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Earning income in the home : an historical perspective prefacing a profile of home based business owners in Franklin and Berkshire counties in Massachusetts.

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EARNING INCOME IN THE HOME: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

PREFACING A PROFILE OF HOME BASED BUSINESS OWNERS  
IN FRANKLIN AND BERKSHIRE COUNTIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

A Dissertation Presented

by

CATHARINE C. PORTER

Submitted to the Graduate School of the  
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

February, 1992

School of Education

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To all of the survey respondents who were and are anonymous, I am indebted. I hope the results of the survey and its acceptance by the Massachusetts Cooperative Extension Service will in some way help those individuals to build a better home business.

I especially appreciated all of the encouragement I received from colleagues and friends who believed that I could complete this work when I could not believe in myself.

## ABSTRACT

EARNING INCOME IN THE HOME: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

PREFACING A PROFILE OF HOME BASED BUSINESS OWNERS

IN FRANKLIN AND BERKSHIRE COUNTIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

FEBRUARY 1992

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The purpose of this research was to study home based businesses from 1880-1980 with special emphasis on society's attitudes towards people who earned an income in the home. Government's role in the development of home based businesses was also investigated. This information was coupled with a survey of home business owners in Franklin and Berkshire counties in Massachusetts.

Findings from the research conclude that home business owners in 1980 experience the same problems and frustrations as those over the past 100 years. It is also apparent that attitudes towards work in the home have become more positive since 1960. A search of government documents provides evidence that numerous government agencies have contributed to the support of home businesses. In addition, there continues to be an important place for both private and government agencies in the support of home businesses.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM

#### Introduction

After more than a century during which more and more people left home--to work, to play, to learn--America is coming home again in what may be the most important social phenomenon of this century. We are rapidly becoming a home-centered society. It may be the salvation of a society that is showing disturbing signs of stress if not disintegration (Feldman, 1982).

If indeed America is coming home, the most significant social trend relating to this more home centered philosophy is the increase in self-employment within the home. This concept is not new to Americans. In 1780 the basic industrial unit in this country was the family which owned and operated a small business in the home. Two hundred years later in the 1980s, people by the thousands, many in the middle and professional classes, are attempting to copy that same concept and operate a home based business. Why? Many reasons relate to basic American values. A healthy attitude towards individualism has returned to this country and a natural outgrowth of this respect for the individual is the acceptance of a person "doing his or her own thing," often manifesting itself in that person starting a business in the home.

Entrepreneurship and free enterprise are concepts which have received lip service in the past but until recently

were not considered practical for the individual. Some observers believe that the large corporate structure for so long associated with success, left many people disillusioned and committed to finding another way to achieve economic independence. Being one's own boss is one way to escape the corporate enclave. Earning income in one's own home is a logical place to start.

Key to many people's decision to operate a business in the home is the home itself. To be home is everything: to be able to work on one's personal schedule, to be with young children, to earn money without travelling to a job all speak to the real reason home based businesses have flourished.

There are some interesting observations that can be made of the new generation of self-employed. A disproportionate number are women and many of them are earning in the home. Whether male or female, people are searching for new and traditional ways to support a family or supplement a family's income by earning at home in what has traditionally been referred to as a cottage industry.

Not every person enters a home business situation for purely philosophical reasons. The more practical factors that contribute to the increased interest on the part of people to earn at home are a direct reflection of today's society. Single parenting, the need to work on the part of mothers of pre-school and school age children, strained

energy resources, irregular public transportation systems, uncertain fuel supplies and their costs, plus the increased attention given to assisting the handicapped in becoming self-sufficient all contribute to the growing number of people doing business at home. At the same time earning at home is also being given serious consideration as more people hear about others like themselves getting into new and interesting home businesses.

Aside from the daily struggle to support oneself and dependents, other reasons for being involved in a home based business may be more intrinsic.

Small business may also fill an important and basic human need. People differ greatly in their 'need to achieve,' their risk tolerance, self-confidence, desire for independence, their frustration tolerance and their impatience to break away from routine and do something challenging and exciting (Allen, 1980).

The reasons for an individual becoming involved in a home based business can therefore be quite complex and should be examined to determine if merely telling someone the "how to's" of a business is sufficient to meet that person's need.

Reports from County Extension Home Economists throughout Massachusetts indicated that interest was high and growing on the part of people involved in home based businesses, in rural as well as urban areas, to develop new skills and enhance the skills that they already possessed.

Although very little formal research had been done on the home based business, numerous articles in newspapers and popular magazines indicated that the topic was on the minds of many people. It is fair to state that more people than ever before were looking into or seriously involved in some type of home based business.

The significant growth in cottage or home based industries will not occur in the craft-oriented businesses but will appear in the businesses opened up through advanced technology. Income earning at home among the middle and professional classes is on the increase with computer terminals in living rooms, "do-it-yourself" electronic kits assembled in the kitchen, and photographs being developed in the bathroom. The person living in a rural county can now tap into a whole new complex of business opportunities in addition to the more craft-oriented businesses.

As our society becomes more information-intensive and as the electronic means for handling information becomes more and more cost-effective, people who work at great distances from each other can be linked electronically as easily as if they were in the same room--we no longer need to bring the people to work in expensive, energy-consuming atmosphere-polluting vehicles. We can bring the work to the people-- electronically (Feldman, 1982).

Home based businesses are emerging collectively as a viable economic force in this country, yet many observers do not know how to categorize this unprecedented shift to a

home-centered society. Are home businesses an answer to a social problem or a social problem in themselves?

### Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine home based businesses--both from an historic perspective and on a more focused basis within Franklin and Berkshire Counties in Massachusetts. The history of home based business from 1880-1980 served to provide both a background and a source for better understanding of the current situation as it existed in Franklin and Berkshire Counties.

Data on Berkshire and Franklin County home-business owners was derived from a two county survey conducted as part of a research project sponsored by the Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station.

### Questions

This study attempted to address the following questions:

#### Historic

1. How has society viewed individuals who chose to earn income at home?
2. Has society's perception of people earning in their homes changed with time?
3. What role has government played in the development of home based business?
4. What were the critical periods during the last one hundred years that impacted most significantly on the concept of earning in the home?

## Survey

1. What is the current profile of Berkshire and Franklin counties home business owners?
2. Do Franklin and Berkshire counties home business owners share experiences common to previous generations of people earning in the home?
3. What types of cottage industries exist in Berkshire and Franklin counties?
4. What are the extrinsic and intrinsic requirements for the operation of a successful cottage industry?
5. What are the perceived needs of business owners related to improvement of selected skills?

## General

1. What are the implications for educators, government and private agencies, as well as the individuals themselves who choose to earn income in the home?

## Statement of the Problem

People in ever increasing numbers are exploring the possibility of earning income while at home. Some estimates would put the number of households serving as headquarters for home based business at over 10 million nationally (Staff, 1989, p. 3).

The concept of earning one's income in the home is not a new one but attitudes toward this type of work have changed over the past 100 years. When the changes occurred and how they came about had never been carefully chronicled. Understanding today's home based business owner would be much easier if an historical perspective were available



which allowed for a comparison of both similarities and differences.

The government's role in home businesses had never been clearly charted yet there is evidence that government had played a somewhat significant role in the development of home businesses and has ultimately influenced their growth. What has government done in the past and what is it doing in the 1980's to support home based businesses?

Within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts thousands of individuals own home based businesses. A current profile of some of these business owners would be helpful so that adequate support can be made available to them. In addition it would be of interest and as well as helpful to see how home based business owners in Massachusetts compare to past home business owners.

### Significance

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in order to strengthen the economy of the state and respond to the needs of shifting family patterns, has particular interest in this study. Massachusetts Cooperative Extension made impressive commitments to programs which enabled people to earn income in their homes. The study was beneficial to Cooperative Extension as well as other agencies in helping them to document and better understand how the popular trend of home business developed so that they could formulate plans for the future. Data collected can provide futurists with some

basic information for understanding current trends and predicting future trends.

Massachusetts Extension Home Economists expressed interest in assisting people in rural areas to improve their income earning potential. Every time a workshop was offered related to this subject the number of people enrolling far exceeded predicted attendance to the point that resources were often stretched to the limit. People wanted to know how to improve their professional and business skills. On the other hand, no one seemed to know how many more people were struggling without the support or guidance of any one person or group.

This research enabled Extension Home Economists throughout the state to confirm that the programs they were offering or planning to offer were suiting the needs of the people in their counties. In addition, the potential for new approaches to dealing with the intrinsic needs of people involved in cottage businesses may be discovered as the research unfolds.

Educators at all levels could be helped in advising and teaching individuals for their future wage producing years if they too appreciated how the concept of home business developed and how it is perceived in the community.

A study of this type offers additional insight into the role of women in society, plus some appreciation of the problems many groups of people have faced or continue to face in earning a living.

This study is the first of its kind in tracing the evolution of home based businesses. The work adds to a growing interest in the concept of earning an income at home and brings a new perspective to the subject.

### Limitations

Limitations of the study relate to the serious lack of early research in the area related to the proposal. The approach used to gather information was therefore adapted accordingly.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL STUDY

The challenging aspect of this study was the lack of easily definable literature on the subject. Earning a living at home is not a neglected area as there have been numerous books written on how to operate a business at home. However, that is not the essence of this paper.

This research could have easily become a paper on the plight of women over the last hundred years and unless there was judicious balancing of materials the paper could have also been transformed into a history of the crafts movement in the United States. The author's intent was to produce neither but rather an insightful look at the relevant issues as they could be gleaned from various sources including newspapers; government documents; magazines; journals of home economics, education, sociology and psychology; books; and miscellaneous materials collected for this purpose.

#### Use of Historical Research

In reviewing the literature a historical approach was used which is the accepted method for understanding events of the past. "Although historical studies are difficult to do well, they can be very important" (Lehman, 1979, p. 31).

One has to agree that secondary data will suffice at times when doing historical research. Since secondary data are easier to obtain and often the only record available,

which was the case in this study, it provides the basis for the historical study.

Historical studies run the risks of being biased due to the limitation of information available. The hope is that by including a wide range of sources including government documents, essays and articles from very early journals plus more current readings that some sense of balance and objectivity will emerge.

"Reports of historical research have no standard format. The particular problem or topic investigated determines how the presentation of findings will be organized" (Borg & Gall, p. 825). There are two obvious methods of organization: chronological and according to topic. Sometime neither method meets the author's needs. This paper will combine both the chronological and thematic approach. "Ultimately, the decision to use a particular organizational pattern depends upon the questions that the historical researcher has chosen to ask" (Borg & Gall, p. 826).

Early literature, particularly essays and articles prior to 1900, tend to be quite emotional in their presentation of the ideas and facts. Essayist, Thomas Holmes, typical of that early period, refers to the independence, love, and courage of women caught in the trap of "house work".

It has become apparent that the collection of attitudes and impressions necessary for this study are often well

hidden within a variety of categories. In the hope that the information be accurate and relevant a wide range of subject headings have been searched. The following are a representative sample of the headings searched: agriculture, arts and crafts, cottage industries, crafts, handcrafts, home economics, house work/labor, household income, labor, sweating, underground economy, women, work, and workshops.

A search of the literature indicates that the information necessary for the completion of this study is available. The literature very clearly indicates that changes in attitudes toward the concept of earning a living at home did occur. It also becomes evident as the literature search continues that there have been critical periods in history that have contributed to both the interest in and the success of, home based businesses.

