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The Work and Earnings of Artists in The Media Fields of Cinema, Radio and Television

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Figures and Tables follow the section in which they are first mentioned. Two Figures and twenty Tables are included in the paper.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to generalize about the work and earnings of American artists in the media fields of cinema, radio and television. The organizational structure of these fields is complex. The complexity prevents making simple categories for employment status, types of work, or the kinds of artists that are involved. An important complication is that the artists often work on different kinds of productions and for many types of organizations and may even change occupational titles for each assignment. A cameraman in one production may be an actor, writer, film editor, or a producer/director on another production. An artist may work under a labor organization contract in one production and as an "independent" in another. They may enjoy very stable employment as salaried personnel of film studies and broadcasting companies, or be freelancers who produce a media work at their own risk, and only after it is completed, become concerned with its possible presentation and distribution.

The American media fields have been in a constant state of growth and change throughout their history. At the present time, radio broadcasting is in a period of expansion after a long period of contraction. Cable distribution of video programs is expanding explosively. New regulations effecting low power transmission of television may significantly increase the number of stations and the character of program material being offered in less populated regions of the country. A surge of feature film successes for cinema presentation in 1981 brought new attendance and profit records to the motion picture industry, only to be reversed and decline again early in 1982. It is especially difficult to follow the economic success of artists in these exciting and dynamic times. However, some of the available data is useful and gives a sense for what is taking place. This paper weaves several of the data threads together and reveals some of the patterns. It also explains the data sets that are useful for these purposes, the sources and interpretation of this data, and gives several estimates of the possible futures of media artists.

After many decades of development, the size, diversity and audience base of the American media fields have become very large and unlike those of other countries because of the broad commercial sector. The artist community also has its special character. Information systems currently in use in America for understanding the artists in the media fields are probably unsuitable as a model for use elsewhere. On the other hand, some insights helpful in other countries may be found from the study of the American data sets. It is in this spirit that the American experience is presented in the following sections.

II. THE MEDIA FIELDS OF CINEMA, RADIO AND TELEVISION

An important difference about the media fields that contrasts with traditional performing arts is the enormous increase of efficiency they offer for artists to serve their audiences. In the media fields, artists' performances or productions have the possibility of being stored, multiplied, and re-experienced many times and in many lands without the continuing employment of the artists or performers once the production is filmed or taped. It is no surprise that few artists are employed in relation to the total size of the audience, or that the distribution system may generate revenues that are very large when compared with traditional performances. Unlike live performing arts presentations, media presentations, such as films shown in a cinema theatre, or by means of radio or television, may accumulate as an inventory of available programs that are available for reuse in the future.

In terms of the evolution of capacity, the American media fields can be described with two kinds of indicators. The first covers distribution. The second are the conventional economic measures of revenue, growth rates, and employment. A number of measures of media distribution capacity can be used together to describe the growth of the distribution systems and the breadth of audience size (Table 1). In the 1920s, the media fields consisted of only radio and the cinema. Television began to develop in the late 1940s. Cable distribution began in the 1950s and developed slowly until very recently. Today, there are more than two radio receivers per person and nearly as many television receivers as persons. Cable connections have been made to about 30% of homes with television sets. Cinema peaked in the 1950s in terms of capacity as measured by theatre seats, and declined from that time to the late 1960s; and has remained more or less constant since then. Recent construction of cinema theatres follow the pattern of being very small in seating capacity when compared with earlier times.

The economic measures of revenues and employment provide another kind of index of capacity. Radio broadcasting is estimated to be generating revenues of $4.1 billion in 1982; an increase of 11.5% over 1981. Television broadcasting is estimated to be receiving revenue of $11.1 billion in 1982; a change of 13% above 1981. And, cable television is estimated to be producing revenues of $2.5 billion in 1982, an increase of 20% over 1981. In terms of total employment: commercial radio stations employ about 100,000 persons; and television broadcasting employs about 82,000 persons. 1982 receipts for cinema, at the box office, are expected to reach about $4 billion, 9% more than 1981, and employment is expected to be at the level of about 129,000 persons. These estimates are by the Bureau of Industrial Economics of the U.S. Department of Commerce and are part of their publication, 1982 U.S. Industrial Outlook for 200 Industries with Projections for 1986.

A more comprehensive measure of the motion picture production industry was provided in the 1977 Census of Service Industries, Motion Picture Industry, which enumerated 10,724 establishments with gross receipts of $5.4 billion as being involved in motion picture production, distribution and services. The corresponding information for theatres where cinema was presented in 1977 adds another 11,815 establishments with receipts of $2.6 billion. The paid employees for production, distribution and services in 1977 was 88,000 persons. The corresponding number for motion picture theatres was 112,000 paid employees.

A report produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics annually on Employment and Earnings provides a slightly different summary of the total employees of these industries which is shown in Table 2. These data are developed from the payroll records of approximately 165,000 establishments each month. Most interesting about these data are the records of employment growth and change recorded since 1947 for the motion picture industry and since 1958 for the broadcasting industry. The latter shows consistent growth for each year. However, data for the motion picture industry shows a tendency somewhat similar to the trend in cinema theatres and seats, which is a decline from a high level in the 1940s to a low level in the late 1960s, and then a small increase followed by a leveling of the total of employees. Taken together, the information in Tables 1 and 2 show that current expansion is taking place in broadcasting distribution and not in the motion picture industry that might be looked to for the production of new programs. The application of this observation to artists suggests that growth of employment for artists will not take place in parallel with the expansion of the distribution system that is occurring via broadcasting and cable. This estimate is consistent with the underlying eficiency of the media as a format for the presentation of performances. It is also interesting to see the difference in the growth of women employees in these two industries as a correlate of the relatively greater growth of the broadcasting industry. Entrance of women into employment is made easier when total employment is expanding.

TABLE 1

SELECTED MEASURES OF MEDIA DISTRIBUTION CAPACITY IN THE U.S.A.

Year	Radio		Television		Cable			Cinema			
	Stations	Receivers in Use (thousands)	Stations	Receivers in Use (thousands)	Systems	Subscribers (thousands)	Percent of TV Homes with Cable	Indoor Theatres	Seats (thousands)	Outdoor Theatres	Car Spaces (thousands)
1921	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1922	30	400	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1923	556	1,100	–	–	–	–	–	15,000	7,605	–	–
1924	530	3,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1925	571	4,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1926	528	5,700	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1927	681	7,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1928	677	8,500	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1929	606	10,500	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1930	618	13,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1931	612	15,000	–	–	–	–	–	22,100	12,144	–	–
1932	604	18,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1933	599	22,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1934	583	26,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1935	585	30,500	–	–	–	–	–	18,263	11,133	–	–
1936	616	33,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1937	646	37,600	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1938	689	40,800	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1939	722	45,300	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1940	765	51,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1941	851	56,600	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1942	930	59,300	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1943	959	57,850	8	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1944	962	55,000	8	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

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TABLE 1
(continued)

**SELECTED MEASURES OF
MEDIA DISTRIBUTION CAPACITY IN THE U.S.A.**

	Radio		Television		Cable			Cinema			
Year	Stations	Receivers in Use (thousands)	Stations	Receivers in Use (thousands)	Systems	Subscribers (thousands)	Percent of TV Homes with Cable	Indoor Theatres	Seats (thousands)	Outdoor Theatres	Car Spaces (thousands)
1945	973	56,000	8	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1946	1,005	60,000	6	10	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1947	1,212	66,000	12	16	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1948	2,094	74,000	16	190	–	–	–	17,811	–	820	–
1949	2,639	81,000	51	1,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1950	2,867	85,200	98	4,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1951	2,981	96,000	107	10,600	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
1952	3,053	105,300	108	15,800	70	14	.1%	–	–	–	–
1953	3,069	110,500	126	21,200	150	30	.2	–	–	–	–
1954	3,193	117,500	356	27,300	300	65	.3	14,716	7,775	3,775	1,142
1955	3,343	121,000	422	32,500	400	150	.5	–	–	–	–
1956	3,487	123,900	459	37,600	450	300	.9	–	–	–	–
1957	3,663	135,000	494	42,700	500	350	.9	–	–	–	–
1958	3,874	139,500	523	47,000	525	450	1.1	12,291	6,995	4,063	1,429
1959	4,055	146,200	545	50,000	560	550	1.3	–	–	–	–
1960	4,306	156,400	559	53,300	640	650	1.4	–	–	–	–
1961	4,537	168,300	579	55,600	700	725	1.5	–	–	–	–
1962	4,772	183,800	603	58,175	800	850	1.7	–	–	–	–
1963	5,050	200,300	625	61,200	1,000	950	1.9	9,150	6,389	3,502	1,652
1964	5,237	214,100	649	64,175	1,200	1,085	2.1	–	–	–	–
1965	5,569	228,300	668	67,210	1,325	1,275	2.4	–	–	–	–
1966	5,779	242,000	699	70,560	1,570	1,575	2.9	–	–	–	–
1967	6,060	262,700	737	74,800	1,770	2,100	3.8	8,803	4,787	3,384	1,403
1968	6,269	281,800	785	79,000	2,000	2,800	4.4	–	–	–	–
1969	6,565	303,400	837	83,600	2,260	3,600	6.1	–	–	–	–

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TABLE 1
(continued)

SELECTED MEASURES OF
MEDIA DISTRIBUTION CAPACITY IN THE U.S.A.

