INTRODUCTION

This proposal is a request for funds to produce a sixty minute motion picture which will portray the values of a rural American community through an estate sale or auction. It will be produced by scholar/filmmakers collaborating to translate ethnographic knowledge into filmable images. Its potential audience includes national Public Television, community discussion groups concerned with the issues surrounding death and dying, as well as college and high school courses in American culture, anthropology, sociology, communication, film studies, and psychology. It is anticipated that the total cost of the project will not exceed $152,000. No additional funds for the project will be requested from The National Endowment for the Humanities.

We wish to produce a film guided by our scholarly research. It will combine theoretical interests with our knowledge of a community and analytically derived assumptions about the function of an estate sale or auction. The film will document, describe, and analyze an auction as a social and economic institution integral to the community's life. It will go beyond and behind the surface of the event. It will be a visualization of abstract thought -- a representation of the core values of a community as displayed in a single event. The film will be innovative because matters of form and content will be collectively constructed by people competent both in the subject of the film and in the construction of films. Most importantly the film will provide its audience with an understanding of how events like auctions are part of basic social processes through which members of a community learn to accommodate death.

It is the practice in Juniata County, Pennsylvania to hold a public auction to dispose of the estate when someone dies. The house, car, land,
farm equipment, animals, and objects from living room furniture to Avon bottles are placed on view, auctioned off, and the proceeds distributed among the heirs. Some people prepare their houses and goods for this moment prior to their own death. Executors spend months getting the estate ready. The sale is attended by family, friends, neighbors, bargain hunters, the curious, local antique dealers, and buyers who wholesale antiques nationally.

Auctions take place on the deceased's premises under a tent and often last an entire day. Church groups sell refreshments as a fund raiser. The auctioneers are local people who know the deceased, their families, and most of the buyers by their first name. Participants bring their chairs to stay for the day -- talking to their friends; commenting upon a particular object and the price it brings; comparing this auction with others; conjecturing about which pieces will cause the dealers to compete and who will buy what and whether or not family members will bid against each other. Bidding ranges from a sluggish response to household items that wind up in box lots to a virtual frenzy when a family member competes against a dealer for their childhood bedroom suite.

Auctions are constructed to be seen -- a public event symbolic of core values of this community. The possessions of a lifetime, often several lifetimes, are offered for public viewing -- something that rarely happens while the owners are alive. Family, friends, and neighbors examine and redistribute these "relics" publicly acknowledging the physical absence of a member of the community by concentrating upon the material representation of the deceased. Auctions prevent family members from haggling in private about ownership. Disputes are transformed into public competition for the highest bid. The dealers are a disruptive force. They remove items from the community. Their actions place market values on objects and indirectly validate some local taste by demonstrating that people from the outside -- people with "urbane and sophisticated" taste -- value these objects.

The auction as a socio-cultural phenomenon begins with the death of an individual and ends when all property has been redistributed. The actual event of the sale is only one phase of a complex series of economic and social activities. The film will document these processes in such a way as to reveal the underlying significance of an estate sale.
PROJECT PERSONNEL

The production group consists of three humanist scholars (Ruby, Aibel, and Musello) trained in the analysis and production of images. They have been living and studying in the community that is the location of the film for three years. Levin, the fourth member, is a filmmaker and teacher of communications who since 1976 has team-taught with Ruby courses in the history, theory, and practice of documentary and ethnographic image-making.

Two members of the group have faculty appointments in communications (Levin and Aibel), another (Ruby) in anthropology, and the fourth (Musello) is completing his dissertation in communications. We share a competence and interest in the ethnographic study of human issues and the production of images designed to convey scholarly thought.

Levin plays a key role in this team. He shares the theoretical orientation of the group, but he does not have a detailed knowledge of the place nor has he engaged in research in the area. Levin comes to the project with "fresh eyes" that will give him a perspective lacking among those immersed in the community and the subject matter. The interaction between the "subject matter" experts and the "outsider" director will provide the necessary checks and balances in the production.

We have written and taught about film, ethnography, and communication for a number of years. We have produced films and acted as advisors and consultants (Appendix I). We feel frustrated with the all too common relationships between scholars and filmmakers where at times the scholar becomes an ornament to satisfy the requirements of a funding agency and, in other cases, the filmmaker is hastily brought in to illustrate narration derived from a scholar's research. We have constructed a more self-conscious model with people co-competent in filmmaking and scholarly research (Ruby 1980).

