Quilting between the revivals: The cultural context of quilting, 1945--1970

Colleen Rose Hall-Patton
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/rtds

Repository Citation
QUILTING BETWEEN THE REVIVALS:
THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF
QUILTING 1945-1970

by

Colleen Rose Hall-Patton

Bachelor of Arts
University of California, Los Angeles
1976

Master of Arts
University of California, Los Angeles
1985

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Sociology
Department of Sociology
College of Liberal Arts

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
May 2004
The Dissertation prepared by

__Colleen Rose Hall-Patton__

Entitled

__Quilting Between the Revivals: The Cultural Context of Quilting 1945 - 1970__

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

__Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology__

Examination Committee Chair

Dean of the Graduate College

Examination Committee Member

Examination Committee Member

Graduate College Faculty Representative
ABSTRACT

Quilting Between The Revivals:
The Cultural Context of
Quilting 1945-1970

by

Colleen Rose Hall-Patton

Dr. Barbara Brents, Examination Committee Chair
Associate Professor of Sociology
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Quilting is a reflection of women's roles in the family. What happened to quilting between 1940 and 1970 is important to examine because it tells us much about the transformation of women from producers to consumers. In the twentieth century, quilts were increasingly replaced by mass produced blankets. While quilting literature has argued that quilting, for all practical purposes, ceased between 1940 and 1970, women resisted the change to consumerism by continuing to produce quilts and negotiating their use of mass production.

The portrayal of quilting in magazines shifted from an integral role as thrifty and decorative to being almost superfluous to women's domestic roles. In practice however, women combined form and function in unique ways to rewrite their tasks of domestic production. Changing views of
textiles as art and valuing creativity and personal expression placed quilts and quilters more firmly in the sphere of art by the 1960s, which created a broad support base for the 1970s revival.

In the research, I used three sources of data. First, I use the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project to examine actual production. Second, I do a content analysis of magazine articles to examine how quilting was portrayed in popular culture. Third, I interview twelve women who were active quilters between 1940 and 1970. I combine these sources to analyze the social relations of American quilting from 1945 to 1970. Quilts reflected women's move from household manager in the 1940s and 1950s to personal expression in the 1960s. Women's production blended use value and aesthetics. Women treated mass production as an expanded choice for their quilting, rather than replacing quilts with purchased goods for gifts and maintaining family ties. This research provides a detailed examination of changes in women's roles, leisure, gender and art, and their intersection with mass production in the U.S. from 1945 to 1970.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Summaries</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW: GENDER, ART, AND CULTURAL STUDIES</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and Art</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Studies</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW: WOMEN, QUILTING AND HISTORY</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back into the family: Conceptions of women's lives in the 1950s and 1960s</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship on quilting history 1900 to 2000</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Culture: The Nevada Heritage Quilt Project</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media analysis: magazine articles</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5 CHARACTER OF QUILT PRODUCTION</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quilt production and magazine article overview</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kind of quilts were produced?</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 6 WOMEN AND QUILTING</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics: Who was quilting</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for quilting</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household management</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 7 ART, COMMERCIALIZATION, AND HEGEMONY</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From home decoration to high art</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer production and quilting</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hegemonic norms and the place of quilting in American society</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION</th>
<th>267</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary analysis</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research evaluation</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPENDIX A Historical placement of quilting in magazine articles</th>
<th>300</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temporal placement of quilting in magazines</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodization, quilt revivals and design movements</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection to current events</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| APPENDIX B Interview schedule | 318 |

| APPENDIX C Questionnaire for magazine articles | 320 |

| APPENDIX D Nevada Heritage Quilt Project questionnaire | 325 |

| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 327 |

| VITA | 339 |
LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1 Quilts completed by decade .................113
TABLE 2 Quilt article frequencies 1920 to 1974 .... 115
TABLE 3 Magazine type frequencies 1940 to 1974 in percentages ..................................118
TABLE 4 Article type frequency by percentages .... 120
TABLE 5 Percent of references to each technique by decade ............................................... 127
TABLE 6 Percent of references to main techniques by decade ............................................ 128
TABLE 7 Average age of quilter at completion by quilt method .............................................. 139
TABLE 8 Quilts by region of origin ..................... 144
TABLE 9 Percent of estimated and known dates by decade .................................................. 154
TABLE 10 Average age at quilt completion .......... 157
TABLE 11 Percent of Nevada Heritage Quilt Project quilts by type of maker .......................... 167
TABLE 12 Group quilts by region ...................... 169
TABLE 13 Number of quilts made for special occasions by religion ..................................... 179
TABLE 14 Percent of family and gift references in magazines and NHQP ............................... 182
TABLE 15 Time usage references by percentages in magazine articles ................................ 192
TABLE 16 Percent of types of aesthetic descriptions .. 215
TABLE 17 NHQP kit quilts by top type ................. 242

vii
| TABLE 18 | Percent of Articles with references to extinctions and revivals | 308 |
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the long years of this doctoral program, so many people have been of immeasurable help that it is impossible to list them all here. A special thanks belongs to Dr. Paul Shapiro for his help with the SPSS design and analysis of the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project data. A second thanks goes to the Graduate Students Association for the research grant that enabled me to research the NHQP. To my committee, Dr. Andy Fontana, Dr. Joanne Goodwin, and Dr. Kate Hausbeck, thank you for your encouragement, direction and patience. Especially to my chair, Dr. Barbara Brents, thank you for the help through the multiple years of this program and seeing the forest when I was lost among the trees.

To my children Joseph and Ellen, who have grown up with Mom as student, worker and sometimes teacher as well, my unending thanks for their love, patience and unassailable belief that I would finish. To my husband, Mark, my primary editor and historical reference, with the kids, you have been my best cheering section. This paper is dedicated to my family, but especially to Mark for his unending love, support and encouragement.

ix
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1971, the Whitney Museum of Art displayed the exhibition "Abstract Design in American Quilts." This is considered the first time that quilts were presented as art in an art museum, and valued for their design qualities rather than for their decorative value, craftsmanship, or historical social context. The exhibit became a Smithsonian travelling exhibit and is credited with starting a quilt revival in the United States, Japan, and Europe (Holstein 1991). "Not only did this show create a new and widespread awareness of American quilts, it also triggered interest in the whole area of American folk art" (Art & Antiques quoted in Holstein 1991:115).

The primary purpose of this research is to examine the social relations of quilt production from 1945 to 1970 in order to see the transformation of women from domestic producers to consumers and how women framed this new role. Quilting is a reflection of women's roles in the family. Quilts, prior to industrialized production of the 1890s and through the 1930s, were produced by women for their use value, and reflected women's central roles as producers in
the economic unit of the family. By the 1920s to 1930s, quilts were increasingly displaced with mass produced blankets and other household consumer items. Most of the literature (Brackman 1989, Bernick 1994, Ferguson and Crews 1994, Trestain 1998) argues that quilting ceased, for all practical purposes during the 1940s to 1960s as women's roles in the family were dramatically redefined. But by the 1970s, as marked by the Whitney exhibit, quilting re-emerged, defined as art and its female producers defined as artists.

The time period between World War II and the 1971 Whitney art exhibit has been considered by most quilting history researchers to be a period when few quilts were made and the whole support system and cultural milieu for quilting was lost. Most quilting history research has focused on the nineteenth century through a revival in the 1920s and 1930s and on the 1970s revival. "Between 1940 and 1976, quilting, in its richest social, artistic, and psychic complexity, had nearly ceased being practiced" (Bernick 1994:138). As a result, there have been no comprehensive studies of quilts or quilters during this time. Quilt production is one way to understand the tremendous changes in women's lives in a postwar consumer economy.

The 25 years from 1945 to 1970 saw huge changes in American lives and women's lives in particular. The 1950s have been characterized as a time of great conformity and a
return to domesticity as large numbers of women left the work force, got married, moved to the suburbs, and started families. At the same time, women's roles within the family shifted from producer of material goods necessary for survival (canned goods, clothing, blankets, and so forth) to consumption. Though the 1960s have been stereotyped as a time of rebellion and massive social change, Linden-Ward and Green (1993:xvii) note that for most women, the 1960s were more like a continuation of the 1950s than a rebellion against it. Likewise, 1945 to 1970 marked the triumph of mass production and a consumer based economy after the deprivations of the Depression and World War II. The conversion from war production to consumer production provided far more market choices than before the war.

I examine the changes and developments in women's roles during the pivotal period from 1945 to 1970 by looking at quilting and the surrounding social relations of production. The social worlds arounds quilting are a microcosm of the larger post war society which reflects the impact of technology, mass production, the rise of the women's movement, and changes in the perception of textile arts.

Textile production has been an area dominated by women in much of the world for most of documented history. In many cultures, textiles are primary indicators of social status through clothing, home furnishings, banners, and flags (Barber 1994:128).
Studying quilters in the 1950s and 1960s will help to fill gaps in our understanding of this time period. The everyday is not a single history but a multiplicity of experiences which escape official remembering and recording. In order to contextualize and historicize everyday life, we need to explore difference, life practice and cultural expression (Morris 1993:25).

Understanding quilts and quiltmaking can enlarge our understanding of women's lives in ways unavailable with standard documents (Ferrero, Hedges and Silber 1987:11, Torsney and Elsley 1994:1). Scholars have recognized that quilts, like other art forms, reflect larger social changes (Bascom 1969:119) and have used them as a microcosm of the whole society to further understanding.

This research will address the following three questions. How did portrayals of quilting between 1945 and 1970 reflect the transformation of women's roles within the family, particularly changes from producer to consumer? Did women resist or negotiate these roles? How did quilt production reflect this transformation?

In order to answer these questions, I will use three sources of data. I use the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project data to examine the actual production of quilts and how quilt producers portrayed their quilting. Second, I interview 12 women quilters. Third, I do a content analysis of magazine articles on quilting to examine how quilting was
portrayed in popular culture. I combine these sources to get a fuller sense of the social relations of quilt production.

I ask the following specific questions to answer the main questions. Did quilt production cease? What was the character of quilt production between 1945 and 1970? Were there changes in quilt production during this time frame? Were there regional differences? How many quilts were produced? What kinds of quilts were produced? How was quilt production characterized in popular culture? What was the frequency of magazine articles devoted to quilting? How did magazine articles discuss quilting techniques and quilt production?

How did quilting reflect women's roles in the family between 1945 and 1970? How did magazines characterize reasons and justifications for quilting? Who was actually quilting, and how did quilters characterize their quilting? What was the demographics of quilters in Nevada? Why did quilters in Nevada say they quilted? When did they quilt? How did others see it? How were antique quilts, family quilts, and commercially produced quilts viewed? Did the perception of quilting change over time?

What is the relation between quilting and art? How was quilt production characterized in magazine articles in relation to art? What did quilters themselves say about quilting as art? What were the norms about what constituted
domestic art? How were terms such as "art," and "craft" used by quilters themselves and by the media about quilting? How was quilting related to other art forms like ethnic and folk art? What changes occurred in published media and in the actual quilts produced?

How did mass production, commercialization and consumerism impact the social relations of quilting? How did magazines use voices of authority? How did the use of authority change over time? How did changes in technology impact women's lives? Did women resist or negotiate new roles for domestic production in light of mass consumerism? Did personal expression, creativity, and emotional ties act as counterhegemonic motivations?

I examine a neglected part of women's cultural production to expand our understanding of twentieth century quilting and, on a larger level, of women's lives. I use the particulars of quilting to examine the larger issues of domesticity, the beginnings of the women's movement, commercialization, and changes in the relationship of gender and art.

Chapter Summaries

The literature review chapter discusses the main themes of this dissertation. It includes current research in cultural studies, and the relationship between gender and art, showing how this work contributes to those research
areas and moves beyond current work. Chapter Three looks at the literature on women in the 1940s to 1970s and quilts' historical placement. Further information on periodization, revivals and ties to current events is found in Appendix A.

The methodology chapter is organized around the three methods of material cultural analysis of the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project (NHQP), content analysis of magazine articles, and interviews. I will discuss the pros and cons of each method and of multiple method studies like this one.

The data analysis chapters follow the themes elaborated within the literature review. Chapter Five will examine the findings from research on quilt production from 1945 to 1970. It focuses on the what, when, where and how of quilting. The who and why are found in Chapter Six, which examines women's experience including changes in time and resource management, leisure, and women's domestic roles. Chapter Seven examines the impact of technology, commercialization, how voices of authority were used, and how magazines questioned the status quo of quilting as merely home decoration. It incorporates changes in the views of how quilts, gender, and art are related.

The conclusion will synthesize the findings, how they augment existing research, limitations of the research, and suggest future research directions.
Summary

With the rise of cultural studies and feminist scholarship, researchers have reevaluated the role of women in relation to virtually all aspects of society. Three particularly fruitful avenues have been: 1) studying how women's roles in the public and private spheres have changed, including the relationship of production and reproduction, 2) studying the systematic hierarchical valuation of production which categorizes women's contributions as either secondary or nonexistent, and 3) illuminating the realities beyond the stereotypes by contextualizing individual experience.

My research will be an in depth case study of one aspect of women's lives in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of changes in women's role in the home, women and art, and women's relation to broader changes in the economy. This dissertation fills in gaps in knowledge about the history of quilting, women's domestic production, the influence of technology and commercialization, and how quilts factored into the reinterpretation of the relationship of gender to art.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: GENDER, ART AND CULTURAL STUDIES

This chapter provides an overview of the existing research on two of the three substantive theoretical areas of the dissertation: gender and art, and cultural studies. The first section of this chapter reviews theory relating to the impact of gender on art, specifically as it pertains to quilting. The second section reviews salient theories with respect to quilting within cultural studies, such as those concerning commodification, leisure, questioning the status quo, and the use of authority. In each section I review the drawbacks of existing theory, and where this research contributes to theory and knowledge.

Gender and Art

Art offers a particularly useful view of what is occurring in a given culture at a specific time (Bascom 1969:119). With the advent of the second wave of the American women's movement, early feminist studies reevaluated the relationship of gender and art. This research has had four main perspectives. It began with the

This research has been used to seek greater influence for women both in the art world and beyond. The relationship of gender and art provides concrete examples of larger social patterns, for art both reflects society and influences it. Feminist research has contributed to a conceptual revision of the definition of art, seeing it as neither transcendent nor neutral, but passionately involved in the construction of meaning from a particular position at a particular moment in history (Parker & Pollock 1981, Chadwick 1990, Vogel 1988). "The historical and critical evaluation of women's art has proved to be inseparable from ideologies which define her place in Western culture generally" (Chadwick 1990:10).

In the following subsections, I examine 1) the components of the new art criticisms, 2) theories about form
and meaning, and 3) how I apply these theories to my research

**Feminist art criticisms**

A part of the new art criticisms included examining the status of women's traditional art forms, led by Patricia Mainardi's 1973 critique of the Whitney quilt exhibit.

"Quilts have been underrated precisely for the same reason that jazz, that great American music, was also underrated for so long--because the "wrong people" were making it, and because these people, for sexist and racist reasons, have not been allowed to represent or define American culture" (Mainardi 1982:344).

From this research developed a critique of the definition of art and artist based on social and historical factors that belied canonical definitions of art as neutral, egalitarian, and transcendent of cultural norms (Parker and Pollock 1981, Chadwick 1990, Vogel 1988).

Researchers have placed considerations of what is and is not art within an historical and cultural framework, rejecting perceptions of academic neutrality and expertise. Feminist researchers have looked at how the definition of art, artist and woman sustain this power system, and how the identification of women's art as merely domestic and decorative serves to dismiss its importance. One example of this reevaluation is Mainardi (1982:331), who said women's needlework is so important that it should occupy the same place in Women's Studies that African Art occupies in African Studies.

11
The basic question of all research into the relationship between gender and art has been, "What is art?" If an object is not even seen within the framework of defined art worlds, it has no influence in any art context. Much of the research into gender and art has explored various facets of this question, seeking to incorporate social conditions, historical derivation and an expanded view that includes women's traditional arts such as needlework and decoration. Researchers have refuted underlying assumptions of approaches such as Janson's that "good" art is timeless, is good for everyone, and never imposes non-universal values (Duncan 1988:68). By ignoring the situatedness of their approach, art historians have naturalized a valuation that says "good" art assumes a single standard that transcends history, class, sex, and race. Feminist researchers have sought to demonstrate that those norms are actually western, white, male and upper class (Vogel 1988:23).

A number of the researchers (Duncan 1988, Mainardi 1971, Vogel 1988) spend a sizable part of their books reframing the art definition question without ever actually giving the definition of art that they are reacting to, or stating a working definition of art they derived from their research. The reader is assumed to share some common, unstated definition at the beginning and some implicit expanded view at the end of her/his reading.
I find that art's most inclusive definition is an anthropological one. Aesthetic anthropology, in focusing on nonindustrialized societies, sidesteps the web of hierarchical and segmented views of the place of art in society in which western art scholars seem ensnared. Franz Boas defined art as "any embellishment of ordinary living that is achieved with competence and has describable form" (Herskovits 1947:80). Thus an Inuit spoon, a quilt, and a Van Gogh painting are all equally art. This approach more easily settles the debate on whether a particular object is or is not art, and allays a host of deficiencies in more traditional definitions such as H.W. Janson's, though it does not encompass contemporary conceptual forms such as performance art that cross art/theater/music boundaries. It retains the importance of design and human small scale production.

The definition of artist typically has two components. The first is that artists make art, and the exclusion of women's art traditions disallowed many women from claiming that title (Parker and Pollock 1981, Chadwick 1990). The second is a series of social roles and actions that have often been in conflict with women's traditional roles (Raeger 1986, Ecker 1986). Feminist researchers have sought to demonstrate that, though the roles of both artist and woman have become less narrowly defined in the last 40 years, a single standard for artists and woman artists does

**Form and meaning in women’s art**

In this section, I examine the fourth area of theory about gender and art: the form and meaning of women’s art. First, I use quilting to look at theories of how different art genre are hierarchically related. A concurrent thread was the theoretically informed artwork produced by feminist artists that subverted the portrayal (or lack of portrayal) of women in works of art, or used needlework, collage and other "craft" forms to contest the established hierarchy of art types (Parker and Pollock 1981:207. Feminist art criticism has focused on how definitions of art and artist have excluded women’s art forms from being considered art by exploring historical changes. Second, I examine how art and gender theories touch one of the most basic theories in feminist research, that of deconstructing essentialist assumptions about women's roles and their place in production and reproduction.

**A hierarchy of art worlds: craft, folk, ethnic and high art**

Since the 1970s, researchers have looked beyond artists and their products to include the larger art world of critic, producer and audience. Becker (1982:226) emphasizes the importance of examining the entire art world to see how art influences and reflects greater social trends. An
expanded definition of art worlds recognizes the range of people working in art production and distribution, not all of whom are usually considered part of an art world. This approach of looking at the art world's multiple participants in order to examine the politics and hierarchies involved has also been used by art historians Parker and Pollock (1981:134), Wolff (1990:5) and Vogel (1988:25), and by Sieber (1974:204) in anthropology.

In the example of folk art, researchers' use of an expanded concept of art worlds has still set limits that have missed important influences. By assuming ideas were only transmitted informally, quilters lacked generalized judging standards, and not seeing a larger community beyond the family, Becker (1984:49) assumed quilts (his example for folk art) had a static, timeless, utilitarian quality without any conscious aesthetic concerns by the makers.

"It seems likely that, while quilters recognize variations in designs and ability, they have no generalized critical or analytical language in which to discuss them" (Becker 1984:253).

Hall and Whannel's assumption of the importance of community for folk art is similar to Becker's (1985:249), and equally oblivious to how folk arts are tied to larger design trends, commercialization, economic and technological changes, and indigenous aesthetic definitions such as the judging standards at county and state fairs. Hall and Whannel's definition of folk art is of a way of life in an
organic community, though they examine popular art where the anonymous folk artist is replaced by a known individual (Story 1993:62). They see popular art as operating within the confines of the popular rather than as a second tier art form. The assumptions about quilting can be used to examine views about hierarchies of art.

Folk art, such as quilting, is defined by being practiced outside the formal art world. Ethnic art is a folk art practiced by a recognized ethnic subgroup, or imported from one. For such works, recognition as "Art" has often meant ignoring the gender and ethnicity of the artist. For example, in order to see such works as art, Navajo blankets and patchwork quilts were designated as made by "nameless masters," (Parker & Pollock 1981:69 emphasis mine). In fact they were made by women and sometimes signed.

The division of art forms into craft/art, high/folk/ethnic/popular, use/display, and public/private forms have simultaneously created and justified a hierarchy that frequently places forms identified with women in the lower position. For example, craft implies some level of usefulness, while art is for aesthetic purposes only (Becker 1982:273). These hierarchies are part of the development of the modern world during the Italian Renaissance which included the privatization of the family, capitalism, and
women as representation rather than artists (Chadwick 1990:60).

By recognizing that needlework was considered an equivalent art form to sculpture and painting prior to the Renaissance, and examining how the art/craft distinction came into being, researchers (Parker and Pollock 1981, Chadwick 1990, Wolff 1991) have explained the social construction of this hierarchy. These distinctions became more pronounced with the development of art academies in the 18th century, and separate public and private spheres in the 19th century.

In examining Victorian instruction manuals and histories of embroidery, Parker (1984:21) noted their simultaneous acceptance of the separation of public and private spheres, and attempts to reevaluate the hierarchical ordering of them. Thus the ideology of separate spheres posed the ongoing juxtaposition of women's traditional needlearts as part of a valid, but separate and lesser art world, versus the efforts of individual artists to succeed in the "real" art world. Feminist consciousness led to questions about the gendered nature of these hierarchies and greater advocacy for abolishing them (Chadwick 1990:332).

How does the study of quilting contribute to the study of high/low art distinctions? First, it encourages a more nuanced, less clearly separated approach that discourages hierarchies because of the way it has crossed boundaries and
mixed genre. Second, the differences within quilting itself further muddies those dichotomies by encompassing folk, decorative, popular art and high art forms. This encourages a more complex understanding of art genres. One way to blur hierarchical boundaries has been to use the term cultural production instead of art. It encompasses a wider array of activities than associated solely with 'art.' Third, it helps dissolve the modernist high/low art distinction by demonstrating existing creativity in an undervalued art form. By seeing creativity in color selection, settings, and quilting motifs, this form of cultural production that has been considered merely rote reproduction encourages women to see themselves as creators, rather than transmitters, of culture. Barry and Flitterman-Lewis (1988:91) view women's art as a form of cultural resistance.

Questioning the non-art or craft status of quilting during the 1945 to 1970 time period indicates one level of resistance to hegemonic hierarchies. For example, Jean Ray Laury, the "Mother of California Quilting" (Quilters Newsletter Magazine May 2003), who began writing magazine articles about quilting in the 1950s, strove to get stitchery recognized as an art form (Laury 1966:132).

The Denver Museum of Art show in 1965, VISTA quilt groups' connection to the New York art scene, and art collectors like Holstein and Van der Hoof, who began collecting quilts in the late 1960s, are examples of
quilting's direct link and valorization as high art. Holstein and Van der Hoof's collection became the 1971 Whitney Museum exhibit; the Denver Museum exhibit also hung quilts like paintings. VISTA organizers originally marketed Appalachian and Alabama Quilts to artists and art collectors in New York City. Quilts of white Appalachian quilters and African American southern quilters were purchased for home decoration by elite consumers. They helped create entre to the world of high art for quilts.

During the 1950s and 1960s, questioning of the dichotomy between art and craft was only beginning. This research examines how quilts were viewed within the context of various art hierarchies during that time.

Women's roles in production and reproduction

Feminists have continuously asked why women have a near universal secondary social status. Quilting is used to examine how women negotiated their assumed secondary position in the binary hierarchy of production and reproduction. Reproduction means not only childbearing and childrearing, but "the reproduction of daily life in the maintenance and socialization activities of the home, while production is the way labor is organized for supporting the economic and political order" (Humm 1995:239-240). Levi-Strauss's analysis shows a higher evaluation of objects, practices, and people as they become further removed from nature (Parker & Pollock 1981:69). Anthropologist Sherry
Ortner (1974:78) argues that women are placed in an in-between status because of their association with childbearing and rearing. This carries into other forms such as chefs/cooks and artist/crafter.

Since the nineteenth century, theories of art that naturalized biological differences have viewed art as an area for defining and reflecting the conception of woman as different from man. Women were the "angel of the hearth," the defenders of culture but not its creators. Ruskin noted that a woman's intellect was not for invention or creation, but ordering, arrangement, decision, and praise (Parker & Pollock 1981:9). Woman's biological difference from man has been the basis for defining her as "other," and closer to nature. As nature is seen as secondary to culture, this biological difference supports the view of woman as secondary to man (Ortner 1974:80). By exposing the historical social conditions that led to this view, researchers have refuted the view of women as transmitters, but not creators, of culture. Women's creativity has been recognized only as it meets established male norms or as focused through procreation while men's focus was cultural creation (Parker & Pollock 1981:6).

The separation of art and craft coincides historically with the development of the ideology of femininity (Parker 1984:5). This ideology naturalized and justified the separate and secondary social roles of women. For example,
when women embroider, they have been described as practicing a craft rather than an art and performing an activity that has come to represent femininity (Parker 1984:5).

In general, needlework has been praised as timeless and simple; that it disputed intellectualism and celebrated nature and intuition (Parker 1984:197). It has also been damned as a means of subjugation, repression and inculcation (Parker 1984:10). Parker (1984:21) noted how Victorian embroidery manuals simultaneously accepted the idea of separate spheres and tried to revalue the domestic sphere. One could expect similar approaches during that bastion of domesticity, the 1950s, and an outright breach of its walls during the rebellious 1960s. Research on the relation of quilters to the public and private spheres will provide an in-depth understanding of how cultural production and the separate spheres ideology are related and interwoven and whether views are similar to Victorian values.

Women's cultural production not only follows its own aesthetic values, but combines the emotional work of tying family and friends together with use of creative imagination. Through its association with family, needlework has been accorded secondary status in the production/reproduction dichotomy (Parker 1984), which made it an acceptable art form for women because of its domestic association. Women's roles were perceived as compatible with needlework, though needlework has sometimes also been
used as a way to control the fragmentation that came with their roles as wife and mother (Hinson 1970:19). Examining the values women placed on quilting is a way of recognizing the physical and emotional labor of creating a family and reproducing society. Some of these values include: a) different aesthetic rules and judgements of creativity from canonical art, b) the social embeddedness of quilts, and c) their use as an expression of creativity when other forms were inaccessible. Quilts are an expression of continuity across generations, a demonstration of female capability, of ties to and independence from the overall economy.

The forms and meaning of women’s art have been framed through examining hierarchies of art genre and how women’s art forms have been excluded as high art by defining them as part of women’s reproductive roles.

How this work contributes to theory

In this section, I examine how quilts have been used in questions about the form and meaning of art. Quilts were treated as art objects in the 1971 Whitney exhibit "Abstract Design in American Quilts" by disassociating them from their mode of production and makers. By mounting quilts on the wall like paintings, the exhibit invoked high art rules of untouchability, distance, and focus on the visual. What changes occurred in the previous 25 years that enabled the international acceptance of this exhibit of quilts? I examined multiple components of art worlds such as
creativity, usefulness and aesthetics to find increasing ties between quilting and art. Though these changes were not seen by feminist theorists until the early 1970s, they still enabled quilts to become a touchstone for altered views of art and gender. For example, Parker and Pollock use quilts to criticize canonical art history that dismissed women's traditional needlework because it was grounded in life passage events of women and used as part of girls' indoctrination into femininity. It is precisely this social embeddedness that is effaced when art history calls them "decorative, dexterous, industrious and geometric" (Parker & Pollock 1981:78).

However, by being outside of the dominant conventions and institutions of art, quilters were perceived to have more design freedom than female artists in traditional media (Mainardi 1982:345). Women evolved their own abstract language to convey personal, political, religious and social meanings. This exploration of abstract forms and colors is what allowed quilts to be compared to modern abstract art (Parker & Pollock 1981:77).

Feminist critics such as Wolff (1990:82), downplay the usefulness of celebratory work such as quilting because it is so often "naively essentialist" and too easily marginalized. Although many quilts do celebrate/commemorate life passages, these critics fail to appreciate the aesthetics and messages that the quilts exemplify. In
seeking a place for women's "voices," women's traditional arts have been overlooked. In part, this oversight may itself reflect a deemphasis on the values exemplified in such cultural production. It also ignores the interactions between society and cultural production where women have already used the medium and surrounding "art world" to voice their concerns, visions, and aesthetics.

True equality can not be achieved in art unless gender becomes irrelevant as a valorization criteria, which cannot be accomplished without seeking equal representation. Quilts have been a touch point for the discussion of women's specifically feminine art forms since the earliest years of feminist art criticism. Researchers have accepted needlework as a quintessential women's art form and contrasted views of it to "high" art forms of painting and sculpture. However, this discussion was predicated on the increased acceptance of quilts as a valid art medium and increased ties to high art, folk and ethnic art that actually began in the 1960s.

I examine changing views of creativity, the value of various art mediums, and quilting's ties to design and social movements. I compare the relation (or lack thereof) of quilting to art in interviews, books, magazines, and the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project.
Cultural Studies

Cultural studies focuses primarily on "the production, distribution, consumption and exchange of cultural objects and their meanings; the textual analysis of these objects and the practices that surround them, and the study of lived cultures and lived experiences which are shaped by the cultural meanings that circulate in everyday life" (Denzin 1992:81). The new cultural politics of difference trashes the monolithic and homogeneous in the name of diversity, multiplicity, and heterogeneity, in order to historicize, contextualize, pluralize and focus on the concrete, specific, and particular (West 1993:203). In this way, cultural studies and history become indivisible (During 1993:203). Cultural studies' emphasis is on the area of private life as the area most available to foster social change and link the personal and the political, valuing leisure activities as a way of expressing autonomy and difference (Hebdige 1979:77). Many possible roads exist for creating a populist culture where cultural producers have more control of their product and its reception. Quilting has long been seen to have such transformative possibilities (Ferrero, Hedges and Silber 1987:97, Brackman 1989:20, Behuniak-Long 1994:152).

This section is divided into three parts. First, I examine how cultural studies is connected to other social theories. Second, I examine specific areas where popular
culture affected women's lives and interpretations of quilting within them. Third, I apply these theories to my research.

Connecting Cultural Studies to other theories

Cultural Studies examines everyday life looking for transformative possibilities. This detailed analytical view can help break down stereotypical assumptions about everyday practices associated with reproduction, such as domestic textile production like clothing and bedding and their consumption. Cultural studies itself has many theoretical sources: 1) the British tradition of cultural criticism, 2) critical theory derived from the Frankfurt school, 3) French structural and poststructural theory, 4) feminist theory, 5) postmodernism (Storey 1993:vii-ix), 6) anthropology (Geertz, Marcus, Fisher, and Clifford) and 7) symbolic interactionism. By focusing on aspects of contemporary culture, cultural studies makes new connections to yet more theories. First, I examine in interaction of cultural studies with leisure theory. Second, I examine the intersection of cultural studies with material culture studies.

Cultural studies' intersection with leisure

Radway's research on the role of romance novels in women's lives is similar to my research because, like my quilters, Radway's readers are predominantly middle class
women filling the traditional roles of homemaker, wife and mother. Both of our studies illuminate the connections between theoretical approaches to the study of popular culture and everyday lives.

Radway (1991:150) focused on how women's needs are not fulfilled under patriarchy. Implicit in Radway's examination of how romance readers justify their reading is the question of the justification of leisure time itself. Her work supports Hobson and McRobbie's findings that women cope with the oppressive features of their situation as women by engaging in traditional female activities (Radway 1991:93). Research on postmodern leisure also acknowledges the difference between men's and women's leisure. Women more often combine work and leisure at the same time (Hargreaves 1989:136). To Radway, the difference between men and women's leisure is more proof of the domination of reproduction by production.

Radway sees reading as mediating between two value systems: emotional self indulgence through consumption and the need to appear as a hard working achiever, which is done by claiming educational value for books (Radway 1991:114). Like Agger, Radway (1991:89) also notes the hierarchy of work over leisure, but she found that women used the ideology of productive labor to justify pleasure and as a way for women to reject the messages in advertising that one can buy happiness. Janice Radway's work serves as a model
of the type of insights which can be revealed by looking at common everyday activities. Like reading, quilting is justified using the pleasure/work continuum and others, such as emotion/creativity, and "saving" money/indulgence.

Cultural studies' intersection with material culture studies

Cultural studies developed from sociologies of the Frankfurt school such as Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse through the British tradition at the Birmingham Center (Denzin 1992:74). Material culture studies developed as part of history, archeology, folklore, and museology in the United States. Neither approach alone utilizes the full measure of information that can be gleaned from objects, texts and ethnographic context. Because its study of objects has emphasized mass produced items, cultural studies' focus on textuality has ignored information about objects such as their production context and what the object is made of. Material culture studies has been overly focused on material composition and production context and only tangentially concerned with overall context. The two approaches can be fruitfully combined to more broadly interpret the material production of society.

Material culture studies' primary focus has been to measure and understand change by examining the physical artifacts themselves, studied in collections, archives, or in situ. Material culture studies also focuses on questions of how technology changes and is interpreted, such as "art"
or "craft." "Material culture" refers to the artifacts produced by every culture, or as Herskovits calls it, "the vast universe of objects used by humankind to cope with the physical world, to facilitate social intercourse, to delight our fancy, and to create symbols of meaning" (Schlereth 1982:2). Such studies tend to be strong in identification, preservation, categorization, history, and display of artifacts, but weaker on cultural analysis and interpretation. In contrast, most cultural studies is strong on analysis and interpretation, and weak in the areas where material culture studies is strongest.

The focus in cultural studies has been on both what symbols are used, and the underlying logic that organizes the texts. Pertti Alasuutari (1995:66) calls these "cultural distinctions," based on the classifications derived from semiotics. There are two forms of this classification: emic and etic. Emic classifications are those known and used by the members of a group, often structured in binary hierarchies. Etic classifications are constructs from an outside standpoint, rather than from within the group. An emic classification in quilting is the distinction between applique, pieced and whole cloth quilts. An etic classification would be the dating criteria and periodization quilt researchers use. Each type of classification contributes to a larger understanding of
quilting, yet, like using multiple methods, may provide contradictory information.

Cultural studies examines the interaction of the dominant culture and subcultures, high culture and popular culture, emic and etic views of cultural practices, culture and art. Researchers seek to understand and valorize previously undervalued forms and practices while examining how such actions can open new areas to criticism and eventual social change.

Both material culture studies and cultural studies advocate the use of ethnographic techniques for contextualizing objects. Each approach enriches the other, broadening the information we can obtain about objects and their meaning for culture. Yet each, in itself, is incomplete. By combining the two methods in analyzing quilts and magazine articles, this research capitalize on the strengths of both.

Detailed theoretical areas researched

After looking at how cultural studies is linked to other theories and how they can augment each other, I look more deeply at the ways the post World War II consumer economy affected women's roles. Women utilized new products to fulfill traditional roles and negotiated new definitions for themselves. For example, women used items like iron-on applique to simplify and speed production of otherwise
traditional quilts. They continued their role as home decorators by making embroidered and appliqued wall hangings, but the analogy of wallhangings to paintings added a further artistic element to that role. In this next section, I examine three areas where popular culture affected women's lives: 1) commercialization, 2) the effects of power in social stratification, and 3) interpreting the meaning of quilting and its social value.

**Commercialization, consumerism, commodification, and the culture industry**

Like other reproductive processes such as food production of making family clothes, quilting is not a purely consumer activity. Its specific goal is to produce a new object, though not a new commodity, so that buying materials for quilting is not only consumption, but also production. Unlike food, and more so than making clothing, it is a durable product, intended for use but not necessarily to be "used up." Quilting is a concrete example of how consumers encounter the culture industry and mass production and use its products for their own ends. Patterns, kits, commercial products like trim and embellishments of finished goods were recommended as ways to produce homemade goods by following instruction requiring no creative input. Women individualized these options by using different settings, fabric choices, quilting designs and adding embroidery.
Postmodern cultural studies applies the ideas of the Frankfurt school to popular culture (Agger 1993:46). The globalization of media has accelerated the influence of the culture industry, spreading not only to areas previously outside of market production, but also into global markets (During 1993:16).

By focusing on consumption, we can see how quilters use mass production for their own purposes, but we need to remain mindful of their position as producers as well. Examining domestic production such as quilting, which transforms materials in the process of production (making food, clothing, bedding) problematizes the relationship between production, reproduction, and consumption because earlier theories assumed the separation of these three processes by commercial production. In the case of domestic textile production, it is both consumption and production, which is not commonly emphasized.

Adorno and Horkheimer (1993:40) looked at the massive influence of industrial production through standardization, mass production, and consumption and saw individual choices reduced to only those that could be fulfilled by the culture industry. While commercialization appeared to provide a proliferation of choices, its range was limited. Horkheimer and Adorno thought that people didn't realize the limitations set by the culture industry, and how media manipulated desire towards those things that commodity
consumption could provide. Marcuse's (1993:472) view of this one dimensional approach is countered by other theorists who see real contradictions not unified in popular culture (Dyer 1993:279).

Dyer both agreed with and expanded the Frankfurt school view by noting that mass production does define and limit what can be considered legitimate needs, but also responds to some real needs for community, well being, and leisure (Dyer 1993:278). Radway's research on the place of the romance novel in women's lives examined the possibility of individual choice within the confines of commodity production (Radway 1991:50). Radway's research countered Horkheimer and Adorno's top down view that commercial production determined needs by showing that her readers had distinctive tastes which were not addressed by the publishers (Radway 1991:49).

Researchers have examined consumer's choice within mass production, how they have used it, the influence of industrial production, and how it defined needs or met real needs. I take a new approach to some of these views by researching such questions as: 1) Would a continuum from consumption to non-consumption better describe the dialectical relationship of quilting and commodification? Full consumption would be purchasing blankets or spreads that required no further construction. Non-consumption would mean using existing materials and patterns that did
not require any further purchases. 2) Is the tradition of using scraps, leftovers, and dime-store fabrics seen by quilters as a way of escaping commodity production?

**Power relationships: gender, class, and reproduction**

To understand differences in how people interact with popular culture, Bourdieu (1993:353) has shown we cannot simply look at an activity's meaning and function, but also the economic requirements of spare time, money availability, and 'cultural capital' entry requirements of family tradition, training, or technical knowledge. While Bourdieu examined sports, quilting can be seen in much the same way. The availability of these necessary requirements depends on power relationships within the family and perceived freedom of action.

Today, there is a wide continuum between professionals and amateurs within the quilt world with many in-between categories. However, before the late 1970s, people were professionally involved with quilting in only three categories: 1) as designers/writers, 2) collectors/museum professionals/writers, or 3) professional quilters that either took in quilting as individuals or worked in one of the cooperatives for commercial production created in the 1960s. Entry requirements for these professional categories show educational or class differentiations, such as a
background in art or antiques for designers and writers, or geographic location and class for quilters in cooperatives.

For the individual beginning quilter, entry issues during the 1950s and 1960s seemed largely nonexistent because of the overall training in sewing for girls through school (Business Week Oct 3 1970:56), the ability and encouragement to use 'found' materials, and the small amount of equipment necessary to pursue it at a most basic level (Laury 1966:13). "Applique stitchery...is a charming, personal, and vital art form, using the humble materials of every day to offer unpretentious works of real value and deep meaning" (Laury 1966:11).

The cultural capital from school training, and the economic ease of quilting fit Bordieu's definitions of ease of entry. Unlike leisure activities like playing an instrument, playing golf, or skiing, quilting did not require new equipment or skills, making it accessible to even relatively poor women. How these were capitalized upon by writers, and differences by region, urban/rural, and race/ethnicity, however, still need to be examined.

Quilting during the 1950s and 1960s was a nearly exclusively female activity. Of the 500+ quilts in the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project, none were made by men or boys, and only a handful note male participation at any level. Femininity and gender differences play a huge role in the way quilts are made and viewed.
The private sphere is no longer considered a privileged arena free from popular culture and thus a play area for the individual imagination (Parker 1984:154). Mid-nineteenth century views of the separation of commerce and home idealized the home as a place of comfort, refuge and warmth (Parker 1984:155). The home has represented the private sphere, and women have been acknowledged as having had aesthetic control of it for the last 150 years. As private and public spheres lost their separation through the interconnectedness of mass production, a dialectical relationship between oppression at work and oppression at home developed. In both, women do unpaid emotional labor, which is seen as increasing oppression and alienation (Denzin 1991:33). However, quilting is an area where women perform emotional labor that may also be seen as creative labor. A quilt may be both a labor of love, and liberating and rewarding. Quilting is one way to examine this interplay of private freedom and popular culture control of the effects of emotion work.

The use of space (Foucault 1993:168) and time (Woolf 1929:110) have been seen as ways of defining men’s and women’s relative value. They can be used to examine negotiations of power, for liberty is in practice, not concept. While Radway saw reading as a way of temporarily refusing the demands associated with women's social role as wives and mothers (Radway 1991:11), thus regaining control
of their personal time, quilting will be shown to be a way to both please oneself, and fulfill one's role as wife and mother. What background made quilters think it would be pleasurable and, as Radway suggests, necessary? What conditions encouraged/discouraged quilting? How women found time and space to quilt is another way to see the negotiation of personal goals versus family and societal expectations. As quilters have said, why did they "get hooked?"

Through reading, women sought to realize some of the benefits of feminism within traditional institutions and relationships by creating a view of themselves as changed without changing social arrangements (Radway 1991:76). As Agger notes (1993:124), self defeating choices by women enforce reproduction's lesser value. Heterotexts like *Ladies Home Journal* and *Seventeen* reproduce the hierarchy of production over reproduction. Yet such texts occasionally include articles that quietly undermine this view, such as articles that emphasize reuse over consumption or valuing home instead of industrial production. In so doing, they both valorize undervalued everyday activities and use those activities to negotiate new views of domestic production. By examining how quilters view their activity, we can see how women's cultural production supports or undermines the status quo, and what women think they accomplish by quilting.

37
Preferred, negotiated, oppositional readings

Cultural studies has revitalized interest in popular culture by seeing it as the driving force of political reality rather than reflecting politics, or as politics and culture mutually influencing each other. Using Gramsci's concept of culture as an area "where hegemony is constructed and can be broken and reconstructed" (Forgacs 1993:186), popular culture has become an important site for the examination of everyday life and the negotiation of power within it. Gramsci defined hegemony as the way dominant ideologies appear permanent, natural, outside history, and beyond particular interests. I examine magazine articles for the political implications of how quilting was used to question established conceptions of women's roles and cultural production.

