

A Survey of Shiloh Arts¹

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ONE DIMENSION OF THE LIFE of twentieth century North American communal organizations has received little attention. The artistic expression of such communities, their artistic works, communal aesthetic values, and artists, reveal much about how these groups achieved social cohesion.

Shiloh,² the largest group within the Jesus Movement,³ was one such contemporary communal group. Founded in 1968 in Costa Mesa, California, it comprised in its heyday approximately 50 communes stretching from the Virgin Islands to Fairbanks. These communes contained approximately 1000 members. By 1989, when David T. Stewart is in the department of Near Eastern studies at the University of California Berkeley.

1. An earlier draft of this paper was presented at the Seventeenth Annual Conference of the National Historic Communal Societies Association, Hancock, Massachusetts and Mt. Lebanon, New York, October 1990.

2. The author was a participant and leader in the group from 1968-1978. For further background on Shiloh see James T. Richardson, et. al., *Organized Miracles: A Study of a Contemporary Youth Communal, Fundamentalist Organization* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1979). In Richardson's book Shiloh is known by the pseudonym "Christ Communal Organization" or CCO. See also Joe V. Peterson, "Jesus People: Christ, Communes and the Counterculture of the Late Twentieth Century in the Pacific Northwest" (M.A. thesis, Northwest Christian College, 1990).

Shiloh documents are archived at Special Collections, Knight Library, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon; The Institute for the Study of American Religion, University of California at Santa Barbara; and The Center for Communal Studies, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville, Indiana.

For additional bibliography, see Anthony J. Blasi and Michael W. Cuneo, *The Sociology of Religion: An Organizational Bibliography*, Garland Library of Sociology, v. 18 (New York and London: Garland Publishing Co., 1990), 343-8.

3. In one five week period Shiloh reported 11,269 visits and 168 conversions throughout its 37 communes and 20 churches. See Nancy Bodenhausen, "The Shiloh Experience," *Williamette Valley Observer* 4/5 (February 3, 1978):10. See also "Shiloh Address List, March 8, 1978" (Dexter, OR: Shiloh Youth Revival Centers, 1978).

Shiloh abandoned its corporate shell, it had founded communes at more than 180 sites in the U.S. and Canada.

The organizational structure of Shiloh was not static. As a community,⁴ Shiloh underwent a dynamic process of development passing through at least five phases in its organizational history. From 1968-69 Shiloh was a confederation of independent communes. In 1969, these communes federated, forming a centralized government. Until 1974 individual communes retained varying degrees of autonomy. From 1974-78, all Shiloh communes were part of a centralized planned economy. As individuals married and moved out of communes, Shiloh Fellowships, or churches, began to arise. In 1978, when Shiloh's Board fired its charismatic founder, it entered a period of retrenchment, chaos and collapse. Around 1982, a remnant group found new purpose in maintaining the central Shiloh commune as a retreat center. Some Shilonites⁵ call the first two phases "Old Shiloh," phase three "New Shiloh," and phase four "The Holocaust." Many Shilonites do not recognize phase five as Shiloh at all.

Shiloh artists used media as diverse as film, sculpture, drawing, dance, dramatic performance, poetry, diaries, letters, sermons, songs, and musical composition and performance. Table 1 (p. 42) correlates Shiloh's developmental phases with preferred media.

The works of Shiloh artists embody the distinctive world view and developing artistic tradition within Shiloh. While this world view was somewhat influenced by the larger concentric circles of Christian tradition and the proximate society,⁶ the primary influences were the aesthetic values articulated by Shiloh leaders,⁷ and the communal

4. John Michael Vlach, "American Folk Art: Questions and Quandaries," *Winterthur Portfolio* 15 (1980): 354, defines a folk community as "a very distinctive form of human expression in which aspects of social philosophy dominate personal desires, in which tradition is preserved and perpetuated. Folk art is not made by just anyone with talent, . . . connection and commitment are also required; connection to one's community and commitment to its values."

5. Shilonites were also called "Shilohs."

6. Ferdinand Tonnies distinguishes between community (*Gemeinschaft*) and society (*Gesellschaft*). Building on this, Redfield sees the community as nested in a set of concentric circles representing larger communities and the society. Of course these outer circles also influence the community. See Munro S. Edmonson, *Lore: An Introduction to the Science of Folklore and Literature* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 45; and Robert Redfield, *The Little Community: Viewpoints for the Study of a Human Whole* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 117.

7. Six of the earliest leaders were artists themselves (Morich, Higgins, Frisbee, David, Frink, and the author) and acted as patrons within the community. Every leader, man or woman, had to give regular oral performances (sermons, public prayers, testimonies, songs) and, from 1971, write letters to the communal newsletter.

TABLE 1

*Developmental Phases of Shiloh
Correlated with Preferences for Media and Forms*

	<i>Oral/Aural Media</i>	<i>Written Media</i>	<i>Material Media</i>
Phase I 1968-9 "Old Shiloh"	Miracle stories, "pearlstringing" sermons, free prayer, extra verses to songs		Airplane sculptures, wall murals, sand candles
Phase II 1969-74 "Old Shiloh"	Spirituals, bands, duos, dramas, berry jokes, reduplicative phrases, long sermons	<i>Newsletter</i> , cookbook, by- laws, letters	Pottery, grave marker, single cell cabins, logo, <i>Shiloh Movie</i> , Psalms t.v. show
Phase III 1974-8 "New Shiloh"	<i>Songs of Shiloh</i> cassettes, operetta, taped sermons, skits, orchestra, <i>Commonwealth</i> band	<i>Cold Waters, Shiloh Magazine, Pastors' Interaction Letter</i> , songbook, poetry, "Ministry History," diaries	Art glass, mosaics, posters, photographs, in- house architect
Phase IV 1978-82 "Holocaust"		Newsletters of competing remnant groups and individuals, diaries	
Phase V 1982-89 "Retreat Ctr."		Newsletters, diaries	Reunion videos

values articulated within the group. The Shiloh "aesthetic" focused on artistic surrender to God. "Surrendered" artistic gifts had utilitarian value in the enterprise of explaining God's word. Central to this hermeneutic enterprise was the commune's understanding of egalitarianism, unity and faithfulness. The resulting artistic embodiments of these ideals helped the group to cohere.

Shiloh artists exchanged the personal privilege to "deviate markedly"⁸ from the Shiloh world view in exchange for participation in the group and for group esteem. Thus, social roles connected

8. Vlach, 346. "Should they deviate markedly from the usual criteria they run the risk of rejection, that is social death. This social coercion promotes not only conformity, but also the continuity of tradition and the stability of artistic performance."

Shiloh artists to their community. On the one hand, artworks bonded them to their communal neighbors. On the other hand, their works manifested community values. While their creations were not private projects, neither were they simply the dictation takers for communal compositions.

Shiloh Aesthetics

Sally Price in her discussion of Western-centered aesthetic judgments of the world's art calls for us to take "native *aesthetic* frameworks seriously."⁹ She argues that our task is to "acknowledge the existence and legitimacy of the aesthetic frameworks within which [primitive artworks] were produced" and conduct a "serious investigation into the nature of the specific aesthetic frameworks within which [primitive art] is kept alive."¹⁰ What was this framework in Shiloh? The numerous modes of artistic expression in Shiloh provided tangible evidence of its egalitarian values (anyone can try). Artworks demonstrated one's valuable participation in the community (I am making a contribution). Art gave one access to visibility (I am esteemed). Nevertheless, the privilege of affirmation by the community was bounded by the artist's affirmation of Shiloh's values in return.

The Shiloh artist experienced the death and resurrection of his or her gifts. When an artist came into Shiloh, the community expected the person to fast from using his or her gifts. "The Lord told him to set aside his art work for a season. . . ." Values of "dying to self" and "laying down one's life" inhered in this abstinence. The fast was a figure of death. The abstinence accomplished its purpose when all wrong motives were "purged" from artistic creation. "He is no longer in bondage to his art work, and he can use it for His glory."¹² Mory Jones explains in the *Shiloh Movie*¹³ that "in Christ" he saw his work was "not in vain." Although he had stopped sculpting for awhile, he now felt permission to begin again because, he says, "it was not for my glory" but rather "for His glory."

Thus, following the first step of abstinence, a symbolic resurrection of the gift by Christ was the second step in the Shiloh artist's

9. Sally Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 89.

10. *Ibid.*, 99.

11. "Glimpses: Steve Brown," *Shiloh Magazine* 2:2 (1976): 27.

