

The Politics of Art: Nancy Hanks and the National Endowment for the Arts



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The history of federal involvement with the arts can be characterized as sporadic, mostly indirect, frequently controversial, and seldom pursued as a matter of arts policy. Throughout much of the nation's history, both government officials and artists regarded each other from a wary distance. Despite such mutual distrust, Lyndon Johnson's Great Society embarked upon a radically different course. With the establishment of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in 1965, the federal government took an important, albeit tenuous, step toward developing a federal policy of continuing, direct support for the arts. In doing so, it also opened the door for potentially fruitful and congenial partnerships between government and artists, between the public and nonprofit sectors, and between the federal and state governments in the quest for an improved quality of life for the citizens of an enlightened civilization.

Although the seeds of change were sown during the late 1960s, they were cultivated to full bloom during the succeeding Nixon administration under the leadership of Nancy Hanks, who served as chairman of the NEA from 1969 to 1977. The flowering of federal arts policy could be seen in the endowment itself, in the thriving proliferation of the arts, in the expansion of the American arts audience both numerically and geographically, and in the transformation of official and public attitudes about the arts as well as of the opinion of artists about government patronage.

When Hanks took office in early October 1969, the NEA was a small, young agency teetering on the brink of its "initial survival threshold."¹ By the time she resigned in October 1977, the NEA had become a mature, institutionalized, successful federal agency. During her eight-year tenure Hanks increased the agency's budget by 1,200 percent and

its staff by nearly 600 percent. This, in turn, had sustained a vast increase both in administrative workload and in federal arts patronage. The number of applications coming into the NEA multiplied by over 900 percent, from about 2,000 to nearly 20,000, while the grants it awarded rose by nearly 600 percent, from 584 in 1969 to over 4,000 in 1977. The agency fostered and contributed to state programs in all fifty states and six territories and engaged in cooperative efforts with other federal entities. Finally, the scope of activities that its programs supported grew to embrace virtually every type of grantee, creative style, and form of art.

Equal to these significant administrative accomplishments was the NEA's record in nurturing an arts "boom" and in dispersing it across the nation. With the agency's support, the number of artists and art institutions in America grew tremendously during the 1960s and 1970s. The number of artists in the labor force nearly doubled, to over 1 million individuals.² The number of professional orchestras and opera companies each increased by 400 percent, while dance companies proliferated by 1,100 percent.³ Additionally, geographic dispersion increased as artistic institutions were established in communities across the nation, most especially outside the old urban centers of the Northeast. Indeed, by the late 1970s the United States had "for the first time moved to the first rank in world terms in almost every major art form."⁴

Concomitantly, the public constituency reached by artists and arts institutions also "boomed." Theater audiences grew from 4 million to 13 million, opera attendance increased from 2.5 million to 11 million, and the dance audience exploded from 1.5 million to 16 million.⁵ Public support grew in other ways as well. Between 1970 and 1978, state appropriations for the arts rose by over 900 percent. Corporate contributions quintupled, from \$40 million to \$210 million, and foundation support doubled, from \$114 million to \$289 million.⁶ By 1980 a nationwide Harris poll discovered that 81 percent of the public wanted "more and better arts facilities" and that 65 percent of those surveyed would be willing to pay ten dollars more in taxes to help support arts activities.⁷

Finally, the wariness with which artists and politicians historically had regarded one another was largely dispelled. Assessing the situation in early 1969, the first NEA chairman, Roger Stevens, announced that "we've killed the bugaboo of government control of the arts."⁸ In fact, only the first steps had been taken toward assuaging the artist's mistrust of government support. By 1974 this change had progressed to the point where Deputy NEA Chairman Michael Straight could report that artists "no longer seem threatened" by "the danger that government interference could lead to the stifling of creativity or to political control." Indeed, artists and arts administrators had come to regard the NEA as a source

of "hope and encouragement" and credited government funding with having "greatly raised the self-appreciation and self-understanding of artists throughout the country."⁹

Among politicians, attitudes had changed and support had grown. A core group of strategically positioned, bipartisan congressional supporters had been cultivated, and advocates at the state level had been mobilized around the establishment and annual legislative funding of state arts councils. In 1977, House majority whip John Brademas declared the arts to be "politically saleable."¹⁰ Thus, within a decade, congressional opinion had changed from viewing federal support for the arts as a risky political venture to seeing it as a legitimate and effective method of fostering the arts in America.

The improvement in the stature, vitality, and popularity of art in America in the two decades since the establishment of the NEA is incontrovertible. Equally obvious is the fact that the NEA played an important part in promoting and sustaining this development. Crucial to this performance was the leadership of Nancy Hanks. A brief listing of her most significant achievements would include the following:

1. The legitimization of the "principle of public funding of the arts in Congress and with the artists, themselves."¹¹ Furthermore, she gave concrete shape to this abstract principle in the form of a partnership composed of the government and private sectors; of federal, state, and local agencies; of individuals and institutions—all joined in collaborative support of the arts.

2. The establishment of the endowment as a leader of the arts constituency. Indeed, Hanks helped to coalesce the diverse arts interests into a genuine artistic community and then to mobilize it into an influential political constituency.

3. The institutionalization of the agency and the routinization of its procedures and programs instead of continuing the "rather improvised personal arbitrary decisions of the (former) Chairman and of the then program directors."¹²

To appreciate how Nancy Hanks achieved these results requires an understanding of the political and bureaucratic resources and constraints with which she had to work; of her personality, style, and experience; and of the environmental context in which she operated. In other words, one must analyze and assess the entrepreneurial leadership of the woman who took a small agency commissioned to implement a politically risky and ambiguous federal arts policy and transformed it into a bureaucratic and political success presiding over a legitimate policy of catalyzing an effective public-private partnership of support for the arts.

The Context and Legacy: Hanks Takes Office

When she was confirmed in October 1969 as the second chairman of the NEA, Nancy Hanks assumed the leadership of a nascent organization that was riding a tide of political, economic, social, and aesthetic change. That wave carried both opportunities and risks, just as the legacy of the young agency presented both resources and constraints.

Throughout the 1960s the vitality and quality of the arts in America were starting to surge, while the financial and institutional stability of arts institutions remained precarious. The postwar period had given rise to an American citizenry that was increasingly better educated, prosperous, and leisured—and therefore more likely to become arts consumers. Concurrently, international conflict between East and West had extended beyond the military, diplomatic, and economic dimensions to include a competition between ideologies, ideas, and cultures.¹³ In the cold-war struggle for the minds and souls of the world's people, the arts had come to be a key component of public diplomacy. Excellence in the arts was held to be an indication of the virtues of democratic civilization as well as a refutation of the charge that the United States had an excessively materialistic culture devoid of an appreciation of things intellectual and aesthetic.

These conditions provided millions of Americans with both a desire and an opportunity to join the arts audience. Furthermore, President John Kennedy's interest in the arts (as seen in the inclusion of artists in his inaugural ceremonies and in White House soirees, which featured the performance of artists such as Pablo Casals) seemed to galvanize many to explore this new frontier. Museums and performing arts institutions of all types began to attract such large audiences that they often needed to expand seasons or extend hours to accommodate the crowds. Such popularity was, however, a mixed blessing, since the costs of expansion for such labor-intensive, expensive activities were great, while financial resources were limited and unpredictable.

Indeed, the financial state of the arts in America was undergoing a dramatic change. Many of the most prestigious arts institutions had outgrown the patronage capabilities of individual supporters. While foundation funds were available—and crucial—in support of both artistic growth and artistic proliferation, they too would soon be inadequate. Corporate philanthropy, so plentiful in the 1980s, was meager, and only a minuscule amount went to the arts and humanities. In 1969, government support was also miserly: the federal government contributed \$8.5 million thru the NEA, all state governments combined added another \$4–6 million, and municipal governments (when they did anything) generally helped to support only the local museum.

Thus, some sources of support were insufficient to meet a growing need, while others held only a promise of providing greater assistance in the future. Meanwhile, arts organizations also confronted limits upon the amount of additional income they might earn from raising prices for fear that they might discourage actual as well as potential arts consumers if tickets became too costly.

Throughout the 1960s, evidence was mounting that the arts were in financial trouble. The unprecedented 1961 musicians' strike of the Metropolitan Opera was perhaps the first harbinger of these impending problems. The second half of the decade saw the release of a number of prestigious foundation reports that sought to examine the issue and to raise the level of public concern. In 1965 a Rockefeller Brothers Fund report, *The Performing Arts: Problems and Prospects*, identified a host of problems facing the live, professional, performing arts; discussed the shifting patterns of their financial support; and made recommendations for possible improvements, including a call for stronger support from the state, local, and federal governments. The following year, a Twentieth Century Fund report documented the economic dilemma of the performing arts, calling it a virtually inescapable "income-earnings gap."¹⁴ Finally, in 1968 the Belmont Report outlined similar problems facing museums. Indeed, 1969 found American art in the paradoxical position of being internationally acclaimed and domestically popular yet faced with an "economic crisis."¹⁵

In the fall of 1969 the NEA was a small, threatened, drifting agency. The National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965 had called for the establishment of an independent executive agency that would have two operating endowments—the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Each endowment was to be directed by a chairman, appointed by the president for a four-year term, subject to confirmation by the Senate. The chairman was, in turn, to consult with and be advised by a twenty-six-member National Council on the Arts (NCA), to be composed of private citizens prominently engaged in or knowledgeable about their respective disciplines. Council members were to be appointed for staggered six-year terms. Furthermore, the chairmen of the two endowments were to be members of and consult with a Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities, which was to include seven federal officials from other government agencies that administered projects in the arts and humanities.¹⁶

Hanks's predecessor, Roger Stevens (who had chaired the NEA since its inception), had a flamboyant, personalistic, and partisan leadership style. During the 1940s and 1950s he had pursued a career as a successful real estate developer and had also become one of Broadway's

busiest producers, backing hit plays such as *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Four-Poster*, and *The Bad Seed*. Stylistically, Stevens was a man of great personal presence who possessed a gambler's willingness to take risks but the successful speculator's knack for carefully assessing potential gambles.¹⁷ Politically, he had first become active as a volunteer for Adlai Stevenson in 1952; four years later he served as finance committee chairman for the Democratic National Committee during Stevenson's second run against the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket. In September 1961, President Kennedy appointed Stevens to the board of trustees for the development of a national cultural center. In 1964, Congress named the proposed center the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and appropriated \$15.5 million toward its completion; Stevens became chairman of the board, a position he still occupies. With such combined partisan and artistic credentials, it was perhaps natural that LBJ should turn to Stevens to pilot the administration's efforts to establish, first, a national advisory council on the arts and, eventually, the NEA. Thus, in 1964 Stevens also became special assistant to the president on the arts. When a National Council on the Arts was created as a preliminary step toward an arts funding agency, Stevens was tapped, in February 1965, to become its first chairman. Six months later this carried him into the chairmanship of the newly created NEA, where, for a while, he continued to wear all three hats.

