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Home, Loved Ones & Heaven: Folk Expressin in the Songs of Katherine O'Neill Peters Sturgill

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HOME, LOVED ONES, AND HEAVEN: FOLK EXPRESSION IN THE SONGS OF KATHERINE O'NEILL PETERS STURGILL

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It goes almost without saying, that the members of this thesis committee are to be gratefully acknowledged for their professional assistance and for their remarkable patience. A number of other folklorists have also been of considerable assistance in this study. I owe a debt of gratitude to Roddy Moore, who steered me in the initial stages of research, to Ken and Mary Clark, who were original members of the committee, and to my colleagues Peggy Bulger, Mike Stoner, and John Landes, who were partners in countless hours of brainstorming sessions.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

HOME, LOVED ONES AND HEAVEN: FOLK EXPRESSION IN THE SONGS OF KATHERINE O'NEILL PETERS STURGILL

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Formation, expression, and function of world view were examined in the life and compositions of folk musician, Katherine O'Neill Peters Sturgill. It was seen that the institutions of home, loved ones, and heaven were dominant themes in the formation of her world view. When twenty-two of Kate's gospel and sentimental song compositions were examined for thematic content, they were found to reflect the predominant formative influences in Kate's life. An interpretive model was developed showing home, loved ones, and heaven to be unified themes in a concept of sacred order--a concept which stood to oppose and defend against the banal chaos of the real world. Gospel and sentimental songs were examined in the context of the chaotic nineteenth century mainstream society from which they emerged, and they were seen to be functional entities corresponding strongly to Kate's songs, created out of her immediate context. The functionality of Kate's performance was interpreted in terms of a rhetorical theory of folklore performance.

INTRODUCTION

This study actually began in the fall of 1972 when, as a beginning student of folklore, I undertook to plan a program of traditional music for a folklife festival in Big Stone Gap, Virginia. Solely upon the recommendations of several local musicians, I called Mrs. Katherine Peters Sturgill and asked her to perform at the festival. I had no definite idea of what kind of music Kate would share with us, only that she was highly regarded as a representative "old time" musician.

Kate's performance was stimulating, to say the least. As she sang and played the guitar, the sincerity and force of her delivery rendered a powerful impact upon the listeners. No one questioned the authenticity of her performance or the appropriateness of her place at a folklife festival. Coming from the same cultural perspective as the other listeners, I intuitively reacted to the performance as something genuinely folkloric.

To my notions of folklore at that time, Kate'e repertoire represented a perplexing enigma. Her songs were neither Child ballads, nor Native American ballads, nor anything else that I had considered to be folksong. They sounded like folksong, but they did not fit any of the conventional genres. They were sentimental songs and gospel songs. To compound my confusion, I discovered that some of the songs were of her own composition. My fascination with Kate, the performer, and her

perplexing repertoire planted the seeds which resulted in this study.

For a research guideline, I have followed Charles Joyner's "Model for the Analysis of Folklore Performance in Historical Context."[1] In this model, he outlines a "complex system of variables affecting folklore performance," each of which I attempt to take into account. Moreover, it is the integration of factors that I found to be the most interesting to deal with, yet the most difficult to discuss.

Chapter I is a biographical study aimed at formative influences in Kate's life as a performer. I attempt to outline the community structure in terms of historical, economic, and societal forces that shaped it. Also, I attempt to examine Kate's individual characteristics and the influence of family and significant others on the formation of her world view.

Chapter II is devoted to a thematic analysis of twenty-two songs excerpted from Kate's repertoire of original compositions. These songs are basically divided into two categories which I call "home songs" and "Heaven songs." These compositions are examined for thematic content and interpreted accordingly. The result is a conceptual model of Kate's world view, integrating many themes which correspond to formative factors in her life.

Chapter III investigates the relationship between Kate's songs and the wide scale phenomena of sentimental and gospel songs, focusing on Kate's performance within the immediate context of her local community. It will be seen that this relationship is largely functional in nature, and therefore function is emphasized throughout the chapter.

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[1] Journal of American Folklore 88 (1975): 254-65 passim.

The conclusion is marked by a summary of findings, emphasizing the integrated relationship of thematic components in Kate's world view, with various formative and maintainence factors in Kate's life.

I developed a close personal relationship with Kate, beginning in 1972 and continuing until her death in 1975. During that time, I conducted interviews with her, traveled with her, and performed with her in churches and schools. In 1974 and 1975, I produced and performed on two commercial recordings for Kate, at her request. In the process, I became intimately familiar with her songs, her performance style, her world view, and her social milieu. Her family befriended me and aided me in this study. In 1975, the family honored me with the request that my wife and I sing at the funeral of Dave O'Neill, Kate's brother, whose autogiography is quoted in Chapter I of this study. Moreover, Kate's associates on all levels have cooperated fully and generously with me in the preparation of this study. She was well loved and respected in her community, and those who knew her are pleased that she is receiving serious recognition as a folk musician and performer.

It is for this reason that I have had a long standing personal commitment to this study. It has been both difficult and exciting, for there is little precedent for a study of this type. Due to the novelty of this research, I have described the study largely in terms of my own personal experience. Gospel songs and sentimental songs have remained relatively untouched as a subject of folkloristic research, and interpretation of this material necessitated certain bold, uncorroborated remarks that must stand the test of future research. Fortunately, as our discipline grows, it remains flexible; the wealth of new perspectives

in folklore in recent years has opened the doors to the study of many traditions not recognized heretofore.

CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Katherine O'Neill Peters Sturgill was born on March 3, 1907 and died on June 19, 1975. Kate's entire life, except for a few years, was spent near the family homeplace in Josephine, Virginia, and she was buried on Stone Mountain just a few yards from where she was born.

The community of Josephine is located in the coal fields of southwestern Virginia just west of the city of Norton, in Wise County. Situated on the eastern edge of the Cumberland Plateau, the community shares a heritage and ethnicity common to much of the Southern Appalachian region. Once populated by bands of Xulan Indians, the area was repopulated by a succession of Cherokees, then Shawnees, then white settlers who pushed their way in, beginning with Daniel Boone's expeditions out of the North Carolina piedmont in the late 1700's.

By the mid 1800's, Wise County had about 4,000 citizens scattered over its 420 square miles.[1] It is believed that these settlers were of English, Irish, Scottish and German descent, typical of the pattern found throughout the Southern Appalachians. Ethnic systems gradually merged and evolved into a stable culture with its own speech, customs, and survival skills. The folklife of the area surrounding Josephine was described in print as early as 1901 by the novelist John Fox Jr. in a

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[1]Luther F. Addington, History of Wise County, Virginia (Wise, Va.: By the Author, 1956; Bicentennial ed., Wise, Va.: Bicentennial Committee of Wise County, Virginia, 1976), p. 116.

two part article for Scribner's Magazine.[1] He and others since then have documented a rich body of traditions including Jack Tales, Child ballads and other forms of folklore thought to be representative of Southern Mountain culture.

Kate's maternal grandparents were descended from early settlers of the region. Reared within a few miles of Josephine, they embraced the lifestyles of an established, conservative, traditional culture that had experienced only minor change over the previous generations. They wandered into the Josephine community and settled there during the dawn of the Appalachian coal boom. Searching through scraps of handwritten manuscripts from Kate's intended autobiography, I came across this description:

> . . . coal prospecters come buying the land for a song from the old settlers who could neither read nor write. About this time there was a new minister arrived from Kentucky. He was a school teacher and doctor. New comers was always welcomed and preparations were being made for him to preach at High Knob. His name was David C. Nickels and his wife was Clara Beverley Nickels. Their only daughter Henrietta became my mother. Grandfather erected an old grist mill near the old homeplace and it was run by water from Powell River. People visited him from many places for prayer and healing. Warts, growths, goiter, stopping blood, cancer and all kinds of sickness were healed through his prayer of faith. After his death Grandmother carried on his work. There are people living today that can testify to this.[2]

When the Nickels (Kate's grandparents) settled in Josephine, the community was reasonably stable, but the area began to experience rapid, dramatic economic and social change due to the development of the coal mines and railroads. Coal deposits were surveyed in the early 1870's and by 1894 one company was shipping coal out of Dorchester, near the

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[1]"The Southern Mountaineer," April 1901, pp. 387-99, May 1901, pp. 556-70.

[2]Kate Peters Sturgill, "When the Trains Came," handwritten autobiographical notes, Josephine, Va., ca. 1972, Personal files of Fred Peters, Norton, Va. Here and throughout this study, autobiographical materials will be quoted with the original grammar and punctuation.

Nickels' homeplace by way of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. The population of Wise County quadrupled between 1860 and 1900 and more than doubled again by the Depression years.[1] A portion of this new population was skilled or semiskilled workers. They migrated from different parts of the country and some later merged into the existing pioneer culture. Kate's parents are a good example of this phenomenon. Perhaps the best account of who they were comes from an autobiography by Kate's brother, Dave O'Neill:

> My father was a wandering Irishman named William Joseph (Billy) O'Neill, from Newbury, New York. He was a railroad construction foreman and one of the best-known, best-liked men in Wise County. We learned very little about his family or his early life, other than that he had a brother named Jack and a sister named Kate, of whom he was very fond. He ran away from home as a boy of fifteen, in the wake of an argument with his father. As he left his father told him, "Don't ever darken this doorway again!" He didn't. Billy O'Neill (called "Pop" or "Uncle Billy" by his children) lived until 1934, becoming addicted to alcohol in his later years. I remember him as one hell of a man.
>
> My mother was the former Henrietta Nickels, the only child of David and Clara Beverley Nickels. She was born at Cornville, in Scott County, Virginia, and later lived at the Nettle Patch, in Wise County, at the head of Clear Creek. The Nickels and the Beverleys were descended from the Scotch-Irish pioneers who settled the Appalachians several generations back. There was said to be a trace of Indian blood in the family--but the same is said of most old families in that area. The Indian blood may or not have been there. My mother was a very tall, strong, God-fearing woman who somehow managed to smother each of her thirteen children with more love than most people know in a lifetime. She outlived my father by some twenty-five years.[2]

Besides people like Billy and Henrietta O'Neill there was a sizeable population of more recent European immigrants. They moved into the area to work in the mines and they lived in company-owned coal camps

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[1]Addington, History of Wise County, chap. 22 passim, p. 116.

[2]Dave O'Neill, The Life and Times of a Mountaineer Game Warden, comp. William O'Neill (Fort Pierce, Fl.: By the Author, 1971), ii.

scattered around the region. When the Clinchfield Coal Company began operations in nearby Dante, Virginia, in 1909, Kate's father, William O'Neill, got a job grading roads. The family moved to Dante for a short time and Dave O'Neill offers a vivid account of the scene:

> Both John and I had long since completed all the schooling we were going to get by the time we moved to Dante. We were big, husky boys (John was 15, I was 11), anxious to earn a man's wages. We had no trouble finding employment in that bustling new coal camp--John carrying water, and I serving as an apprentice cook in a boarding house kitchen.
>
> The boss of the camp was a strapping Irishman named Bill Hurley, an old friend of our father and a man I best remember for his tremendously broad shoulders and elegant brown mustache.
>
> Most of the laborers at the Dante Camp were foreigners--Italians, Hungarians, and Turks, who came in already indebted to the coal company for the cost of their transportation from Europe. It was obvious that many of those poor people had been recruited for the voyage to this "land of the free" with grand promises of milk and honey, and then cruelly betrayed once they got here. Whatever conditions they lived under in Europe, it couldn't have been much worse that what awaited them in Dante.
>
> The immigrants lived in wood-and-tarpaper shacks, sleeping twenty and thirty to a room. They endured the most unsanitary conditions imaginable. There was no plumbing, no flooring, and little protection from the elements. Because of the attempts of many to "skip their transportation" and strike out for parts unknown, the "furriners" were kept in compounds which, if they were in existence today, would be called concentration camps.
>
> Mining safety was unknown at that time, and the inexperience of the immigrant laborers made things even worse. Many native-born miners quit their jobs and went hungry rather than enter the mine with them. It was like playing Russian roulette. There were already enough hazards in coal mining, they reasoned, without adding human time bombs.[1]

It is difficult to measure the full impact of the new immigrant groups on the local culture of the time. O'Neill indicates that there was some interaction between ethnic groups, but it is apparent that the coal fields were far from being a melting pot:

> The culinary habits of our immigrant neighbors never ceased to facinate those of us who had been raised on a diet of cornbread-and-beans-and-turnip greens, with only an occasional ham-hock or chicken or groundhog thrown in for variety.

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[1]Ibid., p. 4

> In time, as frequent guests in immigrant shacks, we came to appreciate and share their love for Hungarian goulash and black bread, as well as Italian spaghetti, pizza pie, and "dago red" wine--but the "Turkish deligh" of un-gutted goose somehow failed to stimulate the American appetite.
>
> The residents of the immigrant, or "foreign" compounds at Dante were strange, impoverished people. Their lot in life was not a happy one, and there seemed little cause for optimism that it would ever improve.
>
> Immigrants were looked down upon by the native Virginians. They were shunned, socially and politically. Since there were very few women among them, competition for the attentions of those few ladies was intense. Almost as many immigrants were killed or amimed in off-the-job brawls as in the mines.[1]

Although there was a multitude of jobs tangential to underground mining, it must be kept in mind that the mainstay of employment was the mining of coal from the earth. The job was difficult and extremely dangerous and the emotional strain alone must have been unbearable. As O'Neill observed:

> Men and boys were being carried off mining tipples all over the Cumberlands every day, Killed or crippled for life--and with little or no compensation, either to themselves or to their families. I have seen men so scared of the mines that each evening when they surfaced after ten or twelve hours of back-breaking labor several miles underground, they'd fall on their knees and thank their Creator for delivering them once again to the topsoil. But they'd be back at dawn the next morning, ready to ride that car down to hell again.[2]

The cumulative effect of this kind of stress affected life outside the mines also, and chronicles point out frequent occurrences of antisocial behavior. Yet, indigenous systems that brought social order, the traditional taboos and acculturated sanctions endemic to the area, were largely misunderstood by the new population, and the old rules of behavior were no longer effective in the new environment. Law was enforced by a few elected officials (there was no taxation until much later and then very

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[1]Ibid., p. 5.