GENERAL THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

We are interested in a cinema of ideas -- to produce a film that begins with an abstract idea that can be translated into filmable images and is grounded in
an articulated theory and a thorough knowledge of the subject matter. We can create such a film in this project and with thorough documentation provide other scholar/filmmakers with a model that can be used and critiqued.

Based upon our studies of film as communication, we are convinced that film can and should speak with many voices (Ruby 1975). We wish to expand the realist tradition of the documentary and the didactic educational film into a more powerful outlet for the transmission of scholarly ideas to the general public. We have selected a visually exciting event, an auction, to use as a vehicle for discussing a profound issue, one that touches everyone — patterns of readjustment when someone dies.

The project furthers our ideas about ethnography as a means of exploring and understanding the human condition (Ruby 1980, 1981). We believe that ethnographic knowledge can serve as the basis of a film. The pioneering work of Jean Rouch in Chronicle of a Summer (1960) and Timothy Asch and Napoleon Chagnon in The Ax Fight (1976) encourages us to pursue the development of an ethnographic cinema (Ruby 1975).

Our general knowledge of the community, our study of auctions (Aibel 1979), and our ideas about cinema provide us with sufficiently broad strategies for production to accommodate the unexpected that always occurs in location filming. Our theoretical orientation will not cause us to merely film illustrations of what we already know but instead will give us the means to deepen our knowledge and representation of the phenomenon.

LOCATION OF THE PROJECT

The film emerged from ethnographic research conducted over the last three years in Juniata County, a central Pennsylvania rural community of approximately 19,000 residents. It is a culturally homogeneous community selected because its uniformity and strong family lines allowed us to examine visual communication within one culture. The features which attracted us also account for the development and continuation of the estate sale which can function only where families tend to live in one area for generations.
Our involvement with the community has gained us their trust and acceptance. Without this rapport the film would be impossible since it requires a crew to be present at times of crisis and intimacy. Interviews with lawyers, bank trust officers, auctioneers, and others confirm our ideas about the relevance of the auction and its significance to the community. They share our enthusiasm and offer their active cooperation (Appendix II).

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

In 1977 Sol Worth and Jay Ruby conceived of a research project in which visual communication systems of a community would be studied ethnographically. The research would include art, architecture, personal appearance, photography, film, and television. With the death of Worth, the project was broken into smaller units and undertaken by Ruby and two of Worth’s former graduate students. Robert Aibel studied amateur painters and their art world. Christopher Musello is researching the home as an index of cultural identity. Jay Ruby is currently studying film, photography, and television. All research is ethnographic, that is, involves intensive long-term participant/observation within the community. The research and film project are theoretically united in their examination of visual communication as a manifestation of culture and are grounded in Worth’s notion of an anthropology of visual communication and an ethnographic semiotic (Worth 1981).

The outcome of the research will be an ethnographic description of a community as revealed by the images and objects they make and use. The production of a film which explores an event that visually represents the values of the community is a logical extension of our interests in ethnographies of communication and in film as communication in general.

Our interest in auctions began prior to our search for a film subject. We attended these events on a regular basis as a social activity, as entertainment, and as a place to hunt for bargains. We began as participants, became observers and finally analysts as we came to understand the importance of these events. The sales are a microcosm of the processes of social interaction and organization that we have been studying. They are events in which these processes are patently enacted in a distinctly filmable way.
LITERATURE AND FILMS ABOUT AUCTIONS

The scholarly study of auctions and auctioneering has been largely confined to economics with occasional forays into folklore and linguistics that focused on its marketplace qualities (Cassady 1967), or on the auctioneer's performance (Steed 1977; Abel 1979; Barrick 1974; Rayfield 1972). Only anecdotal commentary about the auction as a social institution exists (Slack 1967; Gutelius 1922; Rockmore and Rockmore 1974; Westerfield 1937; March and Aspinall 1971; Brough 1963; Clark and Halford 1978).