12. *Ibid.*

13. 10:42-12:24.

journey.¹⁴ The resurrected gift was now endowed with a new motive, the glorification of God.¹⁵

The *Shiloh Magazine* hints at a third step in the Shiloh artist's journey. In several issues the magazine quotes Ephesians 2:10 on its poetry page: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The editor adds this commentary: "The word 'workmanship' in the Greek is 'poiema' which is English [sic] for 'poem.' We are god's poem."¹⁶ The artist is the poem of God, and in imitation of the work of God, she or he can make poems or any other artistic creation. God's creating justifies the artist's act of creating. The journey of the artist's gifts, through death to resurrection, Shiloh justified as God's "poem-making" of the artist's life itself.

The artist who has completed his or her symbolic voyage through death and resurrection, and who has prepared to create in imitation of and for the glory of the creative God, relies on the Holy Spirit for inspiration. Mory Jones explains: "Even before I came to Christ, I prayed and He showed me to do airplanes." In an interview about a dramatic production, the director said:¹⁷

We wanted to rely on the Holy Spirit to help us develop our characterizations, the Holy Spirit to move on the stage and make the drama a reality. There is a certain amount of "spirit" in any dramatic production. We wanted to rely on *The Spirit*, the Holy Spirit, to create the "electricity" on stage. And we wanted the Holy Spirit to move in the audience and touch people's hearts, minister to them and bring them to salvation as a result of the message in the drama. So I can say that at least we attempted to rely on the Holy Spirit. We feel that the Holy Spirit is an essential part of any dramatization of the Scripture, because He knows what it means—it's God's Word. We need to have the Holy Spirit in the dramatization or ultimately we fail.

This passage redefines "failure." Artistic failure was not audience disapproval, or failure of technique or vision, but rather failure of the artist to rely upon God.

A utilitarian motivation provided the rationale in Shiloh for nearly all artistic enterprise.¹⁸ As seen in the interview above, the

14. One former Shilonite writes: "I spent my whole time in Shiloh trying to die and never got around to the resurrection . . ." Jacob A. Wegelin, Personal Communication, March 15, 1991.

15. Richardson, et. al., 45, also notes this motivation.

16. See "Poetry," *Shiloh Magazine* 3:2 (1977) : 33.

17. "Drama," *Cold Waters* 2:2 (October/November 1974) :20. The author is the interviewee.

18. However, this was not always the motive. Bob Barnes, for instance, made some of his photographs strictly for pleasure and for their compositional values.

community might use drama to recruit new members. Sculpture and handicrafts could provide financial support for a community. Magazine articles could teach practical skills such as menu planning or canning. Songs and posters could teach Shiloh values.

The incorporation of words, i.e. Biblical passages, in Steve Brown's posters, or laid in mosaics, or carved on grave markers and fireplace mantels, or dramatized on stage illustrates the centrality of "the Word of God" to the community. Visual statements did not stand by themselves. Shiloh artists shaped material forms or stage tableaux to explain the "Word." This permeating word reflected the frequent daily quotation of scripture by commune members to each other. The motivation of visual quotation was not simply display of the word, but rather explanation.¹⁹

I went ahead and started the Drama Club. We started with "Psalms." When we first got into it, there were a couple of Scriptures that the Lord gave us. One of them was in Judges 5:11, ". . . there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel." So we thought this would be a way to rehearse the mighty acts of the Lord. There was one in Nehemiah 8:8, "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." So what we wanted to do is to speak the Word of God distinctly and cause it to be understood through the visualization.

A dramatic performance or a poster could be a kinesthetic or visual commentary on "the Word." The Shiloh artist was thus engaged in a vast enterprise of hermeneusis.

Hermeneutic artwork not only had the goal of enlightening commune members, but also of attracting nonmembers. The dramatic production of *Job* had the purpose of "bringing people] to salvation." Richardson²⁰ notes that "presentation of the play was considered a major effort in CCO evangelistic activities. . . ." The play was taken on the road and performed in public parks in Seattle, Washington, and Portland, Newport, and Eugene, Oregon. With similar motivation, a billboard campaign in Des Moines used Steve Brown's poster *Proverbs 1:7 "The Fear of the Lord . . ."*²¹ Mel Terry's poster, *Free Food* (Figure 1), had wide distribution near Shiloh communes, inviting homeless people to seek out the community. A 1977 outreach on the University of Oregon campus featured Terry's poster series *Know*

19. "Drama," 15.

20. Richardson, 45.

21. "News Now," *Shiloh Magazine* 2:3 (1976): 36.

(Figure 2). The goal of evangelism infused plays, posters, preaching and broadcasts alike.

The individual Shiloh artist followed a journey through the death, burial and resurrection of his or her talent. Old motives died as the new motive of glorifying God arose. The reshaped artist was

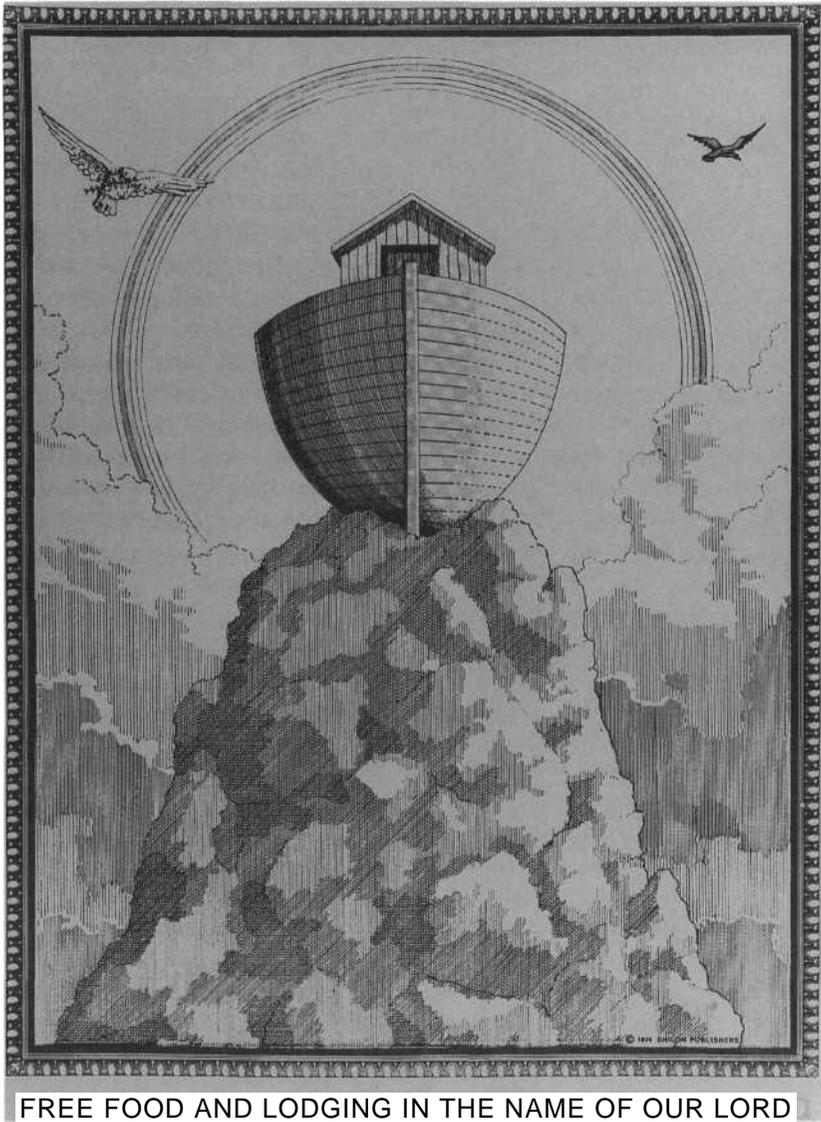


Figure 1. Mel Terry poster used to attract the homeless to Shiloh houses. Courtesy of Shiloh Youth Revival Centers.

the poem of God. In imitation of God's creative acts, the Shiloh artist reshaped God's words in a commentary. Explaining and proclaiming this word, Shiloh artworks created a vast hermeneutic assemblage of the English Bible.

