

# Artists in the Labor Force: A Brief History

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# Who Are Artists, According the the Census and NEA?

- ▶ *Actors*: stage, motion pictures, radio and television
- ▶ *Architects*: building and landscape
- ▶ *Authors*
- ▶ *Dancers*: ballet, modern and night club
- ▶ *Designers*: incl. decorators and window dressers
- ▶ *Musicians and composers*: classical, jazz, folk, rock, pop
- ▶ *Painters, sculptors, craft artists, and artist printmakers*
- ▶ *Photographers*: all types, including video camera operators
- ▶ *Producers and directors*
- ▶ *Radio and television announcers*
- ▶ *Artists nec.* includes, clowns, astrologers, jugglers, snake charmers, etc.



# Issues with the Census Definition of “Occupation”

- ▶ The survey asks for one’s “chief job or business activity last week”; if you have more than one, you are asked to pick the one in which you worked the most hours.
- ▶ Problems with this definition:
  - Artists may not always find employment in their profession.
  - Some artistic professions may be seasonal (acting, dance).
  - Artists are notorious for moonlighting (CPS tracks this).
  - The Census method detects the most successful artists; can a person still be an artist if not working as one?

# Employment and Unemployment of Artists

- ▶ Lack of entry barriers (outside architecture) suggests an over-supply and more unemployment than in other professions.
  - ▶ Many artists seem to get “psychic benefits” from being artists even though they earn little income from doing so.
  - ▶ What do we see when we look at the numbers?
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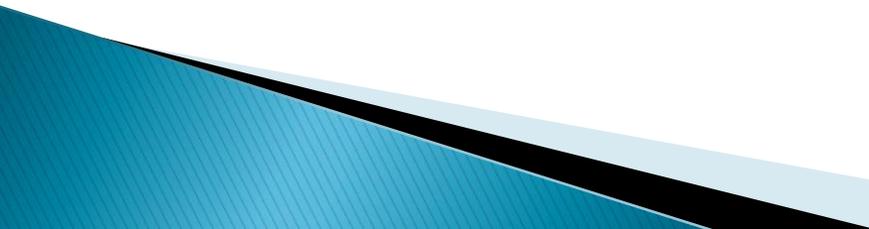
# Artist Employment Detail, 1940–2000

Attribute	1940		1950		1960		1970		1980		1990		2000	
	Artists	Profs.												
<b>Age</b>	37.9	38.3	37.8	38.9	40.2	40.0	38.6	39.0	36.8	38.0	38.3	39.2	40.3	40.9
<b>Education</b>	11.7	14.2	12.8	14.4	13.7	15.0	13.8	15.2	14.5	15.7	14.4	15.3	14.8	15.6
<b>Women</b>	33.0	43.7	34.7	35.2	38.6	38.2	29.7	41.1	38.2	47.4	44.3	52.7	45.1	56.5
<b>White</b>	95.4	95.9	95.6	95.5	96.1	95.0	94.7	93.0	92.1	88.7	89.9	86.2	88.0	82.8
<b>Black</b>	4.2	3.9	4.0	4.2	3.0	4.1	3.5	5.5	4.3	7.3	4.5	8.0	5.1	8.9
<b>Unemployed</b>	11.0	3.0	4.9	1.4	4.0	1.2	4.4	1.7	5.5	2.0	4.8	2.1	3.3	2.0
<b>Working in Census Year</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	100.0	99.1	98.0	98.8	96.5	98.4	97.4	98.0		
<b>Working in Prior Year</b>	92.1	96.0	91.8	94.5	98.4	98.5	98.1	98.2	95.8	98.1	96.6	98.3		
<b>Self-Employed</b>	33.4	16.3	26.5	12.8	28.2	10.4	22.4	8.1	30.1	7.6	31.3	7.5	31.5	6.6
<b>Full-Time*</b>	39.2	49.4	25.5	41.6	42.9	57.6	50.1	52.9	49.6	58.8	53.1	61.9	53.3	57.6
<b>WORK TIME:</b>														
<b>Hours Worked*</b>	30.1 (40.0)	39.4 (40.0)	33.9 (40.0)	40.9 (40.0)	33.2 (40.0)	39.8 (40.0)	33.9 (40.0)	37.3 (40.0)	35.5 (40.0)	38.5 (40.0)	37.0 (40.0)	39.6 (40.0)	38.1 (40.0)	39.6 (40.0)
<b>Weeks Worked*</b>	38.3 (50.0)	42.6 (52.0)	40.1 (51.0)	42.7 (52.0)	41.8 (51.0)	44.1 (51.0)	42.9 (51.0)	43.9 (51.0)	42.1 (52.0)	44.9 (52.0)	43.3 (52.0)	45.9 (52.0)	43.7 (52.0)	45.1 (52.0)

