Research Division Report #2

To Survey American Crafts: A Planning Study

National Endowment for the Arts

July 1977

A Condensation of a Report Prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. January 1977

PREFACE

When the Research Division of the National Endowment for the Arts was requested to survey American craftsmen and their organizations, it quickly became apparent that not enough information was available even to begin such a survey. There was no commonly accepted definition of the term "craftsman", no useful taxonomy of the field, and no reliable estimates of the number of craftsmen or craft organizations.

In response to that need for preliminary information, this planning study has been prepared. The study attempted to prepare a systematic classification of crafts in America, to group and classify craftsmen and their organizations into an appropriate system, to estimate the numbers of craftsmen and crafts organizations, to record their geographical distribution, and to suggest approaches, methods and costs for a true survey of the field.

This planning study has been prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. The project team was led by Diana Zentay, whose principal colleagues were Dr. Constance F. Citro and Miriam D. Plotnicov. This summary report has been prepared by Dr. Citro. The complete report, which contains detailed information on survey alternatives, may be seen in the in the Library of the Arts Endowment or borrowed on an inter-library loan basis. To do so, contact Mrs. Chris Morrison, Librarian, National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C. 20506; phone: (202) 634-7640.

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INTRODUCTION

Evident all around us is a growing interest in the world of crafts--in producing crafts, acquiring crafts, teaching crafts, learning a craft, writing about crafts. Everywhere one turns, it seems, there is a crafts shop or a crafts book or a crafts fair. A large number of Americans of all ages, races, and in all localities make crafts on a leisure basis. A smaller number of craftsmen, working in every conceivable mode with many different materials, sell or exhibit their products as professionals, achieving often a high degree of artistic quality. A wide range of institutions directly or indirectly support crafts production--organizations and associations of craftsmen, craft materials supply houses and equipment manufacturers, art and technical schools, colleges and universities with degree programs or courses in crafts, publishers of craft books and periodicals, craft shops and galleries, museums, and public agencies at the local, state, and Federal levels.

Given the popularity of craft activities in the United States today, it is astonishing how little we know about the crafts world in a comprehensive way. We do not know how many craftsmen there are altogether, nor how many are working on a professional basis. We do not know the geographic distribution of craftsmen, their educational background, or economic status, or their preferred media and techniques. We are ignorant of the role crafts production plays in the U.S. economy. Similarly, we know very little about the activities of the various craft-supporting institutions.

A few small surveys related to crafts have been conducted in the last few years, but much remains to be done if a full picture of the crafts field is to be obtained. To fill this knowledge gap, the National Endowment for the Arts expressed interest in a national crafts survey. As a preliminary step, the Endowment contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) to carry out a review of existing information and to prepare a preliminary survey design. MPR delivered its report, entitled A Planning Study for a National Survey of the Craft Arts, to the Endowment in January 1977.

THE SCOPE OF THE PLANNING STUDY

The Endowment's charge to Mathematica Policy Research was to carry out a planning study that would help define the scope of a national crafts survey and estimate the costs and resources likely to be required. The first step was to review existing knowledge about the crafts field. Hopefully, sufficient information would be available to permit MPR to construct preliminary estimates of the numbers and basic characteristics of each component of the crafts world, including craftsmen and craft-supporting institutions and organizations. This review would also, of course, identify areas where knowledge was particularly lacking. In a parallel effort, MPR was to attempt to learn the information needs and priorities of the Endowment, other Federal agencies operating craft-related programs, and private groups concerned with crafts. Based on the knowledge gained from these two steps, MPR was to design questionnaires for each component of the crafts field, recommend survey procedures to be followed, and develop cost estimates.

In the course of the planning study, it quickly became evident that to develop estimates of every type of craftsman and craft-supporting institution was not feasible. Information in many cases was too scattered and sparse to permit constructing estimates within the time limits of the project. It also became clear that the Endowment and others to whom MPR talked during the study were most interested in the group of craftsmen who sell or exhibit their work professionally. Interest was high in the organizations or associations to which many professional craftsmen belong as well. This interest gained importance as MPR determined that about the only cost-effective means of reaching craftsmen for a survey is through their organizations or a similar source of mailing lists.

Hence, MPR directed the bulk of its efforts during the planning study to estimating the number and basic characteristics of professional craftsmen in the United States from the scanty available data and to designing survey questionnaires and procedures aimed at this group. Secondarily, MPR focused on craft organizations. In fact, to develop estimates of professional craftsmen, it turned out that MPR had to estimate the numbers and characteristics of craft organizations as a necessary preceding step. This experience led MPR to recommend strongly in the planning study report that a survey of craft organizations be conducted prior to a survey of individual craftsmen in order to make the latter survey as cost-effective as possible. In turn, the survey efforts directed at craft organizations and craftsmen should benefit subsequent surveys of other types of craft-supporting institutions such as shops and museums.