[2]Ibid., p. 13.

little) and by coal company agents like Phelps-Baldwin. In reality it was a nearly lawless and chaotic society.

As the coal boom imposed itself on mountain communities like Josephine, it brought a veritable swarm of money, men and machines. While these factors helped build a more prosperous economy, they worked to undermine the existing traditional mountain culture leaving a complex, changing, and frequently violent society for which there were few stable elements in life. While Kate was born into an enormously complicated world, it stands out clearly that she held tightly to those few stable elements left in her environment--her homeplace, her loved ones and her religion. As Kate matured, her interest in music intensified and expanded, embracing both religious and secular forms of expression. The elements of home, family and religion shaped her musical expression, and in her songs, she in turn, emphasized these same elements.

Although the family made at least two brief moves into nearby communities, they always returned to what they considered the "old homeplace." That homeplace and extended family were of tremendous importance to Kate as reflected in her writings:

> My earliest childhood memories were in a big old two story house at the foot of Stone Mountain near Norton, Virginia. Its cheeriest memories was about a big family and all the things about a happy country home.[1]

Wherever they lived, there were a lot of people around. The family was large, and they often kept boarders in their home. Apparently it was a good environment for an aspiring young musician. There was a piano or a parlor organ or perhaps both in the home, and according to

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[1]Sturgill, autobiographical notes, ca. 1972.

her sister, Kate began to play the piano "as soon as she could talk."[1] Kate's mother sang solos in church and her father, although not a musician himself, was Kate's ardent fan. She wrote, "When I first began to sing, I could barely touch the pedals of the old parlor organ and sing the old Irish ballads for my father."[2]

I have never been able to determine conclusively what the "old Irish ballads" were, but my educated guess is they were probably sentimental songs popular in America at the turn of the century. Kate made frequent references to songs like "Mother McCree," "Three Leaves of Shamrock," and "Where the River Shannon Flows," but nowhere in her repertoire have I run across ballads originating in actual Irish oral tradition. In all resects, Kate's "old Irish ballads" seem to be more closely related to Irish emigrant ballads and songs collected in America.[3]

Almost from the beginning, there were string musicians in the O'Neill family, and they played an important role in Kate's musical development. One of those musicians was a cousin named Dave Beverley, who played the violin and sang. Three of Kate's brothers were also string musicians. They had moved across Black Mountain into Kentucky where they formed a band in 1914. One of them, John, gave Kate a guitar which she learned to play in her teens. It became her favorite instrument.

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[1]Clara O'Neill Culbertson, Fay Ledford, Fred Peters, interview in old O'Neill homeplace, Josephine, Va., May 1976.

[2]Sturgill, autobiographical notes, ca. 1972.

[3]For examples, see Robert L. Wright, Irish Emigrant Ballads and Songs (Bowling Green, Oh.: Bowling Green University Press, 1975).

One of the most constant sources of music in Kate's early life was in the church. Kate's mother was of strong religious conviction, and she reared her children in the Christian faith. This was a family tradition for, as mentioned before, Kate's grandfather was a non-sectarian old-style frontier preacher. The family showed a preference for "free-will" evangelical churches but was not strictly oriented toward any one denomination. The family went to camp meetings, revivals and regular services in a number of area churches, and frequently their mother would sing solos in church. This created a strong role model that Kate would adopt in later years.

Kate was educated in a one-room school in West Norton, four miles from the O'Neill home. There she acquired the necessary literary skills she would need in recording her songs and poems. She attended school through the seventh grade--an education which was average by community standards.[1]

In 1922, at the age of fourteen, Kate quit school and married Sidney Peters, a coal miner who lived near the family home. Kate's cousin, Dave Beverley, built them a house adjacent to the old homeplace, and they settled there. In the following two years Kate gave birth to her two children, Fred and Glen. Kate's marriage to Sid Peters coincided with some very important developments in her career as a religious singer. The extent of Sid's influence is unclear; nonetheless, he shared a major part of her life and eventually shared a role as a performer in his own right.

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[1]Addington, History of Wise County, p. 293.

According to family sources, Kate and Sid began an active participation in the community's newly emerging Pentecostal Holiness movement in the early 1920's. This was part of (and I think probably precipitated) a shift in the O'Neill family's denominational preference toward the Pentecostal Holiness Church. Although the Holiness people espoused the same basic Wesleyan doctrine as the Methodists, their worship was filled with the zeal and emotion that had characterized the early frontier churches. Methodists and Southern Baptists, on the other hand, had gradually become more restrained. While their congregations grew, they also lost some members, including the O'Neills. As Kate's sister remarked:

> They [Methodists and Baptists] weren't so spiritual at that time . . . they'd organized their churches, and they were more man-made than spiritual. They didn't have much spirit left, and then the Holiness come in, and they were very spiritual. They weren't so well educated, but still they had the spirit of the Lord with them, and a lot of Methodists and Baptists went to the Holiness Church because they felt like they were deeper and giving them more of a spiritual religion.[1]

The first Holiness Church, located in an old building in West Norton, was moved to Josephine around 1930, when Kate's mother purchased and donated land for the building. It was called the Christian Church of God. The pastor was Reverend Gordon Freeman, a coal miner who had begun preaching at the nearby Thacker's Branch Church right after the First World War. Freeman was a fervent, powerful preacher, and he believed in an intense, emotion-filled worship service.[2] It was in this church

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[1]Culbertson, interview, 1976.

[2]Kate made several home-recorded 78 rpm discs of Freeman's sermons during the late 1940's and early 1950's. One that I have heard indicates that he had an extraordinarily powerful emotional delivery.

that Kate developed her talent for "special singing" apart from congregational singing. This included solos in several different contexts, duets and quartets.

Kate's first solo singing was taken from current songbooks used in the church. When I asked her sister if Kate wrote her own material at first, she replied, "No, not at first. She'd just pick out songs in the songbooks that they hadn't been singing so much in the church when she'd sing a special, and that's how she got to writing her own songs I guess."[1] I was able to obtain a number of religious songbooks from Kate's collection. They include locally printed chapbooks used primarily for revival services and turn of the century shaped-note gospel hymnals.[2] Interviews reveal that Kate's solos were sung for regular services, at revivals and at funerals.

Kate sang religious music in small ensembles as well as in solo performances. One of her earliest and best known songs, "Deep Settled Peace," was probably intended as an ensemble piece. Initially, a local woman named Goldie Bowman helped her sing it. Kate was also reported to have sung in quartets, one of the earliest including Raymond Donner, Troy Donner and Fay Ledford. This configuration of two men and two women suggests bass, tenor, alto and soprano harmony, but I did not determine which part sang the melody air or, for that matter, which part was Kate's. It is likely, though, that singers were flexible and took either the lead or the harmony part depending on the song and the singers present. Kate is known to have sung lead, alto and tenor.

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[1]Culbertson, interview, 1976.

[2]One such hymnal, missing both cover and title page, was hand-inscribed "Treasured Song Book." It contained pre-Civil War shaped-note spirituals by composers such as William Bradbury and Lowell Mason and an abundance of J. H. Showlater gospel songs dated 1982.

Unlike many fundamentalist gospel singers, Kate developed no compunction about mixing sacred and secular song. As Kate continued her work in the church, she performed in a variety of other contexts as well. In 1927, she joined her talents with a neighboring fiddler named Vernon Frazier and the father-son banjo team of Newt and Claude Wells. Together, they formed a string band called the "Lonesome Pine Trailers." Newt Wells played mountain "hoedown" style banjo and his son, Claude, used a finger style technique he learned from a well known local musician named Dock Boggs.[1] With Kate singing lead and Claude Wells singing tenor, the band competed with local musicians for the first time in a gathering at the Wise County Courthouse. The group won first prize.

Eventually, the band underwent changes in personnel and reorganized under the same name. Newt Wells left the group, but joining them were Clifford Dye, a guitarist, and Raymond "Windy" Wampler, a singer and guitarist. On vocal arrangements, Kate exchanged lead parts with Windy Wampler in which case the other singer filled in on the baritone or alto. They were joined on tenor by Claude Wells.

The repertoire of the group included sacred songs, folk, and popular vocal numbers, and instrumental dance tunes. The following is a list of songs garnered from Kate and Windy Wampler. It is not their complete repertoire, but it represents something of its range:

"St. Louis Blues"
"Columbus Stockade Blues"
"Maple on the Hill"

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[1]Boggs performed throughout southwest Virginia and eastern Kentucky and made commercial recordings as early as 1927 for the Brunswick label. He was recorded in recent years by Mike Seeger for the Folkways and Asch labels.

"Birmingham Jail"
"Red Wing"
"Lonesome Road Blues"
"Cripple Creek"
"Cluck Old Hen"
"When the Roses Bloom Again"
"Beautiful Home"
"Shine on Me"
"Little Green Valley"
"You've Got to Walk that Lonesome Valley"
"Come Back to Me in My Dreams"
"You Are My Sunshine"
"In the Pines"[1]

Throughout the years 1928-29, the band appeared at theaters and schools all over the area. Much in demand, they played for cake walks, box suppers, and square dances. During that time, they also broadcast over radio stations WOPI in Bristol, Virginia, and WEHC in Emory, Virginia.

Times had been good for the Lonesome Pine Trailers, but good times were short lived. In fact, life in the coal fields had already begun a dramatic turn for the worse. The coal industry in Wise County hit peak production in 1926, but began falling rapidly thereafter.[2] When the stock market crashed in 1929, the coal fields were already feeling the throes of a depression.[3] By 1932, coal production in Wise County was half of what it had been only six years prior.[4] Heavy dependence on the coal economy wrought a grim result.

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[1]Raymond "Windy" Wampler, Kate Peters Sturgill, interview in Kate's home, Josephine, Va., ca. March 1974.

[2]Addington, History of Wise County, p. 229.

[3]Harry M. Caudill, Night Comes to the Cumberlands: A Biography of a Depressed Area, with a foreword by Stewart L. Udall (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, Atlantic Monthly Press, 1962), p. 167, chap. 13 passim.

[4]Addington, History of Wise County, p. 229.

The Great Depression generated a condition in the coal fields that was particularly chaotic. Coal miners, already frustrated by low pay and intolerable working conditions, sought to organize. The result was one of the bloodiest struggles in labor history. Many people chose to leave in search of greener pastures. They, in turn, were replaced by hordes of newcomers seeking work in the mines. In many respects, the scene was reminiscent of conditions during the early years of Kate's life.

People living there at the time were left with two choices--either leave and make a new life, or dig in and make a go of it. Many of Kate's brothers and sisters chose to leave; Kate chose to dig in. In following that choice, Kate embraced the stable elements in her environment--her homeplace, her loved ones and her religion. Those same elements that had been so important in shaping her life were now necessary elements in her survival. They were institutions that offered security and social order and hope to a turbulent society. Her esteem for those institutions became fixed fundamental values which she energetically expressed. In the years that followed, she became an active performer, writer, folklore collector and community organizer. Her role expanded and solidified as it took on new import. She was more than a musician. She was a spokesperson, a champion of the institutions that held her world together--her homeplace, her loved ones and her religion.

Through the Depression years Kate continued to play with the Lonesome Pine Trailers; however, their performances took place in a different context. Instead of playing in theaters or school houses for large audiences, they played for informal gatherings in neighboring

homes. These occasions included bean stringings, apple peelings, suppers, cake walks and other gatherings. Ostensibly, their music was used to draw crowds, accompany rituals and games, or to serve as a reward for participants in "workings" such as bean stringings, apple peelings and the like. But with hard times at hand, music served the more profound function of alleviating stress and reinforcing the sense of community. There were also tangible contributions the group made in the form of benefit performances to raise funds for needy people.

It was at one of those community gatherings that Kate first met Meadie Moles, a woman who would become a long time singing companion. Meadie describes the circumstances:

> Well, the first time I met Kate was, I guess it was in 1930, and and they gave a benefit supper in a little store building out not too far from where we lived for a widow woman. And we went out there to this supper, and Kate was there, she and this "Windy" Wampler . . . and quite a few others that had been playing. . . . We met quite often after that then. We found quite a lot in common, and we got to playing together and singing together, and we remained close friends through the years.[1]

Meadie and Kate shared the same musical tastes; they also shared some of the same distant kin. One of those persons was a shrewd and insightful cousin from neighboring Scott County, Virginia. He came across the mountain to sell fruit trees and to make music in the local schoolhouses. While there, he collected songs from Kate and Meadie and others. His name was A. P. Carter, and his songs shaped the history of country music.

A. P., Sarah and Maybelle Carter are credited with over 250 recordings published on more than a dozen different record labels. They were musicians of immense popularity during the 1930's and 1940's, and they are recognized as a major influence in the history of the

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[1]Meadie Moles, interview in her home in Hubbard Springs, Virginia, September 1975.

