



Research Division Note #10 - March 5, 1985

ARTISTS REAL EARNINGS DECLINE 37 PERCENT IN THE 1970s

When adjusted for inflation, median artists earnings declined by 37 percent from 1969 to 1979, according to data obtained in the 1970 and 1980 Census of Population. The 14 percent decline in real (inflation adjusted) earnings for women was less than the 29 percent for men, but women continued to earn substantially less—42 percent of men's earnings in 1979 compared with 35 percent in 1969. The large increase of women in artist occupations over the decade had the effect of substantially lowering the overall median artist earnings.

As a comparison group, all professional/technical workers increased median earnings by 83 percent in the decade. Men's earnings increased 82 percent and women's earnings increased 102 percent. In terms of real earnings, the total and men had declines of 8 percent, while women increased by 2 percent.

The earnings statistics of the decennial Census refers to earnings from all sources and not just from the artist occupation which was given as the respondents principal job. Also, the term earnings includes only wages and salaries and self-employment earnings. It does not include government transfer payments such as social security or welfare payments, or unemployment compensation.

o Median earnings of all artist occupations combined was \$7,880 in 1969. The actual median earnings in 1979 was \$9,803, but when adjusted for inflation, this was the equivalent of only \$4,951 in 1969. For men artists, median 1969 earnings of \$9,540 compare with the 1979 median real earnings of \$6,795. For women artists, median 1969 earnings of \$3,373 compare with 1979 median real earnings of \$2,885.

o Median women's earnings in most artist occupations are one-third to two-thirds less than those of men. The greatest increases in total median earnings percentages between 1969 and 1979 occurred in occupations that experienced a decline in the percentage of women in their labor forces.

Architects - This group had the highest total median earnings in both 1969 and 1979 of all artist occupations, and the highest median men's and women's earnings. Real earnings declined for both men and women.

Art/Drama/Music Teachers (higher education) - Total median earnings for teachers increased 29 percent between 1969 and 1979. Unlike most of the other occupations, men's median earnings increased more than women's (57 vs. 32 percent). Real earnings declined for both men and women.

Authors - Authors were the only artists whose median earnings decreased between 1969 and 1979. Total decreases were 22 percent and median women's earnings decreased far more than men's (15 vs. 4 percent). Real earnings declined 60 percent, greater than any other artist occupation. Between 1969 and 1979, authors made a transition from a relatively high-earning artist occupation to a relatively low-earning one in part because of the large increase of low-earning women authors.

Dancers - Total median earnings increased nearly two-thirds (62 percent) between 1969 and 1979 yet dancers still had the lowest median earnings in 1979 of any artist occupation. Median men dancers' earnings had the largest percentage increase in any of the artist occupations (71 percent) and also increased significantly more than women dancers (43 percent). However, real earnings declined for both men and women.

Musicians/Composers - Total median earnings for musicians/composers increased 88 percent between 1969 and 1979; the largest percentage increase of any occupation. Median women's earnings also had the largest percentage increase (128 percent) of any artist occupation, while men's increased only 52 percent. Even with these large increases, the median musician/composer earnings was significantly lower than in most other artist occupations. Real earnings increased for women but decreased for men. The decreased proportion of women in the musician/composer labor force (see Note #9) was partly responsible for the positive trend for women's real earnings.

Photographers - Photographers had a 30 percent total median earnings percentage increase between 1969 and 1979. Men and women had similar increases of 42 and 43 percent respectively. Although the percentage increase in their earnings was small, photographers went from a level of median earnings below the average for all artists in 1969 to above the average in 1979; and in common with most of the occupation groups, their real earnings declined.

CAVEATS: The four occupations of Actor/Directors, Designers, Painters/Sculptors/Crafts-Artists/Printmakers, and Artists/Performers/Related Workers, N.E.C. had large definition changes in the 1980 Census. Because of this, conclusions should not be drawn about median earnings changes and these groups are not included in the preceding discussions of the individual occupations. See Research Division Note #7 for more details of the 1980 definition changes.

Artist Median Earnings by Occupation and Sex, 1969 and 1979

Occupation	Total			Men			Women		
	1979	1969	Change	1979	1969	Change	1979	1969	Change
Actors/Directors*	\$12,564	\$ 5,936	n.a.	\$14,397	\$ 6,816	n.a.	\$ 9,396	\$ 5,021	n.a.
Announcers	8,144	7,067	15%	8,639	6,974	24%	6,377	2,963	115%
Architects	19,220	12,800	50	20,123	13,188	53	10,859	6,995	55
Art/Drama/Music Teachers (postsecondary)	11,787	9,140	29	16,901	10,735	57	6,906	5,242	32
Authors	6,956	8,875	-22	10,337	10,823	-4	4,625	5,451	-15
Dancers	5,404	3,332	62	7,576	4,421	71	4,976	3,469	43
Designers*	10,656	10,100	n.a.	16,979	11,155	n.a.	6,232	5,461	n.a.
Musicians/Composers	5,561	2,958	89	7,074	4,668	52	3,186	1,395	129
Painters/Sculptors/Craft- Artists/Printmakers*	8,576	6,996	n.a.	12,091	9,454	n.a.	5,773	3,946	n.a.
Photographers	10,085	7,774	30	12,116	8,551	42	5,217	3,655	43
Artists/Performers/Related Workers, N.E.C.*	7,218	7,735	n.a.	9,521	9,350	n.a.	4,745	4,490	n.a.
All Artists	9,803	7,880	24	13,455	9,540	41	5,713	3,373	69
Professional/Technical Workers**	15,206	8,312	83	19,189	10,516	82	10,581	5,244	102

* These artist occupations had large definitional changes for the 1980 Census and data from the 1970 Census are not comparable. See Research Division Note #7 for more details about the changes.