The full planning study report runs to 93 pages and 6 appendices. This paper attempts to pull out from the report knowledge we learned that may be of general interest to persons in the crafts field. We begin with a review of the few surveys which have focused on craftsmen and crafts production in recent years. Unfortunately, as will be evident, the data from these surveys is too restricted to go very far toward providing a comprehensive picture of crafts activity in America today. We then turn to the estimates of professional craftsmen and their organizations that we constructed working from some of these survey efforts and several recent directories. Finally, we offer our survey recommendations.

WHAT RECENT SURVEYS TELL US

A 1974 survey of 3,017 persons representing the American population found that 39 percent currently engage in "woodworking, weaving, pottery, ceramics or other crafts," and another 18 percent would like to do so, if they had the time.[1] This sample survey is too small, however, to permit reliable cross-classification of the people working in crafts by other characteristics, such as income and residence. Moreover, the survey clearly focused on the leisure activities of Americans; most respondents were probably making crafts for recreation; fewer were craftsmen who earn at least a portion of their livelihood from crafts production.

The American Crafts Council (ACC), a national organization of craftsmen with about 20,000 members resident in the U.S., surveyed its membership in 1975 to discover their general characteristics and particularly their evaluation of ACC services. A grant from the National Endowment for the Arts supported the survey. ACC sent a three-part questionnaire to a random sample of 3,000 members; about one-third of the sample responded. The largest proportion of respondents (37 percent) were working craftsmen or "artisans" to use ACC's term. The next largest proportion (26 percent) were teachers. Almost half the respondents made less than $1,000 a year from their crafts; eight percent earned $15,000 or more from craft production. Over 60 percent of the respondents had been producing crafts for five or more years. Nearly one-third were producing functional ceramics; the next most frequent craft specialty was loom weaving, followed by off-loom techniques.[2]

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[1] Associated Council for the Arts, Americans and the Arts (New York, 1975), p. 51.

[2] Derived from unpublished tabulations provided by the American Crafts Council.

Marietta College in Ohio has recently undertaken a project to prepare a directory of craftsmen and craft organizations. Marietta originally sent a two-page questionnaire to the membership lists of almost 1,000 organizations. The first edition of the Marietta College Crafts Directory USA, published in March 1976, contains names, addresses, and craft specialties of nearly 5,000 craftsmen who returned questionnaires. It also includes the names of over 900 craft organizations. Additional information obtained on the questionnaires regarding income derived from crafts production, whether the craftsman has a studio and employees or apprentices, educational background, publications received, and organization memberships was not processed. Since the first edition, over 50,000 questionnaires have been returned from craftsmen originally queried plus new names, and over 10,000 responses keypunched for a possible second edition. However, because the Marietta list is not the product of a scientific survey of a defined population, it is doubtful that the craftsmen included can be regarded as representing all professional craftsmen in America.

Several other surveys of craftsmen have been conducted recently but, because of focusing on certain groups of craftsmen and in some cases because of very low response rates, are of limited usefulness in obtaining a comprehensive picture of crafts professionals in the U.S. today. These surveys include a one-page questionnaire in the Spring 1976 issue of The Working Craftsmen, sent to 7,000 subscribers, of whom 275 replied; and a recent survey of 183 rural Tennessee craftsmen and 9 organizations conducted by the University of Tennessee Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology.

One might think information regarding individual craftsmen who pursue crafts on a vocational basis would be available from the United States

Decennial Census and other statistical surveys which ascertain the occupation of the working population. Unfortunately, this is not so. The occupational codes used by the Bureau of the Census, while extending to three digits, identify only a few categories of craftsmen in the sense of those who make objects by hand. The Bureau's broad category of "craftsmen, operatives, and kindred workers" uses the term in the sense of the craft unions and includes persons working at particular trades in industrial setting. Some professional craftsmen, as we have defined them, are in the Census, but it is impossible to sort them out.

ESTIMATING PROFESSIONAL CRAFTSMEN

Despite the absence of a large-scale survey of craftsmen in America to date, bits and pieces of data are available that permit constructing at least rough estimates of the total number of professional craftsmen and their distribution by place of residence and type of craft. A key source for constructing these estimates is the Bowker publication, Contemporary Crafts Marketplace, which is prepared by the ACC Research and Education Division. The 1975 edition lists 251 national, regional, and state craft organizations by name and address that have at least 10 members and are organized under a constitution or by-laws. The importance of this list is that characteristics relevant to craftsmen are included, such as the number of members in the organization and the date founded.