As head of the agency, Stevens had a philosophy of "not believing in democracy—that is, giving everybody a little money. Instead he tried to create an impact where a small sum could make a difference." He also worked closely with the NCA, which during the earliest years functioned virtually as NEA staff, originating project ideas and carefully reviewing individual grants. For both philosophical and practical reasons, the initial emphases of the agency were grants to individuals, rescue grants to a few arts institutions, experimental/developmental projects, and demonstration programs in arts education.¹⁸

For example, the very first award given by the NEA was an emergency grant of \$100,000 to the American Ballet Theatre, for which the agency was applauded as having "saved a national treasure."¹⁹ Another \$250,000 was added to help sponsor a national tour by the company. Individual grants were given to choreographers, as fellowships to arts school graduates, as sabbaticals for teaching artists, and as distinguished service awards to poets, critics, and composers. The first matching grant for a public sculpture went to Grand Rapids, Michigan, to help commission Alexander Calder's *La Grande Vitesse*. Experimental "laboratory theatres" were started as pilot projects in New Orleans and Providence. A 1967 grant of \$1.3 million was the first of many awarded toward the development of an American Film Institute for the preser-

vation and cultivation of the nation's cultural resources in film. An artists-in-the-schools program was begun and collaborative funding for its expansion secured. Grants in support of arts programming on educational television and radio were also made. Finally, an emergency program directed at minority groups was carried out in sixteen cities as the Inner City Arts Program, one small part of a larger administration effort to "cool down" the inner cities that had flared into riots during the summers of the late 1960s.

Yet, throughout most of Stevens's tenure the agency seemed stalled at an appropriations level too low to allow it to do much more than sponsor demonstrations or make an occasional rescue grant. After a 1966 start-up appropriation of \$2.5 million, the budget averaged approximately \$8 million for each of the next three years. For FY 1970, an incremental increase of 7 percent raised the budget slightly, to \$9 million. Clearly, such resources were quite insufficient if the NEA was to have any discernible national impact upon the arts. Nor could the agency do much to alleviate the growing economic crisis in the arts with a mere \$9 million, when the 1968/69 gross deficit for professional nonprofit theatre, opera, dance, and symphony orchestras was expected to be nearly \$100 million.²⁰

Politically, congressional support for the arts was uncertain and not fully bipartisan. During reauthorization hearings in 1968, considerable criticism had focused on grants made to individual artists. Indeed, the House voted to revoke the agency's authority to award such grants; this was, however, amended in conference to allow for grants to persons of "exceptional talent." Furthermore, suggested authorization figures varied widely throughout congressional debate that year, indicating that little legislative consensus existed concerning the agency.²¹

In general, liberal Democrats were more likely to support the NEA than were Republicans, with notable exceptions such as Senator Jacob Javits (R-N.Y.). Similarly, the Democratic party had gone on record in its 1964 platform as supporting the agency and the principle of federal support for the arts, while the Republican platform had made no mention of the subject.²²

Thus, the future of the agency under the Republican administration that would take office in January 1969 seemed questionable. The fate of Roger Stevens, however, was clear. President Nixon certainly did not want to reappoint a prominent Democrat, particularly one who had raised funds for Democratic candidates who had campaigned against Nixon himself. Presidential assistant Leonard Garment was given the task of finding a suitable replacement—a task that subsequently stretched over many months.

Stevens's term at the NEA expired in March 1969, at which time

his deputy of less than a year, Douglas MacAgy, assumed acting command. During the next six months the agency drifted. A number of staff members resigned, as did three members of the NCA. Congress was reluctant to appropriate funds for an agency without a chairman. Many possible appointees were considered, but each proved to be either unavailable or unacceptable to key congressmen or senators. Indeed, one observer noted that the position seemed to require "a political virgin who can produce political results."²³ Nancy Hanks proved to be just the person who could meet those specifications.

Formative Experiences and an Emergent Administrative Style

In naming Nancy Hanks to become the second chairman of the NEA, President Nixon chose neither an artist nor a politician. While Hanks was "almost . . . a lifelong Republican,"²⁴ she had not been involved in partisan electoral politics. Although she was not a stranger to Washington when she assumed direction of the endowment, neither was she a member of the Washington establishment or even an "in-and-outer." Although she had a long association with the Rockefeller brothers (especially Nelson), they were not her mentors, nor was she their protege. Born in Florida to Texan parents, she attended high school in New Jersey, earned a bachelor's degree in political science at Duke University in North Carolina (1949), and spent a summer in Colorado and another at Oxford. A single, attractive, middle-aged woman who combined femininity with a sense of traditional propriety, Hanks became one of only a handful of female federal executives, but she was no feminist.

Hanks had been a philanthropic administrator concerned with the arts, but she was neither an artist, an arts patron, nor even an arts administrator. Aesthetically eclectic, she was an aficionado of no specific art form or style, but rather was "open to sampling and enjoying everything."²⁵ Her only personal artistic endeavor was the making of needle-point typewriter covers. In a field filled with imposing, dramatic, public personae, she was a charming, down-to-earth, and very private person. A workaholic who paid meticulous attention to detail, Hanks was neither an artful writer nor a captivating formal speaker. In describing her own particular talent, she once said: "My one art is budgeting. I'm an administrator and a good listener . . . I'm creative in putting a program into a political context."²⁶ Thus, pre-NEA, Nancy Hanks was on the margins—politically, artistically, and even socially—just as the agency itself was. In moving the endowment to the center of the arts world and establishing its social and political support, she also found her particular niche. Thus Hanks's personal journey from marginality

to leadership paralleled the developmental transformation she wrought for the NEA.

In the early 1950s, Hanks had come to work for Nelson Rockefeller in Washington, and from the mid-1950s through most of the 1960s the Rockefeller connection had carried her to the fringes of the art world.²⁷ At the Rockefeller Brothers Fund she coordinated the pathbreaking and influential study *The Performing Arts: Problems and Prospects*, which helped to build support for the creation of the NEA. This project accorded Hanks a broad overview of the major issues and personalities in the worlds of the theatre, dance, opera, and symphonic music. Later, she served as a member of the search committee for a new director for the Museum of Modern Art, in the process becoming acquainted with virtually every important figure in American museums. Then, in 1968, as a member of the Belmont Committee, she became familiar with the conditions, needs, and possible solutions to the critical problems then confronting museums.

Finally, in 1969 she was named president of the Associated Councils of the Arts (ACA), a diverse, nonprofit membership association dedicated to the support and development of the arts in the United States and Canada. This organization included individuals involved in state and regional arts activities, as philanthropic and corporate patrons of the arts, as artists and arts administrators as well as representatives of unions, public arts officials, and public-opinion pollster Louis Harris.²⁸

The cumulative effect of this record was to make Hanks a generalist who was also an "authority on the arts"; "politically skillful" but not a politician; and familiar with most of the leading artistic individuals and institutions but taking no side or holding no strong opinions in the wars of taste, style, and school that sweep the arts.²⁹ While many individuals might have been more expert in a particular art form, few of these would have had as wide a range of artistic experience or so catholic tastes. While others might have been more partisanly worthy, they would also have been likely to be partisanly suspect. Thus, Hanks had the advantage of many relevant assets for the job but few distinct liabilities or opponents.

She had also acquired various working habits and operational skills that proved to be useful in piloting the agency into favorable straits. First, she had been thoroughly schooled in the consultative, networking style of foundation work. Her work as the coordinator of special projects for the Rockefeller Brothers Fund had involved the forming of expert panels, coordinating advisory committee decisions, integrating diverse viewpoints, and distilling bountiful information and opinion into an acceptable and practical product. Furthermore, in working for the Rock-

efellers, she had worked with individuals who had the means, methods, and procedures to implement their projects. Hence, much of Hanks's administrative perspective was dominated by a sense of the possible rather than a concern with obstacles. She "believed that there wasn't anything that couldn't be done." Indeed, one of her favorite statements to staff members was, "I'm sure you'll find a way."³⁰ These experiences and the skills they sharpened were directly transferred to her performance at the NEA.

As a matter of law, the NEA chairman has to consult with an advisory committee (the NCA), just as the Rockefeller Brothers Fund special projects coordinator had had to. Hanks herself maintained that "I never attempt to make statements that are not based on Council thinking."³¹ Under her direction, the NEA came to rely increasingly upon panels of experts to review applications and to maintain close contact with the artistic community. Hanks would frequently sit in on panels meetings and just listen. She would even occasionally have her deputy chair the quarterly NCA meetings so that she could pay closer attention to the views being discussed. Throughout, as Lawrence Reger, her former director of planning and management, observed, she showed "an uncanny ability to take into account incredible amounts [and] variety of opinion and really react to them in what ultimately works out to be the best way. She synthesizes and she sympathizes." In fact, Janet Gracey, one of her former assistants, thought that part of Hanks's charm stemmed from her ability to make others feel "that when she listened to you, you had absolutely her full attention."³²

As an administrative assistant to the Rockefellers, Hanks had been accustomed to working behind the scenes and leaving the spotlight to others. When this apparent modesty was combined with her equally apparent ambition to do the best job possible at the NEA rather than to treat it as merely a stepping stone to other opportunities, she quite readily and genuinely gave others much of the public credit for designing and furthering federal arts policy.

No doubt Hanks's tendency to be a very private person had been reinforced during her years as an unacclaimed staff assistant. Because she did not crave the limelight, she was perhaps more than willing to share credit and praise for accomplishments with others. Such generosity not only helped her to win political friends and bureaucratic loyalists but, in the long run, may have accorded her some insulation from the inevitable criticism that occurs in any policy arena.

First and foremost among those whom Hanks applauded was the president himself. For example, she praised President Nixon's announcement that "one of the important goals of my Administration is

the further advance in the cultural development of our nation."³³ Persistently, she gave the president credit for being the originator and motivator of expanding federal support for the arts and for seeking to make the arts more available to more Americans, particularly youths and minorities. When asked by reporters how she had gotten the president to "go along" with the first proposal for a major increase in the agency's budget, she had replied: "He was not dragged. . . . On the contrary he couldn't have been more enthusiastic . . . he asked me to develop an effective program and he agrees that we can be effective if we can get this money." The next year's request for another funding increase found Miss Hanks "ecstatic" at the President's decision."³⁴

Furthermore, by crediting the president as the pacesetter of federal arts policy, Hanks helped President Nixon get some of the best press of his administration. For example, a 1971 *New York Times* article praised Nixon for making "the most solid contribution to the arts of any President since FDR"; and the *Washington Post* speculated in 1972 that Nixon might "go down in history as the nation's most enlightened presidential patron of governmental architecture and design as well as a great patron of the arts." Or as political columnist David Broder remarked, one welcome relief from "the wretched Watergate business" was the administration's record on the NEA—an area where President Nixon had "been superb . . . making first class appointments and strongly backing increased funds for the program."³⁵

Hanks was also willing to share the role of agency spokesman with her deputy chairman, Michael Straight. This too generated a number of advantages. As a member of the Whitney family as well as former editor and owner of *The New Republic*, Straight was obviously well-connected and had virtually inherited an interest in the arts. Indeed, Straight himself had been a possible candidate for the NEA chairmanship, but as a liberal Democrat, he was not wholly acceptable as a replacement for that other liberal Democrat, Roger Stevens. It was, however, agreeable to Hanks, Straight, and Garment (speaking for President Nixon) that Straight assume the second place at the NEA, a position he held until Hanks's successor was confirmed in November of 1977. In accepting Straight as her deputy, Hanks made an unmistakable statement about the nonpartisan character of federal arts support and at the same time improved her ability to cultivate bipartisan support for the agency. Straight was also a charming and proficient public speaker, always ready with an illustrative tale or a notable quotation citing anyone from Aeschylus to Thomas Wolfe. In contrast, Hanks was uncomfortable as a public speaker, being at her best in small or informal settings instead. Therefore, Hanks could and did delegate many of the

public address tasks to Straight. As a result, the agency gained not one but two artful and persuasive spokesmen, each skilled at a different type of communication.