Popular culture has often seemed to be defined as that which "is left over after we have decided what is high culture" (Story 1993:7). Cultural studies has contrasted popular culture to high, folk, and mass culture, but has not studied folk culture itself. Folk culture is "above" the media and most popular culture, but below high art. In between folk and high art are the decorative arts which have also been missed by cultural studies. Quilting has been associated with both decorative and folk arts, if considered any type of art.
Cultural studies follows Denzin's (1991:34) view that "art has always been cultural, political, and ideological." The different levels of the standard hierarchy of high art, decorative art, popular art and mass culture demonstrate different ideological views of taste, beauty, and goodness. At the same time, they embody the political values of the state, and the classical distinction between science, art, and morality. Denzin sees the aesthetic experience as a form of emotionality, which contrasts with its usual view as a cognitive or metacognitive spiritual experience. Art is experienced politically within the context of culturally approved values for work, the individual, family, and sexuality. "These experiences become political when the actions and emotions they express connect to the political economies of everyday life in ways which reinforce class, race, and gender stereotypes" (Denzin 1991:135). In late capitalist western societies, the relations between things replaces social relations, paralleling Marx's account of the fantastic objectification of commodities. The categorization of objects, reflecting wider rules of gender, taxonomy and aesthetics, overrides the original relations of objects (Clifford 1993:53).

Collecting and preserving an "authentic domain of identity," or provenance, is not value free. It is tied to politics, law, definitions of culture and authenticity, and contested encodings of both the past and the future.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
(Clifford 1993:52). Women, as the keepers of their family heritage of textiles, are responsible for this "authentic domain of identity." They are responsible for the quilts that symbolize family relations, physically embodying the ties (sometimes literally with tied quilts) to others, binding (again literal as well) against the distance of time and space. For many women, becoming part of that tradition by making family textiles is a way to tie themselves to other women across generations, or as part of women's traditions in general. My research examines how women view their ties to domestic art forms and how quilts have been used to encode interpretations of the past, politics, culture and authenticity.

According to Brecht (1978:151), "Art is never without consequences." Thus all texts are ultimately political because popular culture is a site where collective social understandings are created (Denzin 1991:137). From this view, even the creation of quilts that cause no stir, no change, are political because they were created to be accepted, following accepted norms and thus reinforcing the status quo. However, by recognizing more potential levels for questioning or supporting the status quo, from the use of nontraditional materials such as iron-on patches instead of applique or embroidery for parts of a quilt, to new designs, techniques or uses, this research provides a more nuanced interpretation of the political implications of
quilting. By examining such usages and what meaning the quilter attributed to them, we can see how women negotiated new social understandings.

Researchers have examined how different groups connect to different genre traditions, and interact with existing cultural, personal and political meanings (Dyer 1993:275). Every cultural text carries multiple meanings which operate at multiple levels (Denzin 1992:150). Cultural production can become one area of potential resistance. By subverting the conventional uses of mass production and inventing new ones, Hebdige (1979:102) notes how subcultures belie Althusser's 'false obviousness of everyday practice' and open up the world of objects to new and covertly oppositional readings, communicating difference and group identity.

Hall's classic distinction places texts in one of three relations: hegemonic, negotiated, or oppositional (During 1993:17). Dyer uses a slightly different set of distinctions. He sees meanings as either a) incorporated, b) irrelevant and disjunctive where they are held alongside but not incorporated to the group meanings, or c) disruptive where they question hegemonic group values and norms (Dyer 1993:275).

Each quilt, each magazine article and each quilter's approach can be placed, more or less, in one of these three categories. For instance, one quilter's use of iron-on
fabric beaks and eyes on a bird applique could be a small negotiated piece. While the categories appear static, we must recognize that interpretations and meanings change over time and with different groups. What was radical in Jean Ray Laury's 1956 quilt (Laury 1966:27) is relatively mainstream today, though still towards the "art quilt" direction. What is radical for traditional quilters can be quite staid for quilt artists. Examining how quilts, quilters and magazine articles fall along this continuum over time enhances our understanding of how this process is negotiated in one cultural medium.

The way commodities are used by a group becomes a way to separate it from more orthodox cultural formations. Both the semantic/ideological and the 'real'/commercial converge on the commodity form, even though they appear to stem from opposing value systems in most subcultures (Hebdige 1993:95-96). Because the relationship between subcultures and industry operates primarily in the leisure sphere, it is often difficult to keep commercial exploitation and creativity or originality distinct. This underlines the importance of understanding how quilting is described and how quilters use commodities with or against the dominant culture's usage. The ideology of quilts as a 'make do' craft, exemplifying colonial/early American thriftiness, may be romantic history and ideological justification, or it could signify a form of rebellion against an emphasis on
mass consumption. The only way to know is by listening to the quilters and writers about quilting themselves.

Radway (1991:215) contends that every form of mass culture can be seen as negative and critical of the social order in at least a faint or implicit way. She sees this as analogous to the folkloric practices researched by Lombardi-Striani and Limon which argues that folklore contests dominant cultures through the expression of different values, or questioning dominant ones, and by the existence of folkloric performance, which Limon says shows valuation by the group (Radway 1991:211).

Another way of looking at the changes in emphasis on hegemonic or nonhegemonic approaches to society can be seen by who is referenced as an authority. Such experts function as molders of public views. The 1950s has been considered the era of the expert (Bell 1961, Jezer 1982, May 1988), when scientific management of business was the dominant model for how American society should be organized. These historians' views would suggest an increase in references to authorities and experts from the 1940s to the 1950s followed by a decrease in their use in the 1960s with the questioning of all forms of authority by the counterculture.

However, this view is not consistent with other studies of expertise that suggest the use of authority was fairly constant after WWII until the 1970s. Larson saw the reliance on all varieties of authority as waxing or waning

How my work contributes to cultural studies

In this section, I discuss how my work ties cultural studies to other social theories and how I use quilting to see the effects of popular culture on women's lives. Using an historical approach, I examine one area of women's activities during a time of rapid social change. Multiple methods are used to clarify the relations between media, individual experience, and cultural production.

While cultural studies provides many new insights into the political processes of everyday life, as well as its focus on popular culture as a valid area of academic research, it has several weaknesses that my work helps augment. First, the focus on transformative possibilities unnecessarily judges the validity of cultural processes. Second, cultural studies tends to be highly theoretical without enough concomitant case studies to test theory.
Storey (1993:193) notes that much of the discussion is a debate among intellectuals about theory, rather than actual work within the cultural field. Third, though it broadens the view of the kinds of cultural production that should be studied, it still tends to take a production approach to reproductive roles. Meanings beyond economic considerations such as emotions and intergenerational ties are missed in the production focus. It does not value emotional work to the same degree as logic. By seeing reproduction as secret production that productions requires for its dominance of reproduction, "merely" reproductive activities become productive in their own right (Agger 1993:95). However, Agger's view is still based on "value," using an economic view which, in its argument, supports the superiority of logic over emotion.

One of cultural studies' primary foci is on the political implications of particular activities. Considerable time is spent debating whether a given work is true valorization, or "merely" celebration, and whether it helps pave the way for massive social change. For instance, Sedgwick derides current academic rhetoric for not going far enough in critiquing antihumanist discourse which at best replaces profound, complex variation with humanist liberal 'tolerance' or repressively trivial celebration (Sedgwick 1993:249). For her, both celebration and tolerance are
trivial. I examine the meaning of celebration versus valorization in the context of the times.

Agger sees the cultural studies project as "locat(ing) politic's interstitial activities bridging subjectivity and institutions," in order to find openings where social change might occur and make possible a massive restructuring of all bureaucratic societies (Agger 1993:30). By focusing on the mediations among subjectivity, intersubjectivity and institutions, such research addresses the intermediate links between the personal and political (Agger 1993:71) which are found in women's structural locations in discourse, everyday life, the household, and the economy. In everyday life, actions and emotions express the power relations that reinforce class, race, and gender stereotypes (Denzin 1992:135). The everyday represents the lower status in binary hierarchies of production/reproduction, society/nature, male/female, and work/leisure (Agger 1993:4).

Much of cultural studies builds its theory from other theory. This creates a body of theory that is not adequately balanced by application and use in case studies. Hebdige's work is one of the best examples of how a researcher can use theory to provide a new focus within a case study. Radway's work also applies theory to a case study while reaching audiences beyond the academic world. Further case studies, such as this one, provide concrete
examples of change from the NHQP, magazine articles and interviews, applying cultural studies theories about consumption, mass production and authority.

In my research, I examine how women constructed new views of their roles in domestic production to encompass the massive cultural changes from consumerism and expanded modes of communication. It has been an acceptable activity because of connotations of usefulness and decoration of the home as women's sphere. Quilting has been seen as bringing beauty into the home and being above the dirty doings of the marketplace (Laury 1970:4, Elsley 1994:75). Less often quilting has been seen as questioning the status quo.

My research examines magazine articles for their acceptance or rejection of the status quo. The complexity of defining that status quo allows for such questions as whether simply being (re)productive can be a criticism even if one makes a quilt by following a pattern and its color suggestions. Quilters in VISTA organized groups like the Freedom Quilting Bee and Mountain Artisans crossed the production/reproduction divide by using quilting to support families financially while staying within the framework of wife, mother, and homemaker.

Agger criticizes postmodern texts that conflate cultural criticism and cultural performance. He agrees with Derrida that every textual choice constrains and sometimes even obscures meaning as well as creating it (Agger

47

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
1993:136). I see every text as political, even if it is to validate the status quo.

Radway is critical of symbolically joining forces through a devalued leisure activity that uses vicarious gratification to disarm the impulse for change. Her critique is another example of the conflicting judgements in cultural studies between valuing cultural processes for protesting the existing social order and valuing them only if they take concrete steps towards reform. For quilters, using scraps to make homemade bedcoverings rather than purchasing spreads and blankets could be valued as a form of protest against industrial production, but is not valued by cultural studies because it does not lead to social change.

While Hebdige notes leisure activity as an area to express autonomy and difference, he evades judging the worth of this process by only seeking to understand the contradictions and compromises that influence subcultures (Hebdige 1979:77). Within the historical context of quilting, we can reevaluate and revalue the work of quilters through their approaches to creativity and production, and quilts' affective value for tying people together.

Agger's view widens the scope of possible value from solely traditional production, but is still based on a fundamentally economic view of "value" which in its argument supports the superiority of logic over emotion. Agger sees emotion as part of the undervalued domestic sphere, but
doesn't value emotion in the same way as other reproductive tasks. It is as though Parsons' "expressive" tasks are subsumed within Agger's valorization of reproduction without recognizing the differences between physical and emotional work.

Part of the effort of the early 1970s to put quilts on an equal footing with painting had been by emphasizing the formal aesthetic qualities of quilts and discarding the affective components. Cultural studies' focus on how an object is used rather than the intent for which it was produced follows this format. However, when the producer and intended user are in close personal contact, the production context remains salient to the user. A major component of that context is its emotional content.

Cultural studies examines everyday life for the ways that power relations reinforce class, race, and gender stereotypes. It questions established hierarchies of value such as production vs. reproduction, the affect of commercialization, and interstices within culture where social change is possible. It has encompassed new methods of study by utilizing material culture, especially the study of various media.

The performance of gender, sexuality, race, and class constitute experiences that shape emergent political conditions in a postmodern world (Denzin 1991:32). Gender and sexuality derive from complex interactions of texts,
meanings and experiences of everyday life in telling us how to be a man or woman. Quilts and quilting are used in my research to understand how women accepted and resisted traditional gender roles and created political significance by negotiating new interpretations.

Summary

As part of the women's movement of the late 1960s, researchers began to reexamine the relationship of gender and art by rediscovering women artists, developing new forms of art criticism and theory, and examining how women were represented in art. Part of the new art criticism examined the status of women's traditional art forms, hierarchies of art, and political implications. Researchers have used quilts as one way of understanding the push-me/pull-you of domesticity and women's spheres of influence. They have been valorized as a quintessential women's art form and demonized for their subjugation of public action to private needs and the "tyranny of the needle."

My research examines the placement of quilts and quilters within art worlds and hierarchies of types of art during this period. It examines changes in perception of quilts as non-art, art, craft, folk art or ethnic art, the role of creativity, its ties to emotions, commercialism, and larger cultural trends such as historical or contemporary design. Quilts have been a medium for valorizing women's
domestic production and traditional roles as keepers of the family heritage and building social relations.

In order to see the transformation of women's roles within the family, this dissertation used quilting to examine everyday resistance and how women used quilting to negotiate new views of domestic production in light of mass consumerism and rapidly changing modes of communication. I examine how questioning the status quo and the changing use of authority may reflect larger cultural trends and how women adapted to the push for mass consumption and the impact of commercialization after WWII through their quilt production and quilting activities.
CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW: WOMEN, QUILTING AND HISTORY

This chapter focuses on historical views of women and quilting from 1945 to 1970. In it, I draw on secondary research to lay out the cultural context of quilting. I will review and synthesize the literature in two areas. The first reviews the primary ways we view women's lives during the 1950s and 1960s. The second reviews scholarship on quilting and quilt history.

An analysis of how quilts were placed historically in magazine articles through periodization, tying quilting to social history, current events, social movements, and design trends can be found in Appendix A.

Back into the family: Conceptions of women's lives in the 1950s and 1960s

Much of our understanding of the 1950s and 1960s is based on simplistic stereotypes. Even within detailed studies of the times, these overriding assumptions have colored the views of those like Elaine Tyler May, Jules
Archer, Betty Friedan, and Todd Gitlin. While these views are true of some parts of American society at the time, scholars such as Joanne Meyerowitz (1994) have called for detailed case studies to deepen our understanding and Stephanie Coontz (1992) has described the glossed over complexities and conflicts of the decade.

The most widespread stereotype of the woman of the 1950s derives from television: June Cleaver, Harriet Nelson and Donna Reed. Joanne Meyerowitz describes them as "domestic and quiescent, they moved to the suburbs, created the baby boom and forged family togetherness...the quintessential white middle-class housewives who stayed at home to rear children, clean house and bake cookies" (Meyerowitz 1994:1). The 1950s have been portrayed as an idyllic era, the yardstick from which all change since then has been measured. The dominant historical interpretation of the 1950s has emphasized its conservatism and the ideological and institutional constraints faced by women. In giving the name "the Feminine Mystique" to this ideology, Betty Friedan (1963) homogenized women and simplified the view of the postwar era, thus reinforcing the stereotype. According to Oakley (1986:434), the 1950s may have been the best decade of the century, if you were white, middle class, and especially if you were male, though in retrospectives of the decade written in 1960, it was written off as the "dullest and dreariest" in history (Oakley 1986:426). By
the 1970s, nostalgia for a kinder, gentler time applauded that same blandness.

The 1950s were not the last vestige of a traditional lifestyle, but something new, formed from the legacy of the Depression, World War II, and the atomic era (Coontz 1992:26). May situates the fifties as an era responding to pent-up demand from the 1930s and 1940s (May 1988:40). While the marriage rate and birth rate plummeted during the 1930s, the 1950s had a unique pattern of young marriage, high birthrate, and low divorce that lasted through the late 1960s.

Part of this new social organization included a general assumption that the world had changed and pre-war thought was no longer relevant. Science, technology and the arts were seen as strategic resources to meet national goals of world dominance. To accomplish this, the government supported research and knowledge production, which altered both intellectuals and their products in the process (Jamison and Eyerman 1994:5). The cult of science inspired a scientific faith and an accompanying denigration of the populist spirit of the 1930s (Jamison and Eyerman 1994:15). This was the high point of Talcott Parsons, positivism, and the belief in social engineering. Scientific and psychological professionals were regarded as the experts of the time; a 1957 study found reliance on expertise to be one
of the noteworthy changes of the postwar years (May 1988:27).

The groundwork for civil rights, the great society, and the race to the moon was set in the 1950s, while much of what we consider to be the rebellious sixties, (ecology, the women's movement, and anti-Vietnam protests) actually did not bear fruit until the 1970s and beyond. Linden-Ward and Green (1993:98) have shown that the important changes in viewing women during the 1960s were not actual changes as much as the development of an arena and mode of discussion of inequality.

A general mistrust of women during the 1950s was demonstrated through the denial of the right to serve on juries, make contracts, and establish their own credit (Coontz 1992:32). In an age of perceived marital bliss, Mirra Komarosky found that less than one third of working class couples considered themselves happily married (Coontz 1992:36). In the 1950s, the most popular book on women's roles was Modern Woman: the Lost Sex, written by psychologist Marynia Farnham and sociologist Ferdinand Lundberg in 1947. They followed the dominant view of the time (for example, Parson 1951), that the biological differences between men and women made each more "natural" for particular roles. Farnham and Lundberg's views were widely accepted by mental health professionals and were popularly propounded in women's magazines like McCall's.
Good Housekeeping, and Ladies Home Journal while working wives were called "a menace" in Esquire and "a disease" in Life (Oakley 1986:294) for perceived "abnormal" behavior. Friedan criticized popular magazines as a repressive force that damaged women, though Meyerowitz criticizes her view for relying too heavily on the writings of a small number of people like Farnham and Lundberg (Meyerowitz 1994:230). One of the few to recognize the inherent sexism of their book, Friedan said, "Thus Freud's popularizers embedded his core of unrecognized traditional prejudice against women ever deeper in pseudoscientific cement" (Friedan 1963:111).

The normal woman could reach fulfillment and happiness only by being a passive, dependent mother and wife. "Normal" women's traits of gentleness, sensitivity, submissiveness, emotionality, and dependence were not valued like "normal" male traits of independence, logic, aggressiveness, and self-confidence. According to Inge Broverman, women were expected to adjust to the less desirable and less healthy stereotypes in order to be considered normal (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:384). Friedan's approach questioned these ideas about women's nature, developing an approach that looked at historical and social factors rather than inherent biological or psychological origins for the differences in behavior and achievement between men and women (Nussbaum 1997:86, Gitlin 1993:375).
Not until the women's movement could women demand that their own needs and desires also be taken into account (Archer 1986:128). The 1960s were a time when women began to consider the possibility of defining their lives on their own terms, rather than in relation to family, husband and home (Nussbaum 1997:86).

Achieving greater individual rights was the easiest path within the American social system because it had been trodden by so many others (Gitlin 1993:432). Consciousness raising, the single activity most closely associated with women's liberation, sought individual, rather than societal change, with discussions primarily focusing on the everyday problems of their participants, who were white, middle class women. Though a small number of women actually participated in such groups, the ideas and ideals of feminism became widely known and individually integrated. By the end of the 1960s, a personal stance on the women's movement became part of defining the self.

The post-war baby boom continued through 1964, so birth and mothering continued as primary activities for many women throughout the 1960s. Yet even within conventional roles, change occurred. Changes in birthing, nursing (Edwards and Waldorf 1984:91), contraception (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:xvi), and abortion laws (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:346) all moved in the direction of giving women greater control over their own bodies and sexuality, and lessening
constraints by the medical establishment and social mores. By the later 1960s, new patterns of delayed marriage and childbearing, and fewer children per couple were evident.

The actual number of women attending college continued to increase through the 1950s, but they were a smaller portion of the total number of students (47% in 1920, 35% in 1958) as veterans using the G.I. Bill poured into colleges. While white women were twice as likely to enter college in the 1950s than their mothers, only 37% of them completed their degrees (May 1994:62). In contrast, though their chances of attending college were small, more than 90 percent of black women who started college completed their degree (May 1988:79).

The lack of opportunities for women after college made upward mobility dependent on latching on to an upwardly mobile male, rather than through women's own efforts. A family's class status was based on the male's education and job, not the woman's. A woman's role as a wife was to be a consumer par excellence in purchasing and maintaining status items, as a status symbol herself, and to help her husband on his climb up the corporate ladder (Packard 1959:49). Rather than attempting to enhance career opportunities for women, colleges enhanced their Home Economics programs to provide more domestic oriented classes for women who aspired to "professional homemaking." Though berated as a "dumbed down" program, they provided a place for an appreciation of
women's traditional roles, art forms, and accomplishments which has not been widely recognized.

From 1960 to 1970 the total percentage of women attending college rose from 38% to 49%, while the total percentage of men attending only changed from 54% to 55% (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:68). Still, through much of the 1960s, a number of the most prestigious graduate and professional schools were closed to women and the national military academies did not become coeducational until 1976. In 1964 only 4 to 5 percent of law and medical school students were women. A class action suit in 1970 opened up medical school admissions so that the percentage of women students grew from 9 percent in 1969 to 20 percent in 1975 (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:79).

Prior to 1940, women's magazines covered a broad range of themes including political activism and careers. With the onset of World War II, this focus rapidly shifted to women as homemakers, consumers and sex objects (Zucherman 1998:xiii). By the end of 1942, fully one third of some women's magazines were devoted to war-related material (Zuckerman 1998:195). Women sought information rather than entertainment from magazines. This was manifested by a significant drop in the number of fiction articles (Zuckerman 1998:203). Most stressed practical homemaking under wartime conditions. A few featured women in defense work and other "war work."

59
At the beginning of World War II, 95% of working women expected to quit at the end of the war. By 1945, about the same percentage wished to continue working to maintain their independence and income (Coontz 1992:31). Three quarters of the women employed in war industries were still employed in 1946, but 90% earned less as they were shunted to lower paying assembly and service jobs (May 1988:76). By 1960, three times as many wives were employed as in 1940, though less than half worked full time and the proportion of professional women was less than in the 1930s. Most worked in traditional fields as secretaries, clerical workers, teachers and domestics; 75% of all women workers were clustered in 57 occupations (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:93). The median income of working women fell from 64 percent of men's wages in 1955 to 58 percent in 1969 (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:94).

In 1960, an era of perceived affluence, 20 to 25 percent of families lived below the poverty line of $3000 per year for a family of four, with another ten percent at the border. Poverty was centered among poor blacks in cities, poor whites in farming and mining areas, in the rural South, and among the elderly, minorities and single mothers (Oakley 1986:246).

During World War II, savings reached an all time high of 25% of disposable income as incomes increased and
domestic production was converted to the war effort. A 1942 pamphlet (in May 1988:74) noted,

"In 1942 alone...the cost of the war to the consumers of the country is estimated at 3,500,000 automobiles, 2,800,000 refrigerators, 11,300,000 radios, 1,650,000 vacuum cleaners, and 1,170,000 washing machines.... The government is taking from the people what is needed to win the war."

Clearly, the war effort was recognized as helping to create a pent-up demand for consumer goods. New car sales jumped from 69,500 in 1945 to 7,900,000 in 1955. The new technology of television shot sales up from 975,000 in 1948 to 4,400,000 in 1950 (Oakley 1986:9).

Housing construction accelerated to meet demand when 98% of cities reported a housing shortage in 1945 (May 1988:168). Housing starts jumped from 114,000 in 1944 to a high of 1,692,000 in 1950 (May 1988:169). Blacks were excluded from this suburban growth more through de facto segregation than through poverty. The increase in gross national product in the mid-1950s was based almost entirely on consumer goods and housing construction (Coontz 1992:25).

Women were important in the 1960s more as consumers than producers of popular culture. As homemakers, their role switched from making goods to buying them. Leisure activities of both men and women became more equal across class lines with the growth of television and mass production (Packard 1959:132). Television offered cheap entertainment for the whole family, required no action and
little thought, and brought the world to the living room. It encouraged a homogeneity of interests, tastes, opinions, and consumption across the country. As middle class values became the dominant ones, the range of behaviors outside that narrow range became "deviant."

Television's popularity changed the face of magazines making photojournalistic publications like *Life* and *Look* redundant, and shooting *TV Guide* to second place by 1972 (Campbell 1998:253). Though these general interest magazines had been the predominant form since the end of World War I, led by *Reader's Digest* (Campbell 1998:251) in circulation, publishers turned to more specialized formats that didn't compete with television (Campbell 1998:255, Reed 1997:199). A huge rise in costs of publishing in the 1950s and a much smaller rise in readership (Reed 1997:213) also encouraged publishers to employ the supermarket sales technique used for women's magazines. By 1995, craft and hobby magazines were the third largest number of new magazine created each year, superseded only by sex and sports magazines (Campbell 1998:257).

One hallmark of the emphasis on scientific organization and social control was the tightly structured, conformist corporate world which extended to the uniform homes and consumer goods of the suburbs. Yet the home was still considered a haven from the corporate maze (Riesman and Whyte in May 1988:22). The suburban house was designed with
flexible, open floor plans and windows looking into both front and back yards which accommodated supervising children. Though the tasks changed, women still averaged 55 hours per week on household chores, like their mothers 20 years before. Appliances were designed to maintain a higher standard of cleanliness and efficiency which was seen as allowing more time for child care rather than giving women more free time for hobbies, careers or other interests (May 1994:73). Magazine articles on home-related information were considered "service oriented" by the magazines and assumed readers were full time homemakers or identified it as their most important job (Zuckerman 1998:214, 218). Most of the quilt related articles in magazines fall into this category.

Friedan (1963) noted the loneliness and isolation of the suburban housewife, the proliferation of kitschy craft projects that made homemaking appear productive, and the manic attentiveness to cleanliness. Rejection of these roles culminated in articles like Pat Mainardi's "Politics of Housework" that challenged the normality of women's expected self-sacrifice for others (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:395).

Many of the substantive programs of women's liberation in the 1960s were first articulated by academic writers such as Rachel Carson, Mary McCarthy and Margaret Mead writing to a popular audience during the 1950s. Using new mass media...
venues, they identified new social problems and gave them meaning and importance (Jamison and Eyerman 1994:222). By 1960, women were part of a nation which was sensing the winds of change. More women were entering the work force, going back to college, and demonstrating for civil rights and peace. In September 1960, Redbook ran a contest for the best account of "Why Young Mothers Feel Trapped" and received 24,000 entries.

During the 1960s, definitions separating high and low art and high and mass culture began to crumble (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:256), even though the canonical versions are still the modus operandi of art history texts today. More women were active as artists in the 1960s than at any time before, though there was a generation gap between the women finally gaining recognition after decades of being ignored and subsumed and younger artists focused on concepts rather than fame (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:260).

Overall, there was increased criticism of basic values, institutions, government, conformity, materialism, complacency, homogeneity, and discrepancies in income and education between various ethnic groups as well as between men and women. Linden-Ward and Green's main premise for interpreting most aspects of the 1960s is that it was an era of hope and the beginnings of discussion, but saw only small actual changes in comparison to the later changes that would build on the era's efforts.
Though a numerically small percentage of women participated in the women's movement, civil rights, the war on poverty, and student organizations, the theoretical and practical ground broken by them made people believe their lives were threatened or changed even though few were directly affected during the 1960s (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:xv). They were a time for beginning to recognize a pluralized society and beginning to eliminate single standards based on white, middle class, male ideals. As Linden-Ward and Green (1993:295) said about writers, "Although one could function in the 1960s without direct involvement in the social movements that characterized the decade, it was almost impossible to ignore them."

The Vietnam war was a central issue for the development of political awareness which was "fundamental to the radicalization of youth everywhere" (Gunnar Myrdal in Archer 1986:58). Similar to white women working in the civil rights movement, women working against the war within Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) slowly developed a realization of the similarity of their position within the organization to the groups they were trying to help (Gitlin 1993:365). As Gitlin said (1993:373), "The fantasy of equality on the barricades shattered against the reality of the coffeepot and the mimeograph machine." As the student protest and civil rights movements sputtered to a stop in
the late 1960s, the women's movement took off (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:xvii).

The women's rights movements coalesced in the mid 1960s into two main factions: liberal feminists who sought reform through political and legal channels, and women's "libbers" who espoused radical change based on analyses of women's subservient position in society. Gender differentiation was denaturalized, and its social and historical origins were examined. For women who remained in traditional roles, these changes must have seemed to undermine the very basis of their existence. Freedom was both exhilarating and threatening. Women began to envision the possibility of a different world, though its enactment could not take place in such a short time frame. The explosion of feminist writings seen from 1970 on reflected the groundwork laid during the 1960s (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:318).

After the burst of activism and group political effort in the 1960s, the 1970s retracted into the "me" decade "...as if a whole generation had moved en masse from "J'accuse" to Jacuzzi" (Gitlin 1993:433). Changes for women continued through the 1970s, but the 1980s backlash against feminism effectively stopped the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment and limited the effectiveness of other laws such as Roe v. Wade. Yet many young women grew up in the 1980s and 1990s with an assumption of equality the women of the 1950s could have barely envisioned.
While the prevalent historical approach to the 1950s has been to emphasize its conservatism (Meyerowitz 1994:2) and to emphasize the radicalism of the 1960s (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:ix), recent research has challenged such stereotypes by providing in depth case studies of various social subgroups. My research views women as acting within a matrix of influences that include race, gender, sexual preference, religion, occupation and politics (Meyerowitz 1994:2), and challenges these stereotypical views. Mass culture is viewed as neither monolithic nor wholly repressive, but inclusive of contradictions and ambivalence.

Scholarship on quilting history
1900 to 2000

Quilts have been used as a source for understanding the role of women as political and/or historical actors in the nineteenth century in Ferrero, Hedges, and Silber's Hearts and Hands, but a comprehensive work on the twentieth century has yet to be done. My research covers a 30 year period of it, illustrating how broader cultural influences are reflected in this traditional women's art form.

Quilts and their history have been seen as unimportant by mainstream academic historians, an attitude which is being reversed as recent histories integrated women's experience with traditional academic history. Feminist scholarship has redefined the centrality of women's
activities to the overall understanding of history through not only adding women to major historical movements, but reformulating what the historical records should include (DeHart and Kerber 1995:4-5).

Scholarly research is supported by groups like the American Quilt Study Group and concomitant Canadian and British organizations, and symposia sponsored by museums and universities. Since the first symposia of the late 1970s, the study of quilting has become more academically rigorous as quilt scholars have gained academic training. Quilt research has gone from the era of history buffs to being university research components such as the International Quilt Study Center at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and the museum at Michigan State University.

Beginning in Kentucky in 1980, groups in 46 of the 50 states inventoried quilts by holding documentation days throughout their state. By 1994, these quilt documentation projects provided information on more that 157,000 quilts and their makers (Sullivan 1995:174). Books written about their findings have provided broader perspectives on the status of quilting, though framed by current understandings of periodization. I use these books to demonstrate the current interpretations of quilting history.

In part, quilt researchers have valorized quilting by using it to round out traditional histories, as another text to add to information about women and culture. In the
process, quilt history has come to use academic research methods while some of its romanticized history has been discarded. An example of one discarded history is the idea that the first American quilts were crazy quilts because women were thrifty, cloth was scarce, and every scrap was used during colonial times. Using estate records, Garroutte (1981:25) demonstrated that very few quilts were made prior to the 1790s, and Brackman (1989:143) showed that crazy quilts were derived from the late 19th century interest in Japanese decorative arts.

Quilting has derived meaning from its historical roots and as material documents of history and historical events. How were quilts and history intertwined? Did that relationship change over time? Recent researchers have called for case studies to broaden and contextualize current stereotyped historical views. See Appendix A for further analysis of how quilt history, periodization, and ties to current events were viewed in magazine articles from 1945 to 1970. It provides a systematic view of how writers used history to justify quilting and evaluated quilting’s popularity.

Quilt history has evolved since 1980, in part by recognizing a cyclical nature to interest in quilting. Quilt history has been characterized as a series of revivals and slumps beginning the 1890s. Researchers (Lasansky 1987:105, 107, Brackman 1989:31, 34) have defined three
revival periods and two interim lag periods for the twentieth century which frame our understanding of quilting from 1945 to 1970. They cite references to revivals in books and magazines of the time as evidence for the revivals' existence.

From 1800 to 1890, quilts and woven coverlets were the most common methods for creating blankets and bedcoverings. Patchwork, applique and quilting were used to teach some of the expected needlework skills a young woman needed in order to provide clothing and bedding for her family (Brackman 1989:17). Quilting increased as manufactured fabrics became more available in the 1840s. Quilting as a reason for social gatherings such as frolics, bees, parties or matches were mentioned frequently in the mid-nineteenth century (Brackman 1989:20). They symbolized community ties through use as commemorating friendship, fundraising, and expressing political views.

Industrial production of the late 1800s obviated the need for home production of blankets and bedcoverings. The first revival of 1890 to 1910 is characterized by the Victorian crazy quilt, often created as parlor throws rather than as functional bedcoverings (Brackman 1989:25). Excerpts from period magazines of 1894 to 1907 such as *Ladies Home Journal* and *National Stockman and Farmer* said "...the old time quilting bee is having a revival..." and "The decree has gone forth that a revival of patchwork
quilts is at hand" (Lasansky 1985:50-54). Publications had a growing influence on pattern, technique and color choice (Brackman 1993:33). This revival died out between 1910 and 1915, in part because of changes associated with World War I as the uncluttered, sanitary, easily washed manufactured white spread became popular (Brackman 1989:28, Cowan 1995:389).

Depression era quilting: The second revival (1925 to 1945)

The second revival began in the late 1920s and continued until 1940 to 1945. By the late 1920s, new dyes and printing technology transformed the sparse dark colors common for quilts before 1920 to brighter multicolor prints. Typical quilt patterns for the time were Double Wedding Ring, Grandmother's Flower Garden, and Dresden Plate, made in light bright pastels. As Ruby McKim described it,

"This wholesome revival of quiltmaking which is so thoroughly sweeping the country is more than a fad, it is the very soul of American art and dignity" (McKim 1931:5).

There were several nationwide quilt competitions during the 1930s that brought in ten to twenty thousand entries each. During the 1930s, mass marketing of quilt patterns standardized designs throughout the United States, while regional variations were lost (Waldvogel 1990:23). By 1934, over 400 newspapers carried syndicated quilting columns by both real women such as Ann Orr and Ruby McKim, and

71
fictitious designers like Laura Wheeler (Brackman 1989:31). Pattern companies based in the Midwest brought those states into prominence in the revival (Brackman 1993:46) while ties to the colonial revival were standard copy for the pattern syndicates (Brackman 1989:31). Quilts were associated with the frugal use of scraps, as quilters used feed sacks and recycled dressmaking fabrics (Trestain 1998:160-161). The interest in colonial times generated nostalgic, romanticized histories such as Hall and Krestzinger's aptly titled 1935 Romance of the Patchwork Quilt. The 1930s revival waned in the early 1940s as World War II shifted domestic production to wartime needs and effectively ended the Depression.

Between the revivals (1940 to 1970)

From the standpoint of quilt research, the 1940s through the 1960s are undiscovered territory. Most of the state quilt surveys since 1980 only accepted quilts completed prior to 1950 (22 of 46 states), or 1960 (6 states). Only 14 states documented quilts completed after 1976 (Sullivan 1995:207-215), many of which, including Nevada, have not published their findings. Thus, little information is currently available from the state quilt project data about quilting after World War II.

Current research indicates a waning interest in quilting beginning in the 1940s (Brackman 1989:34). Trestain argues that rationing during World War II encouraged the continued production of scrap quilts, but
after the war and into the 1950s, quilting became associated with poverty and a lack of time while raising a family (Trestain 1998:161). The Florida state book, which reported the findings from their state quilt project, contrasts the decline in interest to the increase in perceived free time due to the end of the war and the plethora of labor-saving devices (Williams 1992:146). Described as "mid-twentieth century doldrums" (Brackman 1989:34), researchers postulated that "quilting in its richest social, artistic and psychic complexity had nearly ceased being practiced between 1940 and 1976" (Bernick 1994:138). Ferguson and Crews (1994:204) describe a loss of interest in quilting based on the limited number of Nebraska state fair entries in comparison to the 1930s, an average of 16 in the 1950s versus a high of 271 in 1931, a decline in quality (1994:213), as well as the limited changes in quilt categories (1994:197). Others have noted a loss of needlework skills and a deemphasis on all forms of handwork (Trestain 1998:161). Mass consumption by television-watching suburbanites was seen as contributing to the degeneration all forms of artistic standards (Jamison and Eyerman 1994:27). Brackman (1993:55) also noted the decline in quality in the 1950s and the least number of quilts in the Kansas Quilt Project of any decade since the 1920s.

Some researchers saw quilting continuing in rural areas, focusing on tried and true 1930s pattern holdovers.
such as Dresden Plate, Sunbonnet Sue, Grandmother's Flower Garden, and Double Wedding Ring and noted a lack of creativity based on using purchased quilt kits (Clark, Knepper and Ronsheim 1991:105). What quilting remained was attributed to church groups or to quilters who began quilting in the 1930s (Ferguson and Crews 1994:204). Rake (1999:32) concurs with the nationwide drop in interest in quiltmaking while citing an increased interest among Ohio Mennonite quilters. Church groups quilted for needy members, relief sales, and on custom quilting of unfinished quilt tops with payments based on the amount of thread used in quilting (Rake 1999:42-48).

Quilt literature assumes that women did not have time to quilt, and that decorating trends focusing on streamlined modern styles and synthetic fabric discouraged quilting (Brackman 1993:53). However, it would be just as logical to assume that the surge of interest in hobbies and home improvement during the 1950s (Macdonald 1988:323) could have sparked a huge interest in quilting, not its opposite. However, many hobby reference books did not include quilting. My research questions some of these very basic assumptions. One way to do this is to examine the interplay of consumerism, changing decorating standards, and time usage expectations as found in later chapters. Using different judging criteria, the demise of quilting is not as clearly visible as current research indicates.
The Kansas state quilt project found an increase in quilts beginning about 1960 (Brackman 1993:55). In the early 1960s, some quilters passed information on pattern names, history and designs through networks of pattern exchanges called round robins (Marston and Cunningham 1990:8). Quilting took on new meanings in the late 1960s through its association with the counterculture and the use of personal decoration as a political statement (Brackman 1993:55). Quilting's simultaneous use as a new design form in the fashion industry brought it into mainstream consciousness, though it was not linked to the women's movement until the early 1970s (Davis 1993:178).

Modern quilting (1970 to present)

While quilting today is a world-wide movement encompassing millions of quilters and a multi-billion dollar industry, the current infrastructure only began to be formed in the late 1960s to early 1970s. A recent nationwide survey estimated that there are 20 million quilters in the United States alone, which has created a 1.83 billion dollar a year industry (Quilter's Newsletter Magazine March 2001:8). The current quilt world consists of fabric manufacturers, conferences, exhibits, quilt museums, quilt shows, design competitions for tens of thousands of dollars, quilt study centers, groups focused on scholarly quilt research, quilt guilds and metaguilds, publications, local quilt shops, classes, seminars, teachers, pattern makers and
distributors, television series on PBS and HGTV, and an abundance of tools and gadgets from sewing machines to specialty rulers to enhance the quilting experience. This infrastructure supports a range of people (the vast majority of whom are women) from casual beginners to professional artists whose primary medium is quilts (Quilter's Newsletter Magazine March 2001:8).

More than ten years into the current revival, a 1984 survey found the major influences for quilting's popularity to be communication, affluence, technology, and an emphasis on creativity (Leman and Shirer 1984:48). Communication came through books, craft magazines and the creation of specialized quilt magazines. Since the 1980s, television shows, video how-tos and the internet have added yet more media sources. Two innovations in particular have radically altered the very construction process of quilting. The first is the rotary cutter, which looks like a pizza wheel and has been available since about 1984. Along with a plethora of accompanying rulers, cutting mats and books, it allows for mass cutting of pattern pieces and new construction methods. The second is the long arm sewing machine, available since the early 1990s, which allows a bed sized quilt to be intricately quilted in a matter of hours instead of weeks.

Quilt shops, which sell fabric and tools, but normally not quilts, began in the mid-1970s, and initially were found
only in major urban areas. In the late 1970s to mid-1980s there was a massive creation of quilt guilds providing face to face interaction (Leman June 2000:26) which developed from informal groups who met at quilt shops (Hall-Patton 1985:5). Unlike quilting bees or church groups, their emphasis is on support for individual quilters rather than on quilting by the group. From the guilds have grown meta-guilds like the Southern California Council of Quilt Guilds that support communication between more than 50 guilds, including the Las Vegas guild.

Quilts and patchwork continue to act as culture-wide metaphors. Probably the most well known example is the AIDS quilt project, which uses coffin sized patches to create world wide awareness of this deadly illness on a gut-wrenchingly personal basis. Jesse Jackson has used the patchwork quilt rather than the melting pot as a way to note a changed view of the American population (quoted in Steward 1994:44).

Quilts also have been used to foster international goodwill and social action through such projects as the Boise Peace Quilts and quilts given to Olympic participants at Atlanta (1996), and Japan (1998). The American revival has spawned a world wide interest in quilts. A recent show of Japanese quilts in Tokyo saw attendance of 245,000 (Atkins 2002:52), and tens of thousands at similar shows of European quilts at QuiltEuro in Spain in 2003.
Aside from a few publications and teachers, none of this elaborate infrastructure existed prior to the 1970s. Thus by examining what resources actually were available to quilters in the 1950s and 1960s, we can understand not only how the 1950s and 1960s are similar to and different from the 1970s, but how they continue and break from the 1930s revival as well.

Our understanding of the past 100 plus years of quilt history is currently framed as consisting of periods of boom and bust. We are currently still in the third and longest quilting revival of the twentieth century.

Summary

Current views of women's lives during the 1950s emphasize domesticity, conformity and consumerism, while the 1960s are characterized by protest and massive social change. After the Great Depression and World War II, American industrial production turned to consumer goods while young men and women formed new families at a greater rate than anywhere else in the world at that time. While the return to domesticity and its accompanying shift for women from producers to consumers is associated with the 1950s, it continued well into the 1960s. The women's movement began in the mid-1960s, but its results only began to flower for most American women in the 1970s.
Quilt history of the last 100 years has been characterized as a series of slumps and revivals. Quilting between 1940 and 1970 is perceived by current quilt researchers as being in a slump between the revivals of the 1930s and 1970s. They found little quilting being done except by those who started during the 1930s.

Like the slump of the 1880s and 1910s, besides fewer quilts being made, it included lessened standards of workmanship and few new patterns. All the slumps reflected changed decorating trends and new perspectives that abundant commercial production eliminated the need for, and was superior to, home production.
CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

To examine how portrayals of quilt production from 1945 to 1970 reflected a transformation in women’s roles from producer to consumer, I have employed multiple methods to provide a fuller view of the time period. The methodology chapter is organized around the three methods I use to examine quilting. My first method uses the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature and the Art Index to create a database of approximately 200 articles and books to give a nationwide view of prescriptive norms about domestic art, commodification, counterhegemonic trends and resources available to quilters. Second, I use the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project archives to examine information about quilt production, materials, methods, demographic information on quiltmakers, and their portrayals of group quilting. Third, I conduct interviews with twelve quilters active from 1945 to 1970 to provide evidence about the social conditions of production, support networks, how quilting and quilts were viewed, and the nature of women’s leisure.