Table 1 shows the number and percentage distribution of the 238 state and regional organizations listed in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace by geographic division of the country, the distribution of the reported memberships of these organizations, and the average membership of organizations in each division. Also shown is the geographic distribution of the membership of the American Crafts Council--the largest national craft organization--from a list furnished by ACC for the planning study.

TABLE 1

COMPARATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF CRAFT ORGANIZATIONS
AND ORGANIZATION MEMBERS FROM ACC SOURCES, BY REGION AND DIVISION

Region and Division	(1) State and Regional Craft Organizations Listed in 1975 Contemporary Crafts Marketplace		(2) Members of Organizations in Column (1)		(3) Average Membership Size of Organizations (Column (2) divided by Column (1))	(4) Members of American Crafts Council	
	No.	Percent of Total	No.	Percent of Total		No.	Percent of Total
Northeast	69	29.0%	23,805	51.6%	345	8,410	37.7%
New England	35	14.7	16,040	34.8	458	2,516	11.3
Middle Atlantic	34	14.3	7,765	16.8	228	5,894	26.4
North Central	38	16.0	5,636	12.2	148	4,349	19.4
East North Central	28	11.8	4,107	8.9	147	3,313	14.8
West North Central	10	4.2	1,529	3.3	153	1,036	4.6
South	63	26.5	10,279	22.3	163	4,220	18.9
South Atlantic	29	12.3	4,237	9.2	146	2,582	11.6
East South Central	16	6.7	2,538	5.5	159	589	2.6
West South Central	18	7.6	3,504	7.6	195	1,049	4.7
West	68	28.6	6,400	13.9	94	5,367	24.0
Mountain	19	8.0	1,369	3.0	72	1,278	5.7
Pacific	49	20.6	5,031	10.9	103	4,089	18.3
TOTAL	238	100.1	46,120	100.0	194	22,346	100.0

NOTE: Regions and divisions are as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. See list at the end of this paper.

Several interesting points appear. The areas of the country with the most craft organizations are the Pacific division with over 20 percent of the total number and the New England and Middle Atlantic divisions with over 14 percent each. The members of ACC are spread geographically in a very similar pattern, except for a much higher proportion (over 26 percent) in the Middle Atlantic division, which includes ACC's New York City headquarters. The pattern of membership in the state and regional organiations, however, does not follow the distribution of the organizations themselves. Thus, New England, with less than 15 percent of the organizations has almost 35 percent of the members, while the Pacific division with 20 percent of the organizations has only 11 percent of the members. The average size of the organizations in each region ranges from 345 members in the Northeast (458 in New England specifically) to 163 in the South to 148 in the North Central region, with the West having the lowest average of 94 members per organization.

The total membership represented by the 238 state and regional organizations listed in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace amounts to 46,000 craftsmen. In addition, this source lists 13 national organizations (including ACC) having a combined membership of over 50,000, for a total number of about 96,200 craftsmen. This figure is just the starting point, however, as Contemporary Crafts Marketplace includes only a fraction of the total number of craft organizations in the U.S. (the first edition of the Marietta Directory listed almost 1,000 organizations) and therefore only a fraction of craft organization members.

We engaged in an intensive effort to determine the total number of craft organizations in the U.S. to use in building an estimate of craftsmen based on the membership patterns evident in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace. Through cross-checking lists of organizations, principally from the Marietta

College _Directory_ project plus other sources, we arrived at a total number of 1,692 craft organizations in the U.S. Table 2 shows the number and percentage distribution by geographic division of our final list of craft organizations. There is a concentration of organizations in the South, but otherwise they are fairly evenly spread throughout the country.

To build an estimate of craftsmen, at least of those who belong to an organization and their geographic distribution, one could simply multiply the total number of craft organizations in each division shown in table 2 times the average membership of all 238 state and regional organizations combined from table 1 (i.e., 194 members), adding in the membership of those national organizations for which the members' residence is not known for a grand total. In fact, we prepared one estimate in this manner. Alternatively, because the average membership varies by division, one could multiply the craft organizations in each division from table 2 by the average membership for that division from table 1, again adding the membership of national organizations into the total. We prepared another estimate along these lines.