The following review of literature is not a traditional review of the literature but rather an historical review to answer the questions posed in Chapter I, under the purpose of this research. The historical study also serves as background for the survey of Franklin and Berkshire counties' home based business owners.

#### Introduction to Historical Review

During most of the nineteenth century the United States was predominantly a rural and agricultural country. The typical farm family was self-sustaining. Even those

engaged in urban manufacturing used the household as the home and shop.

The labor needs of the household defined the work roles of men, women, and children. Their work, in turn, fed the family. The interdependence of work and residence, of household labor needs, subsistence requirements, and family relationships, constituted the 'family economy' (Tilley & Scott, p. 12).

Toward the end of the 19th century the country was rapidly expanding and showing signs of adaptation to the machine and industrialization.

Easily documented trends resulting from industrialization could be seen in the move to the cities with more people seeking work in urban areas. Income earning became separated from the rest of family life as people started to leave the home for a part of each day. For the most part it was the men who left home for work. Women, especially those who were married, remained at home. Many of these women took on work for which they were paid and could perform without leaving home. Until the late nineteenth century the majority of women who earned money did so at home (Smuts, 1959).

Those women who needed an income were offered encouragement to be creative and develop ways in which they could continue to earn money at home. It was felt that they wanted things to do to supplement a family income but had to be exposed to new ideas (Church, 1882).

The far reaching social ramifications of industrialization could be observed as the home shop for both men and women gave way to factory and mass production. Life became less personal with workers feeling no real association with the factory owner and more importantly no pride of craftsmanship. This move away from self-dependence manifested itself in feelings of lower satisfaction and individuality with people having no real stimuli to do their best (Osburn, 1940).

A wide array of problems developed in response to the number of women entering the factories. Suitable living arrangements, labor laws, and pay, were constant issues with which women had to contend (Meyer, 1972). In addition, women had to fight for work, after losing jobs to men. They were criticized if they performed any paying job at home that could have been done commercially by a man (Meredith, 1900).

Industrialization did not mean an income for everyone. There were numerous people who were not accepted into factory work. The unskilled farmer and miner, those sick or disabled, mentally impaired individuals, inmates, and most women were left to earn a living elsewhere. The home became the alternative work place (Osburn, 1970).

By 1910 enough people were actively involved in producing goods at home that a proposal for a set of standards was sponsored by the National Home Products League. The league proposed "that country, state, and national conven-



tions could be held at which market conditions could be discussed and rules and regulations established for producing articles in thousands of independent homes under uniform recipes and packed in a uniform way" ("To Standardize", 1911, p. 825). The league also suggested that every community establish a cooperative store and exchange with similar cooperatives in other towns. Over-supplies of goods in one place could be sold in another area.

Marketing home produced goods was an ongoing problem. A network of independent outlets called the Woman's Exchange had been organized in the late nineteenth century as a philanthropic project operated by women of influence and financial means.

The Woman's Exchange would accept homemade goods and sell them on consignment. The exchanges were founded to serve women of the middle class. There was no intention to reach and serve the working class woman. To that end the operations were fairly successful. Many women were helped to develop a skill that was marketable and thus subsidize and often support a family (Meyer, 1972).

A concern that surfaced frequently during the early 1900s when the United States was growing and changing so dramatically was the state of the family and the home environment. There was serious questioning as to whether women should be working in factories or at all. Some observers felt that women could be creatively earning money working at home.

One of the chief problems, today, in education for girls, is to bring back to the home some of those money-making activities that formerly were carried on there, and to establish new crafts and arts which may be developed effectively by women in their homes.

The Indian women with their baskets and pottery left examples of enduring beauty; and one regrets that among the masses at the present time women are not engaged in producing anything expressing a permanent form of art or lasting element of beauty (Trowbridge, 1913, p. 22).

The hope was held that as a woman returned to home crafts she would find the home a more interesting place than the factory and as a result she would bring out her talents in creative products not seen since the advent of industrialization (Trowbridge, 1913).

Not every part of the United States was experiencing or would experience industrialization. Those people living on farms or in more remote areas had little opportunity to participate in the technological growth of the country. For them revival of handcrafts during the early 1900s was to be their one chance for some economic security.

The southern mountain areas were ripe with people who knew how to produce a variety of desirable craft products. Women's Clubs, missionaries, social workers, government agencies all got involved in assisting the people in the remote mountain regions. The story repeated itself in New England, on Native American reservations, and finally ended

up in the cities where crafts were being encouraged as a way for the unemployed to earn a living (West, 1904).

The Depression during the 1930s was a period when work of any kind was scarce and greater interest was paid to increasing production of home produced goods with increased attention being paid to marketing goods (Herr, 1933).

During the same period there was a resurgence of interest on the part of the unemployed workers in urban areas to develop some handcraft skills. Vocational schools were encouraged to provide more crafts classes in their communities and make them available to the unemployed worker (Industrial Arts and Vocational Education, 1924).

By the 1940s the Depression had ended but World War II had begun and with it an entirely new set of problems. As disabled veterans returned home from the war the first thought in assisting in their rehabilitation was to teach them a handcraft skill. The intention on the part of occupational therapists was to not only boost their morale but work towards a time when the more severely disabled could earn a living at home using their newly acquired skills (Fuller, 1945).

World War II precipitated a series of changes in exactly who earned money at home. As eligible men went to war, more women went into factories, many leaving small home businesses. At the same time thousands of men moved into home businesses in a very dramatic way. The major builders of equipment for war were not able to produce or find pro-

ducers for small parts necessary to complete the military machinery. Men who could not serve in the armed forces were called upon to help by producing parts in their home workshops. The War Production Board was the chief organizer of these temporary home businesses and assisted in the coordination of these alliances between major corporations and the ordinary man with a set of tools in his basement (Grahame, 1942).

After World War II people switched places. Returning servicemen went back to their jobs and women were faced with unemployment. The government termed this the reconversion period. It did force many women to face up to hard decisions about their future.

Some women opted to return home and care for the family; others chose to start their own businesses. This period is notable because it signifies the real beginning of women as owners of business and as such was the catalyst for the years to follow (Todd, 1946).

During the 1950s a definable trend was appearing. Women were becoming involved in a variety of home businesses. The higher cost of living was requiring some form of supplement to the family income and women were actively seeking ways to do this without leaving home.

Numerous articles appeared in the traditional women's magazines describing success stories of women who started their home businesses. For some, the money earned at home was "pin money", a little added income to buy the extras

that added to the family's enjoyment. Other families counted on the added home-producing income to pay for a child's college education (Lobsenz, 1955).

Words of encouragement appeared in popular publications throughout this period.

Just because you are a housewife you don't have to smother your talents, said Virginia Hogarty, stitching a bright yellow tulip to an organdy apron. Everybody has some creative urge, and the woman who will not indulge her inborn desire to make things is cheating herself of a great deal of positive benefit (Bowe, 1953, p. 28).

By the 1960s attitudes were changing and more published articles were appearing on the discontent of housewives, encouraging them to think of ways to be useful outside of the home (Sanders, 1960).

The 1970s, with "the enormous affluence that the mass consumption society has generated," ("Counter," 1974, p. 52) marked the beginning of the crafts revival and in turn again refocused attention on those individuals earning income at home. This time many more male crafts persons were included.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s many observers of society were paying attention to the increased phenomenon of the shift from working outside the home to home based businesses. People's perception of work and its relative importance in their lives was changing especially among younger workers who were less willing to undertake work they

saw as mentally stultifying and lacking in self-direction (Gaudart, 1983).

### Historical Review of Work in the Home

The labor needs of the household defined the work roles of men, women, and children. Their work, in turn, fed the family. The interdependence of work and residence, of household labor needs, subsistence requirements, and family relationships constituted the "family economy" (Tilley & Scott, 1978, p. 12).

Prior to the industrial revolution in the United States, those people engaged in rural and urban manufacturing found that the household was both the home and shop, with the hand process of producing goods virtually the only production method available. Work in the home meant everything from candle making to the preparation of wool for weaving as well as the weaving itself. Men and women alike made goods at home. Women would generally produce food and fiber items while the men would work on heavier materials such as metal and wood, usually in a shop adjoining the homestead. Because the physical location of the man's work place was somewhat apart from the house in a separate building, society gave it a greater dignity and importance than the location of the woman's work, which was within the home itself.

Many communities were largely self sufficient and seldom did anyone have to venture to another town to secure additional goods and services. Families that produced goods

in the home frequently bartered their work for another needed commodity or service. Any extra items would be sold at fairs and markets. In some instances a popular home produced product would be exported to another town. Thus the interwoven network of home workers was the foundation of every small village throughout the country.

During this era of economic self sufficiency, craft workshops were numerous and deemed important to the survival of the immediate community. The common picture of the family happily working together is one often portrayed, but the reality was rather depressing. Free from scrutiny, many families expected all of the members, from the very youngest to the oldest, to work at the craft. Demands placed upon those least able to handle the work were rigorous. Long hours, tedious and often physical work were expected of every person in the family unit. Observers of these conditions were critical yet had very little power to remedy the problem. Thankfully for many families the industrial revolution put an end to much of this abuse within the home. Unfortunately, people would soon discover that a new set of abuses would develop as the factory system spread throughout the country.

The Effects of the Industrial Revolution Upon Work in the Home. The industrial revolution's move from England to the United States by the mid nineteenth century marked the end of most work in the home as those home produced goods were slowly being replaced by factory made products. A few

craftspeople survived, in particular those individuals producing goods that were in demand far beyond the local area. However, as society became more urbanized, products formerly produced in the home were manufactured in a separate setting from the household, leading to a greater division of labor. Craftspeople protested this minute division of labor which followed because they believed that such a method of production stripped all artistic features from the final product. Advocates of the well designed and produced crafts felt that a revival of village industry could occur only if there was an increased demand for the handmade object. The hope was held that as rural electrification and improved transportation became available, villages would make a comeback and people could again make a living while working at home. As evidenced by the rapid development of the factory system, this did not happen.

The social ramifications of the industrial revolution were apparent in every aspect of daily life. As production shifted from home to factory, women who had been engaged in home production were forced to find outside employment. Insufficient work was available to women who really had to work because machines were doing the bulk of manufacturing. Exacerbating the problem was the attitude towards women who tried to find work. Victorian family norms of the late nineteenth century supported a male dominance in the household which meant a non wage earning wife. Although women were capable of doing the work, widespread notions that the



job required too much standing, was hard on the organs, required too much brain power, and was too hard on the nervous system all resulted in forcing women back into the home to earn an income. This conservative attitude signalled the beginning of a system which exploited women and children for decades to come. The system was officially called industrial homework but earned another, less flattering title, "sweating". Sweating exemplified all the attendant problems associated with homework such as long hours, poor conditions, and low pay.

Industrial homework in its simplest form was farmed out factory work completed in a person's home. The home was used as a workshop and the homemaker and her children were producers for a profit making company.

From the earliest days of manufacturing, industrial homework existed not only in the United States but was evident in other countries with a developing factory system. The system commonly used in industrial homework involved a contractor who served as the middleman, bidding competitively for jobs offered by a manufacturer. "The petty contractor has made possible the sweating evil, and he is inseparable from it" (White, 1896, p. 363). The contractor who made the lowest bid received the work and handed it out to women and men in their homes, who completed and returned it to the manufacturer. The contracting system was prevalent in the growing women's apparel industry and a major cause of sweatshop conditions at the time.