American country music industry. Their popularity was due not only to their unique musical style, but also to their tremendous appeal to the folk esthetic. They drew materials from the same southern rural audience to which they sang. As one scholar has recently pointed out:

> The Carter family are perhaps representative of singers throughout the whole Southern Appalachian area in that many songs they popularized were current within their community. Hence, their repertory may be seen, in part, as a musical indicator of the sentiments and artistic tastes of this folk environment.[1]

Interviews related to this study have turned up interesting new information about the source of some of the Carter family repertoire. Meadie Moles offered this rememberance of her encounter with the Carter family when they visited Lee County, Virginia:

> Well, they come down here. They had relatives that lived in this community . . . . I'm related to them, too, but they had closer relatives than I am. They came down here, and they stayed around a while, and they put on programs around the school buildings. And so they found out, I guess some of their folks told them about my brother-in-law, a man by the name of John Kelly. He played the guitar, and he gathered up songs, you know, here and there, and he knew the "Wabash Cannonball." Anyway they came here, and they got me to go with them to his home. So he told them he would give it to them and asked me if I would give it to them for him. And I told him that I would, so they stopped here at my house as we came back, and I gave them the words. And another one I gave them them the words to that was his song was "I Wonder How the Old Folks Are at Home."[2]

In a larger sense, this illustrates the connected repertoires shared by a whole complex of Southern mountain musicians of which Kate was a part.

Kate's connection to the Carter family was probably not unique,

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[1]Margaret Bulger Kohn, "The Carter Family Contemporary Tradition in Songs." (M. A. thesis, Western Kentucky University, 1975), p. 11.

[2]Moles, interview 1975. The Carter's first recorded "Wabash Cannonball" on the Victor label, Vi 23731. "I Wonder How the Old Folks Are at Home" appeared also on the Victor label entitled "Homestead on the Farm," Vi 40207.

for A. P. Carter knew a lot of people and had lots of cousins. "Dock," as he was known, made frequent trips through surrounding communities. Being a collector, he sought out other collectors and Kate was one of them. Kate's sister, Clara Culbertson, offered this account:

> Yeah, he used to come around here collecting songs. See, Dock was kin to my mother. He'd stay two or three days sometimes and get Kate to give him some of her songs or sell them to him or something . . . .
>
> And he'd go all around over the country and hunt up songs to sing. She [Kate] got a lot of songs from him and he got a lot of songs from her. One song was "Will the Roses Bloom in Heaven," I think that was the title of it, that she sold to Dock for five dollars. . . . I believe she did write a verse to it. I had an old scrapbook with a poem in it and she got a hold of the scrapbook and said, 'Well, let's just make a song out of this.'
>
> And I said, 'Well, Okay.'[1]

From the time I first heard Kate sing, I have sensed a strong esthetic similarity between her music and that of the Carter family. Although the repertoires of the two do not appear to overlap to a great degree, it is evident that their music is derived from a common pool of sources and operated within the same system of logic and expression. The Carter family repertoire is thematically characterized by strong emphasis on homeplace, loved ones, and religion. As we shall observe in the following chapter, Kate's own songs are characterized by these same themes. However effusively sentimental they may appear to be, these themes are part of a greater pool of functional, culture-based expressions.

The immense popular acceptance of the Carter family in southern rural areas during and after the Depression supports the argument that they served a functional role through their use of culture-based

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[1]Culbertson, interview 1976.

expressions. Through those expressions, people found release. Sentimental and gospel songs offered an escape from a troubled world and brought a message of hope. Moreover, the communal exchange of these expressions fostered a sense of identity, a sense of place and, ultimately, a sense of well-being. In that respect, both Kate and the Carter family worked to strengthen the fabric that held their society intact.

Through the Depression years and continuing thereafter, Kate threw her energies into the work of upholding her community. The government service programs instituted in the community became uniquely appropriate ways to channel those energies. Through them she found employment but, more important, she found ways to apply her creative and expressive talents. As Kate later observed:

> My sister, Clara, and I started the school lunch at West Norton School. The children were faint from hunger. We used the commodities furnished by the government and fed them a good lunch. The teachers told us the children began to learn much better, and their faces became brighter and happier.
>
> After school lunch, we started the Recreation Center where there were all ages from the cradle to the grave. We taught hand crafts, creative writing, games of all kinds, and put on plays. During this time we wrote the play 'The Stone Mountain Settlers' and put it on at the theaters and schools locally . . . .[1]

The Recreation Center was a Works Progress Administration sponsored program centered in a pole log building erected on land donated by Kate's mother next to the O'Neill homeplace. By all indications it seems to have been a hub of community activity. The Lonesome Pine Trailers played for dances there as did other community musicians such as Dock Boggs. The atmosphere was ripe for creative expression, and Kate put her talents to work.

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[1]Sturgill, autobiographical notes, ca. 1972.

Characteristically, her creations became monuments to the home community and to the life of a day gone by. "The Stone Mountain Settlers" serves as a fine example of this:

> . . . the play 'The Stone Mountain Settlers' [was] written about High Knob and the places around it using the names of such places as 'Prince's Flats' [now the city of Norton] and Gladeville [now the town of Wise] and telling how the places came to be named depicting early pioneer days with scenes of local interest. Featured in the play is an original poem and song with string music mountain style.[1]

Through her work on the play, Kate came into contact with local scholar James Taylor Adams who put together a massive collection of area folklore.[2] She also came into contact with Herbert Halpert who was collecting folksongs of the area for another W. P. A. project. In 1939, he recorded Kate singing "I Once Loved a Young Man," a version of "The Wagoner's Lad" she had learned from a lady in neighboring Harlan County, Kentucky. These scholarly collectors were influential persons, for they reinforced Kate's self-image as collector, preserver, and spokesperson for her community culture.

Her vigorous activities in the Recreation Center were concurrent also with her growth as a gospel singer. Her husband, who suffered a crippling accident in 1936, responded to a call to preach the gospel. Together they traveled to churches and religious gatherings all over the area. He preached at revival meetings and healed the sick. Kate developed a talent for testifying and singing solos and was called on frequently to sing for funerals. They performed in tandem, as it were, extolling the virtues of the Christian life and the rewards of a better life to come.

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[1]Ibid.

[2]James Taylor Adams collection, Clinch Valley College Library, Clinch Valley College, Wise, Va.

Kate worked side by side with another preacher named Gordon Freeman, pastor of the Josephine Christian Church of God. He called on her primarily for funerals and revivals. As noted earlier, Freeman's church was near the O'Neill family homeplace, and Kate frequently attended services there.

The churches, particularly the emotionally oriented ones, play an enormously important role in stabilizing the community. Through worship, people can release tension, solidify their community ties, and obtain hope in an otherwise dismal world.[1] Anyone familiar with the worship form of the Pentecostal Holiness sects knows that they exhibit a zealous emotional behavior. Seeking an understanding of Kate's performance role in this context, I learned that her behavior was more restrained than other singers in the church. She sang "heart songs" as Reverend Joe Freeman recalls:

> Kate wasn't a 'spiritual' singer--she sang 'heart songs.' She was real dedicated, but as far as seeing her get real emotional in the spirit . . . I've never seen her . . . . Kate was a good speaker. She would testify maybe before she sang and talk about the song. Back when I was a boy I've seen Kate cry . . . . She would sing songs and tears would come in her eyes, and that is about all the emotion Kate would show.[2]

Freeman responded to the question, "Would the congregation respond enthusiastically to her singing?"

> If there was conviction. They were touching songs. She would sing a song to get to them--make them change their ways. There's

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[1]See William W. Wood, Culture and Personality Aspects of the Pentecostal Holiness Religion (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1965), a carefully executed case study of the psychological and social aspects of a Pentecostal Holiness church in rural North Carolina.

[2]Reverend Joe Freeman, son of Gordon Freeman and pastor of the Esserville Christian Church of God near Wise, Virginia, interview in his home in Esserville, Virginia, April 1976. My wife and I attended Easter Sunday services in Freeman's church and conducted this interview afterwards.

still a lot of those songs sung now, but there's not too many Kates.[1]

Kate knew the value of "heart songs" whether she sang them in church, at some other public gathering, or in the privacy of her own home. To her they were a salve to the soul in time of distress. Apparently it was a time of distress, World War II, that precipitated in Kate a renewed interest in songwriting and performing. Her autobiographical account of the Depression years is followed by this account:

> Then came World War II. Our young men had to go to war, and some of them never came back. The Recreation Center was closed, and all of us went back to our work at home helping to win the war. We had to have our ration book for gas, coffee, sugar, lard, cig [sic], whiskey, shoes, and meats. It was a depressing time. So I began to renew my song writing and music.[2]

Kate's sons, Fred and Glen Peters, served in the U. S. Navy throughout the war. Luckily, their lives were spared, but many were not so fortunate. War fatalities were an imminent factor to be dealt with, and Kate reflected this in her creative expressions. She wrote one song, "The Dying Soldier," and one poem, "Our Heroes," during the war years. She began writing another song, "The Gold Stars Shine in Heaven," but she did not complete it until years later during the Vietnam conflict. Unlike many topical songs which were popular in this country during the Second World War, Kate's compositions bore a timeless, sentimental, plaintive quality, depicting the universal soldier, the universal mother, and the universal sweetheart back at home.

By the end of the war, Kate was performing regularly with her friend, Meadie Moles. Known as the "Cumberland Valley Girls," Kate

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Sturgill, autobiographical notes, ca. 1972

and Meadie played guitars and sang together drawing from a repertoire of sentimental and gospel songs, many of which Kate herself had written. In the years to follow the Cumberland Valley Girls performed weekly over radio station WNVA, a 250 watt AM facility located in the Josephine community.[1] Their broadcasts, beginning shortly after the station was built in 1946, were an immediate success and continued until 1954. Meadie Moles describes their beginning:

> We lived in Josephine you might call it, there in that railroad camp. And we lived for quite a while down in the O'Neill property down in the 'big house' they call it. The old O'Neill house.
> . . . when they built the radio station, Kate come up one day and she told me they had started the station down there and she said, 'When they get it finished, we're going to see if we can't get a program on the radio station.' . . . she went to see the program director and talked with him and made arrangements to have an audition down in the station down at Josephine. We went down and auditioned one day, and he liked our singing and told us to come back on Sunday morning. That he'd give us a fifteen minute program on Sunday morning.
> We went back and, of course, I guess we were both a little nervous . . . they didn't have their equipment right up to par at that time. . . .But the second Sunday we went back, why folks liked it so much that they began to write in and want us to sing certain songs, and we really got a lot of mail. Some of the folks thought we wouldn't get much mail from the younger folks, but we did get quite a lot of mail from the younger generation.[2]

Regrettably, the radio station did not preserve any audio recordings or program logs of the Cumberland Valley Girls' broadcasts. Fortunately, however, Kate and Meadie sang together one last time in 1974, when they were interviewed in Kate's home by a group of students from Pitzer College. A video tape of that interview begins with Kate and Meadie's re-creation of a typical radio performance of The Cumberland

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[1]Addington, History of Wise County, p. 285.

[2]Moles, interview, 1975.

Valley Girls. Their songs are listed here in order of their appearance:

"Where the River Shannon Flows" (solo by Kate)
"Jesus Beckons Me Home"
"Lord Lead Me On"
"If We Never Meet Again" (with recitation by Meadie)
"The Lord Be With You 'Til We Meet Again"
"Carry Me Back to Old Virginia"

--break in performance--

"Deep Settled Peace"
"Time Has Made a Change in Me"
"Silver Threads Among the Gold"
"Curtains of Time"
"Carry Me Back to Old Virginia"[1]

Sacred and Sentimental Songs Written and Sung by the Cumberland Valley Girls, a songbook which Kate published in 1949,[2] gives us a look at the contribution Kate made to their overall repertoire. The book includes lyrics to twenty songs and poems, of which she claimed authorship of sixteen. Titles of her compositions are listed here as they appear in the book:

"Deep Settled Peace"
"Memories of Virginia"
"The Gypsie Girl"
"Good-bye Schoolmates"
"My Stone Mountain Home"
"When I've Crossed the River Jordan"
"Climbing Up the Golden Stairs"
"That Little Old Log Cabin of My Dreams"
"A Dream of Home"
"Mountain Twilight"
"Our Heroes"
"Somewhere Across the River My Mother Waits for Me"
"Will the Gates Open to Heaven"
"The Dying Soldier"

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[1]Paul Congo, The Cumberland Valley Girls (Norton, Va.: Broadside Video, 1974).

[2]Norton, Virginia: By the author.

"Treasured Mountains"
"Memories of Home"[1]

Among the documents of Kate's musical performance during the 1940's and 1950's there are a considerable number of recordings, most of which were made on a home disc recorder she obtained during the mid-1940's. Thirty-seven discs remain, featuring Kate, her mother, Henrietta O'Neill, her sons, Fred and Glen Peters, Reverend Gordon Freeman, Meadie Moles, and several others. One of these recordings, dated 1951, is a special Christmas program put together by Kate, her son, Fred, and two others for broadcast over radio station WNVA.

In addition to home recordings, Kate also made her first commercial recordings in 1949 for Folk Star Records, Johnson City, Tennessee. Songs on the 78 rpm recording were "Little Napanee" and "The Indian's Dream," and they appeared in Folk Star's Hillbilly Series. Both songs were credited to Kate, although lyrics of "Little Napanee" are of earlier popular origin.[2] As the titles suggest, these songs were composed around an "Indian" motif. Although she wrote two other songs in the same thematic vein, these songs are anomalies which were all written within the span of a few years and represent her attempts, perhaps, to break into the popular song market. These commercial recordings did not catapult Kate into stardom, but they did extend her range as a performer and added to her prestige in the community.

With her public exposure on radio, a published book of songs,

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[1]Lyrics to ten of these songs are included later in this study for purposes of thematic analysis, see Appendices A and B.