	Radio		Television		Cable			Cinema			
Year	Stations	Receivers in Use (thousands)	Stations	Receivers in Use (thousands)	Systems	Subscribers (thousands)	Percent of TV Homes with Cable	Indoor Theatres	Seats (thousands)	Outdoor Theatres	Car Spaces (thousands)
1970	6,889	320,700	862	88,300	2,490	4,500	7.6%	–	–	–	–
1971	7,011	336,000	881	93,200	2,639	5,300	8.8	–	–	–	–
1972	7,189	351,500	906	100,700	2,841	6,000	9.6	9,209	6,064	3,490	1,922
1973	7,379	383,400	927	109,800	2,991	7,300	11.1	–	–	–	–
1974	7,561	401,600	938	117,000	3,158	8,700	13.0	–	–	–	–
1975	7,785	413,100	952	121,100	3,506	9,800	14.3	–	–	–	–
1976	8,034	425,300	962	131,500	3,651	10,800	15.3	–	–	–	–
1977	8,173	448,000	984	138,200	3,832	11,900	16.6	7,814	5,392	2,882	1,677
1978	8,440	451,000	986	145,700	3,875	13,000	17.4	–	–	–	–
1979	8,615	453,000	992	155,800	4,150	14,100	18.5	–	–	–	–
1980	8,752	460,000	1,013	162,500	4,225	16,000	20.0	–	–	–	–
1981	8,963	–	1,021	–	4,375	18,300	25.3				
1982	9,101	–	1,045	–	4,825	21,000	28.3	–	–	–	–

– No data for this year.

SOURCE: Various tables in Sterling, C.H. and Haight, T.R., The Mass Media: Aspen Institute Guide to Communication Industry Trends, Praeger, N.Y. 1978; (data source details are provided in this publication). Revised data for 1975–77 and data to 1982 from manuscript prepared by Dr. and Mrs. Sterling for a revised and updated publication. Data for 1977 on cinema capacity from Bureau of the Census, Motion Picture Industry, 1977 Census of Service Industries, Subject Series SC77-5-4, Washington, March 1981.

Table 2

TOTAL OF EMPLOYEES AND WOMEN IN THE
MOTION PICTURE AND BROADCASTING INDUSTRIES
1947-1981 (thousands)

	Motion Picture Industry			Broadcasting Industry		
Year	Total Employees	Total Women	Percent Women	Total Employees	Total Women	Percent Women
1947	252.0	*	*	*	*	*
1948	249.0	*	*	*	*	*
1949	250.0	*	*	*	*	*
1950	248.0	*	*	*	*	*
1951	245.4	*	*	*	*	*
1952	240.1	*	*	*	*	*
1953	234.0	*	*	*	*	*
1954	230.7	*	*	*	*	*
1955	231.6	*	*	*	*	*
1956	225.8	*	*	*	*	*
1957	211.1	*	*	*	*	*
1958	199.1	*	*	86.9	*	*
1959	195.1	*	*	88.9	*	*
1960	189.6	66.3	35.0%	92.4	20.9	22.6%
1961	186.5	64.1	34.4%	93.9	21.4	22.8%
1962	178.3	60.7	34.0%	95.3	21.4	22.5%
1963	176.5	59.8	33.9%	99.1	22.2	22.4%
1964	177.4	58.8	33.1%	102.9	23.0	22.4%
1965	185.1	59.1	31.9%	106.9	23.6	22.1%
1966	187.5	60.8	32.4%	113.6	24.8	21.8%
1967	194.3	64.4	33.1%	119.6	26.9	22.5%
1968	196.0	66.4	33.9%	123.6	28.3	22.9%
1969	206.7	69.5	33.6%	131.3	31.2	23.8%
1970	204.1	70.7	34.6%	137.6	32.2	23.4%
1971	201.2	71.4	35.5%	143.0	33.8	23.6%
1972	204.9	73.0	35.6%	142.7	34.1	23.9%
1973	206.6	76.7	37.1%	144.3	35.7	24.7%
1974	207.5	76.5	36.9%	149.4	38.1	25.5%
1975	205.7	76.5	37.2%	154.5	40.7	26.3%
1976	209.5	76.6	36.6%	159.8	42.9	26.8%
1977	214.0	77.8	36.4%	168.6	47.2	28.0%
1978	213.1	79.3	37.2%	179.8	52.7	29.3%
1979	227.6	84.5	37.1%	188.5	58.5	31.0%
1980	216.0	81.6	37.8%	198.0	63.3	32.0%
1981	213.3	86.4	40.5%	202.5	66.0	32.6%

*figures not available in these years

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment & Earnings, United States, 1909-1978 and Supplements

III. DEFINING A MEDIA ARTIST

What is an artist in the media fields? This is a question that is not resolved by the existing information systems. There are many difficulties that can be seen rather quickly but are very hard to resolve in data systems that strive for simplicity and broad generality. First, the media fields involve the creation of productions that are essentially collaborative in nature. There are exceptions, the instances of artists in the media fields who create works almost totally through their own efforts. An example might be an artist such as Nam June Paik, who in the spring of 1982 is being honored by a retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum in New York City. His avant-garde works, largely of his personal creation from electronic wiring to sound and image production, have brought a whole new view of the possibilities for video as an art form.

For the most part, it is possible to characterize media artists and the production of media works as intensive collaborative efforts of a great many persons with specialized skills. To witness a work of media art being created, is to see a group of people with many occupational titles, at times working together, and at other times, working alone. These people have occupational titles such as: writer, producer, director, film director, art director, cameraman, actor, sound technician, script supervisor, editor, and many others. Within their individual fields of specialization, they do highly skilled and creative work.

A second complicating factor is that many of these people change roles and occupational titles for different productions. A third difficulty is that many artists in the media fields work under a number of industry employment structures, including under contracts with a labor organization, such as the Screen Actors Guild, or as an "independent". Sometimes media artists have several professional names which are used when working under their different occupational titles or under different employment systems.

The best way to understand the artist must be the technique of the case study that examines the entire career, work experience and accomplishments. This approach is only practical for the highly unique cases that justify separate biographical study. However, the concerns in this paper are with the problems of describing the central tendencies of the whole group of media artists. This is possible to some degree, through the use of a number of different data sets. Some of these are generated through the manpower series of the Federal government using data collected by the Bureau of the Census. Other valuable data sets are created by special files, such as membership files of labor organizations that provide services to artists in the media fields, membership files of professional societies, exhibition records or performance histories, and records of educational attainment. Each of these approaches to the creation of study universes of media artists is potentially useful for some information needs, but also has definite limitations. Often it is desirable to use information from several different sources to provide multiple perspectives on certain kinds of problems and questions.

Artists in the media fields are no different than artists in the other genre of art on the difficult problems associated with instability of employment and earnings. This is true, even though their living standard may be very good by means of support from earnings of other persons in their households. Severe tensions also may result from the discrepancies between the artist's aspirations and ambitions and the realities of their career success, from conflicting judgments on their level of skills, or because of too little appreciation for the quality of their work and its importance. There is also the artist's personal displeasure about the necessity of earning money for work that does not have the desired artistic relevance. These deeper problems can not be approached with the statistical data systems that are now in use and this paper takes aim only at measuring economic conditions rather than artistic achievement or the fulfillment of artist's aspirations.

IV. INFORMATION SYSTEMS ABOUT MEDIA ARTISTS

A. Federal Government Systems

Through the normal, continuous data systems of the Federal Government, some information is available that provides insight into the economic condition of the media artist labor force. Limitations inherent in these systems are important and the major benefits of the data from these sources is in terms of broad comparability with other sectors of the artist labor force and the labor force in general for the purposes of trend analysis over time periods of many years. The most detailed of these information systems is the Census of Population which is done for the last year of each decade. A monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) provides much less detail but with greater frequency. Among the other studies that provide some helpful information on an industry-wide basis are the five-year Census of Service Industries and the annual Employment and Earnings Report which was mentioned before. Unfortunately, the data from the 1980 Census of Population will not be available on individual occupations until early 1983. For this reason, the Census information presented in this paper is based upon the 1970 Census of Population and on the Current Population Survey.

Accurate use of the data generated by these systems requires knowledge of their special characteristics. One important characteristic is the basic set of questions used to make occupational classifications. The whole population surveyed in the decennial Censuses and the sample surveyed in the CPS are asked the same basic set of questions. A coding clerk subsequently reviews each individual's responses and decides which one of about 420 occupational classifications should be assigned to that individual. The basic set of questions identify: occupational title, job duties, employment for wages or self-employment, employment by industry or government, and field or business of the employing organization or the level of the government agency. The reference period for these questions is a specific week, usually the last week preceding the survey. If the individual was engaged in more than one activity, the one used is the one on which the most time was spent. For the artist in the media fields, the difficulties of this system are associated with the usual short term periods of employment and the frequency of multiple and concurrent employment in different occupations. This data system uses only one occupation classification for each individual at one time to avoid the problems of double counting.

A second important characteristic of these systems is that every individual in the population, above age 16, is placed into one of four categories: employed for wages, self-employed, unemployed, and not counted as part of the active labor force. These are illustrated in the diagram of Figure 1. The four most frequent reasons for not being counted as part of the active labor force are: a student attending school, illness, retirement, and housework (as a spouse or homemaker). As the arrows of Figure 1 suggest, the relationship between these four categories is dynamic and constantly changing. Each survey is a cross sectional study at a moment in time and measures the activity in the reference period. This approach may often show large fluctuations in the artist labor force size and employment that reflect the normal mobility of artists' work and the relatively frequent spells of unemployment between jobs of short duration.