In their comprehensive filmography Ferris and Peiser (1976) list three films on auctions and auctioneers -- Ray Lum - Mule Trader, Bus Mars - Auctioneer, and Folklife Number One. In 1977 Werner Herzog produced How Much Wood Would A Woodchuck Chuck? about the world championship contest for livestock auctioneers in New Holland, Pennsylvania. Jeff Vaughn and John Schott produced a biographical film, Robert Scull, America's Pop Collector organized around a Parke-Bernet fine art auction in Manhattan. Most recently Dinty Moore made The Auction Film, a survey of several Pennsylvania auctions. These films concentrate upon straightforward description and upon the performance of the auctioneer. With the exception of the Scull film, no one attempted to place the performance or the event into any socio-cultural context. They are character studies of "interesting" people and records of "exotic" events. Our research and film will correct this lacuna and, to our knowledge, will be the first attempt to describe and analyze the auction as a cultural institution (Steed 1977:2).

ANALYTIC STRUCTURE: THE AUCTION AS SOCIAL PROCESS

The film will move from a rendering of the sensual surface of a sale to an examination of its role in maintaining and transmitting culture. An auction is an inherently exciting event that engrosses all who watch. It is a rhythmic, sensual, faintly archaic ceremony reverberating with a mixture of sentimental, celebratory, economic, and pragmatic features. It demands our attention and yet there is more than meets the eye.
Viewed across time and within the life of the community, the auction is a social institution -- a ritual solution to the end of a family cycle. It is part of a cross-generational process of familial exchange and transmission and a way for the community to deal with the death of a member.

An auction occupies a particular place in a family's cycle of growth and exchange. A family's history follows a pattern which has three primary phases (Fortes 1958). Each phase has characteristic processes for pooling, exchanging, and sharing material possessions. The **Expansion** phase is a period beginning at marriage and lasting through the children's dependency upon their parents. During this stage the new family receives substantial material assistance. This is a period of marked acquisition and accumulation as furnishings are taken from parents and siblings. These exchanges continue, usually at a reduced and increasingly reciprocal level, until **Dispersion** begins with the marriage of the oldest child. It continues until all are married and beginning their own families. Parental attention now turns toward assisting their children in forming a household. Goods from the family home circulate as "endowments upon departure" and are supplemented by gift-giving and pooling of extra possessions. The final phase, **Replacement**, is the stage during which the farm is turned over to the offspring in rural communities. It is the retirement from active economic life by the parents. It ends with the death of the parents and their replacement in the family structure by their children.

Located at the end of the **Replacement** phase, the auction occurs at a critical moment in the history of a family not simply at the time of death but when a household is to be disbanded -- the death of a social unit. The family has an organizational as well as an emotional problem. There is a need to restructure relationships, adapt customary activities and redistribute roles, responsibilities, and the material wealth of the founding household. The business of inheritance is central to the negotiation of family relationships at this time (Goody 1976:3).

The process of dividing the property becomes a vehicle for testing and enacting the new family order. While rules of inheritance in some cultures provide for preferential treatment of one group over another, estate sales in Juniata County are egalitarian. County residents will tell you that they don't want to
disagree and they don't want their survivors to argue over "who gets what." They are firm in the belief that each heir should receive an equal share. The auction provides a solution in which each family member will have equal access to bid like everyone else on items desired by several heirs.

Possessions are thought of as important elements in a family's legacy. For example, pieces of furniture dating back several generations may be willed to particular individuals to insure their continuation within the family. Prior to the sale family members will sometimes arrange for a partial division of major possessions. Whatever the final mixture of specified inheritance, informal negotiation or competitive bidding at sale, the auction is commonly implicated in the processes of give-and-take. It provides a method of distribution consistent with the prevailing tendency to minimize disputes and the display of major inequities in material resources.

The auction assumes an important significance in the renegotiation and adaptation of organization at this transitional moment in a family's life. It is, however, a narrowly conceived moment. For in actuality, neither family integration nor exchange are restricted to this period. Rather, each process is continuous. The auction is one of the cycle of events that spans generations. The idea that the auction, as a method of inheritance, serves as an event through which families renegotiate their roles and relationships is central to the film.

However, the death of an individual is more than just a family matter. It is a loss for the community. It threatens the existence of the group (Radcliffe-Brown 1964:285; Goody 1962, 1974; Warner 1959). It therefore necessitates an organized response to provide for continuity in the succession of members (Blauner 1977).