From the manufacturer's point of view, contracting work to the home was often the only way in which he could remain in business, due to the competition he felt from other manufacturers like himself. The typical manufacturer was a small operator with very little capital, dependent upon an elastic reserve of cheap labor. The employer found that many products could be manufactured more cheaply in a home than an established factory since he paid no rent for work space, no utilities, and very little if anything for equipment. The homemaker received payment for perfect work only. Rejects were considered spoiled merchandise and thus lost time and income for the worker. In addition, the homemaker had to pick up and deliver the goods on his or her own time. Of greatest value to the manufacturer was the fact that he could demand his work at any time, thus pressing the homemaker to work longer hours for ever-diminishing pay.

Who were these workers and why did they choose to work at home? A profile of a typical homemaker would include the following description: female, homemaker and mother of young children, immigrant, uneducated, unskilled. In addition, many elderly, the handicapped and very young children did the same type of homework.

Homeworkers worked for low pay, suffered long hours and poor working conditions which precipitated severe health problems. They experienced very irregular employment as so many industries were seasonal, especially the needle trades.

Homemakers carried the major burden of this form of work out of sheer desperation for income. As other members of a family, usually men, would find themselves unemployed, the homemaker would readily accept an offer to do low paying homework.

Society's attitude towards women working also contributed indirectly to the perpetuation of industrial homework. When a single wage earning woman married, she quite frequently was deprived of her job in the limited business and professional world open to her and would be forced to take up homework to earn additional money for herself.

Industrial homework essentially occurred in every state in the union, from farm houses scattered over the countryside to city tenements. It was especially prevalent where there was a lack of contact between workers, thus limiting the possibility that any bargaining power could develop. Many of these homeworkers never felt for a minute that they were anything but independent business people doing what they pleased, as they pleased. For most of them, this was a cruel self-deception. The picture of the little old lady quietly knitting socks by the fireside in her quaint little cottage was fast fading.

Special concerns relating to homework were always surfacing. Low paying homework was naturally strong competition for factory work and thwarted union and government efforts to raise factory wages to a minimum standard in any industry where such homework existed. Efforts to increase

piece rates to homeworkers so as to yield a minimum standard rate failed, thus public relief rolls carried many families whose members were doing the low paying homework.

Misconceptions developed on the part of the public concerning the character of industrial homework. Leisure time activities of homemakers were confused with using the home to produce goods for profit. People tended to assume that the woman who earned money at home spent occasional odd moments sewing or making flowers while she was a full-time wife and mother. The truth was far from the assumption. When a homemaker became an industrial homeworker, she had little time for her family's needs since she had to work eight or ten hours a day. The results were devastating to the welfare of the family. Neglect of the family was apparent to even the most casual observer. Young children became involved in the work, sleeping rooms were used as workshops, and the home became less of a shelter from stress and strain and more of a factory. "When an industry enters a home, the price paid for it at the outset is generally the sacrifice of the home itself" (Heather-Bigg, 1894, p. 370).

Industrial homework was a natural follow-up to the typical cottage industry where one or two people worked at home producing an item to be sold from the home itself or through various sources outside of the home. Many earlier cottage industry workers were caught up in the industrial revolution and by the 1830s were no longer independent but rather employees of a larger factory system. The wish of

the individual may have been to remain independent but in reality there were few options open whereby a person could support a family selling an item made at home.

The oldest industrial homework industry in the United States was glove making, started in Fulton County, New York, by Scottish immigrants in the early 1800s. Following shortly after were Parisian craftsmen who immigrated to New York City in the 1830s and established the artificial flower business, operating almost exclusively out of homes. Although critics continually deplored the conditions of industrial homework, from that point on it would be difficult to find a category of consumer goods that was not at least partially produced using the home as a factory.

Essayists of the 1880s expressed concern that human life would fall into a serious plight if it chose to suppose that all its work was to be done by the immense machinery of organized manufacturers on a giant scale. The problem was easily recognized but the solution was not. Although slow to develop, alternatives to sweating started to appear during the later part of the nineteenth century and signaled the beginning of a new approach to earning an income in the home.

The Movement From Farm to Factory and Options for Women (1880-1900). In the late nineteenth century earning an income while working in the home was something that women simply did; sometimes by choice, sometimes by default. The opinion of most people of that time was on the side of women

staying at home and not seeking outside work. Men were given the better paying office and factory jobs while women were forced to accept the worst of any situation. Most women who worked outside of the home ended up in a factory sweatshop and those who stayed at home operated their own sweatshop.

The abuses associated with homework were deplored by the women affected by them as well as advocates for the improvement of women's lives. Many believed women could have autonomy, better working conditions, and a lucrative income by starting their own "home business". Books were written and lectures delivered on alternative ways in which women could improve their lives by earning an independent income within the home. A consciousness about the depressed lives of women was developing within society and advocates for women were encouraging them to consider how they could escape their sweatshops and still earn an income.

The problem with encouraging paid work in the home was one of matching talents with needs. Observers believed that there were people who needed to supplement the family income but did not know what specific needs for products existed and therefore could not provide the appropriate goods. An added dimension to this problem was the lack of education and training of working class people. The New York Times argued for women learning more business skills in spite of people "who see in helpless ignorance a womanly charm" ("Bad advocacy", 1882, p. 6). Women had problems when it came to

earning money. They were paid less because they were not respected and employers felt they could be replaced at any moment.

Common sense advice to women on how to earn an income at home seemed to be the most helpful. "Why should not the carefully prepared delicacies so lavishly displayed on the table of the ambitious house-keeper for the admiration of her friends also be converted into a source of revenue?" (Church, 1882, p. 28). Suggestions to women as to where to start included visiting a dealer and inquiring as to the demand for such items, the most popular kinds, and the profit that could be expected. Women were advised to avoid middlemen and transact all business with the ultimate consumer whenever possible. It was advised that a good housekeeper might discover that if she could supply a daily reoccurring want such as food, she would never be without constant employment, as people always need to eat. Women were encouraged to maintain the highest quality at all times and remember that "there is always room higher up, even in the preserving business" (Church, 1882, p. 38).

Assuming one had developed a good quality product the sales of that product became a real struggle. Suggestions on how to be a successful marketer reflected as much on the times as on the women themselves. Pies and cakes were extremely popular bakery items and women were encouraged to sell them in the cities. Customers in urban areas were more likely to purchase baked goods since they seldom baked for

their own families. The selling of pies and cakes would not fare so well in rural areas where women felt insulted by the mere suggestion that they were not able and willing to bake for themselves.

Always a concern for the "gentlewomen" was the least offensive way in which they could earn an income in the home. A most socially acceptable means of earning income in the home involved the teaching of music, needlework, fancy arts, mending, cooking, and many more miscellaneous topics. Any good "gentlewoman" was never criticized for offering home instruction and could sustain her family in this way. "Teaching...has always been a popular employment with the educator principally because it is one of the few means of money-making in which a lady may openly engage without compromising her social standing" (Church, 1882, p. 78). Teaching was not a solution for most women because there were far fewer women who were officially qualified for this kind of work and many more who had no education whatsoever. These individuals would have to do something else, perhaps working with their hands instead of their minds.

"A deft use of the needle is a particularly lady-like accomplishment" (Church, 1882, p. 60). Although sewing was "lady-like," the introduction of the sewing machine had made traditional hand sewing less remunerative and women were reminded not to make too many items for which there was limited demand, examples being pin cushions and baby socks. They were encouraged to make original items that would sell



as well as some selected inexpensive items. Home industries often provided some of the more elaborate and intricate handwork of the day. Advocates for handwork supported it as a way of escaping drudgery and developing a feeling of personal self-content. "The more intricate and elaborate--the better because only then is the ingenuity and resource of the workman called into play and exercised" (Lend A Hand, 1889, p. 477). In order to compete in the higher priced markets for hand sewn goods women had to be able to do the kind of work that required study and considerable outlay of both time and money. For most women this was not a realistic option as they struggled to find a promising project.

Women were seen as having an abundance of misdirected energy, wasting it on work that was neither rewarding nor profitable. They were seen as amateur dabblers without one strong skill, having aims too vague and too wide. What they really needed was proper management.

The moral is that the woman in need of money should have a session with herself, first, upon three questions: 1st, What do people want which they have not in ample supply: 2d, What is there which can be done better than others do it: 3d, What, of either of these things, can I furnish? ("Money getting", 1882, p. 6)

These words of encouragement were applicable to women in the cities and their counterparts on the farm.

In support of the need for re-establishing home industries, the plight of the farm family was stressed, especially the women on the poorer farms. Farm wives had

less financial independence and fewer ways to earn an income than their counterparts in the cities. The poorer farm families needed extra resources to pay for supplies and had no way to get them, adding to the frustrations of the women in the families. The farm wives were given few options to develop skills and management resources needed to gain some independence. Probably the worst problem these women faced was the real isolation during the winter months when they saw very few people, even neighbors. This led to women becoming bored, possibly troubled, and extremely lonely. Observers believed that the farm women would be likely candidates for a home industry if they could just develop a skill and adjust to the "habit" of production. One such home industry in New Hampshire provided evidence that this approach could work. Farm women of this state, with a little support from artists, made rugs during the winter and sold them along the Atlantic coast in the summer months. Suggestions for other profitable home businesses included raising flowers, vegetables, plants for medicinal purposes, ferns for decorative uses, plus bee and poultry raising. These types of rural home businesses were the answer for some but many women lacked the ability to get their product or idea into the marketplace.

During this period several organizations, mostly directed to the upper middle class were formed to assist in the production of items made in the home. By 1880 a rather pretentious organization entitled the New York Society of

Decorative Arts was formed which attempted to support the production of certain products in the home. The Society stated as its objectives:

1. To establish a place for the exhibition and sale of decorative work, and to encourage the production of such work among women.
2. To distribute information with regard to the various art industries which have been found profitable in other countries, and to increase the supply of hand-wrought decoration...a high standard of excellence.
3. To induce art-workers to master thoroughly the details of some one method of decoration.
4. To assist those who have worked unsuccessfully in choosing some practical and popular direction for their labor.
5. To form classes in various kinds of decorative work.
6. To establish a library of books and manuals of design.
7. To form connections with manufacturers and importers, and to obtain orders from private individuals, and from dealers in decorated pottery,...and articles of household art.
8. To develop the beautiful art of needlework, and assist in adapting it to the requirements of house-furnishing and decoration.
9. To furnish a market, outside of a limited circle of friends, for the large amount of artistic work done by those who do not make it a profession, but who have attained a professional skill in execution (Church, 1882, p. 117).

The Society held that acceptable art would be a range of items from handpainted cups to handscreens for fireplaces but would not accept such products as wax fruits and flowers or knitted and crocheted items. If a person chose wisely

from the approved list of handmade items, the remuneration was certain to follow. The Society for Decorative Arts had admirable intentions but failed because it set such high standards which only a few people could ever meet them. Most people had limited talent and education and could not master the more sophisticated skills deemed appropriate by the Society.

Production of a product in the home was never as difficult as the challenge of finding a market for the item. Haphazard selling of a handmade item would never amount to significant income for the person making it. Since women were the main producers of home products it became apparent that a special system needed to be established whereby they could find an acceptable market for their goods. The system used for the consignment sale of home produced goods was called an exchange. The first such exchange, the Ladies Depository Association of Philadelphia, was founded in 1833. It was established to serve the educated and refined woman whom it was felt "fate had dealt a blow" (Salmon, p. 394). The exchange was basically a philanthropic operation and made every effort to protect the clients whom it served. Educated women with some status in society were permitted to dispose of their work without embarrassment or exposure as they did not wish for people to learn of their less than fortunate circumstances. "Neighbors were not to know of her situation" (Rothman, 1978, p. 86).