New York City and Los Angeles are the dominant national locations for media program production, so one can surmise that a substantial part of the artist occupational labor forces of actors, dancers, musicians/composers and photographers in New York City and Los Angeles are involved in media work. It is interesting to see the proportion of such persons in these cities in relation to the rest of the country. In 1970, for example, the Census of Population enumerated (Table 3) 9,728 employed actors in the United States: 32.3% were in New York City and 23.3% were in Los Angeles; for dancers: 13.6% were in

New York City and 10.9% were in Los Angeles. Of the 87,834 employed musicians/composers enumerated in 1970: 9% were in New York City and 6.9% in Los Angeles. The 6.9% of employed musicians/composers in Los Angeles in 1970 was 6,038 individuals. A study published in 1971, Robert R. Faulkner's, Hollywood Studio Musicians, estimated that studios drew their music performers from a local pool of 2,000-3,000, which was about a third to a half of the employed musicians according to the 1970 Census.

The labor pool that is not counted as part of the active artist labor force shows (Table 4) actors in this reserve status as 63.3% as numerous as the active actors' labor force; and the corresponding reserve for dancers is 74.3% as many as the active dancers' labor force. Artists classified as not in the active labor force status may well be available for employment that might be offered. Self-employment is a relatively unimportant status for actors and dancers but is quite significant for painters/sculptors, musician/composers, photographers and authors (Table 5). A problem in the interpretation of employment data for self-employed persons is that they may have little or no earnings but are not considered as unemployed. They are in a sense, individual proprietors.

The primary function of the Current Population Survey (CPS) is to provide information for estimating national employment and unemployment statistics. Annualized monthly averages of the estimates are useful statistics for observing long-term trends in the artists' labor force size, employment and unemployment. These data have been used in the National Endowment for the Art's Artists Employment and Unemployment 1971-1980 for the several occupations relevant to the media fields. They show that actors, dancers and musicians had relatively modest growth in their labor force sizes. Actors increased by 21%, dancers by 20% and musicians by 21%. Radio/TV announcers declined by 32%. The modest increase in size of the labor force for three of the performing artist occupations seems consistent with the employment trend shown in Table 2. The decline in the number of radio/TV announcers seems to run counter to the growth of employment in the broadcasting industry. A widely held explanation for this decline in numbers of announcers is that there has been a great improvement in productivity due to technical innovations and that there are now fewer employees with the broadcasting stations who have a single function, such as only an announcer.

Figure 1

DIAGRAM OF POSSIBLE SHIFTS
IN LABOR FORCE STATUS WITHIN
THE ARTIST OCCUPATIONS
AS USED BY THE BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

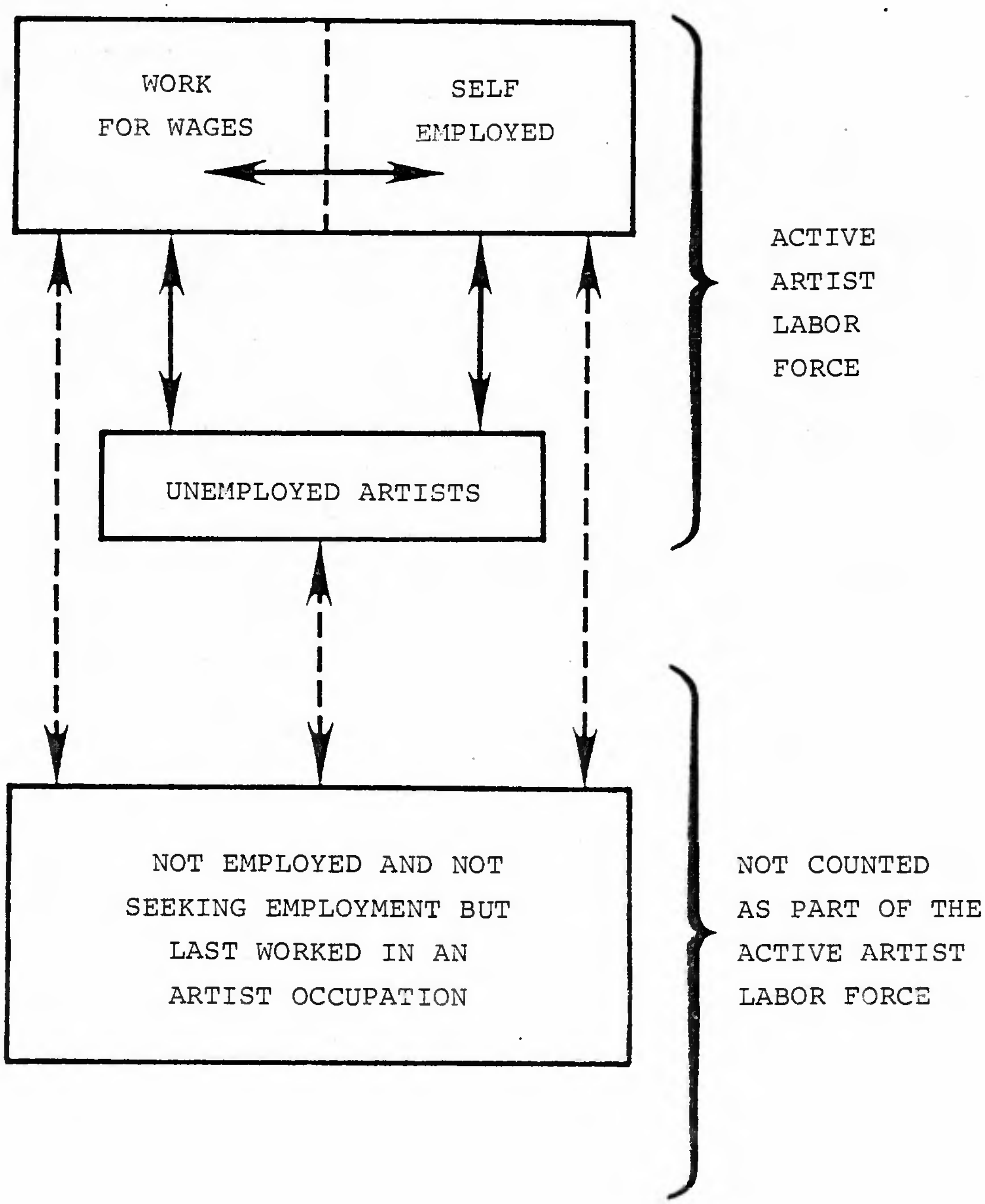


Table 3

EMPLOYED ARTISTS IN SELECTED OCCUPATIONS RELEVANT TO THE MEDIA FIELDS, 1970

	United States	New York City*	Los Angeles*	Other U.S.
Actors	9,728	3,140 (32.3%)	2,264 (23.3%)	4,324 (44.4%)
Dancers	5,950	808 (13.6%)	651 (10.9%)	4,491 (75.5%)
Musicians/ Composers	87,834	7,877 (9.0%)	6,038 (6.9%)	73,919 (84.2%)
Photographers	64,691	6,332 (9.8%)	3,846 (5.9%)	54,513 (84.3%)
Radio/TV Announcers	21,226	571 (2.7%)	515 (2.4%)	20,140 (94.9%)

* Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area

SOURCE: Research Division Report #5, Where Artists Live: 1970.

Table 4

PERSONS NOT IN ACTIVE LABOR FORCE BUT LAST WORKED IN ARTIST OCCUPATIONS 1960 TO 1970, AS A PERCENT OF SELECTED ARTIST OCCUPATION LABOR FORCE: 1970

Architects	10.0%
Actors	63.3
Authors	21.2
Dancers	74.2
Designers	16.5
Musicians/Composers	28.5
Painters/Sculptors	22.2
Photographers	17.0
Radio/TV Announcers	11.6

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population: 1970 Subject Reports, Final Report PC (2)-7A, Occupational Characteristics

TABLE 5

SELF-EMPLOYMENT AS A PERCENT OF SELECTED ARTIST OCCUPATIONS LABOR FORCE: 1970

Architects	30.8%
Actors	12.4
Authors	32.5
Dancers	4.1
Designers	8.3
Musicians/Composers	29.3
Painters/Sculptors	28.7
Photographers	45.8
Radio/TV Announcers	1.5

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population: 1970 Subject Reports, Final Report PC (2)-7A, Occupational Characteristics

B. Information From The Labor Organizations

Very different kinds of data files about artists in the media fields are prepared by the several labor organizations whose members work in cinema, radio and television. The organizations include: the American Federation of Musicians (AFofM), American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), Screen Actors Guild (SAG), Actors' Equity Association, Writers Guild of America, Directors Guild of America, National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians (NABET), and the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Operators (IATSE). This is not a complete listing, but includes only the organizations whose data is used for illustrations in this paper.

Federal data information systems such as the decennial Census, CPS, and the annual report of Emloyment and Earnings, tend to undercount media artists out of an effort to avoid double counting of individuals who may work in several occupations. The data from the labor organizations has the opposite tendency. Individuals may be counted several times, in several different occupations and in the records of several labor organizations. This tendency is illustrated in Table 6 which shows how frequently artists hold memberships in several of the labor organizations associated with the media fields. It is well known that some actors, musicians and authors, whose work appears in film, on television and radio, are also active in other genre. The data in the table for Actors' Equity is one confirmation of this, as it shows that of the members whose primary personal identification is with Actors' Equity, the organization of actors in live theatre, 58% also hold membership in AFTRA and 64% hold membership in SAG, which are primarily for artists who work in the media fields.

Keeping the universe separate and clear is greatly complicated by multiplicity of employment, not only across the lines of the several labor organizations, but under each of the labor organizations. Table 7 shows the majority of the members of the unions who were employed at all in 1980, worked for several employers. In the case of the Screen Actors Guild members, 77% had two or more employers and 12% had 20 or more employers that year; 20% of the members of the American Federation of Musicians had 20 or more employers.