The estate sale is located within the "rites of integration" — a final rite within a funerary cycle constructed by society to accommodate death. Integration occurs when both the living and dead acquire their new statuses. The survivors become part of the newly reorganized family and community structure and the deceased becomes an ancestor. Within this "rite of passage" (Van Gennep 1960), the auction represents a final phase wherein society transforms the death from a private event into a public means to sustain itself.
These formulations take substance when we look at the auctions in Juniata County. They are public occasions that invite extended community scrutiny of the family, its possessions, and its handling of the event. The social nature of these "last rites" is unquestionable. In the repetition and standardization of auctions through generations, their status as rituals seems well established.

Even their timing locates them at the "appropriate" moment in the cycle of funerary rites to be considered as part of the rites of integration. Typically, sales occur six to eight months after a death. They are held at a respectful time after the spiritual work which must be done following the death -- a time when the community has had an opportunity to recover.

The sale provides for a "pushing away" of the dead as it dissolves and disperses the household. The point is graphically made when, after each sale, the pieces of the household leave in cars and trucks for points around the county and in recent years around the country. The house stands empty as the living exchange papers and arrange for a new family to fill its spaces with life.

The same sale process also integrates the community through a redistribution of the material possessions of the deceased. The objects are regularly used as symbols to document and encode references to people, events, and relationships. Auctions provide occasions whereby people acquire remembrances of the deceased and his/her family. Relatives collect possessions of other relatives, friends of a friend, and club members of another club member. It is through the acquisition of such objects as relics that the deceased makes the transition from contemporary to ancestor.

The items may be only commemorative (e.g., china or knick-knacks) yet all but the most common and least durable carry a lineage incorporating references to previous owners. When talking about anything from a house to a hat pin, you are frequently told "where it comes from" meaning who owned it before. Previous ownership is a primary property of the object. Often these things are subsequently used to recount stories of the original owner and family. They are pointed to as tangible evidence of the person concerned -- "That's her dry sink over there."

The objects may record actual relationships or they may be acquired to document those not personally known who are of some significance. Conversely, people
will often not consider attending the auction of families they dislike or who they hold in low regard. In this way the redistribution of goods serves to commemorate, and indeed to index, bonds of relation, networks of association, and the conferral of status -- in essence to document the shape of the social structure itself. The act of acquiring these objects serves to announce the purchaser's appreciation of the deceased or their relationship and thus to demonstrate the new owner's continuing membership in the community's value system.

Auctions are grand viewing events. Prior to sale the family cleans, sorts, and prepares the home. We have observed elderly women actively acquiring furnishings and redecorating their homes in anticipation of their own passing. During the days leading up to the sale and during the auction, people walk through the house and examine its possessions, discussing the former owner's life. The auction provides for extraordinary access to the home -- many see the interior for the first time. The event becomes a final viewing by the community en masse and implicitly serves as a collective last summation and evaluation of the departed and perhaps in the process as quiet testimony of shared values.

While the social aspects of the auction are important and provide the analytic framework for the film, it should not be forgotten that the economic functions are primary in the minds of the participants. It is the most apparent reason for the event. An estate sale is a subset of a larger form of economic activity known simply as sales or auctions. These activities constitute an important component of the economic system of this county.

Young families rely on sales for furnishings to set up households. Established families attend in order to supplement or replace their material inventory to avoid the high cost of new goods. This is a poor county and sales represent an important resource.

Recently auctions have been distorted by the influx of antique dealers and collectors. These people reinterpret the objects as antiques and carry off material and symbolic resources depleting the supply of older family items. This has created tensions between county residents and dealers contributing to a dramatic inflation in prices while at the same time economically integrating the once insular county with a regional, national, and even international marketplace in antiques and collectibles.
We have pointed out that the auction occurs at the end of a life, at the end of a family's developmental cycle, and within the cycle of successive generations. An estate sale is a particular kind of redistribution within an ongoing system of familial exchange. It is a family's way of dealing with a time of crisis and transition -- a mechanism for negotiating relationships among the living.

Viewed from the community's perspective the auction is an institution which draws the family crisis into the public sphere by prescribing methods for dealing with death. The auction is the last phase of a set of funerary rites through which the dead are separated from the community and the stability and continuity of the social system is assured.