In 1878, the New York Woman's Exchange, founded by Mrs. William Choate, opened its doors and quickly became the dominant exchange in the country. It began business with ten articles and occupied one floor of a building. By 1881, the exchange had 22,000 consignors and occupied the entire building. Mrs. Choate believed that wives and widows of soldiers wounded and killed in the Civil War needed some economic help. She understood that these women had no opportunity to work outside of the home and needed some way to help themselves. In her mind the exchange system was the answer. Between 1878 and 1892, one hundred exchanges in over 75 cities opened throughout the United States, most philanthropic in nature. The aim of the New York Woman's Exchange and others like it was "beneficence not charity" in order to help the "gentlewoman suddenly reduced to abject penury." Supporters undertook to train women who were unaccustomed to work, to compete with skilled laborers and sell the results of their newly acquired skills (1892, Salmon). Exchanges would take orders for any kind of work from the sale of products to various services which women could perform in their homes, such as mending and repairing. Philosophically, the exchanges were designed not to encourage women to earn money but to relieve poverty, in other words, they were a temporary relief for what could be a much longer period of need.

Services offered by the New York Woman's Exchange ranged from an employment service to a summer house in

Stockbridge, Massachusetts which served as a haven for women in need of a rest. Women who had no opportunity for recreation were sent to Stockbridge as guests of the exchange at no charge. As the exchanges around the country expanded they continued to add more auxiliary services. Businesses such as tearooms opened to the public and training schools for consignees were established.

The exchanges accepted needle and art work, all types of food products, plus an assortment of things a woman could make in her home. The rules stipulated that all consignments must be made by women and often only by women who could prove they were dependent for their partial or entire support upon the sale of the article offered for sale. At the very beginning of the exchanges, only formerly affluent women could sell their goods.

Critics felt that the exchanges placed more emphasis on whether a person really deserved to earn money rather than questioning whether the items produced were saleable and priced appropriately. As a result, the exchanges filled up with too much mediocre merchandise and sales were poor. As a business enterprise the exchanges were initially failures and had to rely on private support from benefactors of the time. What was most needed was professional help in running the exchanges, but the exchanges only employed "gentlewomen" who needed financial help themselves, thus eliminating the possibility of knowledgeable assistance from the outside.

The problem which exchanges faced daily was the lack of a basic system for regulating the supply of goods coming into the exchange at any given time. Contributors to the exchanges had no real guidance or way of knowing what other women were producing and what the public was interested in purchasing. Without direction, women worked in a void, often overproducing an item which did not sell and under-producing an item which was popular. In most cases women would be forced into a conservative position, only making a few of any one item and waiting until those sold before making more. If the item was in real demand the home producer was in no position to capitalize on that popularity quickly enough. All of this impacted on the exchanges, making it virtually impossible to make a profit.

A positive step forward for the Woman's Exchange was the decision on the part of directors that some standard had to be set for products. A committee developed revised standards, pointing out to consignees that it was to their advantage to accept suggestions for improved products. With improved standards, sales increased steadily and many exchanges started to show a profit. With some degree of self-sufficiency, exchanges could then turn their attention to a broader spectrum of women, including those working in low paying jobs who could use help to improve their situation. Women who made as little as \$2.50 per week working in a factory could eventually earn as much as \$35.00 per week selling a well-produced product made at home.

The Woman's Exchanges from their inception were very protective of their clients. They required all consignees to be known by a number, not a name, in order to protect their identity and thus spare them the embarrassment of admitting they were in need of financial help. Although the system of privacy was essentially a benevolent impulse it resulted in endorsing the feeling of shame some women experienced because they had to earn money. Women felt they had to work by stealth, delivering their products after dark by the back door, and coming to work camouflaging their lunches by carrying them in music rolls.

The protective environment of the exchange offered a select group of women who came from backgrounds of financial security and standing in society, a place where they could find help during times of hardship. There a woman was given a chance for an occupation to which she was "best suited" rather than turn to the outside for employment, where everyone would then know of her plight. Organizers of the exchange attempted to show women that a means of support was open to them in their own homes. Critics of the operation felt that the exchanges robbed women and their work of dignity by insisting that they should work only when misfortune struck. It was felt that exchanges perpetuated the fatal mythology that proper middle-class women would not be caught dead trying to make a living. Women had little sense of self-worth when they most needed it (Fishburn, 1982).



The Woman's Exchange served a very small percentage of women in need. It in no way solved the problem of distribution of home produced goods for all women. The majority of women who needed income and hoped to rely on home produced goods were from the working classes and had very little contact with the exchange in their city. Most exchanges were located in the more fashionable areas of the city and were viewed as too risky and expensive to even try to break into with the often less expensive and less sophisticated products of the working class. "Like all other remedies instituted by wealthy philanthropists to assist the working women, they were palliatives for the ills of a few, not curatives for the sufferings of the many" (Meyer, p. 298). During the late 1800s there were so many women who were working in sweatshops or had been employed at one time that their numbers far exceeded those few who could be helped by exchanges. Eventually, exchanges did expand to incorporate a broader clientele and were thus able to serve more of the working class.

Taking the lead from the exchanges, women's clubs, very popular at the turn of the century, were encouraged to identify their own members having artistic education or instincts. These members would then form committees that would encourage and organize home industries. To many people's disbelief, this system of voluntary support of the home industries actually worked and was carried into the 20th Century.

By the end of the nineteenth century there were no well established and prosperous domestic manufacturers. There was concern that the country had nothing that "answers to the name of 'home manufacturers'--no article of use or luxury made in our homes, and subjects of commercial interchange or sources of family profit" (Wheeler, 1899, p. 402). It was noted that there were a few exceptions, the Native Americans being the prime example of that time. Although some of their better works were considered art, they represented only a small part of society as a whole.

Organized Efforts to Facilitate Income Producing Businesses in the Home (1900-1920). By 1900, home industries had not developed to any great extent, especially in the cities, yet the topic of women earning an income was very much on people's minds. It seemed appropriate that women try to earn an income out of the home, but when they attempted to do so they found themselves having to fight for work. A man was still given a job before a woman, leaving her with very little choice but to earn a living at home. If she chose to earn an income in her home doing something that could be done commercially she was criticized for taking away a man's job from the workplace. Despite the frustrations, women were intent upon earning some income wherever they could and were often romantized as "heroines" by social observers. No doubt many women did experience poverty, illness, hardship, and did "fight on with courage" as they were depicted in novels and essays of that period.

The fact remained that coming into the twentieth century women were on the minds of those people who could serve as agents of change, and changes would occur--slowly.

One such interested group were home economists who met in Lake Placid, New York in July of 1901. These women discussed the value of noncommercial household arts and crafts and the "business opportunities for women in the crafts taken out of the home" (Lake Placid Conference, 1901, p. 110). This discussion led to an agreement that few women had sufficient business skills to conduct their own home business involving crafts. Not only did these home economists have little faith in women as business operators, they had even less faith in women as connoisseurs of good crafts. It was felt that few women at that time had an appreciation of good quality home crafts and would not be willing to pay a fair price for outstanding home crafts even when they were available in the shops.

In the following year, another meeting of home economists was held at Lake Placid where household economics was again discussed. Women's clubs were still considered an ideal way to assist people who wished to earn an income in the home. It was felt that home economists could develop a course of study with a section on home handicrafts and provide women's clubs with the materials in the hope that the members would assist other women who wished to stay at home and add to their income.

Although some manual training schools had been in existence since 1876, few regular secondary schools incorporated handwork into their curriculum. A consensus of home economists at the 1902 Lake Placid conference led to the support of handwork as being quite acceptable "so long as the pupil is studying to apply principles and not working for trade efficiency" (Lake Placid Conference, 1902, p. 76). It was felt that handwork should be permitted not because it may prepare a woman for future wage earning but because it was tied to the need to broaden her mentally. This perspective from home economists did not encourage the concept of working at home for a profit.

By 1903, when the Fifth Lake Placid Conference was held in Boston, a major part of the agenda focused on the importance of handwork. Parents apparently wanted their daughters to receive more training in all forms of handwork while many educators questioned the value of handwork in the school curriculum. The whole philosophy behind handwork seemed to be to help students understand and appreciate the value of labor. There appeared to be little interest in incorporating handwork into school curriculums in order to prepare a student to earn a living from the handwork itself.

From another perspective, further encouragement was offered to revive "fireside industries." K. L. Smith (1903) applauded handwork while downgrading mass produced goods as poorly made, lacking artistic merit.

There can be no doubt that the coming to the front of these fireside industries is more than a passing fad, and that people are again appreciating the novel character of goods entitled to the 'hand made' mark of excellence (Smith, p. 449).

Smith believed there was a slight revival occurring in the appreciation of artists and artisans and she believed that in every community a dormant and profitable craft was just waiting for encouragement. If support could be offered to people in the rural areas to aid them in developing their skills at a craft, the exodus to the cities on the part of many people, especially young boys and girls, might be curbed.

Above all things this revival of handicrafts would help us settle one of the biggest problems which this country has ever faced, namely, the idleness which must come about among our young boys through the passing of the law which makes the working of a boy for wages illegal until he is sixteen ("Handicraft", 1914, p. 400).

Mentioned as areas where the greatest potential for handwork existed were Massachusetts, Kentucky, the Appalachian Mountains, North Carolina, New Hampshire, and areas where the Native Americans were settled. "Life in the village and on the farm lacks interest. Humanity must have an outlet for its creative aspirations..." (Blatch, 1905, p. 103).

This belief in home industries for the rural areas of the United States was held by many people in the early 1900s and was acted upon by many groups as the years progressed,

notably the social service agencies and women's clubs which proliferated during these years. It was during these years that several notable cooperatives were established in North Carolina to support the home crafts made there by rural men and women.

"The woman question," as Hill (1904) phrased it, would not go away. The role of women was on the minds of social observers of the time and many were concerned that women were still discouraged from working outside of the home. It was an accepted custom that when a woman married she would leave her profession and become either a "home bound woman or a lady of the house," depending upon her personal perception of her situation. Hill questioned the worth of women who were shuttled to the parlor for the rest of their lives, forced to accept a life which contented their grandmothers but not them. Women were given no sense of worth or future. This frustration led many women to look for ways to earn a little extra income which was termed "pin money." Articles began to appear in the women's magazines of the day featuring ways for women at home to add to their income. Editors were not very original and suggested such activities as selling dried flowers and baked goods. There seemed to be more suggestions forthcoming around Christmas as crafts were most popular during that season.

Reflections on how full a homemaker's life was at the time were offered in a magazine article entitled, "Shall wives earn money?"

Yet hundreds of married women long for an opportunity to earn money for purposes that the husband's income does not encompass—for pin money, charity or a daughter's lessons with a tender regret at days before marriage, when as self-supporting women they were comfortably assured of a definite weekly or monthly salary, and there is in them an undertone of dissatisfaction with present pecuniary conditions, that takes away something from the pleasure of life (Sangster, 1905, p. 32).

From Sangster's vantage point the amount of money a woman could earn at home was minimal, just enough to enable her to feel that she is not a pensioner living off of her husband's generosity. She referred to the lack of respect women received when they did choose to earn an income at home. Many were seen as doing about the same level of work as that of a maid.