Annual earnings are the product of the wage rate multiplied by the number of hours or weeks worked. This well known and simple relationship must be kept in mind for media artists in particular, since they may work for a high wage rate, but for only a short period and therefore "make a lot of money," but earn very little annually. The Screen Actors Guild members pay their dues in nine brackets or classes based on an estimate of their average annual earnings. Table 8 shows historical information accumulated by the Screen Actors Guild's Office of the Controller for the years 1961-1978. The relative earnings proportions are essentially uniform over this entire time period. The constancy of the percent of the membership in each of the dues brackets for every year is remarkable. About 75% of the SAG members have consistently averaged annual earnings under SAG contracts of $1,250. Class 1 is the "star" class in which estimated average annual earnings are over $100,000. The proportion of SAG members in this class never exceeded 1% but declined to as low as 0.4% The table also shows a shift in the proportion of star class members over the time period covered. This evidence agrees with what is recognized to be a general change in the primacy of the artist occupations in the media fields. Actors no longer are as important as they were in the star system of several decades ago.

One of the services that labor organizations offer to their members is the administration of a number of benefit programs such as insurance, hospital expenses, and pensions. The labor organizations receive payments from employers on behalf of covered employees and administer the programs to provide fringe benefit compensations. Those benefits would be difficult and very costly if done by the employers for artists with work periods that are of very short duration. The files of consolidated programs such as Pension and Welfare Funds that are administered by labor organizations provide certain aggregate data about the work done and earnings of members from many employees and many periods of employment. For example, Table 9 shows the total wages as recorded in pension and welfare files for all AFofM locals by employment area. This unique data describes the amounts and proportions of earnings from different types of work for musicians who are employed in the media fields as well as in the other employment areas. Film, radio and television work contributed 23.8% and 28.3% of total wages recorded in 1976 and 1978 respectively. The subdivisions of these earnings shows considerable variation for the two years, but radio and TV jingles (advertising) were the largest media category of sources of wages both times. Media earnings are consistently greater as a whole than the combined earnings from theatre and live concerts of symphonic music.

Table 10 provides another interesting perspective from consolidated pension records. This second case is the Motion Picture Industry Pension Plan. It covers members of IATSE, an organization that differs from AFofM, with its many specialized locals in the large employment areas of Los Angeles or New York. These locals are specialized to one craft or occupation. The data in Table 10 shows the average hours employed for three different years: 1967, 1972 and 1977; and for 20 occupations represented by IATSE in the media fields. These hours are a consolidated average of IATSE members' work for many employers during the three years. It is common for the IATSE members to work for a great many employers each year and usually to have a short period of unemployment between jobs. The range of average hours on the table, if divided into 40 hour weeks, would indicate from 24-51 weeks of full employment. Actually, workers in these occupations rarely work a standard number of hours per week like the conventional industrial or service industry workers, but accept the work schedules of the production on which they are employed. Supplementing the average hours employed of Table 10, are the data of Table 11 that provides illustrations of weekly wage rates for selected occupations represented within many of the same locals. By combining the information from these two tables, it can be seen that average earnings for the three years in these occupations may be substantial and significantly greater than for the average actor as shown in Table 8, not withstanding the similarity of having frequent spells of unemployment between jobs.

The varieties of employment and compensation are further illustrated by the labor organizations whose memberships are shown in Table 12, the Writers Guild of America, West; Directors Guild of America; and the National Association of Broadcast

Employees and Technicians. The members of the Writers Guild of America are artists engaged to write either literary or dramatic material for media organizations. Creative writers employed by organizations that have signed agreements with the Writers Guild are paid both a weekly wage, the minimum level is negotiated by the union, and royalty payments which may continue for many years after a work is completed. By far the greater share of income, is derived from work intended for television or radio presentation rather than for film. The Writers Guild also has the responsibility of collecting "residuals" or royalty payments for the reuse of the work and distributing them to the members. In 1980, the value of the residuals distributed to Guild members was over $23 million.

The members of the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians are a distinctly different group from the others discussed previously. NABET was organized in 1933 as a company union of the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). The principle places of employment for its members at the present time are NBC and the American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). NABET members do jobs like engineering, film editing, video tape editing, and other technical occupations. They experience comparatively stable employment. Approximately, 55% of the members of this union are employed on a staff basis with the NBC and ABC networks. Approximately 28% are employed as staff by local radio and television stations and the remaining 17% work as freelancers.

Directors stand out as the unique group in media production at the present time. It is generally believed, within the motion picture industry, that "the film is the vehicle" and it is largely a product of the personality and skills of the director. The director has become the star whose name and reputation can generate financing, publicity, critical reviews in the press, and deliver large audiences at the box office or at the television set in millions of homes. In this changing world of media, "stars" rise and fall. The directors may have succeeded the actors, who in turn succeeded the producers. Now the primacy of directors is being challenged. A book published last year, John Brady's The Craft of the Screenwriters, says that the age of the director is past and "the era of the screenwriter as superstar is at hand."

Directors have been actively fighting studios for decision-making power in the economic and creative partnership. Their freedom, earnings and employment are directly related to their success in achieving productions that attract large audiences and commercial success. Currently, a decline in box office earnings reverses an up-trend of only a few months ago and has stiffened bargaining resistance to many directors. They are being told that they can no longer have the support they assumed in 1981. An illustration is in the press of April 1982 which reports on such developments as the decision by the writer-director, Francis Ford Coppola to close down his production group rather than face bankruptcy.

According to the <u>Brooks' Standard Rate Book,</u> minimum weekly salaries received by directors in 1978 varied from $2,200 for directors of theatrical (cinema) motion pictures and $5,000 for directors of TV films to $635 for a second assistant director. Of course, the salaries of the "stars" are negotiated and may be much greater than these minimums. As in the case of many other artist occupations in the media fields, the annual earnings of directors actually depend on the number of weeks worked as well as on the weekly rate. A director employed for only a few weeks in a year may not have a large annual income even if the rate seems rather high.

TABLE 6

MULTIPLE MEMBERSHIP IN ARTIST LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

	Artist's Primary Affiliation				
	Actors' Equity Assoc.	American Federation of Musicians	American Federation of Television and Radio Artists	American Guild of Musical Artists	Screen Actors' Guild
Actors' Equity Association	100%	-	38%	7%	44%
American Federation of Musicians	2%	100%	6%	1%	2%
American Federation of Television and Radio Artists	58%	2%	100%	22%	65%
American Guild of Musical Artists	4%	1%	1%	100%	1%
Screen Actor' Guild	64%	1%	61%	9%	100%
American Guild of Variety Artists*	5%	1%	4%	2%	4%
Screen Extras Guild*	1%	-	4%	-	1%

* Membership was not sampled as a primary group

- No answer in survey

SOURCE: Ruttenberg, Friedman, Kilgallen, Gutchess & Associates, Inc., "Working and Not Working in the Performing Arts: A Survey of Employment, Underemployment and Unemployment Among Performing Artists in 1980", prepared for Labor Institute for Human Enrichment, Inc., in cooperation with the Department of Professional Employees, AFL-CIO, Washington, 1981.

TABLE 7

NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS WORKED FOR AS A PERFORMING ARTIST
BY UNION MEMBERS WHO WORKED AT LEAST ONCE IN 1980

Number of Employers in 1980	Actors' Equity Assn.	American Federation of Musicians	American Federation of Television and Radio Artists	American Guild of Musican Artists	Screen Actors' Guild
1	15%	14%	13%	43%	10%
2	18	10	8	11	10
3	12	8	14	7	11
4	9	8	7	6	7
5 or 6	13	11	12	15	16
7 to 9	6	9	8	14	6
10 to 19	8	13	15	7	15
20 or more	6	20	11	3	12
Don't know/ No answer/ Not asked	13	7	12	2	13

SOURCE: Ruttenberg, et.al., op.cit.

TABLE 8

ANNUAL EARNINGS OF SCREEN ACTOR'S GUILD MEMBERS BY PERCENT IN EACH DUES-BRACKET AND THE ESTIMATED AVERAGE EARNINGS

Year	Class 9 Up to $2,500 ($1,250)	Class 8 $2,500 to $5,000 ($3,750)	Class 7 $5,000 to $10,000 ($7,500)	Class 6 $10,000 to $15,000 ($12,500)	Class 5 $15,000 to $25,000 ($20,000)	Class 4 $25,000 to $35,000 ($30,000)	Class 3 $35,000 to $50,000 ($42,500)	Class 2 $50,000 to $100,000 ($75,000)	Class 1 $100,000 & Over ($110,000)	Estimated Average Earnings
1961	73.7%	7.9%	7.9%	3.7%	2.9%	1.2%	0.8%	0.9%	1.0%	$5,328
1962	75.0	7.6	7.5	3.4	2.6	1.1	0.9	0.9	1.0	5,218
1963	76.9	7.0	6.9	3.2	2.4	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	4,894
1964	77.2	6.6	6.5	3.0	2.5	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.0	5,243
1965	75.9	7.8	6.7	3.0	2.6	1.1	1.0	1.1	0.9	5,204
1966	76.8	7.5	6.5	2.9	2.2	1.2	1.0	1.1	0.8	5,021
1967	76.0	7.3	6.4	3.1	2.9	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	5,234
1968	76.9	7.1	6.0	3.0	2.9	1.2	1.0	1.2	0.7	5,088
1969	76.6	7.3	6.1	3.2	2.8	1.3	0.9	1.0	0.7	4,946
1970	76.1	7.3	6.6	3.3	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	0.6	4,937
1971	74.2	8.9	7.5	3.1	2.8	1.1	0.8	1.1	0.4	4,711
1972	76.0	8.2	6.9	3.1	2.6	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.4	4,468
1973	75.9	8.0	6.7	3.1	2.7	1.2	0.9	1.0	0.5	4,721
1974	75.5	8.0	6.8	3.1	2.9	1.3	0.9	1.0	0.5	4,794
1975	74.8	8.3	6.9	3.1	3.1	1.3	0.9	1.0	0.6	4,954
1976	77.0	7.3	6.3	2.9	3.0	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.5	4,671
1977	77.0	7.2	6.2	3.1	2.7	1.3	0.9	0.9	0.6	4,732
1978	76.2	6.9	6.1	3.1	3.1	1.5	1.2	1.3	0.7	5,381

NOTE: Numbers in parentheses indicate average earnings within each Dues-Bracket.