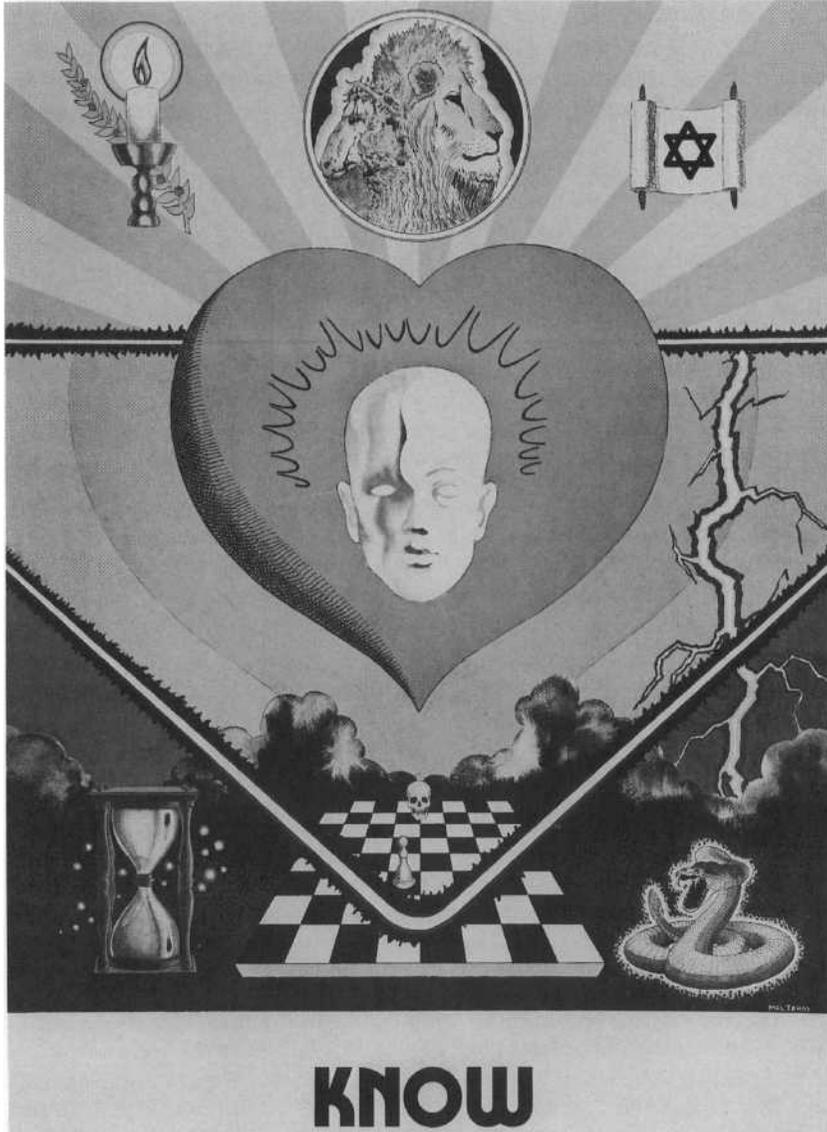


Figure 2. Poster in kiosk at University of Oregon. Mel Terry, artist. Courtesy of Shiloh Youth Revival Centers.

Communal Values in Shiloh Art

Songs. Singing was one of the chief pleasures of Shilonites. In the morning riding to work, in fields picking berries, at blessings before lunch and dinner, and in worship at night, Shilonites sang songs of joy or complaint. Recordings captured only a portion of this outpouring. The *Songs of Shiloh*²² contains the songs of twenty-six song-writers.²³ Some singers perform ballads or spirituals, or oral "variants" of them on the *Songs of Shiloh* cassette recording.²⁴ Albums of Shiloh music groups,²⁵ the Shiloh Folk Festivals,²⁶ and the sound

22. Bruce and Teresa Muller, eds., *Songs of Shiloh* (Springfield, OR: Shiloh Youth Revival Centers, Inc., 1976).

23. They include Mickey Adams, John Aiken, Dan Bond, Mike Clark, Bob Claycamp, David Evans, Kent Hall, Ed Hill, John Hubbard, Lynn Huff, Mike Hunger, Shauna Janke, Allen Lake, David Littlejohn, Bruce Muller, Teresa Muller, Patty Nonnon, Lee Osterkamp, Jeannie Owens, Pat Reams, Tom Reams, Tom Salzillo, David Taylor, Jeff Thompson, Brian Williams, Wendy Wilson. There are also four unattributed songs.

24. Jan Harold Brunvand, *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1986), 222, defines a **folksong** as a song that "consists] of words and music that circulate orally in traditional variants among members of a particular group" (222). Until the publication of *Songs of Shiloh* in 1976, all Shiloh songs were transferred orally in group settings. One trace that variants existed in Shiloh songs is found in Mike Clark's "Except the Lord," in Muller, 74. His performance on cut 10, side 2 of *Songs of Shiloh II: Exhortation*, cassette, Shiloh Youth Revival Centers, Inc., 1977, differs in wording. Brunvand also includes **spirituals** and **religious songs** in his category of folksongs (233). Several spiritual songs are analyzed below. Brunvand further defines a **ballad** as a "narrative folksong" (248). "Country Road," in Muller, 48, and "How Happy You Should Be," in idem, 72, are Shilonite examples.

25. Some of these groups were "Above the Dust", "Bonnie and David", "Morning Star", all pre-1974; "Shiloh Recorder Ensemble and "Shiloh Orchestra" in 1974-5; "Commonwealth" in 1977-8. The *Song of Solomon* was produced as an operetta in 1975. See also Richardson, et. al., 87. A Shiloh Music tape is advertised in the October/November 1974 issue of *Cold Waters*: "'Can Two Walk Together' (various brothers singing with guitar accompaniment) Cat. No. C-AI." Musicians included Bonnie and David Littlejohn in "Bonnie and David"; Dean Forbes, and Tom and Pat Reams in "Morning Star"; John Bean, Bob Claycamp and Barbara Price in the Recorder Ensemble; John Bean, David Brunson, Thomas Ellis, David Evans, Jim Feyler, David Flietner, Dean Forbes, Paul Glanville, John Howard, Stan Huston and Christine McBirney in the chamber orchestra; Jim Flickinger, Jerry Frink, Mike Hunger, Cliff Hunter, Allen Lake, Mike Langley, Louie Mercer, Bruce Muller in Commonwealth.

26. See "Shiloh Folk Festival '75," *Shiloh Magazine* 1:2 (1975): 16-25. A cassette recording of the "Shiloh Folk Festival 1976" is advertised in *Shiloh Magazine* 3:2 (1977): back cover. It features 12 songs including: "Rapture" and "Fool's Last Day" by Bob Claycamp, "Song to Brethren" by Bruce Muller, "Actor Within" by Patricia Reams, and "Precious" by Ken Ortize.

track to the *Shiloh Movie*,²⁷ each contain a few songs. However, other Shiloh songs such as "Kodiak Island Blues," a complaint song by Jacob Wegelin, or the "Western Area medley" never found a recorded form.

The published musical expression drank deeply from the values of the commune. "Sojourner's Song,"²⁸ begins: "Brethren take nothing with you/ the needs have been supplied." Not only did the artist go through a symbolic death in Shiloh, forsaking his or her gifts, but also each entrant into the community "forsook all to follow Jesus." Just as the artist found a symbolic resurrection of creativity, so the brother or sister received back "abundant life" in the community. When David Taylor sings: "Your family and your loved ones are they that love the Lord,"²⁹ he tells us that the community family replaces the birth family as the family of primary allegiance. Just as the individual is a pilgrim, so also this community is on a journey. All are "pilgrims and strangers" who may "sojourn" here on the way to the heavenly community. Bob Clay camp exhorts the sojourner: "Deny yourself daily; pick up your cross. If you follow my Savior, you'll never, never, never get lost."³⁰ Thus, the journey from death to life encompasses a daily dying and rising that echoes both the death and resurrection of one's entrance into the community, and one's destiny.

The new family of the community "one-anothers" each other. Teresa Muller sings: "let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works."³¹ When Ed Hill urges: "Exhort One Another,"³² he reminds the community of a key way to "consider one another." "Exhortation" was a sanctioned form of criticism with either the purpose of reminding community members of mutual obligations, or the purpose of warning members away from sin. The song "Be Faithful" is an example of such exhortation: "Be faithful unto

27. Shiloh Youth Revival Centers, Inc., *Shiloh Movie*, produced and directed by Roy Hicks, Jr. and John J. Higgins, Jr., 20 min., 1970, features songs written and sung by Pat Reams, Tom Reams and Dean Forbes.

28. Words and music by David Taylor, in Muller, 45; performed on *Songs of Shiloh II*, side 1, cut 3. See also the author's *A Survey of Shiloh Arts*, produced and directed by Art Reed, 16 mins., Instructional Media Services, University of Utah, shot 49, where Taylor sings his song on camera.

29. Bruce Muller, "It Won't Be Long" in idem, 51; performed [by idem] on *Songs of Shiloh II* side 1, cut 6.

30. Muller, 73; performed [by Bob Claycamp] on *Songs of Shiloh II*, side 2, cut 9.

31. "Let Us Consider" in Muller, 70; performed [by Teresa Muller] on *Songs of Shiloh II*, side 2, cut 6. Her words are a citation of Hebrews 10:24.