# Parsing the Employment Data

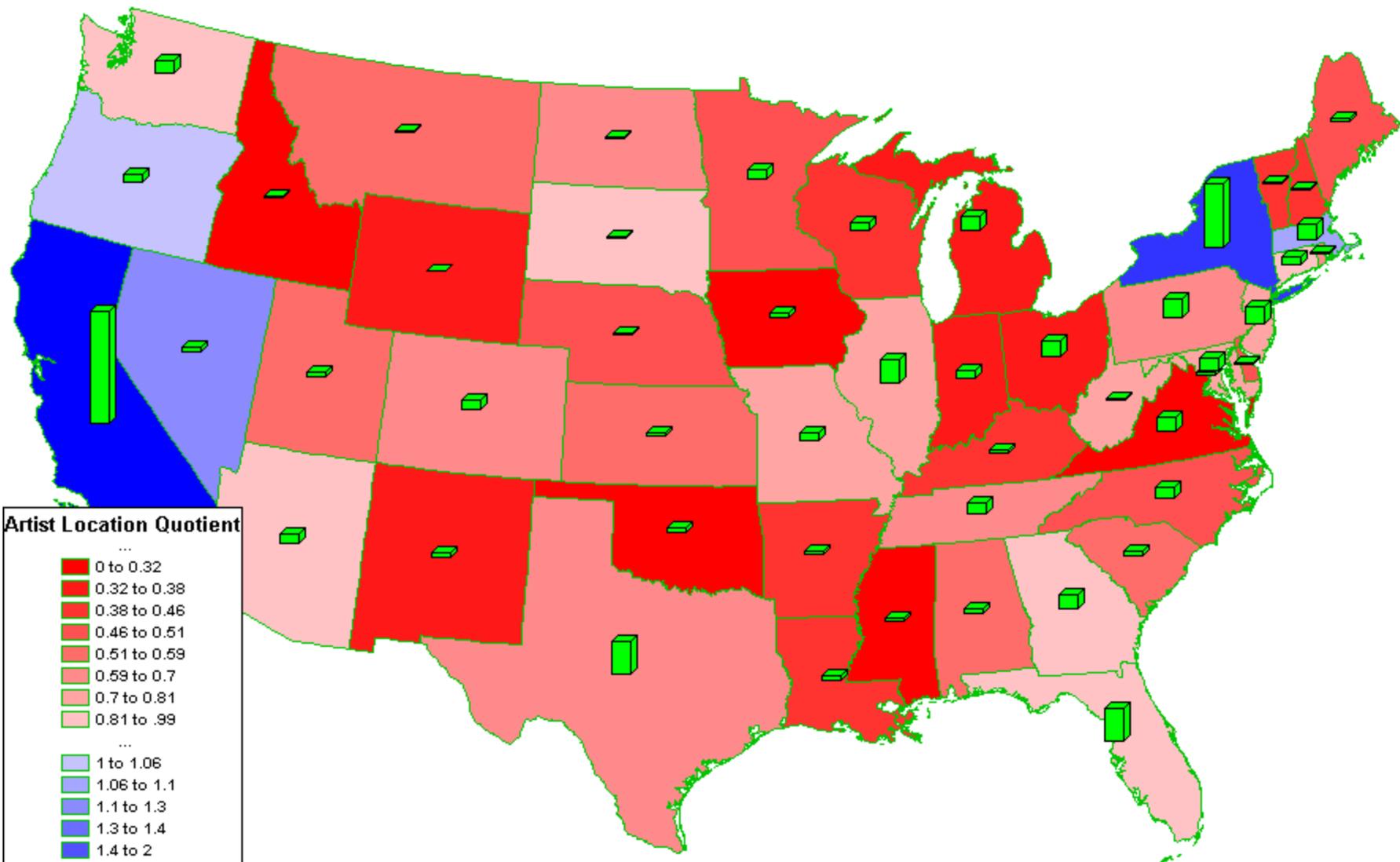
- ▶ Artists traditionally have had higher unemployment rates than professional workers.
  - ▶ The self-employed have averaged about one-third of the artist labor force; they are less than 10 percent of the professional labor force.
  - ▶ Fewer artists work full-time, and their average weeks and hours worked for artists are lower.
  - ▶ Artists are more likely to be moonlighters (CPS data since 1970).
  - ▶ In the Census data, artists are often found working in industries that seem unrelated to their profession.
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# Parsing the Employment Data II