SOURCE: Office of the Controller, Screen Actor's Guild

TABLE 9

TOTAL WAGES AS RECORDED IN PENSION AND WELFARE FILES
FOR ALL AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS LOCALS
BY EMPLOYMENT AREA ($thousands)

	1976		1978	
Phonograph Recordings	$ 29,503	17.6%	$ 31,111	19.4%
Media	40,019	23.8	45,284	28.3
Radio	391	.2	1,126	.7
Television	3,371	2.0	4,961	3.1
Jingles, Radio/TV	13,928	8.3	16,456	10.3
Television Film	3,637	2.2	6,989	4.4
Syndicated Videotape	12,579	7.5	8,340	5.2
Motion Pictures	6,113	3.6	7,412	4.6
Theatres	13,269	7.9	12,837	8.0
Symphony	11,053	6.6	7,117	4.4
Local Engagements (Casual & Steady)	73,821	44.0	63,916	39.9
TOTAL	$167,665	99.9%	$160,265	100.0%

SOURCE: American Federation of Musicians Pension Fund

TABLE 10

AVERAGE HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT PER YEAR
INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF THEATRICAL STAGE EMPLOYEES
AND MOVING PICTURE OPERATORS (IATSE)
MEMBERS IN SELECTED CRAFTS

Local Number	Craft	Avg. Hrs. Employed 1967	1972	1977
659	Cameramen	1,572	1,439	1,371
728	Electric Lamp Operators	1,406	1,418	1,312
695	Sound Technicians	1,840	1,712	1,629
683	Film Technicians	1,708	1,697	1,748
44	Propertymen	1,482	1,443	1,386
706	Makeup & Hair Stylists	1,546	1,328	1,254
776	Film Editors	1,890	1,784	1,797
818	Publicists	1,815	1,879	1,924
871	Script Supervisors	1,573	1,446	1,577
80	Grips	1,536	1,427	1,335
876	Art Directors	2,022	1,694	1,855
839	Screen Cartoonists	1,309	1,142	1,172
705	Costumers	1,442	1,380	1,418
892	Costume Designers	989	1,046	1,341
789	Cinetechnicians	1,843	1,782	1,839
790	Illustrators & Matte Artists	2,059	1,250	1,658
847	Set Designers	1,722	1,297	1,611
816	Scenic & Title Artists	1,210	996	1,249
729	Set Painters	1,537	1,388	1,454
854	Screen Story Analysts	1,307	1,220	1,462

SOURCE: Motion Picture Industry Pension Plan

TABLE 11

MEMBERSHIP OF SELECTED LOCALS AND SELECTED WAGE RATES

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Operators (IATSE)

Local Number and Location	Craft	Membership Number	Membership Year	Selected Weekly Wage Rates
659 - LA	Cameramen	1,321	1977	$712 (1979, Camera Operator, Studio)
				$1,262 (1979, Director of Photography, Studio)
728 - LA	Electric Lamp Operators	1,116	1977	$674 (1979, Chief Set Electrician, Studio)
695 - LA	Sound Technicians	1,122	1977	$787 (1978, Mixer, Studio)
44 - LA	Propertymen	3,767	1977	$566 (1978, Prop Maker Foreman, Studio)
706 - LA	Makeup & Hair Stylists	459	1977	$731 (1979, Makeup Technician, Studio)
				$586 (1979, Head Hair Stylist, Studio)
776 - LA	Film Editors	1,701	1977	$834 (1978, Film Editor, Studio)
818 - LA	Publicists	203	1977	$561 (1978, Senior Publicist, Studio)
161 - NY	Script Supervisors	66	1979	$524 (1978, Script Supervisor, Technical)
				$100* (1979, Script Supervisor, Commercial)
871 - LA	Script Supervisors	175	1977	$474 (1978, Script Supervisor, Studio, - 3-years experience)
80 - LA	Grips	1,140	1977	$636 (1978, Grip Head, Studio)

(continued on next page)

TABLE 11
(continues)

MEMBERSHIP OF SELECTED LOCALS AND SELECTED WAGE RATES

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and
Moving Picture Operators (IATSE)

Local Number and Location	Craft	Membership Number	Membership Year	Selected Weekly Wage Rates
876 - LA	Art Directors	230	1977	$967 (1978, Art Director, Studio,- less than 1-year experience)
841 - NY	Screen Cartoonists	496	1979	$467 (1979, Staff Comic Strip Storyman)
839 - LA	Screen Cartoonists	1,410	1977	$446 (1979, Staff Comic Strip Storyman)
705 - LA	Costumers	1,007	1977	$529 (1978, Costumer, Dept. Supervisor, Studio)
892 - LA	Costume Designers	41	1977	$647 (1979, Costume Designer, Studio)
816 - LA	Scenic & Title Artists	76	1977	$933 (1979, Scenic Arts Supervisor, Studio)
729 - LA	Set Painters	654	1977	$600 (1979, Foreman Painter, Studio)

* daily rate

SOURCES: Data on New York City (NY) locals from Quarterly Reports to IATSE. Data on Los Angeles (LA) locals from Motion Picture Industry Pension Plan and from Brooks' Standard Rate Book.

TABLE 12

MEMBERSHIP OF SELECTED LABOR ORGANIZATIONS
IN THE MEDIA FIELDS

	Writers' Guild of America, West[1]	Directors' Guild of America[2]	National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians (U.S.A.)[3]
1965	2,336	-	4,442
1968	2,723	3,400	4,619
1971	2,948	3,800	5,470
1974	3,172	4,000	5,738
1978	4,780	4,875	7,227

[1] All membership categories. SOURCE: Office of the Executive Director, Writers' Guild of America, West.

[2] SOURCE: Directors' Guild of America, Membership Directory, various issues.

[3] All membership categories. SOURCE: Office of the International Secretary-Treasurer, National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians.

C. Information About Independent Artists In The Media Fields

Artists also work in the media fields independently of the formal labor organizations or outside the employment of formal producing organizations, such as Hollywood film production studios, television networks or broadcasting stations. They comprise a fairly numerous and important sector of the artist community. However, it is the most difficult sector to describe with economic data. Independent media artists are often union members and they may work under a formal structure from time to time. They may work with different approaches to media or entirely different occupations in a formal structure than they do when they work as independents. For such reasons, the collection and analysis of statistics is difficult if not impossible for this sector. In fact, it is not clear that this sector has a distinct universe of artists for the reasons just pointed out. In any case, there is a gray area with much overlap.

At one time independents were filmmakers who worked outside the studio system. The relationship of studios to film producers began to evolve to a new pattern as a result of the multiple impacts on the motion pticure industry of the famous court case, the U.S. vs. Paramount, which was decided on May 3, 1948. The decision required the major motion picture film companies to end their monopoly over cinema theatre ownership and they began to divest themselves of their theatre holdings. This change was taking place in the same time period as the initial and rapid introduction of television (Table 1). Together, these had the combined effect of bringing about a rapid decline in the number of new feature films produced, from 622 in 1950 to 392 in 1955, and also substantially reduced the importance of the star system. The combined effect of these developments also created opportunities for independent filmmakers to exhibit their films in cinemas which were no longer under the control of the owners of the major studios. Television also opened a new audience for independent filmmakers. Within a few years, the studio system began to disintegrate and loose its supreme position over production. In addition to these developments with feature films, a great expansion took place in the production of films for other kinds of purposes such as uses by government, industry, religious institutions and educational organizations rather than for exhibition in cinema theatres or on television. Coupled with these factors was a growing interest in the media as a proper genre for artistic expression. The media became respectable in schools of art and attracted the attention of talented young artists. Higher education institutions began to offer specialized training for careers in the media fields and started the programs of formal professional career education for the media work that has now produced a substantial number of highly trained artists and an even larger number of persons who have developed a keen appreciation for the media as an art form.

Available information for the study of independents must be drawn from many sources. A special financial support base began to develop in the 1950s and 1960s, consisting of foundations and government agencies that awarded grants and fellowships to independent media artists. These include: The National Endowment for the Arts, The National Endowment for the Humanities, The American Film Institute, The New York State Council on the Arts, The Ford Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, The John & Mary Markle Foundation, The John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, and a number of producing and distributing cooperatives organized to provide services to independent filmmakers.
Another kind of development that has been of great importance in facilitating the work of the independents was the establishment of media centers in many cities. These organizations, which depend on support from the same foundations and public agency sources, provide services to media artists by renting professional quality equipment at very low cost, they conduct training workshops and other organized technical and artistic activities; and perhaps, the most important of all, is that they conduct regular exhibitions of video and film productions of an avant-garde nature.

No one can be certain of the exact number of independent filmmakers. Such cross-sectional studies as are currently done, can only catch a small number of the qualified individuals. Independent filmmakers who leave media work for a time may return to it later. Estimates are made frequently and range from as low as 1,000-2,000 qualified independent filmmakers to well over 10,000. Further, there are a very large number of artists in the other occupations necessary in the collaboration that produces a work of media art and many of these have acquired special filmmaking skills. The future is suggested by the number of students taking courses in film, television or related areas in American colleges and universities. A publication of the American Film Institute, Guide to Colleges Courses in Film and Television, 1978, records that approximately 200,000 students were taking non-major courses in these fields each semester and over 40,000 were working towards degrees during academic year 1977-1978, nearly 4,000 of these were at the graduate level.