Furthering this lack of respect for work in the home was the prevalent attitude in Deerfield, Massachusetts where handwork was highly regarded as an activity for women to do in their leisure hours with the unwritten law that crafts should be only "fireside industries." Women were to appreciate the aesthetic benefits of their work more than the commercial benefits.

The burdens of household responsibilities were prominent concerns of those organizations and individuals interested in the welfare of the family. It was felt that women had so many housekeeping chores that they could not both work for pay and tend to the interests of the home. Only with the help of a housekeeper should a woman do both,

whether it be work out of the home or operate a business from within the home. "While women have a right to enter independent wage-earning occupations outside the home we must consider the danger of making too broad the pathway leading from the home and of obscuring the chief practical department of woman's endeavor" (Work, 1909, p. 329). It looked as though forces were gathering strength against women who wished to earn an income.

No one spoke more eloquently about a woman's place than Charles W. Eliot, President Emeritus of Harvard University, when, in 1909, he offered the following thoughts.

There is a common idea that to procure for herself an intellectual life, as distinguished from a life of sentimental or mechanical routine, a woman needs to have some occupation similar to those of men--that is, she needs to keep a shop, carry on a business, have some trade or profession, be skillful in some area which has a commercial use, or be a professional artist or writer....I do not think this is rational ("Woman's Intellect", 1909, p. 3).

The first part of the twentieth century was one of debate as to the role of women, whether they should work at all, and how best to accommodate their needs, while men continued their traditional roles of breadwinners out of the home.

By 1910, the women's magazines of that period were very actively promoting ideas for earning money in the home.

"In what way can I make money at home?" This query pours in from every point of the compass from the trained and untrained, from those



incapacitated for work in office, shop or factory by physical weakness, and from those bound to the home by responsibilities and duty to others (Richardson, 1910, p. 30).

People were advised to look for a market as close to home as possible and avoid mail order businesses. Taking advantage of the hunger for home businesses were mail-order business scams, which exploited people who responded to misleading advertisements in papers and periodicals offering ways to make money at home. People often needed income but did not want friends and neighbors to know of their plight. They would respond to advertisements in magazines glorifying the true potential for income they could possibly earn. Generally one of the requirements to get started in the business would be to buy the supplies and equipment from the advertiser, costing so much that the person made very little profit from the venture. Home clerical work which amounted to anything from addressing envelopes to song writing were very popular home business opportunities. Women in particular were frequent responders to the advertisements enticing them to write songs for profit. In order to receive payment from the company, they had to purchase the first one hundred copies of their song which generally were the only copies sold. Essentially they never got ahead.

Rural residents were particularly vulnerable to work at home schemes because most were isolated and generally quite naive about business practices in general. These people were advised not to try to compete with city workers who

might also be doing similar work at home. Rural workers would have to obtain their work by correspondence which took longer and could be unreliable. Generally work assigned to people outside of the cities was not provided on a regular basis, leaving many farm families without an income they could count on. Farm women in particular were cautioned against falling into a trap where homemade meant nothing more than doing a manufacturer's piece work such as crocheting and flower making. Quotas were too high per day to make it worth the effort of the novice, plus city workers were faster and more experienced, meaning they always earned more.

Rural workers were urged to do what they did best, focusing on products which would appeal to people in their area and, at the same time, reflecting the character of their lives. Food products, fresh produce, and crafts and handwork they were accustomed to working with would always yield a better profit than something sent to them by mail. Seasonal home businesses were very common at this time. Carpenters who could not find work during the winter made and sold birdhouses and furniture through a co-operative on Long Island, New York. Women in New Hampshire, isolated during the winter, continued to produce rugs representative of the area and sold them to tourists in the summer and fall. It was during this period that home demonstration agents with Cooperative Extension began their work with farm families. Every aspect of farm life was a concern of these

agents and many of them saw home produced goods as a potential for income. These agents would become strong supporters of home industries as the years went by.

Outside of the Woman's Exchange few organizations existed that encouraged home industries. In 1910, the Home Industries Association opened its doors with an exhibit of handcrafts from all over the world, including the United States. Louise Brigham, the founder of the organization, reflected that there was no practical recognition of handcrafts in the United States as there was in Europe at that time. She felt there was little support from people of influence in this country for handcrafts, thus no pride associated with such work. It was Miss Brigham's hope that the exhibition would excite viewers to the quality of workmanship available in this country, encouraging patrons to come forth with financial support and general encouragement. The potential for finding capable craftspersons was considerable as immigrants coming to this country at the time brought with them numerous talents related to crafts. Always, the focus of the Home Industries Association was on items made in the home and not in sweatshops, promoting the feeling of national pride in the United States' home industries and ultimately coming into line with other countries.

A problem that many people involved in home industries saw developing but did not know how to deal with was standardization of quality. The National Home Products League, an organization formed to encourage production of quality

goods in the home, sponsored a proposal that would encourage the revival of handcrafts by setting standards. The League felt that every community had people who make useful items in the home and that they could earn a good income in this manner if they had an organized market. The League suggested each community establish a co-operative store and exchange items in oversupply with similar co-operatives in other towns. Part of this project would be the establishment of standards for food items in particular. The League believed that farm families could supply a steady and uniform product to customers, cutting out the middleman. To this end, the League proposed "that the country, state, and national conventions could be held at which market conditions could be discussed and rules and regulations established for producing articles in thousands of independent homes under uniform recipes and packed in a uniform way" ("To standardize", 1911, p. 825). Examples of products where standards were already in use were noted, such as cranberry sauce on Cape Cod and coverlets in North Carolina. Government officials of the time felt this movement towards standardization in home industries would appeal strongly to the middle class as it gave an air of respectability to work for wages in the home for both men and women.

Women who were earning an income by producing a product or service in the home did not have the full respect of most people of the day. Society had still not fully accepted the idea that women should earn an income, especially married,

middle-class women. Voices like Edna Ferber's, who believed that a good business woman was the best of all domestic managers who took her home seriously, did not do much to make it easier for women to work in any location. Fortunately for some women their were supporters of work in the home. The Ladies Home Journal, a legitimate magazine of the time, was very serious about the encouragement of work in the home as the following advertisement by the editors indicates:

We want experiences of girls and women who have found out unusual ways to make money at home--to help other women. Have you found some way, or do you know of some woman who has? If so tell us about it--briefly, please, in 100 words, or 200 words at the very outside. But only those instances are wanted where women remained at home. For each story accepted we will pay Five Dollars: unavailable stories will be carefully destroyed.. ..No names of women who have made the money, nor those of contributors, will be printed ("How some", 1911, p. 18).

This was the type of encouragement women needed. Ideas were forthcoming from readers and appeared regularly in the Journal.

Another source of help was available in the form of a 32-page booklet was published in 1913, which could be purchased for one dollar, entitled, Home Work for Women: Twenty Ways by Which Ladies of Refinement Can Earn A Living or Pocket Money in Spare Time. In this booklet, women could find ideas for a home business such as operating a pet shop or selling "edibles." Manufacturing of items such as clean-

ing compounds and farm and home remedies like toothache sticks and poultry regulators were suggested as profitable products to consider.

The booklet offered serious advice to women who would take the suggestions to heart. Women were urged to use good quality stationery, buy neat business cards, and purchase a typewriter for correspondence. They were encouraged to outfit their home office in a business-like manner so that they could handle their business quickly and promptly. In no uncertain terms, the woman courageous enough to launch a business would find herself in the proverbial man's world:

To be sure, the fact that you are a woman, will count somewhat, but if you are dealing every day with men, you must learn to adopt their methods of business. Little brusquenesses, little slights, little bluntnesses must pass unnoticed. Don't expect anything more than business-like courtesy and give that same thing to the people with whom you are dealing.

A woman in business is not handicapped by her sex nowadays, but this same yielding by the man to woman's invasion of his favorite stronghold has led to a withdrawal of at least a portion of the consideration with which he formerly regarded her. Now she is a comrade in arms, a soldier of the business army, and naturally entitled to no more favors than would any other comrade regardless of sex (Breniser, 1913, p. 32).

Despite this heralding of gender equality in business, the welfare of women remained a topic of concern during this decade. Women remained poorly trained and had few choices for work outside of domestic service. In 1911, the Home School of Providence opened, providing a school for working

girls who wished to improve their skills for homemaking. Emphasis was placed upon developing skills whereby women could earn money without going out into a factory or office, especially after marriage, when job possibilities declined. How could they earn extra income? The Home School suggested making jelly and baked goods. There is no evidence that this type of school prospered nor that its students were able to earn income based upon their training.

By 1915, demonstration agents with Cooperative Extension throughout the country had developed some concrete projects for farm girls and women, offering suggestions for standardization of farm products. Fifty thousand girls participated in canning clubs, earning income for their families.

"How Can Your Wife Earn A Living?" This article and others like it appeared in 1916 magazines, again pointing to the attitude surrounding women and their helpless condition. "Because most women possess no developed talent or ability that is marketable, most of them are compelled to turn to household drudgery" (Rud, 1916, p. 618). The article encouraged women to use forethought while they are dependent upon a husband and plan to have something to fall back on if needed. The advice was especially pertinent for older women who inevitably had problems earning an income if they no longer had a husband. Suggestions offered to all of these women ranged from giving piano lessons to selling crafts.

More suggestions poured forth from popular magazines of the times. Women were urged to develop original crafts and abandon all of the crocheted doilies they had been doing for years. They should develop one, well designed article of good taste and avoid the "hackneyed fancywork." Articles told women to visit shops, read more magazines, and gather ideas which might work for them. Women would be better served if they examined their natural environment and made use of natural resources. This proved to be sound advice since through the years products made from local materials did outsell most items which could have been made anywhere. Marketing goods was a major stumbling block for practically everyone. Encouragement came in many forms. "Start out, at the very beginning, to give whatever you manufacture or devise a professional touch" (Mitchell, 1916, p. 32).

Further advice appeared in The Ladies Home Journal discussing the pros and cons of operating a home craft business. Not everyone was considered an eligible candidate to operate a home business efficiently. A list of ineligible included any needy person who cannot do basic house-keeping, a widow with small children, a woman desperate for money, and a woman who has a skill but simply wants to amuse herself. The perfect candidate for a successful home business had the following profile. The person had to be reasonable, take criticism, be patient, be conscientious, able to assume responsibility and expect to become proficient by serious application, keeping in mind that a few inferior



pieces of work could ruin a reputation. The young housewife with growing children whose needs outstrip her income would make the best worker because caring for her family taught her frugality and industry (Albee, 1916).

Support for a woman interested in starting her own home business could be found in the newly formed Women's Chamber of Commerce. This group implored women to become investors and proprietors of their own enterprises. The organization's intent was to "encourage, guide, and aid women to the attainment of economic independence" ("Mrs. Gould", 1919, p. 20). There was no question that the move was on to see that more women had the support to start up their own businesses, many in the home. Women who were successful relied on their skills as homemakers. Typical of home businesses which grew into factory size operations were Pin Money Pickles of Richmond and the Sassy Jane Apron Factory of Los Angeles. The names of both companies owned by women reflect their special interests.

Homemaking talents were adequate for some home businesses but the interest in quality crafts was stronger than ever by the end of the second decade with more organizations starting up to aid the craftsperson. As a result, the outlook for home businesses dealing in crafts was very optimistic and a new generation of home produced products was in the offing.