**These estimates were derived from the Current Population Survey (Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 75 and 129) instead of the decennial Censuses because the occupational revisions to the 1980 Census eliminated the category of "Professional/Technical Workers."

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Inflation Adjusted Artist Median Earnings by Occupation and Sex, 1969 and 1979 ^{1/}

Occupation	Total			Men			Women		
	1979	1969	Change	1979	1969	Change	1979	1969	Change
Actors/Directors*	\$ 6,345	\$ 5,936	n.a.	\$ 7,271	\$ 6,816	n.a.	\$ 4,745	\$ 5,021	n.a.
Announcers	4,113	7,067	-42%	4,363	6,974	-37%	3,221	2,963	9%
Architects	9,707	12,800	-24	10,163	13,188	-23	5,484	6,995	-22
Art/Drama/Music Teachers (postsecondary)	5,953	9,140	-35	8,536	10,735	-20	3,488	5,242	-33
Authors	3,513	8,875	-60	5,221	10,823	-52	2,336	5,451	-57
Dancers	2,729	3,332	-18	3,826	4,421	-13	2,513	3,469	-27
Designers*	5,382	10,100	n.a.	8,575	11,155	n.a.	3,147	5,461	n.a.
Musicians/Composers	2,809	2,958	-5	3,573	4,668	-23	1,609	1,395	15
Painters/Sculptors/Craft- Artists/Artist Printmakers*	4,331	6,996	n.a.	6,107	9,454	n.a.	2,916	3,946	n.a.
Photographers	5,093	7,774	-34	6,119	8,551	-28	2,635	3,655	-29
Artist/Performers/Related Workers, N.E.C.*	3,645	7,735	n.a.	4,809	9,350	n.a.	2,396	4,490	n.a.
All Artists	4,951	7,880	-37	6,795	9,540	-29	2,885	3,373	-14
Professional/Technical Workers**	7,680	8,312	-8	9,691	10,516	-8	5,344	5,244	2

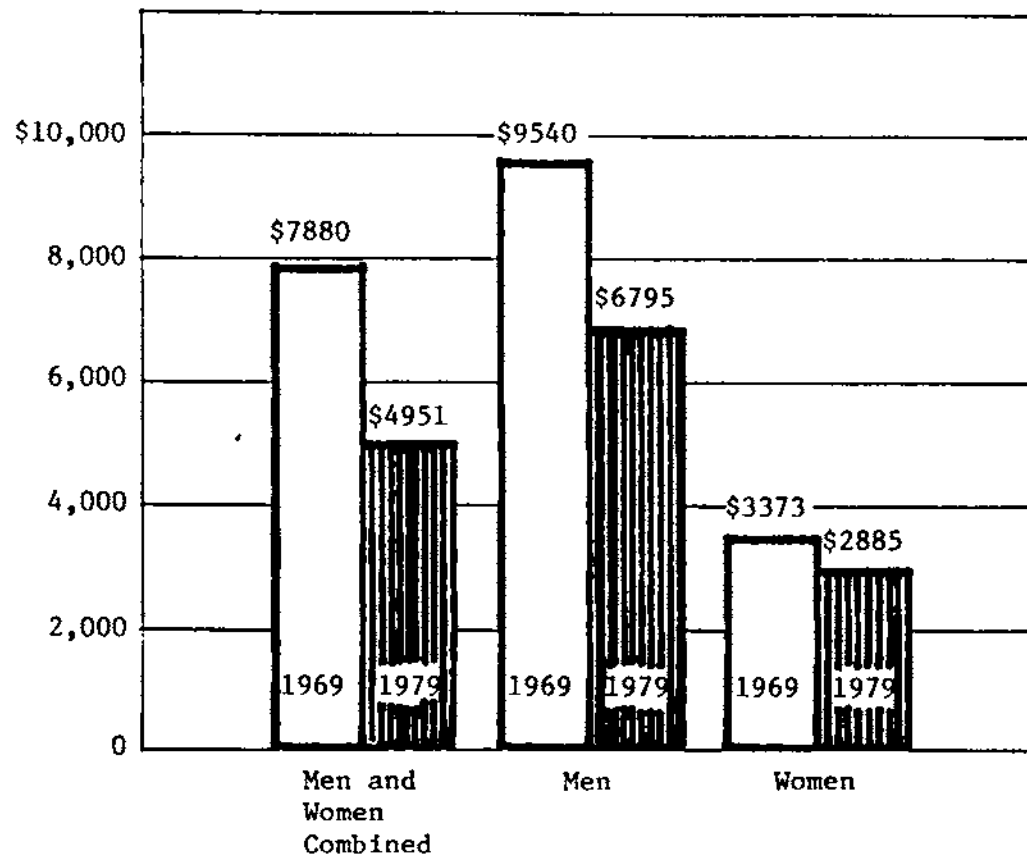
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^{1/} Consumer Price Index (1969=100)

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INFLATION ADJUSTED ARTISTS' MEDIAN EARNINGS (CPI 1969=100)



WOMEN ARTISTS' MEDIAN EARNINGS COMPARED WITH MEN