A study conducted for the National Endowment for the Arts in 1972-1973 examined the sources of annual income of 1,000 independent filmmakers (Table 13). At that time, grants and production awards from foundations constituted over 35% of the reported annual earnings: however, the average annual income of $845 per filmmaker makes clear that each of these individuals must have had alternative or supplementary income sources to survive. This assumption can be explored further with other data sources. Illustrations from the program files of the National Endowment for the Humanities provides examples of the daily rates earned by independent filmmakers who produced films for that Endowment in 1973-1974 and 1978-1979 (Table 14). Similarly, daily rates of independent filmmakers working on seven Ford Foundation media projects in the period of 1974-1978 are shown in Table 15. While the daily rates in these tables do not differ substantially from those shown in Table 11 for members of IATSE who worked under the labor organization negotiated rates, it is fairly certain that the independents earned their daily rates for many fewer days. It is also known that independents often subsidize their own productions. A random sample from the membership of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) in 1979 shows that only 7% recovered full costs for films that they made which were used on public broadcasting stations; 28% recovered the full costs of their films which were exhibited by commercial broadcasting stations. Over 50% recovered only 10% or less of their costs for films exhibited either by public broadcasting or commercial broadcasting companies (Table 16).

That independent video and filmmakers work across the commercial/independent line is also confirmed by a random sampling of the membership of the AIVF files in 1979 (Table 17). About one-third of the members derived more than 90% of their income from independent media employment. About 27% of AIVF members derived over 90% of their income from commercial media employment. Obviously the membership of this organization of independent video and filmmakers works both in the independent and the commercial sectors. The large proportion who are essentially full-time in the commercial sector must identify with the independent video and filmmakers when they join AIVF. They may aspire to be independents; or they may actually alternate or combine careers in both sectors. The annual surveys conducted by the quasi-public Corporation for Public Broadcasting contrasts with the information about independents whose work is broadcast by public television stations as it shows a much more positive economic situation for employees of public television companies with similar kinds of occupational titles (Tables 18 and 19). The difference is largely attributable to steady employment rather than the rates.

TABLE 13

SOURCES OF ANNUAL INCOME
OF 1,000 INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS, 1973

	Income	Percent
Royalties from Filmmakers' Cooperative	$145,000	17.2%
Royalties from Other Distributors	100,000	11.8
Grants and Production Awards by Foundations	300,000	35.5
Institutional Support	150,000	17.8
Television	90,000	10.7
Direct Income from Film Festival Awards, Private Sales, etc.	60,000	7.1
Total	$845,000	100.0%

SOURCE: Renan, S. "The Economics of Independent Filmmakers", a report prepared for the Public Media Program, National Endowment for the Arts, February 23, 1973.

TABLE 14

DAILY RATES OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS
WORKING ON NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES PROJECTS
1973-1974 and 1978-1979

	1973-1974		1978-1979	
Occupation	Avg. Daily Rate ($)	Range ($) and (Number of Observations)	Avg. Daily Rate ($)	Range ($) and (Number of Observations)
Exec. Producer	102.3	77-150 (3)	280.0	260-300 (2)
Producer	107.5	80-120 (4)	255.0	250-260 (2)
Assoc. Producer	46.3	24- 60 (3)		
Asst. Producer	33.0	32- 35 (3)	97.0	64-130 (2)
Director/Filmer	52.4	26-110(12)	93.5	30-210(10)
Assoc. Director	86.0	80- 92 (2)	110.0	110 (1)
Asst. Director	n.a.	-	92.6	38-120 (3)
Cameraman	175.0	150-200 (2)	150.0	120-160 (4)
Asst. Cameraman	75.0	75 (2)		
Soundman	53.0	20- 85 (5)	138.0	100-160 (5)
Editor	114.5	75-185 (3)	86.7	70-120 (4)
Asst. Editor	41.3	35- 52 (3)	49.0	48- 50 (2)
Projectionist	n.a.	-	144.0	144 (1)
Narrator	265.0	265 (1)	52.0	52 (1)
Lab Engineer	130.6	-		
Lighting Director	120.0	120 (1)	144.2	120-250 (7)
Make-up	100.0	100 (1)	150.0	150 (2)
Actors/Dancers	39.0	38- 40 (2)		
Electrician	n.a.	-		
Asst. Soundman	n.a.	-	60.0	60 (1)
Production Mgr.	80.0	80 (1)	93.0	48-167 (6)
Story Editor	n.a.	-	79.5	70- 89 (2)
Publicist	n.a.	-	72.0	57- 96 (3)
Stagehand	76.0	72- 80 (2)		
Animation/Graphics	n.a.	-	110.0	40-180 (2)
Researcher	n.a.	-	112.5	25-200 (2)
Grip	24.0	24 (1)		
Film Crew	103.0	103 (1)	120.0	120-120(16)
Wardrobe	n.a.	-		
Script Supervisor	n.a.	-		
Still Photographer	n.a.	-	144.0	144 (1)
Stage Manager	n.a.	-	119.2	113-130 (5)
Senior Unit Mgr.	n.a.	-		
Program Director	n.a.	-	49.3	36-100 (6)
Operations Manager	n.a.	-	46.0	30- 83 (4)
Video Assistant	n.a.	-	63.5	55- 72 (2)
Film Assembler	n.a.	-	120.0	120 (2)
Prop Designer	n.a.	-	250.0	250 (1)

SOURCE: National Endowment for the Humanities program files.

TABLE 15

DAILY RATES OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS WORKING ON FORD FOUNDATION SPONSORED MEDIA PROJECTS, 1974-1978

	Average Daily Rate ($) and Range			
Occupation	1974 (2 Projects)	1975 (3 Projects)	1977 (1 Project)	1978 (1 Project)
Director-Producer	$250 (200-300)	$250 (200-300)	$300	$300
Assistant Producer	-	78 (75-80)	-	200
Associate Producer	-	-	50	-
Cameraman	193 (185-200)	189 (185-200)	250	240
Assistant Cameraman	100	100	100	180
Soundman	85 (70-100)	87 (70-120)	130 (110-150)	180
Gaffer	100	70	125	-
Still Photographer	-	-	230 (200-260)	250
Editor	55 (50-60)	67 (50-100)	125	-
Assistant Editor	35 (30-40)	43 (40-50)	50	-
Co-Editor	-	-	40	-
Narrator	-	-	200	-
Negative Cutter	-	-	200	-

SOURCE: Ford Foundation program files.

TABLE 16

BUDGET RECOVERED THROUGH BROADCASTING FEES AND COMMISSIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS, 1979

Percentage of Budget Recovered	Public Broadcasting		Commercial Broadcasting	
	Filmmakers	Percent	Filmmakers	Percent
Not-Specified	3	7.0%	3	12.0%
None	9	20.9	12	48.0
1-5%	9	20.9	1	4.0
6-10	5	11.6	-	-
11-20	6	14.0	-	-
21-30	2	4.6	1	4.0
31-40	3	7.0	-	-
41-50	1	2.3	1	4.0
51-70	-	-	-	-
71-90	2	4.7	-	-
91-100	3	7.0	7	28.0
Total	43	100.0%	25	100.0%

SOURCE: Random sample taken from AIVF membership files, 1979.

TABLE 17

INCOME EARNED FROM MEDIA AND NON-MEDIA SOURCES
BY MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT
VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS

	Media Employment		Non-Media
Proportion of Income	Independent	Commercial	Employment
	Percent of Total Members	Percent of Total Members	Percent of Total Members
1-5%	10.6%	2.6%	2.1%
6-10	9.4	6.8	5.2
11-20	8.3	6.0	8.3
21-30	6.7	7.7	7.3
31-40	6.7	2.6	4.2
41-50	12.8	18.8	17.7
51-70	4.4	5.1	13.5
71-90	8.3	23.1	14.6
91-100	32.8	27.3	27.1
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

SOURCE: Random sample taken from AIVF membership files, 1979.

TABLE 18

NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES OF
PUBLIC TELEVISION LICENSEES -- SELECTED OCCUPATIONS

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1977	1978
Number of Licensees	139	138	150	154	157	157
Total Number of Full-Time Employees	6058	6068	6385	7100	8123	8414
Producer-Director	582	538	554	618	Occupational Categories Revised	
Film Director	80	108	88	112		
Art Director	104	137	125	86		
Other Technical & Production	2091	-	-	-		
On-Air Talent	233	177	166	170		
Production Crew	-	777	628	678		
Film Editor	-	121	133	140		
Production/Executive Producer					493	492
Director					175	206
Script Supervisor/Writer					70	81
Film Director					45	37
Film Editor					73	55
Unit/Studio Supervisor					89	99
Graphic Artist					213	221
On-Air Talent					141	133
Camera (film)					90	81
Camera (video)					187	204
Craftsmen					16	23
All Other Professional					1250	1572
All Other Technical					2104	2003

SOURCE: Compiled from Annual Survey, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 1971-1978.