32. See Muller, 64; performed on *Songs of Shiloh II*, side 2, cut 2. His words are a citation of Hebrews 3:13.

the end/ in all God puts before you./ For the Lord preserves the faithful/ and rewards him in the end."³³ The ideal of faithfulness in small things could motivate, with equal dexterity, perfectionism in petty cash bookkeeping³⁴ or outhouse use. Thus, these songs call for intense mutual attention to the details of each others lives.

Jeff Thompson's "Behold How Good" contains a key exhortation for Shiloh:³⁵

Chorus:

Behold how good,
 behold how pleasant
 it is for brethren to dwell
 together in unity.

1

We are one,
 members of one another.
 The way we treat one
 is the way we treat all.
 From our hearts
 we're destroyed and divided,
 and Jesus desires
 to make His body whole.

Chorus

2

We have a job to do,
 we're not to be observers,
 we're called to love
 and surrender our lives
 We're to hold fast
 to the head, He is Christ Jesus,
 and lift each other up
 in the pure love of our Savior.

Chorus

3

When we yield
 and surrender to His will,

33. "Be Faithful," words and music by Teresa Muller, in Muller, 68-9; performed [by Teresa Muller] on *Songs of Shiloh II*, side 2, cut 4. Mama David, in a personal communication, September 21, 1990, noted that John J. Higgins, Jr., said to her that "Teresa's songs represent the values of Shiloh better than any others."

34. See *Petty Cash System* (Dexter, OR: Shiloh Communications, 1976), 24.

35. Words and music by Jeff Thompson, in Muller, 56-8; performed [by Jeff Thompson] on *Songs of Shiloh II*, side 1, cut 9. The chorus and last four lines of the third stanza are citations of Psalm 133:1 and 3a.

He fulfills His promise
 and our unity is secure.
 For there the Lord has commanded
 His blessing
 even life for evermore,
 for evermore.

Chorus

The pleasantness of unity was a central idea throughout Shiloh's history, serving to facilitate social control, yet also growing out of an experienced reality. However, Thompson's interpretation of both the scripture quoted in the song and the phenomenon itself, exposes the ways that unity could fail. Members might be treated unequally. The thoughts of "self seeking" hearts could divide. One can observe and not participate. Lives may not be "laid down." One might not lift up another or encourage. Some may not "surrender" or "die to self" through service to the community. Some may exalt earthly leadership rather than Christ. Thompson's song captures how "community" unravels. He exhorts to restore and hold the ideal.³⁶

Shiloh felt communal unity necessary not only within single communes, but also across the network of communities. Shiloh leaders perceived mutual and formal commitment to be the glue that would hold the entire network of communes together. When Bruce Muller sings: "The Lord is blessing our family of God"³⁷ he meant all of Shiloh as that family. When he continues: "The Lord has brought us through another year/ and by His Spirit He's gathered us here," Muller evokes Shiloh's annual "commitment meeting" held at the annual pastor's conference. One by one, each present would stand and say "yea" aloud. Each vowed commitment to all others present and to Shiloh for another year, "to pray for one another/ to lift each other up to our Father's care,/ and to stay with one another/ while we wait on Jesus, ..." [emphasis mine]. The very title and first line of the song, "As Cold Waters," an allusion to Proverbs 25:25,³⁸ further evokes the ideal of mutual commitment. Muller paraphrases the verse, substituting "weary" for "thirsty." "As cold water to weary soul,/ So is good news from a far country." This interpretive substitution discloses, on the one hand, the weariness of Shiloh's relational intensity. On the other hand, it promises that good news from the

36. Singing also contributed to group solidarity in the *Bruderhofs*. See Benjamin David Zablocki, *The Joyful Community* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1971), 270.

37. "As Cold Waters," words and music by Bruce Muller, in idem, 60-1; performed [by idem] on *Songs of Shiloh II*, side 1, cut 12.

38. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul,/ So is good news from a far country."

hand reaches of Shiloh would refresh the souls of all Shilonites wearied by their commitments.

The songs of Shiloh, as sketched above, call for self-denial, mutual criticism, mutual obligation to loving service, and active participation in the community through faithfulness, mutual encouragement, equal treatment and commitment. Their life situations include entrance into the community, daily life in the community, the weekly prayer meeting, and the annual commitment meeting. These songs provided an identity for Shiloh people. Shilonites were "sojourners" with a heavenly destiny, and "our family of God" for the present. An article in *Shiloh Magazine* suggests these songs were "a folk history of the Christian experience through song."³⁹ This "history" was not a history of the particular community, but was rather a mythic story for an individual to live.

Writing. Writing in Shiloh chiefly found expression in journalistic articles in Shiloh publications, letters, poetry and diaries. In 1971 the first *Newsletter* contained mostly letters from commune leaders with prayer requests and news about their communes. Gradually, this format was expanded to include some news articles, recipes and "how-to" pieces.⁴⁰ Letters were identified by writer, but other pieces were printed without bylines. One example of anonymous authorship from this period is the *Shiloh Communal Cooking Book* filled with hundreds of recipes created and adapted by Shiloh cooks to feed 25-50 people. Under the editorship of Dean Camarda, the magazine changed its name to *Cold Waters* and began to print the names of staff writers on the inside cover.⁴¹ In 1976, the letters from leaders were placed in a separate publication, *Pastors' Interaction Letter*. The title of the magazine was then changed to *Shiloh Magazine* under the editorship of John Bean and Jo Ann Brozovich. These editors gave writers their own bylines⁴² and began to publish poetry,⁴³ letters to the editor, and articles by any community member.⁴⁴

39. "Shiloh Folk Festival, 75," 19.

40. Richardson, et. al., 29, calls this a "religious whole earth catalog."

41. Paul Gniffke was the staff writer in 1974.

42. These include Barbara Bobber, Dean Camarda, Bob Claycamp, Rick Cohen, Kevin Conway, Peter David, Andy Dwyer, David Hardin, Flavio Hernandez, Nick Gebelt, Paul Glanville, Victor Graham, John J. Higgins, Jr., David Kirby, Bob Lyons, Joyce Matthews, Lee Matthews, Ken Ortize, Andy Papendieck, Larry Schwartz, Jack Sharratt, Sue Vails, and Jake Wegelin. Some of these pieces are more than reportorial and represent short theological discussions or didactic essays.

43. Poetry appears in *Shiloh Magazine* 1:2 (1975): 2-3; 2:1 (1976): 2-3; 2:2 (1976): 30-31; 2:3 (1976): 32-3; 2:4 (1976): 30-31; 3:2 (1977): 32-3; 3:3 (1977): 28-29. Poems by 25 poets are included, three of which also have songs published in the *Songs of Shiloh*. These include Bob Cantu, Sue Cohen, Kevin Conway, Jeff Cooper, Pat Cox, Darryl Day, Max

Shiloh publications such as the *Shiloh Magazine* and the later *Pastors' Interaction letter* could function to enforce social control on several levels. Not only did they represent recapitulations of the annual commitment meeting, thereby extending "commitment" throughout the year, they also attempted to instill new values such as safety consciousness. Jo Ann Brozovich as writer and Steve Brown as illustrator attempted this with humor in "Safe at Almost Any Speed."⁴⁵ However, the letters' forum of the *Pastors' Interaction Letter* enforced conformity to Shiloh values in a third way. A letter could reveal one's attitude or "balance" in communal praxis. Two letters illustrate this possibility. A letter from Gary Grabb shows one tendency to write positive "vision" letters.⁴⁶

Greetings in the name of the King, who daily puts a strong vision before us. I hope that Jesus comes back right now; but if He doesn't I want to continue to occupy and be just as zealous and just as excited as if I knew that any minute now, it might be the time. Jesus is constant and never changes. That's how my vision should be—never changing, just total belief in Him. I know that I can really rejoice in that, and I can be absolutely sure that I'm his child and that I'm in Him, by just clinging to the simplicity of the Gospel. We must continue loving God, repenting and walking humbly before Him. I don't ever have any excuse for walking in condemnation, being bummed out, or walking around with my head down. The Lord just doesn't minister those things. Everything about Jesus is encouraging and positive. He ministers grace and a vision. He tells me to look up—not down, he reminds me that I'm His child, that I have salvation, and that His desire is toward me. If He's for me, then who can stand against Him? Back to the rest.

A second letter from Jack Campbell illustrates his response to a private correction about his public position on fasting.⁴⁷

Recently, I wrote that I had been blessed by an occasional fast. I want to clarify that I am not on a fasting trip! I have fasted some; occasionally just for

Faulkner, Jim Feyler, Amanda Fraser, Paul Jacobsen, Dan Langerock, Nancy Lennstrom, Lloyd McFarland, Will van Moorlehem, Sue Mosolf, Bruce Muller, Alan Murray, Richard Myers, Diane O'Riley, Lee Osterkamp, Pat Reams, Denise Ross, Rinda Sieleman, Larene Slonski, Cathy Stewart. Included with the Shiloh songwriters, more than fifty persons were attempting to express themselves poetically in Shiloh.