Growing Independence of Women Following World War I and Facing the Great Depression (1920-1940). The aftermath of

World War I left the labor market in a state of flux. By 1920, many women who had been working outside of the home left their jobs and returned to their families. A resurgence of prejudice against women working developed at that time, and it was no longer considered appropriate for a woman to be part of the labor force. Still, many women found themselves in positions where they had to work. "The World War and great epidemic robbed many homes of the bread winners" ("Starting ", 1920, p. 87). These women were forced into considering alternative means to earn an income and for the first time in history were encouraged by supporters to start their own businesses and use their homes as the location where they could make and also retail their products. Adding support to this relatively new concept of entrepreneurship was the newly organized Society for Revival of Household Industries and Domestic Arts, founded around 1920. The purpose of this short-lived organization was to encourage women to take up the home crafts of their grandmothers. People started searching out old spinning wheels from barns and attics and bringing them into the cities where they were quickly sold to would-be craftspersons. All of this was done to provide work for women who had previously been engaged in war work and were left jobless. The Society hoped that by re-introducing spinning, families could start to produce their own cloth, cut down on clothing expenses, and ultimately develop a saleable craft product. Although well meaning, the project died due to lack of

direction and little interest in sheep raising which was also included in the master plan.

Individuals affected by the war were not the only people who needed to get involved in some form of work in the home. Thousands of immigrant women with very special skills in embroidery and sewing were looking for work, and those who did not wish to work in the traditional sweatshops were offered few options. Settlement houses in the city organized handworkers and encouraged them to use their skills to produce items that could be sold in shops within the area.

Psychologists...told us that the tips of the fingers are the instruments which demand to discharge the surplus energies of the human body, and that if they are denied their natural expression developed through the ages they "take it out in picking and stealing" ("Craze for", 1920, p. 4).

There was a concern that if immigrant women could not find some way to earn money they would not only suffer depression but would turn to illegal and oppressive means such as employment in sweatshops in order to obtain money for themselves and their families.

As usual, there was a need for teachers, supervisors, and other personnel to keep such projects ongoing. Organizers who called themselves the Art Alliance of America started in the urban areas and had high hopes of expanding their work to reach out to the rural areas of the country and assist those people who also had potential skills for

handmade products. Social workers were particularly concerned about the younger rural men and women, who having no work, would leave their families and go to the cities in search of economic independence. Problems emanating from this rural to urban upheaval were greater than most experts could have predicted and various ideas were considered to encourage people to remain on the farm. It was thought that training in the production of products at home would, in the long run, benefit the individual and society in general.

The interest and concern for the rural families was manifested in a scholarship offered to a graduate student at Cornell. Mrs. Henry Morgenthau, wife of the New York banker and philanthropist, offered a scholarship in 1926 to a student who was "studying rural conditions for girls and woman with reference to the opportunities for rural women to support themselves especially by means of handicrafts" ("New from", 1926, p. 478).

A remote part of the country receiving much attention at this time was the Appalachian region. Visitors to this area were impressed by the crafts found there and at the same time shocked by the living conditions. Individuals and agencies from the northeast fostered the successful development of crafts in that area resulting in hundreds of families becoming involved in the production of home produced crafts. The success stories from the Appalachians are numerous and speak well of the time and work invested by people to establish and maintain home workshops.

There did not appear to be any area of the United States where there was not a need for improved methods of teaching and marketing home produced goods. As was the concern of the settlement workers in New York, very often the mental health of a person was as important as the financial health. Just coming in contact with teachers and other support personnel was a positive lift for those individuals who were isolated and poor. Everyone involved in the encouragement of the production of goods in the home knew of the needs and were supported by women's magazines of that time. These publications were flooded with requests from women who wanted to know how they could earn money at home.

Coupled with the interest in entrepreneurship was the developing interest throughout the country in arts and crafts for the home. Gift shops were opening up everywhere, and as business improved men and women who produced crafts in their homes were trying to become more practical as well as cooperative with the shop owners. Most shop owners were somewhat naive about good quality crafts and had very little experience in buying or selling them. They had to be educated on the history of decorative arts, qualities to look for, and where they could find people producing appropriate items. The better educated shop owner contributed to the improvement in the quality of crafts available to the public and to the growing interest in the arts and crafts movement.

While craftsmen and retail outlets for quality crafts were essential, other factors heightened interest in decorative arts for the home. People had money to spend on accessories for the home due to higher wages and the healthy economy following World War One. There were a growing number of magazines and sections in newspapers devoted to the home thus encouraging the interest in home decorating. People were becoming better educated about color and design, and most importantly, society grew in cultural diversity as soldiers returned from Europe after the war. Of concern to observers at the time was the lack of opportunity in this country for people to learn crafts. As the demand for home decorative arts increased there were few museums or schools prepared to educate and train would-be craftspersons. The first impetus for revival of decorative arts in the United States came from the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts. The realization that machine-made items were not high quality crafts along with the push for a positive attitude towards handmade decorative arts was a significant step towards encouraging craftspersons to continue their work at home.

Women in particular continued to receive conflicting messages about how and where they should work. An article in the New York Times in support of women who left the home to assume business and professional careers, stated, "It is not that women are doing wonderful work. It is just that it is wonderful that they are doing work" ("Art in", 1921 p. 11). Opposing voices added to the confusion. One such

opinion came from Helen Schuyler (1922) writing in Woman's Home Companion.

There is a girl, or woman in every town who knows 'a little' about cooking, or sewing, or painting. Ten to one she has time to spare, and would like a job, but can't leave home. What are her chances as a wage earner?...Every chance in the world, I should say. She can go into business by the fire-side, keep house, and mind the baby, too. When the business outgrows the home hearth, move it to the barn, or unused hay loft, but keep the job at home (Schuyler, 1922, p. 38).

From this perspective the woman was encouraged to see herself as privileged to be out of a job so that she could be free to choose a new home enterprise. Success stories were related which told of the many successful home businesses which, if started by good managers, could expand and prosper.

There are many things I should do in business if I were a country girl; if I lived at home! Such wonderful adventures in the business world waiting around the corner that might be had for the asking! If I had the time, what wouldn't I try, where wouldn't I explore! (Schuyler, 1922, p. 38).

Words such as these bordering on the heroic, sounded a clear message. Staying at home and developing a business might be worth considering. Advertisements directed towards women who wanted to learn "how to do something" were abundant in journals and magazines of the day. One such advertisement in the Journal of Home Economics for a free bulletin entitled "Cooking for Profit" promoted a home study

course in food preparation. It read, "If you wish to earn money at home through home cooked food, candy making and catering...you will be interested in Miss Bradley's new home-study course" (1925, p. 58). This advertisement was typical of many such advertisements, most focusing on food preparation.

The Woman's Exchange which had for years serviced the woman in dire financial need was now expanding and accepting consignments from women who were merely interested in earning a little extra money for their household expenses. The social stigma previously attached to such means of earning income was weakening, and now women could put their home produced goods on the market without feeling ashamed. The problem arose when the Exchanges were inundated with goods and could only accept a fraction of what was brought to them. Gift shops could not absorb all of the products either so discussions were on going about what to do next. Women were encouraged to consider organizing into collectives with each woman specializing in her best product. This type of collective and other forms of alternative marketing did develop in rural areas due in large part to the assistance of home demonstration agents from Cooperative Extension working with farm families. In some states, standardization of home produce was instituted and there were both home industries specialists and food specialists working together to support the farm family. These specialists could offer advice on improved product quality and



suggest specific ways to sell the final product. An interesting result of this process came from West Virginia where specialists helped rural women produce jellies and jams for sale to the Young Women's Christian Association and the Baltimore and Ohio Railway Company under the label of "Mountain State Brands." Food and crafts produced in the farm homes were also successfully sold in farm stores, fairs, and a variety of outlets supported by farmers. Unfortunately, there were never enough outlets to fully accommodate the needs of the growing supply of home produced items ready to be marketed. As a result, many women and in some cases men, started to open their own gift shops in their homes by turning a room of their home into a retail store. To a point these home shops were successful and numerous examples could be found in small towns all across the United States.

Earning an income in the home was publicly acceptable and by the end of the 1920's was encouraged, especially for women who were still struggling with the need for financial assistance in a labor market that remained unwelcoming. Women approaching middle age without a skill were a problem for society since they could not earn enough money for themselves and their families.

Is anything more pathetic than the untrained middle-aged woman, suddenly thrown on her own resources by poor investments, by death of the husband and wage earner, or by losing to a younger woman the position she thought hers for life? (Freeman, 1929, p. 18).

As in decades past, the advice remained the same. Do what you do best and what meets the demands of the day. Writers would speak words of encouragement about using one's innate talents, capitalizing on the skills learned through living, such as crafts, catering, and tutoring. "It is the woman's instinctively quick perception of needs to be met and ways to meet them, coupled with a natural readiness to attempt the untried, that is responsible for theirs and countless other successful individual enterprises" (McCarroll, 1927, p. 226).

Mechanization had also played a part in stimulating people to consider good quality home produced products. Demand was high for items made by hand with the original tools. People were tired of the proliferation of poorly made, massed produced goods and had by this time developed more sophisticated tastes. "The problem of the restless, neurotic middle-class woman is based on the fact that the machine has stripped her of her ancient skills, leaving nothing but boredom in their place. Nature has ever abhorred a vacuum" (Chase, 1929, p. 120). Although unflattering, the comment did direct attention to a potential opportunity for women to add to their income. The 1920's ended somewhat better than when it began in respect to earning an income in the home with women being both praised and ridiculed along the way.

"Make do" was the slogan of the 1930s. The United States was experiencing the Depression and the attitude in

the early 30s was that everybody should try harder to manage their assets in an efficient manner. People were encouraged to reduce food waste, remake clothing, and repair what they already owned. Not only was economic survival critical during this period but the mental and emotional survival of individuals and families was a major problem. People who were out of work became depressed, and the ramifications of this economic crisis could be felt in the homes as well as in public. In the hope that these problems could be addressed, adult education courses and materials were offered locally by the Young Women's Christian Association, schools, cooperative extension, and towns. Subject matter varied from one area to another, but most was practical in nature. People not only learned how to become better managers but were also taught how to produce marketable items such as clothing, food products, and furniture, thus developing skills that were immediately transferable. The best students often were then able to earn some money in the home after taking the courses offered. Rural women were already involved in home businesses, much more so than their urban counterparts, as farm families knew financial hardship long before the crash of the stock market.

The economic hardships experienced by rural residents were addressed at the state level as well as through local agencies. It was not uncommon for the land grant colleges to assume leadership in attempting to help those rural inhabitants needing support. The relation of successful home

industries to family living was recognized and the subject commanded attention from contemporary sociologists. Research and commentary focused on the dynamics in families who were financially strapped and determined that income was the way to relieve the stress placed upon families by forces outside their control. Home economics teachers who had a natural access to girls and their families became more active and began to incorporate materials in the classroom that would provide useful skills that might be used at home to earn some income. Teachers were cautioned, however, about the types of products they encouraged people to make since impractical items which might have found a market in better times would not sell at this time. Cooperative Extension specialists, working out of land grant colleges continued to support rural home businesses, and more states added home marketing specialists to their extension staffs. Home demonstration agents affiliated with Cooperative Extension were very closely tied to the rural family, and although many of their programs were focused on better management of resources, some programs were developed which taught skills needed to produce items for sale in cooperatives and clubs. Farm women were continually urged to improve their standards for quality products and to consider the packaging and presentation of their goods. Hard times meant that new ideas had to be offered to those families in rural areas. They were encouraged to capitalize on the growing tourist trade by selling in roadside markets and

seasonal hotel gift shops. This method of distribution worked to a point, but far too many home business owners never did see their products sold since the marketing of goods still remained a major obstacle to these novices.