However, as already pointed out, the membership distribution of the state and regional organizations listed in _Contemporary Crafts Marketplace_ is highly skewed toward the Northeast and away from the other regions, particularly the West. The average membership size by division indicates a reason why this is so. New England contains organizations that are much larger on the average than in any other area of the country, while the Mountain and Pacific divisions have the smallest organizations on the average. Analysis that looked at size categories of membership confirmed this finding, showing that over 23 percent of the organizations listed for New England have 500 or more members, while only 6 percent have less than 50 members; in contrast,

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL LIST OF CRAFT ORGANIZATIONS BY REGION AND DIVISION

Region and Division	Total Craft Organizations	
	Number	Percent of Total
Northeast	366	21.7%
New England	165	9.8
Middle Atlantic	201	11.9
North Central	348	20.6
East North Central	208	12.3
West North Central	140	8.3
South	632	37.3
South Atlantic	207	12.2
East South Central	258	15.2
West South Central	167	9.9
West	346	20.4
Mountain	141	8.3
Pacific	205	12.1
TOTAL	1,692	100.0

SOURCE: Developed by combining and eliminating duplicate organization names from The 1975 Contemporary Crafts Marketplace list of 251 names; the March 1976 Marietta College Crafts Directory list of 910 names (568 were not duplicated elsewhere); an additional 500 names from Marietta received in July (348 were not duplicates); another 1,400 names received from Marietta in September (415 were not duplicates); 203 crafts cooperatives from the 1974 Office of Economic Opportunity National Consumer Directory (76 were not duplicates); and a few miscellaneous names.

less than 2 percent of the Western organizations have 500 or more members, while almost 52 percent have fewer than 50 members. (Interestingly, this same skewed distribution is found looking at the age of the organizations in each area. New England has the highest proportion of craft organizations founded earlier than 1950--almost 47 percent--while the Mountain division has the lowest proportion of organizations founded prior to that time--9 percent--and the highest proportion established in the period 1970 to 1974--over 45 percent.)

We questioned whether it was valid to assume that the average size by division on our total list of almost 1,700 organizations, if we knew these figures, would parallel the average size by division reported for the subset of organizations listed in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace. On the contrary, given that Contemporary Crafts Marketplace was aiming to include the "best" or most prominant craft organizations, it did not seem unreasonable to assume that all or almost all of the very large organizations (those with 500 or more members) were already included in that publication. Thus, we would not expect the over 1,400 additional organizations on our total list to show such wide variations in average size over the different geographic areas in the country. Hence, we decided to prepare at least one estimate of the numbers of craftsmen by geographic area that included a correction for large-size organizations.

Another correction that we needed to introduce before we could come up with reasonable estimates concerned overlap in organizational affiliation. In other words, we wanted to find out if craftsmen tend to join just one organization or whether they tend to have multiple organization memberships. Craftsmen's joining patterns are interesting in themselves and could also help us decide whether to use the average membership figures derived for the organizations listed in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace as is or whether to make some subtraction to allow for multiple membership.

Early in the project we received a list of the ACC membership. We next wrote to 24 other organizations listed in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace, including all 12 national organizations (not counting the ACC itself), and to a national organization not listed, requesting their membership rosters to use in determining the extent of organizational overlap. We also obtained lists from three craft fairs and one statewide exhibition in different parts of the country to determine whether the people exhibiting at these events also belong to organizations. We received membership lists from 22 organizations and fairs in time for checking.

We checked each of the 22 lists against the ACC list to determine if persons who belong to other national organizations also belong to ACC and if persons who belong to state and regional organizations or who exhibit at fairs also belong to ACC. Because of time constraints, we could not do all of the cross-checking that would have been desirable, for example, checking for duplication between state organizations and other national organizations besides the ACC. However, we did glean some interesting results.

Table 3 shows the extent of overlap between the ACC membership and each of the other organizations we checked. The percentages range from a low of less than one percent in the case of the National Wood Carvers Association to a high of 66 percent for the Ann Arbor Street Fair and the Pacific Northwest Arts and Crafts Fair and 61 percent for the Society of North American Goldsmiths. We estimated the total overlap for all of the national organizations listed in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace with ACC at 9 to 10 percent, based on the 7 organization lists we were able to check directly; and for the

TABLE 3

OVERLAP OF MEMBERSHIP IN SELECTED CRAFT ORGANIZATIONS
WITH MEMBERSHIP IN THE AMERICAN CRAFTS COUNCIL

Organization Type and Name	Number of U.S. Members	Percentage Overlap with ACC
National:		
Glass Art Society	312	22.1%
Guild of Book Workers	215	4.7
Handweavers Guild of America	18,786[a]	13.0
National Association of Handcraftsmen	1,401	21.6
National Standards Council of American Embroiderers	1,816	6.2
National Wood Carvers Association	10,134[a]	0.2
Society of North American Goldsmiths	381	61.4
Regional or State:		
Albuquerque Designer-Craftsmen	113	33.6
Ann Arbor Street Fair	149	65.8
Arizona Designer Craftsmen	313	28.8
California Design (exhibition)	462	19.5
Contemporary Crafts Association (Oregon)	288	21.9
Florida Craftsmen	350	39.4
Indiana Artist-Craftsmen, Inc.	240	19.2
League of New Hampshire Craftsmen	3,969[a]	3.2
Minnesota Crafts Council	384	22.9
National Crafts Fair (Baltimore)	508	41.6
Pacific Northwest Arts and Crafts Fair	155	65.8
Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen	1,197[a]	10.9
Southern Highland Handicraft Guild	657	11.3
Tennessee Arts Commission	628	6.2
United Maine Craftsmen	611	6.1

SOURCE: Derived from membership lists furnished by each organization which were compared to a list furnished by ACC. All names in each list were checked for duplication unless otherwise noted.