- ▶ The artist labor force is slightly younger than the professional labor force.
  - ▶ The artist labor force has education levels comparable to the professional labor force.
  - ▶ The percentage of women in the artist labor force is growing, but it is growing faster among professionals.
  - ▶ The percentage of racial minorities in the artist labor force is growing, but it is growing faster among professionals.
  - ▶ The artist labor force has had a higher percentage of men and whites in every Census year.
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# Artists' State of Residence

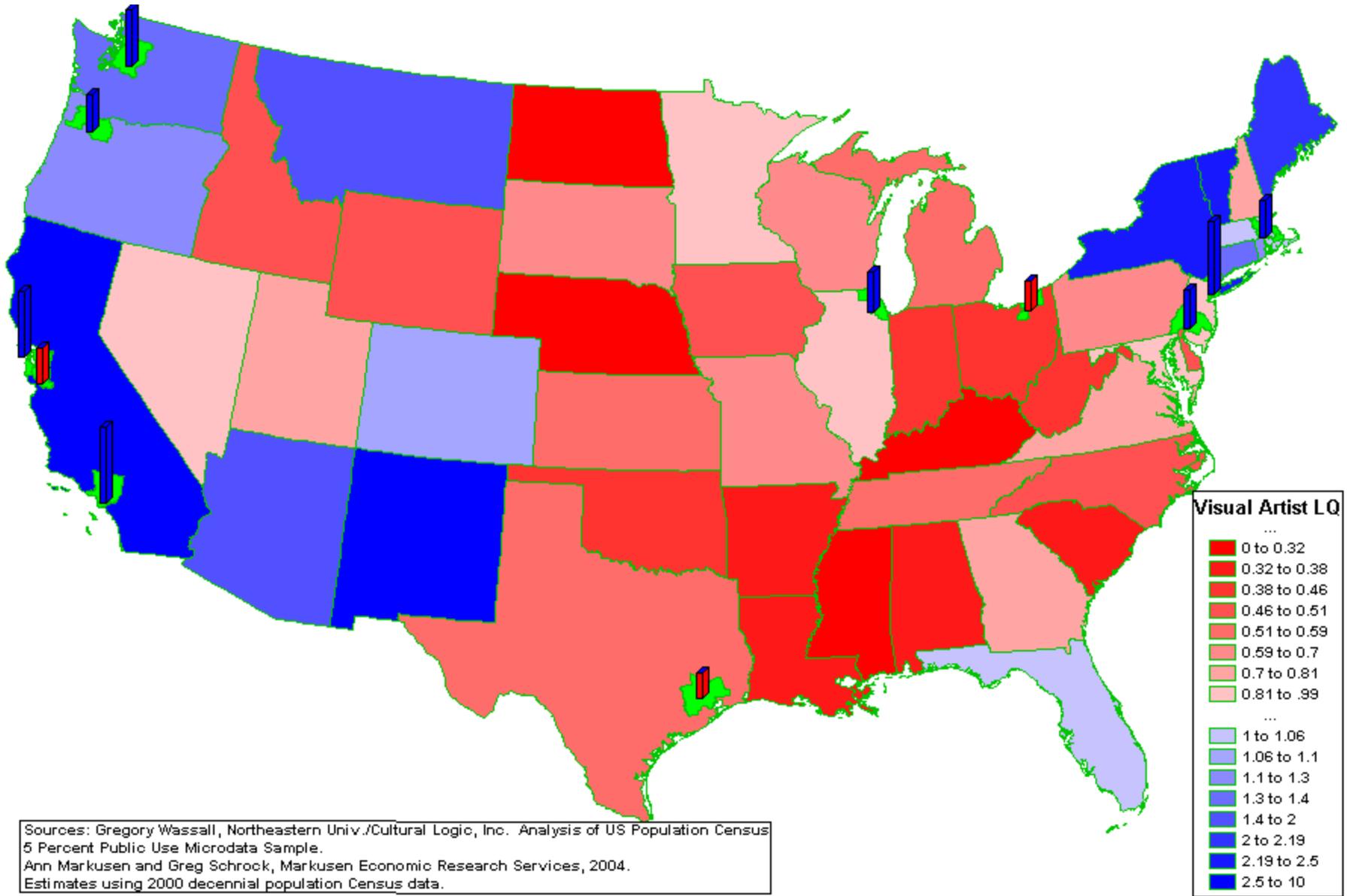
- ▶ The following slides show where artists lived in 2000.
- ▶ We use a location quotient to measure artist concentration. A location quotient is the ratio of any occupation's percentage in the state labor force to its percentage in the US labor force.
- ▶ A  $LQ > 1$  means that a state has more than the national share of an occupation; a  $LQ < 1$  means that it has less.