[2]Will Rossiter, "Little Napanee," Canadian copyright 1906, words credited to Will S. Genaro.

and a commercial recording to her credit, Kate had clearly become a known figure in her community. Like other artists with a consistent exposure to the public, Kate ultimately made a statement, a world view which can be observed by an overview of her performance repertoire during those years. From the documents available, it appears that Kate showed an overriding preference for sacred and sentimental songs, drawing little distinction between the two. Her own compositions melted well into the overall structure of her repertoire and seem to be almost an amalgam of the two forms of expression. As Meadie remembered of Kate's songs, "She would always put in a spiritual word or two, and they could be used most anywhere she'd want to sing." Any distinction between sacred and sentimental songs is made even less clear when the response of the audience is considered. Take, for example, the theme song of the Cumberland Valley Girls, "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia," The song is sentimental and nostalgic in nature and makes no religious statement, yet a soldier returning from war is said to have commented, "If you'd been where I'd been, you'd know what I mean--that song carries as much effect as a hymn."[1] Indeed, it was not the separate effect of the sentimental song or the religious gospel song, nor was it simply a combination of effects that captured her audience, but a gestalt, a world view greater than the sum of its parts. That world view defined a state of being caught somewhere between the idealized past of the sentimental song and the idealized future of the gospel song. It was a world view which offered respite from the cold realities of the present.

The real world had, in fact, been hard on Kate. The close

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[1]Meadie Mole, interview in her home in Hubbard Springs, Virginia, May 1976.

family ties that she cherished had been gradually torn apart as, one by one, family members and friends died or found it necessary to move away to find work. A theme of separation from loved ones which appears in almost all of Kate's songs was, in fact, manifest in her personal experience. After her father's death in 1934, Kate's brothers and sisters began to move away, several settling on the West Coast. Two of her sisters moved to Kingsport, Tennessee, where they pursuaded their mother to come and live out the last years of her life. In 1951, Kate suffered the loss of her husband, Sidney. A year later her son, Fred, moved to Baltimore, Maryland, in search of work. In 1954, when Kate and Meadie ceased their broadcasts as the Cumberland Valley Girls, it was partly due to Meadie's having moved to another community some forty miles away. By the mid 1950's, Kate, her son, Glen, and his family were the only family members left at the old homeplace. Kate supported herself by trading antiques and used furniture and by renting small section houses located on the family property. Her earnings were meager, but she steadfastly refused to relinquish any of the family property or to move to another location. In 1960, Kate's mother passed away, leaving the homeplace in her care. In both the real and the ideal sense, Kate was keeper of the home fires, a role she embraced as her sacred duty.

In 1963, Kate married again, this time to Archie Sturgill, a disabled coal miner from the neighboring community of Needmore, Virginia. Kate and Archie moved into a small house across the road from the O'Neill homeplace where they resided for the remainder of their years. The couple was well matched--they shared a strong sense of place, many of the same friends, and a similar heritage. They also shared a deep love for music, and while Archie himself was not a performer, he quickly

became Kate's greatest fan. Kate, in turn, held a high regard for Archie and composed a song for him entitled "You Belong to Me."

Archie brought to their home a collection of 78 rpm bluegrass recordings which he listened to with obvious pleasure. His favorite song was the classic bluegrass gospel song "White Dove," made popular in the 1950's by the Stanley Brothers from the nearby Smith's Ridge community. Hearing Archie's recordings must have reinforced Kate's sense of membership in a larger musical community, for bluegrass gospel songs embrace the same cultural values of homeplace, loved ones, and heaven that are found in Kate's repertoire.

Up to this point in her life, Kate had performed mostly for the same, generally familiar, audience living in Wise County, Virginia, and the immediate surrounding communities. Her radio programs at WNVA were broadcast by a 250 watt signal which probably covered only a limited area. It is probable, too, that her commercial music recordings were not widely distributed, but sold mostly in surrounding communities. Most of Kate's media coverage reached an audience who had already been listening to Kate for years. In contrast, audiences of the 1960's and 1970's seemed to diverge into two different categories: the neighborhood audience of friends and relatives with whom Kate was already intimately familiar, and the widespread public audience of casual observers with whom Kate had never made an acquaintance.

It was in the small, intimate group that Kate developed as a funeral singer, one of her most outstanding roles as folk performer. As time passed, this role became more dominant in relationship to her immediate community where she performed less and less as an entertainer and became more prominent as a ritual singer. The very passive,

emotional quality of her performance lent itself perfectly to the mood and tone of the traditional mountain funeral. The demand for Kate's services as a funeral singer was also influenced by the fact that many of her friends were coming to the end of their lives, and they turned to her with a final request to sing at their funeral. Typically, requests would be for a song and a few well chosen words: "Kate, you know my favorite song . . . just say a few words; you know what I would like for you to say . . . ."[1] Her role as performer was sculpted by the southern Appalachian value system, which dictates modesty, passivity, personalism, and a regard for mother, home, and the heavenly home.[2] Kate's repertoire, particularly the songs she wrote, fit perfectly into this context. By the early 1970's, Kate was singing at ten to fifteen funerals per year, usually at the request of the deceased.[3] Kate had suffered the loss of many loved ones by that time, including the tragic death of her son, Glen, in a mine related accident in 1971. She was comforted by her friends in these times of sorrow. Likewise, she recognized the service she could provide others by comforting friends at the graveside with a favorite song. It was this recognition that gave Kate the strength to persevere toward her own ultimate end.

Ironically, in contrast to the small, intimate audiences who witnessed her performances as a funeral singer, Kate was also exposed to audiences much larger, perhaps, than she had ever seen before, performing,

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[1]Kate Peters Sturgill, interview in her home in Josephine, Virginia, ca. February 1974.

[2]See Loyal Jones, "Appalachian Values," Twigs, 1:1 (Fall 1973), passim.

[3]Sturgill, interview ca. March 1974.

out of context, as a folk singer. As the folk music revival gathered momentum in the South, many musicians such as Kate were brought into the limelight. Audiences, although generally aware of Kate's role as folk musician, were obviously much different than the folk audiences to whom she had once sung. Nonetheless, they were unquestionably supportive of her music. Her first performance of this type was in 1968, when she traveled with Dock Boggs to Richmond, Virginia, to perform at the Virginia State Fair. She accepted several college engagements in the following years, including one performance at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, and several performances for nearby college audiences at Clinch Valley College, in Wise, Virginia, and at Mountain Empire Community College in Big Stone Gap, Virginia. Her last real public engagement was at the National Folk Festival in Wolftrap Farm Park in Vienna, Virginia, where she participated in a workshop on sentimental and sacred songs.

Kate experienced her most prolific years as a songwriter from the late 1960's until her death in June of 1975. It was during this period that I met Kate and had the opportunity to record her songs for the Mountain Empire Community College recording label. The first recording appeared on Home Folks (MECC .001), a sampler LP album of musicians from Wise, Scott, and Dickenson County, Virginia. A subsequent LP album, entitled My Stone Mountain Home (MECC .002), was made up entirely of songs written and sung by Kate. Shortly before her death, I helped her record a 45 rpm disc on the MAG label containing two of her most recent songs, "The Old Vacant House" and "The Land of Endless Day." There are scraps of manuscript in her collection of other songs which she was unable to record commercially, but which she was able to record on a home cassette recorder.

Looking back on Kate's final days, it appears to me that she was driven to write as many songs as she could before she died. Perhaps it was the combination of esoteric and exoteric acceptance of her music that motivated her.[1] Perhaps it was Kate's way of coming to grips with her own imminent demise. Whatever the motivation, Kate wrote songs until the end. True to form, those songs clung to the persistent themes which always characterized her work: her homeplace, her loved ones and her final reward in Heaven.

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[1]William Hugh Jansen, "The Esoteric-Exoteric Factor in Folklore," in The Study of Folklore, ed. Alan Dundes (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 43-51.

CHAPTER II

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Now that a biographical framework has been established, the next step in this study will be to examine, in depth, the themes underlying the song texts composed by Katherine Peters Sturgill. In addition to plays, prose and poetry, Kate is reported to have composed over fifty songs in her lifetime. Because of her untimely death in June of 1975, I have been able to account for only thirty-three of her compositions. Of those compositions, a corpus of twenty-two sentimental and gospel songs were chosen for examination here.

Since Kate was not alive to offer conclusice proof of authorship to many of the texts, it is appropriate that I should first explain my methodology in arriving at the selections chosen here. To begin with, Kate's family allowed me to examine copies of over 100 items in her collection of song lyrics. Having made commercial recordings of several of Kate's songs in 1974 and 1975, I was able to identify certain texts which were unquestionably of her authorship. The aforementioned publication Sacred and Sentimental Songs Written and Sung by The Cumberland Valley Girls was also of great help in determining authorship.

Aside from publications, there remained a large number of song texts, mostly handwritten, which I subjected to the scrutiny of Kate's closest friends and associates. Kate's son, Fred Peters, was very helpful in this respect. He went through the collection first, removing songs

that he recognized clearly to be the property of other composers. Next, I went to Reverend Joe Freeman, son of Kate's close associate, the late Reverend Gordon Freeman. He removed gospel songs not penned by Kate. Singing partner Meadie Moles scrutinized the material as did Kate's sister, Clara Culbertson, and more doubtful texts were removed from consideration. Fred Peters again pared any questionable material from the group, leaving thirty-three song texts which can be credited to Kate with reasonable certainty.

At this point, I examined the material thoroughly and removed eleven anomalous song texts in order to draw clearer focus on Kate's most characteristic compositions. Four of the songs removed were love songs, sentimental in nature, but bearing little relationship to the larger body of texts. Of these, three were composed in the "Indian" motif mentioned in the previous chapter, and another was "You Belong to Me," the love song Kate wrote to her second husband, Archie Sturgill. Two miscellaneous songs, a sentimental ballad entitled "The Gypsie Girl" and a school closing song, "Good-bye Schoolmates," were interesting compositions, but were so different in character from the rest that I chose to omit them for the sake of expediency. A group of five songs were omitted because they appear to be adaptations or additions to well known existing compositions. They bore interesting similarities to Kate's other compositions and might well have been pertinent to this study as examples of the folk process of re-creation. They were laid aside, however, in order to expose a more homogeneous body of compositions.

Twenty-two song texts that survived this process of elimination stand as a unified body of Kate's most characteristic compositions. These selections will be studied here with respect to the world view which they

suggest. While it appears that Kate made little attempt to distinguish between sentimental and sacred songs in her overall repertoire, her compositions show a thematic orientation which justifies studying the material as two separate but related categories. The most explicit denomination for these categories, however, lies not in the use of the terms "sentimental songs" and "sacred songs," but more accurately, "home songs" and "Heaven songs." Kate's sacred songs were, by nature of the language and imagery employed, sentimental; by the same token, her sentimental songs usually included "a spiritual word or two," some sentimental songs carrying "as much effect as a hymn."[1] The rationale behind using the terminology home songs and Heaven songs will be made clear as we proceed with this study. Thus, table 1, Dates of Composition and Publication, establishes the terms home songs and Heaven songs to delineate the categories used here and throughout the study. As an introduction to the material, the song titles appear in the appropriate grouping, accompanied by relevant data.

TABLE 1

DATES OF COMPOSITION AND PUBLICATION

Title	Date of Composition[a]	Date Printed[b]	Date Recorded[c]
	HOME SONGS		
A Dream of Home	1940's	1949	...
That Little Old Log Cabin of My Dreams	1940's	1949	...

[1]Moles, interview, 1976.

TABLE 1--Continued

Title	Date of Composition[a]	Date Printed[b]	Date Recorded[c]
	HOME SONGS		
Memories of Home	1940's	1949	...
Memories of Virginia	1940's	1949	...
My Stone Mountain Home	1928	1949	1974
The Old Vacant House	1975	...	1975
Prisoner of War	1940's/1960's	...	1974
	HEAVEN SONGS		
At the Gate	1970's	...	...
Climbing Up the Golden Stairs	1940's	1949	1974
Come and Listen	1974	...	...
Deep Settled Peace	1934	1949	1974
The Gold Stars Shine In Heaven	1940's/1960's	...	1974
Home Is Drawing Near	1970's	...	...
If I'm Called to that City Before You	1970's	...	...
In Heaven We'll Never Be Crowded	1970's	...	...
In the Land of Endless Day	1975	...	1975
Lord Pull Back the Veil	1970's	...	...
Someone Who Cares	1970's	...	...
Somewhere Across the River My Mother Waits for Me	1940's	1949	...

TABLE 1--Continued

Title	Date of Composition[a]	Date Printed[b]	Date Recorded[c]
HEAVEN SONGS			
There'll Be Singing Over Yonder	1970's	...	...
When I've Crossed that River Jordan	1940's	1949	...
Will the Gates Open to Heaven	1940's	1949	...

[a]Songs which appeared in print, but for which no exact date of composition was determined, are estimated to have been written during the 1940's. "Prisoner of War" and "The Gold Stars Shine in Heaven" were begun during the Second World War and completed in the years of the Vietnam conflict.

[b]Kate O'Neill Peters, Sacred and Sentimental Songs Written and Sung by the Cumberland Valley Girls (Norton, Va.: By the Author, 1949).

[c]The songs recorded in 1974 were published on an LP release My Stone Mountain Home, Mountain Empire Community College Records, MECC .002. Recordings in 1975 appeared on a 45 rpm disc published on the MAG label.

The actual texts of the songs (See Appendix A, Home Songs and Appendix B, Heaven Songs) are characterized not by concrete expressions, but by a codified, formalized, descriptive language. Kate, the songwriter, speaks in metaphors, images, and symbols--an esoteric language made up of rhetorical codes which can, in the right context, deliver a powerful impact. As one examines a number of the songs, patterns and themes begin to emerge from the material. Interlocking images in the lyrics paint a picture of the universe as Kate sees it, expressed in personal terms but endowed with an "everyman" significance. A distilled view of life on earth is expressed through Kate's home songs; an idealized universal vision

is drawn by the Heaven songs.

In order to ascertain the nature of this world view with a maximum level of objectivity, it was necessary to employ a method of inductive reasoning. I began by examining the material as a whole, noting rhetorical codes (metaphors, symbols, images, implied meanings, etc.) which appeared throughout the songs. As many of these rhetorical codes bore a synonymous relationship, or at least a distinctive relationship, I organized these codes into larger groupings or themes. Table 2 lists the prominent themes by their assigned titles accompanied by corresponding rhetorical codes.