44. "Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed." See *Shiloh Magazine* 1:2 (1975): inside front cover.

45. *Shiloh Magazine* 2:4 (1976): 12-13. The goal of this is to enforce seatbelt use and minimize accidents. Shiloh's liability and accident insurance costs were also rising. Economic concerns helped drive safety concerns.

46. *Pastors' Interaction letter* (March 1978): 9.

47. "San Francisco from Jack Campbell," *Pastors' Interaction Letter* (August 1977): 14.

physical reasons, and other times to seek out the Lord about something in particular. I recognize that it can become a fanatical trip, and I don't want any part of that.

The top leadership group expected every leader to write. This expectation pushed every leader to take public positions in their letters. Many letters begin with an apology for missing a month or two. If the letter was too "down," the writer could expect a telephone call from one of the top leaders. If a doctrinal statement or statement about personal piety appeared to be "out of balance," it would similarly draw an exhortation. The safest course for a letter writer was to make a positive statement about work or evangelism, or give a short testimony, ask for prayer and then sign off. Dennis Mears' letter, for example, contains an interesting, short, narrative testimony:⁴⁸

Since Paul and I have come to Orlando we've only had to sleep outside in parks and vacant lots a few nights. Different Christian people have opened up their houses to us for over a month and a half now. You know, the Lord doesn't let us down when He says to take no thought for your life, but to seek the kingdom of God first and He will bless you.

While looking for a house around here, we meet many freaks looking and asking where there's a place to crash. The Lord really gives you a burden for these people because their need is greater than our own. He gives us a ready opportunity to tell them about Jesus and a new life.

The Lord has gone before us here and the majority of the people we talk to have really listened to the gospel and a handful are anticipating the opening of the house here in Orlando. We have an open door just about every Thursday night to testify or to give a Bible study to some two-hundred black kids that get together at a meeting hall here in town. We have been blessed with a car, which has helped us get to work part time, and is enabling us also to cover quite an area while looking for a house.

Mears' letter depicts Shiloh virtues of hardship endured, "burden" for humanity without Christ, and self-sacrifice while seeking the Kingdom of God. He frames his testimony of homelessness with upbeat news of God's help in finding him shelter, a car, and telling the Gospel. He acceptably expresses the negative experience as part of a larger story about the acts of God.

The letters' forum opened the door not only to social control, but also to social advancement. Writers had an opportunity to assert their spirituality and ministry through sharing some personal revelation or vision. This was risky, because of the Shiloh value that "All prophecy is to be judged." One could appear as "out of balance" or, worse,

48. "Florida: Orlando," *Newsletter* (December 1972): 4-5.

as a false prophet. An example of a successful communication of a revelation is in Terry Mosolf's letter:⁴⁹

Today, as I was tree thinning in the Coastal Range west of here, the Lord manifested to me how persuasive He's been in my life. My old ideas and desires (of the old man) surfaced in my heart for examination. It blew my mind to see their absurdity and how they used to rule me reflected against the riches of my new life. God has persuaded me to give Him my life, go into the mountains, sweat, bleed and eat peanut butter on a regular basis to give my life joy and fulfillment. I just said, "Lord, you're mighty persuasive all right." He ministered to me that His loving-kindness is better than life.

Note that Mosolf says: "The Lord manifested to me," "persuaded me" and "ministered to me." This was a safer, less assertive way of communicating personal revelation. Such phrasing did not immediately put the revelation in the category of prophecy. Similarly, Bruce St. Onge uses "opened my heart" and "brought to my remembrance" to the same effect:⁵⁰

I was completely burned out and burdened on every side. I went upstairs, sat in the shower and just let the cold water run over me. Sitting there, I began my lamentation before the Lord. After awhile I said, "Lord, I just need to be comforted." Suddenly, the Lord opened my heart to a vast amount of understanding. He brought to my remembrance that there is no comfort outside of Christ.

Public letters in Shiloh reveal a concern for maintaining a "balanced" public image. Because the letters offered others an opportunity to exhort, writers tended to give positive testimonies, assert spirituality, or affirm values. Accounts of negative experiences were carefully framed by affirmations of self-sacrifice or of dependence on God.

Humor. Public criticism of the community's values or practices, not surprisingly, found vent in humor. Because "mocking" and "foolish jesting" were forbidden in Shiloh, the humorist had to be circumspect in the use of humor. Sanctioned humor included language jokes like: "It's been a berry vine year," or "Get your palms red," with the response "Berry funny" if you lived at the Shiloh berry farm.⁵¹ Food jokes, such as one depicted in a cartoon about home-made, unsweetened yogurt, were permissible if they did not appear

49. "Eugene Brothers from Terry Mosolf," *Pastors' Interaction Letter* (August 1977): 3.

50. "Appleton from Bruce St. Onge," *Pastors' Interaction Letter* (August 1977): 20.

51. "It's Been a Berry Vine Year, or How to Get Your Palms Red," *Cold Waters* 1:1 (July/August 1973): 33-38, 43.

to be "murmuring."⁵² A writer could tell funny stories about themselves, as in Jo Ann Brozovich's "Dream Land."⁵³ Steve Brown could push the limit with his cover illustration to *Petty Cash System* (Figure 3) because almost everyone hated to do bookkeeping. The tangle of freeway spaghetti (tape?) entering into a billboard advertising "Petty Cash System" is all brilliant red. Shilonites did not miss the meta-message criticizing the chore of daily bookkeeping. In a similar way, the melody, tempo and singing style of Bruce Muller's song "Chicken Picken' " brought attention to the unearthly weirdness of catching chickens in a barn at midnight.⁵⁴

Shiloh artworks communicated Shiloh values. Through singing, the course of one's personal journey in the community became clear. The songs explained the ways of the community and helped the member's memory to recall what Shiloh was all about. Letters exposed the writers to exhortation or praise, thus reinforcing values. Humor provided a small vent for permissible criticism of self-sacrifice and perfectionism. Shiloh artworks helped the community cohere, by upholding the community's *Status quo*.⁵⁵

Oral Milieu

A complex interplay existed between orality and literacy in Shiloh. Most Shilonites were literate and read their Bibles daily. *Shiloh Magazine* published reading schedules, so that one might read the Bible through every year. Despite this, Shiloh culture emphasized speaking and hearing with the verse: "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." The Word of God was preached, expounded, explained, sung, witnessed, prayed and quoted throughout the day, so that one's consciousness of the scriptures was a complex aural/oral fabric.⁵⁶ A vast electronic address system at the main center in Dexter, Oregon permitted wake-up calls composed of scripture quotation or broadcasts of recorded and live sermons in any building. John Higgins, responding to a question as to why no other

52. *Newsletter* (February 1972): 40-1.

53. *Shiloh Magazine* 3:3 (August 1977): 18-9.

54. Words and music by Bruce Muller, in idem, *Songs of Shiloh*, 90-1.

55. To the degree that Shiloh, as an entity itself, represented a radical critique of the proximate society, these works also represented a subversion of that same society. John Lofland and James T. Richardson, "Religious Movement Organization: Elemental Forms and Dynamics," in *Research in Social Movements, Conflict and Change*, v. 7, edited by L. Kriesberg (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1984), 36, suggest that regardless of Shiloh's ideology, it was "fundamentally radical in organization."

56. See Table 1, *infra*.

books were permitted besides the Bible, answered that he wanted only "one voice speaking in Shiloh."⁵⁷ Thus, despite the fact that the letters cited above were written, they still developed out of a life situation that was primarily oral.