My research uses three distinct methods to examine quilting nationwide. Building on Denzin (1978), Janesick
(1994:215) describes five types of triangulation, or multiple method research, four of which are used in this research. It uses multiple data sources, multiple theories, multiple methods, and is derived from multiple disciplines. It does not use multiple researchers. Different methods provide multiple viewpoints on a particular question rather than creating a hierarchy of preferred methods (Hodder 1994:394). The advantages of multi-method research are in some ways the same as its disadvantages; that is, different methods and sources often yield very different results. While the differences can be used to compensate for weaknesses or augment the results of other methods, the difficulties of synthesizing potentially widely divergent results adds an additional level of challenge. The multiple methods used balance and augment each other. Like Radway, I think multiple methods more accurately reflect

"the ways historical subjects understand and partially control their own behavior in a social and cultural context that has powerful determining effects on individual social action" (Radway 1991:6).

The methods I used for this research complemented each other by providing different views of quilting during the same time period. First, content analysis of magazine articles provided an overall view of the portrayal of quilts in American culture through their historical context, relation to commercialization, aesthetic considerations, women's roles, and other discourses. Second, the Nevada
Heritage Quilt Project (NHQP) survey showed what kinds of quilts were actually produced, and who was making them. Third, twelve interviews give an emic/insider's view of quilting that contrasts to the etic/outsider's view from the magazines. The interviews give a perspective of how quilting fits into women's everyday lives, their motivations, and how they integrated quilting in their multitude of roles. Any quilter who was 40 in 1960, which is younger than the average age of quilters then, would be 80 today. Since I am covering a time period ranging from 30 to 60 years ago, it is imperative these oral traditions be recorded while they are still available.

While interpretive methods such as interviews tend to assume an internal coherence between the self-understandings of the actors, they are weak in identifying how social orders developed (Fay 1976:88). This research is informed by Dorothy Smith's feminist standpoint approach (1992:105) that treats the everyday world as problematic, continually created, shaped and known by the people within it, while also shaped by external material factors and textually mediated relations (Oleson 1994:163). The longitudinal content analysis of the magazine articles provides the historical perspective missing in interviews while the interviews balance the tendency of historical accounts to be overly structural.
The magazine articles were compared to the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project (NHQP) for how quilt kits were referenced and for which quilt methods were emphasized at a given time vs. the distribution of methods seen in the NHQP. The NHQP survey and the interviews I conducted both examine the reasons and circumstances of quilting. The interviews provide insight into how publications were actually used by quilters and their views of the consumerism and mores implied in the articles.

The research process itself is like a quilter who pieces together many different fabrics that individually may look impossibly contradictory, yet when put together form a new blending and a larger overall pattern. In this work I try to honor the multivocality of multiple sources and speakers.

Material culture: The Nevada Heritage Quilt Project

The first research method uses material culture analysis to learn about quilts made between 1945 and 1970 using the data collected in the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project archives located at the Nevada State Historical Society. Quilt owners brought in quilts for evaluation to documentation days held in fifteen communities throughout the state from 1988 to 1991. Of the 3000+ quilts that were documented in this project, over 500 fit this time frame. I
selected quilts for analysis based on creation dates between 1940 and 1975. From the documentation and slides, I examined the types of quilts made, the influence of commodification, the existence of quilt groups, and demographic information about quilt makers. Volunteer groups have surveyed the quilts in 46 of the 50 states, and Nevada is one of only sixteen that recorded quilts made after 1960.

Though slides of the quilts do not show quilting detail, workmanship, or fabric detail, overall views of quilts can look startlingly different from what one would assume from their brief description. The slides show overall top design, colors and sometimes the amount of quilting. The slides illustrate the vitality of the quilts and the creativity of their makers, which is lost in the brief written descriptions.

Statistical analysis lets us see changing trends through time, and any interrelationship between demographic variables and the kinds of quilts produced. The data itself provides a detailed view of mid-century quilting. It has additional value by correlating it to the magazine articles and interviews.

Data I analyzed included: 1) changes in the rates of applique vs. pieced quilts made through the time period, 2) associations between group quilting and the region where groups were active, 3) patterns in the reasons quilts were
made, 4) affects of time, place, and religion, and 5) who was quilting (by age, religion, and so forth)

My unit of analysis was the NHQP documentation for a single quilt. Each quilt has its own manila folder containing four sheets of information: 1) a detailed physical exam of the quilt including construction, fabric and pattern (sheets 1 and 2 created by NHQP evaluators), 2) provenance (the quilt's origin ownership, and history), and 3) any known biographic information about the quilt maker (both from the person who brought in the quilt). See sample in Appendix D. A fifth sheet of owner information is stored separately and is not available to the public.

I operationalize the physical composition of each quilt using information found on the original documentation for each quilt. Physical composition consists of four criteria: 1) the type of quilt (pieced, applique, whole cloth, embroidered, combination), 2) the top construction method (by hand, machine, combination), 3) quilting method by which the top, interior and back are attached (hand quilted, machine quilted, tied, combination), and 4) the type of fabric used (cotton, polyester/cotton blend, wool, silky or combination. "Silky" fabrics are those with similar appearance made of silk, satin, or rayon.)

Documenters also noted whether a quilt was made from a purchased kit or whether the top was a known or original design. The impact of technology and commercialization can
be examined through the changing use of sewing machines, fabric, and the use of quilt kits.

Pages 1 and 2 came from the quilt evaluator, while pages 3 and 4 of the documentation were created by evidence from the quilt owner. They include the name(s) of the quilt top maker(s) and quilter(s), where the quilt was made, whether the quilt was made for a special occasion, how the quilt got to Nevada if made elsewhere, and demographic information on the quilter such as birth date, place of birth, ethnicity, religion, occupation, and education.

A common assumption about quilts is that they were all group made. The image of the historic quilting bee where women gathered to quilt a completed quilt top is a strong one. In reality, most quilts were and continue to be completely made by one individual. From the NHQP data, I operationalized identifying a group quilt as one where one step of the process was done by multiple quilters. Examples include a quilting bee to quilt a top, or family members contributing squares for a quilt top. A quilt where the top was made by one person and quilted by a second was not considered a group quilt, using current guidelines (Quilt Chatter 2003:8).

There were three ways quilts were dated: 1) date sewn onto the quilt, 2) owners provided a completion date to NHQP personnel, and/or 3) evaluators estimated the quilt completion date. Quilt evaluators used a combination of
knowledge of pattern history, fabric history, production techniques and books like Barbara Brackman's *Clues in the Calico* to estimate a quilt's date. Owners base dates in personal family history such as "She must have made it before WWII because I was with her five days out of the week after that and I never saw her piecing" (overheard in a quilt class). I dated the quilts by analyzing the two quilt dates to give an estimated date, using the latest date as the quilt's completion date. The completion date is the date used for the quilt. I gave more weight to the quilt owner if their dates were more precise. For instance, if the quilt owner said the quilt was made from 1958 to 1959 and the documenter said 1950s, I used 1959 for the date. If a range of dates was given, such as a quilt begun in the 1930s and finished in the 1960s, the 1960s date was used. For approximate dates, an average was used, for example 1965 for 1960s, 1960 for a "1950s to 1960s" estimate.

Also noted was whether the quilt itself was dated by the maker (i.e. "Mary Quilter 1962" embroidered in a corner). Only 26 of the 511 quilts (5%) of the research time period were dated on the quilt itself. Quilts completed after 1960 were more likely to be dated. More than half the dated quilts are from 1960 to 1980, though dated quilts are found across the entire time period. Without actual dating on the quilts, I combined the completion dates provided by quilt owners and the dates given by the NHQP professional
evaluators. Because quiltmaking can be a time consuming process and/or may be started by one person and finished by another, I included quilts started before 1940 if they were completed between 1940 and 1975, or quilts begun between 1940 and 1975 but completed later. In all, I identified 511 quilts begun or completed between 1940 and 1975.

Dates were further operationalized as known or estimated. If a year was listed by the documenter, the quilt itself was dated, or the quilt owner gave an actual completion year, it was classified as having a known date, otherwise, it was estimated. Descriptions like "1960s" or "late 1940s" were considered estimated dates. Overall, 53% of NHQP quilts had known dates.

I examined quilts for differences between those found in urban locations in Nevada, which I operationalized as having 40,000+ people in 1990, and rural areas with less than 40,000 people. Over 70% of the quilts documented were made outside Nevada. This volume allows for classification by region of the United States (Nevada, other West, Midwest, South, East). While the number of quilts from each area reflect migration patterns rather than the actual popularity of quilting in that region, summary conclusions can still be drawn regarding construction differences, reasons quilts were made, group quilting, and so forth. To my knowledge, there is no equivalent work available from other projects, nor, given the few state projects that have accepted 1940 to
1975 quilts, are such equivalent studies possible. For example, while the NHQP includes Iowa quilts made after 1930, the Iowa quilt project does not.

**Sampling**

I reviewed all 3000+ folders in the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project (NHQP) archives and selected all quilts that were completed or started between 1940 and 1975, omitting quilts made "in the 1970s" due to the number and possibility of being outside the study's range. Only quilts that documented work being done between 1940 and 1975 were included. For example, I did not include any quilts where the top was made in the 1930s and had no documentation it had been touched until it was made into a quilt in 1980. Using these criteria, I found 511 quilts begun or finished between 1940 and 1975.

As secondary data, there are two sampling biases that must be noted. First, the way the quilt days were advertised did not reach Hispanic and African American communities. No quilts from these communities were documented. Second, from interviews, women did not bring in every quilt they owned, but selected those with possible historic significance such as quilts with signed blocks, or those with greater aesthetic qualities. Still, the NHQP provides some of the most comprehensive documentation we have on mid-twentieth century quilting.

89
Data on each quilt can be roughly divided into two categories: 1) information about the quilt itself such as materials, construction methods, and dating, and 2) information about the quilter(s) such as why and where the quilt was made and demographic information. In addition, I reviewed slides of 250 of the quilts for corroboration of kit usage and originality. This information was coded into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for analysis, allowing further correlation of the data. Reliability was tested by recoding 25 quilt forms and comparing results, which resulted in a 94.7 percent correlation between the two sets of questionnaires.

**Pros and cons of research on material culture**

Material culture studies have looked at the relation of objects and culture in historical, archaeological and ethnographic contexts. "Material culture" refers to the artifacts produced by a culture. Herskovits defines material culture as "the vast universe of objects used by humankind to cope with the physical world, to facilitate social intercourse, to delight our fancy, and to create symbols of meaning" (Schlereth 1982:2). This area of research primarily focuses on the physical artifacts themselves.

Thomas Schlereth sees three uses for artifactual study: 1) when no other data is available either because of historical constraints or because of the lack of textual
sources for a given population, 2) as supplementary evidence, such as my own three-pronged research involving quilts, publications, and interviews, and 3) to test hypotheses and revise existing ideas based on documentation. Because artifacts are a different source for history and culture than texts and interaction, they can offer different information.

Most of the work in this area has sought to measure and understand change using an interdisciplinary approach. Most material culture studies are strong in identification, preservation, categorization, and display of artifacts, but weaker on cultural analysis and interpretation. In contrast, most cultural studies are strong on analysis and interpretation, but weak in the areas where material culture studies are strongest. Cultural studies has created a new arena of interest in the material products of society as research sources within the discipline of sociology. It approaches an object as a text to be read, offering in-depth, interpretive analysis within a larger cultural context. It provides an area where subordinated groups' daily activities can be seen (Hodder 1994:395). This research uses both material culture studies and cultural studies approaches with both the quilts and the magazine articles.

As cultural studies began to consider the influence of researchers in interactive interviews, they reassessed the
value of passive observation by using such naturally occurring data as books, magazines, and advertisements. Objects are seen as texts to be read, offering in depth, interpretive analysis within a larger cultural context. Because the objects and texts have already been produced, a researcher's effect on the data is presumably limited to interpretation only. Objects may provide information which is less consciously biased than texts. Quilts, for instance, show the impact of new textile technologies by changes in dyes, types of fabrics, the advent of polyester batting, and the introduction of new technology such as the sewing machine about 1860, zigzag sewing machines in the early 1960s, and the rotary cutter in the 1980s.

Material culture studies is a separate object-based research agenda which looks at the relation of objects and culture in historical, archaeological and ethnographic contexts. Its basis in the detailed examination of each individual artifact offers a level of information that most cultural studies researchers have not accessed or used. Cultural studies has opened the discipline of sociology to the new research source of the material products of society. However, cultural studies emphasis on the textuality of objects applies techniques not currently used within material culture studies.

Using only existing documentation limits the kinds of information obtainable to questions which have already been...
asked. For example, I would have liked to know when the quilter began quilting, but such a question was not asked by the NHQP, and could only be inferred for 26 of the 511 quilts. The researcher also has no control over the quality or the reliability of the data. At the same time, the data itself is to some extent free of researcher influence. It does not allow the kind of in depth examination of each piece that sheds light on processes and habits of the makers (Barber 1994:23), but substitutes quantity for quality. The disadvantages of working with secondary data can be partially overcome by using other methods.

While there is a significant African American population in Las Vegas, and discussions with several women have led me to believe that quilting was an integral part of many of these families, no African American quilts were documented in the project. There are also no quilts identified as by Hispanic quilters. These serious errors of omission were probably created by the ways the quilt days were advertised and where the quilt days were held.

Another example of the type of data unusable in the NHQP survey documents was the impact of technology in the use of polyester batting, which was introduced in the late 1950s. Batting cannot be seen and its use can only be inferred from the quilt's appearance. Too many 1940s quilts were listed as having polyester batting for the survey to be reliable, and I had to eliminate it as a data category.

93
Finally, the data reflects both the varying amount of training provided to the volunteer recorders, and the effort to coordinate their results with the information provided by quilt owners, who may know little or nothing about quiltmaking or the women who made their family quilts. However, these critiques should not be seen as denigrating the still significant information available in the NHQP files, as evidenced in my research.

Using material culture analysis of quilts in the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project provides concrete examples of domestic production from 1945 to 1970. I examine changes, continuities, the interaction of technological changes, commercialization and changing demographics. The impact of new research technology, as evidenced by SPSS, makes these interactions visible and enables a range of comparisons which would have been virtually impossible with manual analysis alone.

Media analysis: magazine articles

The second method I utilized in this research was a content analysis of approximately 200 magazine articles, advertisements, pamphlets and books published from 1940 to 1971 which included quilting techniques in their text. The database is derived from the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, the Art Index, and the Humanities and Social Science Index.
The articles are predominantly written by experts like designers, home furnishing editors, and museum curators, thus skewing the articles towards idealized and marketable representations of quilting. This was counteracted to some extent by the NHQP data and interviews with quilters. While the articles tend to focus on culturally valued artifacts such as rare 19th century quilts, they provide a means of seeing how quilts, quilt culture, and the role of quilts in American culture at the time, were described to the more general public, what values were applied, and what were common understandings and assumptions about quilts. They provide a more popular view than specialized publications like pattern catalogs which were marketed to those already interested in quilting.

I used content analysis to examine the overall societal view of quilts and quilters, placing the underlying patterns and contradictory features in a larger context. I examined both the prescriptive norms about the nature of domestic art, its ties to commodification, and evidence of counterhegemonic trends. This qualitative content analysis began with a conceptual framework derived from gender and art and cultural studies theory from which a questionnaire was developed (see Appendix C). Each magazine article was analyzed and coded, then was summarized to find frequency changes.
In addition, I used a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss 1967) to uncover trends and approaches found through the analysis itself. One example I discovered was that the three basic techniques of patchwork, quilting and applique had separate time periods of prominence in the articles.

My initial question was to identify any pattern in the frequency of articles throughout the time period. Using my database of articles from 1900 to 1978, I expected to find that the number of articles published matched the rise and fall of quilting's popularity during the 20th century. My research showed this was not substantiated by the actual articles.

Some basic information about quilt articles was necessary. In fact, no previous research has systematically used these magazine articles as a source. Sample questions I asked were 1) what kind of magazines published articles and in what frequency, 2) what kind of articles were written, 3) how were quilts placed historically in the articles, 4) what kind of objects were referenced, 5) why was the article published, 6) what techniques were referenced, 7) who wrote the articles, 8) what authority did they reference, and 9) what values/discourses were referenced?

I expected the articles to reflect larger social, economic, and decorating trends found mid-century. Of
particular interest were the views of femininity, family, and the enactment of domesticity and the women's movement, which I expected to change over time. While much of the current quilt literature sees the 1970s quilt revival as derivative of the 1971 Whitney quilt exhibit, I wanted to see what writers at the time said about the demise or revival of quilting.

I categorized magazine types based on their primary purpose and/or market: women's, home, antique/collection, art/museum, scholarly, and general/other. Types of articles were grouped as antiques, how to, exhibition notices, scholarly, industry, folk/ethnic art, purchase and care, and advertisements. The historical placement of quilts and quilting were categorized as contemporary (the default if no other placement was mentioned) or some type of historic reference, either to a specific date, general time period or some vaguely historic reference, such as "in times past...."

Three areas of further inquiry were 1) what justification for quilting was given, such as for a gift, to make or save money, to do something creative, or for home decorating, 2) how time spent quilting was viewed, and 3) how quilting/quilts were viewed (as art, craft, folk art, rural, visual, tactile, historic, family heirloom, and so forth). In most categories, articles referenced multiple discourses.
I examined articles for the effects of commercialization which were operationalized as containing references to a pattern, kit, or finished product, professional quilters, stores, brand names or using finished goods (herein called readymades). Readymades were a method of speeding up or simplifying construction, such as embellishing purchased curtains with applique.

Articles were considered to take a negotiated or counterhegemonic stance to quilting if they questioned any of the common assumptions about quilting. Such assumptions as quilting as a method for women to decorate their home, that quilts are not connected to any art worlds, quilting as a traditional method out of step with "modern living" and mass production, or quilts as a collectible/antique were operationalized as being status quo visions of quilting.

Another important area of inquiry was what kind of authority was referenced. Authority was operationalized as references to experience, professional affiliation, or training. Citations such as "noted quilt expert," museum curator, "designed by the editors," or noting a designer's art training or profession as an art teacher are examples of these authority references.

Finally, was there a reference to historic or contemporary group work? What other parts of the known quilt world were referenced such as quilt magazines or
books, historic quilting bees, or fairs? How were social movements and current events such as WWII referenced?

**Sampling**

Perhaps the biggest challenge for these articles was determining what constituted quilt activity. I excluded articles whose titles indicated they obviously were not quilt related, such as ones on bedframes or woven coverlets. Magazine articles that were included in the research had to use or reference at least one of the three types of quilt methods at least once (patchwork, applique, or quilting) that Marie Webster first categorized in 1915. I did not limit the article selection by the type of object produced so that articles about appliqued curtains, home quilted upholstery fabric and patchwork skirts were included. However, I excluded tied comforters, embroidered summer spreads, and candlewick spreads that did not, by this definition, use any quilt methods. I also omitted articles that only included textiles made from commercially quilted fabric unless they alluded to traditional quilts, such as using preprinted fabric that looked like patchwork or applique.

The primary resource for magazine articles was the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, the *Humanities Index* (which yielded very few entries), and the *Arts Index*. All articles from the following categories were examined:

a) bedding, b) counterpanes, c) needlework, d) patchwork, e)
quilts, and f) sewing. The sample included all quilt related articles published from 1940 to 1971 found through the three indices plus a few other articles discovered in the research process, a total of almost 200 articles.

The frequency of articles might simply reflect changes in the number of magazines indexed in the Reader's Guide. I totaled the number of articles for each five year period from 1920 to 1974. Because the number of magazines indexed does not change dramatically from year to year, I created a ratio of this total to the number of magazines indexed in the middle year of the five years. For example, there were 26 articles from 1945 to 1949 and the number of magazines indexed in 1947 was 133, so the ratio was .2. In comparison, the number of indexed articles from 1960 to 1964 was 39 and the number of indexed magazines in 1962 was 129 so the ratio was .3. This shows that the change in the number of indexed magazines was not responsible for the increase in the number of articles, otherwise the ratios would have been the same.

**Pros and cons of content analysis**

Like material culture, content analysis uses passive observation, except it focuses on the naturally occurring data in books, magazines, and advertisements. The pros and cons for using sources like magazine articles were largely discussed within the previous section detailing the NHQP as a source. Because they have already been produced, the
researcher's effect on the data is limited to interpretation only.

Articles provide insight into aspects of quilting not provided by the other two methods, including a national level perspective on how quilts were seen at midcentury. This is the richest source for placing quilts within a larger cultural context, though it still suffers from the basic problem of triangulation--trying to bring together results from extremely disparate sources. It also was the most time consuming method, taking more than two years to gather the articles alone, and on average more than an hour per article to code.

In order to place the articles in a larger time frame, my database extends from 1900 to 1978, though I have used content analysis only for those articles within the 1940 to 1971 time frame. While the indices miss certain genres of periodicals such as specialized needlework magazines like Workbasket, local farming and ranching magazines with homemaker columns, and weekly syndicated columns in newspapers, they have the advantage of providing a consistent, accessible, replicable index which carries with it the hegemonic authority of supposedly non-prejudicial academic indexing.

Quilting related magazine articles and books provide a hegemonic cultural view of quilting, a framework for comparing the interviews and NHQP data. The publications do
not present a unified view of quilts and their place in contemporary American life. Instead, they enable us to see the predominant approaches and how they change through time.

Interviews

My third research method was in depth semi-structured interviews with twelve quilters who began quilting before 1970. What constituted quilting activity was described and defined by the women themselves through self selection. I did not limit the range of quilt activities. Even so, those discussed focused on bed quilts, only occasionally referencing wall hangings, clothing or home decorating.

The women interviewed were 60 to 85 years old, white, and middle class. Two worked part time, one was in a nursing home, the rest were homemakers. All were currently married except one widow. All had children, most had grandchildren, and a few had great grandchildren. They began quilting from the late 1940s to the early 1970s. While they all lived in Nevada or California at the time of the interviews, several had made quilts while living in other states as well. Most were active quilters at the time of the interviews (1997 to 1999).

While sociological interviews and oral history interviews may ask very similar questions, the way interviewees are identified in the research is very different. Oral histories gain part of their validity
through acknowledging the real person within the text, while sociological interviews guarantee anonymity for those interviewed. In order to allow for both possibilities, my interview permission form gave subjects the choice to be identified or to remain anonymous, thus allowing for historical validity checking or protecting respondents by maintaining confidentiality.

The semi-structured interviews were loosely organized by a questionnaire (see Appendix B) that acted as a checklist more than as a structured interview. When possible, interviews were conducted in the subject's homes. This was done after a few interviews when it became obvious that resources like scrapbooks, quilt books, and quilts they had made were available there and contributed greatly to overall understanding.

There were three main sections to the interviews. First, I asked for general demographic information such as number of children, work status, husband's job, and age. Second, I asked about their personal quilting history: how they learned, when they started, where they got patterns and fabric, what contact with other quilters they had. Third, I asked questions to frame quilting within their other daily activities: when they found time, family and friends' views, other influences such as magazines and social organizations. This last part was very difficult for most interviewees to
reconstruct and few saw any connection of it to their quilting.

I began with the view that women's everyday activities would demonstrate the interaction of public and private spheres, the impact of commercialization, and cultural expectations, expecting it to be "shaped by external material factors or textually mediated relations" (Olesen 1994:163). However, quilters themselves saw choices rather than influences or connections. Questions in interviews were intended to put a "human face" on quilt production, to understand the interplay of quilt publication and production, of prescriptive norms and actual work, of how quilt production fit within a woman's day and life.

My unit of analysis was the individual interview. An interview consisted of substantive questions about the context of quilting for the women being interviewed and their specific demographic information. Questions focused on personal histories of sewing and quilting, individual contexts of quilting, sources for patterns and fabric, membership in or use of groups for quilting, and how each felt quilting was viewed during the time period. For many of the interviews, this was followed by a house tour showing me their work, providing a sense of its current place in their lives.

The interviews provide a richly contextualized narrative of the role of quilting in women's lives. Like
the quilt data analyzed from the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project, the interviews provide concrete examples to compare to the recommendations and assumptions found in the quilt articles. Because most women interviewed were in their 60s or beyond, there is a time limitation to any replication of, or further interviewing, unlike the other two methods, as there is a finite number of years they or their contemporaries will be available. Just as it is already too late to interview 1930s quilters, it will soon be too late to interview 1940s and 1950s quilters.

In the interviews, I asked women about the cultural capital they brought to quilting by asking how they learned to sew, when and why they started quilting, whether they took any classes in quilting, and where they got ideas and patterns for their quilts.

I operationalized ties to a larger quilt world by asking if they ever did any group quilting, if they ever belonged to a quilt guild, or if they had taught any quilt classes. The intersection with commercialization came from questions regarding fabric sources, types of fabric used, the use of scraps, and pattern sources.

I operationalized the role of quilting in women's lives by asking what other arts and crafts they did, when they quilted, how family and friends reacted, who their quilts were made for, what family recreation was, and whether they taught their children or grandchildren to quilt. The
effects of the larger society was categorized through questions about what they read, organizations they belonged to, volunteer work, and how they felt the women's movement affected their lives.

Sampling

Because women who quilted during this time form no cohesive or known grouping, I used a convenience sample based on word-of-mouth and volunteered information. I asked for volunteers during a quilt retreat sponsored by the local quilt guild, then asked those quilters for further references. The local group (Desert Quilters of Nevada) had approximately 400 members in southern Nevada and held a yearly retreat in Bunkerville where about 60 members spent an entire weekend taking quilt classes or working on their own projects. Several other quilters were referred by people knowledgeable about my research. Because of the volume of research necessary with the other two methods, the number of quilters interviewed was limited to a dozen, including initial local volunteers and those referred to me.

I interviewed women who identified themselves as beginning a quilt prior to 1972 or 1973. This is not the same as defining themselves as quilters. Some women, who made a quilt top either quilted by some one else or left in a drawer for many years, did not consider themselves quilters until they had completed a whole quilt themselves. Considering these women quilters because they used a quilt
technique is consistent with the selection of magazine articles I reviewed because both focus on process rather than product. Just as a quilt related article had to reference a quilt technique but didn't have to promote a bed quilt, so also women didn't have to complete a quilt to be considered quilters.

Pros and cons of interviews

Using multiple research methods balances traditional ethnographic interviewing through the use of other forms of representation to get away from mere "reporting," while further enabling the goal of cultural studies to analyze texts and experiences shaped by everyday life (Denzin 1992). In-depth interviews situate the observer closer to the subject, enhancing the observer's understanding of the context of behavior. The goal is interpretive understanding, discovering motives and intentions rather than looking for causes. Interviews balance the other two methods by providing real life circumstances and details such as the impact of consumerism and technology.

Interviews offer multiple levels of interpretation. Subjects interpret the past through a lens of 30+ years of further experience and changing mores. This leads to comments like "I didn't know anything back then, I used whatever fabrics were available." Therefore, I try to counterbalance this time-laden reinterpretation through the
other methods, while also balancing the interviews among each other.

One of the difficulties in the interviews was identifying what activities had occurred up to 1970 vs. those that were after the time period of the study. Another was that women's views of the time have been colored by subsequent experience and media exposure, so their evaluations could be highly subjective. Framing questions to use other events in their lives to fix time frames also helped to focus responses to reflect what was happening at the time rather than generalized overviews. With the small number of women I interviewed, and the volume of other research, interviews were used more as anecdotal evidence than using systematic ethnographic analysis.

Placing myself in the research

In order to uncover my own biases and thinking, a brief overview of my relationship to quilting is in order. Reflexive research not only puts the ethnographer's position at the reader's disposal, but requires the ethnographer herself to confront deep-seated but often barely noticed biases that can affect the research.

Gold (Adler & Adler 1994:379) defined a typology of four research modes through which observers gather data: observer, observer as participant, participant as observer, and complete participant. These all involve different
levels of detachment and involvement. Realistically, I used some or all of these roles at different times because they are not discrete positions, but rather steps along a continuum from total outsider to total insider.

Most of my time was spent as a participant-as-observer because one cannot be a true participant observer in events that occurred more than 30 years ago. I also used the self-reflexivity and "auto-ethnography" of the complete participant to create easier connections with quilters, and to enable questioning only a knowledgeable participant could ask and understand.

Being a quilter has given me a level of understanding and acceptance I would not otherwise have. It enabled me to get to deeper meanings with the quilters I interviewed when they understood I was "one of them." Knowing the terminology and process provides another level of insider view (Fontana and Frey 1994:366). Elizabeth Barber, a textiles researcher and archeologist, emphasizes this type of learning which "can shed light on the lives and habits of the original craftworkers that no amount of armchair theorizing can give" (Barber 1994:23). This does not obviate the recognition of the differences in power within the interview process (Olesen 1994:166). In fact, subjects often assume someone my age (mid-forties), knows little about quilting. When it became obvious that was not the case, I took care to ensure they understood how much I
valued their contributions, even if that contribution was not the technical details of quilting per se.

My personal interest in quilts probably stems from my baby quilt of 1930s quilt blocks finished by my grandmother in the 1950s. I began sewing in junior high, completed my first "quilt" piece in 1970 (a patchwork formal for a Christmas dance), and began my first quilt in 1971, which was finished in 1992. Quilters became the focus of my master's thesis in 1985 when I sought a way to study change in ethnic and folk arts in the modern world while doing ethnographic fieldwork in the Los Angeles area. I continue to quilt and belong to the local quilt guild, though I often tell quilters I spend so much time studying quilters I don't have time to quilt. I began collecting antique quilts at estate auctions in the Midwest, and used my 1940s to 1970s quilts to better understand the details of quiltmaking I could not obtain from the NHQP slides.

Summary

The multiple methods I have used reflect the multi-perspective interdisciplinary approach of my own training in sociology, anthropology and history. Multi-method research provides an extremely rich, complex body of data to uncover patterns of behavior. Triangulation provided different kinds of information and enabled validation and refinement of one method by the others (Reinharz 1992:201). They kept
the research at a level of synthesis and integration, which might otherwise have tended towards simple descriptions of individuals, individual quilts, and individual magazine articles.

While any of the methods could probably have constituted enough research for a dissertation by itself, it is the interactions between them that provided the most enlightenment. By combining material culture analysis, content analysis, and interviews, we have more ways of examining the interplay of everyday life, production and reproduction, material and commercial influences, providing a more nuanced view of the specifics of one part of women's lives from 1945 to 1970.
CHAPTER 5

CHARACTER OF QUILT PRODUCTION

What was the character of quilt production from 1940 to 1975? This chapter examines NHQP data and portrayals of production in magazine articles to examine material culture history from 1945 to 1970. "Material culture" refers to the artifacts produced by every culture, or as Herskovits calls it, "the vast universe of objects used by humankind to cope with the physical world, to facilitate social intercourse, to delight our fancy, and to create symbols of meaning" (Schlereth 1982:2). I compare the evidence from the NHQP archives with a hegemonic view of quilting from magazine articles. Data compiled by the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project was examined for the types of quilts produced, geographic and historic patterns of production, and how those changed over time. Magazine articles were examined for the quantities of articles, types of articles, patterns of references to construction techniques, and types of artifacts produced. This chapter focuses on the what, when, where, and how of quilting; the who and why are found in the next chapter.
Quilt production and magazine
article overview

**The Nevada Heritage Quilt Project**

Did quilt production between 1940 and 1975 decline as most quilt histories indicate? The NHQP shows quilts were consistently produced during the time period of study. In fact, more quilts were made in the 1950s and 1960s than in the 1940s (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th># of quilts</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940-1949</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1959</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1969</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1979</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1989</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>511</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All quilts that had work done between 1940 and 1970 were included.

Quilt production from 1950 to 1970 was relatively constant at 140 quilts every ten years. Significantly fewer quilts were produced in the 1940s. (See chapter note 1.) My research shows an increasing number of quilts produced in each decade from 1940 to 1970 in the NHQP. This indicates only a slight decline from previous decades. Feazell’s counts (1995:115), the only other research using the NHQP archives, used different dating criteria. Drawing from Feazell's previous study of the NHQP it is clear that production from 1940 to 1970 was 75% of what it was from
1940 to 1970. (See Chapter note 2.) Even at those rates, the number of quilts is higher than I would have expected given existing quilt research.

One of the most important conclusions from the analysis of the NHQP data is that there are no statistically significant patterns of changes over time or differences by region of the country or rural/urban differences. Still, some patterns of changes over time and between regions can be seen.

Magazines

Frequencies

Unlike the NHQP quilts, magazine articles from 1940 to 1970 show no decline from the 1930s. There is an overall increase in articles from 1920 to 1945 with frequencies leveling out from 1945 through 1954 (see Table 2). It was not until the late 1950s that the number of articles dropped noticeably. It is the only time from 1940 to 1974 when there were fewer quilt articles than at the highest point in the 1930s, even accounting for changes in the number of magazines indexed. The drop for 1955 to 1959 is followed by a big increase from 1960 to 1964, then numbers return to immediate post war levels until a huge jump in the early 1970s.
Table 2. Quilt article frequency 1920 to 1974

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reader's Guide</th>
<th>Art Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total/Average</td>
<td>Total/Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-1924</td>
<td>11/2.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-1929</td>
<td>12/2.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-1934</td>
<td>25/5.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-1939</td>
<td>19/3.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-1944</td>
<td>30/6.0</td>
<td>16/3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-1949</td>
<td>26/5.2</td>
<td>22/4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1954</td>
<td>26/5.2</td>
<td>8/1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955-1959</td>
<td>21/4.2</td>
<td>0/0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1964</td>
<td>39/7.8</td>
<td>8/1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-1969</td>
<td>26/5.2</td>
<td>2/0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1974</td>
<td>64/12.8</td>
<td>19/3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1971 was a propitious year for quilting. At the beginning of the year there were several articles on Mountain Artisans, an Appalachian quilt cooperative, followed by a flurry of press coverage of the Whitney exhibit which opened that August. For the next few years, quilt related articles popped up everywhere. More articles were published in the five years from 1970 to 1974 than in the fifteen years of the previous revival (1925 to 1940). There was a huge increase in the number of articles in the general press as well as arts and home magazines.

The 1970s increase reflected the Whitney exhibit in 1971, its subsequent national and world tour, and the burgeoning quilt revival. In both quantity and the range of magazine types where quilts appeared, the 1970s revival was highlighted in national publications in a way never seen previously. Along with increased interest from the Bicentennial, the exhibit is credited with spawning the
current quilt revival. The revival itself is also partially responsible for generating the increased articles in the 1970s, as growing interest spawned even more articles.

There were cycles of popularity five to eight years long. The high point produced about eight articles per year while the low point produced four articles per year. From 1940 to 1970, the 1950s produced the fewest articles, though they matched 1930s levels. The 1940s and 1960s are 40% above 1930s and 1950s levels. Looking at frequencies by year, there was a surge in articles from 1962 to 1965, averaging almost 10 articles per year, and a smaller surge from 1954 to 1956 of almost eight articles per year. The sustained highs of the 1970s and beyond were wholly new in the 20th century, and constitute a truly new period in quilt history.

A count of recent articles in the Reader's Guide found 15 articles for 1999, and six each for 2000 and 2001. The average of these (9) is higher than any equivalent five year period prior to 1970, indicating a continuing revival.

Did the number of magazines indexed influence the number of articles found? In order to determine this, I created a ratio of the number of magazine articles found to the number of magazines indexed in the Reader's Guide. The Guide indexed from 111 to 133 magazines from 1920 to 1965, and 160 from 1965 to 1974. The ratios for each five year period from 1940 to 1970 are all higher than those before
1940, replicating the changes in article counts (see Table 1).

The Art Index is more ambiguous because one magazine, Antiques, is responsible for a significant number of quilt articles from that index. However, Antiques was dropped from the index from 1959 through 1971. Because of this, I did not create a combined count for both indexes. The number of articles in the Art Index decrease through the 1950s and 1960s except for a slight increase from 1961 to 1965, which mirrors a similar jump in the Reader's Guide.

I combined the Art Index and Reader's Guide to see where articles were published. I divided magazines into six categories: women, general/other, home, collecting/antiques, art/design/museums, and industry oriented magazines (see Table 3). During the time period, articles were published in 33 different magazines. The dearth of articles from 1957 to 1960 is quite evident, even taking Antiques into account. Perhaps most striking is that only one article was published in art/design/museum magazines from 1956 to 1961. This is one indication of changes in how quilts were viewed in the art/craft debate, as historic exhibits decreased but new justifications for quilt techniques as part of "stitchery" and for wallhangings had yet to emerge.
Table 3. Magazine type frequency 1940 to 1974 in percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>General/</th>
<th>Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940-1944</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-1949</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1954</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955-1959</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1964</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-1969</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1974</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overall%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Antique</th>
<th>Art/</th>
<th>Museum</th>
<th>Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940-1944</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-1949</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1954</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955-1959</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1964</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-1969</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1974</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overall%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From 1940 to 1975, there was a steady stream of articles in home magazines such as *House Beautiful*, *American Home*, and *Better Home and Gardens*. The highest percentage of articles were in home magazines, which demonstrates a strong designation of quilts as home decoration. The drop in antique and collecting references in the 1960s due to *Antiques* magazine being dropped from the *Art Index* is quite noticeable, since that category had been nearly equal to home magazines in the 1940s (30% vs. 32% for the decade) and 1950s (21% vs. 23% for the decade). Women's magazines place fifth of six categories. Those magazines, like *Ladies Home*...
Journal, Redbook, and Seventeen, had few articles referencing this feminine art form. Perhaps this difference between women's and home magazines, also primarily aimed at women, reflects the separation of women's interests as perceived by publishers.

Magazine article frequencies demonstrate a rise in interest in quilting in the 1930s. That interest plateaued through the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, and jumped significantly with the revival of the 1970s. Article frequencies provide no support for the current view that interest in quilting declined after the 1930s revival.

**Article types**

Another way of examining changing emphases in quilting is by looking at the kind of magazine articles published. The articles were categorized into seven different types: 1) antiques, 2) how-tos, 3) exhibit description and/or review, 4) about people, 5) purchase and care, 6) scholarly, or written for the textile industry, and 7) other. Of these, only antiques, how-tos and exhibits each constituted 10% or more of the overall number of articles. How-tos, which give instructions for making specific items or using particular techniques, were the most common article type at 38% of all articles from 1940 to 1970.

The second most frequent article type was about antique quilts (20% of all articles), and third was exhibit reviews and descriptions (10% of all articles). There were
significant differences by decade, which will be discussed below (see Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antiques</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review/exhibit</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase/care</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly/industry</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How-to articles emphasize a hands-on approach to quilting. For instance, many of the how-to articles during WWII are about patching clothing and making do under circumstances of war shortages. Each decade shows significant variations of how many articles were how-tos in each five year period, one half about 30% and the other half about 45% of all articles. The highs are 1940 to 1944, 1955 to 1959, and 1960 to 1964. Most noticeable is a bulge of how-to articles from 1962 to 1965, especially in 1963 when how-tos are 9 of the 11 total articles. While the majority of articles are about making bedspreads, many also include wallhangings, clothing, and many home decorating items like curtains, pillows, lampshades and even wastebasket covers.
There is a noticeable decrease over time in the percentage of articles that focus on antique quilts, from about 25% in the 1940s and 1950s to 14% in the 1960s. This is partially attributable to Antiques magazine being dropped from indexing from 1959 to 1971, but is part of an overall decreasing trend since there were 22 articles found in Antiques in the 1940s but only eight in the 1950s. Dropping Antiques from the Art Index is particularly ironic in light of evaluations at the time which said it was "without a doubt the most valuable single repository of published material on the American arts, particularly the decorative arts, that exists" (Whitehill 1965:146). Aside from noting a few 20th century commemorative quilts, historic quilts are primarily from the U.S. centennial or before; late 19th and 20th century quilts are rarely mentioned. Antique quilts are primarily noted for their rarity, craftsmanship, and provenance rather than design, aligning them more with other decorative arts like silversmithing and antique furniture than as a folk art.

Exhibit reviews are of two primary types: 1) those of historical textiles, which may or may not focus on quilts specifically, and 2) museum or gallery exhibits of an individual's work such as Berthe Stenge in 1943 and Elizabeth Allen in 1967. When the Art Institute of Chicago opened Stenge's "summer show of--of all things--patchwork quilts, and modern ones at that" they crossed borders
between decorative art and folk art as "the first modern quilts in the U.S. today" (Newsweek Aug 2, 1943:91). Allen was an "esoteric" whose "mystic primitive tapestries" were discovered in the British hinterlands of Kent by a graduate art student, and eventually exhibited in an art gallery in London (Time June 2, 1967:53).

Magazine articles show a bias for east coast events. In fact, the 1963 Denver Art Museum quilt exhibit was not mentioned in any of the national level magazines indexed. The Denver Art Museum is a national level art museum which exhibited their significant collection of 1930s applique quilts by some of the major quilt designers of that time. However, their quarterly magazine, which described the exhibit and collection, was not indexed, though several east coast museum publications were.

Though articles about museum exhibits were found in all decades, almost 50% of the total articles came from 1945 to 1949, which were the last years of the Colonial Revival design movement. This time coincided with the first formal interest in material culture, folklore and folk art, which focused on the artifacts themselves more than their makers, the production process, or their place in society (Schlereth 1982:38). This focus on the past and its products was seen by scholars as tied to America's new world power and the cold war (Schlereth 1982:21).
Three other categories comprised another 20% of articles. Purchase and care articles (8.3% of total) discussed purchase criteria for new items and cleaning instructions for existing ones, including family quilts. The vast majority of these types of articles (64%) were from 1945 to 1955. They can be seen as evidence of the impact of mass production on consumer products as the United States returned to a peacetime economy. The introduction of new materials and processes prompted instructions for how to deal with the new synthetic materials, new permanent press fabric treatments, and the newly available machine quilted fabric with polyester filling as upholstery and purchased bedspreads. These new fabric types were compared to the treatment of existing quilts, which were assumed to be cotton. While polyester batting was available in commercial bedspreads in the 1950s, it was not widely available to the home quiltmaker until 1960 (Brackman 1989:54).

Publications for the textile industry totaled 6.5% of quilt related articles. They were published primarily in the 1960s, and showed how the industry both reflected and tried to influence the direction of consumer spending. By the 1960s, manufacturers had a plethora of new production techniques available such as machine quilting and new weaving and fabric printing methods, and were confident they could mass produce most traditional textile techniques, including weaving, knitting, embroidery and quilting.
Several articles referred to a "revolution in fabric manufacture" (American Fabrics Winter 1964, House Beautiful Feb. 1964). Articles also noted the production of new mattress sizes (queen, king, super king) and new mattress construction methods.

In the industry articles, quilts were referenced as design sources for fabric, wallpaper, tile, and rugs. They were one of numerous new trendy crossover sources, including tapestries, porcelain, and ethnic textiles. Such designs as Cuna molas (American Fabrics Winter 1964) and geometric quilts produced by the American Indian Arts Center Sioux Indians (O'Brien 1964) are blended with serapes and manufactured bedspreads to show a huge variety of textiles available for purchase.