TABLE 2

DELINEATION OF THEMES
BY RHETORICAL CODES

Themes	Rhetorical Codes
Idealized Earthly Home	the old homeplace, old cabin home, old Virginia, etc.; always viewed fondly and longingly from a distance of time or space
Family Life	symbolized by Mother; denoted by family, friends, loved ones; always viewed fondly and longingly from a distance of time or space
Earthly Beauty	pastoral beauty denoted by flowers, birds, mountains, tall dark pines, etc.
Earthbound Travel	steps toward earthly home, roaming or wandering away from earthly home with intent to return; implied by longing to return
Desire for Reunion on Earth	reunion with parents, friends, loved ones, sweetheart, etc.
Sadness/Loneliness	denoted as sadness or loneliness; implied by tears or weeping

TABLE 2--Continued

DELINEATION OF THEMES
BY THETORICAL CODES

Themes	Rhetorical Codes
Stress	denoted as tribulation, weariness; implied by dangers, storm, tempest raging, etc.
Travel Toward Heavenly End	denoted by travel; implied by being lost, stumbling, steps getting slow, etc.
Waiting	denoted by waiting, longing, yearning; usually anxious anticipation
Paths	denoted by path, trail, highway, lane, road, etc.; leading either to earthly or heavenly place
Barriers	passage to Heaven over body of water; also mountain, stairs, or ladder
Thresholds	denoted by gates, doors, windows, etc.
Appearance of Heaven	description of arrival scene in Heaven; almost always a city, sometimes a mansion
Reunion in Heaven	reunion with loved ones, parents; with you
Heaven as Home	explicit connection of the terms home and heaven
Singing	in heaven with the angel band; on earth, people or birds sing
Joy	denoted by joy, happiness, wonderful day, etc.
Heavenly Relief	implied by peace, rescue, safety; no more sorrow, no more hardship
Eternal Stay in Heaven	denoted by stay, abide, dwell eternally
Light	denoted by light, brightness, day, etc.

Having established these guidelines, it is now possible to tabulate the recurring reference to themes in the song texts as indicated by the

presence of one or more rhetorical codes. Table 3, below, indicates the percentage of songs in each category which are characterized by given themes. A third column indicates the percentage of songs where the themes appear.

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE OF SONG TEXTS CHARACTERIZED BY THEMATIC REFERENCE

Theme	Home Songs	Heavenly Songs	Total
Idealized Earthly Home	100	...	32
Family Life	71	13	32
Earthly Beauty	86	...	27
Earthbound Travel	57	7	23
Desire for Reunion on Earth	57	...	18
Sadness/Loneliness	57	53	55
Stress	14	40	32
Travel Toward Heavenly End	14	60	45
Waiting	71	67	68
Paths	71	20	36
Barriers	...	67	45
Thresholds	29	33	32
Appearance of Heaven	14	53	41
Reunion in Heaven	14	80	59
Heaven as Home	14	40	32
Singing	57	53	55
Joy	14	27	23
Heavenly Relief	14	60	45
Eternal Stay in Heaven	...	47	32
Light	29	53	45

Emerging from this tabulation is a group of indicators. These indicators can be used to interpret Kate's picture of the world in a number of ways. Perhaps the most interesting model is one which considers and takes into account an implied sequence of events which Kate imposed on her description of the world. That is, a scenario may be derived from these indicators.

First a measure of significance must be imposed on the data. In this case, a level of fifty percent will be used as a dividing point. Table 4 includes only those themes which occurred in over fifty percent of the home songs.

TABLE 4

THEMES INDICATED IN OVER FIFTY PERCENT OF THE HOME SONGS

Theme	Percentage of Occurence in Texts
Idealized Earthly Home	100
Family Life	71
Earthly Beauty	86
Singing	57
Paths	71
Earthbound Travel	57
Sadness/Loneliness	57
Waiting	71
Desired Reunion on Earth	57

The scenario which can be interpreted from these resulting significant themes follows a three-part pattern as seen here:

(1) Beginning: Person once had a secure life in a beautiful little mountain home, surrounded by loved ones and friends.

(2) Transition: Paths that led to home also led away, and person roamed away from the old homeplace and friends.

(3) Distress: Person is now anxious for something better, for there is sadness and loneliness and a desire to return to home for a reunion with loved ones.

Characteristically, Kate's home songs are dramatized in the first person, looking back on the past. Warm memories of the old home contrast sharply with the emptiness of the present. Attainable joy lies in dreams, memories of the past, and visions of the future, but never in the present. (See appendix A to observe how this scenario compares with home song texts.)

Heaven songs appear to be a separate, but related continuance of the scenario of the home song. In table 5, Heaven songs are evaluated for themes occurring above the fifty percent level of significance.

TABLE 5

THEMES INDICATED IN OVER FIFTY PERCENT OF THE HEAVEN SONGS

Theme	Percentage of Occurence in Texts
Waiting	67
Sadness/Loneliness	57
Travel Toward Heavenly End	60
Barriers	67
Appearance of Heaven	53
Reunion in Heaven	80

TABLE 5--Continued

Theme	Percentage of Occurence in Texts
Heavenly Relief	60
Singing	53
Light	53

The scenario of Heaven songs begins at a point where the home songs leave off. As with home songs, this scenario is also in three parts. They are as follows:

(1) Distress: Person is sad and lonely, waiting out the years of wandering about on earth.

(2) Transition: The wandering takes on new meaning, for the journey is not longer directed backward toward the old homeplace, but to the future, toward Heaven. This journey culminates by crossing a symbolic barrier of water.

(3) Resolution: Person will meet with loved ones who have been beckoning from the other side. This is a place of relief from earthly sorrows and there is singing with loved ones in the "angel band."

Overall observations reveal that three themes stand out with significant occurrence in both home songs and Heaven songs as shown in table 6.

TABLE 6

THEMES INDICATED IN OVER FIFTY PERCENT OF HOME SONGS AND HEAVEN SONGS

Theme	Home Songs	Heaven Songs	Total
Waiting	71	67	86
Sadness/Loneliness	57	53	55
Singing	57	53	55

In an overview of the song texts, both parallel and contrasting relationships can be seen in the themes. It is with respect to these relationships that the information in table 6 makes the most sense. The home of the past and the Heaven of the future are both envisioned with much longing. Both are places of great joy and beauty, stable protective environments where loved ones dwell. They are, in many respects, parallel images. In one song, for example, Kate asks, "Will there be a path to Heaven like the one to the cabin door?"[1]

By the same token, images of home and Heaven contrast with the present state of being. By implication, the present state is one of unrest rather than order. It is in this state that there is loneliness and sadness. There is also waiting--anxious anticipation for the "joyous singing" in the heavenly life to come, reminiscent of that once heard around the old homeplace.

Reference to light, occurring in 53 percent of the Heaven songs and 29 percent of the home songs, is a theme which points up one of the most basic of all the contrasts in human expression--the ancient mythical dichotomy of light and darkness. Kate speaks once of the "lights of home sweet home"[2] and frequently refers to the heavenly lights. Although darkness per se is seldom a theme in Kate's songs, it is implied logically by the vision of distant lights and figuratively implied by metaphors such as the "raging tempest," the "storm," etc.

A further development of this idea draws forth a societal con-

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[1]Appendix A. second selection, "That Little Old Log Cabin of My Dreams."

[2]Appendix A. last selection, "Prisoner of War."

cept of world view in which the "sacred cosmos" opposes "chaos." In The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Societal Theory of Religion, Peter Berger says:

> The sacred cosmos emerges out of chaos and contunues to confront the latter as its terrible contrary. This opposition of cosmos and chaos is frequently expressed in a variety of cosmogenic myths. The sacred cosmos, which transcends and includes man in its ordering reality, thus provides man's ultimate shield against the terror of anomy. To be in a 'right' relationship with the sacred cosmos is to be protected against the nightmare threats of chaos. To fall out of such a 'right' relationship is to be abandonded on the edge of the abyss of meaninglessness.[1]

The term "sacred cosmos" can be applied here to Kate's home songs and Heaven songs; to wit, home and Heaven are seen by Kate to be almost equal symbols of sacredness. This equality explains why the two categories assume the same reverence, formality, and ritualistic quality. This recognition sheds light on the integration of home songs and Heaven songs throughout Kate's repertoire. Kate departs from conversational language in both categories of song, because the nature of her subject is not mundane, but sacred. Home attains a sacred order in her thoughts as envisioned through dreams and memories. "The Old Vacant House" is no longer home, but the imperfect shell that once surrounded something sacred. Time obscures reality, thus home can be seen as part of the sacred cosmos.

Though home is clearly different from Heaven, the two share a sacred rank in the world view expressed in Kate's songs. Because of this ranking, home songs and Heaven songs could be sung by Kate just about anywhere she wanted to sing them.[2] Although home and Heaven songs served different uses (Heaven songs being more appropriate for fune-

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[1] (Garden City, Ny: Doubleday & Co., 1967; Anchor Books, 1968) pp. 26-27.

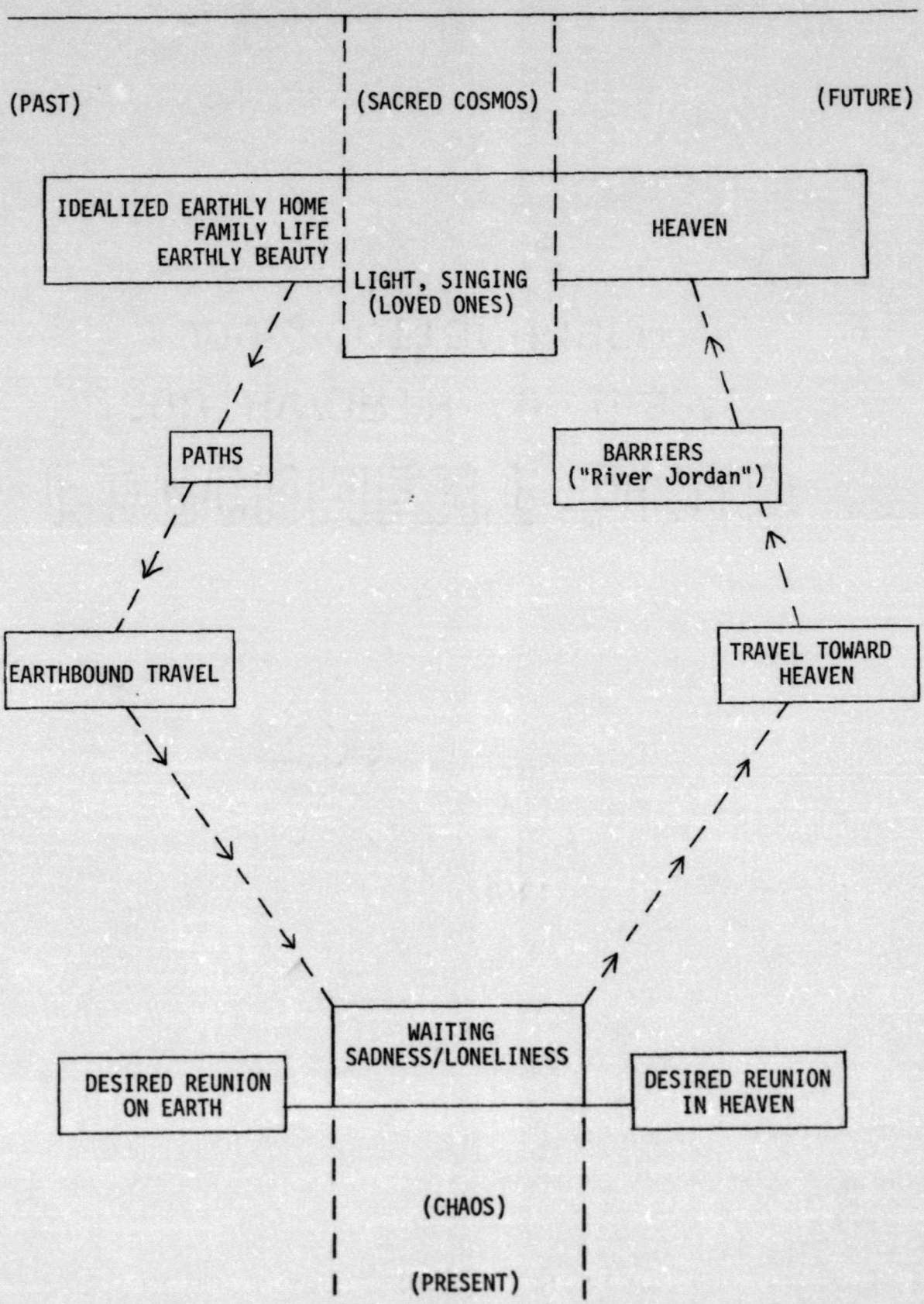
[2] Moles, interview 1976.

ral, for example), they served the same function for Kate--they represented protection from the threat of chaos.

A conceptual model can be drawn which brings all the various features of Kate's song themes into perspective. The scenario projected by the home songs begins with the cosmic home of the past and progresses to the present stage of chaos. The Heaven song scenario begins in present tense by lamenting the chaos of the world and looks forward to heavenly relief. When the two scenarios are tied together, it can be seen that the transition from home to Heaven is not a linear progression, but a cycle. Figure 1, World View Revealed in Home Songs and Heaven Songs can be examined on the following page.

FIGURE 1

WORLD VIEW REVEALED IN HOME SONGS AND HEAVEN SONGS



In figure 1, home songs and Heaven songs can be seen in their integrated relationship, revealing why Kate made little distinction between the two. Together they represent a gestalt with all the parallel and contrasting relationships balanced against each other. Through her songs, Kate defined the world as she knew it. She knew where she had come from, and she knew where she wanted to go. By defining her world, she gained satisfaction.