A final significant factor in setting Hanks's administrative style can be found in the relatively small, intimate, and highly personalistic settings in which she had gained her pre-NEA experience. Such environments prevailed when she was with Nelson Rockefeller at the President's Advisory Committee on Government Organization or at the White House staff, as well as in the philanthropic world and in the arts. Everyone knew everyone else in these circles. Influence was as likely to flow from personality, access, and information as from formal position and tangible power. Such environments both required and responded to extensive networking, proficiency in consensus management and coalition building, social and informal as well as authoritative consultation and follow through, and personalized management. All these habits were appropriate to the administration of federal arts policy in the 1970s and, indeed, characterized Nancy Hanks's style as chairman of the NEA.

Among other qualities, one can clearly see her reliance on a personal touch at both the most powerful and the most clerical of levels. In dealing with the administration, Hanks had impressive and direct personal access to key actors: to presidential assistant Leonard Garment and, through him, to the president and to the directors of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).³⁶ She would also reinforce these ties through personal service, such as helping Tricia Nixon host a White House pumpkin-carving contest or getting a monumental modern sculpture that the president disliked moved from the lawn of the Corcoran Gallery.³⁷ Similarly, Straight bought a box at Kennedy Center and each Tuesday night invited two congressmen and their wives to dinner and a concert.³⁸

At the bureaucratic level, Hanks would go out of her way to visit even the secretarial pool and to get to know all of the staff at the NEA. This very personal networking underpinned Hanks's ability to get things done individually and also contributed to her organization's competence and cohesion. The fact that "she never lost contact with anybody" fostered a returned loyalty from her associates and enhanced her ability to call upon many people for assistance when she needed it. Furthermore, she gave her staff "a lot of authority," expected them to be "generalists" with a shared "approach to problem solving," and kept them well informed about what was happening and what was pending. As earlier at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, she expected every person on her staff to "know exactly what was going on and be able to pick up the phone and speak intelligently about anything."³⁹ Such a staff system not only gave the impression of her organization's competence but fos-

tered both internal and external communication by minimizing the bureaucratic red tape anyone encountered. Finally, such a staff, since it was also loyal, was likely to be able to head off, if not anticipate and avoid, problems at an early stage.

Hanks also paid attention to detail, including the apparently trivial and the superficially symbolic. For example, she concerned herself with the appearance of the staff coffee room and the design and use of a new logo for the agency.⁴⁰ Her command of specifics derived, in part, from meticulous preparation. One former associate recalled that Hanks "never went into a meeting without knowing the outcome that she wanted" or "without being aware of everyone's view on the subject" and having taken steps to try to defuse "troublemakers" "so that things didn't get out of hand at (the) meeting." Such a personalized and detailed administrative style was time-consuming—so much so that "much of her social side was business," and she was "inclined to work herself into exhaustion."⁴¹ But it also paid off in the long run. It allowed her to assemble and cultivate a capable, stable, loyal staff—the core of which remains close-knit and protective of Hanks to this day. It also contributed to the development of a distinct and positive image for the young agency.

Entrepreneurial Strategies

Some elements of Nancy Hanks's style have begun to emerge from the preceding section. A full discussion of her administrative strategies and record could be expanded into a virtual history of the endowment and of arts policy during the 1970s. Such comprehensive treatment is, however, inappropriate for this essay. Instead, I have chosen to highlight some of the major tactics she employed in her general strategy of bureaucratic entrepreneurship. As used here, *strategy* is regarded as the art of using various types of resources to afford the maximum support and the most advantageous conditions for the pursuit of articulated policy ends. *Tactics* are means used to achieve strategic ends.

It is not unusual to find explications of strategy in the annals of battlefield conflict or of athletic team competition. On the other hand, the statement of a strategy for public policy, complete with an articulation of general goals, methods for securing adequate resources, project programs for implementation, and an assessment of political feasibility, is quite rare. Yet, just such a master plan for federal arts policy was drafted by Nancy Hanks and endorsed by President Nixon at the very beginning of her tenure as chairman of the NEA.⁴² Indeed, Hanks had made basic agreement upon the general outlines of the plan a precondition for her acceptance of the appointment.⁴³

The overall strategy, laid out in the October 1969 memo, entailed

presidential support for the reauthorization of the NEA, a commitment to propose substantial budget increases for the next three to four years, and a promise to work for the congressional appropriation of such increases. This long-term financial growth strategy would allow the agency to develop a three-pronged artistic policy aimed at

1. *cultural resources development*—designed to assist primarily the “major nonprofit institutions of the traditional arts (theatre, dance, opera, orchestras, museums)”;
2. *availability of artistic resources*—designed to encourage the “wider distribution of artistic resources throughout the nation”; and
3. *advancement of our cultural legacy*—intended to “encourage new opportunities for audience and artist alike.”⁴⁴

The pursuit of this strategy would require clear and sustained White House support, the strengthening of congressional and arts constituency support, and the successful implementation of a number of new NEA grant-awarding programs. To obtain and retain these strategic objectives, Hanks employed a repertoire of tactics. Four of the most important were:

1. Establishing momentum quickly
2. Building a capable, committed, stable administrative staff
3. Securing substantial increases in agency resources, both financially and politically, through
 - a. the sequential advancement of new rationales for obtaining “synoptic” budget increases;⁴⁵ and
 - b. extensive efforts to mobilize constituency support and to cultivate bureaucratic and political coalition allies.
4. Adopting pretested program initiatives

Each of these tactics is described briefly in the succeeding subsections.

Establishing Momentum Quickly

Hanks was confirmed as chairman of the NEA on 2 October 1969. By the end of 1969—a mere three months after assuming office—Hanks had already begun to move federal support for the arts into a new and more ambitious phase. Not only had she taken command of the agency but she had arranged to move it into new and larger quarters.⁴⁶ Furthermore, she had established a firm working alliance with presidential assistant Leonard Garment, who would serve as an arts advocate within the White House as well as a communications link to the president and to OMB. Together, she and Garment had provided the president with extensive arts policy proposals that called for an immediate doubling of the budget for the arts and humanities endowments.⁴⁷ These proposals

argued that this would be an extremely cost-effective way for the administration to demonstrate dramatically “its commitment to ‘reordering national priorities,’ ” that the proposed increase was adequate to achieve a discernible impact upon the financial problems of arts institutions, that this initiative would “be a high impact move among opinion leaders,” and that a strong constituency was “waiting in the wings” and ready to “enthusiastically endorse” such a policy. Furthermore, Hanks and her NEA staff had informally ascertained that key bipartisan congressional actors were ready to back such a budget proposal without seeking any major revisions.⁴⁸ In other words, a full “game plan” was presented to President Nixon for his approval and was ready to be put into action. The low budgetary cost but high political yield of the plan was undeniably appealing to Nixon. He not only acquiesced but gave the initiative a full presidential send-off—complete with a December Special Message to Congress on the arts and humanities and the inclusion of a proposal to nearly double the endowments’ fund in the budget that he was sending to Congress the following January.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, Hanks was helping to organize a campaign among the arts community in support of the president’s proposal. First, she enlisted the assistance of the American Symphony Orchestra League in getting a letter and telegram wave started.⁵⁰ Throughout the spring, as appropriations hearings proceeded, persistent efforts to raise public and official consciousness regarding the imperiled state of U.S. cultural institutions, especially orchestras, continued. Major metropolitan newspapers ran stories about the problems of orchestras. The National Symphony Orchestra (NSO), in Washington, seemed to epitomize the plight of orchestras nationwide, as it teetered on the brink of insolvency and President Nixon himself appealed to corporate representatives to support the NSO’s fund-raising drive.⁵¹ Congressional testimony by orchestra representatives argued that they were “starving” for funds. Endowment grants announced in March tried to assist those orchestras in the most acute crises but primarily served to illustrate the inadequacy of current governmental support.⁵²

In the end, this orchestrated lobbying campaign was effective. On 20 May 1970 the Senate approved a combined NEA/NEH appropriation of \$40 million, or double their current budgets. The House followed suit on 30 June with a strong, bipartisan vote of 262 to 78, thus “offering strong endorsement of the validity and continuity of Federal support on the arts and humanities.”⁵³ Soon thereafter, orchestras began to reap the rewards for their political support, as the agency announced the award of more than twice as much money to nearly three times as many orchestras as had been possible under the previous budget.⁵⁴

This first “battle of the budget” illustrates a number of ingredients

that would be used repeatedly by Hanks to leverage major increases in the budget for her agency. These were to

1. focus on one or two distinct issues to justify a large-scale funding increase;
2. link these primary issues to particular segments of the arts constituency capable of mobilizing effective lobbying effort with Congress;
3. offer suggestions of other possible benefits and new programs that more funding might also support;
4. follow a distributive policy strategy of offering more benefits to all arts constituents in reward for lobbying efforts and their consequent increase in appropriations (avoiding a redistributive strategy that would reward some constituents only at a cost to others);
5. secure a firm OMB commitment to, and publicly involve the president in, support of budget increases;
6. build a bipartisan congressional coalition in support of the proposed budget increase; and
7. deliver immediate "rewards" to the arts constituency in the form of more and bigger grants once increased appropriations have been obtained.

Building a Capable, Committed, Stable Administrative Staff

To sustain the initial momentum for rapid programmatic and budgetary expansion, as well as to preside over the artistic diversification of the NEA, it was necessary for Hanks to both expand and stabilize agency staff.⁵⁵ Furthermore, since she had inherited some agency personnel from her predecessor, she needed to cultivate the loyalty of the staff and to instill it with an esprit de corps. These personnel matters involved two interrelated functions: recruiting "good" staff and promoting staff cohesion.

