership constitutes a new management field that has been defining itself at the same time as it is being examined as a model.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The first 30 years in the community arts council movement mainly comprise a prologue. There has been a multitude of projected responses to apparent needs, more questions than answers, and much conceptualizing. The problem now is how to create some enduring processes without limiting continuing experimentation and response to the needs of individual communities.

The local councils have grown to this point of time through indigenous development—from communities' own perception of what is needed to enhance the state of the arts. As we have noted, "the arts" may mean many things: traditional, well-endowed, and large institutions; a bevy of smaller organizations of nontraditional art forms; very traditional ethnic art forms; individual artists of all kinds. The composition and proportion of one facet to another changes from community to community.

Arts councils have sprung from chambers of commerce, Junior League interest, foundation interest, citizen interest, and government interest. They have evolved from the formation of arts festivals, arts and crafts associations, training programs such as the Community Artists Residency Training program (CART), and other catalyst activities. Councils sprang up from community interaction; rarely were they mandated. (However, in 1980, with the development of the Arts Lottery in Massachusetts, arts councils were mandated in each statewide jurisdiction. Over 300 arrived, born with the lottery legislation.* Similarly, in California, many councils have developed simultaneously (as stipulated by the State Arts Council's incentives for state-local partnership planning.)

The size and age of a city, its management structure, demographics, topography, traditional support systems, local corporate commitment, foundations base, educational structure and system, and population stability and mobility are all going to bear upon its particular arts council's structure and function. In rural areas and countywide service systems, the problems of distance, isolation, differing town personalities, priorities, and activities create circumstances quite different from those in urban settings.

Other factors—age of populations, school systems without arts specialists, high tourist potential, permanent or impermanent populations, expanding or contracting population base—will affect the way the arts and artists live in that community, as well as the expectations and focus of the council.

*In 1982, after the first year, the Arts Lottery was in need of rethinking, even though about $37,000 was distributed to Boston and an average of $734 each to the towns and cities, depending on population. See Charles C. Mark, *Arts Reporting Service*, no. 288, March 22, 1982.

The arts are nowhere on an island off to themselves, no matter how strong the private sector is. There are still places where the traditional support systems are so strong that the private sector alone can support institutions, but these are rare and due to become even rarer as the 1980s progress. It will be an educational process to find out how to deal with the combined private and public support potential as wisely as possible. It will take sophistication on the part of boards of trustees, an educated citizen advocacy, and a look at the ways in which other human service areas have addressed such issues. The arts are only the latest segment of human concern to have to face the challenge.

We know these things to be true, for the arts council, moving from its earlier concern for the arts organizations, has been one major testing ground. Many times they have been the agents of change in the community, and there is a growing reliance on them for advice, expertise, and technical assistance, not only by arts groups and civic community organizations, but by governmental agencies. They have been, and should continue to be, enmeshed in the fabric of governmental affairs. More and more, it is being realized that cultural affairs should be part of governmental affairs.

It is laborious to spend more time than absolutely necessary on definitions, because it becomes abundantly clear that the community arts service agencies that are the concern of this book have had somewhat the same range of services and functions since the beginning. The difficulties expressed in regard to definitions beg the questions that are really important.

It takes time for any impact of any sort to be felt, absorbed, or expressed by those unrelated to the effort. The public sense grows slowly—many times, too slowly. In their first years, councils have come and gone before there was a strong enough public sense of their presence.

All of this begs the ultimate definition for local agencies—local initiative. The declaration of purpose in the congressional act that brought the National Endowment for the Arts into being discusses, first off, the importance and primacy of this initiative and the proper and appropriate order of things, including the federal government's proper concern.[21] Without local community concern and activity, there is no appropriate action on other levels. That's what it's all about.

NOTES

1. R. Philip Hanes, Jr., "Arts Councils of America: Progress in Review," in *The Arts: A Central Element of a Good Society* (New York: Arts Councils of America, 1965), p. 140.

2. Cecil Hayes, *The American Lyceum: Its History and Contribution to Education* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1932), p. 31.

3. Elmer D. Johnson and Michael H. Harris, *History of Libraries in the Western World* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1976), p. 202.

4. Ibid.

5. Victoria Case and Robert Ormond Case, *We Called it Culture: The Story of Chautauqua* (Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1948), p. 2.

6. Theodore Morrison, *Chautauqua: A Center for Education, Religion, and the Arts in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. vii.

7. Edward Kamarch, "The Surge of Community Arts," *Arts in Society* 12(1975): 6–9.

8. Virginia Lee Comer, *The Arts and Our Town: A Plan for a Community Cultural Study* (New York: Association of Junior Leagues of America, Inc., 1944), p. 7. Reprinted by permission.

9. Virginia Lee Comer, "The Arts and Your Town: The Junior League Explores a New Field for Community Planning," *Community: Bulletin of Community Chests and Councils, Inc.*, November 1946, p. 6. Reprinted by permission.

10. Notes from Virginia Lee Comer's historic materials. Used by permission.

11. Leslie C. White and Helen M. Thompson, eds., *Survey of Arts Councils* (Charleston, W.Va.: American Symphony Orchestra League, 1958), p. 5.

12. Kenneth Brown, "Arts Councils – What and Where They Are" (speech to national convention of ASOL, Evansville, Indiana, June 17, 1955), pp. 1–2.

13. Ibid., p. 3.

14. White and Thompson, *Survey*, p. 9.

15. Ibid.

16. Definition formulated in conversation with Ralph Burgard, February 26, 1982.

17. National Endowment for the Arts, Task Force on Community Program Policy, "Report for Discussion no. 104" (August 1979).

18. Charles C. Mark, *Arts Reporting Service*, no. 245 (June 23, 1980).

19. National Assembly of Community Arts Agencies, *Report to the National Council on the Arts* (Washington, D.C.: Author, 1979).

20. National League of Cities Task Force on the Arts, "Cities and the Arts," questionnaire set to 450 cities, 1977.

21. National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, Section 2 (Public Law 209 – 89th Congress, as amended through October 8, 1976), p. 1.