Like Berger's description of sacred cosmos, Kate's concept of the sacred cosmos emerged out of chaos "to confront the latter as its terrible contrary." This phenomenon is dramatically illustrated by a capsulization of the grim realities, the "chaos" Kate faced in her life. As emphasized earlier, Kate's environment was a complicated one where men, money and machines were (and still are) caught up in a constant state of industrial revolution. There were frequent fluctuations in the fragile economy accompanied by in-migration and out-migration of people. Stress was a constant factor in societal behavior because of the dangers inherent to coal mining. Aggravating that already hectic society were the powerful effects of economic depression and war that belabored society at large. Kate watched daily from the old homeplace as her friends and loved ones departed for other destinations, either in this world or the next. She observed also with growing despair the devastation of the land surrounding the old homeplace caused by strip mining during her later years. Kate described the scene like this in her autobiographical notes:

> As I topped Stone Mountain, I knew I would most likely never make this climb again. As I viewed the valley below, I could see my childhood home and the many places so dear to my heart. Many times in my youth I had climbed this mountain and wandered over cliffs to gather the beautiful rhododendron we used to decorate the big old fireplace in the summertime at home.

> Looking down, I could see Powell River. . . . It used to be a very large river with plenty of fish. . . . It is now only a small stream in most places until it gets on down about Big Stone Gap. The cutting of timber and the strip mines and all the things man has done to destroy has dried up the water and the beauty of our land. We now live in a desolate place where it used to be a paradise. If man is left alone, he will destroy himself. With the pollution and destruction of the land, the time is now.[1]

As Kate faced the grim realities of life, her songs took on ritual significance. They became incantations, as it were, evoking the sacred cosmos of home and Heaven in order to cope with a world she could not change. When the vision of the sacred cosmos emerged in her thoughts during her formative years, she knew that home meant love and security. She knew increasingly well throughout her years that Heaven meant hope. The satisfaction she derived from this is expressed in what has become her best known and best loved song, "Deep Settled Peace." Her statement in the first verse of that song goes a long way toward summing up her feelings:

> I found no rest for my soul
> Till I heard that story told,
> Now I'm in that shepherd's fold
> And there's a deep settled peace in my soul.

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[1]Sturgill, "Last Chapter," autobiographical notes, ca. 1972.

CHAPTER III

CONTEXT AND FUNCTION

The folkloric quality of Kate's songs lies in the intrinsic relationship they bore to a larger part of society and, more specifically, to the surrounding community of people who influenced Kate in the formulation and expression of her world view. As Henry Glassie has said, "Creativity is frequently the by-product of the collision of cultures."[1] Though Kate's songs are the product of an individual's act of creativity, they bear an unquestionable relationship to the musical expressions of a larger part of society caught up in the chaos of the American Industrial Revolution. Coal mining brought societal disruption to southern Appalachian communities, just as steel mills brought disruption to the northern urban communities. This condition brought forth a wave of creativity in the form of sentimental and gospel songs. These songs followed the cutting edge of the Industrial Revolution from the northern urban centers of the nineteenth century to the coal camps and mill towns of the twentieth century rural South. In communities such as Josephine, Virginia, sentimental and gospel songs remain as a persistent part of the community culture, for in many ways, the chaos of industrial revolution has never subsided.

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[1]Henry Glassie, "Take That Night Train to Selma," in Folksongs and Their Makers (Bowling Green, Oh.: Bowling Green University Popular Press, n. d.), p. 51.

In Chapter II, I spoke of the functional quality of Kate's songs--invoking the sacred cosmos to bring order to a chaotic world. It is this functional quality of sentimental and gospel songs in general that brought about their acceptance by mainstream society in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

In The Parlour Songbook: A Casquet of Vocal Gems, Michael Turner offers an interpretation of Victorian sentimental songs as they relate to the struggles of society:

> Death stalks the pages of this collection, as it must any anthology of Victorian popular art. . . . Death was then even more obviously omnipresent in life than now, of course. The death-rate from disease, inexpert medical care and poverty was very high by our standards and as the middle class donned the sober garb of gentility they also strove to improve death. The sting of reality was removed by romanticizing it. And, in some curious way, sentimental death became an international drug: several generations found in it satisfaction, enjoyment, and harmless entertainment. . . .
>
> Death was closely rivalled as a topic for lyrics by home. A deep longing for security, for both the emotional and physical comforts of the family fireside are a constant theme throughout the nineteenth century. For it was far from a settled period, pre-eminently the age of Emigration. Millions who had scarcely stirred for centuries more than a few miles from their ancestral acres travelled to seek new lives in grimy factory towns or in the Promised Lands of the United States, Canada, Australia or South Africa. The population of Ireland dropped some four million between 1841 and 1901.
>
> It is not surprising, therefore, that many songs of travel, exile, and yearning for home should be Irish in character, nor that the bulk of them should be American. As families divided and scattered, the stronger was the need to maintain emotional bonds . . . the song that has almost certainly been sung more times than any other from this period [is] 'Home Sweet Home.'
>
> And for 'home' in many of these songs read 'mother'. . . . Well loved objects also act their roles as symbols of home. . . . Old spinning wheels and old rustic bridges by the mill are all pressed into service as aides memoire for the exile. The very adjective 'old' suggests security and permanence.
>
> . . . nearly everybody must have followed a small coffin at some time or other to the graveyard. At such moments, and with the ever-present fear of such sad events recurring, the cliche was the least upsetting form of communication: By generalizing grief the Victorians could deal with their own particular sorrows. . . . In passing on to heaven, doomed infants point out to their sorrowing relatives--or even to casual passers-by--the road to a new and better life.[1]

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[1](New York: The Viking Press, 1972), pp. 17-18.

As Turner indicates, life was not easy for one caught up in the mainstream society of the Victorian era. He suggests, though, that life was made somewhat more bearable by the expression of sentiments via the Victorian song. Here we see the strong thematic correlation between Victorian parlor songs and Kate's songs; by the same token, the typical life struggles of mainstream Victorian life were manifest also in Kate's life experiences in the twentieth century.

When we examine the emergence of gospel songs on the American scene, we see that they, too, were spawned by the current social disorders of the day. Several scholars have attempted to analyze the gospel song in the context of social history. By this they offer significant insight into the relationship between Kate and the greater society.

In "Revivalism, The Gospel Songs and Social Reform," James C. Downey describes the great urban revivals conducted by Dwight L. Moody, Billy Sunday and their followers between 1875 and 1930.[1] It was in those revivals that gospel song as we know it really came into vogue.[2] In his study, Downey describes the social situation from which the revivals emerged, something of their theological content and how gospel songs related to the movement by their use in the revival services. Revivalism, he says, "flourishes in periods of social disorganization and in areas where church and secular institutions are not sufficiently strong to dictate patterns of behavior."[3] He points to conditions in urban areas during

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[1] Ethnomusicology 9(1965): 115-125.

[2] James Sallee, A History of Evangelistic Hymnody, with a Foreword by Dr. Jack Hyles (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker Book House, 1978), p. 97.

[3] Downey, "Revivalism, the Gospel Songs and Social Reform," p. 116.

the last quarter of the nineteenth century which brought about a resurgence of revivalism in the booming cities:

> The first of these [conditions] was the flood of immigrants from non-Protestant European countries coming directly to urban areas without passing through the chrysallis of the frontier that had determined the social and religious identity of America. The evangelicals set out to fuse these nationalities into a homogenous mass by providing them with a 'common worship and a common religious faith,' and a set of 'Puritan customs and habits.'
>
> The second of these conditions was the tensions felt in a developing social distinction made by the 'people,' the middle class sentimental, evangellically oriented clerks and shop-keepers and the two extremes of the economic scale--'big business' and the 'masses,' or labor composed of rural and immigrant families. . . .[1]

This situation in the northern cities is directly comparable to conditions in Josephine, Virginia, the differences being that there was a reversal of roles. The industrial condition was brought down upon the small community of Josephine. The resulting stress for people in Josephine was much the same as that which characterized rural migrants to the city--they "suffered from the insecurity and despondence caused by 'culture shock.'"[2]

Downey described the nature of the urban revivals as drastically different from the camp meeting revivals found earlier in the nineteenth century. As he says:

> The wild terror and violent physical activity associated with rural revivalism gave way to sentiment and compassion, weeping and touching entreaties to accept the invitation of a beneficient God. Both Moody and Sunday discouraged any distracting audience participation and instructed the ushers to remove any person who reacted with too much enthusiasm. The 'God of Wrath and Judgement,' so vividly described by the early revivalists, was replaced by a 'God of Love and Mercy'. . . . The condemnation and 'hell-fire' preaching became a 'compassionate invitation' to salvation mixed with anecdotes and Victorian sentiment.[3]

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Ibid., p. 117.

[3]Ibid., p. 116.

The invitation to salvation in these revivals was, often as not, made by the song leader instead of the preacher. Dwight L. Moody made great use of his song leader/soloist, Ira D. Sankey, in their revival services. In fact, their revivals are often referred to as the Moody/Sankey revivals. Though it is believed that solos were used in revivals prior to Moody and Sankey, it was they who set the pattern still followed by modern evangelists today. Music played an enormous role in the revivals. As Downey says:

> The role of music in the meetings of the revivalists changed greatly in the latter part of the nineteenth century because of a mystical power believed to be inherent in the text and music of a gospel song. The object of the evangelist to change the course of the life of an individual through a conversion experience could also be realized through the impersonal medium of a song. . . . The revivalists themselves elevated music to an equal place with the sermon of the evangelist because of their belief in this divine power. . . . This emphasis on presenting the revivalist's message through music continued with such teams as [Billy] Sunday and [Homer] Rodeheaver or Billy Graham and George Beverly Shea.[1]

According to Downey, the early gospel songwriters employed symbols which appeared in many of the early twentieth century romantic ballads. "Will the Circle Be Unbroken," written in 1907 by Gabriel and Habershon, recalls the happy days of youth and the tearful departure of loved ones, themes which often appeared in secular songs.

Song leaders would sing special solo numbers called "burdens" which had a powerfully emotional evangelistic message. As Downey describes it, Sankey would sing a "burden song" preceding Moody's sermon:

> . . . Before beginning his solo, Sankey would often pray aloud that some sinner would be converted through the 'sanctifying power of the sacred song.' The texts of the burden songs were either narrative or an intense emotional expression set to a lyrical melody, often chromatic and delivered in an intimate, personal style. A secular musical form closely related to this type of song was the

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[1]Ibid., p. 119.

> "sentimental ballad," which was popular in the music halls and homes of nineteenth century America. The burden songs were calculated to leave the audience "bathed in tears." Moody nourished this emotional state with tender anecdotes to the point where his appeal to accept the atonement made by a loving savior could not be rejected. The solos often filled the hall with sobbing. . . .[1]

This description of Sankey sheds light on the study at hand, indicating that Kate's role as a revival singer is not without precedent in the larger context of gospel singing. We know that Kate traveled throughout surrounding communities in the company of itinerant fundamentalist preachers such as her husband, Sid Peters, and Reverend Gordon Freeman. Although their revivals were not on the grand scale of the professional urban revivalists of past years, her role in religious services was similar in some respects to the role of urban revivalists/soloists like Sankey, Rodeheaver and others. As Gordon Freeman described Kate's performance in a religious service, Kate sang "heart songs," special numbers designed to elicit a response from her audience. In Freeman's words, quoted earlier here:

> She would testify . . . . she would sing songs and tears would come in her eyes . . . . she would sing a song to get to them--make them change their ways.[2]

Available scholarship supports the idea that gospel songs are a part of a larger matrix of folk expression, both preceding and following the nineteenth century urban revivals. One such study by Kay Cothran analyzes over 400 gospel songs in an 1883 collection, focusing on the sturcture of the image of death. Introducing her study, Cothran makes this comment:

> As we know, gospel songs were disseminated through publishers and by the revivalists themselves. Some became big hits in the popular market. Thus being phenomena of literacy, the songs have been ignored by many folklorists for reasons that make sense in terms of the disipline's history but not in the light of present

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[1]Ibid., p. 121

[2]Freeman, interview 1976.

day interdisciplinary thought.

> . . . The gospel song ought to have greatest appeal to socially ambiguous people who are neither rural countrymen--"folk" in the narrowest sense--nor the middle-class townsmen. Such people would be close enough to the Victorian mainstream to relish a literate medium but also close enough to the frontier to be unaffected by genteel distaste for boisterous revival meeting "carrying on." Twentieth-century information on cotton mill operatives' revival meetings and on the social status of people supports such a view of the gospel song audience, and there is no reason to suppose that the audience's composition has changed greatly since that last century, although individuals constantly move out of it. Sentimentalized death is a theme of Victorian culture, but the roots of the religion-death-sensuality-exhibitionism complex run historically deep in Anglo-American song and society. We recall that gallows balladry, such as criminal goodnights, takes on a religious-sentimental cast long before the nineteenth century. Indeed this theme appears in the earliest broadside ballads.[1]

There are some intriguing comparisons which can be made between Cothran's study and the study at hand. There are important similarities between Kate's audience and the nineteenth century urban gospel audience. The chaotic environment of the coal fields was parallel to urban industrial areas in many respects, and therefore audiences were characterized by many of the same psychological needs. Cothran's methodology appears to be similar to this study in that she interprets "image clusters" in the song texts. Her thematic construct consists of four basic categories, Life, Heaven, Death, and Hell, which she describes as they appear here in figure 2:

FIGURE 2

THEMES DESCRIBED IN COTHRAN'S STUDY, "ANXIOUS, DREAD TOMORROW"

Life characterized as or through:

> Motion (journey, wandering); temporality (short length of time); anxiety; change; darkness; night; labor; battle

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[1]"Anxious, Dread Tomorrow," Keystone Folklore Quarterly, 17 (Spring 1972): 11-12

FIGURE 2--Continued

THEMES DESCRIBED IN COTHRAN'S STUDY, "ANXIOUS, DREAD TOMORROW"

Heaven characterized as or through:

Stationary; home; at rest; eternal; safe; stable; light; dawn; reward; gain; victory; love; "within-ness"; together

Death characterized as or through:

Crossing (often over or under water, through valley or gate); sudden; being called; separation; dark; cold

Alternative A (leads to Heaven):

Guided; carried; rising through skies; successfully crossing water; through gate; through valley

Alternative B (leads to Hell, pictured as indefinite extension of B)

Drowning; trapped in grave; unsuccessful crossing; no rising

Hell characterized as or through:

Alone; outside; falling; crushed; lost; dark; gaping deep grave; distant.