Hanks brought to these tasks an acquaintance with a large pool of prospective appointees as well as experience in putting together specialized staffs and advisory boards gained at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Hanks's very broad network of acquaintances was further extended at the NEA by consultation with NCA members and through the agency's peer-review panels. Locating prospective appointees who were capable and committed thus posed few problems for Hanks. Furthermore, such networking was an administrative habit she had honed to a fine art in the foundation world. As a result, "relations between staff, panel, and council were extremely warm . . . [characterized by] a sense of camaraderie and respect."⁵⁶

In other ways, Hanks's task was facilitated by the character of the

agency and staff she inherited as well as by the opportunities she had to hire new personnel. Indeed, the staff she inherited presented less of a problem than might have been expected. Stevens had employed a total staff of no more than three dozen people. By the end of Hanks's first term as chairman (1973) agency personnel had nearly quadrupled, to about 120. By the end of her tenure the staff numbered over 215. Thus, Hanks had so much opportunity to increase personnel that "her" employees naturally outnumbered any that she had inherited. Since she made a point of getting to know "everybody on the staff" and of paying "particular attention to the people in positions least likely to get attention from top management,"⁵⁷ she cultivated the loyalty of staff at all levels, among both the new and the inherited staff.

Furthermore, during the six-month interregnum between the expiration of Stevens's term and the confirmation of Hanks, a number of program directors had resigned and were replaced by the then acting chairman. Thus, a number of the key staff Hanks inherited had not actually worked with her predecessor. By keeping these individuals on, at least for a reasonable transition period, Hanks avoided the disruption and inefficiency entailed in a wholesale restaffing and earned for herself the good will of most of the incumbent staff. In many cases she fully integrated continuing program directors into her administration. For example, the directors of the education, state, music, theatre, and visual arts programs, although appointed before Hanks took office, retained their positions for most of her tenure.

Hanks also had many opportunities to make new appointments, both programmatic and administrative. In some instances, as the agency initiated new programs, more and new personnel were required. Thus, as new programs for museums and expansion arts were established, new directors for these programs were appointed. In other cases, as the activities of the programs in architecture and design, literature, and public media diversified, their directors were replaced by new appointees. Thus by 1971/72, Hanks had put her stamp on all of the program directors.

Program directors were not only dependable but artistically informed and, in a number of cases, either journalistically or politically experienced as well. For example, Brian O'Doherty was editor of *Art in America* for three years concurrently with his service as head of the NEA Visual Arts Program, and Chloe Aaron, head of the Public Media Program, was also a senior editor of *Videorecord World*. Such links to cultural publications no doubt helped to build the endowment's image both among the general public and in the art world. Others, such as Leonard Randolph of the Literature Program, had had prior experience as congressional administrative assistants. Still others, such as Vantile

Whitfield (Expansion Arts), from the Performing Arts Society of Los Angeles, or Ralph Rizzolo (assistant music director), from the American Symphony Orchestra League, represented links to major arts institutions and constituency groups.

Administrative personnel followed a similar pattern. There were a few key carry-overs (such as Ana Steele, who became director of budget and research) and call-backs (for example, Fannie Taylor, who had been music director in the late 1960s and was recalled in 1972 to head the new public information office, and Livingston Biddle, who had been Stevens's deputy chairman and returned in 1975 to serve as congressional liaison). Meanwhile, many of the newcomers had valuable contacts or experiences; for example, press assistant Florence Lowe had been a news service correspondent, and executive assistant John Clark and evaluation director Charles Kirk had both been policy analysts at OMB.

Thus, Hanks's personnel selections were generally respected, loyal, and multitalented. It should be noted, however, that in relative terms, the proliferation of directoral staff was greater on the administrative side than on the programmatic. In other words, as the size and complexity of the agency grew, the need for more numerous and more functionally specialized administrative staff became obvious. New positions were created or split off from existing ones. For example, both the offices of budget and research and of planning and management were split into four separate offices, with the former director of budget and research taking over planning and the directorship of management being upgraded to the level of assistant chairman. New offices for evaluation, program information, and employee orientation were also created.

Despite these many changes, staff, once appointed, tended to remain fairly stable even though titles and responsibilities were likely to vary with periodic programmatic evolution and administrative restructurings. Indeed, during Hanks's chairmanship the NEA underwent a classic phase of bureaucratization—that is, it became increasingly specialized in its division of labor and progressively routinized. Clearly, the recruitment and molding of such a capable and committed staff not only enhanced the agency's operational capabilities but extended and complimented Hanks's political and programmatic capacities.

Securing Substantial Increases in Agency Resources, Both Financially and Politically

Hanks's initial experience in establishing momentum for the agency and her leadership of the agency contained many of the tactical elements that she would use repeatedly to support and accomplish the growth of the NEA. Fundamental to this expansion was the need to obtain greater

budgetary resources, which in turn would underwrite programmatic and staff expansion. Simultaneously, increased funds would become both an instrument of constituency service and an incentive for the mobilization of political support and the attraction of coalition allies. A key to the successful pursuit of additional resources was the advancement of a series of rationales that would justify the need for such increases while also attracting sufficient political support to secure them.

During the congressional hearings in 1970, alleviating the financial crisis of American artistic institutions, particularly orchestras, was the primary rationale Hanks put forward for increasing the NEA budget from \$9 million to \$16 million.⁵⁸ With this 81 percent increase, the endowment could begin to pursue the "president's" tripartite arts policy and could offer some assistance to the most hard-pressed of the major cultural institutions.

Similarly, in 1971, the economic crisis of the arts was the key justification in seeking to boost the budget from \$16 million to \$31 million, although the list of those explicitly identified as endangered was expanded. If agency funds were doubled (as proposed), Hanks argued, the NEA could assist more orchestras in more states. Also, other musical organizations—opera companies and choral groups—would receive "substantial assistance for the first time."⁵⁹ Furthermore, the \$1 million pilot program for the support of museums could be expanded to \$4 million. Since orchestras and museums had the most numerous, most widely distributed, and best organized constituencies in the arts, they could mount an extensive lobbying effort in support of these potential benefits. Opera companies, while less numerous, could nonetheless call upon prestigious and influential board members to carry their case to federal legislators.

While these major institutional arts communities carried the brunt of the persuasive effort, other interests were also wooed with promises of new or expanded arts programs. For example, minorities were courted through the announced intention to broaden support for jazz projects and to make a special effort to aid the artistic development of inner-city-, neighborhood-, and minority-based cultural groups. In addition, the states—most of which had, by then, established state arts councils and were therefore receiving annual grants-in-aid from the NEA—were enticed by the prospect of increasing their annual grants from \$75,000 to \$100,000 each, for a total of \$5.5 million, if the proposed budget increases were approved by Congress. Meanwhile, programs in support of dance, theatre, literature, film, architecture, and folk arts would all continue and, in many cases, be expanded. Thus, the entire arts community stood to benefit if the NEA's proposed budget was approved. Because of this prospective general benefit, the arts pulled together as

never before.⁶⁰ Indeed, it was said that "few requests for money for a Government agency have been endorsed by so many constituents in letters, telegrams, telephone calls, and personal visits."⁶¹

Once again, the president was active in spearheading the campaign for an expanded federal arts policy. Not only did President Nixon again submit a request for greatly increased funds to Congress but he made his support clear both externally and internally. Publicly, he addressed a meeting of over five hundred representatives of state and territorial arts councils gathered in Washington for the annual conference of the Associated Councils of the Arts. He was warmly received, and, in turn, he treated the delegates to a White House tour and a reception hosted by Mrs. Nixon. The delegates then dispersed to visit their individual congressmen to urge them to support the president's proposed budget. Internally, the president issued a memorandum to all federal agency heads requesting that they assess both how their agencies "can most vigorously assist the arts and artists" and "how the arts and artists can be of help to your agency and to its programs."⁶² Hanks, as chairman of the NEA, was to coordinate responses to this call and present a report and recommendations to the president.

Following congressional approval, more and/or bigger grants were soon going out from the NEA to its deserving constituency. In August, sixteen museums in fourteen states were awarded \$10,000 each for the purchase of contemporary American art works. The following month, thirty-nine nonprofit theatres across the nation were granted a total of \$1.6 million.⁶³ By December the NEA had reached ninety-three orchestras with assistance totaling \$5 million.⁶⁴ Thus, all the ingredients of a successful budget-increasing strategy, as identified in 1970, were recombined in 1971.

In subsequent years Hanks would continue to follow this same recipe, although not always with the same degree of success. For example, in 1972 an increase from \$31 million to \$40 million for FY 1973 was propelled by a planned increase in the Expansion (minority) Arts Program and the establishment of a governmentwide Federal Design Improvement Program. Indeed, two later observers would comment that this design effort "was a good example of Nancy Hanks' success in public office based on her ability to take existing programs, activities and assignments and, by bringing them together, create new alignments and new impetus."⁶⁵

Planning and maneuvering for FY 1974 were well under way by June 1972. Hanks and her ally in the White House, Leonard Garment, launched another memo campaign to persuade the president and OMB to support a second sequence of substantial budget authorizations. The timing was affected by many elements: the pending need in 1973 to

reauthorize the agency and to set projected three-year funding levels, the ongoing 1972 presidential reelection campaign, and long-range planning for the Bicentennial. In a 6 June 1972 memorandum to OMB Director Caspar Weinberger, Garment laid out a proposal and rationale for bringing NEA's authorization up to \$200 million by FY 1976. He pointed out that "the President's program of financial support for the arts has been one of the domestic success stories of this Administration." Further, he noted that this policy was "popular not only with Republican elite types, but with people in both political parties and generally with the public, including all economic and racial groups." Garment also argued that strategically, the Bicentennial provided an excellent occasion to put forth a "new Presidential arts initiative" and that the announcement of such an intention should be made so "as to permit its inclusion in the Republican Platform."⁶⁶

Similarly, while suggesting that "we all lie low until after the election" and "most assuredly not let . . . the Arts Endowment get into politics," Hanks was working behind the scenes with Weinberger and Garment as well as the arts community to use the Bicentennial as the necessary leverage for a new three-year series of major funding increases. As in 1969, she provided evidence of waiting-in-the-wings lobbying support, suggested tactics to avoid criticism on possibly sensitive issues, and even suggested language the president might want to use in official or press statements.⁶⁷

This campaign was successful again—but not completely so. President Nixon did recommend doubling the NEA's funds for FY 1974, proposing a budget of \$80 million and approving three-year authorization levels that would bring the agency up to \$200 million by 1976. The arts community rallied behind the president, praising the proposal as "wonderful" and the president for moving "Federal aid for the arts toward levels that will be truly effective." Three months later, the Senate approved a bill authorizing a total of \$160 million for the NEA and NEH combined for FY 1974, \$280 for FY 1975, and \$400 million for FY 1976. Although the vote was a solid 76 to 14, it was nonetheless accompanied by strenuous objections to such increases when other domestic programs were being severely cut. Senator John McClellan, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, called the increase "clearly out of line," and Senator William Proxmire called it "unconscionable."⁶⁸