TABLE 19

AVERAGE SALARIES OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES OF PUBLIC TELEVISION LICENSEES: 1977-1978

Job Title	1977		1978		1978 Range
	No.	Avg. Salary	No.	Avg. Salary	
OFFICIALS					
Chief Exec/Sta Mgr	212	$28,367	216	$31,284	$12,000 - $85,000
Prog Dir/Mgr	133	20,670	123	22,147	8,000 - 65,000
Production Mgr	73	19,632	68	21,057	13,000 - 65,000
Dir/Chief Engr/Ops	139	21,748	133	23,026	12,570 - 56,000
Dir Development	73	20,218	70	21,555	6,973 - 55,050
Dir Publ and Promo	28	18,140	30	20,341	9,950 - 45,700
Business Mgr/Treasurer	71	18,812	63	21,036	8,100 - 53,400
All Other Officials	51	21,963	74	26,823	11,088 - 52,500
MANAGERS					
Prog/Prog Dev	0	0	23	19,735	9,950 - 50,290
Dir News/Pub Affairs	52	18,694	45	19,257	9,000 - 49,500
Dir Cult/Arts & Perf Prog	56	15,677	38	18,631	9,420 - 49,725
Dir Instr Serv	84	17,590	87	18,570	7,000 - 34,957
Opns Mgr/Dir	47	16,101	46	17,266	8,418 - 42,000
Prod Mgr/Dir	57	16,999	49	17,788	9,950 - 29,380
Promo Dir/Mgr	41	12,091	39	13,499	8,168 - 25,850
Chief Eng/Asst Chief Eng	37	17,944	65	18,998	14,000 - 38,522
Dir Pub Relations/Info	44	13,666	49	14,189	6,600 - 40,000
Dir/Coord Comm/Vol Serv	41	12,396	46	12,463	6,950 - 23,602
All Other Managers	358	17,717	370	19,237	6,400 - 52,000
PROFESSIONALS					
Prod/Exec Prod	493	16,057	492	17,077	6,960 - 37,750
Director	175	13,268	206	14,132	6,240 - 36,190
Scrip Supv/Writer	70	12,147	81	13,373	6,000 - 21,804
Film Dir	45	13,884	37	14,269	10,100 - 22,300
Film Editor	73	11,547	55	13,546	6,763 - 19,500
Prog Cood/Supv/Asst	0	0	40	14,718	6,000 - 24,960
Unit/Studio Supv	89	12,877	99	14,161	6,613 - 24,039
Graphic Artist	213	11,209	221	12,317	5,200 - 22,300
Reptr/Anncr/On-Air Tlnt	141	14,990	133	17,313	6,320 - 70,160
Pub Info Asst	0	0	35	10,061	6,200 - 13,248
Chf & Asst Chf Engr/Brdcst Supv	623	14,204	613	15,072	7,702 - 33,000
Other Engr/Tech Prof	0	0	61	12,771	9,300 - 22,321
All Other Professionals	727	12,750	823	13,377	5,200 - 28,000
TECHNICAL					
Brdcst Eng	674	14,335	582	14,709	5,600 - 22,997
Audio/VTR Eng	150	13,073	151	14,036	5,350 - 23,172
Engr Maint/Field Serv	137	12,535	214	14,028	6,480 - 26,400
Camera (Film) Opr	90	11,393	81	12,933	5,000 - 22,526
Camera (Video) Opr	137	9,479	204	10,259	5,340 - 23,595
Mstr Cont Engr/Tech Dir	427	10,630	461	12,463	5,200 - 24,765
Floor Mgr	37	10,221	33	12,021	4,800 - 19,226
Cont/Traff Dir/Mgr	108	8,917	94	9,477	5,340 - 17,117
Prod Asst	162	8,707	143	8,997	4,900 - 21,646
Acctnt/Bookkpr	67	10,776	60	9,901	4,750 - 14,676
All Other Technical	292	12,185	245	13,594	4,100 - 28,676

(continued on next page)

TABLE 19
(continued)

AVERAGE SALARIES OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES OF
PUBLIC TELEVISION LICENSEES: 1977-1978

Job Title	1977		1978		1978 Range
	No.	Avg. Salary	No.	Avg. Salary	
SUPPORT (CLERICAL)					
Secretary/Steno	676	8,505	713	9,133	4,414 - 16,536
Clk Typist/Recept	253	7,179	272	7,852	5,000 - 12,750
All Other Clerical	311	9,011	259	9,638	5,512 - 14,781
SUPPORT (MANUAL)					
Craftsmen	16	9,157	23	12,104	6,800 - 24,700
Operatives	22	9,512	33	9,294	4,997 - 13,000
Custodian/Guards	101	7,652	82	8,425	4,100 - 16,000
All Other Manual	64	7,452	92	10,335	5,222 - 14,825
ON THE JOB TRAINEES					
Interns/Students	53	7,643	83	7,409	4,000 - 21,400
CPB Training Grantee	0	0	59	11,462	6,240 - 23,000

SOURCE: Salary Report, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 1977 and 1978.

D. Similarities and Contradictions

This chapter of the paper about information systems shows that the general data and the specific data examining very fine details do not combine to fully describe the economic condition of a clearly defined universe of artists. We do not know how many artists are at work in the media fields or what the aggregate available labor pool may be. The range of work done by artists in the media fields is described under many different occupational headings. It runs the gamut from employment on very large teams of specialists who collaborate on productions with multimillion dollar budgets to individually financed self-efforts. Though the former are the dominant sources of employment and earnings in the conventional sense, the aspirations of creativity and artistic achievement are often best fulfilled by the activities that are only possible in independent and self-effort productions. The labor pool of trained persons may be growing but it is not clear that employment opportunities are also growing.

The very broad observations of artists provided by data collected through the Bureau of the Census may be a reasonably good representation of the economic situation. These data show that the numbers of performing artists have not grown appreciably in the past decade. The separate measure for radio/TV announcers shows significant decline in the number of individuals employed. When data for 1970 and a special <u>1976 Survey of Income and Earnings</u> are compared, median earnings of performing artists (actors, dancers, musicians/composers and radio/TV announcers) were the same for both time periods, \$3,700! Further, median earnings of all artists, including the performing artists as well as the visual artists, designers and other occupations in the arts, also was the same in the two time periods, but over twice as great, \$7,900! However, performing artists earning \$25,000 or more increased nearly threefold from 1970 to 1976. From 3,338 individuals to 9,596 individuals! The lack of increase of the median earnings was caused by growth at the beginning or lowest earnings levels, as is illustrated in Table 20. The Table 20 data on the distribution of earnings to numbers of artists for 1976 is sketched in Figure 2. The figure shows the bimodal distribution clearly, with most artists earning little or nothing and a few who have substantial earnings. Compare this distribution with the data in Table 8 that shows annual earnings of Screen Actors Guild members in each dues bracket. The average earnings of all Screen Actors Guild members in 1976 was \$4,671, approximately \$1,000 greater than the median of the performing artists in the Census data for the same year. Yet the distribution of Screen Actors Guild members in the lowest dues bracket, for earnings up to \$2,500, was 77%; and the estimated average earnings within this dues bracket were only \$1,250!

TABLE 20

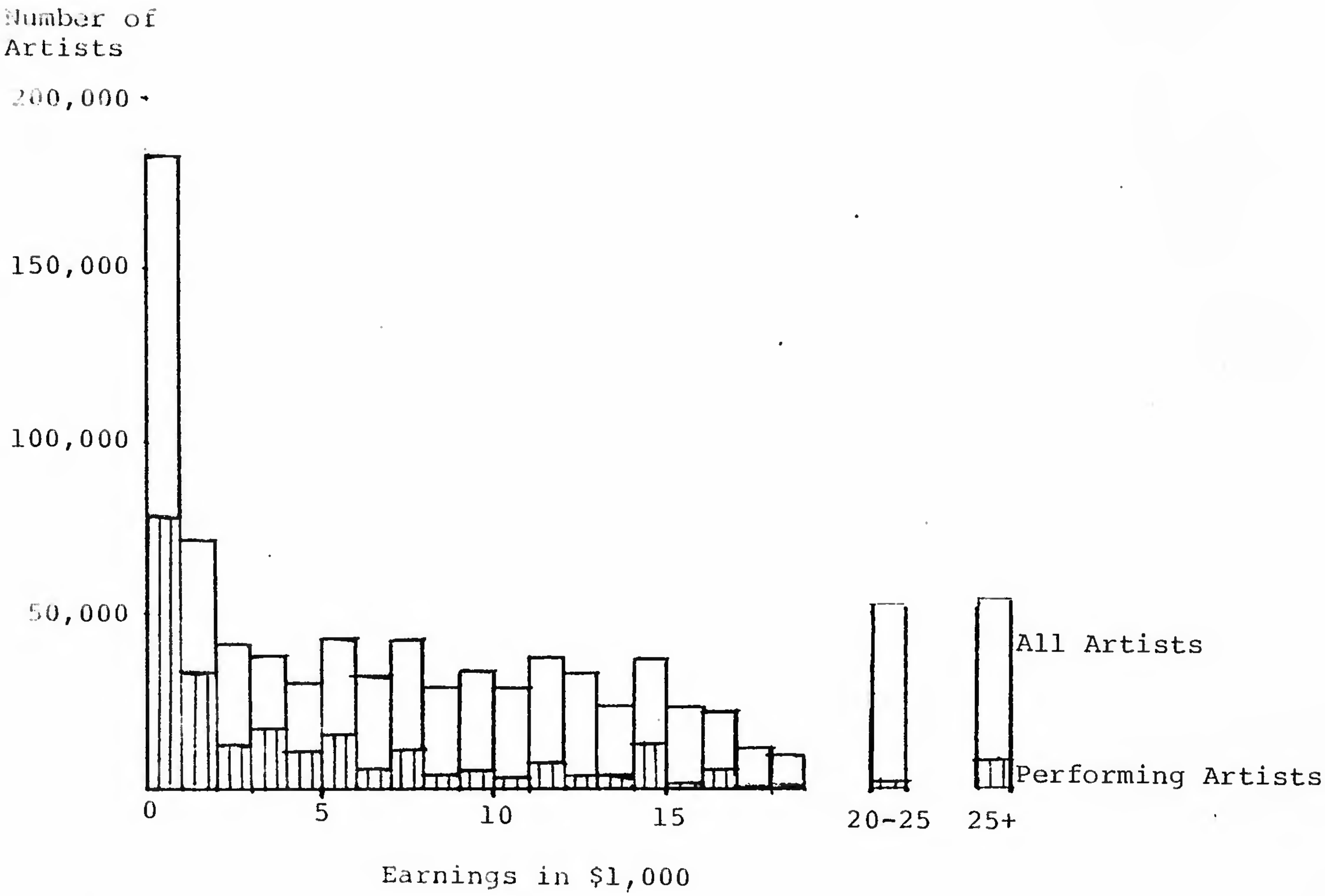
Earnings in Artists' Occupations
Compared 1970 and 1976