SOURCE: Kay L. Cothran, "Anxious, Dread Tomorrow," Keystone Folklore Quarterly 17(Spring 1972): 14, figure 1.

An examination of figure 2, above, reveals that there is considerable correlation between "images," which characterize Cothran's delineation of nineteenth century gospel song themes, and "rhetorical codes," which characterize Kate's themes as presented in this study (Chapter II, table 2). The comparison here with Cothran's study lends a measure of objectivity to the contention that Kate's songs are similar to nineteenth century gospel songs.

In the course of her investigation, Cothran emphasizes the concept that death constitutes a rite of passage in the gospel song. Textually,

it appears as "the liminal period between earthly and heavenly life." In the context of nineteenth century urban revivals, the gospel song was used in order to elicit a decision making response by the audience--that is, a religious commitment. Cothran takes the concept one step further, suggesting that the decision for religious commitment, which thereby settles feelings of personal ambiguity, might be symbolic of another commitment as well--the decision to accept, and therefore enter, the modern world. She says:

> I believe there is significant parallel between the gospel songs' emphasis upon gaining cognitive clarity about one's ultimate fate, itself made precise by descriptions of the paradise awaiting those who decide for Jesus now, and the social ambiguity that I earlier attributed to consumers of these songs. If one's status in society is ambiguous, one feels arrested in a state of liminality, then the rite of passage model embedded in gospel songs contributes a symbolic link between social class and religious position.[1]

Cothran develops a matrix reproduced here in figure 3:

FIGURE 3

COTHRAN'S PASSAGE MODEL LINKING SOCIAL CLASS AND RELIGIOUS POSITION

	Preliminal	Liminal	Postliminal
Religious	earthly life	death	heavenly life
Personal	life before decision	decision process	subsequent Christian life
Social	rural folklife	urbanized but insecure and nonprestigious	confidant, urban, middle class

SOURCE: Cothran, "Anxious, Dread Tomorrow," p. 15, figure 3.

Her concept here is, of course, open to question, for it is highly

[1]Ibid., p. 15

theoretical. Nonetheless, it offers an interesting insight relevant to this study. Cothran's "passage" model can be applied to Kate's Heaven songs, for it is obvious that Kate spoke of passage from this world to the next. Cothran's conceived symbolic link between religious passage and personal passage (that is, a personal decision for the Christian life) is also useful as an interpretive model, for it can be applied to Kate's songs in relation to her evangelical role in her community.

Cothran's concept of "a symbolic link between social class and religious position" cannot be applied to Kate's songs. As figure 3 indicates, Cothran suggests that the "rite of passage model embedded in the gospel songs contributes a symbolic link" between "rural folklife" and membership in the "confident, urban middle class." While this may in fact be true for the rural migrant to the city, it is not the case where Kate's community is concerned. Her environment was one in which industrialization had been imposed on an existing conservative rural culture. In contrast, the northern cities were primarily centers of trade and industry to which rural migrants had been attracted. Those migrants sought change, for they had migrated in search of upward mobility--in short, the American Dream; independent-minded Appalachian people resisted change, for it had been imposed on them. Faced with no choice in the matter, Southern mountaineers such as Kate sought to cope with life in their own passive conservative manner. Home was an important institution, for it represented a last bastion against the encroachment of industry. Facing the same "culture shock" as urban dwellers, it is logical that Kate's community would utilize an established mechanism for coping with change--sentimental and gospel songs. Those songs took on a specialized character, however, being selected, re-created and created

within an esthetic and conceptual format consistent with traditional community values.

It has been suggested by Loyal Jones that traditional Appalachian values center around religion, individualism, neighborliness, familism, personalism, love of place, modesty, sense of beauty, sense of humor and patriotism.[1] In light of this suggestion, it is not difficult to understand the qualities which characterize Kate's songs, and particularly the fact that Heaven and home songs take such a prominent place in Kate's repertoire. Home songs and Heaven songs fit well into the same model of world view for, in combination, they reflect the totality of the traditional Appalachian value system. Home songs dealt with the social ambiguity in Kate's community. By continual reference to the beautiful, stable, humble mountain home, Kate sought to reinforce and validate her culture. Heaven songs also contributed in this respect, for they reinforced the egalitarian principle that all are equal in the eyes of God contributing to the possibility of self esteem.

Kate's songs were important functional entities in her community. By opposing chaos and removing social ambiguity, they served to reduce anxiety; by reinforcing traditional values and stable institutions, they validated culture; by implication, they encouraged moral, acceptable behavior; by their artful performance, they entertained.[2] Roger Abrahams has offered a rhetorical theory of folklore performance which gives us insight into how Kate used her songs to perform these functions. He

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[1]"Appalachian Values," Twigs 10 (Fall 1973): 83, 82-94 passim.

[2]William R. Bascom, "Four Functions of Folklore," In The Study of Folklore, ed. Alan Dundes (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965) pp. 270-298.

emphasizes the functionality of folklore performance in that it "uses arguments and pursuasive techniques developed in the past to cope with recurrences of social problem situations."[1] Abrahams indicates that the elicitation of sympathy from the audience is essential to the process. He says.

> Sympathy, in life as well as in art, is essentially a mediating force, a recognition of the universality of strife through the ability to imagine oneself 'in the shoes of another.' And folklore as a sympathetic activity functions mediationally as an imaginative projection, creating a world of conflict which for each individual in the group is both a negation and an affirmation of community. Each item of traditional expression articulates conflict in some way; it also provides some manner of temporary resolution. Its very traditional nature promotes community.[2]

This projection of conflict is an obvious characteristic of sentimental and gospel songs. In Kate's songs, the conflict is embodied in the chaos and loneliness of the present. For example, in "The Old Vacant House," (See Appendix A, Home Songs) Kate relates that the old house is standing vacant, she misses the loved ones who used to gather there; finally she stands "at the door a-weeping" and her "eyes with tears o'erflow." Resolution is found in the fact that her mother once sang about "a city bright and fair;" furthermore, she "said some day we'd gather there." By envoking the sacred cosmos of heaven and loved ones, the empty home becomes symbolically filled and satisfaction is gained.

When Kate's audience heard her perform, they knew what to expect. Understanding the tradition, they relished a "good old sad song." In this respect, there was mutual reinforcement exchanged by Kate and her audience. By responding to Kate's sad songs, the audience participated in the performance.

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[1]"Introductory Remarks to a Rhetorical Theory of Folklore," Journal of American Folklore 81 (1968): 146.

[2]Ibid., p. 148.

Kate usually entered into performance with a reverent, sincere, almost staid demeanor. She was warm and assuring in her vocal tones, but one could sense that she was usually very serious about her songs. The language in her songs, for the most part, is formal, conventionalized and pietistic; much removed from conversational language. Abrahams explains this by stating that the performer must "establish a sense of identity between a 'real' situation and its artificial embodiment." He says:

> This is done by creating a 'psychic distance,' by removing the audience far enough from the situation that it can see that it is not going to involve them immediately. Presented with an anxiety situation but relieved from the actual anxiety, the listener gains control, and with this limited control, relief.[1]

Throughout Kate's songs there is a psychic distance. When anxiety is produced, it is diffused by the ambiguous form in which it is expressed. Waiting and longing and emotional pain are expressed, but never the causal factors, other than a longing for home or Heaven. The implied distance from the long sought goals of home, reunion with loved ones and Heaven serves to enhance their attractiveness. They are idealized, thereby lending them uncritical potential for esteem in the mind of the listener.

This enhancement of the themes of home, loved ones and Heaven is of utmost functional importance. These themes, when translated into real world institutions, become home, family and significant others, and religion. These institutions are the most important stabilizing factors in the maintenance of community, and thus, the maintenance of sanity in an otherwise chaotic reality.

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[1]Ibid.

CONCLUSION

I began this study in hopes of solving what, to me, was a perplexing enigma: How could Kate Sturgill, creator of songs, be folkloric in her performance? Folksongs, I thought, must be passed on through generations of performers; they must be the property of a folk group, therefore not attributable to one composer. Through diligent investigation into the context of Kate's creativity and performance, I discovered that it is not necessarily the song as a whole that is folkloric, but the components and the context that lend folkloric relevance to the song. As Henry Glassie has so aptly stated:

> A serious consideration of an expression of culture must involve an analysis of more than the obvious whole: components and contexts must also be taken into account. Some brand new songs are novel re-combinations of folk elements and are true folksongs at the instant of their creation.[1]

When I examined Kate's development as a singer, I found three formative elements to be dominant: home, family and significant others, and religion. In examining the thematic components of Kate's songs, I found that three symbols stand out as most important: home, loved ones and Heaven. It was then that I realized that Kate's songs functioned to reinforce those institutions which insured the survival of her sanity in a chaotic world.

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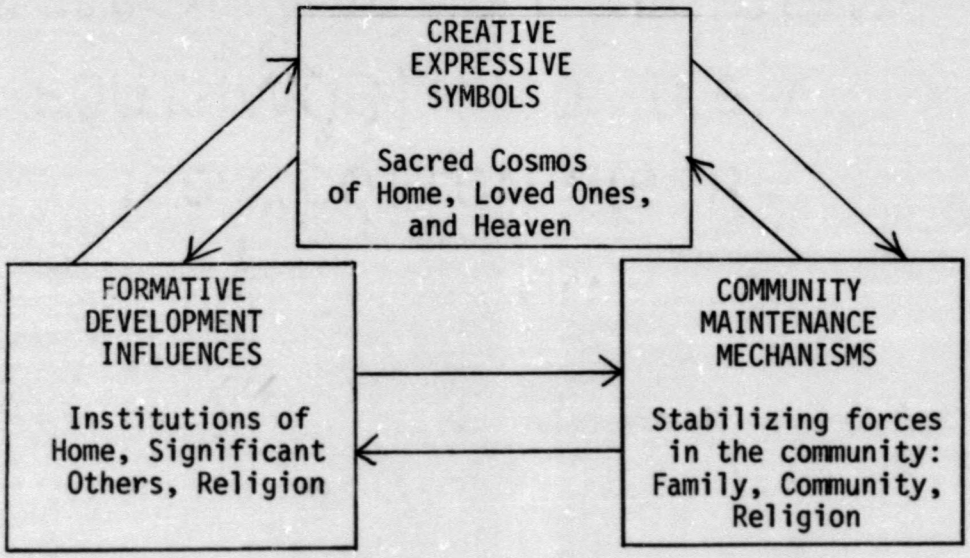
[1]"Take That Night Train to Selma," in Folk Songs and Their Makers (Bowling Green, Oh.: Bowling Green Popular Press, n.d.), p. 52.

Formative influences relate to expressive symbols which relate to community maintenance mechanisms. Their relationship is integrated in such a way that a gestalt is formed. As this study shows, the stabilizing influences in Kate's community were internalized by its members and taught to its children through continuing community expression. All these factors were dependent upon the others for meaning and importance. Thus, Kate bore an important relationship to her community: as spokesperson for the stabilizing institutions in her community, she helped bring solidarity to that community, thereby she insured her own stability and ultimate survival. This relationship of formative, expressive and maintenance factors can best be illustrated by a visual model. This matrix of factors is shown here in figure 4.

FIGURE 4

INTERRELATION OF FORMATIVE, EXPRESSIVE AND MAINTENANCE FACTORS



It was in this integral relationship to her home, her loved ones and her religion that Kate found "that deep settled peace" in her soul.

APPENDIX A *

HOME SONGS

A DREAM OF HOME

1. Last night I had a sweet dream
I dreamed I saw the old home place,
It makes me feel so sad and lonesome
When I dream of Mother's smiling face.
I dreamed that I saw her
Bending down o'er my bed
And placed her soft fingers,
Upon my aching head.
I dreamed that she kissed me
And asked why I had roamed
And when I was coming,
Back to my dear old home.

Chorus

I'm going back in the springtime,
When the roses are in bloom
I'm going back to my parents
On the farm for me there's room.

2. And I know that I'll be happy
When I walk up the little lane,
When the flowers are blooming, birds are singing,
To welcome me back home again.
I have looked at Mother's picutre,
While the tear drops fell in vain
Now my rambling days are over,
I'm going back in the spring.

THAT LITTLE OLD LOG CABIN OF MY DREAMS

1. As I wandered up the pathway,
To that dear old cabin home,
I knew before I entered
That the folks would all be gone.
They had long ago departed,
Not a one could there be seen
Around that little old log cabin of my dreams.

Chorus

Then I wondered if we'd ever,
Be together just once more.
If there'd be a path to heaven,
Like the one to the cabin door.
When we walked it there together
O'er the hills and by the stream.
Around that little old log cabin of my dreams.

2. I called loud from the doorway
Just an echo answered me,
Then it made me feel so lonely
When the folks I could not see.
And my steps were slow and weary,
As I wandered round the rooms,
Around that little old log cabin of my dreams.