In the next few months, the House voted to authorize the full budget sought by the president, but then its Appropriations Committee cut back the two endowments to a combined total of \$106 (rather than \$160) million, while shifting money to other programs covered by the Interior Affairs appropriations bill. Chairman Julia Butler Hansen called the

reduction in the proposed budget for the arts and humanities "one of the most difficult decisions" her subcommittee had had to make and pointed out that the agency budgets would still receive a healthy increase.⁶⁹ Certainly, this 37 percent raise to \$64.5 million for the NEA was substantial, but it also marked a slowing of the dramatic growth pace of the previous three years and was an indication of a changing attitude in congressional support for the agency.⁷⁰

As the FY 1975 budget was being formulated and debated, the general strategy unraveled for reasons largely beyond Hanks's control. The expanding Watergate investigations and impeachment proceedings preoccupied the president and his counselors; hence, Hanks's friends in the White House had little time or concern to spare for the fate of the arts endowment. In August 1974, Nixon resigned from office and was succeeded by Gerald Ford. In addition, Hanks suffered the loss of her father, to whom she had been quite close. Soon thereafter, in the spring of 1974, Hanks fell seriously ill and was hospitalized with pleurisy aggravated by near exhaustion. Indeed, this episode probably marked the recurrence of an old health problem that would eventually lead to her death from cancer. Despite these disruptions, the agency managed to secure an additional \$15 million, but that only brought the total up to about half the level that had been optimistically projected in its 1973 reauthorization bill. Clearly, the agency's momentum had begun to slow, and Hanks's previously successful budget tactics had begun to encounter obstacles. Indeed, growth might have virtually ceased had Hanks not "invented" justifications for increases during her final years.

For FY 1976, Hanks used the change in the federal budget year to secure a windfall in extra funds for the NEA. Pursuant to the Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, the start of the federal fiscal year was shifted from 1 July to 1 October, with the change taking effect at the end of the 1976 "old" fiscal year. This change produced a "fifth" quarter which bridged the period from 1 July through 30 September 1976, thus serving as a transition into the "new" fiscal calendar. Hanks argued that because of the grant-award cycle at the NEA, a number of expensive programs were scheduled for this transition period, thus justifying larger than simply proportional expenditures in this quarter. With this rationale and a judicious allocation of the quarter's prospective funds to major arts interests, Hanks obtained \$33.9 million for the quarter, or \$10–13 million more than might otherwise have been forthcoming. As per the established pattern, the bulk of these funds went to those large and politically influential constituencies that had helped to lobby for the additional monies: over \$12 million was divided among the state councils; \$6 million went to orchestras; \$3 million to theatres; another \$3 million to opera companies; \$2 million to museums; \$1 mil-

lion to dance companies; and another \$1 million to the American Film Institute.⁷¹

For FY 1977, the allocation for general program funds grew only incrementally, from \$74.5 million to \$77.5 million. A new grant category was initiated—challenge grants, which required an extraordinary three-to-one match of private money for every federal dollar—designed to appeal to the major arts institutions in all disciplines. New challenge grant funds accounted for \$9 million of the overall \$12 million increase that Congress gave the agency for FY 1977. Finally, the NEA secured an additional \$29.8 million in FY 1978 by doubling challenge grant funds and by winning congressional approval for the separation of the administrative staff previously shared by the two endowments. Since this reorganization necessitated an increase in the administrative funds accorded each agency, the NEA gained an added \$3.4 million for administrative support expenses.

Obviously, the sequence of budget-increasing rationales had been a key tactic of Hanks's entrepreneurial leadership. Equally clear, however, was the implicit limitation of this tactic: premising the agency's growth upon its financial ability to reach an increasingly inclusive constituency ran the eventual risk of running out of new and organized interests that could be coopted and would pay the "initiation fee" with lobbying support. By the late 1970s, Hanks found that there were few artistic interests that she had not already engaged in her political support coalition. Furthermore, she found the very principle of cumulative budget and program expansion challenged by the zero-based budgeting philosophy of the new Carter administration.⁷²

The foregoing rationales were necessary to justify increases in financial resources for the NEA. Equally necessary, and related to these programmatic and policy proposals, was the effort to mobilize political support for these initiatives in both government and the arts community. The importance of successful coalition building within the corridors of governmental power (particularly with the Executive Office of the President) and among congressman on both sides of the aisle (especially Congresswoman Julia Butler Hansen, Congressmen John Brademas and Frank Thompson, and Senators Claiborne Pell and Jacob Javits) has already been illustrated. Another element of Hanks's coalition building involved the establishment of alliances with various bureaucratic agencies. Thus, the NEA became a partner with the Department of Education in arts education programs, as well as an adviser to the U.S. Information Agency on its artistic exchange programs and to the General Services Administration on its program of commissioning works by contemporary American artists for inclusion in new federal buildings.⁷³ While considerable evidence has been presented pertaining to

the effectiveness of Hanks's efforts to organize and mobilize the arts community into a potent political interest group, the methods she used to achieve this end still require some examination.

The organization of a diverse and diffuse arts community into a coordinated political interest group was accomplished largely through the building and/or strengthening of arts service organizations. When Congress was considering the establishment of the arts and humanities endowments in the mid-1960s, most of the public support for these measures came from the humanities constituency composed of higher-education interests, including "nearly 5 million students, several hundred thousand faculty members and colleges, universities or junior colleges in many congressional districts in the country."⁷⁴ Few elements of the artistic community were sufficiently organized at that time to be a useful lobbying force. Moreover, some of the few organized groups were unsure of the merits of a federal arts agency. For example, while representatives of artist unions such as Actors Equity and the American Federation of Musicians testified in favor of the creation of an arts agency, ASOL did not (largely because its membership was divided about the advisability of such governmental involvement in artistic matters). Similarly, many of the most prestigious arts institutions "were suspicious of politicians and felt they had more to lose than to gain from the political process."⁷⁵

Such a weak and divided constituency was insufficient to support the policy and budgetary potential of the NEA. Under Hanks's leadership, the agency became a "patron of political action," attempting to politically mobilize a constituency from the top down by encouraging groups that could "promote new legislative agendas and social values." These groups were arts service organizations—nonprofit associations that provided services (whether artistic, technical, managerial, or informational) to their respective fields and engaged in political advocacy.⁷⁶

Since 1970, the NEA has annually awarded between 5 percent and 9 percent of its combined program and treasury funds to the support of such organizations and their activities. Furthermore, the agency often accorded these organizations special treatment by exempting them from the general eligibility requirement that all applicant organizations had to have a two-year record of independent existence before they could qualify for federal assistance. Instead, the NEA not only supported relatively untried groups but also promoted the establishment of completely new organizations, including the National Opera Institute, Opera America, and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.⁷⁷ Thus, in a spiraling pattern of cause and effect, the NEA patronized the political action of a constituency which, in turn, supported the agency's

quest for more resources that could be channeled back into the very constituency the agency had helped to expand and organize.

Adopting Pretested Program Initiatives

Hanks had a reputation for emphasizing "programs that could demonstrate results."⁷⁸ A significant contributing factor to this record of programmatic effectiveness was her practice of adapting ideas that had already been piloted elsewhere. Knowledge about such experiments was constantly flowing into the agency via the program staff and NCA members, who were closely connected to the arts community and its private and state government patrons. Meanwhile, information about projects undertaken by other federal agencies or by prior administrators came to Hanks through her political communications network, as well as through many of the administrative staff who had had work experience elsewhere in the government bureaucracy.

In some cases, worthwhile projects had originally been undertaken on a large scale by foundations at a time when the endowment was relatively new and had very limited funds. For example, in 1966, when the NEA's total budget was a mere \$2.5 million, a single private source—the Ford Foundation—had committed \$82 million to a five-year orchestra program. Indeed, between 1957 (when it started funding the arts) and early 1969, the Ford Foundation had awarded \$184.6 million to the arts.⁷⁹ In comparison, federal support for all the arts (as granted by the NEA) did not cumulatively surpass this figure until FY 1976.

Indeed, foundation patronage had sustained many of the institutional art forms (orchestras, theatre, dance, museums) during the late 1960s and early 1970s, when public support was either nonexistent or only miniscule. But later, as foundation funding for specific arts projects began to be phased out or redirected, the NEA had usually had the time to float a "pilot" program and secure additional federal funds that could be used to expand public support for such organizations and activities. Thus, it was not mere coincidence that the NEA undertook to launch and quickly increase an orchestra program during 1970 and 1971, just as the Ford five-year orchestra program was expiring.

In other cases, foundation projects on the arts often amounted to policy experiments from which the NEA could discover what worked, or worked best. In this way, private philanthropic endeavors absorbed the costs of experimentation and thus helped to minimize the uncertainties the endowment faced in trying to design programs that would be artistically effective as well as politically acceptable and administratively feasible. For instance, two of the endowment's most successful multidisciplinary programs—challenge grants and artists-in-the-

schools—had been pretested by private patrons and had had trial runs as NEA pilot projects before being implemented as bona fide public policy programs.⁸⁰

In yet other instances, programs had their origins in governmental actions. The Expansion Arts Program, designed to meet the cultural needs of minority, inner-city, and regional groups, had its prototype in the 1968 New York State Arts Council Ghetto Arts Program. The idea had been picked up by Roger Stevens at the NEA and tested as an Inner-City Arts Program. Therefore, Hanks, seeking a means of addressing the “vital artistic expression from diverse groups” as well as President Nixon’s goal of making “the arts available to all the people,” simply nurtured the seeds of an expansion arts program that had already been sown.⁸¹ Similarly, the governmentwide Federal Design Improvement Program, spearheaded by the NEA during the mid-1970s, was a revival of President Kennedy’s effort to improve federal design and an extension of some of the ideas put forth in his administration’s “Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture.”⁸² In a number of cases, exploratory programs were sponsored under the agency’s catch-all special projects division until they could become independent programs. Both the Folk Arts Program and the Fellowships in Arts Management Program followed this route to institutionalization.

Thus, in arts policy, as in many other domestic policy areas, innovative ideas were seldom totally new. Rather, they were often “old” ideas that had incubated for years, slowly amassing public interest and political support. In a sense, therefore, Hanks was fortunate to serve when the times and sentiments were ripe for arts policy initiatives. Conversely, the times were also fortunate that a policy entrepreneur of Hanks’s caliber was appointed to a key position from which she could act on the opportunities that she recognized.

The Problems of Success: The Limits of Entrepreneurship

The key to Hanks’s entrepreneurial leadership at the NEA was being “the right person, at the right place, at the right time.” In prior sections of this analysis, I have sought to identify personal, contextual, and organizational factors and to demonstrate how these seemed to converge and interact as Hanks assumed the chairmanship and carried forward her plans to expand the NEA’s resources and influence. The resultant blend supported and sustained a period of growth, innovation, and accomplishment—in other words, successful entrepreneurship.