NOTE: Percentage overlap with ACC means the percent of members belonging to the specified organization who also belong to ACC.

[a]Because of the large number of members, a representative sample of names, ranging from one in every two names to one in every six depending on the size of the organization, was checked against the ACC.

organizations in each division at an average overlap of 13 percent, ranging from over 40 percent overlap in the South Atlantic division to less than 4 percent in New England.

We were now ready to proceed to estimate the number of craftsmen belonging to organizations. Table 4 shows three such estimates ranging from 246,000 for the estimate called M_2, to 353,000 for the M_3 estimate, with the M_1 estimate falling in between at 326,000 craftsmen.

The M_1 estimate for each division, in simplified terms, builds on the number of organizations from our total list of 1,692 for the division blown up by the average size of the organizations in that division listed in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace, corrected for overlap with the ACC. The total of the craftsmen identified by division in the M_1 estimate amounts to 307,000; the national estimated total of 326,000 craftsmen includes members of national organizations (not also members of ACC) for whom we could not determine residence.

The M_2 estimate is the same as M_1 with a correction factor included to allow for the hypothesis that all large craft organizations are already listed in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace and are not added to from our total list of 1,700. This estimate amounts to 227,000 craftsmen on an area basis and 246,000 including members of national organizations.

Finally, a third estimate, M_3, simply uses the average membership size of organizations listed in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace for the nation as a whole times the total organizations in each division correcting for overlap, but not taking into account the variations in average size by geographic area or the large-size hypothesis. This estimate is the highest, amounting to 334,000 craftsmen distributed geographically and 353,000 craftsmen in all.

TABLE 4

ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTIONS OF CRAFTSMEN
COMPARED TO CENSUS POPULATION FIGURES BY REGION AND DIVISION

Region and Division	Percent of Estimated Craftsmen			Percent of Population Age 18-64, 1974[a]
	M_1- derived on a geographic area basis	M_2- derived correcting for oversize organizations	M_3- derived on a national basis	
Northeast	41.8%	32.8%	23.0%	22.8%
New England	25.2	16.4	9.8	5.7
Middle Atlantic	16.6	16.4	13.2	17.1
North Central	15.7	18.6	21.3	27.0
East North Central	9.2	11.6	13.2	19.3
West North Central	6.5	7.0	8.1	7.7
South	30.6	33.3	34.6	32.0
South Atlantic	7.7	8.2	12.1	15.9
East South Central	12.5	16.9	13.4	6.3
West South Central	10.4	8.2	9.1	9.8
West	11.9	15.2	21.2	18.4
Mountain	3.3	4.5	8.1	4.6
Pacific	8.6	10.7	13.1	13.8
Total identifiable by geographic area	100.0	99.9	100.1	100.2
(Number of Persons)	(306,975)	(227,127)	(333,965)	(122,313,000)
National Total	325,883	246,045	352,873	122,313,000

SOURCE: See text for explanation of how each estimate was derived.

[a] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Estimates of the Population of States by Age: July 1, 1973 and 1974, Current Population Reports, series P-25, no. 539 (January 1975), table 1.

The M_3 estimate shows the least skewness toward New England and away from the West and South, as we would expect given the procedure used to derive it; the M_1 estimate is most highly skewed with the M_2 estimate occupying a middle ground.

The last column in the table shows the entire working-age population of the United States in 1974 (age 18 to 64) by division for comparative purposes. We should not expect craftsmen to follow the geographic profile of the larger population exactly; nevertheless, estimate M_2, which appears quite plausible, parallels this geographic profile fairly closely. According to this estimate, there are more craftsmen in New England and in the East South Central division and fewer in the South Atlantic and East North Central areas than is true of the general population; otherwise the distributions are quite similar.

