

NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR  
THE ARTS

WASHINGTON  
D.C. 20506



A Federal agency advised by the  
National Council on the Arts

Research Division Note # 27 - December 9, 1987

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS  
1982 AND 1985 COMPARED

BACKGROUND

The Surveys of Public Participation in the Arts conducted in 1982 and 1985 have now been analyzed. The changes in participation rates between the two surveys have been independently evaluated by the Survey Research Center, University of Maryland, and the Statistical Methods Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census. This Note discussed changes between the first six months of 1982 and the first six months of 1985, when all aspects of the questionnaires and procedures were identical.

Overall, twenty-two activities or participation measures changed between 1982 and 1985 at the 95% confidence level. In other words, there are nineteen chances out of twenty that these changes accurately reflect the results that would have been obtained if the total adult population was surveyed in 1982 and in 1985 instead of using sample surveys. Eighteen of these changes concern attendance at live performing arts events, music preferences, and arts participation via the media of TV, radio, and recordings. This Note and the attached tables are about these three groups of arts participation rates.

Only changes that meet or exceed the 95% confidence level are described as being statistically significant in this Note. This is a widely used standard. The mathematical formula involved considers both the size of the sample and the percent of the population that participated in each activity covered in the questionnaire. Both factors must be taken into account concurrently. For example, a change of four percentage points from 10% participation to 14% participation could be regarded as a significant change if the sample for the particular activity was five hundred or more persons, but would not be significant if the sample for the particular activity was less than this number.

WHAT CHANGED?

Downward changes in rates of participation by attending live performances are significant for classical music, opera, and musical plays/opereettas. In each of these three art forms, the participation rate declines were significant at the 95% confidence level. These declines correspond to significant declines also found in attending performing arts events at concert halls/auditoria, and at college/university facilities.

The participation rate for attending fairs or festivals increased by 5 percent, the largest increase found for any of the activity attendance questions. This change is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. Changes in rates of participation were not significant for visits to art museums or galleries, and to parks, monuments, and buildings.

Participation rates for performances by the Survey respondents themselves before the public, either as a professional or as an amateur, did not change significantly. The participation rates for reading literature and poetry also did not change significantly.

Many rates of participation in the arts by means of the media changed significantly. All three forms of media participation surveyed (TV, radio, and recordings) decreased for jazz music; as well as for classical music; so did watching non-musical plays and watching ballet on TV. Declining participation was also found for opera and musical theater/opera in all three media forms, but the extent of the declines for these art forms did not meet the test of significance at the 95% confidence level. Watching programs about art or museum collections showed an upward change of two percentage points; but this change did not meet the significance test.

The results of the 1982 and the 1985 Surveys of Public Participation in the Arts showed that preferences for six music genres changed significantly. Soul/blues, rock, mood/easy listening, hymns/gospel, and 'other' (mostly ethnic) musics all increased their followings at the 95% confidence level. On the other hand, country-western music declined significantly in terms of the estimated proportion of the population liking this music. The proportion of the population indicating that it likes jazz music increased by three percentage points which just barely missed reaching statistical significance at the 95% confidence level.

To round out the description of 22 statistically significant changes are the following four arts and leisure activity measures: 1) Jogging, lifting weights, and exercise as a regular recreational activity--Increased 7 percent. 2) Working with indoor plants--Decreased 8 percent. 3) Attending performing arts events at college/university facilities--Decreased 2 percent. 4) Attending performing arts events at concert halls/auditoria--Decreased 3 percent.

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHANGING 'RATES' TO NUMBERS OF PEOPLE

To convert the participation rates shown in the accompanying tables to estimated numbers of persons, change the rates into the decimal form (e.g. 3% = 0.03) and multiply by the appropriate population base for 1982 or 1985. For the 1982 rates, the appropriate population base to use is

164,575,000 adults who were eighteen years and over. For the 1985 rates, the population base to use is 170,552,000 adults who were eighteen years and over.

Here are three examples: Q. How many adults attended at least one classical music performance in 1985 compared with 1982? A. The 1982 rate is 14% and the 1985 rate is 13%. Therefore, 0.14 multiplied by 164,575,000 equals about 23 million adults in 1982 and 0.13 multiplied by 170,552,000 equals about 22 million adults in 1985. Since the decrease passes the 95% confidence level test, there is a 19 out of 20 chance that this estimate is accurate. In plain talk, 1 million fewer adults attended classical music performances in 1985 compared with 1982, notwithstanding the increase in the adult population base of about 6 million persons.

A second example illustrates how to interpret a change that is not statistically significant: Q. Has the number of persons who like jazz music increased between 1982 and 1985? A. The rate increased by 3%. To convert this rate change to a number of persons follow this procedure: in 1982 0.30 multiplied by 164,575,000 equals about 49 million persons, and in 1985 0.33 multiplied by 170,552,000 equals about 56 million persons--an increase of nearly 7 million persons. However, these results do not meet the test of significance at the 95% confidence level. It is highly possible that an increase did occur, but this possibility should be considered tentative until some corroborating information is obtained or until the next Survey interval provides confirmation of the trend.

