

# *Mentor's Introduction*

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"Some people's mind is set in concrete, and permely mixed, I deal with people like that most every day".

Jesse the sign painter

Jesse was speaking of many of the people that he knew and read about. . . but, not Ann.

Ann was introduced to Jesse Howard's work while she was a member of a seminar in Material Folk Culture at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Her paper represents her journey into the lives of Jesse and Maude. Jesse, a folk artist from a conservative rural community in mid-Missouri, shared with Ann his story and art. The experience provided, far beyond the doctoral student and artist dialogue, a special opportunity for Ann to listen and learn and communicate. Ann is now in Louisiana, working on her dissertation. As she did with Jesse, she is meeting, observing, talking and interacting with Cajan families. As one immerses oneself into experience, considering the delicate balance of objectivity/subjectivity, one learns. One becomes aware of the problems and solutions, and more important the in-betweens. This experience, when viewed within the contexts of a culture will lead to human understanding. To paraphase Jesse, "Some people's mind is set in concrete, and permely mixed. I guide my students from that most every day".