It seems reasonable to conclude from these estimates that there are at least 250,000 craftsmen affiliated with organizations in the United States and perhaps as many as 350,000. Of course, not all of the members of craft organizations are professional craftsmen who sell or exhibit their work; excluding these persons would decrease our estimates somewhat. On the other hand, none ot our estimates accounts for professional craftsmen who do not belong to organizations; including these craftsmen might increase our estimates considerably. However, the fact that high percentages of craftsmen exhibiting at the three fairs from which we obtained lists also belong to the ACC suggests that the number of non-affiliated craftsmen may not be that great.

Given that our estimates reasonably approximate professional craftsmen in America, it is also true that many members of special groups working in ethnic craft traditions outside the mainstream of professional craft activity are likely to be excluded from estimates based on organizational affiliation. Such special groups include Native Americans, persons of Spanish origin, the Amish, and the like. The 1970 Census counted 344,000 Native Americans age 20 to 64 in the U.S., of whom about 55 percent resided in rural areas; almost one-half lived in the West, with the next largest proportion in the South. There are over four and a half million persons age 18 to 64 of Spanish origin with the largest concentrations in the Pacific and West South Central areas. We were unable to determine the number of craftsmen in these categories, but are sure there are some.

For one special group, the Amish, we were able to obtain fairly good estimates from an informed source.[1] The total Amish population over baptismal age estimated for 15 sects is about 210,000 individuals, of whom the majority are rural. For the rural sects, about 75 to 80 percent are estimated to be craftsmen; even for the sects which are only 40 to 60 percent rural, about 30 to 40 percent are estimated to be craftsmen. Special groups such as the Amish and Native Americans will require their own survey designs and procedures, as it is likely that only a fraction of the craftsman in these groups will belong to organizations.

We found it virtually not possible, based on available data, to construct acceptable estimates of craftsmen by other dimensions such as craft specialty. Replies to one source, the ACC's survey of its membership, suggest that the largest number of craftsmen are engaged in functional or sculptural ceramics (over 30 percent), with over 25 percent engaged in weaving, either loom or off-loom. Over 18 percent were engaged in metal work (jewelry, sculpture, and holloware in gold or silver), over 8 percent in stitchery (embroidery, quilting, lace), and over 6 percent in wood work (accessories, sculpture, furniture), with smaller percentages engaged in textiles (printed), enamels, glass, leather work, and book work. Classifying names of organizations listed in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace that could be identified by special craft (we could classify in this way 133 out of 251) suggested strong

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[1]Ms. Margaret Yocum.

concentrations of craftsmen in weaving (over 44 percent), stitchery (32 percent), and wood work (18 percent). Admittedly such classification is very crude.

Table 5 indicates the geographic distribution of four major crafts--ceramics, stitchery, weaving, and woodworking--developed from a variety of sources. The validity of this information is highly questionable; nevertheless, we see interesting patterns. Potters are clearly concentrated in the South; stitchers are fairly evenly divided throughout the country but with a concentration in the West; wood workers are strong in the North Central region. It would be fascinating to explore the reasons for these distributions, if, in fact, they hold up in a national survey--reasons from history, location of raw material sources, and so on.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Clearly, the world of crafts is large and complex. Our review of existing knowledge of the crafts field for the planning study focused on two major components, professional craftsmen and the organizations or associations to which they belong. The time and resources of the project did not permit looking in any detail at the other kinds of craft-supporting institutions and organizations, but we know there are a sizeable number of craft shops and sales outlets, materials suppliers and equipment manufacturers, educational institutions teaching crafts, museums with craft collections, craft publications, and government agencies with craft-related programs. We also know there are substantial numbers of leisure craftsmen in addition to professionals, and that there are craftsmen working professionally, among groups such as Native Americans and the Amish, who are outside the mainstream of those affiliated with organizations. Ideally, to obtain a comprehensive

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED CRAFTS BY REGION

Region	Ceramists[a]	Stitchers[b]	Weavers[c]	Wood Workers[d]
Northeast	15.7%	20.0%	29.3%	23.8%
North Central	22.1	21.2	23.0	37.5
South	46.1	20.3	17.5	19.8
West	16.2	38.6	30.2	18.9
TOTAL	100.1	100.1	100.0	100.0
(Number of Craftsmen)	(1,226)	(1,182)	(24,726)	(10,134)

NOTE: Regions are as defined by the Census Bureau.

[a]Derived from summing reported memberships by region for 16 regional and state organizations listed in The 1975 Contemporary Crafts Marketplace that could be identified as specializing in ceramics.

[b]Derived from summing reported memberships by region for 16 regional and state organizations that could be identified as specializing in stitchery as above.

[c]Derived from summing reported memberships by region for 65 regional and state organizations that could be identified as specializing in weaving as above, plus the membership by region of the Handweavers Guild of America Inc., from a current membership list; no correction was made for possible overlap.