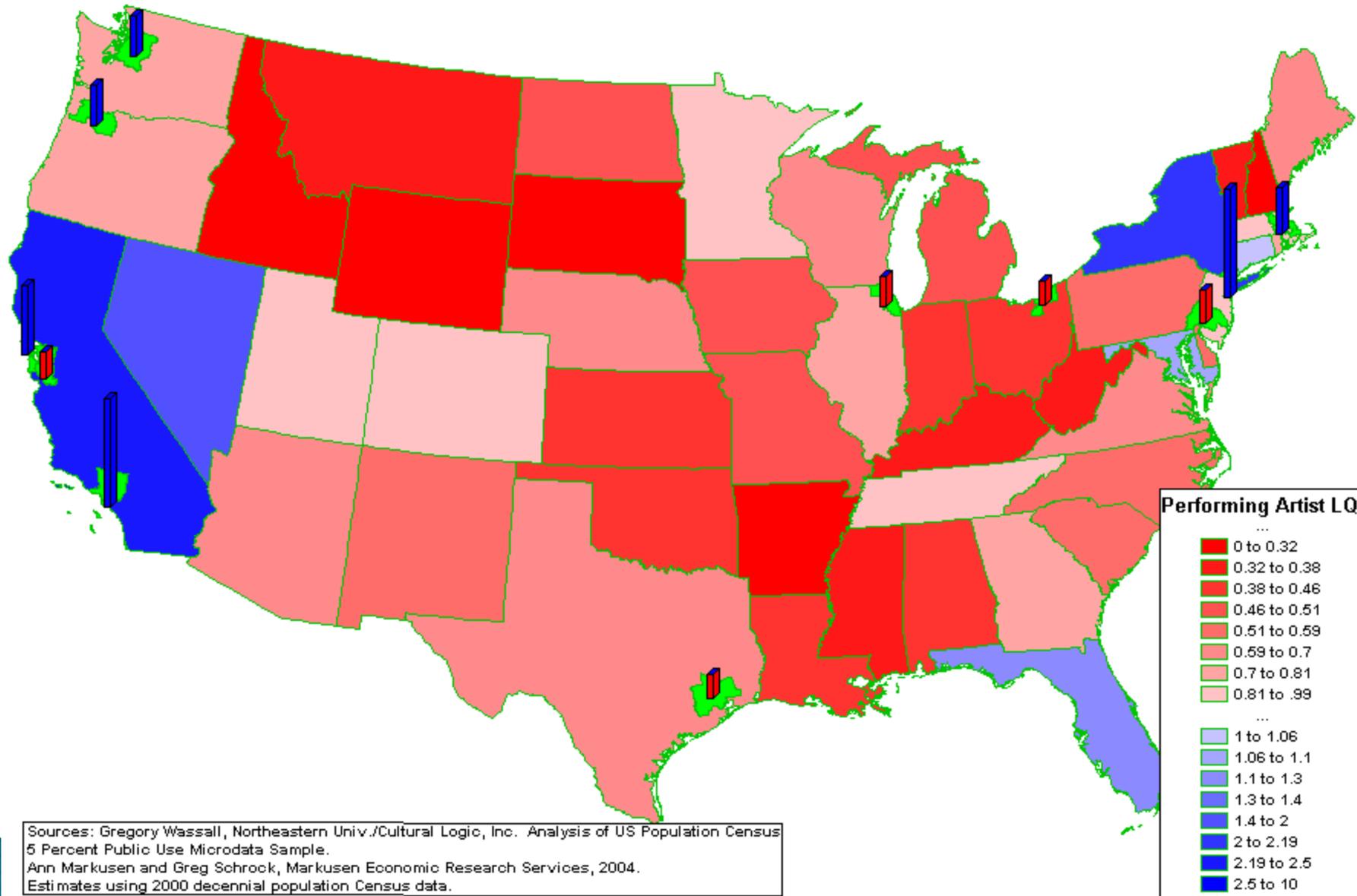
**Artist Location Quotient**

- 0 to 0.32
- 0.32 to 0.38
- 0.38 to 0.46
- 0.46 to 0.51
- 0.51 to 0.59
- 0.59 to 0.7
- 0.7 to 0.81
- 0.81 to .99
- 1 to 1.06
- 1.06 to 1.1
- 1.1 to 1.3
- 1.3 to 1.4
- 1.4 to 2
- 2 to 2.19
- 2.19 to 2.5
- 2.5 to 10