	1970				1976	
Earnings	Actors	Dancers	Musicians/ Composers	All Artists	Performing Artists	All Artists
Loss	0	0	168	3,035	907	13,431
$0-1,999	3,262	2,373	39,858	110,378	78,998	183,309
$2,000-2,999	1,200	698	8,091	29,840	33,989	72,568
$3,000-3,999	961	700	7,456	31,468	13,765	40,450
$4,000-4,999	666	502	4,905	27,812	17,666	37,415
$5,000-5,999	867	566	5,296	33,768	10,722	30,611
$6,000-6,999	1,173	535	5,111	32,453	16,780	43,411
$7,000-7,999	898	264	4,171	35,151	5,729	32,187
$8,000-8,999	567	166	3,756	37,315	11,721	43,030
$9,000-9,999	367	202	2,231	33,582	2,870	27,874
$10,000-10,999	536	168	3,294	44,196	5,422	34,827
$11,000-11,999	302	167	1,405	25,979	2,748	29,945
$12,000-12,999	569	33	1,536	30,056	6,911	38,792
$13,000-13,999	167	67	730	18,591	3,697	33,168
$14,000-14,999	167	33	732	15,572	4,335	24,045
$15,000-15,999	500	0	1,065	18,033	12,034	38,286
$16,000-16,999	67	0	467	8,873	1,179	24,946
$17,000-24,999	700	133	2,770	38,528	8,358	99,121
$25,000 or more	832	0	2,506	24,764	9,596	55,240
Total	13,801	6,607	95,548	599,394	247,427	902,656
Median Earnings	$5,936	$3,332	$2,958	$7,880	$3,713	$7,936

SOURCE: Tables 23 and 24, Research Division Report #12, Artists Compared by Age, Sex, and Earnings in 1970 and 1976, National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, 1979. Data obtained from 1970 Census of Population and 1976 Survey of Income and Earnings.

FIGURE 2

Earnings of Performing Artists Compared with All Artists, 1976



Source; Table 20

V. FUTURE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS FOR ARTISTS IN THE MEDIA FIELDS

Looking forward to the future is especially difficult when the view of the present situation is somewhat cloudy. That the future of the media fields will continue to evolve and change is a fairly safe prediction. What the new situation may provide for the media artist is far less certain.

Rapid change in the media fields is sensed everywhere. Many innovations are working to change the technologies and the structure of the distribution system. Cable transmission of video is an important factor as it opens possibilities for expansion of simultaneous program distribution and program variety. Low power television systems and low power radio systems may augment these possibilities especially in rural areas with populations that are small but have sufficient audience size for certain specialized programs, news, weather and other geographically focused communications. The possibilities of paying for program access, either by cable or encoded broadcasting techniques, opens the possibilities for small groups of persons with intense special interests to pay the cost that makes it possible for them to receive programs that could not be justified for a mass market. The expanded availability of recording equipment, the cassettes and disks and cameras, the media centers' rental equipment capabilities, and the growing number of public libraries that have expanded their collections to include recorded media programs and have facilities for play-back for the use of the general public, are innovations that open access to an esoteric technology. The potential of the satellites for international reception of programs broadens the audience for special productions that have only limited audi-ences in any small geographic location. The rapid decrease in the cost of household antennas for reception of satellite transmissions of video images may become very important for the dissemination of avant-garde program material to the small audiences for it that probably exist in many countries. Similar opportunities may develop for special programs of more tradi-tional art that may also lack a large audience in most loca-tions. These developing trends are widely recognized and need no elaboration in this paper.

A large and growing number of individuals now have hands-on media training and significant artistic skills and are able to work with the media technologies. Thousands of such individuals are being trained in the colleges and universities each year, and others with basic training in the visual arts, such as painting and sculpture, or music, are acquiring the necessary technical skills to bridge across the fields and disciplines. Nam June Paik, mentioned earlier, is a superb example as he became an avant-garde media artist after training and experience as a musician and composer.

The Public Telecommunications Financing Act of 1978, was a potentially important development. This law authorized the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) to make grants or contracts with independent producers for the production or acquisition of programs that would then become available to public broadcasting stations licensees. It was intended that a substantial amount of funds would be available for these purposes. Funding available for CPB, however, was greatly diminished in the past year because of the restraints being exercised in general on the discretionary Federal support programs. There is no assurance that the intentions of the 1978 Act will be implemented with future public funding by the Federal Government.

Co-production has emerged as a new financial and organizational principle. It involves consortia established with the expectation of using media productions for exhibition in cinemas, for television broadcasting and for cable. This kind of arrangement attempts to achieve economic benefits by spreading the costs of expensive productions between audiences to be served by several presentation formats. New developments in the contractual and legal arrangements concerning artists' rights and compensation have also evolved. Labor organizations like the Writers Guild, the Directors Guild, the Screen Actors Guild, and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists have engaged in important strikes and contract negotiations during the past two years. These actions had the intention of improving compensation of members, particularly with respect to "residual" or royalty rights in productions that may be reused in several formats, especially for cable, and for long periods of time. The Screen Extras Guild, SAG, and AFTRA may be close to completing a merger which could greatly strengthen their bargaining power for rates of compensation. Changes in copyright laws have also taken place during the past several years, which strengthen the special interest of artists in the media fields.

These important topics are not dealt with in any detail in this paper beyond their mention. Nevertheless, they suggest some improvements both in artists' compensation and in recognition. There is concern that the increased costs of such benefits will undermine the employment opportunities of the artists who work in the formal industry structures. Independents, whose work in media field production has been largely self-subsidized in the past, may be willing to continue to self-subsidize with their own funds and accept little or no compensation as a fact of the artist's life. The changes taking place in the field do not support a clear vision for another alternative. These changes are mostly in the direction of increasing competition and of increasing disaggregation of the audience. The changes in the distribution systems and technologies may well contribute to an increased demand for more programs. But, will they generate sufficient funds to adequately compensate media artists for their work?

Audience demographics are another factor to be examined for opportunities. American audiences are now far better educated and have greater amounts of leisure time than was true in the past. A hope is that these factors will combine into a demand for programs of higher quality and greater variety, and that the educated appreciation of media art will create an enhanced audience support base for the careers of more media artists. Technical opportunities also provide hope about the future possibilities for media artists. Sophisticated equipment is more within the reach of small production groups or individual media artists than before. Technologies such as the interactive formats which provide possibilities for two-way reception via cable and satellite transmission, may vastly broaden opportunities for media artists in new kinds of applied activities in the field of education, in commerce, and scientific research.

Models are often used when thinking about the future. Several models come to mind in the effort to organize the material presented in this paper. The first model is the traditional view of labor economics that looks at such factors as the labor force size, the hours per week spent in media production, the market demand for such productions, and the earnings generated. In this model, allowances for the creative satisfaction of media artists who work for little compensation is made by imputing a value to the pleasure derived from the creative activity or by considering uncompensated work as a form of investment that will contribute to future earnings. The application of this model leads to a dire view of the media artists' future. New job seekers in the media artist labor force are growing rapidly and there is no clear evidence that opportunities for employment are keeping pace. This model suggests that larger and larger proportions of media artists will not be able to depend upon earnings from the media fields as their major source of income.

A second model stresses audience development potential and takes as a point of departure the size of the audience and the number of hours available for seeing films in theatres or watching and listening to television and radio. Since time use data now shows that the media, especially television, consume a very large part of Americans' leisure time, it is doubtful that the potential exists for a great increase. So the application of this model leads to the view that increasing the number of simultaneous program opportunities will reduce the possibilities for revenues for each program and consequently, the potential compensation for the artists who produce the programs. Therefore, the possibility for improving the earnings of artists depend on the willingness of audiences to pay more for the time they devote to the media. One argument is that increased availability of alternative program opportunities will work against the possibility that audiences will be willing to pay more. On the other hand, we see evidence that audiences are paying more by subscribing to cable and encoded systems for video programs when once all programs were available free. The hope in this model of the economic future of media artists is predicated on the growing appreciation of highly specialized but limited audience appeal programs and the possibility that these services will be adequately paid for by the public that values them.

The encouragement that the new technologies will create employment for media artists in education, commerce or research is also a clouded joy. The skills and talents of the media artist are definitely applicable to programs specifically prepared to serve as sales messages, or to a tele-conference, documenation of an event in a laboratory, or observation of a field experiment in the physical and social sciences and engineering. Specialized newspapers and magazines in the formats of media programs have been started which may replace the special newsletters that service many sectors of the industrial and social community with specific information about government, educational or commercial activities. The fear is that the goal of such work is not art and that the artist that turns to it will become a technician more than a creative person.

All of these arguments can be defended with data illustrations at the present time. The future may hold a great enlargement and improvement of the kinds and qualities of communications between peoples via the media arts, but it is not clear that the economic condition of the creators who produce the programs will necessarily benefit. If the efforts to improve compensation succeed, will the appeal of such occupations continue to encourage more people to seek work than can be supported by employment growth? If that happens, high unemployment and low annual earnings will continue to be the experience of most artists in the media fields. The attractiveness of a career in the media arts may be the undoing of all general efforts to improve the economic condition of the artists. This is not a new or unfamiliar condition. It has been the general experience of artists in the traditional performing arts as well.