[d]Derived from a current membership list furnished by the National Wood Carvers Association.

picture of crafts activity in American today, the Endowment for the Arts would want to survey each of these groups and organizations.

However, the minimum data necessary to construct acceptable estimates for designing a scientific sample survey is much harder to obtain for some groups and organizations than others. Some groups also appear harder to locate and interview. For example, interviewing ethnic craftsmen may pose problems of language or cultural barriers. Or, trying to find the person in a large museum or publishing house who is knowledgeable about its craft-related activities may prove quite frustrating. Hence, our basic recommendation to the Endowment is that each component of the crafts world be approached as a separate problem from the viewpoint of designing the most effective survey.

We recommend that one of the first groups for the Endowment to survey be professional craftsmen. There are several compelling reasons for this recommendation. First, in our discussions with many persons during the course of the planning study, there was clearly greatest interest in obtaining more information about these craftsmen. This interest is not hard to understand. Professional craftsmen are in a real sense at the heart of the crafts world; they inspire nonprofessional craftsmen and, without them, the craft-supporting activities of institutions and organizations would be less important. Second, although not that much is known about professional craftsmen, the job of designing a representative sample appears much more feasible for this group than for many of the other groups and institutions. Similarly, it appears relatively easy to reach professional craftsmen for interviewing. Finally, a survey of professional craftsmen should reveal information that can improve the effectiveness of surveys directed at other components of the crafts field.

As we learned during the planning study, professional craftsmen are a very small proportion of the general population. Our estimate of 250,000 to 350,000 professionals represents less than one-half of one percent of all working-age Americans. It would be prohibitively expensive to survey this group through traditional house-to-house methods (an initial sample of well over 1 million persons would be needed to obtain a sample of about 2,000 professional craftsmen). The only practical means of reaching craftsmen, as we determined, is through organizations to which they belong or similar sources of mailing lists, such as persons exhibiting at craft fairs, craft marketers' lists of suppliers, subscribers to craft magazines, and so on.

Because of efforts such as the Marietta College Directory, it seems possible to assemble virtually a complete list of craft organizations within a fairly short time. Putting together a complete list of craft marketers or other potential sources of craftsmen's names would be a much more time-consuming and difficult proposition. Furthermore, even though a survey limited to members of organizations will inevitably overlook some professional craftsmen, the effect on the validity of the survey results should not be severe. All of the available evidence suggests that craftsmen, like other groups in America, gravitate naturally toward joining organizations or associations of like-minded persons. Our crosscheck of membership lists with names of craftsmen exhibiting at fairs, for example, revealed considerable overlap between the two groups. That is, there are not large numbers of craftsmen exhibiting who do not also belong to an organization. Hence, we recommend that the Endowment use craft organization membership rolls as the main source of the sample of craftsmen to be interviewed in a survey.

Before conducting the survey of craftsmen, however, we recommend that the Endowment first conduct a survey of the craft organizations and associations themselves. We say this both because of the utility of learning more about the functions associations serve in the crafts world and because a prior survey of organizations should greatly facilitate a cost-effective survey of their members. Let us develop these recommendations more fully.

We estimated in the planning study that there are close to 2,000 craft organizations active in the United States today. They vary widely in size and geographic scope, from the American Crafts Council with 20,000 members from all over the U.S. to small local groups such as the Fairbanks (Alaska) Weavers Guild with a 1975 membership of 18 persons. They also vary in the craft skills or specialties of their members. From the descriptions provided for those organizations in Contemporary Crafts Marketplace, it appears that their activities and services cover a wide range. Most of the organizations listed have a newsletter or other form of communication with their membership, many sponsor craft fairs or exhibitions, some offer classes, workshops, or help their members buy equipment, market their products, or obtain education through scholarships.

More information is available about craft organizations than about craftsmen themselves or the other craft-supporting institutions. But there is still much to learn about these organizations--their finances, how they are staffed, their salience to their members, the extent and variety of their activities and services. It seems a very useful contribution to expanding our knowledge of the crafts world to survey the organizations that craftsmen have formed.

Conducting a survey of organizations first also has the great advantage of making possible a more cost-effective survey of individual craftsmen later on. A sensible procedure for obtaining names of individual craftsmen to interview is to request membership lists from a sample of craft organizations rather than from the total list, as this cuts down the cost of checking the lists for duplication of names prior to selecting the craftsmen to be surveyed. However, if the Endowment were to proceed with the survey of craftsmen first, ignoring their organizations, important characteristics of each organization such as geographic coverage, skill coverage, size, and so on, will not be known. This means that the sample of organizations from which membership lists are requested may turn out to contain too many small organizations or too many organizations of weavers or potters, and therefore produce a sample of craftsmen that is not truly representative of the total. If, instead, a survey of organizations is conducted as a prior step, it becomes possible to use information obtained in that survey to improve the representativeness of the sample of craftsmen. In technical terms, it will be possible to stratify organizations on critical characteristics, requesting membership lists from a sample of organizations within each stratum. This procedure helps ensure the representativeness of the sample of craftsmen that is obtained while realizing a cost savings because membership lists do not have to be requested or processed from every one of the 2,000-odd organizations. In addition, replies to the craft organizations survey may suggest topics which should be explored more fully in the individual craftsmens' survey than previously thought.