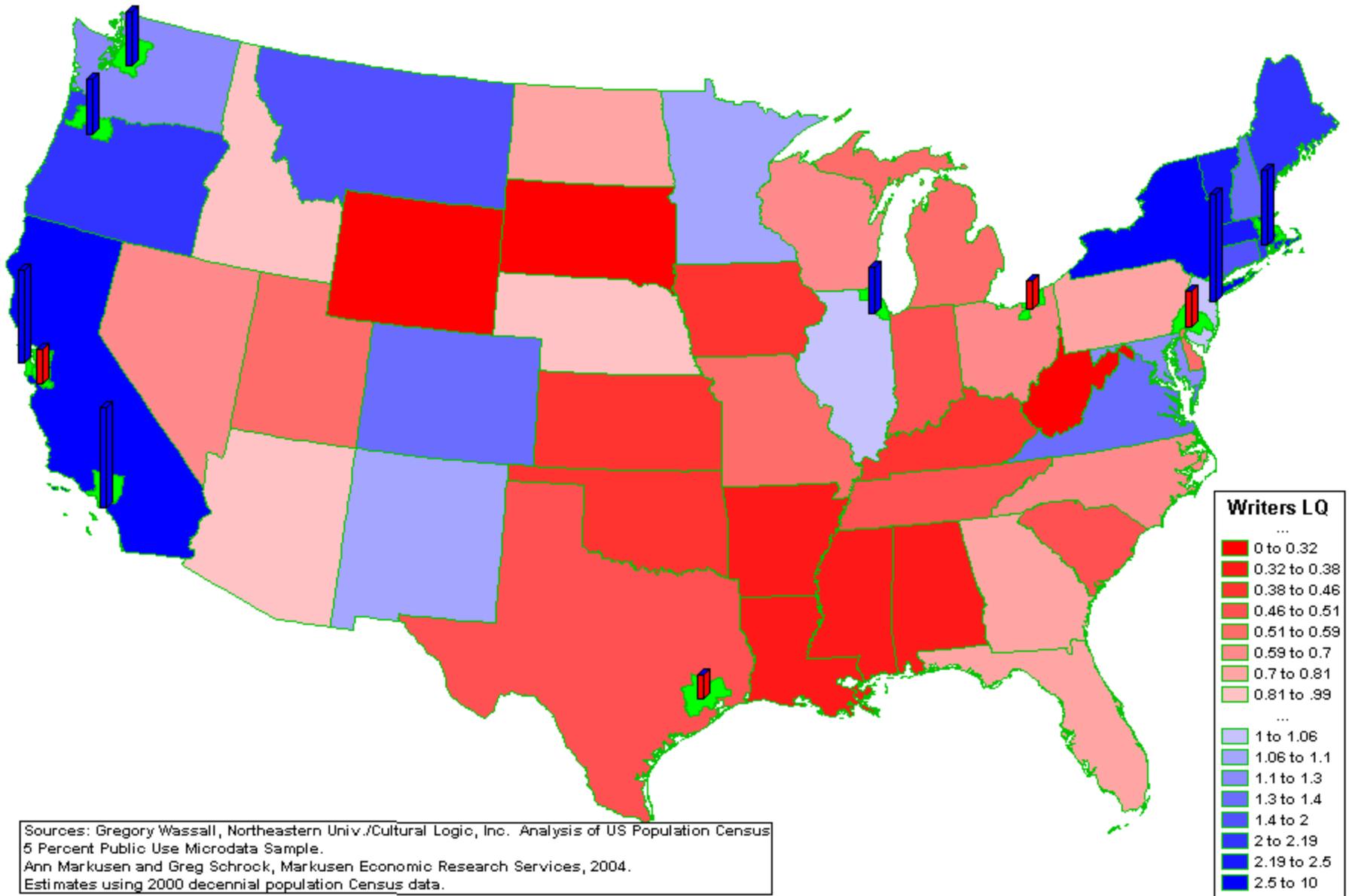
Source: Gregory Wassall, Northeastern Univ./Cultural Logic, Inc.  
 Analysis of US Population Census 5 Percent  
 Public Use Microdata Sample.