Such complex chemistry, when it occurs, produces dramatic effects. But it is a delicate compound, susceptible to change from many different quarters. If any of the major elements begins to move out of synchro-

nization with the others, what was an ingredient of success could become a retardant, perhaps even a liability. Indeed, such centrifugal tendencies can be seen during the last three years of Hanks’s tenure. Her case thus becomes illustrative of both successful and declining entrepreneurship.

Hanks had been nominated by a new administration to assume direction of a small, virtually invisible agency, presiding over a policy area that was still highly suspect in Congress. She was selected because she was a “political virgin,” a competent administrator, and an informed generalist on the arts. In 1969, art activity was booming, but the financial condition of artists and of arts institutions was precarious. Five years later much had changed.

President Nixon’s August 1974 resignation had numerous ramifications for Hanks and the NEA. Hanks had taken pains to portray arts policy as a presidential priority. In the wake of President Nixon’s disgrace, that linkage ceased to be an asset. While this policy association may not have become a liability under his successor, it was nonetheless clear that the arts did not enjoy the same importance with President Ford.

Similarly, the executive alliances Hanks had cultivated within the Nixon executive office were also lost in the change of administrations. As Laurence Leamer put it, “With Leonard Garment gone, the agency no longer had a special friend in the White House.”⁸³ Garment had no counterpart on the Ford White House staff. Despite Hanks’s earlier association with the Rockefellers, it quickly became apparent that given internal White House politics, an alliance with Vice President Rockefeller was likely to be counterproductive.⁸⁴ Similarly, the faces at OMB were new, as were many in the other departments and agencies with which the NEA had collaborated. Hence, the network of relationships that had been so carefully cultivated and productive during the Nixon years had to be recast and reconstructed with the advent of the Ford administration.

While there was little outright opposition or hostility to Hanks or the endowment, neither was there great interest or support. The pattern of the Nixon administration alliances could not be replicated as effectively under President Ford. Having to start over at the expanded level of the 1974–75 NEA was a different and more difficult undertaking than the task in 1969. Such problems were repeated and intensified in Hanks’s last year in office, as she confronted the task of starting over yet a third time with the Carter administration, which professed different partisan loyalties, other aesthetic preferences, and a new administrative style and philosophy.

Positive support on Capitol Hill had also begun to erode by 1974. Congresswoman Julia Butler Hansen, chairman of the Interior Appro-

priations Subcommittee, which funded the NEA, retired at the end of her term that year. Thus a new working relationship would have to be established with her successor, Congressman Sidney Yates—a task likely to be influenced by the newly resurgent and reformist mood of a Congress that sought to reassert its power vis-à-vis the executive and that was, among other things, redesigning the federal budget calendar and process. Congressman John Brademas, another key NEA supporter, had sponsored hearings and a bill to establish a special program providing general operating support for the nation's museums. Hanks could not support this idea. She argued that it might fragment the arts constituency and eventually lead other major interests—dance, music, theatre—to seek direct congressional funding; in addition, such a move would undermine the NEA's authority and flexibility.⁸⁵

The effort to "line item" support for museums dragged on for the next three years, before an Institute of Museum Services was finally established. In the meantime, as Hanks had feared, another special interest supported by Brademas—the American Film Institute—attempted to split off from the endowment but failed to secure separate funding from Congress.⁸⁶ Although relations between Hanks and Brademas remained cordial, the museum-support debate marked a turning point in the attitudes of key congressional supporters.

Brademas, for one, had begun to fear that Hanks was building herself "a bureaucratic fiefdom immune from Congress and the rest of government." Thus, instead of regarding the NEA as "a proud offspring," he was coming to see it as a "runaway agency he could do very little to control." Another friend of the arts, Congressman Frank Thompson (D-N.J.), began to worry that "the federal government shouldn't dominate the field," and a number of senators—notably Javits (R-N.Y.), Stevens (R-Ala.), and Pell (D-R.I.)—voiced increasing concern about the fair and national distribution of agency grants.⁸⁷ Ironically, Hanks's political acumen now became a liability. She had been so successful in winning congressional supporters and in mobilizing constituency influence upon public officials that she and her agency now seemed impregnable and therefore politically unaccountable.

Similar problems stemming from success also affected the relations between Hanks and the arts community. The state arts councils, which the NEA had done so much to nurture, had matured, formed their own service organization, and begun to demand a bigger and more equal role in policy formation.⁸⁸ Indeed, they wanted a partnership with the federal government rather than simply patronage from it.

Likewise, the agency had supported (and even sponsored) service organizations in each of the various artistic fields and had been an important factor in the proliferation of artists and arts institutions

throughout the nation. By FY 1975, however, the NEA's spectacular budgetary expansion had slowed; indeed, if adjusted for the effects of inflation, its financial base was virtually static. As a result of these combined factors, the agency now found itself contending with more and more applicants, who were increasingly better organized into special-interest associations, competing more strenuously for a share of a shrinking common pie. Furthermore, as Hanks ran out of new and persuasive rationales to justify synoptic increases in appropriations, the competition and the intraconstituency tension intensified.

Once again, previous success had created later problems, particularly as it seemed to spark unfulfillable expectations among the agency's clientele. Paradoxically, Hanks began to find that the very constituency she had helped to expand, mobilize, and organize could be as effective a critic as a supporter.⁸⁹

Finally, within the agency itself, signs of restiveness became evident. Relations with the NCA began to sour. Some members had come to feel that the chairman "wasn't listening to them or that they were being expected to rubber-stamp her."⁹⁰ This was significant not merely in itself but because the members of the NCA reflected changes occurring in other elements of the agency's political environment, such as Congress, the White House, and the arts constituency at large. Perhaps a telling indication of the magnitude of the transformation can be seen in the "capture" of the master-memo tactic that had served Hanks so well upon her assumption of the chairmanship. No longer was such articulated strategy a "brainchild" of the chairman, adopted by White House friends and given presidential confirmation. By 1976–77, long-range planning was a complex, cumbersome effort carried on at the NCA's instigation and by congressional request. In 1969 the Hanks plan had been a seven-page memo that sped from composition through approval to public declaration in a matter of weeks. By 1977 it had taken nearly six months merely to produce a three hundred-page draft report on "Future Directions."⁹¹

Indeed, this last example might be regarded as emblematic of the more general administrative burden of success. Agency growth had been rapid and substantial. By 1974 the agency had outgrown the organizational size and complexity that Hanks found comfortable or consistent with her administrative experience and style. Hanks was accustomed to being involved in all aspects of agency operations, but the scope of those operations now exceeded her grasp. Staff, as well as outside critics, contended that she did not delegate enough and that bureaucratization had gone too far.⁹²

In part, these contradictory views coincided with the emergence of two staff generations. On the one hand, the "old" staff, who had signed

on early, were generally highly committed, energetic, and creative individuals who viewed themselves as part of the art world rather than as government bureaucrats. Many continued to pursue private artistic activities. Some even lived in New York City and commuted to work in the capital. They were accustomed to a rather freewheeling style. As one remarked, "You weren't accountable in dress or time . . . you could really accomplish something. I used to work from seven in the morning 'til late at night. I broke rules to organize programs."⁹³ As the NEA grew and began to routinize, some of these people began to feel shackled by rules, requirements, and schedules and thought the agency was becoming depersonalized. During 1976 and 1977, such discontent became manifest as the programmatic team Hanks had assembled began to break up. The directors of state, architecture, and media programs resigned, and the dance program changed directors four times in as many years.

In contrast, "new" staff was concentrated in the administrative ranks of the agency and was comprised of bureaucrats rather than artists. These individuals sometimes complained that Hanks would not delegate and that she was "in effect sitting on absolutely everybody's shoulder all the time."⁹⁴ Others felt that the staff was too static and that it was judged on the basis of loyalty rather than competence. Critics outside the agency maintained that there were problems of "waste, ossification, sluggishness and self-perpetuation," as well as "'misdirected energy' expended on duplicate chores, unworthy research, and public relations."⁹⁵ Staff were accused of enjoying an inflated, extravagant lifestyle, of being overly concerned with the agency's image rather than its mission, and (if anyone left the agency) of providing for each other through the awarding of grants and contract awards.

Hanks, too, found her time increasingly occupied with administrative concerns rather than policy or politics. These included tasks such as engineering the division of the staff shared with the NEH and the consequent reorganization in 1978 of a separate administrative staff for the NEA; debating staff classifications and promotions with the Civil Service Commission, as well as personnel ceilings with OMB; and of recasting and justifying budgeting submissions in elaborate detail for the zero-based budget system of the new Carter administration. Thus, Hanks found her own creativity stifled by the changing political and bureaucratic environment.

Finally, even personally things began to go wrong for Hanks. Following the 1973 death of the father she loved dearly, Hanks, as the only surviving child, was called upon to support her mother emotionally, so she decided to move her to Washington, where she could be of more comfort and assistance. The strain of this, coupled with her unremitting

work pace, led to a serious illness and hospitalization in the spring of 1974. Thus, Hanks's own energy and exuberance were beginning to flag.

On 29 August 1977, Hanks announced her intention to leave the endowment at the close of her term, on 2 October. She took pride in having spurred a growing public and official awareness of the cultural, sociological, and economic importance of the arts and of promoting a collaboration among public, private, and corporate support for the arts.⁹⁶ She had the wisdom to act on the realization—increasingly evident through her last two to three years as chairman—that she was no longer the right person for the time and place. The agency now seemed to require a consolidator and reformer, with closer links to Congress than to the president. Her successor would have to manage with little growth and the strong prospect of having to redistribute benefits within the arts community. These were not her talents, and after eight years, Hanks saw the necessity of retiring and had the grace to do so.

She returned to a quiet private life on the fringes of the art world and began to cultivate an interest in environmental issues. The entrepreneurial phase of her career was over. When she died of cancer in early 1983, she was mourned by hundreds at memorial services held both in Washington and New York. In an extraordinarily prompt and uncontested move, Congress enacted a law that designated the revived and reconverted Old Post Office Building, which now houses the NEA, as the Nancy Hanks Center in tribute to her memory.⁹⁷

Except for her chairmanship of the NEA, Hanks would have led an unexceptional life, leaving little visible impact upon public affairs. Her leadership of the endowment marks the most significant phase of that agency's history to date. As Leonard Garment remarked, "She (was) an impossible act to follow."⁹⁸ Yet, like all institutional leaders, Hanks had to be succeeded. It is, therefore, the final measure of her impact that Hanks has become, whether appropriately or not, the standard against whom her successors have been measured.

Notes

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1. The notion of "initial survival threshold" is that of Anthony Downs; see his *Inside Bureaucracy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), 9. For a related discussion of the stages of bureaucratic development at the NEA see Lawrence Mankin, "The National

Government and the Arts: Recent Experiences—the Biddle Years” (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, 1–4 September 1983).