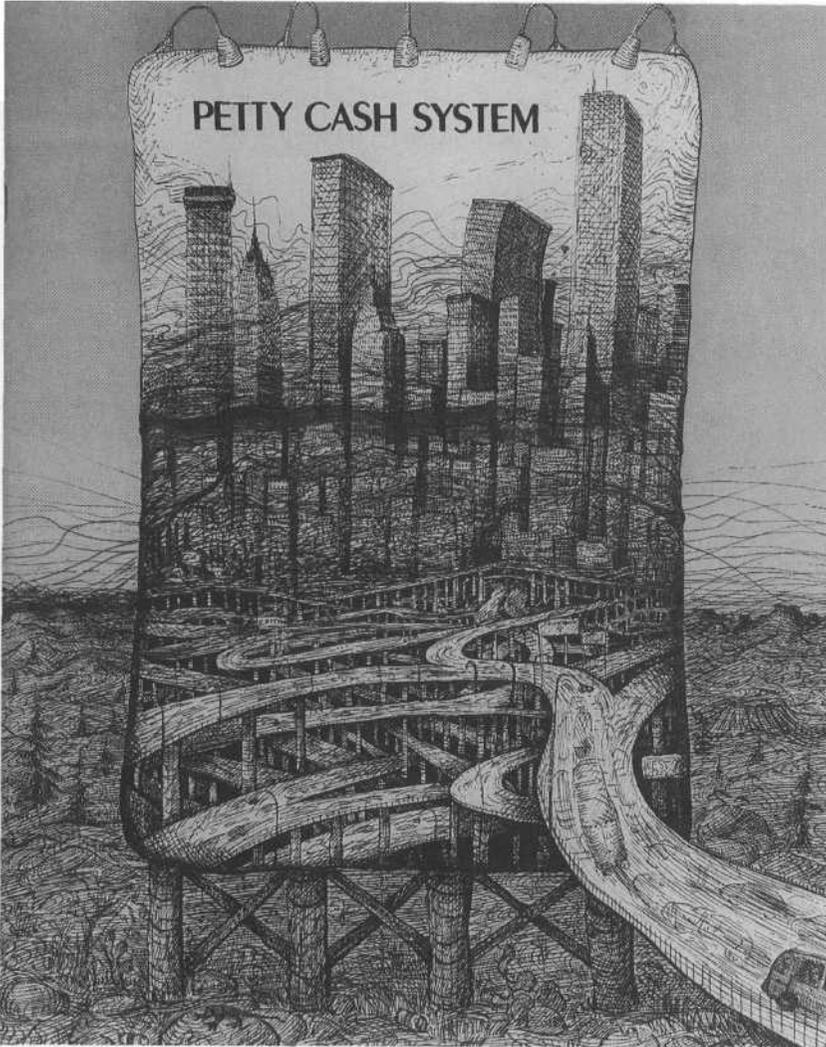


Figure 3. Cover from Shiloh's petty cash manual. Steve Brown, artist. Courtesy of Shiloh Youth Revival Centers.

57. Personal communication with the author.

Residual Orality in Letters. Farrell notes that "when students begin to learn to write in earnest . . . , they may do little more than roughly transcribe the way they talk, because they have not yet fully learned the various conventions of writing."⁵⁸ The above letters contain conversational vocabulary and phrasing from the proximate popular society such as "bummed out/" "trip," "freaks," "crash," "blew my mind," and "burned out." However, they also contain elements of the particular Shiloh vocabulary drawn from the Bible and repeated in daily oral discourse. Gary Grabb's letter contains words and phrases such as "occupy," "zealous," "visions," "the simplicity of the Gospel," "walking humbly before Him," "walking in condemnation," "He ministers grace," "His desire is toward me," and "the rest." These particular expressions collectively form an assemblage of Biblical allusion. Another example is Campbell's first letter. He alludes in the beginning to the verse "Occupy until I come" (Luke 19:13). This was often repeated in Shiloh as an aphorism to explain why Shiloh people, who expected the soon coming of Christ, worked. His word "zealous" Larry Pilgrim especially stresses in the *Shiloh Movie*. His mention of "vision" recalls the verse "Where there is no vision the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). This was commonly repeated among Shiloh's leaders. His phrase "the simplicity of the Gospel" echoes "the simplicity that is in Christ" (romans 11:3). When Campbell writes of "walking humbly" he alludes to Micah 6:8, "To walk humbly with thy God." His sentence, "I don't ever have any excuse for walking in condemnation," comments on Romans 8:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh. . . ." The statement, "He ministers more grace," reminds one of James 4:16: "But He [God] giveth more grace." Campbell quotes Song of Solomon 7:10: "His desire is toward me." He concludes his letter with "Back to the rest," an idea explained in Hebrews 4:11: "Labor therefore to enter into the rest [that remains for the people of God]."

It is true that Campbell was reading his Bible, but he was also hearing the Bible and its phraseology constantly repeated. That the spoken word was more important than the read word becomes clear in the following example. Grabb's opening, "Greetings in the name of the King, who daily puts a strong vision before us," does *not* make use of the available literary, *New Testament* epistolary openings, but rather is a complex amalgamation of Psalm 68:19a, "Blessed be the

58. Thomas J. Farrell, "Differentiating Writing from Talking," *College Composition and Communication* 29 (1978): 348.

Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits" and the formula "in the name of _____" The image "strong vision" creatively combines the Shiloh "vision" motif and the Shiloh concern to "be strong."⁵⁹

Phrases also recur over several letters. Thompson writes: "I had been blessed." This is echoed by Mears: "We have been blessed," and Helen Hill: "We've been blessed here."⁶⁰ Similarly, St. Onge writes: "The Lord opened my heart."⁶¹ Mosolf speaks of "my heart." Mears makes use of the image of opening with the phrases "opened up," "the opening of the house" and "We have an open door."⁶² Images of opening and "heart" drawn from the Bible are freely appropriated and recombined.

Brunvand identifies variant repetition, or the existence of an oral element in different versions, as one quality of folklore.⁶³ These letters freely and variantly quote scriptures. They take a word or phrase and substitute noun phrases, or exchange infinitives for gerunds, and place them in new contexts. Biblical verses, carried in a web of oral sayings, become a complex of generative formulae in sermons, testimonies, prayers, conversations, and also in letters reflecting this oral life.

Oral Performance Art. Grabb's letter has something else about it that captures our attention. It has a rhythm to it. Repetition of "I," "walking," and "minister," along with punctuating, shorter sentences give the letter a kind of breathless forward motion that has a parallel in Shiloh's sermonic speech. Grabb, a commune pastor, wrote down a short sermon in his letter.⁶⁴

Shiloh oral performance art includes sermons,⁶⁵ public prayers,⁶⁶

59. See the popular Shiloh song "Help Me to be Strong," words and music by Dan Bond in Muller, 54-5.

60. Helen Hill, "Eugene," *Newsletter* (December 1972): 15.

61. Cf. Acts 16:14, "Whose heart the Lord opened."

62. Cf. Revelation 3:8, "I have set before thee an open door."

63. Brunvand, 7.

64. Walter J. Ong in *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Routledge, 1982), 31-77, offers a model of oral style contrasted with literate style. There are many hints of residual orality in Shiloh letters with the implication of a concomitant tension between orality and literacy.

65. The Shiloh Tape Library primarily distributed the sermons of John J. Higgins, Jr. However, a few by Jim Howard and other Shiloh leaders were also included.

66. Prayer meetings were held weekly on Saturday nights, and frequently and spontaneously throughout the week at noon and other times. A pastoral prayer is offered by Jerry Frink in the *Shiloh Movie*, 4:47-7:01. Free prayers are offered by Brian St. Onge and Andy Lucik in a group setting in the *Shiloh Movie* at 12:19-12:56.

testimonies,⁶⁷ chants,⁶⁸ skits⁶⁹ and dramatic performances.⁷⁰ Two short sermons are recorded in the *Shiloh Movie*, one by Jerry Frink and another by Larry Pilgrim.⁷¹ The former is a brief expository Bible study illustrating the oral technique of "pearl-stringing" scriptures by free association of keywords. The latter is anecdotal, a kind of testimony used for a hortatory purpose. Unfortunately, the little that remains extant in any recorded form, does not do justice to its pervasiveness in Shiloh life. Sermons, oral prayers and testimonies, along with singing were a daily if not a thrice daily experience in Shiloh.

Table 2 (p. 71) summarizes and categorizes Shiloh's oral tradition according to life situation and the stage at which the orality of the artwork emerges (composition, transmission, or performance). The performance of Shiloh sermons, prayers, sayings, proverbs and testimonies are simultaneous with their composition. Sermons were transmitted orally by cassette. Songs and testimonies were transmitted in groups or between individuals. Shiloh's dramas and operetta began as written compositions distributed in written form, but were performed orally.

Simple Forms. Jolles⁷² suggests that simple oral narrative forms are universals or near-universals and underlie oral phenomena. Each form is the realization of "gestures of language" condensed to a pattern and infused with "a characteristic perspective on a typical life experience."⁷³ Simple forms have a characteristic life situation and a characteristic pattern. These forms are not individual creations, but rather events of life that take on form in language. Shiloh oral performance art contain two of Jolles's "simple forms," aphorisms and

67. These were offered frequently on Sunday afternoons at a testimony service.

68. See *Sunday Message*: 10:48-13:57. Scott Stewart, Jake Wegelin and Jeannie Owens lead the negro spiritual chant-song "Need another witness."

69. See "Study Center Christmas," *Shiloh Magazine* 2:1 (1976): 4-7. Richardson, et. al. also refers to "sociodramas", 76.