From 1969 to 1970, several articles such as "Big Happening in Home Sewing" (Reader's Digest 1969), "Look Who's Sewing" (Harper's Bazaar 1970) and "$3 Billion Boom in Home Sewing" (Business Week 1970), noted a new interest in home sewing. Though their primary emphasis was girls' and women's clothing production, and none mentioned quilting per se, they positioned quilting to fit squarely within this growing emphasis on home rather than industrial production.

"Home sewing used to be associated with penny-pinching, poor style, leftover fabrics and make-do workmanship. ... Where the emphasis used to be on economy--on how much the woman who sewed could save--today it is on smartness and individuality. ... With an annual volume of nearly $2 billion, home sewing has now become one of
the nation's ten fastest growing industries" (Wharton 1969:25-28).

Articles on people also comprised 6.5% of all articles and are evenly spread across all decades. Examples of such articles included a 1943 article on Canada's one million needleworkers, a 1970 article on a VISTA organizer, and two 1966 articles on an elderly idiosyncratic quilter in England who was receiving critical notice. Such articles reflect an ongoing interest in the people who produced quilts as well as the quilts themselves.

The number of magazine articles from each decade of 1940 to 1970 equaled or exceeded those of the 1930s. The magazine counts reflect two dips, from 1955 to 1959 and 1965 to 1969, but an overall continuity I had not anticipated. From other researchers, I had also expected women's magazines to portray quilting more than home magazines or general interest magazines, but such was not the case. The number of quilts documented by the NHQP were also higher than I had expected and demonstrated a continuance of quilting, though not at the then record highs of the 1930s.

The types of magazine articles clearly portray the dimensions in which quilting was seen. Quilts were primarily seen as home decoration, collectible antiques, and as decorative art to be seen in museum exhibits equally as antiques and as contemporary decorative arts. Though the artistic merit of objects was mentioned more frequently in
the 1960s, in each decade quilts were recognized at least occasionally for their aesthetic as well as historic value.

What kinds of quilts were produced?

Techniques and materials

In this section, I examine what kind of quilting was portrayed and promoted in the magazine articles and what kind of quilts were found in the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project. Changing emphases on different techniques and materials reflect changes in American society including the impact of mass production and technological changes.

Quilt techniques in magazine articles

As I coded articles, I encountered years where there seemed to be more articles focused on one particular quilt technique than the other two. If my impression was true, then the focus of previous researchers only on bed quilts might have missed important changes in the way quilts and quilt techniques were viewed and used.

I therefore examined quilt articles for their ratio of citations of applique, patchwork, and quilting, the three main techniques that have defined what is or is not a quilt since Marie Webster's book enunciated them in 1915 (see table 5). Some articles mention all three quilting techniques, some use only quilt imagery. Quilt imagery refers to articles where the author used only the idea or appearance of a technique without the actual method such as
when using cheater cloth (pre-printed cloth that appears to be patchwork), quilt designs as wallpaper, or using glue instead of stitching to "applique" fabrics. Using quilt imagery values quilt design, even though not technically utilizing quilt techniques. It is another way that quilting was kept in the public view. The only other technique mentioned with any frequency was embroidery, a traditional embellishment for connecting patchwork and creating details in applique. In cross-stitch quilt kits it replaced applique or patchwork designs with an embroidered design.

Table 5. Percent of references to each technique by decade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quilting</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applique</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patchwork</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embroidery</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagery only</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of references to technique in comparison to the total number of articles decreases each decade of the study. In the 1940s, there are an average of 2.14 techniques referenced per article, in the 1950s there are 1.82 references per article, and in the 1960s there are 1.17 references per article. Thus, over time articles tended to focus on fewer techniques in each article, to the point that
from 1966 to 1969, there are no specific references to quilting as a technique at all.

By looking at only the three main quilt techniques, distinct patterns of popularity emerge (see Table 6). Magazine articles emphasized the technique of quilting from 1945 to 1955, applique in the 1960s and patchwork in the 1970s. During World War II, the three techniques received almost equal mention. From 1946 to 1955, quilting was over 50% of the references to specific technique while applique and patchwork were 26% and 23% respectively. The way quilting techniques were referenced was fairly stable from 1940 to 1960 when the ratio of references were fairly similar, with less than 5% difference within technique between the two decades. For both decades, quilting was mentioned most often, followed by applique, then patchwork. However, the 1960s had substantially fewer references to quilting, and a noticeable increase in the number of references to applique, while references to patchwork decreased slightly. The increase in applique references came from its use in wallhangings and school art projects.
Table 6. Percent of references to main techniques by decade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quilting</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applique</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patchwork</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After World War II, quilting is presented as a luxury that added an expensive designer touch to home decorating in such articles as "Poor Man's Magic Wand" (House Beautiful 1944), "Bedroom in Trapunto" (Ladies Home Journal 1949), "Quilting Adds the Midas Touch" (American Home 1952), "If You Want It to Look Luxurious, Quilt It" (American Home 1954), and "For Smart Touches, Decorate with Quilting" (Farm Journal 1956). Hand quilted designs surrounded by machine-quilted crosshatch backgrounds are recommended for upholstered chairs, lounges, wastebasket covers, and vanities. Women were challenged to try quilting by referencing expectations of femininity such as Guinan (1944:54 emphasis mine):

"We (women) can't get to the movies, so we stay home and play charades. We can't find the fabric we want for the wing chair by the window, so we get out the sewing machine and do our own quilting. Our great grandmothers made gala occasions of their quilting bees and, although scores of years have passed since quilting was a social fad, it's still the best way we know of giving ordinary fabric a head-in-the-air, five-dollar-a-yard quality. You can, of course, decide that you're not woman enough with your fingers and pay a professional to quilt your fabric for you. . . . So buy
it if you want to, but make it if you can. And we think you can."

An abundance of commercially quilted fabric became available in the 1950s and was recommended as an alternative for similar purposes, without the stigma purchased goods and services had earlier. This seems to represent the changes in attitudes after the war that embraced mass production. The increased variety and quality made them attractive alternatives.

Throughout the articles, there is a sense that quilting itself was the most difficult and time consuming part of quiltmaking. While a drop in references to professional quilters in the 1960s is matched by a drop in the frequency of references to quilting as a technique, a similar drop in references to professional quilters in the 1940s is not because the drop was accompanied by an increased emphasis on women doing their own quilting. There are only four choices for completing a quilt: the top maker quilts the quilt, someone else quilts it (such as a family member, church group or a professional), it is tied instead of quilted, or it does not get quilted. The perceived difficulty of quilting and its time consuming nature seems to have contributed to its deemphasis during the 1960s, which follows Barnett's (1953:369) view that differences in requirements for mastery of a technique affect its rate of innovation (and thus popularity).
Applique was found throughout the entire thirty year period, but was most frequently referenced in the 1960s, especially from 1963 to 1965. Applique was one of the multiple methods included in "stitchery," which also included weaving and embroidery but not patchwork or quilting. Applique has often been seen as having greater freedom of design, and thus being more art-like, than the other two methods because its designs were curvilinear and representative rather than geometric and abstract. Like paint or embroidery, it is "applied" to a background canvas or fabric. Patchwork creates a new patterned fabric, like weaving, but its abstract values were not appreciated as art until the 1970s. In the articles, applique was also used more frequently for decorations such as monograms on sheets or flowers on curtains than quilting or patchwork.

The number of references to applique would have been even higher in the 1960s had I included glued fabric as applique instead of imagery (see Table 5). While gluing two pieces of fabric together is not an actual sewing technique, the articles refer to it as applique, and, in effect, the results are the same as today's widely accepted technique of using fusible web (Wonder Under) for applique. This method contributed to the large number of articles in the 1960s advocating applique as a technique for school art classes. Gluing was identified as either patchwork, as in "Collage Inspires Patchwork Tapestry" (School Arts 1960) or applique,
as in "Applique for Impatient Fingers" (*School Arts* 1963). This confusion is based in an inherent ambiguity of the definitions because most "patching" actually uses the technique of applique. Using either term both tied the object to past traditions and expanded their usage to include objects other than bed quilts.

Another reason for the high number of articles in the 1960s that use quilt imagery without any actual technique are articles aimed at the textile industry showing how industrial production could replicate the appearance of quilting or patchwork in different mediums including wallpaper, rugs, and textiles. These commercial efforts sought to replace homemade products with store bought ones. Such products kept quilting motifs in the public eye and made them accessible to those who neither made quilts nor possessed family quilts.

The most common technique used for quilts other than quilting, patchwork, and applique is embroidery. It may be either functional, such as using a buttonhole stitch to attach applique to its background, or purely decorative, such as butterfly antenna, parasol handles and crosstitch designs that replicate traditional applique to make the top. Embroidery is found throughout all three decades, but is most frequent from 1960 to 1964 when it constitutes 13% of all mentions of techniques (see Table 5). It ties into the emphasis on "stitchery" and the emphasis on applique. In
fact, embroidery is probably the most common technique used on wallhangings in the mid 1960s.

In the 1960s, wallhangings became an important new kind of end product. Though mentioned as early as 1942, and sporadically through the 1950s, 71% of all references to wallhangings occurred during the 1960s. In these articles, the focus is on the end product and art concepts such as composition, design and color rather than the process itself. Makers of wallhangings also did not have to be concerned with use factors such as wear and cleaning, thus allowing greater freedom of construction, fabric selection, and technique. Because different art forms are more or less susceptible to change (Merriam 1964:307), the greater freedom of wallhangings allowed more experimentation, which eventually filtered back to more traditional forms like bedcoverings.

**Nevada Heritage Quilt Project**

**material culture**

Examining the material production of quilts at mid century provides a snapshot of the way women thought about quilting and what resources were available to them. The most vivid changes were in colors and designs on the fabric used by quilters and how that reflected changing commercial production. Looking at overall patterns of quilt production, this section examines the actual construction methods of quilts and variations in where quilts were made.
Top type construction

From 1940 to 1970, patchwork is the least frequently mentioned quilt technique in magazine articles. It is associated with thriftiness in the 1940s, and in the late 1960s, as a technique of VISTA initiated groups like the Freedom Quilting Bee and Mountain Artisans and part of the "hippie" movement. Not until 1971 does patchwork become the most frequently mentioned technique.

Though patchwork is downplayed in the magazine articles, patchwork (or pieced) quilts are the primary form of quilt found in NHQP, equaling 53% to 60% of quilts in each decade. From 1940 to 1975, the 1970 to 1974 period actually produced the fewest patchwork quilts (49%) in contrast to patchwork's emphasis in magazine articles at that time. Quilt top production was more evenly spread between piecing, applique, whole cloth, combination and embroidered tops. Again, magazine articles promoted patchwork items that included wallhangings, clothing, and pillows which were not reflected in the NHQP data.

In order to see whether magazines' varying emphasis on different techniques over time had any impact on actual quilt production, I compared the quilt types found in the NHQP survey with mentions of techniques in the magazine articles. Whole cloth quilts, where the whole quilt design is made through quilting alone, are less that 5% of quilts in the NHQP. The vast majority of such quilts (71%) were
made from 1960 to 1975. Only three of the 24 whole cloth quilts are made in the late 1940s and early 1950s during the high point of quilting found in the articles.

Almost half of all the applique quilts produced were completed from 1950 to 1965. Though the peak for applique references in the magazines is in the early 1960s, the same five years place third (14%) for the ratio of how many quilts of the total produced were applique. The highest ratio was after 1980, meaning that earlier appliqued tops begun between 1940 and 1970 were more likely than non-appliqued tops to be completed at a later date.

In NHQP data, applique quilts were never more than 18% of quilts made, whole cloth quilts no more than 5% of quilts (Feazell 1995:120). Similar percentages were found in the Kansas state survey (Brackman et al. 1993:191). In West Virginia, overall 74% of quilts were pieced, 8% applique, 10% combination pieced and applique and less than 1% were whole cloth (Valentine 2000:247). Breakouts by time period are not available for other state surveys, but these percentages show considerable variation of Kansas and Nevada from West Virginia, the only three states for which any statistical data could be found.

Changes in quilt production for both applique and quilting can not be directly tied to changes in emphasis on techniques in articles in national magazines. Part of the reason for the discrepancy between the magazines and the
findings of the NHQP is probably because many of the types of objects promoted in the articles are not cataloged in the NHQP. Both quilting and applique are promoted in the magazines as useful for household decoration outside of bedcoverings. Since no home quilted upholstered furniture nor wallhangings of any sort appear in the quilt project database, it is impossible to correlate the data between the two research databases for this measure.

**Top construction method**

From the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project data, the most popular methods for constructing tops from 1940 to 1975 were by hand (43%), followed by machine (31%), combined hand and machine (9%), and whole cloth, which required no construction (9%). The remainder (8%) were unknown in the documentation. There is a clear pattern of increasing use of machine construction and lessening hand construction until 1970. From 1955 through 1970, less than 50% of quilts were hand pieced. The low point for hand construction was 1965 to 1969 when 38% of quilts were hand sewn, 50% were machine sewn, and 12% combined the two. There is a dramatic reversal in 1970 to 1975 when 52% were hand sewn and 39% were machine sewn. Combination construction does not change dramatically during that time. The 1970s, therefore, show a return to traditional hand construction, reversing a trend of increasing use of machine construction, though about half of all quilts from then contain some machine sewing.
The beginning of this current revival in the 1970s placed an emphasis on traditional construction and the process of quiltmaking, so that women were more willing to spend the extra time on hand piecing and applique. This is in contrast to a concern about construction time found in magazine articles from 1956 to 1960 when nine percent of all magazine articles used 'easy', 'quick' or 'speedy' in their titles, and in 1961 to 1965, when eight percent of articles did so. Before and after this, these terms appear in less than five percent of article titles. It is notable that the emphasis on product and speed in the 1950s coincides with the smallest number of articles, though it does not coincide with a drop in quilt production in NHQP. The articles reflect a societal emphasis on product which was not picked up by quilters.

Completion methods for NHQP quilts

While there is a clear pattern of change in construction methods toward using more machine construction, such changes are not found in quilting methods. Quilting is visible, and hand quilting seems to have remained the expected norm throughout the time period. Almost 90% (458 of 511) of the quilts were machine quilted, hand quilted, or tied. The remaining 11% (53 quilts) were unfinished tops, summer spreads, or both hand and machine quilted; 18 were of unknown completion type. Overall, 74% (379 of 511) of quilts were hand quilted.

137
When looking at only hand quilting, machine quilting and tying, 83% of those 458 quilts were hand quilted. Aesthetic and use considerations appear to be the dominant concerns for the type of quilting method used. From 1965 on, machine quilting and tying became slightly more popular, dropping the percent of hand quilted quilts below 80%, yet never less than 77% of all quilts. Machine quilting was the least popular completion method; only 26 of the 511 quilts were completed that way. While there were changes in the frequency of machine quilting during this time period, from two percent of all quilts completed from 1945 to 1949, to nine percent of all quilts from 1940 to 1944 and after 1975, the total number of quilts is so small that no overall pattern through time is discernable.

No technological innovations in quilting methods were found in the magazine articles during the study time period. Technological changes such as walking feet and long arm sewing machines were not available until the early 1990s, restricting the type of machine quilting that could be done. If current quilt shows are any indication, I would expect to see dramatic differences in those percentages since the advent of long-arm sewing machines.

From the article analysis, machine quilting was described as straight line quilting using a quilting guide to follow the first established line. There is no mention of current techniques such as free motion quilting or using
walking feet. There are several references to combining hand and machine quilting in the 1950s such as hand quilting a floral design and machine quilting a crosshatched background.

Of the 511 quilts in NHQP, 53 are tied. In a tied quilt, the three layers of top, batting and backing are tied together with yarn or thread. Tying is a short cut completion method associated with decreased standards or inexperience. For instance, the local quilt guild, Desert Quilters of Nevada, does not accept tied quilts for judging in its quilt shows, although the Clark County Fair does. Though 10% of the quilts in the NHQP survey are tied, there is no mention of tying as a completion technique in the magazine articles until 1972 (Seventeen Dec. 1972). Most of the tied quilts were made between 1960 and 1975 (31 of 53) with an average of ten (10) quilts per five year period.

The average age of quilters who tied quilts is 59.6, older than any of the averages by five year time period (see Table 7). Older quilters seemed more likely to make tied quilts than younger quilters. Twenty of the 28 tied quilts where the quilter's age was known were made by quilters age 50 or older. The mode age for makers of tied quilts was in their 70s, 8 of 28 quilts being made by this age group. Tying seems to be most related to the age of the quilter, rather than the time period when the quilt was completed or other possible variables I could check.
Table 7. Average age of quilter at completion
by quilt method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th># of quilts</th>
<th>Avg Age</th>
<th>Youngest</th>
<th>Oldest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>machine</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hand</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tied</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the 289 quilts where the age of the quilter was known, the vast majority were hand quilted. Though the age differences are not statistically significant, machine quilting was more common among slightly younger women, while tied quilts were more common among older women. This pattern also held true for the age ranges of each method. For machine quilting, the oldest quilter was 75, for hand quilting the oldest was 100, and for tying, 92. The youngest quilter who tied quilts was 29 while the youngest quilters for the other methods were in their late teens. The oldest women did not machine quilt, and the youngest women did not tie, while hand quilting predominated and was most popular among all age groups.

Fabric usage in NHOP quilts

In discussing fabric types, poly cotton refers to quilts with tops that include both polyester cotton blends and 100% cotton fabrics, while cotton refers to quilts without any poly cotton fabrics. Quilts with any woven poly cotton fabric in their tops were included in the poly cotton category. Quilts of silk, rayon, or satin are grouped together as silky quilts (16 of 511 quilts), only five (5)
wool quilts were recorded. Forty-seven included combinations of other categories or miscellaneous fabrics including bull durham tobacco sacks, denim jeans, fair ribbons, men's ties, and doubleknits, all of which were grouped together as "other" in this study.

The majority of quilts made or begun between 1940 and 1975 used cotton fabric (68%). There is a steady increase in the inclusion of poly cotton fabrics during the overall period of my research, with the biggest increase occurring during the 1960s. By the 1970s, over 40% of quilts included poly cotton fabric in their tops. By geographic region, more than twice as many poly cotton quilts were made in Nevada as in any other region. Fabric of 100% cotton was relatively unavailable because fabrics were not produced for the quilt market, but as clothing fabric, where a preference for easy care, permanent press qualities dominated. However, I have no reason to think 100% cotton was less available in Nevada than the rest of the U.S. The lack of an overriding idea that quilts should only be made with such fabric was reflected in interviews with quilters, such as the following from Alice Godwin:

ag: And this was the one I told you I had trouble finding a print, so I just used polyester. Sixty or 80 percent polyester. It's held up great, better than the cotton! (laughing) I don't know why we're so against polyester.
chp: At what point did it become important to have all cotton fabrics?
ag: I don't know. I've never thought it was that important. Just some people think so.
All other kinds of fabric usage constituted 11-16% of quilts made during any decade. The highest usage of combinations and unusual fabrics was from 1965 to 1974 when 14.6% of all quilts recorded used such fabrics. Combination and unusual fabrics were a product of the western part of the U.S. (63% or 29 of 46 quilts), and nearly half of those were from Nevada, which only produced 29% of all 1940 to 1975 quilts. This may indicate a lesser emphasis on tradition among western quilters, which is seen in other areas such as the frequency of Tying vs. quilting and the younger average age of Nevada quilters.

Half of the quilts (8 of 16) made using silk, rayon, or satin, grouped as "silky" quilts, were made in the 1950s, three from 1940 to 1944, and five from 1960 to 1979. Silky quilts are found most often from 1950 to 1969. Regionally, silky quilts are a product of the west (13 of 16 quilts) with one from the south and two from the Midwest. Poly cotton, unusual/combination and silky quilts show a pattern of predominance in the west, and in particular in Nevada. Nevada's relatively sparse population and rural conditions seem to have encouraged a maverick attitude and make do spirit. Perhaps because of these views, Nevada quilters created nontraditional quilts with even greater frequency than found in the west in general, and in stark contrast to other parts of the United States.
The birthplace of the maker was known for 340 of 511 quilts. The vast majority (83%) were born outside of Nevada, including 19 whose makers were born outside the United States. There are two noticeable patterns for fabric usage. The first is how Nevada born quilters differed from other U.S. born quilters. Native Nevada quilters used more poly cotton blends than non-Nevada born quilters (30% of all quilts vs. 19% of U.S. born quilters), and no wool quilts were made by Nevada born quilters.

The second pattern contrasts quilts made by quilters born outside the U.S. to U.S. born quilters. Foreign born quilters either followed the maxim of using 100% cotton fabrics, or made unusual choices for fabrics. They did not use poly cotton (1 of 19), wool, or silk/rayon/satin (0 of 19). Half of their quilts (9 of 19) used cotton fabric, half (9 of 19) used fabric mixtures or nontraditional fabrics. This is in stark contrast to Nevada born quilters, for whom 7.5% of their quilts were mixtures, and other U.S. quilters, for whom 5.3% of their quilts were mixtures. Thus there are two distinct types of non-U.S. born quilters: those who knew the rules and followed them even more strenuously than U.S. born quilters, and those unaware of the cotton-only guideline who used whatever struck their fancy or whatever was available.
Where NHQP quilts were made

One question on the pages that quilt owners completed asked where the quilt was made. These were coded into five general regions of the United States plus Nevada itself. The NHQP accepted all quilts currently in Nevada regardless of when the quilt came to Nevada, or how old it was. In other state quilt projects, like California where the quilt had to be in the state before 1945, no information on quilts during the time period examined here was gathered. As befits a state whose population has grown exponentially in the last 40 years, less than 30% of NHQP quilts were actually made in Nevada. Nearly as many quilts (23%) came from surrounding western states and from the Midwest (21%) while practically no quilts came from Eastern states (see Table 8). These percentages probably reflect emigration patterns rather than the popularity of quilting in those areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th># of quilts</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other west</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Previous research has assumed that regional differences largely ended during the 20th century through the impact of
national pattern companies, advertising and magazines (Waldvogel 1990:xiii). State quilt projects such as Ohio's have found regional patterns within that state and differences by religious group, which stemmed from 19th century practices. For Nevada and the West, I found regional practices, but not regional patterns. Some practices are found primarily in the west, and others are unique to Nevada and continued to appear during this time period.

Of the 53 tied quilts, the region of manufacture was known for 50. The vast majority (64%) were made in the west. More than half of those, (17 quilts,) were made in Nevada. These constitute 34% of the total, more than any other region. A quarter of the tied quilts were made in the Midwest, with no tied quilts from the South and only three from the East.

When divided by region where quilts were made, friendship or commemorative quilts were overwhelmingly made in western states (94%), and in particular in Nevada. Such quilts usually consist of squares provided and signed by friends. Sometimes such quilts are an overall design with signatures of those who worked on them on the back. Such quilts were made for people completing terms of office, as when a bishop finished his term in the Mormon church, when the president of the local quilt guild stepped down, or when a friend moved away. The tradition extends back to at least 145
the 1840s (Brackman 1989:147). The vast majority (11 of 17) were made in Nevada, five elsewhere in the West, one from the East, and none from other regions. This is the only significant pattern of regional differences in reasons quilts were made and may reflect the types of quilts chosen by owners for NHQP participation. Quilts that have local significance may have been more likely to be brought to quilt days, as I discovered in asking one of my interviewees how she chose quilts to be registered in NHQP.

chp: How did you decide which ones to take to be part of this?
ag: I don't know. Weren't they looking for all the quilts they could possibly find?
chp: I think so.
ag: I just took a lot of quilts. I just took the ones I thought were important.

Between 1940 and 1970, Nevada was transformed from a rural to an urban state. In 1940, 61% of Nevadans lived in rural areas; by 1970 only 19% lived in rural areas (www.census.gov/population/censusdata/urpop0090.txt). For the purpose of this study, I defined urban as a city having a population of 40,000 or more as of 1990. For NHQP sites, this included Reno, Las Vegas, Henderson, and Carson City. No quilt days were held in North Las Vegas or Sparks though they both exceed that cutoff point.

One hypothesis was that rural quilt owners would have more knowledge about their quilts than urban owners because fewer quilts were purchased in rural areas and quilting traditions remained stronger in rural areas. However, the
differences between rural and urban areas is inconsistent. While the difference for knowing dates is virtually nonexistent, knowing the birth date of quiltmakers is higher in rural areas than in urban areas. More urban quilts have makers with unknown birth dates than rural quilts (47.6% vs. 31.7%). Unlike dating quilts, there is no pattern of decreasing knowledge of demographic details for earlier quilts. Forty-seven percent (47%) of rural quilts had estimated dates, 48% of urban quilts had estimated dates.

There is a distinct difference in acquisition methods among quilt owners between urban and rural areas. While only 27 quilts in NHQP were purchased, 78% of those were possessed by urban dwellers. Urban owners might have had more access to antique stores, and proportionately fewer family quilts. And only in an urban area is one likely to find quilts by dumpster diving like one example in NHQP!

The vast majority (85%) of quilts were owned by the maker's family with a slightly higher percentage in rural areas than urban areas. The next most common owner (8%) was the receiver's family, where a gift was given outside the family and then passed down through the new family. Proportionately more quilts owned by receiver families were found in rural areas than urban areas.

In the magazine articles, urban areas were an unspoken contrast to rural areas through the entire time period studied. There was no specific mention of quilting in urban
areas until the 1970s. While quilting was never framed as an urban activity, few articles described it as a rural activity either. There is a slight trend of decreasing references: 8% of 1940s articles, 7% of 1950s, and 5% of 1960s articles described quilting as a rural activity.

An example from 1941 evoked the contrast of urban and rural by comparing quilt pattern names to the names of towns from whence they came, the rounded hills of nature to the geometric angles of civilization and culture, traditional lifeways and modern life.

"A sudden halt came in the midst of the strain and fastidiousness of our modern geometric civilization when a scout from the hinterlands of the Appalachians laid before us the names by which old ladies in the district know their quilt patterns. Listen to them: Flying Swallow, Star with Many a Point, Flying Birds,. . . Fish Block, Peacock's Tail, Pine Burr, Autumn Leaves, Democratic Victory, Lady's Puzzle. The localities from which these quilts sprang--forgotten mountain corners of Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky--slumber along under equally atmospheric names: Wildcat Valley, Hoot Owl Hollow, Troublesome Creek, and Poor Valley" (House & Garden Dec. 1941).

Summary

Neither the quilt count from the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project nor the number of magazine articles published support the generally accepted idea that quilting was a lost art from 1940 to 1970. In fact, though the 1940s are considered the end of the quilt revival that began in the 1920s, the NHQP survey found more quilts from the 1950s and 1960s than the 1940s. Using the Reader's Guide index, more
magazine articles were found in each five year time period from 1940 to 1975, except for 1955 to 1959, than at any earlier time in the 20th century. Quilting was obviously not lost.

Quilting, in popular magazines of this period, was seen as a traditional form of home decoration. It was found more commonly in home magazines, which are aimed primarily at women, and antique magazines aimed at a leisure market, than women's magazines. A detailed examination of why articles were found in particular magazines can be found in Chapter 7. The placement of articles in home magazines emphasized quilting as a method to fulfill women's roles as home decorators. In contrast, collecting antiques was not seen as a gender specific activity, nor was it part of any gender specific role definitions. Private collectors and museum professionals mentioned are of both sexes. The historic ties of quilts in antique magazines kept them visible and valuable to nonquilting audiences while home magazines expanded perceived decor options by portraying quilts in modern settings.

Most frequently, quilt articles focused on the 'how-to' of quilting, though many added liberal doses of history and symbolism. Antique quilts were the second highest focus overall, though much more important in the 1940s than afterwards. This also matched the frequency of articles on museum exhibits, which placed quilts within an historic
context, the majority of which were found in the 1940s. The 1950s mixed a look backwards with the first articles placing quilts in a modern post-war and post Depression world, mainly through the use of new designs and fabrics.

Past research has commented on the ups and down of popularity of quilting as a whole, as if it was a single method activity. Instead, I found ebbs and flows in each of the three techniques of patchwork, applique, and quilting in magazine articles. Different techniques also connected to different emphases in society as a whole from home upholstery of the 1940s to wallhangings of the 1960s. Each had a distinct time in the 1945 to 1975 period when it is most popular in magazine articles, though these did not correlate to changes in the popularity of techniques in quilts found in the NHQP.

Patchwork was the most frequently produced quilt type in NHQP throughout the time period, but was the least frequently mentioned technique in the magazine articles. One major difference between the two sources was that the NHQP survey only documented bedcoverings, from crib quilts to king size. Magazine articles also featured wallhangings, clothing, upholstery fabric and home decorating items like curtains, pillows and vanity covers. The popularity of different techniques could also be tied into art movements, which will be examined in Chapter 7.
Pieced quilts are more amenable to machine construction than applique. There was a growing use of the sewing machine to construct quilt tops until the 1970s, when there was a reversal of percentages of machine and hand pieced quilts, reflecting a reemphasis of process over product. In contrast, the more visible quilting stitch kept hand quilting as the expected method of completing the quilt. Tying was found in 10% of NHQP quilts, though not mentioned in magazine articles until the 1970s. Based on average ages of quilters, tying was a choice of older quilters who switched to tying when their fingers and eyes could no longer produce the quality of quilting stitch they expected, rather than demonstrating lessened aesthetic requirements. One example of this concern with quality and age-related changes in physical ability was evident when one quilter (age 91) admonished me as I was looking at her quilting on a group project for a church group, "Now, don't you go comparing your quilting to mine. Yours'll look like this when you get to be my age!" (Hall-Patton 1985:62).

The increasing production of polyester and polyester and cotton blend fabrics made their way into quilts so that, by the 1970s, more than 40% of quilts included poly cotton fabric. Nevada quilters were more likely to use blended fabrics than quilters in other parts of the country, perhaps reflecting fabric availability or less exacting construction standards. They were also more likely to use unusual
fabrics like corduroy or blue jeans, make quilts combining many different kinds of fabric, and make quilts of silky materials. Most of these differentiate quilt production in western states from the rest of the United States with Nevada as an even more extreme instance.

This is one example of regional differences continuing well into the 20th century. Previous research has focused on pattern usage to see regional differences and their demise (Waldvogel 1990:91). There were not enough quilts of any given pattern to make assumptions about regional pattern distribution. The most common patterns in NHQP for 1940 to 1975 were grandmother's flower garden (23 quilts), sunbonnet sue/lady (16), double wedding ring (14), and lone star (12), which were the only ones with more than 10 quilts each. Patterns were available from national companies and syndicated newspaper columns, but fabric availability was of necessity more locally determined, which may explain ongoing regional variation in fabric usage. These kinds of comparisons are possible with the Nevada survey data, unlike other state quilt surveys, because of the high percentage of recorded quilts made in other states.

I examined whether rural America remained the repository of quilt information because of the historical association of quilting with rural America. There were some differences between quilts recorded in rural vs. urban settings such as that more purchased quilts were found in
cities. There were no significant differences in knowledge of dating, but some demographic information was better retained in rural areas. Magazine articles did not frequently reference quilts in an urban/rural contrast, but when they did, they always saw quilting as a rural activity until the 1970s.

Using statistical analysis of the NHQP data and magazine articles enables us to see changing patterns across space and time. Quilting continued throughout the United States after World War II, though it changed and was associated with different ideologies. Future chapters examine how we can use quilts to learn more about the changes in women’s lives and the impact of technology, commercialization, and the relationship of gender and art.
1. Any quilts identified as 'made in the 1970s' were also excluded from my study as past the time period. They would have been given an averaged 1975 date, and thus the 1970s count would probably have been higher. To see how this dating affected overall decade counts, I averaged the differences between the first and second halves of each decade for the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. The projected count for 1975 to 1979 would have been 162 quilts and 258 for the whole decade, reflecting the growth in quilting as the revival took off.

2. Feazell's date range covering the 1930s was 1910 to 1950. Her study only used data from eight of the 15 quilt day sites. I selected only those sites in my data and subtracted my count for 1940 to 1950 from her 1910 to 1950 total. The remainder I spread evenly over the 30 year remaining time to obtain an estimate of Feazell's count for 1910 to 1940.

It seemed reasonable to assume that more information might be known about more recently completed quilts. Using known vs. estimated dates, a more recently completed quilt was more likely to have a known date than an earlier quilt. There is a clear pattern of increasing knowledge about quilt dates the later a quilt was made except for the 1950s (see Table 9). Using the estimated completion date as a criteria, information on quilts is often lost over time. While family quilts are valued and passed down, the stories that accompany them often are lost.

Table 9. Percent of estimated and known dates by decade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Known</th>
<th>Estimated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940-1949</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1959</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1969</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1979</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980+</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 6

WOMEN AND QUILTING

In order to understand the reasons women made quilts mid-century, we need basic information on the quilters. From 1940 to 1970, the United States went from the Depression through World War II and post war prosperity to the cold war, Korea and Vietnam. How did women's lives change during this time, and how do quilts reflect those changes? Women's lives continued to be focused on home and family through the 1960s though the justifications for quilting changed. For example, magazine articles deemphasized time for quilting as part of homemaking as they defined it as an avenue for personal expression.

The first part of this chapter examines who was quilting by using NHQP demographic data. I combine demographics with the types of quilts made and the reasons quilts were made to gain an in depth understanding of how the variables are intertwined. Such comparisons are also be used to understand the impact of groups on quiltmaking since views of quilting's popularity and viability seem to be based on the viability of quilt groups. In another subsection, I examine different types of communal quilt
activities like fairs, correspondence in magazines, and groups.

The second section of this chapter examines the reasons women made quilts in the NHQP and compares those to reasons used in magazine articles. The third section uses quilting to examine how women's roles as homemaker and household manager of time and other resources changed. Different valuations of quilting as homemaking or leisure were used by the magazine articles to justify quilting at different times. The reasons why women made quilts and views of how women spend time are closely intertwined.

Demographics: Who was Quilting

Quilts reflect women's relationships to their communities, families and friends. Women made quilts by themselves, with friends and in more formally organized groups. Magazines portrayed group activities through fairs, contemporary and historic groups. This section focuses on age, religion and group activities of NHQP quilters and groups and communal activities portrayed in magazine articles.

Age

Current research states that one of the reasons quilting languished from 1945 to 1970 is that few women began quilting at this time. Quilting was continued by women who began quilting during the 1930s revival (Sullivan 156).
in Eames 1988:6). If that were so, the average age of NHQP quilters would increase proportionately from 1940 to 1970 (for example, in 30 years, the average age would increase 30 years). NHQP data only partially supports this view. The average age at completion of NHQP quilts increased from 48.6 in 1940 to 59.0 in 1970, a 10.4 year increase in 30 years (see Table 10). This could be because older women became quilters or fewer young women began quilting. However, the average only increased 1.7 years per five year period, which means either new women began quilting or the age did not increase as much because older women ceased quilting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940-1944</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-1949</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1954</td>
<td>55.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955-1959</td>
<td>55.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1964</td>
<td>58.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-1969</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1974</td>
<td>54.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-1979</td>
<td>63.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980+</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One must also note the timing of the increases. The average age jumped from 48.6 in 1940 to 55.5 in 1950 and stayed the same during the 1950s, jumped again to 59.0 in 1960, then remained the same through the 1960s. These jumps may indicate times when few women began quilting, while times when the ages stayed the same indicated an influx of new quilters mid decade in the 1950s and 1960s.
There is a significant decrease in the average age of quilters from the 1960s to the early 1970s of almost four years. This seemed to occur because of the number of new quilters when the current quilt revival got into full swing. The quilts included from 1975 on are only those begun from 1940 to 1970 so inconsistent average ages after 1975 may be the result of quilts being started by one person and finished by another.

Regional variations can be seen in the average age of quilters. Quilts made in the Midwest had the oldest quilters (58.6 years), while quilts made in multiple regions had the youngest (50.7 years). The average age for Nevada quilters was 52.5, which was four years younger than all other regions and six years below the average for surrounding western states. Nevada's relatively young average indicates an ongoing introduction of women to the art of quilting throughout the time period. To provide a sense of the current average age for quilters, an unofficial average for Las Vegas can be seen from a show of hands at a local quilt guild retreat in September 2001 when only four of the 110 quilters there were younger than 50. This is consistent with ages from NHQP when only one five year period had an average age of less than 50.

The average age of quilters increased from 1940 to 1970, then dropped in the early 1970s when the current revival began. Along with the emphasis on quilting within
Mormon women's groups, discussed later in this chapter, quilting in Nevada involved younger women than national averages, perhaps because of continuing support systems.

**Religion**

Was religion a factor in Nevada quilting? In 315 of the NHQP quilts, the religion of the quiltmaker was known, and some differences by religion appear. Mormon quilters made 34% of the NHQP quilts, Catholic quilters 25% of the quilts and Protestant quilters 41% of the quilts. Statewide religious affiliation statistics for the mid-twentieth century could not be found, so I averaged 1890 and 1990 statistics to estimate comparable percentages (Gaustad and Barlow 2000:370-372). Statewide, 16% of the population was Mormon, 54% Catholic, 27% Protestant, and 2.7% Jewish. Thus LDS and Protestant quilts are disproportionately represented in the state quilt survey, while quilts made by Catholic quilters are underrepresented. This difference is likely a result of the underrepresentation of minority populations in the quilt survey, which includes no Latino or African American quilters, based on a question in NHQP asking participants to list the "ethnic background" of the quilter.

The largest percentage of Catholic quilts (29%) and Protestant quilts (31%) came from the Midwest. Few quilts came from the East, but of those that did, 38% of them were from Catholic quilters. From the south, 56% of quilts were made by Protestant quilters.
The Mormon church is largely a western religion, and all but two Mormon quilts were made in the West. Of all quilts made in Nevada, 63% of those where the quilter's religion was known are of LDS origin. Of those made in the western region, 46% were made by Mormon quilters. Longstanding and continuing traditions within the Mormon church, such as making quilts for the bishop's storehouse and quilts as presentation gifts for outgoing bishops, create institutional support for quiltmaking (Covington 1997:124).

The Mormon quilting tradition still thrives. In 1994, a display of over 1000 quilts and coverlets made by LDS relief societies in greater Las Vegas were displayed in a church social hall before being taken to the bishop's storehouse. Commemorative bishops' quilts were recorded by the NHQP which are similar to those displayed at the Museum of Church History and Art in Salt Lake City. In casual conversations with women in Las Vegas, I have also encountered several non-Mormon women who lived in small Nevada towns like Ely and were part of Mormon led quilt groups that served as community building efforts.

In all regions, 35% of quilts were made by women whose religion was unknown, or by groups whose religious composition could not be determined. The Elko, Henderson, and Las Vegas quilt day locations had a disproportionately
large number (50%) of quilts where the maker's religion was unknown.

There are significant differences in the religious distribution of quilters in the 15 quilt day locations. In several small communities (Bunkerville, Logandale and Panaca/Caliente/Pioche), 57% to 86% of quilts are of LDS origin. These are all early Mormon settlements along the Utah border of Nevada. Carson City, Tonopah and Lake Tahoe all had 50% or more of their quilts made by Catholic quilters, while Reno, Hawthorne, Lovelock and Henderson had 48% to 53% of quilts made by Protestant quilters.

Mormon quilters played a significant role in quilting in the West, and in particular in Nevada from 1940 to 1970. In other parts of the country the relationship of quilting and religion is less clear, though it probably reflects local religious affiliations.

Communal activities

Quilting has been a way of building community, communicating across space and time, and tracking women's family contributions and heritage. Sharing work and its results, in addition to those intrinsic purposes, provided a reason for people to get together. These activities connected women to a larger network of quilters and to quilt history. In magazine articles, references to communal activities in both the past and present decreased slightly in the 1950s and more dramatically in the 1960s. Historic

161
group references declined with the demise of the Colonial Revival, and a greater emphasis on creativity and individuality in the 1960s devalued group activity.

As guilds, shops, classes, and shows provide space for expressing community today, there were three primary ways such communal activities were mentioned in magazine articles from 1940 to 1970. These were 1) through fairs, 2) various contemporary groups such as church groups, social or neighborhood groups and coops like VISTA groups and those mentioned in the NHQP survey, and 3) historic references, primarily to the legendary quilting bee. Other references to quilt culture included those that declared the demise or revival of quilting as a practice, references to newspaper contests, women's pages in magazines like *Farm Journal*, classes, and round robins. The proportion of these references to the number of articles varies considerably by decade. Over time, references to quilting as part of an overall practice decreased, and there were even fewer references to contemporary activities like fairs and quilt groups.

In the 1940s, there were .7 references to communal activities per article published. This breaks out to 42% of 1940s articles mentioning historic quilting, 14% mentioning groups, and 12% mentioning fairs.

In the 1950s, there is a drop to .5 mentions per article published, with 28% of all articles mentioning
historic groups and organizations, 13% mentioning contemporary groups and 8% mentioning fairs. The ratio of articles within the three main categories to each other is similar to the 1940s.

There is a huge drop in the number of references to group quilting activity in the 1960s with only .13 mentions per article published with 8% of articles mentioning historic quilting, 3% mentioning groups, and 3% mentioning fairs. The proportions between the three categories remained similar to the 1940s and 1950s (56% historic, 22% groups, 22% fairs). Though there are virtually the same number of articles in the 1940s and 1960s (65 vs. 64), there is almost no mention of a contemporary quilting community. Contemporary groups and fairs are not mentioned in relation to quilting. However, there is a burst of articles from 1963 to 1965 recommending or describing group projects in art classes for elementary through high school students, a new use for the rubric of group work.

The first articles referencing the VISTA organized cottage industries like Mountain Artisans and the Freedom Quilting Bee do not appear until 1969. Quilting is portrayed as done by school groups, individuals or small family groups. With the demise of the Colonial Revival as a design factor around 1950, references to historic quilting groups and historic ties became less important. Without this analogy of contemporary groups to past groups, quilting
was seen as an individual or informal group activity. In the articles, the emphasis was on contemporary creation valued for its production rather than any historic context or for creating ties to the past or to other women.

According to other researchers (Marsten and Cunningham 1991:8), a community of women collecting quilt patterns during the 1950s and 1960s made contact through more generic needlework publications. These round robins, as they were called, were important for continuing an interest in quilt history. Numerous examples from Workbasket magazine show the ubiquitous nature of these pattern exchanges. However, there is no mention of round robins in any of the indexed magazines throughout the time period, nor had any of the women I interviewed ever heard of, let alone participated in them. This is one example of the weakness of this research method for examining quilt history because the areas where such communications were made were in publications "below the radar" of the Reader's Guide and the Arts Index. The frequency with which letters and articles appear in non-indexed magazines seems to support their importance as a communication point, but they were entirely missed by the hegemonic indexes.