2. For a review of U.S. Census data on American artists see John C. Beresford and Diana Ellis, “Using Census Data to Study Characteristics of American Artists,” in *Research in the Arts: Proceedings of the Conference on Policy Related Studies of the National Endowment for the Arts*, ed. David Cwi (Baltimore: Walters Art Gallery, 1978), 90–96. For an overview of information on the population, earnings, and employment of American artists see National Endowment for the Arts, *Five-Year Planning Document, 1986–1990* (Washington, D.C., 1984), 83–89.

3. According to figures in *The New York Times*, 26 May 1985, sec. 2, there were 42 professional orchestras in the United States in 1960 and 166 by 1984. Thus, orchestras increased by 400 percent. Similarly, there were 17 U.S. opera companies in 1970 and 81 in 1984, representing a 470 percent increase. (See Opera America, *Profile: 1984* [Washington, D.C., n.d.], 6). Finally, while there were only 35 dance companies in 1965 (most in the New York City area), in 1983 there were four hundred dance groups located in over one hundred communities nationwide (see U.S. Congress, House, Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies, “Testimony of Dance/USA,” 99th Cong., 1st sess., 28 April 1983, 3).

4. Waldemar Nielsen, *The Endangered Sector* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 139.

5. Comparisons are based on early figures found in Rockefeller Brothers Fund, “The State of the Arts,” A Special Studies Project (New York, 13 October 1969, Mimeographed); more recent figures are drawn from National Endowment for the Arts, *Five-Year Planning Document, 1986–1990*, 116.

6. Kenneth Goody, “Arts Funding: Growth and Change between 1963 and 1983,” *Annals* 471 (January 1984): 144–57.

7. American Council for the Arts, *Americans and the Arts, 1980* (New York: ACA Publications, 1980). It should, however, be noted that this Harris poll uses a very inclusive definition of the arts which includes, among other activities, film attendance. Therefore, its figures are likely to exaggerate the extent of public support for the range of arts activities supported by the NEA.

8. *New York Times*, 11 January 1969.

9. Michael Straight, “A New Artistic Era (If the Money Lasts),” *ibid.*, 20 October 1974, sec. 2; Malcolm N. Carter, “The National Endowment for the Arts: Will Success Spoil Our Biggest Patron?” *ARTnews*, May 1977, 47.

10. *New York Times*, 4 September 1977, 18.

11. Excerpt from an interview with Michael Straight by Rodney Campbell as quoted in “President Nixon Did More for the Arts Than Any Other President in Our History,” chap. 16 in “Ten Years for Tomorrow,” ed. Rodney Campbell (Mimeographed draft manuscript), 32.

12. *Ibid.*, 36.

13. Jacques Barzun, “Art-by-Act-of-Congress,” *The Public Interest* 1 (Fall 1965): 64.

14. Rockefeller Brothers Fund, *The Performing Arts: Problems and Prospects* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1965); William J. Baumol and William G. Bowen, *Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966).

15. The Ford Foundation released its report on “The Economic Crisis in the Arts” in March 1969 (see *The New York Times*, 2 March 1969). At its 1969 annual meeting, the American Council for the Arts declared that it would focus its attention on the economic crisis in the arts (see *ibid.*, 3 February 1969).

16. In addition to the chairmen of the NEA and NEH, the other federal members were to be the U.S. commissioner of education, the secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, the director of the National Science Foundation, the Librarian of Congress, the director of the National Gallery of Art, the chairman of the Commission on Fine Arts, and a member designated by the secretary of state.

17. Fannie Taylor and Anthony L. Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier: The National Endowment for the Arts* (New York: Plenum Press, 1984); on Stevens’s background see 55–59.

18. *Ibid.*, 77; derived from chap. 3, “The Roger Stevens Years,” *ibid.*, 55–126; Michael Straight, *Twigs for an Eagle’s Nest* (New York: Devon Press, 1979), 14–16; NEA, *Annual Reports, 1964–65 thru 1969* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1965–69).

19. *New York Herald Tribune*, 13 February 1966.

20. Rockefeller Brothers Fund Report, “The State of the Arts,” 7.

21. The House oversight committee (Education and Labor) had originally suggested a two-year authorization total of \$135 million for the NEA and NEH combined. The House eventually approved a one-year authorization of only \$11.2 million for both endowments. The Senate supported a two-year appropriation at a figure between the high and low variously suggested by the House. The figure finally approved after conference called for a combined two-year total of \$47.5 million for both endowments (see Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*, 116–17).

22. See Terri Lynn Cornwell, “Party Platforms and the Arts,” in *Art, Ideology, and Politics*, ed. Judith H. Balfe and Margaret Jane Wyszomirski (New York: Praeger, 1985), 243–63.

23. R. L. Coe, “The Politics of Art on Capitol Hill,” *Washington Post*, 17 July 1969, as quoted in Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*, 126.

24. *Chicago Daily News*, 15–16 November, 1969, 6.

25. Ana Steele, interview by the author, Washington, D.C., 30 November 1984; *Chicago Daily News*, 15–16 November 1969, 6.

26. Quoted by Sophy Burnham in “Nancy Hanks, Santa Claus to the Arts,” *Town and Country*, December 1975, 125.

27. Laurence Leamer, “The Gifted and Endowed,” *Playing for Keeps in Washington* (New York: Dial Press, 1977), 315–47.

28. Background material on Hanks is derived from a biographical sketch from NEA files, dated 28 August 1969, and from the author’s interviews with Janet Gracey, New York City, 18 December 1984, and Ana Steele, Washington, D.C., 30 November 1984. Information on the ACA is from Joan Simpson Burns, *The Awkward Embrace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975), 292–99, and from ACA membership and publication materials.

29. *New York Times*, 6 September 1969; Lincoln Kirstein, of the New York City Ballet, as quoted in Burns, *The Awkward Embrace*, 383; *ibid.*, 384.

30. Gracey interview, 18 December 1984.

31. Excerpt from an interview with Nancy Hanks by Rodney Campbell as quoted in chap. 16 in Campbell, “Ten Years for Tomorrow,” 7.

32. Steele interview, 30 November 1984; excerpt from an interview with Lawrence Reger by Rodney Campbell as quoted in chap. 16 in Campbell, “Ten Years for Tomorrow,” 44; Gracey interview, 18 December 1984.

33. Press release, “Statement by the President on the Appointment of Nancy Hanks as Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts,” 3 September 1969, Nancy Hanks Papers, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

34. *New York Times*, 11 December 1969; 16 January 1970.

35. Frank Getlein, “The man who’s made the most solid contribution to the arts

of any President since F.D.R.," *New York Times Magazine*, 14 February 1971; *Washington Post* critic Wolf Von Eckardt, comments of 3 May 1972 and 16 September 1972, as quoted in an advertisement supporting President Nixon's reelection (see *New York Times*, 29 October 1972); *Washington Post*, 22 July 1973.

36. The pattern of communication that emerges from the personal papers of Hanks (as well as those of Leonard Garment) clearly point to close, supportive, and frequent contact. Similarly, the frequency with which one encounters personal correspondence between Hanks and OMB directors and deputy directors, particularly Caspar Weinberger, indicates that the linkage there was also direct and friendly. Indeed, many of the exchanges are on a first-name basis between "Cap" and Nancy. Apparently Weinberger, who would acquire the nickname Cap the Knife and a reputation as an intrepid budget cutter, was won over as a supporter by Hanks and Garment quite early; see, for example, the memorandum from Caspar Weinberger, deputy director of OMB, to Leonard Garment, dated 2 November 1970, where Weinberger remarks that

certainly a most persuasive case is made. As you know, we are trying to reduce expenditures for most agencies in order to meet the ceilings desired by the President and this kind of process usually precludes doubling the budget of any agency, but we will certainly do our best to recommend an adequate amount for these important subjects.

I might say that personally I would infinitely rather allocate Federal resources for activities such as these than for highways or some of the other things we are required by continuing formulas to finance.

In the Papers of Leonard Garment, Library of Congress.

37. For an account of the sculpture incident see Straight, *Twigs for an Eagle's Nest*, 31–33. This incident was also recounted by Bradley Patterson, who was then working as a White House assistant to Leonard Garment, in a conversation with the author, Washington, D.C., 3 May 1985.

38. Straight, *Twigs for an Eagle's Nest*, 22.

39. Steele interview, 30 November 1984; Gracey interview, 18 December 1984.

40. Internal memo, Hanks to Mr. Berman (on the subject of purchasing a folding screen), 29 December 1969. Found among the uncataloged papers of Nancy Hanks stored by the NEA. As part of a federal design initiative spearheaded by the NEA in the mid-1970s, considerable attention was paid to the design of a suitable symbol for the agency and establishing its consistent use as the official logo for the NEA (see Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*, 155).

41. Gracey interview, 18 December 1984.

42. Nancy Hanks, "Memorandum for the President," 17 October 1969 (draft 3), in Hanks Papers.

43. For an account of her appointment as chairman and of the consultations with President Nixon and presidential assistant Leonard Garment on the administration's intended arts policy goals see Hanks interview, in Campbell, "Ten Years to Tomorrow," chap. 16, 2–8.

44. For each of the three major goals of the arts policy Hanks proposed, she quoted President Nixon's own words as the basis for these new directions. For example, both goals 1 and 2 were part of the president's statement to the press in September 1969 when he announced Hanks's nomination as NEA chairman.

45. *Synoptic* is used as the antithesis of *incremental*, the presumably more frequent form of policy making, particularly of making changes in budgetary allocations. See, for instance, M. A. H. Dempster and Aaron Wildavsky, "On Change: Or There

Is No Magic Size for an Increment," *Policy Studies*, June 1980, 371–89; and discussion in B. Guy Peters, *American Public Policy* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1982), 132–35.

46. Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*, 133.

47. Since both the NEA and the NEH were established as part of the National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities, they are generally paired for legislative authorization and appropriation. Indeed, until 1977 they shared administrative services and personnel. Also, between 1966 and 1973 the appropriations for the two agencies were maintained at parity. Beginning in 1974, however, the total funds approved for each agency began to differ, with the NEA generally receiving between \$1 million and \$3 million more each year. In 1974 the NEA received nearly \$10 million more than the NEH, and for the 1976 transition quarter, the NEA received \$33.9 million, compared with the NEH's \$21.2 million. The gap between the two agencies has continued to grow during the 1980s: for FY 1985 the NEA appropriation stood at \$163.6 million, while the NEH's was \$139.4 million.

48. For the Hanks memorandum to President Nixon of 17 October 1969 see n. 42. Leonard Garment summarized her memo and forwarded it with his own cover letter to the president on 23 October 1969. He then followed, on 26 November 1969, with a detailed assessment of the proposed arts policy initiative (see Leonard Garment, "Memorandum for the President" on "The Quality of Life in America: Presidential Leadership for the Arts and Humanities," 26 November 1969, Garment Papers, National Archives).