In short, there seems to be every advantage to conducting a survey of craft organizations prior to surveying individual craftsmen or any of the other components of the crafts world. The number of organizations is relatively small and can be easily reached for interviewing. In the planning study report, we consider the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods of surveys--mail, telephone, personal interview, and combinations of these types. Our recommendation is for a mail survey of craft organizations that covers the entire universe, i.e., 100 percent of the known organizations, rather than a sample. The survey procedure should be carefully designed to find out about new organizations to add to the initial list that is developed based on existing directories.

The survey of craft organizations can be quickly designed and carried out. From the information learned, the Endowment will be in a very good position to design an effective survey of those craftsmen who belong to organizations. Again, we recommend a mail survey of craftsmen, using a sample drawn from membership lists of selected organizations included in the previous survey. The sample could be supplemented by lists of craftsmen participating in regional or statewide fairs to permit a better assessment of whether a survey primarily based on organization membership rolls will in fact represent the vast majority of practicing craftsmen.

We recommend further that the survey of craftsmen be done in two increments. Since so little is known about craftsmen, we feel it is an inefficient use of resources to design a lengthy questionnaire and send it to a large sample with the hope of getting a lot of detailed information on a wide range of subjects. For one thing, respondents are apt to balk at a large questionnaire and to fail to send back a completed form. If the response rate to the survey is too low, the results will be of questionable value. Moreover, the replies to certain items may turn out to be uninteresting or unimportant. Or some groups of craftsmen may turn up in many more numbers than required for reliable results, while other groups may be insufficiently represented. Of course, exploiting as fully as possible the information gained in the survey of craft organizations should minimize the likelihood of obtaining an unrepresentative sample of craftsmen or of asking for irrelevant information. Nevertheless, we feel that a conservative, incremental approach will afford the greatest dividends in the long run.

Thus, we recommend first a "screening" survey of professional craftsmen with a sample large enough--between about 10,000 and 25,000 craftsmen--to be representative of all important characteristics, such as types of media, residence, income levels, and so on. The questionnaire would contain general questions on significant facets of a craftsman's life and work. The purposes of this initial survey would be to provide a broad-range, descriptive picture of craftsmen in America, not now available, and to point up subject areas or particular groups of craftsmen that merit more in-depth attention. The next increment would be questionnaires that ask for much more detailed information on a given subject area or from a particular group.

We realize the approach described is not appropriate for craftsmen who do not belong to organizations and who belong to special groups, such as Native Americans, ethnic craftsmen, and the Amish. These craftsmen will require special survey designs that address the particular problems of designing a representative sample and of reaching and interviewing each group. A prior survey of professional craftsmen who are affiliated with organizations should benefit the design and effectiveness of surveys of these special groups.

Having surveyed craft associations and professional craftsmen belonging to them, the Endowment for the Arts will have gone a long way toward building a comprehensive picture of crafts activity in the United States today. With the knowledge gained from these two surveys, the Endowment will be better able to embark upon effective surveys of other groups of craftsmen and of the many institutions and organziations that are part of the complex and varied world of crafts.

LIST OF STATES INCLUDED IN THE REGIONS AND DIVISIONS DEFINED BY THE U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

NORTHEAST

New England

Maine
New Hampshire
Vermont
Massachusetts
Rhode Island
Connecticut

Middle Atlantic

New York
New Jersey
Pennsylvania

NORTH CENTRAL

East North Central

Ohio
Indiana
Illinois
Michigan
Wisconsin

West North Central

Minnesota
Iowa
Missouri
North Dakota
South Dakota
Nebraska
Kansas

SOUTH

South Atlantic

Delaware
Maryland
District of Columbia

SOUTH (continued)

South Atlantic (continued)

Virginia
West Virginia
North Carolina
South Carolina
Georgia
Florida

East South Central

Kentucky
Tennessee
Alabama
Mississippi

West South Central

Arkansas
Louisiana
Oklahoma
Texas

WEST

Mountain

Montana
Idaho
Wyoming
Colorado
New Mexico
Arizona
Utah
Nevada

Pacific

Washington
Oregon
California
Alaska
Hawaii