One very hopeful sign for the person interested in a home business was the revival of "arts and crafts," "fire-side industries," or "home industries." This movement was largely depression born and produced a solution for many people who needed income. From the most basic instruction in vocational schools and adult education classes to guilds and museums, crafts were becoming important. They were appreciated not only because of their economic potential but because of their link to America's past culture. There were a growing number of both art and social organizations that gave much of their energy and time to promoting American handcrafts. Notable among the supporters were the Department of Agriculture, Indian Services, Women's and Recreation Division of the Works Progress Administration, Russell Sage Foundation, New Hampshire Arts and Crafts League, Home Craft League of New York, and Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of the Governor of New York. The revival of handcrafts at this time was attributed to several factors. There was an apparent need for economic decentralization as a result of the major pockets of unemployment in the country. Secondly, those people living on subsistence homesteads needed a "cash crop" other than vegetables. Lastly, the immediate creativity of handcrafts offered a greater personal satisfaction

than the fragmented work of factory assembly lines. Every individual and organization supporting the handcrafts knew that the key to the success of this revival rested in good part on the restoration of pride in such work. Good quality work was appearing in a variety of forms from clay, wood and metal to fibers. Supporters of the crafts movement encouraged craftsmen to sign their works, a positive statement of esteem in the work.

Certain areas of the country were recognized as a rich source of folk arts and crafts. From Southern California to New Mexico, on to Maine, New Hampshire, and Nantucket, people were scouting for products to sell, especially those made from materials native to the area. The Southern Appalachian region continued to be a prime example of a forgotten part of the country that had much to offer in the way of crafts. With help from various organizations, these popular home produced products were exhibited and sold in eastern cities where demand became so great that shops could not get enough of them. The Department of Interior was opening gift shops in some of the national parks during this time, and was very interested in selling locally produced handcrafts. Thus home businesses grew in areas where other businesses could not.

This movement was not popular with every one during the 1930s. The heightened interest in handcrafts was criticized by some observers who falsely believed crafts would be seen as an easy way to make money, requiring little education and

skill. Others felt crafts were out-of-date and a waste of time, another misimpression.

The critical economic situation put added pressure on the exchanges and various consignment shops throughout the country. There were far more goods produced in homes than could be marketed so more exchanges were opened in smaller cities and towns. Organizers of these new exchanges were overwhelmed with merchandise made by women who could not leave home yet were trying to maintain some pride and dignity by supporting themselves and their families during the Depression. Society had already started to change its attitude towards women earning an income, yet there was still a certain amount of disapproval towards the "respectable" women of the upper social classes earning money. Even these women could not escape the economic hardship brought on by the Depression and tried to sell what would be seen as more appropriate handmade items like painted china cups and special lace items.

Although women had been most productive in home businesses to this point, men were now engaged in home production as an alternative to unemployment. Men commonly worked with metal and wood but also took up weaving and a wider variety of crafts as time passed. For them, distribution was even more difficult. Some sold goods through consignment shops while others produced goods for one or two large concerns. One notable difference could be made between the way in which women and men conducted their work at home.

While women seldom focused on where or how they did their work at home, some type of formal home workshop was considered essential for the men. Workshops were a popular topic in newspapers and certain magazines directed towards men. Writers asserted that the home workshop would become a permanent part of some people's lifestyle, and the workshop could lead to a successful home business.

The 1930s were years of unusual growth for home businesses. Old crafts were revived, men entered in a serious way, and women remained. No records were kept of the number of home businesses or the profits made from them but there is no question that without them many families would not have survived the Depression.

New Focus Placed on Home Businesses Pre and Post World War II (1940-1960). By the early 1940's the country was in a state of emergency and the Great Depression was over. As more adults entered the fabled "effort" for World War II, anyone wanting to work, women as well as men, had very little trouble finding employment. During this period the main groups seriously cut off from employment were the physically and mentally disabled and residents in rural areas of the country. Crafts were still important at this time but did not grow at the rapid rate previously noted in the 1930s. Supporters of the craft movement found that people were too involved in the work force to devote time to home crafts.



During World War II, a totally new and unexpected home business developed. Because of the demand for equipment for the war, manufacturers could not keep up with the orders and it became apparent that small parts, requiring skilled assembly, were in short supply. Responding to this need, the War Production Board (WPB) attempted to develop a practical plan to get existing home workshops, converted garages, and back street machine shops into war production. The War Production Board was established to work with major contractors of weapons and equipment, enforcing government standards and deadlines. It was also charged with determining what large, individual contractors needed to facilitate their production. The WPB searched for owners and operators of home workshops to serve as sub-contractors, using the radio, newspapers, and technical magazines to reach people. A successful example of the use of media could be found in Popular Science Monthly, a widely read and distributed magazine for hobbyists and craftsmen. Popular Science cooperated by including a registration card for readers to sign up as operators of a wartime workshop. The magazine maintained a resource file for the government's use and aided in putting home workshop owners in touch with the WPB.

Most of those home shops were operated by men who held full-time jobs and used their shops as a means of relaxation after work. These were men who built model airplanes and trains, not bomb sights and tracer bullets. Many of the

home shop owners were too old to serve in the armed forces and were willing and able to develop the skills necessary to convert their workshops into the production of rather technical pieces. As their way of participating in the war effort, these men set up operations in which they would be expected to spend their nights and weekends working on specialized parts for their contractors.

These new home businesses were a hodge-podge of facilities and craftsmen. Some men were very highly skilled at working with intricate pieces and parts due to their previous hobby and craft work. Other men had made everything from chicken pluckers to coffin plates and required more training. When a person was contracted for his work, he would be trained and provided with any necessary equipment in order for him to complete his project. Power tools and other more sophisticated equipment not generally found in home workshops were in short supply and had to be supplied by contractors.

Following the war, power tools did become available and as a result some men upgraded their home shops and remained in business. In some instances a man would get so involved in his defense work that he would leave his full-time employment devoting all of his time to the contracted work. When World War II ended so did the home business for defense purposes but for a time many men were intensely involved in work at home.

Home industries were not abandoned by women during the 1940s but took a new turn because of the war. A "make it yourself" market developed, growing out of the adult education projects of the Depression. Manufacturers of sewing machines, pottery companies, food growers, and suppliers of all types of raw materials promoted this "make it yourself" market. The government was equally responsible for encouraging such activities as a way to help out in war time. Many women took jobs in factories during this period, but women who chose not to work outside of the home could consider a small home business to supplement their family's income. This became a necessity for many women whose family incomes were reduced when husbands left to join the war. Magazines would praise the versatility and resourcefulness of women who earned an income in the home. Many women relied on the traditional jelly making and pot holder production. Other women working at home turned to the war effort. They would take on work that would have normally been completed in a factory but due to production for the War was handed out to women in their homes. This work, not necessarily for war materials, usually required only equipment found in a typical family home.

The war impacted severely upon all phases of society, including home businesses. Those home businesses that suffered the most were ones that relied completely upon tourism and travel. Because of gas rationing, people had to curtail trips by car, thus roadside stands and small con-

signment and craft shops witnessed a significant drop in sales.

The concept of a home business took on new importance to an entirely new group of citizens, those servicemen who had been injured in the war. The Red Cross and similar service agencies began to show an interest in ways in which the disabled could earn an income by producing goods or services at home. There was a concern that the disabled, in a rush to find work, would get caught up in sweatshop activities. By developing a skill and starting a business at home, the individual could escape such a prospect.

The end of the war meant the end of an income for many women who were left without work. Many social observers encouraged women to go home and stay with their families. It was considered the patriotic thing to do as the returning soldiers needed to work. Women were in a reconversion period. Some returned to the home to put new effort into a small home business they had left, while others started new businesses in the home which they hoped would serve as a beginning of a new career.

Home businesses, however small, were all that some rural residents had to look forward to after the war. They too were feeling the effects of withdrawal from the labor market they had entered when the war started. The home business was now their full-time work. Some states renewed their efforts to promote crafts and the home craft movement picked up momentum. Teachers and social workers in rural

areas sensed a real economic and cultural value in crafts, and supported the crafts revival at the time. In some areas, such as the Southern Highlands, one out of every four families had a member earning part or all of the family income from a home produced craft.

Although home businesses were found throughout the country, it was becoming apparent that changes were taking place in society that would have a significant impact on their growth. Families were becoming smaller and homes had more labor saving devices. Circumstances facilitating employment outside of the home were changing. Access to employment was improving with better roads and expanded means of transportation. People who had previously relied on a home business because of limited options now had a choice and home businesses were often abandoned. Success stories continued to be published and books continued to be written but a home business was not a priority by the end of the forties. Women in particular were expressing a need to get out of the home and find work. No amount of catering, knitting, or lampshade decorating could satisfy them.

"For most of us don't fool ourselves. We know we're not businesswomen and don't want to be. Home comes first. Still, it would be nice to make a little money, we think" (Jaquith, 1950, p. 8). Women in the 1950's experienced a growing ambivalence. Significant during this period was the new attention being paid to a woman and her role. Should she be at home? Could she possibly work and manage a home

too? Sociologists and psychologists would just begin to study those questions as the decade progressed.

New self-help books and articles on how to earn an income at home appeared regularly, mainly filled with old advice. Like many women, you've probably had an idea now and then that seemed like a money-maker----not an idea worth millions but one that might pay a few bills. And then, like many women, you've probably dismissed it. That's a dream, you say--but wouldn't it be nice if it came true? (Fromen, 1951, p. 4).

People were advised to start earning money at home by choosing their best hobby, keeping investment low, and pricing wisely. Most articles concerning women earning extra income generally portrayed a cozy gathering of family around the kitchen table making fruit cakes or some other simple product to sell. For those women who were running out of ideas, magazines suggested new money-making schemes such as having people bring their uncooked roasts to a person's home for roasting or curtains to a person's home for stretching.

Success stories from this decade were most frequently depicted in women's magazines through articles with such titles as "Winning Favor Through Flavor," "Sewing the Seeds of Sewing Success," "Pat's Rolls Rescued the Rooneys," and "All's Well With Her Wishing Wells." Simple homemakers became heroines as they turned a hobby or skill into a profitable business. Often the articles would include descriptions of unemployed and sick husbands or children in need of dental and medical care. In a sense these stories

became monthly sagas of who could overcome the greatest obstacles. Countering the more desperate stories were those describing how husbands joined with their wives to make the home business work. These men took on the role of sales manager, shipper, and any other task which had to be done. This period was not one in which many men chose to have home businesses, but there were cases where men with home workshops attempted to earn extra income. Men who tried their skills at home identified questions and needs identical to those of women at the time.

Successful home business owners for the most part did a few basic things right. They started out making a simple and inexpensive item for family and friends that was in general demand throughout the year and gradually expanded by selling at church bazaars and other types of events. Sometimes their success was totally unexpected and occurred serendipitously, catching everyone by surprise. A person who could easily make ten dolls found that larger orders for an additional one hundred dolls were difficult to accommodate without ordering more supplies and getting extra help, leaving some people overwhelmed. How these people handled their growing business was as important as what they made.

Regardless of the size of the home business, marketing homemade products was an ongoing problem. Fortunately women's exchanges were still active and widely used as an outlet for home produced products. Some home businesses merchandised through direct mail and became quite success-

ful. Those more aggressive business owners contracted with commercial customers who ordered their products as gifts for clients. Others made arrangements with stores to sell their items exclusively in particular locations. Roadside stands, traditional gift shops, community consignment shops, and shops within the home itself were popular methods for retailing goods.