49. Richard M. Nixon, "Special Message to the Congress About Funding and Authorization of the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities," 10 December 1969, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Richard M. Nixon, 1969* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1970), 1018–20. For press coverage on the message see *New York Times*, 11 December 1969.

50. The American Symphony Orchestra League (ASOL), one of the oldest and largest of arts service organizations, had sent out a contact letter to almost five thousand board members of symphony orchestras throughout the country encouraging them to contact their political representatives on the proposed arts budget. In a 28 December 1969 note from Hanks to Richard Wangerin, president of ASOL, she reported that "responses are pouring in and The President couldn't be more pleased with wires, not to mention editorials, and the letters are starting. This will give us a lot of good sales talk when we approach Congress" (NEA storage files, Shoreham Building, Washington, D.C.).

51. See *New York Times*, 10 March 1970.

52. According to the *New York Times*, 11 March 1970, the NEA announced the award to grants to twelve symphony orchestras, totaling \$706,000. Both the meager total and the small number of orchestras funded underlined dramatically the limitations of current government funds and therefore helped to demonstrate the need for increasing appropriations for the NEA. In 1970 there were twenty-six major symphony orchestras and at least twice as many professional orchestras of smaller sizes.

53. *New York Times*, 8 July 1970.

54. On 6 August 1970 *New York Times* reported that the NEA had just awarded \$1.68 million to thirty-four orchestras. This was a marked increase from the previous year's grants of \$706,000 to only twelve orchestras. For a list of the awardees see *New York Times*, 25 August 1970.

55. This discussion of staff draws on personnel and position listings found in NEA annual reports for the years 1968–77; on internally circulated biographical

sketches compiled by the agency; and on press releases announcing the appointment of program directors and administrative personnel. Also useful was Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*.

56. Steele interview, 30 November 1984.

57. Ibid.

58. Budget figures through FY 1977 include program, treasury, and challenge funds as well as half of the administrative funds allocated for the combined National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities.

59. *New York Times*, 16 January 1971.

60. See the comment of Amyas Ames, head of Lincoln Center, as quoted in *ibid.*, 17 January 1971. Ames organized and headed a citizen support group called Partnership for the Arts which in 1971 called for government funding for the arts to increase to \$200 million. On the launching of this group see *ibid.*, 6 January 1971.

61. *New York Times*, 29 July 1971.

62. *New York Times*, 26, 27 May 1971; Richard M. Nixon, "Memorandum about the Federal Government and the Arts, 26 May 1971," in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Richard M. Nixon, 1971* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1972), 681–82.

63. *New York Times*, 5 August, 15 September 1971.

64. This was an increase from the previous year's record of \$3.7 million in grants awarded to seventy-three orchestras (see *New York Times*, 5 December 1971).

65. Richard M. Nixon, "Statement about Increased Attention to the Arts and Design in Enhancing Federal Buildings and Publications, 16 May 1972," *Public Papers of the Presidents: Richard M. Nixon, 1972* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1973), 601–2. For a description and discussion of the Federal Design Improvement Program see Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*, 154–57; the quotation is from *ibid.*, 156.

66. Leonard Garment, "Memorandum for Caspar Weinberger: Some Thoughts on the Arts, the Bicentennial, and the Campaign, 6 June 1972," in Papers of Leonard Garment, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

67. See informal memo, Nancy Hanks to Leonard Garment, 8 August 1972, Hanks Papers. In this memo, Hanks pointed out that the administration would have a "built-in" lobby with the Ames group (Partnership for the Arts) that would mobilize the large artistic institutions as well as "heavy state council" support. Further, she suggested that a "strong expansion arts program and artists-in-the-schools" program would protect the agency and the president from getting "attacked as 'establishment.'" In addition, by commissioning new works to help commemorate the Bicentennial, the individual artists would "become enthusiastic."

68. *New York Times*, 31 January 1973; and for the comments of Senators McClellan and Proxmire see *ibid.*, 3 May 1973.

69. *Ibid.*, 20 June 1973.

70. The 1971 budget represented an 81 percent increase over the previous year; in 1972 the agency budget increased by another 92 percent; and in 1973, by 58 percent. After 1974, budget increases were much more modest. In addition to the Bicentennial, the continuing problems of museums were another "cause" argued as part of the 1974 budget campaign. A survey of museums by the NEA, *Museums: USA* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1974), documented many of the financial problems this constituency continued to confront despite large increases in federal and state funding (see *New York Times*, 9 December 1973). While museums continued to support increases for the NEA for FY 1974—and were rewarded by an increase in the agency's museums program grants, which jumped from \$4.6 million in 1973 to \$9 million in 1974—they also sought congressional support for the creation of a separate institute for the

improvement of museums services (see *ibid.*, 20 July 1973). Hanks, for reasons to be discussed later, did not support this initiative—a stand that put her at odds with prime congressional arts supporters such as Senator Claiborne Pell and Congressman John Brademas.

71. Program figures derived from NEA, *1976 Annual Report* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1977).

72. One encounters a sense of the new assumptions and philosophy implicit in the zero-based budgeting approach from internal memoranda during 1977; see, for example, "Memorandum," P. D. Searles (assistant chairman) to Nancy Hanks, 7 September 1977 (found in miscellaneous Hanks correspondence stored by the NEA).

73. On the history of the GSA's Art-in-Architecture Program see Don W. Thalacker, *The Place of Art in the World of Architecture* (New York: Chelsea House, 1980).

74. See Milton C. Cummings, "To Change a Nation's Cultural Policy: The Kennedy Administration and the Arts in the United States, 1961–63," in *Public Policy and the Arts*, ed. Kevin V. Mulcahy and C. Richard Swaim (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1982), 161. On the legislative history of the establishment of the NEA and the NEH see Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*, 17–54.

75. Joseph Wesley Zeigler, "Passionate Citizenship," *American Arts*, May 1983, 23–24.

76. The phenomenon of federal sponsorship of interest group formation is discussed by Jack L. Walker in his "The Origins and Maintenance of Interest Groups in America," *American Political Science Review* 77, no. 2 (June 1983): 390–405. For a discussion of NEA policy toward arts service organizations see Margaret Jane Wyszomirski, "Arts Service Organizations: Aide, Ally, or Competitor?" (Paper presented at the Conference on Social Theory, Politics, and the Arts, College Park, Md., October 1984).

77. National Endowment for the Arts, "National Council on the Arts: Policy and Planning Committee Report on Service Organization Support" (Washington, D.C., 1980, Mimeographed), 50, 68.

78. Gracey interview, 18 December 1984.

79. *New York Times*, 2 March 1969.

80. The Ford Foundation had established a \$10 million cash reserve grant program in late 1971 designed to help financially troubled arts organizations retire their accumulated deficits and to create a more viable cash-flow system (see *New York Times*, 18 October 1971). Similarly, challenge grants were to help major arts institutions become more financially stable, build new sources of revenue, and engage in long-range planning. Various kinds of artist-in-residence programs had a long history dating back to 1936. Thus, in creating its artists-in-the-schools program, the NEA had prototypes and a substantial performance record from which to draw lessons. Furthermore, Roger Stevens had experimented with a poets-in-the-schools program in cooperation with the U.S. Office of Education beginning in 1966 and had a broader-based version in process by 1969, when Hanks became chairman. Between 1969 and 1976 the artists-in-the-schools program had grown from one that placed six artists in secondary schools to a \$4 million program that brought more than two thousand artists into seven thousand five hundred schools in all fifty states and five special jurisdictions, reaching nearly one million students. For an account of the AIS program and its roots see Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*, 209–24.

81. Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*, 157–59; NEA press release, "Expansion Arts Program Announced," 16 December 1971.

82. Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*, 154–57.

83. Leamer, *Playing for Keeps in Washington*, 339.

84. It seems that Vice President Rockefeller was pushed out of President Ford's inner councils virtually before he was even confirmed. On the Rockefeller vice presidency, particularly on his role in domestic affairs, see Michael Turner, *The Vice-President as Policy-Maker* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984). Ana Steele, who worked closely with Hanks throughout her tenure, could not remember Hanks's trying to engage a Rockefeller connection during his term as vice president (Steele interview, 30 November 1984).

85. For Hanks's official position on the prospect of establishing an institute for museum services, see U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare and Committee on Rules and Administration, Joint Hearing of Special Subcommittee on Arts and Humanities and Subcommittee on the Smithsonian Institution, "Museum Services, 1973: Oral Testimony of Nancy Hanks, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts," 93d Cong., 1st sess., 18 July 1973, 44–221. See also U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, 94th Cong., 2d sess., 1976, 1–29; U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Education and Labor, Select Subcommittee on Education, 93d Cong., 2d sess., 1974; and U.S. Congress, Joint Hearings before the House Subcommittee on Select Education and the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee, Special Subcommittee on Arts and Humanities (on the Arts, Humanities and Cultural Affairs Act of 1975), 94th Cong., 1st sess., 12–14 November 1975. For internal correspondence discussing the NEA's position and concerns about a museum services act, as well as an assessment of congressional reaction, see "Memorandum from Livingston Biddle to Nancy Hanks, 9 September 1975," and "Memorandum and Supporting Materials from Fred Lazarus, 11 November 1975," in uncataloged NEA documents.

86. On the effort to establish direct funding for museums and for the American Film Institute see *New York Times*, 4 September 1977, sec. 2.

87. Leamer, *Playing for Keeps in Washington*, 345–46; Carter, "The National Endowment for the Arts," 46–47.

88. For an account of "the strong undercurrent of unrest and dissatisfaction" among state and local arts agencies that began surfacing in mid-1973 see Taylor and Barresi, *The Arts at a New Frontier*, 179–88.

89. As an example of the range of criticism coming from the various components of the arts constituency see Carter, "The National Endowment for the Arts."

90. Steele interview, 30 November 1984.

91. Earlier NCA discussions had prompted the chairman and her staff to prepare a preliminary list of questions on future directions for the agency and to present these at the November 1976 NCA meeting. The following February, the NCA was presented with the draft volume "Future Directions," numbering some three hundred pages.

92. For a critical discussion of Hanks's management of the NEA see Gael M. O'Brien, "The Arts Endowment's Hanks: Good Politician, Poor Manager?" *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 7 March 1977, 9.

93. Leamer, *Playing for Keeps in Washington*, 339.

94. Steele interview, 30 November 1984; Leamer, *Playing for Keeps in Washington*, 337–39.

95. Carter, "The National Endowment for the Arts," 39–40; Michael Newton, director of the ACA, as quoted in *ibid.*, 40; *ibid.*, 42.

96. NEA press release, 29 August 1977.

97. In renaming the Old Post Office Building for Hanks, Congress took only half

an hour to act unanimously. Leonard Garment noted that "no American president has been memorialized so quickly and with so little partisan commotion" (see Garment's memorial article, "Nancy Hanks [1927–1983]," *ARTnews*, April 1983, 106).

98. *Ibid.*