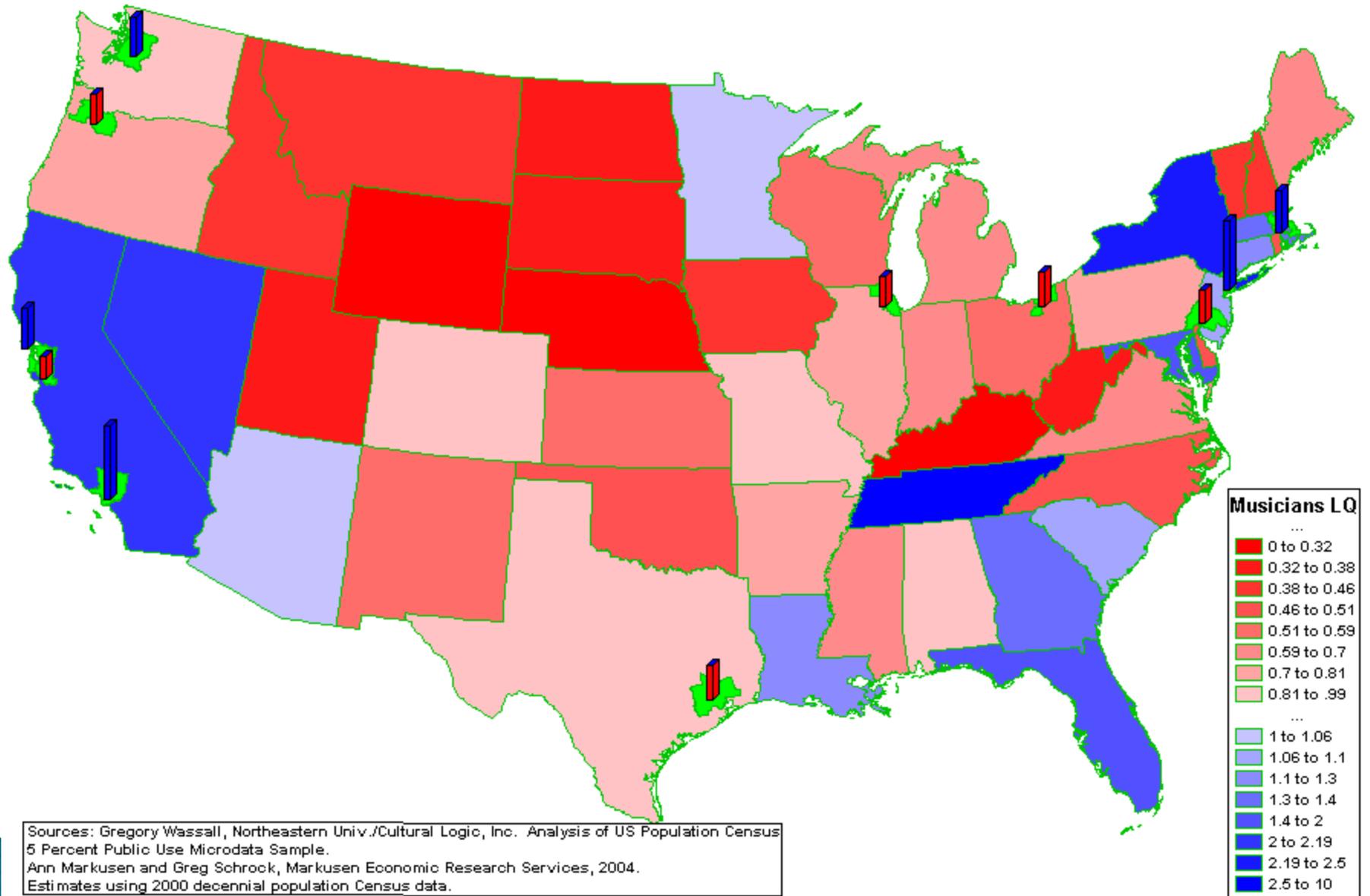
Sources: Gregory Wassall, Northeastern Univ./Cultural Logic, Inc. Analysis of US Population Census 5 Percent Public Use Microdata Sample.  
 Ann Markusen and Greg Schrock, Markusen Economic Research Services, 2004.  
 Estimates using 2000 decennial population Census data.



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# Earnings of Artists

- ▶ Professionals make more than less educated workers.
  - ▶ Artists, though comparably educated, do not benefit from entry barriers to their professions (except for architects), as many professionals do.
  - ▶ Job fragmentation may also affect the amount and distribution of earnings.
  - ▶ What do we see when we look at the numbers?
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# Earnings of Artists 1940–2000

