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mentor's introduction

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Most studies and development activities in art education have focused on urban and suburban students and few have been concerned with rural students. Marjorie Manifold's research is unique in that she has chosen to study a population whose members have roots in Appalachia, but are living in an urban setting. Her insights are all the more powerful due to her personal involvement in the 10th community that is the cornerstone of her study.

Many educators have viewed rural communities, and students from these communities, as culturally deprived. Coupled with most people's reactions to inner city neighborhoods as blights on urban environments, students from the 10th Street community would appear to have little chance for success in mainstream schools throughout the United States.

Marjorie Manifold's interpretation of adult 10th Streeters' descriptions and reflections about artists and aesthetic attitudes, and her interweaving of these two themes with characteristics of their community, is helpful in understanding values and beliefs held by students from Appalachia backgrounds living in the inner-city. The educational implications she draws are important for art teachers and others conducting research about teaching a variety of students from different backgrounds in diverse settings.

The second part of her investigations will contrast and compare reactions of members of two rural, Appalachian-transplanted communities in the Midwest with the inner-city 10th Street community. When her project is completed, she should be able to contribute greatly to literature about the needs of rural/urban Appalachian art students and how they might be educated equitably with a focus on their needs and abilities. With so much emphasis today on multicultural and global education, the backgrounds of students whose roots go back to Western and Eastern Europe often are not included as part of the newly cooked stew that has replaced the melting pot metaphor in education. Marjorie Manifold has demonstrated that the backgrounds of all students need to be considered when planning, creating, and implementing art curricula in the schools.