Another potential reason for communal activities' lessened importance in magazines may have been based in countercultural values that extolled the virtue of self worth (Reich 1970:229) but saw groups as supporting
conformity and authority rather than community (Chalmers 1996:96-97). For example, Linden-Ward and Green (1993:328) saw patchwork skirts as an anti-modern style reflecting an idealized past that was simpler and more authentic but retained the value of domestic sewing skills. The skirts reflected success ethics based on personal rewards that began in the mid-1950s (May 1988:176) and, by the late 1960s, "a revolutionary assertion of individuality" (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:326).

A growing emphasis on creativity and art in the 1960s may be another reason for the declining references to group creation and traditional display venues. This view contrasts the medieval use of workshops, guilds, and folk art groups like bees to the hegemonic concept of the artist as a solitary inspired creator that has dominated western art since the Renaissance. To see quilters as solitary producers relates them more closely to art than craft, the latter known for utilizing group work and patient, time consuming labor (Parker 1984:80). More on the art aspect of quilting can be found in Chapter 7.

Magazine articles deemphasized traditional group quilting activities as the demise of the Colonial Revival made connecting contemporary and historic quilting irrelevant for promotional purposes. There was also a growing emphasis on individuality, except for art projects
for students where communal work was used to overcome mental barriers to artistic work.

**Group Quilting: NHQP, magazines and interviews**

How were groups who actually made quilts portrayed in magazines? What evidence of group quilting was found in the NHQP? In Nevada, group quilting continued as part of church groups, informal neighborhood groups, and more formalized senior citizen and homemaker groups. NHQP group quilts continued to be made at the same rate as individual quilts through the entire time period. It became much less significant in the magazine articles in the 1960s, though references to group art projects using quilt techniques increased.

For the purpose of this research, a group quilt is defined as one where either the topmaking or quilting stage of the process is done by more than one person, using quilters' own working definitions from judging criteria at quilt shows (*Quilt Chatter* 2003:8). The group may include the quilt top maker, consist of a group of friends, or be a more formally organized social or church group. Thus, it does not include quilts where the top was made by one person and quilted by another individual (49 quilts or 10% of NHQP quilts) (see Table 11). The majority of quilts where the top maker and quilter differed (95 quilts or 21% of all quilts) were group quilted quilts. However, the vast
majority of NHQP quilts were made entirely by one individual: 69% or 317 of 461 where the maker was known.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maker</th>
<th>Percent/# of quilts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single maker</td>
<td>62%/317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top maker w/single quilter</td>
<td>10%/49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group quilts</td>
<td>19%/95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown maker(s)</td>
<td>10%/50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Named groups comprised 53 of the 95 group quilts, which were of three types: 1) homemaker, social, or neighborhood clubs (26 quilts), 2) senior centers (2 quilts) and 3) church groups. There were 25 quilts made by church groups, of which 16 were made by LDS groups, 4 by Methodist groups, and 5 by other church groups of various denominations and locations. Two social clubs, the Harmony Social Club of Fallon, NV, and the Homemakers Club of Rule, Arkansas were each responsible for nine of the 26 group quilts. The Arkansas quilts were brought to Nevada when the maker moved here. For both groups, the top makers were members of the groups and thus contributed to the quilting of their own tops. Other groups may have also "taken in" quilt tops as a group or church fund raising activity so there was no ongoing relation between the quilters and the top maker.

Working together to quilt unfinished quilt tops for people.
who own tops but do not quilt has been a traditional fund raiser for women's church groups for many decades.

Of all group quilts, the religion of the maker is known for 64 of 95 quilts (68%). Of those, 36% were LDS, 19% were Catholic, and 45% were Protestant. These proportions are close to the overall ratio of quilts by religion in Nevada. Nevada had an unusually high percentage of group quilts in comparison to quilts in the NHQP survey from other regions of the U.S. Of those, an unusually high percentage were Mormon made. This is another indication of the significance of Mormon women in contributing to Nevada's quilting tradition during this time.

Largely because of the small number of quilts in the NHQP survey from the East where makers and quilters were known (11), finding no group quilted quilts is not greatly outside the average expectation percentage of one or two quilts (see Table 12). However, the distinction between Nevada and the rest of the West (31.9% vs. 15.0%) where more than twice as many quilts were quilted by groups indicates a reliance on group quilting not found elsewhere. Both Nevada and Southern totals are skewed by the production from one social club in each region. By removing those quilts from calculations in order to calculate the ratios without their influence, less than ten percent of the remaining Southern quilts were group quilted, yet more that 25% of Nevada quilts were group quilted. The state difference remains.
Group quiltmaking was more important in the practice of quiltmaking in Nevada than in other parts of the United States from 1945 to 1970, based on NHQP quilts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of quilts</th>
<th>Percent of group quilts within region</th>
<th>Percent of total group quilts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I examined references to group quilting in magazines in order to gauge how it was seen in popular culture. In the 1940s, 38% of magazine articles mentioned group quilting, with nearly equal proportions of contemporary and historic groups (18% and 20% respectively). Contemporary groups included families, friends, women's clubs, and church groups. Historic group quilting included group made quilts like friendship quilts and references to the "old time quilting bee," invariably placed in the 19th century.

In the 1950s, 41% of articles mentioned group quilting with 17% of articles mentioning contemporary groups and 24% mentioning historic groups. In the 1960s, only 21% of articles mentioned group quilting, with 13% of articles mentioning contemporary groups and 8% of articles mentioning historic groups. There was a slight decline in mentions of
contemporary groups from 18% in the 1940s to 17% in the 1950s and then to 13% in the 1960s. References to historic group quilting rose to 24% in the 1950s from 20% in the 1940s, then dropped dramatically to 8% in the 1960s.

Of NHQP group quilts, 19% were completed in the 1940s, 31% in the 1950s, 28% in the 1960s, 18% in the 1970s and 3% in the 1980s. These numbers are nearly identical to overall quilt production (see Table 1). The lesser number in the 1940s may reflect the lesser knowledge about quilters noted earlier. However, these percentages do not reflect the decline in group references noted above. Though magazine references decreased in the 1960s for both contemporary and historic groups, actual quilt production from NHQP sources changed very little.

Contemporary and historic group references are found in the same years in the 1940s and 1950s, but in the 1960s, there is no overlap by year of contemporary and historic group references. References to historic groups are in 1960, 1961, 1965, and 1966, and no references to any groups from 1967 to 1969. The references to contemporary groups are from 1962 to 1964, primarily in the context of group art projects in school. Such references to group class projects began in the 1950s, and seem to be tied to the expanding definition of acceptable art mediums at that time. Magazine articles were no longer promoting quilting through references to historic group quilting. The contemporary
group quilting described changed from contemporary women's groups to being primarily a way to organize school art activities.

The depiction of historic group quilting focused on the quilting bee as a social gathering, on church groups for fundraising, and groups of friends working on album quilts. Bees are symbolic of pioneer heritage, a spirit of cooperation, as a reason for socializing across long distances, for fundraising, and to make commemorative quilts for brides, boys' "freedom" quilts, and for ministers and their wives.

Most non-quilters do not realize that the ubiquitously mentioned 'quilting bees' gathered for only the quilting portion of the quiltmaking process, which joins the top, back and batting together. Friendship and album quilts, where the top is also made by a number of people, are the other primary example of group made quilts. The process of quiltmaking is usually the result of a single individual's effort just as the majority (62%) of NHQP quilts were completely made by one maker.

Contemporary group references continued the emphasis on social support, citing military wives left behind during WWII and friendship quilts. Other references included more varied recommendations, such as exchanging scraps with friends, children's art classes, and family activities like a mother/daughter project. For the entire period, the most
frequent type of group contemporary quilting references in magazines were church groups, though none were mentioned in the 1960s. This would agree with indications from the Kansas state quilt project data that quilt groups overall dwindled in the 1960s (Davis 1993:185). New quilt groups have formed as quilt guilds since the 1970s without the emphasis on group quilting.

An example of the concept of group quilting as a dying art is seen in an article about the Harmony Social Club in the Winter 1966 Nevada Highways and Parks magazine. It described the group's creation in 1915 as a service organization. Its members were in their 70s and 80s by 1966. They came together to quilt "in an art fast disappearing in most parts of the country, the early American craft of quilting" (Kendrick 1966:41). The article also represents researchers' current view of the state of quilting in the 1960s. My findings documenting an overall increase in the number of magazine articles from 1962 to 1966 and a static number of quilts represented in NHQP for the 1960s do not support this assumption.

From 1940 to 1970, quilt groups were either formed informally to complete specific projects such as a wedding or baby quilt, or existed as longstanding social groups like the Harmony Social Club. Such groups not only aided members in completing quilts, but also served to connect members with others in the community. Magazine articles rarely

172
mentioned the community aspect of quilting, but women who participated in such groups valued them highly. The group aspect of quilting has been recognized as an important part of community building and relieving the isolation of individual households since the mid 19th century. In my interview with Delores Vervey, she spoke to this isolation most eloquently when describing how she got started quilting.

d: And that was the first what I'd call a quilt that I made.
c: When was that?
d: That was in 1964. Probably '63. That's the first baby quilt I made. And you could see I really didn't know very much about it. Then we moved from the apartment, we moved into a house. I was quite lonely in the house, my husband went out to work every day, you know, all the family was gone, I mean, was back in Wisconsin.
c: You were out here at this time?
d: Yeah, we were out here in Las Vegas. And I was really quite homebound. So one day my husband said, "Now, you get up in the morning. You roll the rock away from your door, you go down to Judy Sue's, and you roll the rock away from her's, and you go in her house and you visit her." And it was his little joke telling me to get out and meet the neighbors.

One day I was out in the yard. The funny thing that happened was Judy Sue was pulling into her yard and carrying stuff into her house. Judy looked over, and she said, "Delores, come on over and see what we're doing." . . . I walked into the house, and there they'd set up a quilt frame. And they were quilting. And I said, "Judy! I've always wanted to learn how to do that." And her mother was Mormon, so they were the real quilters, and that's how I learned how to quilt, from my neighbor and her mother.

And that's how the quilting started, and they were hand quilting. And then I joined our church group, and we made a lot of baby quilts. We pieced a lot of flannel baby quilts. We tied the ones that we gave away, just sold for a minimum... just like $10 a quilt. I think we had as much fabric in it as the money we
raised from it. But it was the whole idea of us all getting together and working on the quilt.

Though she started quilting in the 1950s, Alice Godwin's recounting of group quilting is from much later. The following quote shows a continuity of experience of group quilting that continues today. She kept a scrap book starting in the early 1980s of her quilt activities. In it, she recounted the importance of a quilt group for creating community near her vacation home in Idaho.

"Every summer starting in 1990 I would drive 45 miles from our cabin to Ashton to spend a day with the quilters of Ashton. These ladies meet every Tuesday and Wednesday at the senior center and quilt on whatever quilt is in the frame. These quilts are done for anyone who has a quilt they want quilted. They're charged about $100 or more and the money goes to the center. No quilter receives money for her work. Sometimes there is as many as 11 ladies, sometimes there is only three. It's a joy and relaxation to sit and quilt and catch up on the news and gossip in this small town. The ages of these ladies range from 45 years to 90 years. Once or twice a year, the senior center treats them to a lunch or they take a day excursion. One summer they all came in the senior bus to our cabin in Island Park and brought the picnic. A very delightful group, I love them all."

Nancy Astle began quilting in the 1960s, with the help of an older neighbor, but her first quilt group grew out of a class in the early 1970s. They formed a small group called the "Nimble Thimble Quilters" that continues to meet on Monday mornings today. They set up three large frames, which they later modified to two bed sized frames and one for baby sized quilts. Members worked on each other's quilts, or one could work alone on a baby quilt. Once a
year they made a charity quilt for the Congregational Church where they met in order to, as Nancy said, "kind of to pay rent on the space." There was more emphasis placed on friendship than on the quality of the stitching.

"A lot of people are home doing laundry on Mondays, but I was always down there. Monday was quilt day! Ten years I'd already been working on my own. My neighbor had shown me, but I was really doing it on my own. . . .

There was one lady in the group who always made me think of how important quilting becomes in your life. Her husband had died of a heart attack over the weekend. He had a heart attack while they were in church. (pause) She was there on Monday morning. They hadn't even had the funeral yet. But it was so important to her to have something stable in her life. It was calming to her.

And I saw that happen several times to women who had real tragedies in their families, but as soon as they could get there, they were right back to that quilt frame. It was something about the friendship, there was something important there with that group that got them through. And I know what that's like..."

These quotes demonstrate the importance of quilting as a communal activity. The isolation of women in individual households continued as a factor through the 1960s, and group quilting was a way to both relieve loneliness and support and value women's groups. May used this isolation as the leitmotif of her book *Homeward Bound* (1988) for the 1950s household, yet from my research it described most women's lives in the 1960s as well.

While groups continued to exist from 1940 to 1970, their viability was questioned in magazines, as shown in the *Nevada Highways* article in the 1960s. New groups formed by VISTA volunteers as part of the War on Poverty in the later
1960s are first mentioned in 1969, though the primary references to them are from 1970 and later. Quilt guilds as we know them today did not exist during this period. Bonnie Leman, in her history of *Quilter's Newsletter Magazine* and the last 30 years of quilting, first mentions the creation of guilds in conjunction with the growth of quilt shops in the mid 1970s (Leman Jan/Feb 2000:24 #319).

During the 1960s, magazine articles portrayed long standing quilt groups as a dying group form while new forms of organization that would come to characterize the current revival had not yet been developed. This portrayal is in stark contrast to NHQP group quilting, however. Group quilting continued at the same rate as individually made quilts throughout all decades with more group quilts made in the 1950s and 1960s than the 1940s. Quilting was seen as serving individual needs, not as an outlet for women's desire for community.

**Reasons for quilting**

With the post war consumer abundance, women could buy blankets and bedspreads. One of the reasons quilting continued was because it had multiple meanings and was one way of fulfilling multiple roles of wife, mother, and homemaker. It was a way to fill emotional needs by providing gifts, connecting with family and friends, and connecting to family and national histories.
Why did women choose to make quilts? Historically, women have had a variety of activities available to them as leisure activities. Making a quilt was but one of numerous forms of needlework that also included sewing clothes, knitting, crochet, tatting, embroidery and needlepoint.

Nevada Heritage Quilt Project

purposes for quilting

The NHQP quilt questionnaire asked, "Was the quilt made for a special occasion?" There was no generic question such as "Why was the quilt made?" though numerous quilt survey forms had reasons entered as additional information. For 22% of the quilts, the reason the quilt was made was unknown. For 32% of the quilts, the reason was "none" or did not fit any quantifiable category. The category "none" did not mean the reason was unknown but, because of the way the question was asked, that there was no special occasion for which the quilt was made. A goodly share of those were because the quilter wanted to or wanted to have something to do, as comments like "as a winter pastime," "to keep busy," or to "quilt for cover" indicate. Other reasons given were as one of many handcrafts done by the quilter, as her other hobby besides gardening, as ranch quilts, or to use up scraps from making clothing.

Quilts for which a special occasion was listed (236 quilts or 46% of total) fell into four general categories. These were unspecified gifts including adult birthdays and
for Christmas (17%), baby/child quilts (15%), for weddings or anniversaries (11%), and as friendship/commemorative quilts (4%). For the rest of this analysis, I will use these four specific reasons as the "known" reasons to correlate to other survey data.

The smallest number of quilts for which there were known reasons in a 10 year period was the 1940s. The reasons for making quilts seem to have been lost over time because the known reasons increase for each decade except the 1970s: 33% of 1940s quilts, 44% of 1950s quilts, 63% of 1960s quilts and 56% of 1970s quilts were made for one of the four above categories.

When looking at the reasons for quilting divided by religion, several different patterns emerge. By religion, 42% of all NHQP quilts with known reasons were made by LDS quilters, 35% by Protestants, and 24% by Catholics. This probably reflects the importance that Mormons place on tracking family history as well as an obvious value placed on quilting within the Mormon church. Friendship or commemorative quilts were primarily an LDS phenomenon, 8 of 11 where religion was known were made by them. Other LDS quilts are evenly divided between wedding/anniversary, baby/child and as gifts. The pattern for quilts made by Catholics and Protestants are very similar to each other, and different from LDS quilters. Baby/child quilts and gift quilts are made in similar proportions to each other while
wedding/anniversary quilts are made less frequently (18% of Catholic, 25% of Protestant quilts) (see Table 13).

Table 13. Number of quilts made for a special occasion by religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Friendship</th>
<th>Wedding</th>
<th>baby/child</th>
<th>gift</th>
<th>total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mormon</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Friendship quilts are the least common in any time period, though they were found in every five year time block except 1955 to 1959. When divided by region where quilts were made, friendship quilts were overwhelmingly made in the West (94%), and in particular in Nevada. The vast majority (11 of 17) were made in Nevada, five in the rest of the West, one from the East, and none from elsewhere. These numbers may reflect that owners chose quilts for NHQP participation because they were considered of local historic value. Or, it may be a western phenomenon because the Mormon religion is a Western phenomenon, 8 of 17 being made by Mormons. This is the only significant pattern of regional differences for reasons quilts were made. For all other reasons for making a quilt, regional distribution matches the regional origins of the quilts.

For group quilted quilts where the reason was known, 34% were made as gifts, 30% for weddings or anniversaries,
21% as friendship quilts, and 15% for baby quilts. It is noteworthy that baby quilts are significantly less likely to have been made by groups, while friendship quilts by their definition reflect the efforts of friends or colleagues. Baby quilts, because of their smaller size, were more easily make by an individual. Wedding and gift quilts are equally likely to have been group made as individually made.

Information about quilts for which both a special reason and age of the quilter were known (157 quilts) showed that most of the quilts (45%) were made by quilters aged 50-69, with 29% by quilters 30-49, 21% by quilters age 70 or older, and 5% by quilters younger than 30. The only noteworthy correlation of reason and age ranges was that friendship quilts were made predominantly by quilters age 30-49 (4 of 6), while the other three categories were primarily made by 50-69 year olds. A likely reason might be that friendship quilts, being historically associated with leave taking/moving, may have continued to be associated with mobile younger quilters rather than older quilters who likely were more settled.

Quilts as gifts or commemorating life passages were a significant proportion of the quilts in the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project. Women gave of themselves in the gifts they made for others. Through their investment of time, creativity, and use of meaningful fabrics beyond mere
purchase, they promoted the value of relationships and their role in maintaining them.

**Baby and wedding quilts: NHQP and magazine articles**

Babies and weddings were two of the most common special occasions for which NHQP quilts were made. While wedding quilts were made for young women by their mother's generation, the number of baby quilts made by young women reflect their changing role from receiver to provider.

In the 1940s, an equal number of NHQP quilts were made as baby/child quilts and as gifts. In the 1950s, the most frequent reason for quilts being made were as baby/child quilts; during the 1960s and 1970s, the most frequent reason was as gifts. In the 1950s, wedding or anniversary quilts were the second most popular reason given, while in all other decades it was third. The overall peak time for wedding and baby/child quilts was the 1950s and 1960s, while for gift quilts it was the 1960s and 1970s. This reflects time period demographics when marriage and childbirth rates skyrocketed after World War II (May 1988:7). It also reflects the ongoing importance of quilts as commemoratives of important life passages.

In the magazine articles, the peak time for mentioning quilts as gifts was in the 1940s and 1950s, while the peak for family related reasons was in the 1950s. The only correlation between the kinds of reasons articles mentioned
and the reasons found by the NHQP survey is in the 1950s (see Table 14). In contrast, there is no correlation between references to making quilts as gifts in magazine articles and the number of gift quilts produced. Magazines did not seem to influence the production of quilts for particular reasons.

Table 14. Percent of family and gift references in magazines and NHQP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Magazine family</th>
<th>NHQP wedding &amp; baby</th>
<th>Magazine gift</th>
<th>NHQP gift</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940s</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950s</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though few NHQP quilts were machine quilted during this time (5% of total), over half of the machine quilted quilts were made for babies or children, anticipating the expected hard wear and frequent washings that such quilts would receive. For similar reasons, more than half of the tied quilts were also made for children. The second most frequent type of machine quilted quilts were wedding or anniversary quilts. In contrast, only 9% of tied quilts were for wedding presents and 30% were gifts. No friendship quilts were machine quilted, reflecting the expected care and high regard such quilts would have. Quilts with high emotional ties made for adults would most likely be treated gently and be seldomly washed.
Gift quilts were popular products for NHQP quilters of all ages (38-45% of known reasons for each 20 year range), indicating that there was a similar impetus for all age groups. Gift quilts show the widest variety of quilting methods and fabric used. While 68% of all quilts used all cotton fabrics in the top, only 54% of gift quilts used all cotton fabrics. Gift quilts were the most likely to be made of poly cotton (30% of such quilts), while baby and gift quilts were the most likely to made of alternative fabrics or combinations of fabric types. There were only eleven silky quilts made for one of the four categories of reasons (11 of 235). The greatest number of these were for baby quilts, followed by gift quilts. Silky quilts are not mentioned in magazines except in advertisements for quilts for sale such as the Elinor Beard quilts in Antiques in 1964.

When looking at NHQP data combining reasons for quilting and the religion of quilters, several different patterns emerge. Fewer LDS quilts had unknown reasons for why the quilt was made (7% vs. 15% for Protestants and 24% for Catholics). Friendship or commemorative quilts were primarily an LDS phenomenon, 8 of 11 quilts being made by them. Other LDS reasons for making quilts were evenly divided between wedding/anniversary, baby/child and as gifts. Almost half (20 of 41) of all wedding quilts were made by LDS quilters. The pattern for quilts made by
Catholics and Protestants are very similar to each other. Baby/child quilts (37% of Catholic quilts, 37% of Protestant quilts) and gift quilts (42% of Catholic quilts, 38% of Protestant quilts) were made in similar proportions to each other and by both religious groups while wedding/anniversary quilts were made less frequently (18% of Catholic, 25% of Protestant quilts). Wedding quilts were all made by women over age 50. Thus younger women of marriageable age were recipients of quilts made by their mother's generation (50-69).

In contrast to wedding quilts, which were made by older women, baby quilts constituted half the quilts made by under 30 year olds, and 38% of quilts made by 30-49 year olds. Thus, a large number of baby quilts were made by the new mothers. NHQP data and interviews indicate there was a strong motivation to make quilts for babies. Several women that I interviewed noted their first quilt was made for their first baby.

Time constraints due to the requirements of childcare are evident in the number of cases where the first child got a baby quilt when later children did not, or the first child got a baby quilt while younger children got quilts when they were much older. In both interviews and NHQP data, there are several examples of quilts begun for infants or small children that were completed much later. Perhaps the most striking example of this was one quilter whose daughter got
her "baby" quilt for her 40th birthday. An example from the NHQP survey was Doris Sheppard, a native Nevadan living in Winnemuca, who began collecting patterns and piecing blocks while a high school student in the 1940s. Her first completed quilts were made for her daughters. These two quilts, begun when she was 29 years old in 1957, were finished first—12 and 13 years later in 1969 and 1970. As the notes said, the quilts "began small when her daughters were small, they kept growing, so the quilts did too."

In other examples from my interviews, a baby quilt was made for one child and then quilting was dropped altogether or not picked up again until many years later. Women had a strong impetus to mark the transition to motherhood, but seemed to underestimate the time involved in completing the quilt, or overestimated the amount of free time they would have after the baby came. This may also be because the women interviewed had several closely spaced children, three to four in four to five years.

Alice Godwin's first completed quilt was a crib quilt. She appliqued the top and her mother quilted it. She made no quilts for subsequent children when they were little. Her second quilt top, pieced from 1954 to 1956, copied the double Irish chain pattern of the only other quilt she owned, using scraps from sewing.

C: So you made the crib quilt, and then this one you worked on for ages.
a: Well, I pieced it and folded it up and put it away and never quilted it until 1980. I never really put it together.
c: OK, so you finished the top in the '50s?
a: Right, I finished piecing it but I never did anything with it.

Like pregnancy and childrearing, quilting takes time, has a particular sequence in how it is made, and encourages focus on process rather than product. While quilts mark life passages, due to the time involved in making a quilt, the quilt marks an epiphanic process of gradually coming to terms with the life passage the quilt represents. Women mention how quilt making helped them contemplate and come to terms with changes. They celebrated and invested physical and emotional energy into the process.

Women like Mary Alice Curry seemed to feel a strong affinity between babies and quilts. In recounting making her first quilt, she described how she became a quilter and how the quilt fit into her evolving relationship with her daughter.

c: So tell me how you got interested in quilting.
ma: Well, when I was first married, I decided that I wanted to make a quilt.
c: And when was this?
ma: That was in 1952, '51 actually. And when I was expecting our first child, I decided, well, what I was going to do was make a quilt for every child. This was my ambition, you know. Each child I had, I was going to make a quilt. I figured by the time I knew the baby was coming, I would have nine months to complete a quilt.
c: Uh-huh.
ma: Well, that first quilt took me, um, I gave it to my daughter when she was forty years old! (both laughing)
c: So you started it in '52 and finished it in '92.
ma: (laughing) Exactly. But I didn't know how much work was involved, because I did it all by hand.
c: And what was that first quilt?
ma: It was a star pattern, not a traditional star pattern. At the time, the LA Times had a column in the ad section that was about handwork, and quilting and sewing and all that kind of stuff. And they offered patterns for fifteen cents. And one of the patterns they offered was this pattern that I got. And I started it with scraps of material that I had, 'cuz I sewed a few things. I did a little bit of sewing before getting married, I'd sewn some of my own clothes, and so forth. I had saved material, and my mother had done some sewing, and she had saved material, so I had quite a bit of material to begin with. The quilt is not a blue and purple or a whatever, it's everything, a true scrap quilt. I was making clothes for our daughter, and so a lot of the pieces were from clothes that I had made for her. And then many years later when she went off to college, she was in Chicago, and she was picking up material for that quilt. And I made a second set of templates and sent them to her so that she knew what we were dealing with. And if she had time, she would sometimes cut the pieces, and then mail them to me, and I would put them together, you know.

Given the number of quilts in NHQP made as part of a goal to give one quilt to each grandchild, quilts were also important for creating cross generational ties. Another source of continuity was tops left for others to finish even if the top maker was gone. Wedding and baby quilts acknowledged women's changed status to wife and mother with tangible evidence of required new bedding. Baby quilts in particular were made by new mothers themselves as part of the process of (re)creating themselves in their new role.
Quiltmaking as a means
of fulfilling roles

Making quilts is one way of fulfilling some of the expectations of women in their roles as mother, wife, and daughter. Quiltmaking was justified in the magazine articles by emphasizing how women could use them to support their role of maintaining social relations. Magazine articles valued social ties such as mother/daughter projects in 1952 and 1970, recognizing life changes through baby quilts and bride's quilts in articles from 1941 and 1966, the importance of friends and/or siblings (articles from 1944, 1949, 1962 and 1966), for gift giving, and for decorating guest rooms. Quilts were valued for both their aesthetic and emotional aspects. Sometimes, this duality of valuation meant quilts were valued for emotional reasons in spite of their perceived aesthetic shortcomings.

One of the reasons quilting is so appealing is the multiple layers of meaning it has for so many women. Quilts carry all those meanings at the same time, not logically separated or listed. An example from one interview came when I asked when she quilted, she replied:

I'd get up in the morning, and I'd start my embroidery, 'cuz that was what I did, you know. That was my enjoyment, that was my relaxation, that was everything. That was everything to me. It was the gifts I gave away. I remember sitting at my mother's side when my father was in the Second World War. And I remember sitting and watching my Aunt Aggie embroider.
This quilter, who incorporated embroidery into her quilting, intimately related the two techniques in her discussion. Here, she ties together leisure time, family ties, the responsibility for acquiring gifts, and a way of understanding a specific time period like WWII.

Magazine articles also show the multitude of roles quilt making filled. The following quote from American Home, October 1954, combines luxury, substituting home for professional labor, and acknowledging the separate roles of husband and wife.

"Luxurious? Of course! And it would cost a young fortune to have custom made, for labor charges come high. But it is a knowing design rather than an elaborate one, and that's why it rewards an amateur's efforts. Owning it would make any woman feel like a queen--but its tailored richness is beautifully understated to please her lord and master too. Moreover, it will please his purse as well as his eyes, for it costs no fortune in fabrics" (1954:108).

Quilts as both process and product carried multiple layers of meaning in women's lives. They could be a direct form of creating community as when made by groups, or part of communication between friends and family when made as gifts. They exemplified the various roles women assumed and how they fulfilled them.

Household management

In The Feminine Mystique (1963), Friedan devoted an entire chapter to the role of time in being a homemaker. As household managers, the three most important household
resources were time, space, and commodities. In this section, I examine how women used quilting to manage time and household budgets and balance family and personal needs. Managing expenses, substituting her labor for that of paid professionals, and how she used "leftover" time for leisure constituted major parts of the homemaker role. If time is money, then examining how women's time was spent provides a window into changing valuations of women's activities.

Time usage, time justification, management, saving time and labor

One way of justifying quilting was through valuing what was accomplished with the time spent. Descriptions of women's use of time for household needs, leisure time, creative time, or making and saving money varied through the decades and illustrate changing concepts of how women's time was valued.

In all decades, quilting was seen primarily as part of a woman's role as housekeeper, which included her responsibility for home decoration. Quilts as part of home decoration were mentioned in 32% of all 1940s articles, 37% of 1950s articles and 30% of 1960s articles. This is a high percentage of references and does not vary significantly between decades. As a twentieth century "angel of the hearth," women were seen as mixing leisure and reproduction
activities to fulfill their role as home decorator, as the following examples from the 1960s show.

"Gay patterns from the days of the quilting bee have come back again to add a lively harlequin touch to your rooms" (House and Garden Sept. 1960:144).

"Wouldn't a replica (of a Whig rose) add a beautiful breath of spring to your bedroom?" (American Home May 1962:12).

"All it takes is the snip of a scissors and the whisk of a hot iron to permanently applique a whole wonderful world of hug-a-bugs, grinning daisies and flutter butterflies. You can decorate a ready-made tablecloth, café curtains, lampshade and wastepaper basket" (Seventeen Nov. 1962:58).

One factor in women's role as household managers was a consciousness of time management. I examined the magazine articles to see how the time spent quilting was viewed. "Quilting" in this usage represents all the time spent in the actual production of a quilt, from planning the design, purchasing patterns and fabric, and creating the quilt top through putting the three layers together and binding the edges. Most articles made no reference to the time spent quilting, while some proposed multiple reasons.

I divided time references into the following categories: home decoration, expected woman's activity, leisure, thrifty use of time, money making or thrifty activity, to make heirlooms, shopping, social activity, and artistic expression. Some of these reasons focus on process and some focus on end product, though the two are often found in the same article. While creative pursuits could be
one way to use leisure time, not all leisure time was seen as creative.

From 1945 to 1949, five categories of time usage references exceeded 10%, comprising 76% of all reasons (see Table 15). The views of time use are more diffuse in this period than in the 1950s and 1960s. Quilting was seen primarily as part of women's responsibilities for home decoration (29% of time references). The second most frequent references were as a means of creative expression (16%). The last three types, leisure time, as part of women's expected activities, and as an investment in the future by making heirlooms, each comprised 10.5% of the total references. Making heirloom quality quilts was seen as extremely time consuming, but worth the investment. It was also a way of tying home production to the Colonial Revival design movement with its emphasis on American heritage.

Table 15. Time usage references by percentage in magazine articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>home decoration</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expected home activity</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leisure</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>artistic/personal expression</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>money making</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shopping</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thrifty</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heirlooms</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

192
In comparison to the 1940s, time references were concentrated in fewer categories in the 1950s and 1960s. There were 1.1 references per article in the 1940s vs. .9 references per article in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1950s and 1960s, only four reasons are found in more than 10% of articles, though these differ between the two decades. These four time usage categories comprise 86% of all those noted in the 1950s, and 77% in the 1960s.

In the 1950s, the highest emphasis is on home decoration (31%), which is nearly identical to the previous five years. This supports the view of the post war period's focus on domesticity. The second highest time reference was as a leisure activity (23%), closely followed by artistic expression (20%), which is a higher emphasis on artistic expression than I expected during the 1950s. It is evidence of the beginning of considerations of textile arts as a viable high art medium. However, it is also the only decade when quilting as a money making activity was more than 10% of the references, at least partly owing to the indexing of the magazine Profitable Hobbies at that time. Money making was the fourth highest reference at 11% (see Table 15). I will examine the money-making and money-saving views in more detail later in this chapter. The 1950s are unique for their high number of references to quilting as leisure and as a money-making activity, which seem to contradict each other, but actually reflect a dichotomization of time
typical of the period as people "worked hard and played hard" (Schor 1991:160).

In the 1960s, articles contrast the time consuming nature of quilting in the past to its new emphasis as a creative activity. The importance of creativity grew steadily from the 1940s (16%) and 20% in the 1950s until it became the most frequent reference in the 1960s (28%). This mirrors the increased frequency of references to art backgrounds and artists as authority sources in the 1960s as well.

The next highest categories in the 1960s were home decoration and as an expected woman's activity, both at 17.5%. This use of home decoration as an expected part of women's roles was the least frequent of all three decades. The increase in references to quilting as an expected activity is derived from magazine articles that contrast the necessity of home production in the past with the freedom of personal expression or the option of purchasing goods in the present. Such articles assumed that quilting 'for cover' was a necessity rather than a creative choice from the 19th century though the Great Depression. After WWII, quilts were explicitly recognized in the magazine articles as intended as throws or bedspreads, not as a replacement for blankets. This emphasized the aesthetic purpose of quilts more than their utilitarian value. Articles that showcased
different bedspread options showed quilts as one of many choices (O'Brien New York Times Magazine Nov. 1 1964:114).

Considerations of how time was spent became less important from 1940 to 1970. In articles that used time references, time for home decoration decreased in the 1960s while references to quilting as a form of personal expression increased. While quilting for home decoration was mentioned fairly constantly over the three decades, it was mentioned less often as a way for women to spend time in the 1960s.

Articles and books make the analogy of using scraps of material and scraps of time to make a quilt (Getzinger 1954:108), which unknowingly echoed Lydia Child's 1829 The American Frugal Housewife: "Housekeeping is the gathering up of all the fragments so that nothing is lost. I mean fragments of time as well as materials" (quoted in Ferraro et al 1987:26). Homemakers' time was also recognized as a way of saving money, by substituting her expenditure of time in lieu of paying a professional. Time usage as a consideration for quilting was mentioned less and less throughout the three decades, with 28% of articles referring to it in the 1940s, 13% in the 1950s, and only 5% in the 1960s. Part of this change is due to the decreasing emphasis on the actual quilting, the most time intensive part of the process. The technique of quilting was less frequently used than applique and piecing in the
wallhangings and other household goods emphasized in the 1960s, which may partially account for the drop in references.

Perhaps even more important was a changing discourse on how time usage was seen. As magazines referred to time spent on creative activities like quilting as a woman's time for "personal expression," they saw creative endeavors as similar to leisure time. Rather than seeing time as a balancing act among various obligations, leisure time was not part of the measuring and balancing process but a category that was separated from normal routines (Schor 1991:160). The time spent on creative endeavors and leisure had a value of their own that did not require justification as part of women's domestic roles and also recognized that women were individuals with needs separate from and not satisfied by their roles as wife, mother, and homemaker.

Money making, money saving

Making or saving money was seen in the context of women's roles as household manager, where one of her contributions to the household economy was to contain expenses. Time spent on quilting as part of home decoration was seen as a means of saving money, not only by using scraps and finding cheap materials, but by substituting a woman's time for contract labor. By being her own interior decorator, reupholstering at home, and even making her own quilted fabric for upholstery, a woman saved the expense of
paying someone else to do it. Home quilting and quiltmaking substituted for commercial production.

By making homemade gifts and household goods, women saved money over the cost of purchasing commercial goods. Quilting was mentioned as a money saving activity in 25% of 1940s articles, 33% of 1950s articles, and 19% of 1960s articles, though far less frequently in the context of time management (Table 6.6). One conservation activity during WWII was the adaptive reuse and decorative patching of clothes to compensate for the fabric shortages experienced during the war. "Making do" was seen as contributing to the war effort by allowing more resources to be diverted to the front. Except for children's clothes, patching clothes was not mentioned after WWII. After the war, money saving activities focused on substituting women's labor for commercial production in articles recommending quilting for adding "the Midas touch" (American Home 1952), or the thrifty use of materials for class art projects (Holman in School Arts Jan. 1968:9).

Besides the thrifty use of materials, magazine articles also advocated a thrifty use of time. A number of titles used the terms "quick," "easy," and "streamline." These terms emphasized and conflated speed and simplicity. Prior to 1954, only one article in the twentieth century, ("Adjustable quilt frame is easy to make" in Popular Mechanics, February 1941), used any of these words in its
title. From 1955 to 1959 nine percent of article titles used these phrases, and eight percent from 1960 to 1964. Besides the emphasis on time and efficiency, they also had the highest percentage of articles using readymade materials for shortcuts in construction (13% in the 1940s, 26% in the 1950s, and 15% in the 1960s) and the highest percentage of references to commercial products. From 1965 on, usage drops to less than five percent of articles through 1980.

Friedan noted how advertisers manipulate commodities. As she quoted,

"After an initial resistance, she now tends to accept instant coffee, frozen foods, precooked foods, and labor-saving items as part of her routine. But she needs a justification and she finds it in the thought that 'by using frozen foods I'm freeing myself to accomplish other important tasks as a modern mother and wife'" (Friedan 1963:114).

In the same way, articles like "Streamline the art of quilting" (House Beautiful 1956), "Applique for impatient fingers" (School Arts April 1963), and "So easy, so giftable" (McCalls Oct. 1969) suggested one could fulfill one's role as housewife and mother, yet be creative and time saving also. Such approaches stressed the value of the product over the process, an unstated analogy to mass production where the consumer emphasis was on the finished product, ignoring the whole manufacturing process. The drop in references to "quick and easy" after 1965 is probably related to the drop in machine construction of quilt tops.
seen in NHQP after 1970 as concerns for speed and efficiency lessened.

Though mentioned less frequently, quilting was seen as a means of making money as well. As professional quilters who created a home based job opportunity, women were seen in the position of helpers rather than breadwinners, reinforcing the expectation that men were the primary providers. Quilting could be seen as the "butter-and-egg" money of the 1940s and 1950s, as can be seen in the following quote from Profitable Hobbies.

"Little pieces of time, just like pennies, add up to dollars, just as little scraps of cloth add up to a quilt of charm and satisfaction. . . . It's pick up work in an easy chair while I listen to the radio or chat with a neighbor or the family. . . . Oh, you'll never get into trouble with Uncle Sam's Treasury boys over the money you make quilting, but it comes in very handy to pay for Sally's piano lessons or Henry's new shoes that he has to have between pay days, or those tulips you wanted to plant to line the front walk. And it's such fun to be sharing the load with that wonderful guy you married!" (Getzinger 1954:108).

Quilting as a money making activity is referenced in 12% of 1940s articles, 10% of 1950s articles and 3% of 1960s articles. There is a declining ratio of the number of references to money saving vs. money making from 2:1 in the 1940s to 3:1 in the 1950s and the largest decline to 6:1 in the 1960s. References to both money saving and money making fell over the course of the 30 years studied; quilting as a money making activity was mentioned in only two articles in the 1960s.
All the magazine articles assumed that women were not working in paid employment outside the home. In trying to compare this assumption to the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project data, I found such comparisons impossible. The occupation of the quiltmaker was asked in the NHQP survey, but it was clear that jobs described did not necessarily reflect what women were doing at the time the quilt was made because they included jobs held prior to marriage and as young adults, such as "worked in USO canteen during World War One." Of NHQP quilts where the work status was known, though it may have been years before the quilt was made, 52% came from homemakers, 11% from ranchers, 10% from teachers, and 27% from women who listed some other kind of job.

Quilters' view of the role of a ranch wife was perceived in a very different way from a housewife. Surveys self-defined "rancher" or "ranch wife" rather than housewife. These were often accompanied by other explanations of reasons for quilting such as "something to do when following the buckaroos." These descriptions were reminiscent of Grace Snyder's autobiography No Time on My Hands about her life that included concurrently ranching in the Sandhills of Nebraska and being an award winning quilter. Ranch wives' roles included a number of other duties, and were seen in more of a partnership with the husband rather than as a complementary, helper role.
Of the twelve women I interviewed, only one worked for hourly wages during the time period studied. One other woman worked in the family business, and the rest were homemakers. National statistics at the time showed 21% of married women working in 1950, 32% in 1960, and 41% in 1970 (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:91). While the reality of the NHQP survey and interviews is that some women did work, the magazines portrayed the ideal of a nuclear family with wage earning husband and stay-at-home wife.

Quilt activities were one way of saving money or making money through quilting for others. Both were ways of contributing to the household budget and fulfilling one's role as household manager.

Leisure

For most people, leisure is valued most highly as time spent with other significant people in one's life and for time involved using or developing non-work skills such as sports or the arts. Time availability is one of the factors of cultural capital that Bourdieu mentions as a factor in leisure (1993:351). Henderson (1989:65) suggested that women lack not just physical space for leisure, but also temporal, social, and psychological space. For women, leisure is a highly regulated area of life (Hargreaves 1989:136). Women's time differs from men's because their time for both work and leisure is characterized by a higher degree of fragmentation (Henderson 1989:10).
Work inside the home is not only different from paid work outside the home, but its definition is constructed in relation to and subordinate to men's work and work outside the home. Hargreaves uses Gramsci's hegemonic view of relationships to explain how males as the major wage-earners in a nuclear family have earned the right to leisure because of their labor (Hargreaves 1989:131). The female is a dependent housewife for whom money and time for leisure are considered bonuses.

For women, leisure is largely home based, but the home is also a primary place of work for women, if not the place. Because of the responsibilities for work within the home, and the home as a place for leisure, the rigid distinction of workplace and place for leisure becomes blurred. Home and family based leisure becomes the norm.

Within the household, it is often difficult to distinguish between a necessary and a chosen activity. If one looks at purchased goods, some, such as television, are for consumption and leisure only. Others such as drills, saws, or sewing machines are used for both discretionary and necessary labor, (such as mending clothes versus sewing a quilted wall hanging.) The increased availability of leisure equipment after World War II meant that more people have become active participants rather than being observers (such as playing golf rather than watching it) (Bishop and Hoggett 1989:160).
Women often fit leisure activities between their various work responsibilities. Quilting fits these criteria because it can be done in the home, and much of it can be done in small segments of time that don't require intense concentration. Free time comes in small increments or is combined with housework or childcare. Leisure becomes incorporated into a daily sense of taste and routines or else is viewed as an extension of mandated sex roles (Henderson 1989:10). Women's leisure time is often seen as a continuation of one's job or housework, and not as a change of pace or restful. Women choose activities that can be done in these unplanned small periods. In this way, women manage their time commitments, either multitasking or using scraps of time similar to the way they use scraps of cloth.