This framework suggests the multiple realities that emerge in an auction. Different meanings are found at each level of analysis. The film will incorporate and convey this analytic framework by developing four ideas:

1. The auction serves within ongoing processes of interaction and exchange as an event through which families renegotiate their roles and relationships at the death of a family member and the resultant dissolution of a household;

2. The auction serves as an important presentation of corporate identity for the family which is evaluated by the community as a means of perpetuating norms and values;

3. The possessions contain references to their previous owners. Through dispersal, the objects document and commemorate networks and bonds of association providing for the continuity of identities and lineages; and

4. As an economic activity, the auction provides a community system of redistribution while at the same time professional buyers siphon off certain symbolic commodities into the antiques market.

Through the exploration of these concepts the film will carry the viewer from an appreciation of the individual auction to an understanding of its multiple functions in the cultural life of the community.

We make no claim that our analysis of estate sales in Juniata County can be applied to all auctions in all locales, although a recent article on the William F. Buckley, Sr., sale suggests some similarities (Appendix III). The purpose of the research and the film is to provide audiences with an example of how one
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community has evolved an institutional solution to a universal problem. As we give audiences a chance to examine a Juniata County estate sale we are asking them to reflect upon their own community's accommodation of death.

PRODUCTION PLAN

Our goal is to produce a film that provides audiences with an ethnographic understanding of an auction. We are not wedded to a particular aesthetic nor convinced that the canons of documentary realism are automatically the best way to produce films about actuality. We wish to avoid the problems of the documentary that eschews narration and thereby gives the impression of describing everything and explaining nothing and of the didactic educational film with droning narration which explains so much that audiences see nothing.

Our film will differ from journalistic documentaries which give the impression of not having a point-of-view. While individual scenes may have the "look" of a cinéma-vérité or direct-cinema documentary, we violate the style of those films by breaking the narrative flow of events. We do so to prevent viewers from becoming too enthralled with the vicarious surface experience of being at an auction and to remind them that there are a number of levels of meaning to an auction.

We wish to make certain audiences know they are viewing an interpretive film. Since it is not "issue-oriented," questions of balance are not relevant. We are not seeking to persuade but to explain. We will explicate our methods and make our point-of-view explicit so audiences can understand and critique it. We intend a film clearly authored by researchers (Ruby 1981).

Ultimately the film is not about auctions but about how scholars explore the human condition as manifested in an auction. We wish audiences to understand that the analytic framework of ethnography causes one to go beyond appearances and explore ideological and cultural structures. We wish to demonstrate how one can "see" culture.

We will provide the viewer with a framework which makes the events depicted meaningful rather than simply interesting, intriguing, or exotic. Sufficient information to make explicit the theoretical position which informed the produc-
tion will be conveyed. We can achieve this goal by using a variety of cinematic devices to describe, analyze, and explain the auction. While narration will be employed, images will not be overburdened with wordy and complex explanations. Graphics, interviews, and actuality footage will convey the majority of the information. Contextual information is vital to fieldwork and filmmaking as scholarly activities. Both are constructions grounded in theory that must be explicit if the film is to have validity (Ruby 1975).

Our interview techniques are a good example of how we plan to produce footage. Settings will be relaxed and informal -- more like a conversation than an interview -- in the person's home, place of business, or the site of the sale. The interview will be treated like an ethnographic situation where the setting or context and the interviewer and his questions are as significant as the interviewee's responses. Questions prepared in advance will be tailored to elicit open-ended responses reflective of the respondent's role in the auction, upon the particular auction in the film, and upon auctions in general. Viewers will be made aware that respondent's answers are framed as responses to the particular setting, the interview, and the question. Since the interviewers will be the scholar/producers and the questions will be heard, audiences will be able to infer theoretical and methodological implications from these conversations. This device makes us less dependent upon narration to make our analytic points.

Our production plan is based upon an idealized situation constructed from observation of more than one hundred auctions. Since the core of the film is an "uncontrollable" event, the auction, we cannot provide a script as detailed as that of a fiction film. We know the cultural "scenario" and a core group of "actors" who perform culturally proscribed roles in order for the auction to take place. This knowledge provides us with strategies for shooting. For example, knowing the style and approach of the auctioneer or the somewhat standardized behaviors of certain dealers or compulsive auction-goers will aid us in deciding how and when to film them.