MEMORIES OF HOME

1. There's a dear old log house in the mountains
For it my heart still yearns,
It's vacant now, but sweet memories,
Oft to me returns.
There's no place so dear to me,
As that old home of mine
Away out in the mountains,
Among the tall, dark pines.

Chorus

I'd like to be a child again
By my mother's knee,
But years have passed
And Mother's gone,
And that can never be.

2. I can hear the sound of the spinning wheel,
Far into the night,
See Mother in the corner
Spinning by the light.
I can hear the sound of the organ
With voices raised in song
Still so fresh in my memory,
Tho' it has been so long.

3. I can hear my mother singing,
With a voice so meek and mild,
The way she used to sing to me,
When I was just a child.
When it was late in the evening,
I can hear the clock's slow chimes.
Sweet memories ever linger,
Within this heart of mine.

MEMORIES OF VIRGINIA

1. Many years ago I wandered
From the place so dear to me
Now my heart is ever yearning
And my song has come to be--

Chorus

How I long for Old Virginia
For the fields that I once knew
Where the branches cast their blossoms
O'er the grasses wet with dew
Let me travel on the trail
To that dear old home of mine
Let me rest beneath the shadows
Of that grand old Lonesome Pine.

2. Where the birds trill their music
To the skies far up above
Take me back to Old Virginia
Back to all the friends I love--

3. Then I left my dear old parents
And the friends who were so dear
Now with thought of them returning
How I wish that I was there.

MY STONE MOUNTAIN HOME

1. There's a dear old home nestled in the heart of the hills
Where the trailing arbutus grows
And the rhododendron blooms on the clifts
That's where I am longing to go
Sweet memories return of my childhood and youth
When I used to wander there
Happy hours I spent by the old mill stream
With never a sorrow or care.

Chorus

I'm longing for my dear old home
That old home in Stone Mountain day by day ["far away," recently]
Where at twilight you can hear the whippoorwill call
And the birds sweetly sing all the day

2. Where the catawba tree blooms by the side of the path
In that dear old familiar spot
Although many years have passed away it has never been forgot
Where the peafowl calls warning of approaching storm
And you hear the humming of bees
And the cattle and sheep graze on the hills
There is home sweet home to me.

THE OLD VACANT HOUSE

1. Now the old house is standing vacant
The roof all covered o'er with snow
No smoke's arising from the chimney
That I remembered long ago

2. And the flowers along the pathway
Now the weeds have over grown
For there's no loving hands to tend them
Like they did so long ago

3. I remember Mother singing
The way she used to sing to me
When I was just a little baby
That she held upon her knee

4. But the words I can't remember
Twas about a city bright and fair
She sang about a home in Heaven
Said some day we'd gather there

5. Now I stand at the door a weeping
My eyes with tears o'er flow
I miss the ones who used to greet me
When we gathered there so long ago

PRISONER OF WAR

1. I been in prison many weary years
I've shed so many bitter tears,
But my steps are nearer to my goal
For I can see the lights of home sweet home

2. They're shining brightly beckoning me
I must hurry onward
I been set free
I cannot tarry, I must hasten on
For I can see the lights of home sweet home

3. I've journeyed far along the way
I've traveled for many a weary day
My loved one's waiting all alone
And I can see the lights of home sweet home

4. The girl I love still waits for me
Her true love I'll always bee
She's been so lonely since I've been gone
And now I see the lights of home sweet home

5. I know she's waiting there for me
My coming home she'll be glad to see
I'll never leave no more to roam
For now I see the lights of home sweet home

*Song texts are reproduced here using underlining, dashes and other punctuation found in the original manuscript or publication in which they appeared.

APPENDIX B *

HEAVEN SONGS

AT THE GATE

1. The time will not be long
For my steps are getting slow
And I don't want to linger here below
For the lights of home I see
And my loved ones beckoning me
To enter in at the beautiful gate

Chorus

Then when you follow on
I'll be singing my welcome song
With our loved ones and friends
I will wait at the gate
Then when you follow on
I'll be singing my welcome song
With our loved ones and friends
I will wait at the gate.

2. When my work on earth is done
At the setting of the sun
And I hear my Savior say
"Enter in, my child, well done"
Then the gates will open wide
I'll enter in and there abide
To welcome you at the beautiful gate

CLIMBING UP THE GOLDEN STAIRS

1. Just a little more of waiting
Just a few more tears
Just a little more of stumbling
Waiting just a few more years
Having just a few more Tri-Bu-Lations
We're all going to have to bear
Then we'll gather at the foot of the mountain over Jordan
And go climbing up the Golden Stairs

Chorus

Climbing up the golden Stairs
Climbing up the golden Stairs
Then we'll gather at the foot of the mountain over Jordan
And go climbing up the golden stairs

2. Just a little more of sunshine
Just a little more of rain
We'll go climbing up the stairs over Jordan
Joining with the angels to sing
We're going to shake hands there with old Moses,
And all that Heavenly band
When we gather at the foot of the mountain over Jordan
And climb the ladder to that Heavenly Land

COME AND LISTEN

The master of the sheepfold went out again and again. Searching down in the gloomering meadows for the sheep that had not come in--

1. Many little ones have fell by the wayside
Could not find their way in the storm
But Jesus will come to their rescue
In His fold they'll be safe from all harm

2. The sheep will not follow a stranger
But the voice of the Lord they will hear
He is gathering his children together
In His fold they'll be safe without fear

3. When we all gather there in the shelter
Won't that be a wonderful day
The Savior will be our good shepherd
He'll gather the ones who went astray

Chorus

Come and listen--Come and listen
Can you hear that small still voice so soft and low
Come and listen--Come and listen
God is calling His children to his fold

DEEP SETTLED PEACE

1. I found no rest for my soul
Till I heard the story told
Now I'm in the Shepherd's fold
And have that deep settled peace in my soul

Chorus

There's a deep settled peace in my soul,
I've been redeemed and made whole,
I've been washed in the blood of the Lamb
And I know I under stand,
That deep settled peace in my soul.

2. Let not your heart be troubled so,
   If to Jesus you will go
   And of Him you'll learn to know,
   You'll have that deep settled peace in your soul

3. Then when death around you lies,
   And you must cross the Great Divide,
   If you have Jesus on your side,
   There'll be a deep settled peace in your soul.

GOLD STARS SHINE IN HEAVEN

1. There are many gold stars shining
   The bugle sounds--their duties done
   And Old Glory is still waving
   Their last battle has been won
   And a mother's heart is lonely
   For her son who went away
   But there'll be a glad reunion
   On that other shore some day

Chorus

Now these gold stars shine in heaven
Taps for them will sound no more
Answered to the final summons
Joined their loved ones gone before
They're now dwelling in that city
In a house not built with hands
And the voices are now ringing
Singing in the angel band

2. In that home they'll all be waiting
   Over on the shining strand
   With our boys we'll be united
   Over in the promised land.
   There will be no farewells spoken
   Then we'll never part no more
   There will be no wars or danger
   On that great Celestial shore

HOME IS DRAWING NEARER

1. I've already climbed the mountain
   I'm going down on the other side
   Braved the dangers on my journey
   I've crossed the river deep and wide

Chorus

The lights of home are drawing nearer
The lights along the shore I see
One by one we're crossing over
What a gathering that will be

2. Over there I have a mansion
The windows now are open wide
It seems I hear familiar voices
The music sounds so sweet inside

3. I'm longing for the holy city
Where I shall dwell eternally
Now I'm waiting only waiting
Till the call shall come for me--

IF I'M CALLED TO THAT CITY BEFORE YOU

1. If I'm called to that city before you
I'll be dressed in my bridal array
I'll be standing at the portals of glory
Where the night time will be turned into day

Chorus

Keep traveling the heavenly highway
Till you rest neath the evergreen tree
Do not falter if your foot steps grow weary
Till you shake hands with my Savior and me

2. It may not be long till you follow
Be sure that you make it on through
The joys we have shared here together
In Heaven we'll share them anew

3. Be sure not to weep at my going
At My Savior's feet I shall kneel
For I've laid up my treasures in Heaven
Where thieves cannot break through and steal

For I've laid up my treasures in Heaven
Where thieves cannot break through and steal

IN HEAVEN WE'LL NEVER BE CROWDED

1. In Heaven we'll never be crowded
There's plenty of room left to spare
Up there we live in a mansion
The Savior went on to prepare

The Lord told His disciples
As He walked and talked with them
"I go to prepare a mansion
That you may enter in"

Chorus

We'll rest in a beautiful garden
Where eternal flowers forever bloom
And listen to the angel band singing
They'll be singing their heavenly tune
Our fathers and mothers and loved ones
Will be watching for us to come
And the lights of the shore will shine brighter
As they light our way over home

2. If I get there first I'll join the singing
With our loved ones gone on before
And when you come to the crossing
The angels will guide you safe o'er
They'll guide you o'er the beautiful river
And the City of God you'll behold
The gates are of pearl, the walls jasper
And the streets are paved with pure gold

IN THE LAND OF ENDLESS DAY

1. Soon I anchor in the Harbour
Never more to drift away
I'll be singing with the angels
In the land of endless day

Chorus

When my journey's ended
I'll just move on over home--move over home
When my journey's ended
I'll just move on over home
To dwell in the land of endless day

2. Even when the tempest is raging
Close to Him I'll ever stay
O'er the troubled sea He'll lead me
To the land of endless day

3. When dark clouds gather round me
And I cannot see my way
Savior take my hand and lead me
To the land of endless day--

[LORD PULL BACK THE VEIL]

1. My loved ones have gone to dwell in that city
   I'm longing, yes, longing for home
   My weary feet have begin to stumble
   With the angels I'm longing to roam

Chorus

Lord pull back the veil when I shall cross over
Let me glimpse that beautiful shore
Lord take my hand when I cross over Jordan
And there let me rest ever more

2. There's going to be a home coming tomorrow
   We'll see them and join in their song
   All tears wiped away there'll be no more sorrow
   When all of God's singers get home

3. As I travel the road on down the mountain
   My steps grow weary and slow
   When I shall come to the beautiful River
   Lord, lead me across as I go.

When I shall come to the beautiful River
Lord, lead me across as I go.

SOMEONE WHO CARES

1. When the world seems cold
   And you friends seem few
   There is someone who cares for you
   When you've tears in your eyes
   You heart bleeds inside
   There is someone who cares for you

Chorus

Someone to care, someone to share
All your troubles like no other can do
He'll come down from the skies
And brush the tears from your eyes
You're His child and He cares for you

2. When your disappointments come
   And you feel so blue
   There is someone who cares for you
   When you need a friend
   A friend till the end
   There is someone who cares for you

3. When the pains of life have passed
And our sorrow will close
There is someone who cares for you
When life's book in closed at last
You will find perfect peace
There'll be someone who cares for you

SOMEWHERE ACROSS THE RIVER
MY MOTHER WAITS FOR ME

1. I'll always remember how my mother cared for me,
Her life will live forever, in my memory.
My heart with grief is breaking
I am sad without her here,
But my blessed Savior whipers
I'll be with thee, always, near.

Chorus

I know that He will guide me,
Guide me safely to the shore.
Where I will meet my mother,
And we'll never part no more.

2. There is no one like Mother
No one can take her place.
And many times in fancy
I see her smiling face.
God called for her, she had to go,
She could no longer stay
But she left this message for me,
There is nothing in my way.

3. Somewhere across the river,
Just on the other side
I'll meet with my dear Mother
And there for aye abide--
With other friends and loved ones
So happy there we'll be.

[THERE'LL BE SINGING OVER YONDER]

1. My life will soon be o'er
I'll be singing here no more
On this earth where deep sorrow abides
I'll be singing over yonder
With the angels' heavenly band
I'll be walking with my loved ones by my side

Chorus

There'll be singing over yonder
I'll be a member of that band
I'll be happy and my voice shall ring again
There will be no toil or worry
For there is no heartaches there
When a thousand years have passed I've just begun.

2. Come along my friends go with me
Lay up your treasures over there
There will be no farewells spoken on that shore
All is joy and peace forever
There no end shall ever come
There we'll walk and sing together ever more

3. When the clouds begin to gather
And your hearts begin to fail
Do not falter, there's no cause for your alarm
Jesus walking close beside you
You will find He's always near
He'll reach out His hand and guide you through the storm

WHEN I'VE CROSSED THE RIVER JORDAN

1. When my dreary life is ended
And I've crossed to the other side,
There I'll wait dear friends, for you
When I've crossed the swelling tide.

2. When I've crossed the river, Jordan,
When I'm safe on the other side,
There I'll sit at the feet of Jesus,
With beckoning hands to you I'll guide.

3. You must not stray from the path so narrow,
You must not let your light grow dim.
Keep the word of God before you
It will guide you home to Him.

4. Take the hand of those who need you
Point to them the way above,
Guide them toward the shining light house,
Our loving Savior's shining love.

5. Let us lift up the fallen,
Unto all a kindness do,
Help to bear each other's burdens,
Our days on earth are very few.

WILL THE GATES OPEN TO HEAVEN

1. Will the gates open to Heaven?
Will loved ones be waiting to see?
Will they be watching my coming?
Will the gates swing wide for me?

Chorus

Oh yes, the gates will swing open,
If true to the Savior I'll be,
If I am prepared in the judgment
My loved ones again I shall see.

2. O Sinner, prepare to meet Jesus,
Will your good deeds be many or few--
You'll reap what you sow at the judgment,
Earthly ties hold nothing for you.

3. Jesus had made you the promise,
Of mansions prepared in the sky.
For Death will soon overtake you,
It's coming to all, by and by.

*Song texts are reproduced here using underlining, dashes and other punctuation found in the original manuscript or publication in which they appeared. In two cases, no title was given in the original manuscript so a title was supplied, taken from the first line of the chorus. These appear in brackets.

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