<b>EARNINGS TYPE</b>	<b>1939</b>	<b>1949</b>	<b>1959</b>	<b>1969</b>	<b>1979</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1999</b>
<b>ARTISTS:</b>							
<b>Wage &amp; Salary</b>	905 (588)	1,913 (1,200)	3,619 (2,800)	6,612 (5,400)	9,942 (6,505)	18,985 (12,000)	28,736 (19,000)
<b>Self-Employment</b>	NA	746 (0)	1,238 (0)	1,688 (0)	2,696 (0)	4,966 (0)	7,390 (0)
<b>Total Earnings</b>	NA	2,658 (2,100)	4,857 (4,000)	8,305 (7,000)	12,657 (9,605)	23,992 (18,000)	36,126 (26,000)
<b>Hourly Wage</b>	0.78 (0.26)	1.57 (0.96)	3.63 (2.49)	5.65 (3.98)	9.13 (5.97)	16.76 (10.38)	26.75 (15.00)
<b>Below Poverty Line</b>	NA	NA	NA	4.9%	7.6%	7.2%	7.3%
<b>PROF/TECH:</b>							
<b>Wage &amp; Salary</b>	1,271 (1,000)	2,510 (2,400)	4,759 (4,500)	8,019 (7,500)	14,882 (13,205)	28,465 (25,000)	39,335 (32,000)
<b>Self-Employment</b>	NA	659 (0)	1,158 (0)	1,309 (0)	1,562 (0)	2,616 (0)	3,484 (0)
<b>Total Earnings</b>	NA	3,170 (2,800)	5,917 (5,000)	9,342 (8,000)	16,476 (14,005)	31,117 (26,000)	43,352 (34,200)
<b>Hourly Wage</b>	0.77 (0.56)	1.52 (1.35)	3.25 (2.70)	5.34 (4.36)	9.48 (7.60)	17.31 (13.46)	25.54 (18.40)
<b>Below Poverty Line</b>	NA	NA	NA	3.3%	3.5%	3.3%	4.3%

# Fifteen Professions with the Greatest Earnings Variability, 1999

OCCUPATION	MEAN EARNINGS	EARNINGS OF ZERO OR LESS	EARNINGS GREATER THAN \$175,000	EARNINGS GREATER THAN \$310,000	COEFFICIENT OF VARIATION		MEAN/MEDIAN	
	(\$)	(%)	(%)	(%)	Rank	Value	Rank	Value
Actor	35,811	0.2	5.8	4.5	1	1.923	1	2.911
Announcer	28,517	0.2	1.0	0.3	12	1.328	13	1.501
Artist and Rel.	24,775	3.8	1.1	0.4	8	1.425	8	1.652
Athlete	21,183	0.2	1.3	0.8	2	1.866	2	2.681
Author	37,099	2.5	3.5	1.6	7	1.525	9	1.613
Chiropractor	75,651	1.3	11.0	2.9	*	1.126	11	1.528
Diet. & Nut.	25,027	0.6	0.7	0.5	13	1.298	*	1.136