The auction season in Juniata County is May through November. Once we have secured sufficient funds to begin production, we will ask the lawyers and bank trust officers in the county to notify us of the death of anyone whose estate will be settled at sale.
We wish to select a sale from a family who has been here for generations and is sufficiently prominent to virtually guarantee a sale of importance. While this may sound calculating, it reflects how people here talk -- that is, they speculate about the sale of someone yet alive. Our community contacts make it possible to anticipate which auctions are likely to occur during the period in which we wish to film. During the last seven months at least six auctions have taken place which would satisfy our requirements.

The filming will occur in three phases:

1. The Preparation for the Auction includes footage descriptive of the community and the site of the sale; interviews with family members, executor, auctioneer, attorney, trust officer, antique dealers, and others who plan to attend the sale; a tour of the house with some of those listed above who will discuss the house, the deceased and his family, valued family treasures, high market value antiques, and other objects; and the general preparation of the estate for sale;

2. The Auction. We will obtain in-depth coverage of the event paying particular attention to the people and objects we filmed earlier. Since three production team members regularly attend auctions in the community, they will assume their roles as participant/observers and initiate filmed conversations with dealers, potential buyers, etc.; and

3. The Consequences of the Sale. Scenes to be filmed include the settling up of the estate with family and attorneys; and the relocation of items purchased. We will seek out the new owners of the objects encountered earlier; discuss their purchases; follow these items to their new homes and interview the owners after they have had time to incorporate the items into their lives.

In this fashion we will follow persons and objects through three phases observing the changes in roles and meaning in each context. By concentrating upon particular objects and people in these different situations we obtain footage which will serve as the central spine of the film.

Editing will be guided by our need to maintain a balance between providing the audience with the pleasure of vicariously experiencing an auction and reminding them of the cultural context of the event and its significances. The well worn cliché that films are made in the editing room is particularly apt here.
The following hypothetically describes how the footage could be organized. The opening scene will be of the auction already in progress. It will be imaged and edited in a way that emphasizes surface appearance — in the style of good journalistic reportage. We wish to establish the auction as an exciting and intriguing event — something that will attract and engage audiences. These opening sequences concentrate upon the auctioneer describing, selling, manipulating, and managing the audience through his chant, jokes, and other classic auctioneering devices. We see the audience chatting, knitting, eating, playing — at times ignoring and at other times totally engrossed in the antics of the auctioneer and the items he offers. An introduction will be woven which will establish the physical setting for the event and the lively, rich, and dynamic texture of the auction. To this point the film will deliberately resemble a standard documentary.

Once we have established the setting and those aspects of the event which are most immediately attractive to the casual observer, we will place the auction within the larger cultural context and present it as a social institution. The transition will be made by moving back in time to the sacred events surrounding the death of the person whose auction we have just been watching.

To acknowledge the grief of death and establish objects which will appear in later scenes, a visual inventory of the estate will be undertaken. During this sequence we introduce the major idea of the film — that the death of an individual is also the death of a household — and contextualize the auction within the temporal, social, and familial continuum.

From an unoccupied house with its material remembrances of the deceased we will dissolve into the same room filled with family members, attorney, and trust officer in the midst of a discussion of the will and the methods possible for settling the estate. We hear the executor read the will and watch as the heirs negotiate their desires and needs, eventually deciding upon a sale as the least contentious way of settling disputes over valued family pieces.

We watch as the family and auctioneer prepare for sale. The house is cleaned; items placed in selling order; titles to property checked; handbills and newspaper ads printed; and finally, preview times announced. During these sequences we introduce the major characters by observing them in actuality footage and
through interviews and voice-overs. By the time we return to the sale audiences will know a group of important people and objects well enough to pick them out of the crowds.

During the previews we follow certain community members through the house and solicit their evaluations of the sale, the people involved, and the objects. Among those observed are family members who covet a particular keepsake; dealers who have customers for certain items; and neighbors and friends of the deceased who wish to have something from the estate. We will return to these potential buyers in the final sequences.

Having provided viewers with a framework for understanding the auction, we now return to it. In the opening sequences the basic format of the event was established thus giving us the freedom to be selective in reporting the sale here. We now concentrate upon those objects and persons we introduced earlier. We watch the daughter of the deceased reclaim her dressing table, the neighbor acquire the settee she always admired, and the dealer obtain the oak table.

As the sale winds down and the bills are paid and trucks loaded, like other bystanders, we admire the new acquisitions and discuss their worth with the new owners. The sale ends as the auctioneer settles up with the executor.