A third example illustrates the effect of the increasing population base, even though a participation rate remains unchanged: Q. Given what is heard about increasing illiteracy, did fewer persons read books and magazines in 1985 than did in 1982? A. The participation rate was stable and did not change for the two Surveys, but the population base did increase. So, in 1982, 0.86 multiplied by 164,575,000 equals about 142 million adult readers of books and magazines, while in 1985, 0.86 multiplied by 170,552,000 equals about 147 million adult readers of books and magazines--an increase of about 5 million adults.

#### CAVEATS

Results for several intervals must be available before trends in participation rates are clearly seen. The changes described in this Note are for only a single interval of three years and therefore should be used with appropriate caution. The increases and decreases that were found for the 1982-1985 interval do not necessarily indicate what may occur over a longer period of time or what will be found over the next interval of time.

RATES OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS--1982 and 1985 COMPARED

At Least Once in Last 12 Months	Estimated Participation Rates		Evaluation of Rate Change
	1982 N=9,263	1985 N=13,675	
<u>Attended:</u>			
Jazz Performances	10%	10%	No change
Classical Music	14	13	<u>*Decrease</u>
Opera Performances	4	3	<u>*Decrease</u>
Musical Plays or Operettas	19	17	<u>*Decrease</u>
Plays (non-musical)	12	12	No change
Ballet Performances	5	4	Not Significant
Motion Pictures (went out to)	60	59	Not Significant
<u>Visited:</u>			
Art Museums or Galleries	23%	22%	Not Significant
Parks, Monuments, Buildings or Neighborhoods for Historic or Design Value	34	36	Not Significant
Art or Crafts Fairs or Festivals	35	40	<u>*Increase</u>
<u>Performed Before the Public:</u> (professional and amateur)			
Played Classical Music	0.90%	0.85%	Not Significant
Played Jazz Music	0.78	0.68	Not Significant
Danced in Ballet Performance	0.13	0.12	Not Significant
Acted in Non-Musical Role	0.77	0.81	Not Significant
Sang in Musical Play or Operetta	0.89	0.83	Not Significant
Sang in Opera	0.08	0.04	Not Significant
<u>Read:</u>			
Books and Magazines	86%	86%	No change
Novels, Short Stories Poetry or Plays	57	56	Not Significant
Read or Listened to Poetry	18	19	Not Significant

\*Statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

RATES OF PUBLIC PREFERENCE FOR MUSICS--1982 and 1985 COMPARED  
(PERCENT OF ADULT POPULATION THAT LIKES THE MUSICS LISTED)

Musics Liked	Estimated Preference Rates 1982 N=1,475	Rates 1985 N=2,125	Evaluation of Rate Change
Classical/Chamber	29%	30%	Not Significant
Opera	10	10	No change
Show tunes	24	24	No change
Jazz	30	33	Not Significant
Soul/Blues	27	33	<u>*Increase</u>
Big Band	33	32	Not Significant
Country-Western	57	53	<u>*Decrease</u>
Bluegrass	24	24	No change
Rock	37	42	<u>*Increase</u>
Mood/Easy Listening	47	52	<u>*Increase</u>
Folk	26	25	Not Significant
Barbershop	16	15	Not Significant
Hymns/Gospel	35	40	<u>*Increase</u>
Other (mostly Ethnic)	1	5	<u>*Increase</u>

\*Statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

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RATES OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS BY THE MEDIA  
1982 AND 1985 COMPARED

At Least Once in Last 12 Months	Estimated Participation Rates		Evaluation of Rate Change
	1982 N=1,385	1985 N=2,125	
<u>Jazz</u>			
TV	20%	17%	<u>*Decrease</u>
Radio	21	18	<u>*Decrease</u>
Recordings	24	21	<u>*Decrease</u>
<u>Classical Music</u>			
TV	27	24	<u>*Decrease</u>
Radio	25	21	<u>*Decrease</u>
Recordings	25	21	<u>*Decrease</u>
<u>Opera</u>			
TV	13	12	Not significant
Radio	8	7	Not significant
Recordings	9	7	Not significant
<u>Musical Theater or Operetta</u>			
TV	20	18	Not significant
Radio	6	5	Not significant
Recordings	9	8	Not significant
<u>Plays (Non-Musical)</u>			
TV	27	21	<u>*Decrease</u>
Radio	4	4	No change
<u>Ballet</u>			
TV	19	15	<u>*Decrease</u>
<u>Programs About Art in Museums</u>			
TV	23	25	Not significant

\*Statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

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