Entertainer	20,025	1.5	0.9	0.7	4	1.676	4	2.002
Health Diag.	40,456	3.5	6.8	1.0	5	1.581	3	2.286
Library Tech.	9,578	0.0	0.0	0.0	*	1.203	6	1.916
Misc. Health Tech.	33,763	0.2	2.2	0.9	11	1.339	12	1.521
Musician	25,036	1.3	1.4	0.7	3	1.698	5	1.926
Other Teacher	16,393	0.5	0.2	0.1	10	1.345	7	1.821
Photographer	25,376	2.0	1.1	0.1	9	1.356	*	1.410
Physician Asst.	37,761	0.2	0.9	0.9	14	1.262	*	1.259
Podiatrist	104,984	2.9	20.1	7.2	*	0.981	14	1.479
Producer/Director	52,777	0.7	4.5	3.7	15	1.232	15	1.434
Religious Worker	16,737	0.0	0.4	0.4	6	1.553	10	1.564

# Parsing the Earnings Data

- ▶ Artists' earnings have averaged about 75–80 percent of professionals'. Most of this earnings gap is due to working fewer hours per week and fewer weeks per year.
  - ▶ There are major earnings differences within the artist profession; at the top are architects, and at the bottom are dancers.
  - ▶ There are major differences in artists' earnings between men and women, and between whites and African-Americans.
  - ▶ Within professions, several artist occupations exhibit substantial earnings variability.
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# Parsing the Earnings Data: Detail

- ▶ Artists reap a smaller return to extra years of education than do other professionals.
  - ▶ What the Census data don't show is a breakdown of earnings from holding multiple jobs. Direct surveys show that a large portion of the earnings of artists is often earned outside the arts.
  - ▶ An analysis of gender and racial earnings differentials reveals evidence of discrimination.
  - ▶ The high earnings variability in some occupations suggests the presence of “winner-take-all” labor markets.
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