70. See "Drama"; Mel Terry, *Ass's Colt*, theater program, 1975; idem, *Job*, theater program, 1974; idem, *Psalms*, theater program, 1974 and idem, *Song of Solomon*, theater program, 1975. Major roles in these shows were performed by Dennis Davis, Jim Feyler, Ed Hill, Paula Lee, Mike McDonald, John Martin, Ken Ortize and Pat Reams. 69 persons, 42 men and 27 women participated in producing Shiloh's dramatic productions. It is perhaps a sign of egalitarianism that these are listed alphabetically under "Shiloh Players" without differentiation as to role.

71. See 4:47-7:01 and 18:03-19:12. Cf. *Sunday Message*, 14:19-30:08 for an example of how the genre developed for one former Shilonite in 1987.

72. Andre Jolles, *Einfache Formen* (Tubingen: Max Niemeyer, 1930).

73. See *Sunday Message: Shiloh Reunion*, produced and directed by Stephen Gilbert, 58 min., 1987, 29:36ff.

TABLE 2
Shiloh Oral Arts

<i>Life Situation</i>	<i>Composed as Performed</i>	<i>Composed Orally & Privately</i>	<i>Transmitted Orally</i>	<i>Performed Orally Only</i>
Nightly Study	Sermon		Taped sermon	
Sat. Night Meeting	Prayer			
Prayer Mtg.	Extra verses to spirituals & chants	Spiritual songs	Spiritual songs	Chants
Entrance to Shiloh		Ballads	Ballads	
Evangelism		Skits		Dramas

religious legends. The aphorism is a "summing up of chains of experience" in a short pithy saying. The religious legend is a kind of "imitatio of the saint."

Rhyming, reduplicative sayings are the briefest kind of Shiloh aphorism. "Dung lung"⁷⁴ and "chicken pickin'"⁷⁵ are sayings from the world of work that occur in song and sermon. One proverb, "Better to go to a funeral parlor than to a party."⁷⁶ originated in a sermon as an updated paraphrase of a Bible verse.

Emergent religious legends also come from this oral fabric. Within Shiloh there circulated a number of miracle stories, revelations, stories of answers to prayers and blessings on the faithful. These included stories about the Houses of Miracles and how they started, the naming of Shiloh and the miraculous provision of funds to buy and build the Study Center community at Dexter, Oregon. When these began to circulate in varying forms, it upset John Higgins, who then felt compelled to commit them to writing in his "Ministry History."⁷⁷ When other Shiloh leaders complained about "inaccuracies," a second telling followed.⁷⁸

Table 3 (p. 62) summarizes "simple forms" found as components of some of Shiloh's oral genres.

A Shiloh oral "tradition" appears in complex permutations of Biblical phrasing. This "tradition" wove scriptures repeated aloud into proverbs, sayings, sermons and songs. Threads of this fabric

74. See *Sunday Message: Shiloh Reunion*, produced and directed by Stephen Gilbert, 58 min., 1987, 29:36ff.

75. Muller, 90.

76. *Sunday Message*, 34:54ff.

77. See *Cold Waters* 2:1 (1974): 21-3, 29; 2:2 (1974): 25-8, 32; 3:1 (1975): 19-22.

78. Part of it is in *Shiloh Magazine* 3:3 (1977): 12-3.

TABLE 3
Jolles' "Simple Forms"
Found in Shiloh Oral Arts

<i>Simple Form</i>	<i>Life Situation</i>	<i>Composed as Performed</i>	<i>Transmitted Orally</i>
Aphorisms	Work	Redup. saying	Redup. saying
	Bible studies	Proverb	Proverb
Religious	Daily	Testimony	Testimony
Legends	meetings	Story	Story
	Homilies		

also wound their way into letters and other written genres. In this way, Shiloh borrowed a vast literary tradition, reified it in oral speech, and recrystallized it in writing.

Customary and Material Traditions

"Tradition" within a community develops along the multiple axes of oral heritage and material culture and custom. Custom related to dances, gestures, dramas, beliefs and festivals along with the materiality of architecture, crafts, visual arts, costumes and food⁷⁹ form further dimensions of the "tradition" of a "folk" group. In Shiloh's short history, the calendar of customary events framed opportunities for artistic creation and expression. The cycle of Bible studies, prayer meetings, and mealtimes offered times to sing and share songs, offer public prayers, chants and sermons.

[I remember] that day when you got us up early on our day off to go pick strawberries for that neighboring Christian farmer, whose crop was rotting. I still remember the little sermon you gave us, telling us that "we are not letting our left hand know what our right hand is doing; the (other shifts, or whatever it was) don't know we are doing this." And then as we drove, I put my head down on the back of the seat in front of me, to try to get some sleep, and instead of being able to sleep I heard that song, led by Joanna Kurtz, rising like angel music in the bus, reverberating off the walls, melding with the rumble of the engines. It was such a pleasure to hear it. The only pleasures we were allowed, someone once observed . . . were eating and singing. God what a pleasure that singing was.⁸⁰

At the Shiloh Sunday Service, a custom developed to leave an empty chair at the front of the hall. One by one, individuals "led by the Spirit" came forward and seated themselves. The chair was a

79. Brunvand, 6-7.

80. Jacob A. Wegelin, personal communication, March 15, 1991.

kind of "talking stick" that gave its possessor the floor. Each speaker would offer a prayer, a testimony, or an exhortation. A Biblical passage undergirded this practice: "Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation" (I Corinthians 14:26b). If the group was slow in getting started, someone would inevitably quote this passage.

Shilonites celebrated together in an annual folk festival and picnic.⁸¹ This large annual celebration featured music groups like Commonwealth and individual singers. Shilonites who had practiced their musical skills all year in a local commune, might share before this regional assembly.

Individual Shilonites in "Old Shiloh" called their personal "journey" through Shiloh the "Shiloh Shuffle." This reflected the constant moves from "house" to work team to house. In "New Shiloh," Higgins attempted to overcome the negative connotations of this term by substituting "Shiloh Ooze." Each person had a more structured journey from work to "lambs" school, to work again and then "sheep" school, and finally to founding a new commune.

Although Shiloh customs associated with the organization of time encouraged performance arts, Shiloh's material culture had little time to develop a "tradition." However, the incorporation of Bible verses in posters, carved mantels and grave markers, laid in mosaics and painted in designs on windows, represents a "convention." For example, Mel Terry's theater program for *Psalms* consists of a citation with each word in varying fonts and pitches. Perhaps the most fundamental convention was the use of Biblical themes and motifs for subjects in the visual arts.

Shiloh sculpture and art glass did not often make use of these conventions. Mory Jones, an early member of the community in Pacific Grove, California, welded airplane sculptures.⁸² Marna and Peter David threw pots and created art glass. Their glass lampshades hung in the Shiloh office in Springfield, Oregon. In 1968-9, Lonnie and Connie Frisbee made sand candles at the House of Miracles⁸³ in Newport Beach, California, as did Stephen Gilbert and Bob Barnes at the Savannah, Georgia, Shiloh house at a later date. Sheer enjoyment motivated some creations. Ken Baumer fashioned masks for the children's play, *Ass's Colt*.⁸⁴ Tim Lynch made spinning wheels and Ro-

81. Locations included Jacksonville, Florida; Jasper, Pleasant Hill, and Dexter, Oregon.

82. See *Shiloh Movie*, 10:42-12:24.

83. An early name for some of the Shiloh communes.

84. See Mel Terry, *Ass's Colt*.

berta Burgoyne embroidered as hobbies. Some of these projects did contribute to the economic support of Shiloh houses, but they did not "edify" the believer.

At about midstream in the Shiloh experience, an architect, Bob Huston, joined the community and created major changes in the design of Shiloh buildings at the Study Center in Dexter, Oregon. Prior to his arrival most buildings were single or double cell cabins built on creosoted poles, made from recycled lumber, and sheathed with cedar shakes. An engineer, Victor Graham, had drafted plans for the dining hall building. Huston created an "uncluttered feeling"⁸⁵ with his buildings built on permanent foundations. His buildings did not make use of decorative features except for inlaid mosaics on the brick porches of the men's and women's dorms. The mosaics featured scripture quotations in a circular design.

The earliest Shiloh communes featured murals on their walls. The Santa Ana, California, House of Miracles had a large representational mural of Jesus carrying and leading lambs and sheep on the wall of the dining room. Randy Morich, an early leader, painted this mural. Later, he turned his efforts to painting oil on canvas. The first House of Miracles in Riverside, California, featured a meeting room mural of the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven. This was also the work of an early Shiloh leader, Jerry Frink, who later became Shiloh's "music pastor."⁸⁶

With the rise of Shiloh's first publication, *Newsletter* (later called *Cold Waters* and then *Shiloh Magazine*) in 1971, illustration became important. Mel Terry was one of the first illustrators, followed by George Price and Steve Brown.⁸⁷ These illustrators, along with Richard Oden and Bob McLeod, did the graphics in the Shiloh publications. They created poster art for use in evangelism and communal decoration,⁸⁸ as well as designs for costumes, stage sets, programs, communal Christmas cards and stationary. Frequently, their designs incorporated a scripture citation or quotation as part of the design itself (Figure 4).