The final sequences follow the objects and owners to their various destinations. The dressing table now is in the bedroom of a teenage granddaughter who talks about eventually giving it to her daughter to keep it in the family. The settee is a new conversation piece prominently displayed in the neighbor's parlor. The oak table has gone to Baltimore where a lawyer's wife bought it because it went so well with those pressed-back chairs she found last summer at the Cape.

Our hypothetical film ends with a conversation with the elderly neighbor lady who is having her living room repapered. She knew the deceased and thought his sale was well done. She's glad she has the same attorney and hopes the auctioneer will do as well for her. The new settee certainly makes her parlor look nice. The family who used to own it took real good care of it. She's certain that it will go to a nice family when she has her sale.

**DISTRIBUTION PLANS**

1. We plan to offer the completed film to the Public Broadcasting System via a station that broadcasts in the Juniata County area. WITT-TV, Channel 33
in Hershey or WPSX-TV, Channel 3 in University Park (Appendix II).

2. The Principal Investigator is currently seeking funds to support locally produced programs for transmission within the Juniata County cable systems. Should the project occur, the film will be offered for local programming without charge.

3. Copies of the film will be given to the local library for free circulation within the county.

4. The film will be screened and critiqued at academic meetings such as The American Anthropological Association and at film conferences like The Robert Flaherty Film Seminar. These screenings will have two functions -- to provide the producers with critical feedback and to announce the availability of the film to potential users.

5. A distributor will be sought who will aggressively promote the film for both the domestic and foreign non-theatrical market, as well as television and other markets. Non-film methods of distribution will also be explored (e.g., videotape, videodisc, etc.).

6. The producers will hold a series of screenings in Juniata County for various community groups. We plan to conduct discussions in conjunction with the screenings in order to provide us with community response.

7. The producers will write study guides to accompany the film. We also intend to chronicle the production in order to provide an ethnographic description of the making of the film. The account will be prepared for scholarly publication thus making our methods available for scholarly examination.
FOOTNOTES

1There are several kinds of auctions or sales. In this project we will concentrate upon only one kind -- the estate sale or auction. Throughout the proposal the terms sale and auction will be used to denote estate sale or auction only.

2According to the U.S. Census standards, Juniata County is one hundred percent rural (that is, it has no towns over 5,000 population). The largest municipality is Mifflintown, the county seat with about 900 citizens. People live in scattered villages, hamlets, and on farms. However, they strongly identify with the county as a social, economic, political, and geographic unit. We therefore feel comfortable in labeling the county a community and refer to it in that fashion in the proposal.

3We have no panel of humanists as consultants for this production because the producer/directors are humanist scholars who have both subject matter and production competencies. Additional consultants would only add to the cost of the project. We have informally discussed our ideas with experts in Pennsylvania folklore and a psychiatrist whose research involves a study of social mechanisms for the accommodation of death.

4There is an ethical tradition in social science of protecting the people you study by changing their names. You cannot do that effectively in a film. Our knowledge of the community and some people who will undoubtedly be in the film (e.g., the auctioneer) leads us to believe they will welcome the film in the same open and giving way they have treated our other work. Our view of the importance of the auction is very similar to their view. We will not be filming strangers in this project nor will we be presenting an interpretation that is alien or offensive to them. We will screen some of the rushes for some of the people in the film as part of our editing process. Their responses will be carefully considered. We have three ethical obligations: to represent the community as fairly as possible; to be true to our research findings; and to communicate the knowledge we obtained and how we obtained it to our audiences (Ruby 1981). All three responsibilities have been carefully thought about and discussed. We intend to continue conducting research in this community for a number of years.
and plan to present the finished film to the community in several public screenings. The need for continued access will certainly cause us to be sensitive to the feelings of the community without in any way compromising our findings or viewpoint.

5 Robert Aibel's research into the role of painting as an art world in Juniata County was privately funded. Christopher Musello's study of the home as a communication event was funded by The Annenberg School of Communications of The University of Pennsylvania. Jay Ruby's study of film, photography, and television was funded by The National Endowment for the Arts, The Wenner-Gren Foundation, Temple University, and a private donor. The research which resulted in this film proposal was not directly funded, but evolved out of the research projects of these three individuals. We have received no funding to prepare this proposal.
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