Radway found that women used reading as an individual form of resistance by erecting a barrier and declaring themselves temporarily off-limits to those who would mine them for emotional support and material care. Reading got them away from the ever present responsibilities of wife and mother, and vicariously enabled them to take care of their own needs for emotional support (Radway 1991:93). Similarly, quilting provides a respite from responsibilities, as Hinson (1970:139) notes in her book Quilting Manual:
"As any mother knows, when she sits down for a moment with a cup of coffee, that is the exact moment that a favorite toy or book must be found for a child, or a problem needing immediate attention must be attended to for her husband. But a piece of sewing, mending, crocheting, or anything that looks like work will act like magic to give the needed few minutes of rest. No one will want to bother mother when she is so busy. Perhaps such little subterfuges enabled our grandmothers to rear nine children in a huge old house and still smile at the end of the day."

Time use for women's leisure has been shown to be different from men's leisure because it often either serves dual purposes, such as making clothes for children or doing gourmet cooking, or it is combined with other duties such as childcare (Henderson 1989:65). Quilting also served multiple purposes in the magazine articles both in reasons for making quilts and the time justifications used. For example, the reason for one quilt in NHQP was that early quilts were made for cover because the maker had nine children, and she used flour sacks for both quilts and dresses. Another noted the maker was a member of an ongoing church group and that she made quilts for her 14 great grandchildren. Others were to deal with grief, such as to "pass time after husband died" or "could only sit and sew after mother and stepfather killed in auto accident Christmas 1971."

Quilting as a hobby was mentioned in 14% of 1940s articles, 22% of 1950s articles, and not at all in the 1960s. Referenced as a specific form of leisure, hobbies were a part of the return to domesticity of the 1950s, seen
as a means of relaxation and connecting to family for both men and women. Defining quilting as a leisure activity decreased through the decades, from 25% of articles in the 1940s, 21% in the 1950s to 14% in the 1960s. At the same time, quilting as a means of personal expression or creativity increased from 16% of 1940s articles, to 20% in the 1950s and 28% in the 1960, showing shifting emphases in ideals of how free time should be seen. While quilting was more often seen as a pleasurable activity, the fewer references to it as leisure seem to be related to changed discourses in the 1960s that emphasized time spent as part of personal creativity rather than leisure. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

Another way of seeing this altered view of the reasons for quilting were references to quilting as a necessity or duty. It was mentioned in 17% of 1940s articles, 10% of 1950s articles and 5% of 1960s articles. Part of this change was related to the increase in commercial production after World War II when women could choose manufactured or homemade bedspreads. Writers contrasted perceptions of the past when quilting was considered a necessity with the present when it was by choice.

Looking at the way time usage was described is one way to see how women's activities were valued. From 1940 to 1970, magazine articles had fewer references to how women spent time. There was a growing emphasis on quilting as a
creative activity, while references to quilting as a means of home decoration dropped dramatically in the 1960s and references as a leisure activity declined steadily from the 1940s to the 1960s. Friedan (1984:214) emphasized the importance of creativity, and described articles written for marketers on how they could use this need to market products. The references to creative expression instead of leisure reflect this change in approach by the magazines. For example, in a description of how to organize a school art project, the writer noted, "The technical procedure should be kept to a minimum also, because... it tends to stifle their originality" (Pappas 1963:5).

Articles that emphasized purchasing goods substituted shopping as a leisure activity for creating homemade goods. As writers like Laury sought to revalue homemade goods in a world saturated by commercial production, they also acknowledged the value of the time spent in creative activities instead of spending money. Laury contrasted the pleasure of quiltmaking to other necessary tasks and pointed out the importance shopping has in housekeeping. "Your problem will not be finding time to sew quilts, but rather finding time to do the shopping or cooking necessary to the running of a household" (Laury 1970:17).

Women's lives were complex because of the many roles they performed within the household, but not dichotomized into work and home as men's lives were. Not only did women
perform multiple tasks simultaneously, individual tasks like quilting served multiple purposes of leisure, reproduction, reinforcing social relations and creativity.

Summary

Changing views of the reasons women quilted illustrate changing views of women's roles. By understanding who was quilting, we see women's roles in creating community, maintaining social ties, and managing household resources. In the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project, the average quilter aged by 10.4 years over the 30 year time span. This both supports and refutes the general concept that there were no new quilters. There may have been fewer new quilters, but some women did begin quilting, many of them to create quilts for their baby boomer generation children. From the NHQP data, Nevada quilters on average were considerably younger than quilters from other regions.

Mormon quilters played a major role in quilting in Nevada. Not only did they provide a disproportionate percentage of quilts in comparison to the proportion of the population, but Mormon church groups supported quilting for church members and the community in general. Their activities continued throughout the three decades, even though magazines referenced community and church groups less through the decades. This means that the Mormon community in Nevada may have borne a disproportionately large
responsibility for sustaining quilting during the time period.

The NHQP questionnaire did not elicit responses on reasons for quilting that are directly comparable to the magazine articles. Most of the known reasons involved celebrating life passages such as birthdays, new babies, weddings, anniversaries, and holidays. Many such life changes, especially birth, graduating from crib to full size bed, going away to college, and getting married, potentially involved changes in actual beds, making new bedding a fitting recognition of changed status. For many young women, having a baby was an impetus for making their first quilt, though it might have taken years to complete and/or was made only for the first child and not subsequent children.

From all three sources, women used quilts to tie people together through gift giving and commemorating special events. They used quilts for the emotional labor of maintaining family ties, providing gifts, and as home decoration besides expressing creativity. Women gave of themselves and used family fabrics to bring together generations. Such use, according to NHQP and magazine articles, fulfilled women's role as household financial manager by being thrifty. Quilts were also one way of fulfilling women's roles as home decorators, a mirror of the emphasis on domesticity in the 1940s and 1950s.
Quiltmaking enabled women to combine leisure and their reproductive roles. With the increase in commercial production after World War II, quilts were but one decorative choice. While the 1940s and 1950s emphasized women's roles as home decorators, the 1960s emphasized creativity and personal expression. This was a gradual change, though somewhat accelerated in the 1960s, from emphasizing women's time spent serving others to time spent on personal needs and reflected larger societal changes. In the 1940s and 1950s, quilts were made as the showpiece of the bedroom, using different designs to match different decor. Quilts became one decorating choice among many. However, in all magazine articles, quilts were represented as having aesthetic value as bedspreads rather than for their thriftiness as an alternative to blankets. This aesthetic emphasis was furthered in the 1960s through magazine articles recommending making wallhangings rather than bedspreads. By being displayed on a wall, completed objects were seen as analogous to paintings by being valued as purely visual rather than being useful like blankets. While such portrayals downplayed women's domestic role as producers, actual quilt production in the NHQP resisted redefinitions of women as consumers only. Quilts enabled women to continue to define home production as an important component of their role as homemaker.
Quilting was one of many choices for fulfilling women's roles as homemakers, wives, mothers, grandmothers and friends. By combining leisure, social roles, and sometimes social groups, women responded to their personal needs as well as their roles of filling others' emotional and physical needs.
ART, COMMERCIALIZATION, AND HEGEMONY

This chapter examines the relationship between quilting and art and how mass production, commercialization and consumerism impacted the social relations of quilting. The key question is: how did women quilters resist and negotiate the effects of mass production and consumerism?

I examine three areas where quilting practices illuminate economic changes in American society after World War II. The first is changes in the relationship of gender and art through reevaluations of techniques, existing art hierarchies, and the role of creativity in quilting. The second examines changes in perceptions of mass production. From the deprivations of the Great Depression and the shortages during WWII, the American economy shifted from war production to commercial production, much of it for the American home. At first, consumers embraced newly available products, but by the 1960s, some began to question what was lost when handmade articles were replaced by mass produced goods.

In the third section, I look at who defines the status quo and how it is questioned. The status quo is the
existing state of affairs at a specified time. For quilting in 1940, that meant quilts were utilitarian home decor (Ickis 1949:viii) that was neither art nor craft, nor influenced by commercial trends. The hegemonic view of quilting from 1940 to 1970 focused on the nostalgia of the nineteenth century quilting bee with its associations of community, pioneer life, and creating beauty from scraps.

I examine the changes in who was referenced as an authority. Magazines recognized authority through their claim of knowledge and expertise. These are intimately tied to views of quilting's connection to art and commercialization. All three sections primarily use publications to examine the evolution in thought from 1945 to 1970.

From home decoration to high art

This section will discuss how magazine articles increasingly characterized quilts as art by citing aesthetic characteristics, increased references to quilting as art, craft, folk art and ethnic art, and tying quilts to creative endeavors. These articles were found through the Reader's Guide and Art Index (see Chapter 3 for more detail). Part of the reevaluation of the relationship of gender and art has been to examine how art has been defined, separated and set in hierarchies that reflect lesser valuations of forms and mediums associated with women. Just as women artists in
the world of high art were the exception that proved the rule that women could not be artists, until the 1960s quilts in the world of high art were the exceptions that proved quilts were not art.

**Quilting techniques as art**

Twentieth century art movements such as Dadaism, Constructivism and Surrealism sought to end the separation of fine and applied arts. Although they failed to do so, by the 1950s their impact did open new space for women artists and traditional feminine art forms (Parker 1984:190). As early as 1955, magazine articles about quilting referenced a new view in the world of high art that recognized needlework and textiles as viable art forms. This occurred first in more mainline art magazines like *Craft Horizon*, then spread to intermediate art magazines like *School Arts*. This new view of textile arts was then brought to home and general interest magazines in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

"The trend toward liberating textiles from functions so that they could assume the status of fine art began during the 1950s and was in full swing by the next decade" (Thurman 1992:134). Articles occasionally included quilt techniques in the burgeoning discussion of expanded art mediums. One example was applique, recommended as one stitchery technique for elementary through high school art classes during the 1950s and 1960s. It was seen as having greater freedom of design and thus as being more art-like than patchwork or
quilting. At the same time, these articles focused on the familiarity of cloth and the availability of scraps and other cheap materials in order to overcome students' cognitive barriers to doing art. Quilting techniques were advocated as an accessible art form.

Articles on school art classes also endorsed making applique wall hangings. Wall hangings were referred to as "fabric paintings" or "tapestries" to further the analogy to art. To further erode cognitive barriers, writers suggested applique and stitchery as group projects. Group work was one way of simplifying the art making process, but the articles made no analogies to historic group work among mainstream quilting.

Other articles in school arts magazines used references to quilting to emphasize a focus on results and appearance rather than function. These articles recommended using glue for applique rather than sewing. Gluing also more closely aligned such projects with collage, another new art form increasing in popularity. Importantly, this focus further removed applique from any gendered associations of sewing.

Most high art descriptions, even of architecture and sculpture, rely primarily on visual cues for their analysis. Like with high art, magazines from the 1940s to 1960s increasingly relied on description of visual characteristics such as color and form to describe quilts (see Table 16).
Forty percent of articles in the 1940s, 44% in the 1950s and 48% in the 1960s used visual descriptions of quilts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic evaluation</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal expression</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usefulness</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An example of the emphasis on visual cues and analogies to high art can be seen in the catalog for the 1970 Whitney quilt exhibit which associated patchwork with abstract art by downplaying workmanship (craft) in favor of visual impact (art).

"This exhibition is based simply on a high regard for the visual content of pieced quilts, regardless of craftsmanship, age, condition, area, or history. It concentrates on examples which provide a cohesive and strong visual statement" (Holstein 1991:214 originally 1971).

Aesthetic descriptions imply an evaluation of the object beyond mere description of its formal properties. For quilts, these ranged from "gay," "colorful," or "pretty," to analogies to high art methods such as "pastel-
like," "collage," or "op art," or comparisons to known artists. Such references were found in 38% of articles in the 1940s, 50% of articles in the 1950s and 36% of articles in the 1960s (see Table 16). Though a higher percentage of articles used aesthetic citations in the 1950s, more are of the "pretty" than "art" type.

Usefulness and tactile properties have been used as one way of distinguishing craft from art forms. Tactile properties, such as "soft and cuddly," were used in only 7% of articles in the 30 year time period. The small number of tactile references in comparison to visual references is a further example of how quilts were seen in the aesthetic sphere. Usefulness as a descriptor of quilts declined through the three decades, from 28% in the 1940s, to 20% in the 1950s, and 14% in the 1960s and is yet another way to see the growing acceptance of quilt techniques as art rather than craft (see Table 16). This decline is slightly more dramatic than the increase in references to visual aspects, but complements the increase in references to designers, to creativity, and increased use of imagery only.

If magazine articles in this period referenced quilting as a type of art, it was more often as craft than as art, though quilts were increasingly seen as one type or the other through the three decades. Art references were made in 15% of 1940s magazine articles, 31% of 1950s articles, and 34% of 1960s articles. Craft references were found in 28%
of articles in the 1940s, 38% in the 1950s, and 42% in the 1960s (see Table 16). The ratio of art to craft citations was 5 to 9 in the 1940s and 4 to 5 for the 1950s and 1960s. In this area, the 1950s and 1960s show a distinct departure from the 1940s.

Through time, quilts were mentioned more frequently as both art and craft, but the highest growth is in referencing quilts as art. Growth in both areas shows how writers considered quilts a part of the arts hierarchy, though the change in ratios in the 1950s is earlier than expected. Quilting was more often seen within a framework of art/craft dichotomies in the 1950s and 1960s, rather than being outside such considerations, as was the case in the 1940s. In two five year periods, 1955 to 1959 and 1965 to 1969, quilting is referenced evenly as both art and craft. These two five year spans have fewer articles than the earlier parts of the same decade, so art analysis also seems to be a factor that increases interest in quilting.

I subdivided art/museum magazines (see Table 3 in Chapter 5) into design/art/museum and hobby/school arts magazines. This represents a conceptual separation between "serious" professionals and amateurs and students. From 1940 to 1959, more articles appeared in hobby/school arts magazines than design/art/museum magazines except for the years 1945 to 1949 when there were a large number of museum exhibits. From 1960 to 1964, an equal number of articles

217
appeared in both types of magazines. From 1965 on, only 10% of articles were found in hobby/school arts magazines while 90% were found in design/art/museum magazines. This is another indication of the growing acceptance of quilting as part of high art worlds rather than as school art projects.

Recognizing the dichotomy of craft and art does not necessarily entail any questioning of why one is valued more than the other. Though not the earliest article treating needlework in general as a valid art form, the first quilt article disputing the dichotomy of needlework and textiles from "high art" forms was an article on machine applique in School Arts magazine in 1963. Written by David Van Dommelen, the article used the term "craftsmen" for artists who used the sewing machine, and urged them to think of it as a tool, focusing on the "machine" rather than the "sewing." It emphasized mastery and extended to textiles the way high art mediums were viewed. Unlike articles that noted the experience of textiles as part of everyday life and made emotional connections to fabric, this article used a purely cognitive approach.

"You can slowly begin to experiment with the sewing machine as your art instrument, until it has become as creative to you as a brush is to the ordinary painter. This will not mean that you are working with a medium that is less valid, but only that you have opened up another field of creative development in today's art world. It is important not to let the machine dictate or be the thinker for you. Instead, you must master the machine and guide it toward a more creative approach in your search for new forms" (Van Dommelen 1963:26).
Quilts were increasingly referenced as a kind of art rather than as just another kind of bedding, and increasingly as 'art' rather than 'craft' through the three decades. Through changes in references to usefulness, art/craft hierarchies, and the kinds of art magazines, quilts became more accepted as an art medium.

**Quilting as Folk Art and Ethnic Art**

Besides looking at quilts along the art/craft continuum, magazine articles referenced quilts as part of folk art and ethnic art. Like ethnic and folk art, both aesthetic concerns and practical considerations of use are part of aesthetic decisions for quilts.

Magazine articles mix together considerations of quilting as home decoration and as a decorative art. This is an area where links to the greater art world become fuzzy, as decorative art is usually considered second in the art hierarchy of high art, decorative art, folk art and craft (Parker and Pollock 1981:51) while home decoration is wholly outside this hierarchy.

Quilts are referenced as part of folk art traditions of areas like Appalachia where the tradition had been kept alive, or as part of generic American history. Quilts are referenced as folk art in 18% of articles in the 1940s, 11% of 1950s articles, and 13% of 1960s articles. Articles referencing folk art are found primarily in the decade after the war, which is assuredly related to the concurrent
academization of folk culture studies (Schlereth 1982:22). The 1950s and 1960s look similar to each other, and different from the 1940s, which is a similar pattern to the way quilts were referenced as art vs. craft.

The ethnic "other" referenced in articles between 1940 and 1970 (17 total) was primarily Hawaiian and, beginning in 1960, Cuna Indian (Panama). Hawaii has a distinct quilt tradition derived from quilting brought to the islands by missionaries. The applique tradition of the Cuna Indians of the San Blas Islands in Panama is used for making women's blouses (molas) and has become a major income source. Magazine articles emphasized the separate traditions of each group. While readers were encouraged to try Hawaiian quilting, Cuna applique was presented for appreciation and as a design source only. The technique was not taught in magazines until the 1970s. As design sources and because both traditions use applique methods and more pictorial designs, they were perceived as closer to decorative art than the geometry of patchwork.

Six percent (4 articles) of 1940s articles reference an ethnic tradition, all of them about Hawaiian quilting. No articles in the 1950s reference ethnic art. This decade is an interesting anomaly for having no ethnic references, which may be related to the inward focus of the decade. In the 1960s, 20% of articles reference ethnic quilt traditions. Ethnic motifs were but one of a variety of
sources referenced as design sources, but they were tied to the increased interest in ethnic clothing and home decoration seen during that time.

In contrast to the previous 30 years, from 1970 to 1979 there were six articles on molas alone and twelve articles on a plethora of other ethnic styles from Tibetan to Amish. Because of the huge number of articles for the decade, they still comprise only 16% of the total. As interest in quilts and quilting techniques grew in the revival of the 1970s, it fed on and was nourished by interests in other ethnic arts.

Folk art references focused on American history and "remnant" groups of traditional quilters in areas like Appalachia. Ethnic art references focused on the separate traditions of each group, which readers were sometimes encouraged to emulate. Both types described an "other" to readers. Combining the two, 24% of 1940s articles, 11% of 1950s articles, and 33% of 1960s articles used an ethnic or folk "other." The 1950s stand out as a transition period when folk art references declined, Hawaiian quilting was not referenced, and Cuna applique had not yet been introduced into mainstream (or even avant garde) American design consciousness. The 1960s continued the reduced interest in folk art analogies of the 1950s and expanded references to ethnic art forms, which became a significant part of the 1970s revival.
Personal expression, creativity, and original design

How does an emphasis on creativity change the perception of quilts as art? Since the Renaissance, high art has focused on the creativity of the individual artist as a major determinant of the value of art. Researchers have described the 1950s and 1960s as a time of rote copying of a few standard patterns with little evidence of originality or creativity. Using this assumption, magazine articles and NHQP quilt designs should show decreasing discussions of creativity, which was not the case. In the magazine articles, creativity is of growing importance as part of quilting, though the 1940s and 1950s are nearly identical. It is referenced in 26% of articles in the 1940s, 28% of articles in the 1950s and 37% of articles in the 1960s (see Table 16). These numbers coincide with similar changes is the way time for quilting was seen as a means of artistic or personal expression (16% in the 1940s, 20% in the 1950s, 28% in the 1960s). Time for creativity was accorded greater value than leisure time. In this way, writers subtly shifted the discourse on quilting by valuing process as much as product and revisioning quilting as an area to get away from standardized patterns and design in order to be creative.

While the 1960s articles emphasized that time spent quilting was an expression of creativity, personal
expression, or artistic impulses, they also demonstrated how the textile industry capitalized on these ideas by emphasizing the creativity involved in purchasing items. As they posed it, shopping was fast and fun, with the handmade appearance and "mix'n'match" capabilities of new textiles making purchases as an "investment in excellence to pass on as an heirloom" (House Beautiful Feb. 1964:101). The variety and "power washing" capability of the new fabrics made frequent bedding changes practical and "as creatively challenging as setting a table or painting a picture" (House Beautiful Feb. 1964:99). According to this article, changing the bed was part of artistic expression.

Friedan referenced a marketing survey from 1945 about the "growing need of American women to do creative work--the major unfulfilled need of the modern housewife" (Friedan 1984:212). The survey's purpose was to help manufacturers market to women. Magazine articles both demeaned and validated the need for creativity at the same time, attempting to substitute purchasing goods for producing them. Ploys similar to those Friedan quoted for selling cake mix were used to induce consumers to purchase as a means of expressing creativity. Similarly, simplified quilt production of quilts through shortcuts and kits was intended to encourage purchases.

In contrast, Jean Ray Laury posited kits as a starting point from which one could venture out on one's own. Laury
has been an influential quilt designer and writer since the 1960s. Her books, articles and patterns over the last 40 years have brought quilting and art together in an accessible way for the average quilter. Laury combined art, design and quilting, consciously setting an example for her women readers of how one could bridge art and domesticity. She advocated designs that came from everyday activities and places like children's drawings and the kitchen while using basic sewing skills and leftover fabric (Laury in Farm Journal May 1966:88). Quilting refutes the idea that art transcends everyday life because so much of it was and is made for everyday living. Common life passages such as birth, going away to college, and marriage were incentives for commemorative quiltmaking.

While Laury could assume the availability of skills and fabric, such 'cultural capital,' though more readily available then, was not universal. However, her assumption of universal creativity is a refreshing alternate to Friedan's acceptance of the heavy handed effect of commercialization. As Laury said,

"Perhaps the greatest reward of stitchery lies in its very personal nature. Our homes are so full of manufactured items that we need and enjoy handmade things more than ever" (Laury in Farm Journal May 1966:88).

Jean Ray Laury included works by contemporary artists using quilts as a medium in her 1970 book Quilts & Coverlets: A Contemporary Approach. As she said, "Only
recently is the influence of contemporary art once again seen in our quilts" (Laury 1970:17). Some of the quilts incorporated political statements that critiqued mass production, the status of women, the concern for ecology, and so on, while others utilized contemporary art forms executed as quilts. Laury does not place them within the context of any social movement, yet as she focused on the technique and results of the quilts, she made readers aware of these art quilts and their statements. Laury acts as an interpreter between the world of high art and home production, showing women how they, too, could be artists using their creativity with familiar mediums.

Another way to examine the role of creativity in quiltmaking is to look at the use of original designs in the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project. Trying to determine what constituted 'original' design with a traditional quilt can be a difficult process. The case of Boisson vs. Linen Source, et al, found that the unique combination of traditional borders, blocks, settings and quilting created a design original enough to be copyrighted (Quilter's Newsletter Magazine May 2001:11). For the NHQP quilts, I combined my knowledge of quilt history with descriptions in the documentation to determine originality, erring on the side of caution (=unknown) when data was unclear. Designs identified as a 'variation' were one clue that a quilt did not clearly fit any known pattern.
Only 4% of quilts in NHQP were of original design, 19% were unknown, and 76% were made with known patterns. Original designs were more common from younger quilters. While 35% of NHQP quilts were made by quilters younger than 50, 53% of the original designs were made by them. Quilts with unknown patterns were made in equal proportions by all age groups. Originally designed quilts were made primarily from 1955 to 1969 (64%) while only 42% of NHQP quilts were made during that time. This also would seem to support the growing emphasis on creativity in the 1960s.

Original designs were disproportionately made as combinations of applique, piecework, and/or embroidery, or as embroidery only (25% of all quilts, 50% of original designs). Commemorative and friendship quilts were primary reasons for original designs. Such quilts are less than 5% of all NHQP quilts where the reason was known, but they are 37% of the originally designed quilts.

In the 1940s, only one quilt (<1%) was an original design. In the 1950s, 5% of quilts were original design, 7% in the 1960s and 2% of 1970s quilts were original. Quilts of unknown originality were 20% of 1940s quilts, 30% of 1950s quilts, 31% of 1960s quilts, and 16% of 1970s quilts. The 1950s and 1960s have both more original designs and more designs of unknown originality than the preceding and succeeding decades. It is possible that this might indicate a growing emphasis on individual creativity through the
1960s. The increased use of traditional patterns in the 1970s may reflect the traditional turn taken similar to the increase in hand piecing at the same time.

Creativity was referenced more frequently with each passing decade in quilt related magazine articles. An increased emphasis on personal expression and creativity was utilized to market mass produced goods, but reflected a real concern of American women as well.

The increased interest in creativity and personal expression of the 1960s intersected with expanded views of art mediums that had begun to include textiles in the 1950s. Quilts were described more frequently in visual terms from decade to decade, placing them more firmly in the aesthetic sphere. Applique wall hangings were promoted as school art projects and in magazine articles. This reflects views that nontraditional products like clothing or wallhangings are more amenable to change and innovation than traditional forms (Graburn 1976:15).

Quilts or quilt techniques were also framed as folk or ethnic art. Quilts are mentioned as folk art most often in the 1940s, while they are mentioned most often as ethnic art in the 1960s. There is no pattern of increase from the 1940s to the 1960s for these two categories of reference.

While quilts were more often seen as craft than art in all decades, they are more equally referenced in the 1950s and 1960s than in the 1940s. Over time, quilts were
mentioned increasingly as both art and craft, bringing them more firmly into the aesthetic realm.

Consumer production and quilting

Did mass consumption after World War II cause the decline in quiltmaking as Trestain (1998:161) believed? She agreed with theorists like Horkheimer and Adorno that market choices dictated household decor. Magazine articles and quilt production would demonstrate this by shifting their emphasis from quality workmanship to implementing mass production techniques, or reemphasizing purchasing goods instead of making them. Changes in authority references and the use of commercially available materials would demonstrate the dominance of the culture industry's influence. Magazine articles did demonstrate how the culture industry sought to influence purchases and quilt production. However, actual patterns of usage are more complicated.

Commercially available goods

Commercially available goods and services

Horkheimer and Adorno (1993) saw commercial production as defining and limiting consumers' needs to what was available in the market. Others questioned this top down view by finding that personal tastes were broader than market availability (Radway 1991) and that there were changes in production to meet consumer demands (Sedgwick
Radway (1991:184) saw that consumers, by voting with their pocketbooks, made production benefit them emotionally as it benefitted the market monetarily. These findings countered the ideology that popular culture was only a product of capitalist commodity production with no meaning except for how it created a profit (Story 1993:14). As Laury said in *Applique Stitchery* (1966:12),

"We buy articles mummified in Mylar, bound in protective polyethylene and marked "sterile." These mass produced articles, each identical to the others of its kind, are impersonal. In many respects, they tend to make our homes identical. These manufactured items satisfy many needs: we want them, use them, and need them. But it is important to recognize what they do for us and to understand what they cannot do. We must see which needs they fill and which needs they do not satisfy. As manufactured items increasingly replace handmade articles, we lose evidence of some human involvement in our everyday environment."

Quilting offers a way to examine how women have negotiated choices provided by the culture industry through the prescriptions of quilt patterns offered in books, magazines and catalogs, as well as explicit support for stepping outside those same prescriptions by writers like Martha Mood (*House Beautiful* Oct. 1962:198) and Jean Ray Laury (*Better Homes and Gardens* Jan. 1963:80).

This section examines how commodification and industrial production concerning quilts were presented to quilters and the general public in magazine articles. By examining the kinds of commercial influences women encountered, we can better understand the impact of the
postwar consumer boom and how it changed over time. Commercial references in magazine articles took two forms. The first was an overall evaluation of the abundance or lack of manufacturing goods. The second referred to specific kinds of goods and services available which allowed quilters to take shortcuts of varying degrees in the process of making quilts.

In the 1940s the availability of manufactured goods was the primary type of commercial reference, mentioned in 25% of all articles. As would be expected, shortages are seen primarily during WWII when domestic production was curtailed in the interest of the war effort. The lack of commercial goods continued to be mentioned after the war through 1948. Most of the articles stressing the availability of manufactured goods are after the war, with only one during WWII and two before the war. For the decade overall, mentions of the lack or abundance of goods were evenly balanced.

In the 1950s and 1960s, there is no mention of the lack of manufactured goods. Magazine articles in the 1950s revel in the availability of new goods and their abundance. Almost 30% of all 1950s articles mention abundance, but by the 1960s, abundance was assumed, and is overtly mentioned in only 17% of magazine articles. While there was no lack of fabric after the war, recent books and quilters I interviewed mentioned the unavailability of 100% cotton
fabric, though no contemporary articles did so. For a number of quilters, this choice became important only with the 1970s revival, as the interview quoted in Chapter 5 noted.

Commercial references included commercial patterns or pattern booklets, quilt kits that provided premarked fabric for the quilt top, or instructions that recommended using readymades (commercially produced items) such as a quilted mattress pad to which one added applique to make a quilt, adding applique to purchased curtains or sheets, or using purchased trims as embellishment. Other types of commercialization included recommendations of particular brand named items, stores where one could purchase finished goods or materials, and the use of professional quilters. By examining not only the overall picture of production and consumption, but the changing structure of the types of commercialization, we have another means for understanding how commercialization affected individuals (Radway 1991:50).

One can easily make quilts with no out-of-pocket expenses using no commercial means whatsoever. Whether or not to use commercially available goods and services is one decision quilters make about quilt construction. A quilter could choose to use only materials and patterns available through personal means, either designing her own patterns, borrowing from friends, or copying from existing quilts. She could use leftover fabric from other sewing projects or
cut up discarded clothing, and use a sheet, blanket, or old quilt as batting. However, most quilters purchase some of the necessary materials or patterns for a particular quilt, most often the backing or batting. From 1945 to 1970, through interviews and comments on NHQP data sheets, women consciously used leftover fabric scraps from clothing construction to make quilt tops. Scrap usage seemed to be because women wanted to use the "perfectly good" odd shaped leftovers from sewing clothes more than using scraps because they could not afford to purchase fabric.

I examined the types of commercial references separately from references to the availability of commercial products. The rest of this section focuses on the types of commercial references only. The number of references to commercialization is relatively constant between the three decades (.58 references per article in the 1940s, .69 in the 1950s, and .61 in the 1960s). While the 1950s have more commercial references than before or after, the difference is negligible in comparison to decade differences for other assessment categories. In the 1940s and 1950s, commercial patterns were the most frequent type of commercial reference; in the 1960s, the most common reference was brand names. In the 1950s, brand name recognition is intermediate in usage between the 1940s and the 1960s. The 1940s and the 1960s are similar to each other in that the second highest type of reference is stores.

232
Though the percentage of commercial references remained relatively constant from 1940 to 1970, the growing impact of the consumer economy can be seen in increased references to commercially available goods like packaged trims and iron-on mending patches and the growing use of brand names. These first examples (called readymades in this paper) were used as shortcuts or to speed construction. Brand names were both status markers and marketing ploys. While store references remained important throughout the time, traditional references to commercial patterns and professional quilters decreased.

In the 1940s, the most common reference was to commercial patterns or booklets, which were 34% of references, mostly from 1940 to 1943. Many magazines featured special patterns available through the magazine itself. The second highest number of references (21%) were to particular stores such as Singer Sewing Centers or types of stores such as department stores and dime stores. These were closely followed by mentions of professional quilters (18%), primarily in the middle of the decade. Fourth in number of mentions were readymades at 13%. The other categories of brand names and kits were less than 10% each of total commercial references.

In the 1950s, commercial patterns and the use of readymades each constituted 26% of commercial references. The third highest number of mentions was professional
quilters (19%), which is proportionate to the 1940s. The 1950s saw the highest percentage of references to readymades of all three decades and the least percentage of references to stores. Commercial patterns are mentioned primarily from 1955 on, while readymades are mentioned only in the middle of the decade (1953 to 1957). Stores and brand names each constituted 11% of mentions, while kits were mentioned slightly more often than in the 1940s (7% vs 5%). The prevalence of commercial patterns and professional quilters continued the more traditional commercial structure of the 1940s while adding new influences from the new consumer economy through readymades.

In the 1950s and 1960s, some magazine articles showed very simplified patterns of huge squares of fabric or large fabric strips. Simplified geometric patterns matched streamlined modern furnishings, the color blocking of 1960s clothes, and op art that glorified commercial production. They were a way of modernizing quilting with the new sensibilities of a new age. The way these articles emphasized bold graphics, geometry and color in quilts became a hallmark of the 1971 Whitney exhibit.

One example is a 1954 article that used a "sew and flip" method that "requires no tedious job of assembling patches and pieces" that could be made "in a matter of hours" (Stewart 1954:118). Articles touting the efficiencies of simplified production interpreted the goals
of mass production for the home. They contrast to the greater emphasis on aesthetic concerns discussed earlier in the chapter and tie into the time management views discussed in Chapter 6.

Such articles deemphasized painstaking craftsmanship and attention to detail that had been associated with women's traditional art forms. This view, of a piece with 19th century reformers who deplored quilts as the "primary symbols of women's unpaid subjection" (Abigail Duniway in Ferraro et al 1987:94), saw change away from crafts-based aesthetics (Becker 1984:289) as a positive move.

In the 1960s, brand names are the most frequent commercial reference (21%) while stores are 18% of the references and the other four categories (commercial patterns, professional quilters, readymades, and kits,) are each 15% of references. Brand names were referenced in 8% of 1940s articles, 11% of 1950s articles and 18% of 1960s articles. There is a slight increase from the 1940s to the 1950s, and a substantial jump in the 1960s. Using readymades is another way to see the growing expectation of purchasing wisely as a way of being an efficient homemaker and a decreasing emphasis on making do with materials at hand. Thrift became a lesser virtue for the American homemaker, replaced by being a savvy shopper.

In the 1960s, professional quilters, brand names and kits are all mentioned only before 1966. From 1966 to 1969,
there are very few references to commercial activity at all, and most of those are about the abundance of goods available. This is perhaps another way of seeing the change in emphasis away from commercial production and towards more artistic considerations in the late 1960s, or the beginnings of reconsidering quilting as a traditional activity just as NHQP quilt production showed a resurgence of hand sewing in the early 1970s. The magazine articles seem to predate this change.

Since fabric is a major requirement of quiltmaking, another way to examine the impact of commercialization is through where magazine articles directed women to buy fabric and notions, and where women said they acquired fabric.

The textile industry was clear that it should take the lead in controlling consumer preferences, which in the 1960s included pushing synthetic blend fabrics and a confidence in being able to replicate traditional designs and methods (American Fabrics Winter 1961/62:54). Changes in stores also indicate the impact of quilters on commercialization. Department stores such as Penney's and Kmart, and dime stores like Cornet and T, G & Y, often had fabric sections, which were prime places for quilters to find fabrics. Department stores began eliminating fabric departments in the 1970s until, today, WalMart is the only national department store that still carries fabric. Fabric stores such as House of Fabrics, which opened 50 new stores in 1970

In one example from my interviews, Isabel Mayberry ran a fabric store in Reno, NV, in the early 1970s. The store specialized in knitted fabrics and also offered classes, including lingerie making. The quilt department began with an offer to teach quilt classes by a couple of college students in the early 1970s. Eventually, quilt oriented fabrics and classes took over the entire store. Isabel sat in on some of the quilt classes being offered and began quilting to provide store samples. This example shows on a local level how the fabric industry reoriented itself to the burgeoning interest in quilting even though the industry's focus had been on commercial and home clothing production until the 1970s.

Mary Alice Curry bought fabric as she ran across pieces she liked, bought batting at a store going out of business and her quilting hoop at a "handcraft type store." Alice Godwin bought fabric at fabric stores, KMart, and department stores, but not quilt stores because they didn't exist in the 1960s. Nancy Astle bought fabric at a dime store or at JC Penney's.

Delores Vervey bought embroidery blocks at the dime store, fabric at KMart and yard sales, and asked visiting friends to bring her fabric. "And living in Las Vegas, we
had lots of people come visit. And so I got 500 yards of fabric!" Fabric and sewing notions were found in places that don't exist today. The perfect opportunity for stores that specialized in supplying quilters arose in the 1970s as interest in quilting grew and the availability of fabric in department stores declined.

There were only occasional references to professional quilters (quilters who produced quilts for sale or quilters who "took in" quilt tops to be quilted) after 1948, with only one reference from 1948 to 1953 and none from 1966 to 1969. The reasons for the drop in references in the late 1940s appears to be different from the drop in the 1960s. In the 1940s, magazine articles encouraged women to do their own quilting, as seen in a spike in the number of references to the technique of quilting from 1945 to 1954 when 39% of articles mention it. Mentions of professional quilters dropped slightly to 15% of articles in the 1960s from 18% in the 1940s and 19% in the 1950s.

Writers in the 1960s deemphasized professional quilters because they seemed to be both less available and less needed as quilting became a less common component of quiltmaking (only 19% of technique mentions). Church groups and professional quilters were traditional methods of getting tops completed by quilters who did not quilt. The drop in references to both during the 1960s showed that article writers no longer considered church groups and
professional quilters to be available resources. However, because the 1960s also had the least number of references to bed quilts, perhaps this reflected a lessened perceived need as well.

The reorientation of manufacturing from war production to consumer production after the war is clear in the magazine articles so that, by the 1960s, production abundance was taken for granted. While the number of commercial references per article did not change dramatically from the 1940s to the 1960s, there was a progressive spread of types of references. In the 1940s, four of six categories had over 10% of the references, five of six in the 1950s and all six categories were above 10% in the 1960s.

Commercial patterns in the 1960s were referenced at half the rate they were in the 1940s while brand name usage nearly tripled from the 1940s to the 1960s. Marketing via brand names and stores became an integral factor in quilt discussions, especially as home production was more routinely posited as an equal choice to commercially produced goods. Using readymade goods in the process of quiltmaking became one way to streamline production. Until the 1970s, women found fabrics and sewing notions in fabric departments of department stores, at dime stores and, increasingly, in fabric stores. Fabric stores specializing in quilt fabric are a byproduct of the 1970s revival.
Commercial production did not replace home production, but added more choices for home decoration. Commercial supplies were incorporated when they fit overall goals of women's individual quiltmaking.

**Kits**

Researchers have looked at two factors that question the dominance of the culture industry over consumers. The first is the way that consumers make their selection within mass production (Radway 1991:50). The second is how consumers' uses of mass production differ from the intention of the culture industry (Story 1993:14, Morriss 1993:305, Hebdige 1979:114). Perhaps the most prevalent example of commercial production for quilters were quilt kits, which included all necessary fabric, perhaps pre-cut patches, embroidery floss and pre-marked quilt designs for the quilt top with the option of purchasing matching backing. With kits, we can examine the selection available to quilters and whether the pattern was closely followed or modified to reflect the quilter's skills and aesthetics.

A number of articles offered quilt patterns and packaged kits for sale. It's not clear whether magazines considered them to be a service or for profit, but they may have viewed them like batting manufacturers did. They considered patterns a service rather than a money making venture (Stearns & Foster 1956:45).
Kit quilts comprised 11.5% of the total NHQP sample. Kit quilts are found most commonly in NHQP from 1955 to 1964 and 1970 to 1974, but are found throughout the 1940 to 1975 time period. While only 10 of almost 200 articles written from 1940 to 1970 mention quilt kits, 7 of them are found from 1958 to 1964, which is reflected in the peak time for kit quilts found in the NHQP.

Two magazine articles in the 1940s and two in the 1950s mention quilt kits, with six articles in the 1960s. The percentage of articles is approximately half the number of kit quilts found in NHQP (5.2% vs 11.5%). This difference is perhaps attributable to kits showing up in magazines as advertisements, which are not indexed. What it does show is the effectiveness of the advertising in the articles. In non-indexed publications such as *McCall's Needlework*, there were even more references to kits and patterns than was seen in the indexed magazines.

In the NHQP survey, the most popular style of kit quilt was embroidery only (36%), followed by quilts combining piecing, applique, and/or embroidery (29%) and applique quilts (22%) (see Table 17). Only one whole cloth kit quilt was found and 5 pieced kit quilts, though pieced kits are difficult to identify without documentation from the time period. Applique and embroidered quilts are found throughout the 35 year time period, though embroidered quilts' popularity peaks after 1965. The embroidered only
quilts, often composed of cross-stitched versions of traditional applique designs, were most heavily promoted in the 1960s, which is reflected in the NHQP quilts.

Table 17. NHQP Kit quilts by top type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top type</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Embroidered</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applique</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pieced</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole cloth</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What cannot be known from the quilts themselves without more extensive knowledge of quilt kits, is the level of modification made to suit individual tastes. In one example from interviews, Delores Vervey provides one quilter's approach to individualization, which shows how quilters took kit prescriptions and made them unique.

"I used to always use Mountain Mist quilt batting. And one of the patterns, oh, this was one of my very best quilts. I think it's called Morning Glory. It's appliqued. And I think it was a kit I sent away for. I got pink, blue, and lavender, and those were the flowers. It seems to me there were a lot of vines that I embroidered.

And then, because I like the insects, I went in with different fabrics and I sat and stitched several grasshoppers on there. And I embroidered butterflies. The patterns for the butterflies were off of wrapping paper. They looked like satin stitch butterflies, and so I satin stitched butterflies around in there. And I put in ladybugs that I embroidered. And then I quilted butterflies in there, and I said 'these are spirits of butterflies lost.' And that's one of my very very best quilts. It's actually wonderful, quite gorgeous. And it got a grand champion in the Nevada State Fair. It was one of my very very early ones."
The 1960s see the highest percentage of references to commercial kits of all decades, double that of the 1950s, triple that of the 1940s, and triple the actual number of mentions in either decade. Examples from the NHQP and from interviews show that quilters responded to commercial production of quilt kits, using them as a basis for further embellishment and design work. Had they followed instructions exactly as given, each quilt would have been identical. However, I was struck by the differences between individual quilts, even as they followed a pattern when I was looking at slides of the NHQP quilts. By personalizing the quilts through additional embroidery, changing setting squares, or using different quilting designs than were pre-printed on the fabric, women used commercial kits as a base for their own creativity rather than replicating the mass consumption look of purchased goods.

From examining quilts, and from interviews, it is clear that the standardization that use of commercial sources could have created did not necessarily occur. For many women, kits expanded their choices but did not limit them. Individual aesthetics are evident in the multiple variations, supporting Radway's view of how women used market sources to their own benefit (Radway 1991:184). It does not counter manufacturers' goals of creating profit (Story 1993:14), but women created contextualized meanings by using kits as a basis for further creative embellishment.
Linking commercialization and NHQP quilts

Looking at how the culture industry influenced purchases and the quilts that were made is one way to see how quilters utilized commercial production. NHQP quilts and interviews demonstrate an acceptance of commercial goods and services when they fit overall goals, but they did not dictate results. This contrasts to Horkheimer and Adorno's emphasis on the unidirectional influence of production on culture and supports the dialectical interrelationship and transformative possibilities Althusser and his followers proposed. Ang also noted how real practices like those of NHQP quilts demonstrated how one cannot determine an object's use from how it is produced (Story 1993:142).