Bob Barnes, the Shiloh staff photographer, made many of the photographs that filled Shiloh publications. His photographs not only documented Shiloh history, as with his annual pastors' meeting

85. See "Bob Huston and Building: A Continuing Chronology," *Shiloh Magazine* 2:2 (1976): 8-12. This article includes some biographical detail of the architect.

86. Jerry Frink, "Music Pastor," *Pastors' Meeting 1977* (August 1977): 19.

87. See "Glimpses," 27, for a short biography of the artist. Other illustrators include Nancy Baker, Bob McLeod and Bob Napolitano.

88. See Steve Brown's *Proverbs* series and George Price's *Isaiah 11:6a* series.

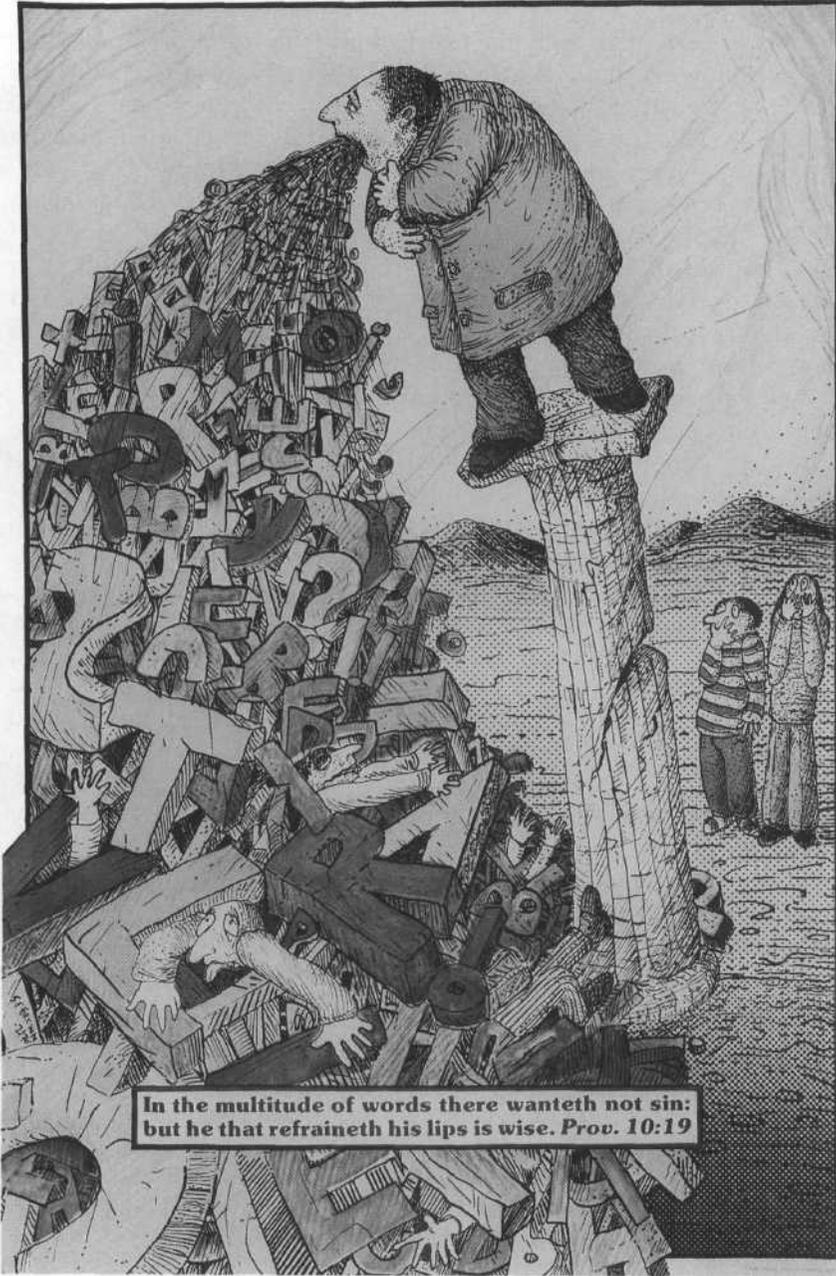


Figure 4. Steve Brown poster, "Proverbs 10:19 . . .", a favorite for commune decoration. Courtesy of Shiloh Youth Revival Centers.

photograph, but also expressed the pleasure of the eye "not satisfied with seeing."⁸⁹

At an early date, Shiloh embarked into the world of filmmaking. John J. Higgins, Jr., an early Shiloh leader who rose to the central leadership position, filmed the 1970 *Shiloh Movie* with the help of Roy Hicks, Jr. This early film was an attempt to deflect criticism that the group was "just a bunch of hippies." John Bean, a former T.V. director and communal member, produced and directed a video version of the Shiloh dramatic production, *Psalms*. This was aired on a local T.V. station in Eugene, Oregon, in 1974. Shiloh also produced a movie short on "How to Plant Trees"⁹⁰ for its treeplanting crews and a videotape about the Vancouver, B.C., commune.⁹¹ In 1987, Shiloh asked John Bean to film the "Last Shiloh Reunion."⁹²

Shiloh shaped time into opportunities to perform. Work travel, mealtimes and meetings were moments for oral performance arts. The daily round itself was marked by the Shiloh Shuffle and Ooze that circulated Shilonites within the movement. This circulation created and constrained opportunities for creating. Movement through Shiloh time and space culminated in seasonal and annual festivals where the fruits of creativity and spirituality could be displayed.

Shiloh shaped material forms with less reference to its ideology and oral milieu. Although the spoken word invaded videos and film, and although the quoted word invaded illustration, mosaics, and mantel pieces, and although biblical motifs invaded murals and drawings, these biblicizing conventions were not all encompassing. Members made works which "edified" the commune in new ways. Glass lamps, pots and buildings aided daily life. Airplanes and candles contributed in small ways to economic support. Photographs and films documented Shiloh's history. Craft works provided sheer pleasure to their makers. Shiloh's material culture tentatively stretched the definition of "edification" beyond pure didacticism or utility towards self-conscious enjoyment, in a way similar to how singing had stretched Shiloh's oral arts toward joy.

89. Bob Barnes' deliberate attempt at an art photograph: Untitled [Mannikin . . .], photograph, 1976. Shiloh photographs are archived in the Special Collections of the Knight Library, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Other photographers included Peter Eirich, David Hardin, Peter Hughes, Sam Huston, Kevin Karth, John Konc, Greg Kopan, Stephen Leanza, Tim Lordan, Steve Owens, John Perkins, Jack Sharratt, Pam Shute, Joe Sullivan, Mel Terry, Garth Viele.

90. Noted in Richardson, et. al., 29.

91. Frink, 19.

92. Approximately 15 hours of unedited video tapes. They are in the collection of Joe V. Peterson, Eugene, OR.

Summary and Conclusions

Arnold Hauser writes that "Art like language is the result of the amalgamation of a traditional collective idiom with constant innovations by individuals."⁹³ Shiloh's "folk" art was not created by a mystic collective "folk," or created by individuals who acted as dictaphones and camcorders for the community. Individuals known by name reflexively mediated the communal vision back to the community.

Shiloh's arts offered to individuals both a personal and group identity, and access to visibility within the community. Shiloh's arts taught communal values and practical skills, recruited members, aided social control, and occasionally provided financial support.

The Shiloh artist created within the constraints created by the community's values. The essential values included "self-denial," "one-anothering," "faithfulness" in performing communal tasks, "unity" of the community, "commitment" to stay with one another, "balance" or moderation in belief and lifestyle, and the primacy of "hearing" for faith. The Shiloh artist upheld the status quo within the community by helping it cohere.

Shiloh borrowed a literary tradition (the English Bible) and reified it in speech. Artworks were hewn out of their oral reification to interpret and explain scripture to the communard. This oral "Bible" found its way back into writing (as the residual orality of the letters attest) and into material forms by means of the biblicalizing convention.

Shiloh's artworks created a vast hermeneutic assemblage, a powerful display of exegesis and interpretation, interweaving the threads of daily life and Bible. Although Shiloh arts peeked through the constraints of didacticism and utilitarianism to play with enjoyment, they never embraced the romantic ideal of *L'art pour l'art*.

93. Arnold Hauser, *The Sociology of Art*, translated by Kenneth J. Northcott (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 44.