Walter Benjamin found that differences in meaning between the producer and the consumer often exist because meaning cannot be pre-ordained (Story 1993:109). This view is a direct contrast to the hegemonic high art emphasis that focuses on the exchange value of art objects for collectors and is disdainful of objects that have some level of functionality. Meanings beyond economic considerations seen in quilting, such as emotions, intergenerational ties, authority, and symbolism also can not be addressed by a focus on production.

Other than with quilt kits, evidence of the influence of commercial production on NHQP quilts is mostly
speculative. But one can piece together information from
different sources to make some educated guesses. I will use
an example of ten quilts from the Nevada Heritage Quilt
Project. These are all attributed to Doris Sheppard, a
native Nevadan living in Winnemuca. Winnemuca is in north
central Nevada and had a 1990 population of about 6100 (Rand
McNally 2000:132). She began collecting patterns and
piecing her first blocks while she was in high school in the
late 1940s. Her first completed quilts, begun in the 1950s
and completed in the late 1960s, were made for her
daughters.

All ten of her quilts were quilted by the same quilter:
Malinda Miller in Baltic, Ohio. They are part of the 28% of
NHQP quilts between 1940 and 1975 that were quilted by
someone other than the top maker. There is no indication in
the survey data of how a woman in Winnemuca, Nevada got in
contact with a woman in Ohio. There may be an unknown
relationship through friends or family, or this may be the
result of contacts through batting companies. Stearns &
Foster, one of the primary batting manufacturers, is in
Ohio, and the batting companies advertised that they had
lists of quilters who would finish quilts. Baltic, Ohio, is
in Coshocton County, immediately south of Holmes County in
Amish country that has strong quilt affiliations. There is
no mention of Malinda Miller in the Ohio state quilt book,
but its archives might have more information, since Ohio, like Nevada, also had no cutoff date.

Two of the quilts were "ordered made by Doris Sheppard." The tops were pieced by Myrtle Raymore in San Diego, CA, in the early 1970s, and were, again, quilted by Malinda Miller in Ohio. These quilts demonstrate an interstate network of quilters, quilt professionals providing services, and possible interconnections with the textile industry.

While the 1950s and 1960s have been assumed to be a time of declining interest and skill in quiltmaking, the patterns of some of Doris Sheppard's quilts also show the ways quilters used commercial sources but made them uniquely theirs. One quilt is a copy of a Florence Peto applique quilt, which she enlarged from a graphed pattern in *Woman's Day* magazine to its full size. Another quilt's documentation includes a fan pattern cut from a newspaper. These are the squares she began in the 1940s, but rather than following the suggested layout of individual squares set on point, she created undulating, nested paths called Mohawk Trail. Her quilts demonstrate an adventurous, multi-skilled quilter willing to make unusual designs from standard patterns, and tackle replicas of intricate 1930s applique. She took the patterns and made them her own.

While quilters had the possibility of using materials already available in the home and using their own labor
only, many chose to buy at least some fabric or batting. Magazine articles promoted a variety of goods and services to speed or simplify production or substitute paid labor for home labor. While the most prominent type of references differed between decades, the rate of references remained relatively constant.

Commercial production replaced war production after WWII. While magazine articles in the 1950s celebrated the abundance of goods available, by the 1960s such abundance was assumed. In the 1940s and 1950s, commercial patterns were the most common commercial reference, while brand name usage climbed steadily until it was the most common reference in the 1960s.

In the 1950s, readymades (finished goods) and patterns were the most frequent commercial references. Using purchased good or trims as a shortcut seems to be related to the emphasis on speed and simplicity, which peaked from 1955 to 1964. Another way of simplifying construction was quilt kits, which are found in the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project most commonly for the same time period, though mentioned most frequently in magazine articles in the 1960s. Women used kits as the base for further modification to individualize their quilts. Even beginning with commercial patterns or kits, many quilters expanded from rote copying to invest their quilts with their personal aesthetic.
The expansion of the consumer economy is readily apparent in the changes in commercial references seen from 1940 to 1970. Though the percentage of references remained relatively constant, they changed from emphasizing commercial patterns and professional quilters to emphasizing brand names, kits and readymades. These expanded quilters' choices, without eliminating more traditional sources or designs, unlike Horkheimer and Adorno's pessimistic predictions (1993:40). Quilters accepted commercial production as it furthered their own perceptions and goals. They emphasized use value while altering the manufacturers' intended product through personalization (Story 1993:42). By adding value through time, materials and creativity, women reinforced their roles as producers rather than being only consumers.

Hegemonic norms and the place of quilting in American society

Quilts are a common part of everyday life for many people, and infuse design, media and ideology to a degree that is often surprising to those who become sensitized to it. "Quilts are everywhere!" is feedback I often encounter after talking to a group about my research.

Quilts themselves are texts tied to the multiple meanings and interpretations quilts have within American culture. Those meanings are neither fixed, coherent, nor
unified, as researchers in needlework have documented at least back to the 17th century (Parker 1984:103). Though heavily influenced by media and cultural assumptions of the meaning of quilts, quilters accept, reject, or reinterpret those cultural values. These cultural texts were used by magazines in their role as purveyors of American taste to reflect dominant views of quilting.

In this section, I use Gramsci's view of hegemony as a way of defining a status quo where dominant ideologies appear permanent, natural, outside history, and beyond particular interests. Questions about that status quo potentially bring about social change. Without overtly declaring it, an authority and those who are expected to accept that authority are defined. In this study, I was interested in both quantitative and qualitative changes in authority and any articles that might question the status quo.

The hegemonic view of quilting from 1940 to 1970 focused on the nostalgia of the nineteenth century quilting bee with its associations of community, pioneer life, and creating beauty from scraps. The status quo view of quilts was that they were utilitarian home decor (Ickis 1949:viii) that was neither art nor craft, nor influenced by commercial trends. Quilts were one way women enacted their role as home decorators and household managers.
In the first part of this section, I examine changes in who is considered an authority able to make pronouncements about the state of quilting. In the second part, I examine the kinds of articles that question the status quo.

**Designers, experts, and professionalization**

One way to examine hegemonic relationships is to look at who was recognized as an authority and how that authority was wielded. Here, I use quilting as a case study of changes in perception and the use of authority. "Post war America was the era of the expert," (May 1988:26) which affected both public and private spheres of life. Based on May and others (Bell 1961:52, Jezer 1982:111), I expected to see an increase in references to authority after World War II and a decline in references during the antiauthoritarian 1960s. Instead, though the dominant type of authority changed in each decade, overall use began to decline the 1950s, not the 1960s.

Who was presented as an authority about what women should buy, how they should make their quilts and which trends and events were important? I categorized the authorities relied on in magazines as quilt experts, museums or museum professionals, artists or art training, designers and decorators, editors or a magazine's authority (such as "home editors" or the Good Housekeeping Institute), stores, and other. Sometimes authority was referenced indirectly,
such as the designs of an interior decorator for various Hollywood stars, where both the authority of professional decorators and the star as fashion leader were used. Some of the major authorities of the current revival, such as quilt teachers and quilt books, are virtually absent. Overall, one can see how the use of authority declined except for the 1970s. In the 1940s, 85% of articles referenced some form of authority, which declined to 74% in the 1950s, 63% in the 1960s, then increased to 71% in the early 1970s.

In the 1940s, there was more use of multiple authorities in a single article. It is the only decade when the number of references actually exceeds the number of articles in some years. For the decade as a whole, the greatest number of references are to noted quilt experts (29%) followed by museums (22%), designers (16%), "other" (16%), and magazines (15%).

Prior to and during WWII, the references to authority are diffuse and spread over many different types, the largest category being "other" (29%), followed by quilt experts (25%). The "other" category includes everyone from WPA supervisors to pageant writers to celebrities. There is a dramatic drop in this "other" category after the war.

There are actually the same number of references from 1940 to 1945 as there are for 1946 to 1949, but after the war, quilts experts and museums account for 61% of all
references to authority, which reflects the large number of articles on museum exhibits. One authority in particular was a major influence during this time. Florence Peto, a leader in valorizing quilts as both aesthetic and historic artifacts, was curator for a number of exhibits as well as a noted writer, researcher, speaker and collector.

In the 1950s, authority use is more evenly spread between four categories, which account for 86% of all references. Designers and editors/magazines accounted for 24% each of the kinds of authority references, closely followed by museums at 21%. The last category that was more than 10% of references was quilt experts, who comprised 17% of references.

This decade showed the greatest use of magazines and editors as authorities, since they were only 14% of references in the 1940s and 13% in the 1960s. This seems to reflect the emphasis on consumption that characterized the 1950s (May 1988:157) and the lead role magazines took as purveyors of taste and product availability. The scientific emphasis can be seen in the use of magazine sponsored institutes and testing laboratories.

The professionalization of home decorating is seen in the increasing use of designers for creating quilt patterns and room decor for the magazine layout. Many of the articles describe how a woman may save money, thus fulfilling one of her expected roles as homemaker, by doing
the work at home rather than hiring a designer or interior decorator to help.

In the 1960s, designers are the most frequent authority reference at 30% of the total, which is higher than both the 1940s and 1950s. This is part of the increasing art emphasis in the 1960s, a blurring of the lines between high art and the decorative arts, and the greater use of both art and craft references. Designers and art references together constituted 48% of authority references in the 1960s.

The second highest authority referenced in the 1960s was museums and/or museum professionals (28%). Quilts described as both fine and decorative art were found in both art and history museums. Quilts and artifacts using quilt techniques were described in equal proportions as historic and contemporary. Folk art and ethnic art exhibits were of both contemporary and antique artifacts as well.

Artist references are less than 10% of overall authority references for the time period as a whole. The most notable change in the 1960s is the increased references to artists and writers with art training or jobs as art teachers. These references constitute 18% of the overall authority usage in the 1960s, while 70% of all references to artists are in this decade. This increase is partially because magazines switched from using nameless magazine staff to using individual designers and artists. Their authority stemmed from their training and jobs rather than
the prestige of the magazine itself. This change makes quilting more art-like. It is analogous to the use of named artists instead of anonymous workshops (Jones in Dewhurst et al 1979:xiii). This distinction has been one way craft has been differentiated from art since the Renaissance.

Quilt experts account for 13% of references to authority in the 1960s, which is the lowest usage of quilt experts in any decade. Quilt experts steadily declined in usage as authorities from the 1940s to 1960s. Magazine editors and 'institutes' also account for 13% of authority references in the 1960s. This is nearly the same as in the 1940s (15%) and well below the 1950s (24%). Magazines jumped into prominence as an authority during the 1950s, then plummeted below 1940s levels.

From the 1940s to the 1960s, authority use in magazines became more focused in fewer categories, and overall use declined. I expected to see an increase in references to authority in the 1950s with the emphasis on the expert referenced in numerous books about that decade (Bell 1961, Jezer 1982, May 1988) followed by a decline in the "rebellious 1960s." While the 1950s do reflect the impact of institutional and commercial references by having magazines as the most frequent type of authority referenced, the percentage of authority references is intermediate between the 1940s and the 1960s.
Though museums and museum professionals were consistently 20 to 22% of authority references from 1940 to 1970, the most frequent authority referenced varied by decade from quilt experts in the 1940s, magazines themselves in the 1950s and designers in the 1960s. In the 1940s and 1960s, expertise was based on personal merit, while corporate merit was emphasized in the 1950s. In the 1940s, quilt experts used a traditional expertise based on knowledge of history, quilt techniques and existing quilt design while the 1960s designer's expertise was derived from art training and the use of innovation. The 1950s use of magazines, and especially the testing laboratories and consumer institutes, reflects that decade's focus on scientific experts and embracing consumer culture.

My research demonstrates a pattern that fits neither the historical experts nor the 'experts on experts' (Haskell 1984, Friedson 1984, Larson 1984). It shows a decrease in expertise, even in the 1950s, and even more use of experts in the early 1970s than in the previous 30 years.

Overall, the use of authority references declined from 1940 to 1970 and became more concentrated in fewer areas. The dominant authority in each decade indicated a switch from traditional to corporate to art based authority. This is another area that shows how quilts were increasingly referenced within an art framework with lessened ties to history.
"Reading the quilt": negotiations of hegemony

Looking at authority references is one way to examine how publications sought to influence quilters. Another way is to examine articles for their acceptance or rejection of hegemonic norms. The dominant reading is the culturally legitimized, taken for granted meaning within the social order. Negotiated meanings accept the dominant codes for restricted, situated conditions yet make their own ground rules by allowing for multiple contradictions (Denzin 1992:150). Oppositional readings aim to subvert the hegemonic meanings by exposing the ideological and political meanings, especially those which hide or displace racial, class, ethnic and gender biases. By illuminating the dominant code and its workings, they create spaces for a public voice (Denzin 1992:151).

Quilts were most often seen as supporting the status quo, if reasons were considered at all. Given the paucity of articles that questioned the status quo in any form, I did not try to separate them into negotiated or oppositional categories. Magazine articles were considered to take a negotiated stance to mainstream concepts of quilting if they questioned its craft vs. art status, the role of creativity, handicrafts vs. mass production, or the use of new technologies. During the 1940s and 1950s, about 10% of articles questioned hegemonic norms. In the 1960s, 20% took

256
a negotiated stance, and almost 65% of articles in 1970 and 1971 questioned the status quo.

Of 65 articles in the 1940s, six took some form of nonstandard approach, all found in either antiques, collector, or art magazines. Four articles focused on antique rarities or quilts that were "tasteless, curious, but not aesthetically pleasing" (American Collector March 1948:7). They all described the rarity of individual quilts and valued them for the way they broke from conventional expectations. The other two articles reviewed the 1946 gallery exhibit of quilts by Ethel Beam. Her quilts were described as a "new art form" whose "... texture and choice of their contrasting patterned linings makes them genuine works of art" (Art News 1946:41). In an almost oxymoronic statement at the time, they were seen as "... sophisticated quilts conceived as pictures in modern idiom, and executed with considerable art skill" (Art Digest Sept. 1946:12). The quality of design, workmanship, and departure from expected quilt styles forced the writers to consider Beam's quilts as art even as they still referred to them as appliqued bedspreads. The art analogies of Beam's quilts were in some ways the exception that proved the rule of the decorative nature of women's art that could not aspire to true "art" (Parker and Pollock 1981:67).

In the 1950s, four of 46 articles questioned the mainstream. These were scattered among art, home, and
general magazines, but, unlike the 1940s, not antique/collectors magazines. Two contrasted handwork and scrap usage without condemning mass production. They offered new designs and styles for quilts to fit in the "Machine Age." Two articles saw quilts as part of a new art movement of textiles as art, thus questioning the assumed position of quilts as outside the world of high art.

In the 1960s, 13 of 65 articles (20%) saw quilts as negotiating standard assumptions while the variety of questioning expanded also. Four saw quilts as a new art medium. Two described the need for quilt design to adapt to the new social circumstances of a new age. Two questioned the assumed superiority of machine made goods and the loss of emotional connection to household goods when purchased rather than made at home. Three examined how ethnic quilting traditions (Cuna molas and Hawaiian quilts) fit into modern design. Their abstract yet fluid applique was perceived to be more like decorative art than was the geometry of patchwork, which contrasted to the emphasis on patchwork in the 1970s. Two articles looked at an idiosyncratic English quilter as "mystical" (Time June 2, 1967) and "visionary" (Life Aug 18, 1967). Five of 13 articles were in art magazines, two were in textile industry magazines, four were in general magazines and two were in home magazines. No articles questioning the status quo appeared in antique/collector or women's magazines, which
represented the most traditional viewpoint towards quilts. Except in the 1940s, collector/antique magazines focused on spectacular but conventional quilts.

Nine of 14 articles written in 1970 and 1971 questioned the status quo. Three related quilts to art, three related quilts to popular culture, and three saw new markets, materials and reasons for quilting. One article each appeared in art magazines, antiques magazines, and textile industry magazines, and six appeared in magazines aimed at the general public. Again, no articles questioning the status quo appeared in women's magazines, and none in home magazines. Other than an article in Parents magazine proposing novel uses and novel materials for quilts, none of the articles questioning the status quo were in magazines primarily aimed at women.

A number of these articles grappled with the use of a traditional craft technique in a world characterized as modern and machine driven. Some saw quilts as a way of "softening the edges" and bringing a human made factor into the machine age. Some embraced new technology and the changes they saw necessary to blend craft techniques and mass production (American Fabrics Winter 1964/65:92). This blending of views of individual and mass production was a factor in the blurring of distinctions between art and craft as both production techniques and mediums were questioned and expanded. The textile industry strove for more "craft-
like" production, while the art world incorporated industrial products into art. Quilters were encouraged to use commercial products such as iron-on tape, purchased applique and trims, many identified by brand name, to produce a "home-made" object.

The percentage of magazine articles questioning the assumptions about quilting doubled in the 1960s and were six times 1940s and 1950s levels for the early 1970s. While articles began considering quilts as art in the 1950s as well as questioning their craft status, this was not overtly associated with gender until 1971. The earliest articles blurring the art/craft dichotomy were in 1950s art magazines. Textile industry journals began to make this new association in the 1960s, and general interest magazines picked it up in the 1970s. Of 34 articles from 1940 to 1971 that questioned the status quo, not a single women's magazine published such an article, though three articles in home magazines and one in a general magazine aimed primarily at women did so. Women's magazines were entirely absent from these discussions, substantiating Friedan's claim of magazines as a repressive force for women (Meyerowitz 1994:231). Less than 12% of such articles appeared in magazines marketed to women; such reconsiderations were overtly aimed at either artists or the general public. The more gender neutral nature of both of these magazine types meant there may have been wider acceptance for quilts
bucking the status quo in art and general audiences. However, women did not find such support in magazines written for them.

In general, there was less support for quilting in women's magazines in comparison to other magazine genre even without specifically looking at questioning of the status quo. There were some notable exceptions, based on individual editors such as Vera Guild at Good Housekeeping, Dorothy Brightbill at American Home, and Roxa Wright at Woman's Day. In contrast to women's magazine, there was support for quilting in home magazines, though quilting was seen only as a home decorating option.

The percentage of articles from 1940 to 1970 (75%) that reference some form of authority should be contrasted to the small percentage (14%) that took any type of negotiated stance. Through time, the reduced references to authority and the increased questioning of the status quo combined to create a new context of innovation and personal authority for quilters. Writers like Jean Ray Laury (1966:11) epitomized this view of personal authority by advocating that women create their own designs, reject overused traditional patterns like Sunbonnet Sue and simultaneously use and modify the bounty of post war consumer production to make personal statements. Such views made the personal political by tying quiltmaking to questioning a status quo.
that basked in mass production and a strict delineation of art and craft.

Summary

From 1940 to 1970, quilting became decidedly more related to the world of high art. Beginning in the 1950s, textiles were more widely recognized as a new medium in which to create art which magazine article writers referred to in advocating quilt techniques. This art connection became especially noticeable in the 1960s for school art classes where textiles became an acceptable medium, yet retained approachability and familiarity. Magazines proposed fewer functional quilts and more art-like wallhangings that did not need to meet use criteria.

Links to folk art and ethnic art also made quilts a more acceptable art medium. While Hawaiian quilting had been recognized as a separate but related form of quilting since the early 1900s, the 1960s brought recognition of more unusual applications of quilt techniques as textile industry writers and museum exhibits explored the designs of Cuna appliqued blouse panels. In the 1970s, this interest in ethnic quilt techniques expanded to include Amish, Afghan, Tibetan and other traditions.

By the 1960s, quilting was less often seen as part of women's role as home decorator to create a useful product and more as a way to expand personal expression and to work
creatively. Quilting as a mode of personal expression in itself represented a new way of viewing women's activities. Quilts became important for how a woman felt about herself from making them. Quilts were not consciously tied to the women's movement in the 1960s, nor were considerations of gender an overt factor in quilts as art before the early 1970s.

Commercial production replaced war production and abundance replaced scarcity after the end of World War II. Commercial production was widely hailed in the 1950s, but as it became an assumed part of everyday life in the 1960s, a few writers began to question what was lost in a home saturated in manufactured goods.

The commercial influence on quilts can be seen in how magazines recommended patterns, kits, brand names, stores, professional quilters, and using "streamlined" methods to produce quilts. The types of commercial references became more diffuse over time, even though the number of references is about the same in all three decades. Thus commercialization's impact insinuated itself in more ways. One example of how women personalized home environments while utilizing the bounty of mass production can be seen in the use of quilt kits. By adding embroidery, altering suggestedquilting, and changing quilt settings, women made their own versions that became unique statements of personal
aesthetics, much as cooks individualized recipes by changing or adding ingredients.

Another part of the impact of commercialization can be seen in changes in who magazine articles referenced as authorities. Authority references declined in number and became concentrated in fewer categories from 1940 to 1970. In the 1940s, quilt experts were the most frequently cited authority in magazines, in the 1960s, designers were the most common reference. While both used individual authority and personal expertise, quilt experts combined both a knowledge of quilt history and collecting antiques with translating those designs for contemporary quilters. Designers in the 1960s were creating new patterns with little reference to historic design.

In the 1950s, the most common authority reference was magazines themselves, which emphasized corporate affiliation rather than the individuals who provided that knowledge. Beyond their commercial and institutional nature, the scientific emphasis is seen in magazine sponsored testing laboratories and consumer institutes. The dominant authority changed from being based in traditional quilt knowledge in the 1940s, to corporate based in the 1950s, and art based in the 1960s. This is more evidence of the growing consideration of quilting as art.

Most magazine articles accepted the status quo of quilting as home decoration, and thus part of women's...
traditional domestic sphere of household management. In the 1940s and 1950s, about 10% of articles looked even slightly askance at hegemonic norms. The focus of such articles in the 1940s was on antique quilts considered aberrations or outside aesthetic norms. In the 1950s, articles tied quilts into the new machine age or to the expanding usage of textiles in the fine arts.

The number of nonhegemonic oriented quilt articles grew to 20% of articles in the 1960s and 64% in the early 1970s. The number of ways of questioning hegemonic norms also increased. Quilting was linked to popular culture, new markets, new materials and questioned the assumed superiority of manufactured goods. Of the 34 articles from 1940 to 1971 that questioned the status quo, none were found in women's magazines, three in home magazines and only one in a general magazine primarily aimed at women. Only later in the 1970s did women's magazines step out from their conservative stance that viewed quilts and quilters as part of women's sphere in the home. Quilt articles in women's magazines were eventually affected by the winds of change blowing all around them (Linden-Ward and Green 1993:xiii).

By the early 1970s, nearly twenty years of reconsidering textiles as a fine art medium had passed. Expanded interest in quilt techniques found in folk art, ethnic art, clothing embellishments, and wall hangings broke down traditional hierarchies of art and craft. Magazine
articles cited artists and designers most frequently as
authority figures, while over 60% of early 1970s articles
took some form of oppositional stance to common assumptions
about quilting. While articles in the 1950s celebrated the
abundance of commercialization, by the 1960s they began
questioning what was lost when mass produced items replaced
handmade goods. The foment of the women's movement along
with all these changes were brought together in reviews of
the Whitney Museum's 1971 quilt exhibit. The following
quotes from a review in Craft Horizon illustrate how they
were all woven together.

". . . (T)he sociological imagination is stirred in
shame by the thought of the stintless spirit of the
women. . . . Here is a spirit in answer to Rimbaud's
almost haughty call for women to be poets. They
already were, as Elaine de Kooning with Rosalynn
Drexler pointed out in Art News' "Women Issue" last
year. . . . We have been irresolute too long on this
"woman" question, and the deep game and cross-purposes
of these quilts make the old hierarchies and rejections
ridiculous. . . . we no longer must consent to the
agreeable obscurity of woman-as-artist. Here is woman,
in the luminous wounds of these quilts" (Shapiro
1971:42-44).
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

This dissertation asked how the portrayals of quilting between 1945 and 1970 reflected the transformation of women's roles within the family, especially from producer to consumer and whether women resisted or negotiated these roles. In order to answer this question, I asked the following specific questions. Did quilting cease? What was the character of quilt production between 1945 and 1970? How did quilting reflect women's roles in the family? What was the relationship between quilting and art? How did mass production, commercialization and consumerism impact the social relations of quilting?

I found that quilting between 1940 and 1975 did not disappear, but continued to exist. The nature of quilting during this time reflected the final stages of a transformation of women's roles from producer to consumer. Importantly, while the portrayal of women's domestic roles in quilting magazines reflected a shift from quilting as a domestic function to almost superfluous to women's roles in the home, women's actual production resisted this, and combined form and function in unique ways to rewrite their...
tasks of domestic production. I also provide an overall evaluation of the research and look at possible future research directions.

Summary analysis

This section provides an overview of the four main themes of the research. 1) How many and what kind of quilts were produced? How was quilting characterized in popular magazines? My research found an ongoing tradition from 1945 to 1975 that included new developments rather than the slump in interest described by previous researchers. 2) How did women use quilting to manage their multiple roles and the changes in those roles? Quilting moved from focusing on use value to being a means of personal expression. 3) What was the relationship of quilting to art? Quilts became more accepted as a kind of art through increased associations with creativity, folk, ethnic, high art and craft. 4) How did the postwar consumer boom alter quilt production and concepts about quilting's place in American society? Mass production provided short cut production steps for quilts. Women regarded industrial production as one of many choices for home decoration, but resisted the overwhelming impact of mass consumption by using quilts to retain their position as producers.
Did quilting nearly cease between 1945 to 1970?

While quilting has been seen as languishing between the revivals of the 1930s and 1970s, I found an ongoing tradition that incorporated changing commercial production and a move towards quilts as an art form rather than just home decor. From the number of quilts documented in the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project and the number of magazine articles published, I do not see evidence of any overall major decline in quilting from the 1940s through the early 1970s. As Florence Peto, a noted quilt expert, wrote in 1967, "The work on some of the antique pieces will never be duplicated but it is far from a 'lost art.' 'Lost art of quilting' -- indeed-- there is excellent work being done commercially and privately even by myself, and I've a bureau drawer full of ribbons to prove it" (Gross 1994:175).

There was an increasing number of quilts for each decade from 1940 to 1970 in the NHQP. The percentages suggest quilt production was 74% of totals from the previous 30 years (Feazell 1995:115), but hardly a cessation as Bernick (1998:138) described it. It is possible that Nevada's pattern is unique, as there are not enough state surveys for comparison, though magazine articles and books of the same period argue against this.

The 1940s to 1960s did not show a decline in the number of magazine articles in comparison to the 1930s. Articles
and magazines from 1940 through the 1970s that I analyzed describe quilting as a 19th century phenomenon. Rather than positing the 1950s and 1960s as a loss from the 1930s revival, they compared quilting at the time to an unattainable 19th century ideal and saw a steady decrease in both the quality and quantity of quilting ever since the Civil War.

There was no sign of a cessation, or even significant slowing of quilting articles. While there was a dip in the number of quilt articles in the 1950s, it is primarily in the last three years of the decade. Even so, the overall number of articles surpassed that of the 1930s, independent of the number of magazines indexed. It was followed by a notable, though temporary, increase in articles from 1962 to 1965, then by a huge increase in the number of articles in the 1970s.

What was the nature of interest in quilting during this time?

There are time periods when the magazine articles focused on each individual quilt technique. Quilting was most prominent in the late 1940s to early 1950s and applique in the 1960s. While the majority of NHQP quilts were constructed of patchwork throughout the time period, patchwork was not the most frequent technique mentioned in magazines until the 1970s. These fluctuations are only visible from the magazine article content analysis. They

270
demonstrate the continuing use of quilt techniques for household goods other than bed quilts. By focusing on technique, I found more quilting activity and ways quilt techniques were utilized than I would have by analyzing only magazine articles with expected end products like bed quilts. Previous research that has treated quilting as an overall activity has missed the changes in technique presentation and expanded end products.

In reality, the amount and quality of quilting activity from 1940 to 1970 was significantly more than what the articles of the time and quilt historians since then have described. Quilting shifted from use production to creative expression. There were changes in reasons for quilting, a broadening of the types of items made, changes in connections to history and art, and changes in the fabrics used.

Writers as late as the 1970s were as likely to characterize quilting as being a dying art as being in revival. It was neither; it continued the ongoing tradition. Quilt scholars should reframe the way they think about quilting to divest themselves of the dichotomous approach that currently prevails. The results of my research show quilting to be more dependent on outside social trends such as considerations of textiles as art and the acceptance or rejection of commercial influences than this typification allows.
Quilting has reflected current events since abolitionists in the 1840s. The frequency of magazine articles reflects the impact of events, especially museum exhibits, for emphasizing the importance of quilting. There were 8 articles on museum and gallery exhibits in the 1940s, 3 in the 1950s, 4 in the 1960s, and 3 from 1970 to 1971. Magazines influenced each other, discerning and following trends, such as the *Time* article on English quilter Elizabeth Allen in June 1967, whom *Life* featured in August 1967. Thus some of the increases in article frequency were self perpetuating.

Articles in the 1940s emphasized the Colonial Revival and ties to history as major reasons why women should quilt. The late 1950s drop in article frequency seems to be linked to the lack of decorating or social trends to which to connect quilting, which is visible even without the impact of *Antiques* being dropped from the *Art Index*. No new historic themes replaced the Colonial Revival, and little encouragement of creativity or use of quilt techniques in the classroom had yet appeared. In the 1960s, personal expression, a greater emphasis on quilts as art, and more articles on ethnic quilting provided new justifications for quilting. Unlike Becker's assumptions of folk art as static and timeless (Becker 1984:40), quilting's popularity in magazines has clearly been dependent on outside social and decorating trends.
Though the number of magazine articles dropped in the late 1950s, the number of quilts recorded in the NHQP did not. Just as we must adjust our understanding of this "low point" in quilting by the evidence put forward in this research, the conflicting numbers between NHQP and the magazine articles mean we cannot unequivocally assume any direct or lasting influence on quilters from the media's evaluation of their art.

However, it is clear that quilting's connection to print media since 1970 has no historic precedent. A 1985 questionnaire in Quilter's Newsletter Magazine asked women what they felt were the notable characteristics of the current revival. They identified affluence, creativity, making personal statements and quilters' self-confidence as key trends. The other change they noted was the large volume of new magazines and books then available on quilting (Leman and Shirer 1985:48). Some of these changes began in the 1950s and were a dominant part of the discourse in magazine articles by the 1960s.

The description of revivals and low points developed by quilt researchers since the 1980s are not reflected in assessments of quilting's popularity from 1940 to 1970. While the number of quilts documented by the NHQP from 1940 to 1970 was about 75% of the rate of the 1920s and 1930s, there were as many magazine articles published in the 1950s as the 1930s. Significantly more articles were published in
the 1940s and 1960s than the 1930s. There is no clear pattern of a decline in quilting "between the revivals," both because there is conflicting evidence of a drop off between articles and NHQP data and because traits associated with quilting in the 1980s were already prominent by the 1960s.

Women's roles and quilting

How did quilting reflect portrayals of women's appropriate roles in the family? From 1940 to 1970, while women's lives continued to be focused on home and family, there was a growing acceptance and expectation that they were individuals with desires and needs of their own. In interviews and magazine articles, women followed the traditional role of homemaker from the 1940s through the 1960s, though a few women worked outside the home in the later 1960s. There is no return to domesticity after World War II in the magazine articles; women were always posited as homemakers because a focus on home was so often evoked as the justification for quilting. There were changes in consciousness and thought frameworks in the 1960s without any actual impact on women's work status.

Like Linden-Ward and Green, I also see the 1960s laying the mental and physical groundwork for the major changes in women's lives in the 1970s. For most women, life focused on home and family, continuing the ideal of 1950s domesticity when few women worked outside the home. Changes in the
1960s are subtle in comparison to those of the 1970s. However, the 1960s differ more from the 1950s than the 1950s differ from the 1940s.

The view of how women could fulfill their roles as household managers dealing with material resources changed from making do in light of wartime shortages during WWII to being a savvy consumer in postwar abundance. By the 1960s, the importance of women being thrifty and carefully managing their time also dropped significantly. In the 1940s and 1950s, magazine articles emphasized women's roles as home decorators. In the 1960s, there is more emphasis on personal expression. Quilting became part of this changing view of women's activities from focusing on fulfilling others' needs to realizing the importance of self fulfillment.

Time consciousness, time management, and time availability were part of women's roles as household managers. Women needed not only a room of their own but time of their own for creativity. Women found time and space for their own needs by judiciously balancing expenditures, family needs, and available scraps of time. In interviews, some women found time by combining socializing and quilting, while others set aside quilting for a number of years when other needs seemed more pressing. The drive to create seemed to force some women to make space for quilting. Others, like Mary Alice Curry, transformed
their original intention for making a quilt to adapt to changing circumstances.

In magazine articles, the views of time use were more diffuse in the 1940s than in the 1950s and 1960s. It is one of multiple areas where magazine articles used more standardized themes in later decades. Writers placed less emphasis on justifying the time women spent on creative pursuits. In the 1960s, writers valued personal time and personal goals separate from women's family roles. I see this as the beginnings of a feminist consciousness as women gave themselves permission to use time for creativity and personal expression. An early stage of the women's movement's emphasis on individuality can be seen in the use of named designers (usually women). Valuing personal needs and desires is evident in the increased questioning of the status quo. Such views followed the path of individual transformation, one which few writers saw as common to all women, let alone tied to any broader women's movement. However, the justification of 'personal expression' was also used by manufacturers as a marketing tool to make purchasing goods seem creative.

One clear demographic pattern in the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project is a disproportionate number of Mormon quilts for the state population. Nevada's quilt production does not reflect the expected slump in interest posited by previous quilt researchers. The ongoing importance of
quilting to the Mormon community seems to have contributed to its ongoing popularity. From the project data and from interviews, Mormon quilters were important in keeping quilting a vibrant tradition in Nevada for Mormons and non-Mormons alike. Not only did they provide a disproportionate number of quilts, but Mormon women's quilt groups included non-Mormons as community outreach. At the same time, there was little ethnic variation in the project data, with very few Native American quilts and no Hispanic or African American quilts represented. These major segments of Nevada's population were overlooked in the survey process, and would probably change some perspectives on Nevada quilting.

Given the number of NHQP quilts produced by groups, group membership seemed to encourage quilt production while building community. Throughout the 30 year time period, quilts were a way for women to fulfill their roles as communicators across generations and between friends and family. Through their quilts, women gave the gift of time as well as something of material value. Quilts demonstrated the ongoing value of relationships and the importance of use value more than exchange value, though quilts were never totally lacking in either.

Quilting was one way women expanded personal authority, increased ties to their community and increased the variety of relationships in their lives. Women used quilts to
demonstrate their creativity to themselves and to carve personal time and space, but not to change their personal situation or the larger society. Not until the late 1960s are there examples like the Hudson River quilt concerning the river's ecology that reflect larger cultural concerns as temperance or abolition quilts did in the 1800s. Where quilt professionals were involved as writers and designers and in VISTA sponsored quilt groups, there is economic empowerment in addition to personal transformation. In interviews, quilts were seen as wholly domestic, but quilt practices like informal quilt groups were also seen as a way of overcoming suburban isolation. Through quilt groups, women received support and empowerment in addition to physical help with quilting.

Group work was mentioned less frequently in the 1960s than before. The loss of group connections may be one reason quilt researchers saw a slump in interest even though quilt production continued unabated. The deemphasis of the technique of quilting, where most traditional groups were involved, and increased emphasis on the individual as artist may have both contributed to this change.

Formal organizations like homemakers clubs and church groups were an intentional way of building community, besides their traditional fundraising function. The value of both of these aspects of traditional groups has been underestimated in cultural studies' theoretical assumptions.
Church groups' fundraising efforts since the mid-1800s have supported social causes like soldiers aid, abolition, and temperance through quilting. Building community and providing a forum for new ideas also dates to the nineteenth century, since Susan B. Anthony's first speech on suffrage was to a church quilt group (Mainardi 1982:342). Like consciousness raising in the 1960s and 1970s that came through group discussion, quilting groups provided socially acceptable places for free ranging discussion.

From 1940 to 1970, women's roles focused less on others and expanded to include more self fulfilling activities. This valorization of creative endeavors and personal expression came earlier than I had expected from quilting research done since 1970. While not linked to the women's movement until 1971, the magazine articles show how perceptions changed to value women as individuals with desires and needs of their own.

Quilts and Art

How were quilts characterized in relation to art? Quilts have been linked to the greater acceptance of textiles as a high art medium since the 1950s. Reviews of quilt exhibits in magazine articles from the 1940s on mix views of quilts as high art, as decorative art and as craft. Quilting spanned all levels of this hierarchy. By not being easily classified, a window of opportunity opened for quilts to be more seriously considered as art.
One reason quilts were more frequently seen as an art form was the way quilters and textile artists adapted traditional styles for a perceived new machine age where traditional design and construction methods no longer seemed appropriate. By using limited color palettes, simplifying and enlarging designs to emphasize their geometric, graphic features, designers distanced quilt designs from the fussy, folksy patterns of the 1930s like Double Wedding Ring and Dresden Plate that people associated with quilts. These new patterns recommended strong color contrasts rather than the pastels of the 1930s and angular rather than curvilinear designs. The emphasis on graphics found in magazine articles in the 1950s foreshadows the approach from the 1971 Whitney exhibit's catalog that

"the finely realized geometry of the pieced quilt, coupled with this sophisticated sense for the possibilities of color and form, produced some works which mirror in startling ways contemporary painting trends" (Holstein 1972:13).

In the 1960s, some writers like Jean Ray Laury viewed quilts as art, yet continued to also value everyday living. Quilting both helped and was helped by the growing emphasis on everyday life found in art and the social sciences. Laury is one example of writers who refused to accept the hegemonic separation of emotional content, historical situatedness, and art. Interviews and the NHQP documents demonstrate how women sought to blend aesthetic and emotional work. Where quilts remained connected to their
original producers and receivers, they retained both their aesthetic and emotional value. In contrast, in order to boost acceptance in the world of high art, collector/experts like Jonathan Holstein and Gail Van der Hoof in their 1971 Whitney exhibit chose to emphasize aesthetic content and see quilts as anonymous folk art, even though it meant ignoring known data about quilters, provenance and meaning. These contrasting views stem from the different audiences writers appealed to: quilters for Laury, art critics for Holstein. Both used the rubric of "art" to justify a changed view of quilts, but only Laury also sought to change the view of quilters.

Articles and books showed an increased emphasis on the aesthetic component of quilts and on quilts as a form of creative expression in the 1960s. Magazine articles named their pattern designers and emphasized their art backgrounds. Quilts as wallhangings were freed from considerations of wear, usage and washing. They therefore could incorporate novel methods like gluing and materials such as burlap that were not functional for bed quilts. The spate of articles about school art classes using applique for wallhangings further connected quilt techniques to the high art concept of art as nonfunctional while emphasizing their visual similarity to paintings. By using glue in lieu of sewing, it removed gendered associations and increased applique wallhangings' similarity to collage. These
increased aesthetic references placed quilts and quilt techniques more firmly within the sphere of art.

Though the emphasis on creativity and innovation in magazines increased in the 1960s, the vast majority of quilts registered in the NHQP archives used traditional designs and patterns. However, the type, patterns and colors of fabrics used changed with market availability. Novel products such as wallhangings, curtains, or footstools are not registered in the quilt project, thus skewing direct comparisons of actual production and magazine articles.

Folk arts and decorative arts were in a dialectical relationship to high art and popular culture. Folk art references linked quilting to tradition, continuity, rural hinterlands, and history. As folk art, quilting was not free from commercial design influences as Becker assumed. Rather, the public sphere of fabrics, patterns, magazine articles, and brand names were deeply intertwined with the practice of quilting. Women treated commercial sources as an extension of their range of choices.

The applique traditions of Hawaiian quilting and Cuna molas tied quilting to ethnic art. The number of ethnic traditions referenced expanded dramatically after 1970, after the time period of my study. Folk art was most commonly referenced in the 1940s and ethnic art in the 1960s. Both a more international interest and influence and a contemporary rather than an historical approach also began
in the 1960s. The historical emphasis of the Colonial Revival was replaced by contemporary views of quilts as art.

The impact of increased interest in ethnic textiles and countercultural clothing embellishment has been associated with the quilt revival of the 1970s. However magazine articles did not relate them to quilt techniques until the very late 1960s and early 1970s. Although associated with the countercultural 1960s, it is seen more in the 1970s. Prior to then, ethnic textiles were exclusively Hawaiian or Cuna, "patched" clothing was part of the war effort in the 1940s and a way of stretching the longevity of children's clothing. Ethnic styles and patched clothing were not referenced in magazine articles as a means of making a "personal statement" until 1970.

Quilting was progressively seen as more connected to the world of art as writers mentioned quilts as being either craft or art rather than being outside aesthetic concerns altogether. Especially after the mid-1950s, more article writers linked quilting to the movement to accept textiles as a valid high art medium. The view of textiles as a means of personal expression and as a viable art form grew from the 1950s on. However, the gender basis of art hierarchies was not "discovered" or discussed in relation to quilts until the early 1970s. At that point, textile art, and quilts in particular, became a major part of the discussion of the secondary status of women's art forms.
Commercialization and Production

What was the relation between quilting, commercialization and mass production? Article writers used various contemporary themes to influence readers, but women treated commercial sources as extensions of their choices rather than limiting them. During World War II, patriotic themes infused articles and advertisements to a degree that is difficult to comprehend by modern readers. Themes of patriotism, making do, and coping with shortages continued for several years after the war as the economy changed from wartime to peacetime production. In contrast to World War II, there were absolutely no references to the Korean War, while the Vietnam War received scant mention except as one of many choices for personal statements on patched clothing.

Although the culture industry grew after World War II, the number of commercial references in magazines did not increase. The types of promotion changed, but readers were exposed to a similar percentage of commercial references throughout the 30 year time period. The new consumer economy gave women a choice to make or buy home furnishings like quilted bedspreads and upholstery. Not until the 1960s did writers see and question the different values associated with home vs. commercial production. In the magazine articles I analyzed, the most commonly noted distinctions between home and commercial production were the lack of emotional connection with purchased goods which left
consumers adrift from their own family and national histories, and from contemporary friends and family as well. Women began to see that it was not enough to materially provide for their families, household goods were more valuable if they made emotional connections besides following design trends. Some writers also saw how the changes propelled women into the marketplace and away from creative, relaxing activities.

The quilters interviewed emphasized how creativity and emotional labor were intertwined in their quilting. By assuming responsibility for maintaining family ties, providing gifts, homemaking, and decorating, women balanced time, money, and creativity when choosing whether to make or buy goods. From the 1950s on, the range of commercially available goods gave them the choice of whether to fulfill their role and receive positive feedback through purchases or to emphasize creativity and the value of giving of self by making goods.

The articles that questioned commodity production looked at its overall impact, the industrialization of the home, the focus on product and satisfying material needs while ignoring emotional needs for personal satisfaction and connecting to others through household objects. Using fabric scraps was not posited as an alternative to commercial production, but as a bridge from familiar to unfamiliar processes in order make art production like

285
school art projects and wallhangings approachable. Scraps had sentimental value and thriftiness was a traditional value associated with quilting. Though women noted consciously using scraps to be thrifty in data collected by the NHQP, magazine articles, interviews and the NHQP never suggested scraps as a way to counter the push towards consumption and commercialization.

Changes in industrial production can be seen in the types of fabric used in quilts, including changes in fabric prints, the increased usage of polyester and polycotton fabrics, and the introduction of polyester batting around 1960. Machine construction of tops became more frequent until the 1970s revival when there was some reversion to traditional hand construction, though it never returned to earlier rates. The 1970s switch in focus from speedier machine construction to hand sewing emphasized process and tradition over production.

The burgeoning consumer market in the 1950s created opportunities for new products and new designs. In magazine articles, a growing consumer emphasis was seen in the increased references to brand names while traditional commercial references to patterns and women who quilted professionally decreased. Though the rate of commercial references remained about the same throughout the three decades, it became more corporate based. There was no identified separate market for quilters' products before the
1970s except for a few family run businesses like Heirloom Plastics, (which became Quilter's Newsletter Magazine,) pattern companies, and batting manufacturers. This market orientation is demonstrated through commercial kits, patterns, suggestions for the unorthodox use of consumer products like coloring books for designs and iron-on patches for applique, and reprinted books like McKim and Ickis in the 1960s. In the early 1970s, the developing market published even more how-to and history books and encouraged the creation and marketing of new products. It identified quilters as consumers, but also provided outlets for new authors, pattern designers, fabric designers, and fabric manufacturers.

It is difficult to see the impact of commercialization on the NHQP data except in the areas of kit usage, fabric changes, and batting types. In part this is because the increased recommendations to use quilt techniques on items like clothing, curtains and upholstery are not reflected in NHQP, which only documented bed quilts. Documenting such usages of quilting techniques would enable those comparisons, but no such systematic collection has been done. Quilters varied greatly in their usage of commercial patterns, kits and new products from none at all to using such commercial sources extensively. From interviews and the NHQP data, one sees how people like Doris Sheppard and Delores Vervey used these commercial sources but
personalized their quilts as they gained experience and skill.

Magazine articles assumed that women possessed basic sewing skills as a type of cultural capital throughout the time period. Still, the technique of quilting was deemphasized in the 1960s because it was perceived as the most difficult and time consuming of the three traditional quilt techniques. However, it was not replaced by recommendations of tying or machine quilting in magazine articles. Studies at the end of the 1960s noted that 85% of teenage girls were sewing. By the 1980s, basic sewing skills were phased out of most school curriculums, and such skills can no longer be assumed. School districts dropped shop for boys and sewing and cooking for girls as part of de-gendering school, though a few created curriculums including all of these skills for all students. The long term implications of this loss for quilting and other textile arts will fundamentally change the possibility of entree into such activities. More detailed research to understand how these assumptions have changed through time needs to be made, but were outside the scope of this paper.

Writers like Jean Ray Laury (1966:13) used this societally promoted availability of skills and materials to make quilting accessible. Laury recommended patterns and kits for developing a sense of women's own capability and
encouraged them to increase their personal creativity by going beyond mere repetition of existing designs.

The lamentation in previous research about the lack of different patterns used during this time period is not sustained by the results of the NHQP. Even with popular forms like Grandmother's Flower Garden, the actual quilts show widely varying interpretations. As a leisure and creative area, women experimented with layout, quilt patterns, fabric, and color to make their own unique designs as a personal creative effort.

**Resistance and negotiation**

How did women resist and negotiate the influences of mass production? Magazines, as part of the culture industry, defined standard and nonstandard quilting practices, and who was in a position of authority to define those practices. Friedan's view of the repressiveness of popular magazines is partially substantiated by the acceptance of the status quo of women as homemakers and quilts as utilitarian home decoration in women's and home magazines until the 1970s. Through the early 1970s, women's magazines were the most conservative and slowest to adopt new views of quilting. Magazines' need to keep advertisers happy seemed to make them even more conservative than the books about quilting printed at the same time. Questioning was found in magazines for the general public and trade and art magazines where support for change was part of the more
general cultural milieu, while women's magazines were the most oblivious to change.

While the 1950s was considered the era of the expert (May 1988:27), the percentage of magazine articles referencing some form of authority actually declined from the 1940s to the 1960s, and fewer types of authority were referenced. This does not follow expected patterns that described an increase in the 1950s and a decline in the 1970s. Certain types of authority became more standardized and commonly accepted, while the use of other forms declined. Perhaps because of their more avant garde affiliation with art, quilting references were ahead of the overall pattern of discounting authority. In the 1940s, the dominant authorities were quilt experts and museums, in the 1950s magazines and designers, and in the 1960s designers and artists. The pattern of references reflects individual expertise in the 1940s and 1960s and corporate authority in the 1950s.

From 1940 to 1970, quilting was most commonly portrayed as supporting the status quo. A small but rising percentage of articles used quilts to question those assumptions and to negotiate new views of domestic production in light of mass production. In the 1940s and 1950s, 10% of magazine articles questioned the status quo, 20% in the 1960s, and almost 65% by the early 1970s. Writers began by focusing on idiosyncratic quilts in the 1940s. In the 1950s, they
looked at changing designs for the modern age and the first articles that saw textiles as a high art medium. Quilts offered one way to deal with a world perceived as materially different from before World War II. The emphasis on textiles as art and as personal expression grew in the 1960s, though without an outright association with gender. However, by the early 1970s, gender is clearly associated with the secondary status of textile arts.

Magazine articles both reflected and helped mold views. Articles that encouraged avant garde approaches by questioning the art/craft dichotomy and proposing that textiles should be considered a valid art medium first occurred in art magazines in the 1950s. As a way of defining trends, textile industry journals like *American Fabrics* took this approach in the 1960s. Textile industry articles were directed at those who saw their role as shaping American taste and molding it to what the textile industry could provide. For them, a more artistic orientation was a potential marketing tool. Home magazines were the first type of consumer oriented magazine to use the viewpoint of quilts as art objects; women's magazines were the very last to make this link.

One of the greatest values of this study is how it applies cultural studies theory concerning consumption and authority and gender and art theory about art hierarchies and creativity to a detailed case study of a particular
cultural activity. The changing use of authority, the unchanging percentage of commercial references, and the importance of considering quilts as an art medium as support for the 1970s revival demonstrate how studying quilting enhances our broader understanding of the time period from 1945 to 1970.

The current subculture of quilting has flowered into its own social movement. It has coopted and included commercial producers and created a quilt world that has empowered many women. From the changes that began in the 1960s, the current range of artists, teachers, entrepreneurs and quilts as art are evidence of its long range impact.

While cultural studies theorists have debated the value of celebration vs. valorization for examining various aspects of culture, it is a false dichotomy for this study. For the people who were involved, recognizing the value of what they did created sufficient intrinsic value in and of itself. For most women, social change was not required to value their efforts. Women's personal views of the value of quilting can be found through examining the time period in detail, and looking at activities that have been downplayed or dismissed. Women empowered themselves by quilting; it did not matter whether anyone else noted it or wrote about it. Women didn't need outside groups or societal changes in order to justify their work. For these women, the value was
in the creative process combined with providing warmth and comfort for family and friends.

Quilting did not disappear between 1945 and 1970, but changed as women's roles changed from producer to consumer. Women resisted this change by continuing to produce quilts and negotiating their use of mass production. Magazines changed their portrayals of quilting from being functional household objects to expressing personal creativity. However, women continued to use quilts to fulfill their roles as mothers, wives, friends and homemakers even as they recognized their value as individuals beyond the roles they inhabited.

Research Evaluation

In this last section, I summarize the advantages and limitations of this research and envision future research directions.

Research limitations

One of the limitations of the research was inherent problems in the Reader's Guide, the Art Index, and the Humanities and Social Science Index. The inherent dismissal of a traditional female pursuit can be most graphically seen in the Humanities and Social Science Index. In it, there are no entries for quilting whatsoever in any category. (That there were numerous entries on sewage but none on sewing says more about the creators of the index than about
the value of the indexed categories.) It is also important
to note the number of popular magazines that were not part
of the indices in the first place.

Quilting's ties to current events, as well as tracing
how quilting reflected and helped develop other trends, can
be seen in magazine articles. By examining individual
volumes of magazines not indexed in standard indexes, like
Workbasket, I found a range of quilt related activity
occurring "under the radar" of the indexes. This explains
why activities known from other research, like round robin
pattern exchanges, never appeared in the indexed articles.
This points up the hegemonic nature of the magazines indexed
in the Reader's Guide and the Arts Index. They missed grass
roots efforts found in magazines not selected for indexing.
Though using indexed articles offers the possibility of
replication, my research showed that the indexes are
fallible for their omissions.

In particular, the lack of indexing for popular women's
magazines created major gaps in knowledge of women's lives
during this period. During my research, the difficulty of
finding women's magazines in libraries participating in
interlibrary loan also made gathering articles for analysis
a multi-year project. In spite of the heroic efforts of
UNLV's interlibrary loan staff and my own on site research
at nine libraries and archives in three states, almost 5% of
requested articles could not be located. This is partly
because periodicals that could be of much assistance in
documenting women's lives and roles have not been valued by
academic libraries. Given that so much of women's lives are
documented in such periodicals and not elsewhere, not
collecting them in research libraries, or indexing them in
standard indexes complicates and curtails much research into
women's lives.

Because of the volume of articles, I did not examine
100% of the articles listed in each category in the indexes. Those skipped were ones whose titles indicated they did not
pertain to my subject, such as ones on woven coverlets or on
bedframes. In an ideal world, I would have examined all
possible articles.

On my wish list of data that would have been available
would have been the SPSS coded data that a previous
researcher created to analyze the NHQP archives in 1995.
Without it, and without being able to find her, comparisons
of her results and mine were virtually impossible. I will
provide the Nevada State Museum Archives with a copy of my
work, so that future researchers might be able to do such
comparisons.

Quilting appeals to people in part because it carries
multiple layers of meaning. It is not unique for that, but
it is one of the things that makes standard analysis more
difficult. To tease apart the historical, familial,
emotional and artistic attributes seemed to diminish what
women found so valuable about the quilts. I tried to honor the combined value they saw.

The other major difficulty with this research, though also one of its greater benefits, was the need to triangulate results from the three disparate sources and three disparate theory areas. Another research project with more time and further research might better synthesize this information. The three methods provide very different kinds of information, all of which were necessary for the historical ethnography I have created, but they had less overlap than I had hoped for. The advantages of the current research were in integrating material culture analysis with content analysis and interviews. Analyzing media influences and cultural production and contextualizing them through interviews did provide the human input that would have been otherwise lost. This research expands methods for cultural studies beyond the standard textual approach to cultural objects, in part enabled by focusing on the production of objects, not just their adaptive reuse.

**Future research directions**

There is far more information available for analysis from all three sources used in this research. The Nevada Heritage Quilt Project offers important demographic data, as well as a much broader range of quilts (3000+ from the mid 1850s through 1990). While I have used NHQP data to analyze far beyond the simple frequency lists found in other reports.
of state quilt surveys, much more work could be done with a greater emphasis on statistical methods. In addition, there are now efforts to provide similar data from other state quilt projects, which will enable cross state comparisons. My research could assist in such comparisons. Two other examples of further research from the NHQP data are research on the interconnectedness and influence between quilters who worked together as friends and family, such as the interrelations of members of the Harmony Social Club and more research on Doris Sheppard as an influential quilter in northern Nevada.

I also used only a portion of the analysis I actually performed on the magazine articles. In particular, I would like to analyze the graphic content (photographs and drawings) in the articles, and the use of symbolism, both of which were beyond the scope of this paper. I would also like to extend the analysis further back in time and forward to expand our understanding of social change and the differing views of women and domestic art as seen through quilt articles. Further analysis of the 1970s articles would be useful for tracking the development of the current quilt revival and the impact of the women's movement, whose effect was barely visible by 1972. Finally, I would like to code my analysis of the magazine articles in SPSS to compare different factors beyond the manual tabulation used in the current research.
Much more work needs to be done with the oral interviews. Because of the volume of work with the other two sources, I could not use the interviews to their fullest extent. They require a more systematic analysis and more interviews with other quilters in order to provide a broader base to find common themes. Given that many of these women are in their 70s and 80s, this research must be done while time and memories permit.

Using the Nevada Heritage Quilt Project provides a unique perspective on Nevada and the West. It also shows another source of information for cultural studies and an entirely new way of interpreting it by using SPSS. The magazine articles provided a way of seeing the hegemonic influences on women and how ongoing social change was framed for domestic production. Most critical for this research was the interviews with women active from 1945 to 1970 to contextualize and tie together the other two sources.

Summary

This research provides a previously unexplored window on women's lives from 1945 to 1970, and thus a more nuanced understanding of American history during a time period of rapid social change. In particular, it provides a detailed examination of changes in women's roles, leisure, gender and art, consumption, and commodification. From the standpoint of quilting history as a part of American material culture,
it examines a time period bridging the revivals of the 1930s and 1970s that has been largely dismissed in previous research.

The research illuminates the lives of women who continued to focus on home and family through the major social changes of World War II, the "return" to domesticity of the 1950s, and the beginnings of the women's movement. Quilts helped women fulfill their traditional roles while providing a place for personal expression and creativity. Even when women were not aware their views repeated history from the previous century, they found meaning that continued the tradition of quilting while adapting it to modern purposes. Changing views of women's roles and textile art forms placed quilts and quilters more firmly in the sphere of art by the 1960s. The links to art, creativity, and personal expression forged during this time created a broad support base for the 1970s revival. Between the quilt revivals of the 1930s and 1970s, quilting thrived and changed with the impact of the consumer economy, increased questioning of the status quo and decreased use of authority.
APPENDIX A

HISTORICAL PLACEMENT OF QUILTING IN MAGAZINE ARTICLES

This appendix examines how quilts were placed historically and how the popularity of quilting was viewed in writings from 1940 to 1970. Quilt researchers (Lasansky 1986:105) have used magazines' descriptions of revivals as evidence of changes in popularity. However, there has been no systematic analysis of contemporary references to slumps and revivals. Researchers (Lasansky 1987, Brackman 1989) since the 1980s have described periods of revival and decline in twentieth century quilting. The quilt history depicted often ignored twentieth century quilting altogether, let alone defining periods of interest and slack interstitial times. Quilting ties to American history, however romanticized, have been an ongoing part of the way magazines and pattern companies have marketed it. Looking at reprint of 1930s patterns, the Colonial Revival is a common motif used to spark interest in quilting. How did writers at the time talk about history? Was there any sense of periodization in the magazine articles?
Initially, I review how quilts were tied to American history and how history was referenced in the magazine articles. How important has the use of history been for validating quilting? The second section examines how the history of quilting was portrayed in the magazine articles. Current understanding of quilting's popularity categorizes it as consisting of periods of revivals and slumps. This section looks at what kind of periodization was described at the time. Did the writers see the end of the 1930s revival in the 1940s? Did they think quilting was a lost art in the 1950s and 1960s? In the last section, I examine how quilts were tied to history-in-the-making through current events and social movements from 1940 to 1970.

Temporal placement of quilting in magazines

The three main historic contexts for quilts in magazines and books were a) contemporary, b) referencing a specific historical event or date, such as a quilt made for a presidential campaign, or c) non-specific/mythic such as "our pioneer foremothers," "in colonial times," traditional, or Americana.

Overall, from 1940 to 1970 there was a decrease in the number of magazine articles that made any time reference whatsoever. Even fewer articles used multiple references.
The 1940s had 1.18 references per article, the 1950s 1.13 references, and in the 1960s, .88 references per article.

A contemporary setting was the most frequently mentioned time frame. This goes along with "how-to" articles, which gave instructions for making quilt items, and were the most frequent type of article in all three decades. Contemporary references were 42% of 1940s time references, 51% of 1950s references and 46% of 1960s references. Articles in the 1940s and 1950s using contemporary references nearly always concerned quilted objects for the home, while 1960s articles included a significant number of articles about using quilt techniques in school art projects.

There was a decline in the number of references to specific time periods, from 24% of all time references in the 1940s, to 22% in the 1950s, and 15% in the 1960s. Combining specific and generic historic references, there is a consistent decline in historic references, from 57% of articles in the 1940s to 44% in the 1950s and 41% in the 1960s. The large decline in the 1950s can be primarily attributed to the demise of the Colonial Revival, and to a lesser extent an increased emphasis on contemporary quilting.

Generic historic references were the second highest category after contemporary references in the 1940s and 1960s and tied for second with specific historic references.
in the 1950s. They constituted 33% of 1940s time references, 22% of 1950s references and 26% of 1960s references. The drop in the 1950s and the intermediate percentage in the 1960s between the 1940s and 1950s are attributable to the number of contemporary references.

Generic time references were further broken out into the following subcategories: a) general history, b) Americana or traditional, and c) nostalgia. All three stress a sense of connection to history rather than specific knowledge of it. Part of the differentiation between these three subcategories relates to changes in what design motifs were popular during different times. References to the colonial era are classified as general history because it is more specific than "traditional" or "Americana," even though the actual furnishings in pictures may be quite similar.

Academic interest in quilt history, beginning in the early 1980s, has transformed our understanding of what kind of quilting occurred when. Research has shown that quilts were a rare and expensive commodity prior to 1790 (Brackman 1989:13). However, the "Colonial" label is applied to quilts made into the 1820s in the magazine articles. "Traditional" or "Americana" labels include the "Colonial" time period but expand it to include the antebellum 19th century.

General or romanticized history is 21% of 1940s references (primarily 1947 to 1949), 7% of 1950s references

303
and 17% of 1960s references. The traditional/Americana category is seen mostly from 1947 to 1954, perhaps as a generalization of the Colonial Revival attribute as that design movement faded. It is 7% of 1940s references, 13% of 1950s references, with only one reference in the 1960s (<2%).

The third subcategory, nostalgia, is the least historically accurate. It embodies a sentimentality about the past without any more specific attributes. It constitutes 6% of 1940s references, 3% of 1950s references and 8% of 1960s references.

Throughout the time period, magazine articles use the logic that women can use different quilt patterns and colors to fit in a variety of decorating schemes, and illustrate it with quilts in Victorian, modern, Empire and 18th century bedrooms (Good Housekeeping February 1941:137). It is clear that the choice of decor drove the choice in bedcoverings. Quilts are promoted as bedspreads rather than blankets, emphasizing their aesthetic contribution to bedroom decor rather than a need for homemade blankets. Quilts are portrayed as one of numerous choices in an expanding market for bedcoverings after WWII. Magazine articles demonstrate a new versatility in considerations of quilt usage and quilt construction. An example is in articles which expanded the ways quilts were viewed by focusing on large graphics and
solid colors, thus creating new designs that complemented modern bedrooms.

Two concurrent trends can be seen in the historic placement of quilting during this period. There is lessening emphasis on history to support connecting women to quilting, and historic references become less specific. As a consequence, contemporary quilting is more heavily emphasized as both a reason to quilt and for its results, which were posed as one possible choice for home decor or as a school art project.

Periodization, quilt revivals and design movements

As noted in the previous section, quilts were connected to American history in a variety of ways. Quilting was placed within a context of understanding the historical milieu of the time, including various revivals of interest in historically based social and design trends.

There is no sense of periodization in the articles from 1940 into the 1970s. Notably, there is no mention of the quilt revivals of 1890 to 1910 nor the 1920s through the 1930s, and very few references to the quilts made then. Rather than situating quilting as following the 1930s quilt revival, the magazine articles imply quilting died out well before 1900. Because they do not recognize the existence of quilting in the 20th century, magazine articles compare
modern quilting to a romanticized view of early 19th century quilting and find it lacking. When the magazine articles mention historically significant quilts, they are almost all from the American centennial of 1876 or before, with the exception of a few 20th century commemorative quilts.

There was a plethora of publishing on material culture around 1948, concurrent with the beginning of the Cold War. Schlereth considers this to be a recognition of the possible political ramifications of American material culture studies, plus the expansion of interest in the history of technology and folklife studies (Schlereth 1982:21). This provides a wider context for the publication of a number of quilt books in 1948 and 1949 which continued to use the Colonial Revival as an organizing theme. Popular from 1880 to 1955, the Colonial Revival is both the name of a design movement as well as a way of viewing a larger cultural trend of interest in the American past. It began at the time of the 1876 centennial with a renewed interest in everything associated with New England around the time of the Revolutionary War and continued as a dominant design style for the first half of the 20th century. The latest reference to the Colonial Revival in the magazine articles is 1950, while it is mentioned in 9% of 1940s articles.

Beginning in 1949, revivals of interest in arts and crafts and handwork are also mentioned. The Americana movement and the folk song revival of the late 1950s and
early 1960s are considered two influences that extended interest in folklore and folk art. Only one article (New York Historical Society Quarterly, April 1948), makes a conscious association of the interest in folk art and keeping the interest in quilts alive. About 1955, needlework takes on new meaning as writers begin to consider textiles as an alternative art medium. Later, patriotic reactions to the tensions and anxieties of the Cold War and the "new romanticism" of the 1960s counterculture contributed to continued American interest in popular culture (Schlereth 1982:31).

Without the references to the Colonial Revival, the number of articles decreeing quilting extinct and those saying quilting was experiencing a revival are similar both to each other and across all decades (see Table 18). Few articles made reference to the current status of quilting, and writers were almost equally divided in their opinion of which direction quilting was going. Still, writers' opinions from the era contrast starkly with the near universal view of quilting's demise from 1940 to 1970 found in articles written after 1980. Perhaps, like writers from 1945 to 1970 who found current quilting lacking in comparison to a romanticized antebellum culture of quilting, later writers, living in the midst of the most publicized quilt revival ever, looked back and found quilting wanting.
To writers from 1940 to 1970, quilting was largely just a fact, a technique to be used.

Table 18. Percent of Articles with References to Extinctions and Revivals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>Revival</th>
<th>Extinct</th>
<th>Revival including Colonial Revival</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940s</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950s</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite later views that quilting was dead from 1945 to 1970, some of the major influences of the 1970s quilt revival were already in place by 1970. In the late 1950s, Dover Publications began reprinting quilt books from the 1930s and 1940s in large size paperback editions. Marguerite Ickis' 1949 book The Standard Book of Quiltmaking and Collecting was reprinted in 1959. Ruby McKim's 1931 book 101 Patchwork Patterns, reprinted in 1962, was mentioned frequently in interviews as an information and pattern source. Indeed, it was from this book that I got the pattern for my first quilt, begun in 1971.

The direct reuse of quilt history through reprints of earlier 20th century texts such as Webster (1915, reprinted 1948), McKim, and Ickis is directly analogous to the use of 'salvage ethnography' texts by groups from whom they were originally taken (Clifford 1993:73). This creates a tighter circle of reappropriation for a past that did not actually 'belong' to contemporary quilters through their own personal
histories, but was made their own through the wonders of modern printing.


New quilt books began appearing in the mid 1960s. Jean Ray Laury's first quilt technique book, *Applique Stitchery*, was published in 1966 and her second, *Quilts and Coverlets*, in 1970. Dolores Hinson's 1966 *Quilting Manual* went into its second printing in 1970. *Quilter's Newsletter Magazine*, which in 2002 had the largest circulation of any quilt magazine in the United States at 250,000, began in late 1969. It originated from a request of a customer to the family run pattern company originally called Heirloom Plastics to provide a forum for quilters to talk to each other and to learn what else was going on in the country as a whole. It is first referenced in other magazines in 1972, when the real onslaught of new books began.

*McCall's Needlework & Crafts* published seasonal needlework issues. Their 1964 Christmas magazine is typical of earlier issues that show such crafts as making Christmas
carolers from Qtips but no quilt techniques. Craft overviews that did not include quilting by default showed it as an atypical leisure activity, in contrast to omnipresent forms like crochet or knitting. Quilts appear under a number of headings, such as "decorator crafts" and "needlework," and eventually got a separate heading of their own in the Spring/Summer 1974 edition. Earlier, in 1972, McCall's had also spun off a separate book called McCall's How to Quilt It. From 1968 through the early 1970s, issues included one or two articles using quilt techniques, advertisements for quilt kits and for quilt batting (the interior layer that makes quilts puffy).

A "boom" in home sewing utilized a "growing need some woman (sic) feel for creative outlets, the trend to do your own thing, and the fact that today's living demands more changes of clothes. Fold in the increasing numbers of girls taking sewing in elementary and high schools, who graduate into consumers comfortable with a sewing machine, and you have a large market, indeed" (Business Week Oct 3, 1970:56).

This early training dropped the median age of home sewers to 23, while six of every seven teenage girls sewed (Business Week Oct 3, 1970:56). In such classes, girls learned basic hand stitches, assembly by machine and how to read a pattern. Such underlying institutional support seems to have remained fairly stable until home economics classes became optional in the 1980s. Clothes patterns from famous designers, sewing machines with built in zig zag and
buttonhole capabilities, and polyester knit fabrics newly emphasized "smartness and individuality" over thrift, changing how home sewing was viewed (Reader's Digest July 1969:26). Institutional support for quiltmaking was also seen in the Mormon church through longstanding traditions like quilts made by relief societies for outgoing bishops and for fundraising (Covington 1997:106).

Beginning in 1972, numerous articles recognized the quilt revival that continues today. Writers still described the heyday of quilting as prior to the Civil War, and there is no sense that this was not the first quilt revival of the 20th century. History again became an important discourse and cause for quilting, though writers cautioned readers that

"You may think patchwork started with the currently popular craze for doctoring up worn out jeans or for prettying up new ones. Actually, the history of patchwork goes directly back to our pioneer days, when communal activities regularly brought together whole settlements for a week or so of shared hand labor" (Micklo 1972:32).

There is no clear pattern of a slump in quilting after the 1940s, but there is also no sustained pattern of increased interest until the 1970s. Both of these concepts evolved later with the advent of scholarly quilt research in the 1980s. Still, quilt articles kept quilting in the public eye, and more articles per decade were written after 1940 than before.
Connection to current events

Quilts have been part of current events and social movements since at least the mid 1800s. As part of fundraisers in Abolition fairs of the 1840s and 1850s, Sanitation Fairs during the Civil War, quilts for WCTU, suffrage, the Red Cross during World War I, and WPA projects in the 1930s, quilts have been an ongoing way for women to express their social consciousness and use their skills to support causes. Quilting is tied to various current events and social movements from 1940 to 1970 as well.

During WWII, patriotic themes figure in most articles. Magazine articles focus on coping with fabric shortages, women's contributions to the war effort, and in oblique references to being without husbands and sweethearts. Eventually, such references were subsumed as a general part of life. Even articles with no overt mention of the war are sandwiched between articles on Victory gardens and Kotex advertisements touting a teen's busy life helping at home and serving at the USO canteen. In this instance, the quilt article serves as a relief and escape from the war effort (Better Homes and Gardens April 1943:67).

There is only one article that referenced the civil rights movement and integration prior to the 1970s. The Negro History Bulletin (April 1954) featured an article about a quilt being made by a black study group that
highlighted black history. It also celebrated interracial cooperation since the quilt was designed by a white man.

As part of the War on Poverty, VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America, a domestic version of the Peace Corps) volunteers organized three quilt groups, two in West Virginia and one in Alabama, the only known such groups. They provided much needed additional income, grossing as much as $1000 per woman yearly, a substantial sum in the early 1970s (Interior Design 1972:32). The Freedom Quilting Bee was the only one composed of African American quilters, though articles about all the VISTA groups emphasized their poverty without distinguishing them by race. The VISTA groups began in 1967 and 1968, but are first mentioned in the magazine articles in 1969. Their first quilts were sold through complex communication channels between 1960s activists and art and design communities in New York City. Using the popularity of patchwork and applique, and being promoted by advocates such as Sharon Rockefeller, the groups' products became associated with high-end department stores like Lord and Taylor, and New York design houses like Paris Hadley. They provided quilts, pillows, upholstery fabric and clothing like hostess skirts.

Outside of the above examples, before 1970, ties to wider social changes are primarily limited to changing concepts in the world of high art: the use of new mediums (1955), and new interests in folk art in the United States.
(1948) and Canada (1950). These were covered in greater detail in Chapter 7.

While no overt tie to the women's movement is found prior to 1971, in the 1960s there is a growing awareness of women as being more than the roles that they inhabit. Part of this changed awareness focused on women as individuals whose need for creativity and personal expression deserved to be fulfilled even if it didn't contribute to other role requirements. In quilting, this took form by connecting to changing views of textiles as an art form, and implicitly, the higher value of art over craft, though the gender component of this hierarchy was not discussed until the 1970s.

Beginning in 1970, social movements such as ecology, the war on poverty, peace and/or anti-Vietnam war efforts are connected to quilting in much the same way as other pop culture themes. Quilt techniques, especially applique, were appropriated as part of pop culture as patched clothing and applique embellishment became a way of making personal and political statements.

An article in Life (July 17, 1970:41) noted: "The girls show off their denim shirts, also by Elaine Post, appliqued in washable satin and depicting moon travel, a map of the United States and a bit of ecology," though the "ecology" mentioned here is merely a depiction of clouds and a rainbow. Another ecology related quilt demonstrates how
needlework, conservation, and social gatherings contributed to the value of a quilt made by both amateur and professional craftspeople (Patterson 1972:4). It was made as a fundraiser for conservation projects and to raise consciousness about the plight of the Hudson River. It was started in 1969 and was first mentioned in articles in 1972.

The conflation of pop culture and politics is perhaps most noticeable in a 1971 article in *Time* where Disney and Vietnam are mentioned in the same sentence:

"Although some of the patches are still homemade, most now come from opportunistic manufacturers, who are spewing them forth in a dizzying variety: hearts, flowers, butterflies and rainbows (usually worn across the hip) are popular. So are noncom Viet Nam insignia and Disney characters" (*Time* July 12, 1971:46).

Parker (1984:205) saw needlework as political by contrasting personal and domestic production with the public sphere. This included considering personal and domestic life as much a product of ideologies and institutions as public life. An expanding leisure industry after WWII positioned needlework as a means of self expression, which by the 1960s became a personal political statement. Its practice outside the male dominated bastions of work and art had a special appeal to radical movements and counter cultures.

As a form of cultural production, quilting was used to express sentiments about social movements and current events. From the patriotism of World War II, to the War on
Poverty, from changes in conceptions of the world of high art through the conflation of popular culture and protest during the Vietnam War, women contributed statements in their quilts. Women produced quilts commenting on ecology and the women's movement in the late 1960s which appeared in magazine articles in the 1970s.

Quilts were tied to American history and current events to promote quilting. They were also part of design trends like the Colonial Revival and patchwork clothing. History was used to add relevance to quilting, though it became less important through the 1950s and 1960s. Writers who commented on quilting's popularity were almost equally divided on whether it was dying or being revived, but most took it as a given, as in stasis.

Summary

The sense of periodization and cycles of revival and decline that characterize our current understanding of the history of quilting were not identified until the early 1980s. Quilts were tied to the Colonial Revival design movement through the 1940s. When it died out in the early 1950s, historic time references became more generic. Though magazine articles on quilting were more focused on contemporary quiltmaking, there were historic references and analogies which lessened from 1940 to 1970. Magazine article authors tended to reinforce widely held myths about
quilting history, and mix romanticized quilting history with concrete provenance about individual quilts. History was used to create interest, but a sense of history was more important than actual history.

As a form of cultural production, women's quilts reflected what affected them. Quilts were tied to current events by showing patriotism during World War II, and as part of the new textile arts expansion that began in the 1950s. Quilt groups were formed as part of the war on poverty in the 1960s, and quilt techniques were used as a popular culture expression of ties to ecology, peace, and individual expression after 1970.
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Demographics
   kids? how old? What was/is their reaction to quilting?
   Quilting before/during raising children?

   Working? Husband's job? annual income? education?

   Living where? When to LV? When joined a guild? This guild?

2. Quilt history

   Why did you make your quilts? What do you like about quilting? Why did you start quilting?
   How did you learn how to sew?
   How did you learn to quilt? Did you take classes?
   Round Robin exchanges?

   What kinds of quilts do/did you make?
   What are they used for? (baby quilts, bed quilts, wallhangings, clothes)

   Did you ever sell any of your quilts? How? Why? When?
   Have you ever taught quilting? (to friends, family, as class through guild, fabric store) When? What did you like about teaching? What did you dislike?
   Did you register any quilts with any state quilt registry? If yes, which ones? Any NOT registered? Why not?

   Where did you get ideas/patterns? (magazines, catalogs, books, friends, family)
   How has your work evolved over time?
   What kinds of fabric did you use? Where bought? Scraps?
   Use of polyester?
   What kind of frame did you use? Did you leave it set up?

   Did you quilt with anyone else? Did you work with a group for any part of the process? (friends, family, church, basting, quilting)
   What were meetings like? What did you talk about?
   Did you have to meet any requirements to be a member?
What reaction to quilts? Did that change over time?

What did you do with your quilts? Given for special occasions? Reaction to gift? Ever given and not appreciated?

What do you think the general view of quilting was during the 50s, 60s, 70s.

3. Other life activities

Did you do other crafts/arts?
What did you/family do for recreation? When did you quilt? (time of day, diff over years)
Did you quilt around family? What did they think of quilting?
Did you teach your children/grandchildren to quilt?

What did you read? (newspapers, magazines, books)
Were you politically involved? How was quilting related?
Women's movement?
What clubs/organizations were you involved with? (PTA, junior league, AAUW, election board, league of women voters, church group)
Did you do volunteer work? With whom?
How old were you during the women's movement (late 60's, early '70s)? How did it effect your life?
APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MAGAZINE ARTICLES

Item#_________

General information
1. Title_________________________________________
2. Author________________________________________
3. Magazine_____________________________________
   Date___________________________
4. Index pulled from a. Reader's Guide  b.AI  c.SSI  d. none
5. Index heading a.bedspreads  b.coverlets  c.needlework
d.quilts  e.sewing  f.textiles  g.__________________
6. Magazine type: a.women's  b.gen'l  c.home
d.antique/collection  e.art/museum  f.scholarly
g._________________
8. How many? (refer to sep. questionnaire)_______
9. Ratio of visuals to text: a. Picture with caption only
   b. 75-99  c. 50-74  d. 25-49  e. <25  f. 0
10. Type of article: a. Antiques  b. how to  c. exhibition
    notice/review  d. about people  e. fiction  f.
    folk/ethnic art  g. scholarly  h. industry  i. purchase
    & care  j. advert  k._________________
11. Type of object: a. contemporary  b. antique  c. fine
    art  d. dec art  e. folk/ethnic art

History, Context
1. Purpose of the article
_____________________________________________________________________
2. Of the quilt/quilt activity in it
_____________________________________________________________________
3. Who is the intended audience? a. quilters  b. collectors  c.teachers
d.artists  e. consumers  f. gen'l public  g.__________________
4. Assumed age of reader? _______________ quiltmaker?
    quiltmaker  a. F  b. M  c. none
6. Assumed ethnicity of quilter a. white  b. black  c.not
    stated  d. other________
7. Assumed family/work structure? a. at home b. working c. both d. not stated e. ______________

8. Quilt's purpose tied to life events: a. none b. birth c. childhood d. marriage e. death f. ______________

9. Ref to outside event: a. y b. n

10. Type of event: a. sewing boom b. revival c. war d. ______________


12. How are quilts/quilters viewed? a. art b. craft, c. extinct d. "new heirloom" e. ______________ femininity/reproduction/patriarchy f. time use, g. fashion, h. family, I. women's mvmt, j. pleasure/leisure k. duty l. gift, m. marginalized, n. urban o. rural p. ethnic, q. aesthetic r. useful, s. visual t. tactile u. emotional involvement v. folk art w. revival x. dec. art y. historic

13. Historic placement a. none b. contemporary c. related to specific historical period d. generalized/romanticized history e. nostalgia f. revival (Hodder 1994:398) g. Americana

14. If on historic quilts: a. women as keepers of family heritage b. bridging time c. market value d. historic value

15. Does it blend time periods? y n i.e. speed and new technology w/ trad. patterns or "workmanship"
How-to
1. Can item be made w/o buying pattern fabric, tools from proposed sellers? (e.e. kit= no) y n
2. What skills/knowledge/practices are assumed/involved? What level? (incl. design, e.e. able to enlarge pattern, process knowledge, color choice/combination, time for completion) (cultural capital: Bourdieu)

3. What suggestions/assumptions of materials and process are there? (i.e. cotton vs. polyester, machine/hand quilting)

Commercialization
1. Is it advertising a. a kit b. Pattern booklet c. finished product d. N/A
2. Whose? Instructions included?

4. Production emphasis a. home b. commercial c. artistic d. school e. none
5. push for consumption? y n
6. Commodification? y n
7. Ref. as economical/thrifty y n
8. Comm or econ infrastructure a. abundance of manuf goods b. comm patterns/kits c. prof. quilters d. brand names e. store (dept, 5&dime f. use of readymades

9. Context of production a. use b. discard c. reuse (e.g. value of reuse vs. discard) d. N/A How does it fit w/in proposed lifestyle (Willis in Hebdige:113)

Authority
1. Aesthetic appreciation mentioned y n
2. What relations of power/authority/value/prestige/status are present?
3. recommended source for fabric, patterns, tie in y n
4. expert/celebrity/professional/art background/"designers" y n
5. How are quilts presented(Denzin p.150 reheel) a. mainstream/ consensual b. negotiated composition/ counter dither
6. How appropriating other cultural texts (Denzinp119)
1. What assumptions of practice are made? How are quilts used? created?

2. What "Codes" are involved? symbols, their meaning and association i.e. eagles/patriotism

3. Use of imagery w/o actual quilt y n

4. Technique used applique b.patchwork c.quilting d.embroidery e.none

5. Is there an "embedded morality"? (Hodder 1993:397) that enforces certain practices (i.e. interp. of kit use, creativity by following pattern)

6. Emotions in article a.intergenerational ties, b. pampering c.loving d. thrifty e. creative f. fun g. sophisticated h. N/A

7. How are quilt makers/readers supposed to feel about work? a. tied to women's history b. subverting expectations c. aesthetic

8. How are emotions invoked?

9. What is accomplished?

10. What values/discourse referenced? a. col. revival, b. thriftiness, c. family ties, d. creativity, e.crafts, f. hobbies g. art h. dec art i. folk art j. ethnic art k. American l. mass prod m. new age

Political
1. What is the supporting infrastructure?

2. Reference to group work? a. historic b.contemp c.none

3. Ref. to subculture of quilting? a. none b. round-robin newsletters, c. QNM d. fairs e.church groups f. demise of subculture (hebdige) g. historic h.other

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
4. Is it a Leisure activity  y  n  N/A
5. How is time for quilting seen?  a. decorating as part of women's sphere  b. not mentioned  c._
5. Tie-in to other social movements?  a. none  b. VISTA  c. women's movement  d. peace  e. ecology  f._
6. Political overtones:  a. personal as political,  b. accept/reject ideology of domesticity,  c. ref. to women's movement  d. define/question femininity,  e. family  f. patriarchy  g._none
7. Is this similar to any other articles/quilts?  a. Y  b. N  Example______________________________
APPENDIX D

NEVADA HERITAGE QUILT PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE

ID#____________ quilt day loc. _____________

Page 1 & 2
1. Pattern name documenter ________________________
   owner (p3) ________________________
2. top a. pieced b. applique c. whole cloth d. combo
   e. embroid f. ________
3. quilted a. top only b. machine quilt c. hand quilt
   d. tied e. ________
   Original design a. Y b. N c. unknown
5. Quilt date documenter __________ owner __________
  quest usg __________
   date on quilt y n
6. Span time pds (i.e. top from 30s, quilted in 70s)
   a. Y b. N
   If yes, Top before time pd a. Y b. N
   Completed After time pd a. Y b. N
7. Fabric type a. cotton b. poly cotton c. wool
   d. silk/rayon e. various f. ________
8. Piecing/applique a. hand b. machine c. combo d. N/A

Page 3 & 4
1. Gender of maker (by name) a. Female b. Male
4. quilt made in _____________ a. NV b. east
   c. south d. Midwest e. West f. multi
   g. _____________
5. Reason quilt made: a. friendship/album b. commemorative
   c. wedding d. baby e. child's f. gift h. unknown
   i. _____________
6. est. age of quilter at making (qltdate - brthdt)
   ______ a. unknown b. <20 c. 20-39 d. 40-59 f. 60+
7. Length of time quilting a. unknown b. <5 yrs c. 5-10 yrs
d. 11-30 yrs e. 30+ yrs

325

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
8. Quiltmaker born a.NV b.other US ______c.outside US d.unknown
9. Ethnicity ______________ a.white b.black c.native am. d.unknown e._______
10. Religion ______________ a.LDS b.Catholic c.Protestant d.unknown e.other
11. Quilt maker's occup. a.homemaker b.farmer/rancher c.unknown d._________
12. Education a.<HS b.HS c.some college d.BA e.some grad f.grad degree g.unknown
13. Quilt owner a.maker's fam. b.receiver's fam c.unknown d._________
14. To NV (quilt, else maker if known) a.unknown b.made here c.w/family move d.w/husband's job e._________
BIBLIOGRAPHY


DeHart, Jan and Linda Kerber. 1995. "Gender and the New Women's History." In Kerber, Linda and Jane DeHart, eds.,
Women's America: Refocusing the Past, New York: Oxford University Press.


Janesick, Valerie. 1994. "The Dance of Qualitative Research Design." In Denzin, Norman and Yvonna Lincoln,


Snyder, Grace. 1963. *No Time on My Hands.* Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.


337


VITA

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Colleen Rose Hall-Patton

Home Address:
143 Carriage Way West
Henderson, Nevada 89074

Degrees:
Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology, 1976
University of California, Los Angeles

Master of Arts, Anthropology, 1985
University of California, Los Angeles

Publications:
"Innovation Among Southern California Quiltmakers."

Dissertation Title:
Quilting Between the Revivals: The Cultural Context of Quilting 1945-1970

Dissertation Examination Committee:
Chairperson, Dr. Barbara Brents, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Andy Fontana, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Kate Hausbeck, Ph.D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Dr. Joanne Goodwin, Ph.D.

339

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.