Not everyone during this period, especially women, took part in growing business trends. Boredom was a word that began to infiltrate comments women made about their lives. Humdrum was another adjective associated with life in the home during the fifties. "There's hardly a woman alive," 'Mrs. E. L. Panks will tell you,' "who doesn't occasionally go off into a daydream world where she is making money in a little business of her own" (Bowe, 1954, p. 38). Women were encouraged to find some diversion for themselves and develop a hobby or money-making project at home. The pleasure of meeting people and the self satisfaction one could receive from a small business were stressed by writers of the day. Women were anxious for a way to make their time and lives more useful; "hanging around the house" was no longer satisfying. Traditional skills of women, they realized, could be just as marketable as those of men. "The axiom that a well developed special interest has a market value applies as well to needlework as to science" (1953, Bowe, p. 24). Women were urged to consider taking their skills further than the chair in the living room. Their problem



was not the lack of a marketable skill but a real lack of confidence in themselves. As women, "They know that a girl with no special genius, who has a husband, home, and family to look after, is not likely to become a fabulous success in business" (1955, Bowe, p. 14).

Not every opinion about a woman's potential was pessimistic. McCall's Magazine, a popular women's magazine of the time, was very much caught up in issues surrounding women, suggesting how and where they could work. Women were tentative about earning extra income for themselves. Similar to women at the turn of the century, some women of the 1950's felt ashamed that they had to do part-time work and others were fearful of what neighbors would think. McCall's urged women to be confident and do what they had to do. In 1953, Sheila Ramsay, a British woman who had moved to the United States with her husband, wrote to McCall's asking for advice on ways she and her family could get out of debt.

By helping to pay off a debt or to bolster the family income during the children's growing-up years or in an emergency is a situation many women face nowadays, and McCall's felt we were helping blaze a trail for many of our readers when we lent guidance and some support to Sheila Ramsay (Herbert, 1953, p. 80).

McCall's worked with Mrs Ramsay, found she was a good cook, bought her an oven, helped her get support from the New York State Department of Commerce Women's Program and featured her in the magazine. Thus Mrs. Ramsay, a good

cook, became an inspiration to many frustrated readers who were experiencing similar hardships.

Several state governments became involved in the support of small businesses with the hope that more people would become interested in starting a small business whether it be at home or in the community. New York was the first state to show an interest in the concerns of small business owners. The state developed a series of clinics called "Business of Her Own," under the leadership of the Woman's Program of the New York State Department of Commerce. Women could bring their ideas and products to the clinics and receive advice on how to improve the quality, as well as package and market the product. Products ranged from shrouds to devices to keep peanut butter from sticking to the roof of the mouth as well as an afghan which took one year to make. Advisors at these clinics helped people to concentrate on items which had potential and to spend their time more efficiently. Supporting this effort and others like it were the Business and Professional Women's Clubs who encouraged women to become entrepreneurs on their own and spent time and money towards this effort throughout the country.

The state of Maine set up a similar program and emphasized tourism and the crafts. Organizers of the plan surveyed seasonal gift shops along the coast of Maine in order to find the most popular items sold. Shop owners and craftspeople were brought together in workshops, resulting

in an obvious improvement in product quality and more profit for the home business owner. Maine's program was very timely as tourism returned to the area following the end of World War II.

As men and women became caught up in various levels of home businesses, warnings started to appear about the many illegitimate businesses which advertised themselves as ways to earn money at home. Many of these operations required up front money before the person ever received the kit including the materials for the "make at home" product. Women's magazines warned readers to check with their Better Business Bureaus to avoid getting caught up in a scam.

Industrial homework was still in practice during the fifties and ranged from being mere exploitation to a very legitimate way in which people could earn a living at home. The state of Vermont sponsored a project that helped people with special needs find work that they could do at home for an employer. Vermont's program was very successful and provided a model that other states followed.

Another form of work in the home which proved to be a forerunner of opportunities in the future despite its eccentricity was offered by a company in Michigan. Edward Brother's Inc., lithographers in Ann Arbor, arranged for a female employee on maternity leave to have the equipment she needed for her work sent to her home where she could then perform her job. The company found it more profitable to

keep their employees since training of new operators was time consuming and expensive.

The fifties reflected new attitudes and life styles for individuals and families. People had more time to develop a hobby while crafts continued to be popular, gaining more support from public and private sources. The concept of work in the home was encouraged by women's magazines and was the object of much attention. Women and men now had the time to take up simple hobbies and crafts and with some luck and work could earn as much extra money for their personal use as they wished.

Home Businesses Become Accepted By Men and Women Alike as the Entrepreneurial Spirit Catches On (1960-1980). The concept of earning an income in the home had experienced an evolutionary development from 1880 to 1960. The next two decades would revolutionize the ways in which people chose to work. A business in the home would be seen as a serious and viable alternative for men and women alike. The 1960s were the years in which attitudes changed dramatically towards the traditional values held by most Americans. A feeling of anti-big business developed and people started to question why and how they worked and lived. A rebelliousness towards government with its structure and authority was evident throughout the country and people pondered how they could "do their own thing". Included in the new rebelliousness was a rejection of material goods and a growing interest in independent living, apart from society's structure.

People wanted to work on their own, in less traditional ways, which often translated into leaving a city job and moving away to a new and less urbanized area.

Women also began to question the way they lived and coming into the 1960s, were experiencing a restlessness and boredom with the American dream of family life and picket fences. They were beginning to make choices about careers and were considering the options which would allow them to earn some income. Magazines and journals furthered the debate by publishing articles on the discontent of housewives, encouraging them to think of ways to "be useful".

Usefulness and self fulfillment were terms used extensively during the 1960s as women and men looked for new lifestyles in which they could support themselves. One obvious option which had existed for hundreds of years was the production of a craft. Crafts were emerging from the 1950s with a strength and potential firmly in place. A clientele was developing that appreciated and understood craft work. This interest in crafts could be linked to the return to the simpler life or "back to earth movement" of the time, while reacting against big business and its related technology. Crafts were revived and new forms were presented, all invigorating those individuals who hoped to work at home in the production of a craft. Both women and men captured the entrepreneurial spirit and entered the craft movement as they took courses, set up workshops, and

found themselves selling their work as a means of supporting themselves and a family.

The choice to purposefully opt for independence did not always work for those people hoping to operate a craft business at home. "The exaggerated belief in the glory of going it alone is the greatest obstacle to the possibility of going it alone" (Dickson, 1975, p. 318). The immediate problems a person earning at home faced was lack of security and a loss of respect from society at large. The home business owner of the 1960s was working in an environment unprepared to deal with the technicalities of a home business or the business owner personally. Men experienced greater difficulty in adjusting to attitudes and problems than did women. For the men who had worked in a more traditional work environment where they were secure and felt they belonged; independent home businesses proved to be more challenging than they had anticipated. Women were familiar with the frustrations associated with a home business as they were common to their past attempts to launch a business from home.

None too soon, the 1970s brought some relief to the home business owner through the introduction of more services available to them to facilitate the operation of the business such as support from the Small Business Administration, state and local governments, and various organizations able to lend advice. The concept of a home business was no longer new and a greater understanding and acceptance

was obvious. Self-employment, often carried out in the home was encouraged by government as exemplified by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare which condemned schools for educating people for employment by others. HEW urged vocational schools to prepare students for self employment and stated that the practical knowledge needed for self employment was a well kept secret where... 'this knowledge is usually transmitted from father to son in middle class families, and is thus difficult for women or the poor to obtain' (Dickson, 1975, p. 336).

By the late 1970s home business owners were faced with new considerations involving the operation of their business. Did they need a license to operate in their town? Were there any zoning restrictions which would preclude the use of the home for a business? Should they accept major credit cards from customers? Should they get a patent for their invention? What about a trademark and a logo for the business? How did one go about getting a sales representative to sell an item? Is a partnership arrangement a wise approach when working with another person? To be in a home business required that the owner be knowledgeable about local and state regulations, business management, taxes, law, and credit. If one was ill informed or naive his or her business at home could be closed by authorities enforcing laws and regulations which did not even exist twenty years before. These issues clearly indicated how far the

business in the home business had come and how sophisticated its operation could be.

While rules and regulations impacted upon the home businesses in the 1970s, technology greatly influenced the methods by which home business owners handled their affairs as the 1980s approached. "There is a revolution underway, whose scope will exceed that brought about by the invention of printing" (DeKen, 1982, p. 1). Owners of home businesses were bringing technology to their operation by purchasing home computers to not only facilitate record keeping and accounting but also as the source for new businesses using the computer. "Home work among the middle and professional classes is on the increase: computer terminals in the living rooms, do it yourself electronic kits assembled in kitchens, photography developed in the bathroom" (Economist, 1981, p. 23). The home business owner began to employ the same techniques used by traditional businesses taking advantage of the opportunities provided by computers. They could buy and sell mailing lists as they attempted to update their customer base and target a market specifically interested in their goods or services. Home businesses were becoming miniatures of larger businesses with many of the same needs.

Booklets by the hundreds were published on every conceivable subject related to the operation of a home business. Suggestions for the 1970s and 1980s were no different than those proposed in the 1870s. "The best kind of busi-



ness is one based on your own knowledge of a real need for certain products or services you could supply" (Running, 1983, p. 26). Experts would warn potential home business owners about jumping into a work-at-home scheme advertised in magazines. They suggested that people make a plan, check out the market, compute the costs, and get professional advice before launching into a new business. Many of the people offering advice were operating from their own homes, serving as consultants and or publishers. There appeared to be no end to the sources of advice.

Home business owners discovered that very often the best advice came from another home business owner. "Networking" was the word most often used when home business owners got together to support one another. From successful networking formal organizations developed which would serve as the voice for the small home business owners. These people needed to be heard by local, state and federal governments as problems ranging from taxes, to zoning developed. One of the first and strongest organizations devoted to home businesses was founded in 1980 by Marion Behr and Wendy Lazar. This new organization, the National Alliance of Homebased Businesswomen (NAHB), stated as its purposes:

- \*to emphasize, encourage, and stimulate personal, profesional, and economic growth among women who work from, or wish to work from their homes;

- \*to project a positive image of women with homebased businesses as equal partners in the work force;

\*to provide a forum for the discussion and exchange of information and experiences related to homebased businesses;

\*to provide publications to disseminate current information and to exchange views on mutual concerns;

\*to provide a network of professional contacts, education, and encouragement to serve as a support system for women with homebased businesses and to enhance one another's professional advancement;

\*to showcase members' goods and services (Behr & Lazar, 1981, p. 87).

The NAHB would just be one of many such organizations dedicated to support of home businesses as the concept would enable men and women alike to earn an income while remaining at home for their own personal reasons.

By 1980 homebased businesses were providing an answer to a changing society's need for alternatives. The home served as the alternative workplace for the person seeking self-fulfillment through independence and self-development. The home served as the workplace for the single parent with limited options, trying to raise a young family. The home served as the workplace for men who shunned the traditional business so that they could explore new options for themselves. The home served as a telecommunicating center for the person connected to the office by a computer. The achievers were those individuals who recognized the gravity of the decision to stay at home and had the motivation and knowledge to succeed.

Earning an income while at home was and is a way of life for individuals and families in the United States. Some people did it willingly while others resorted to it as the only means to earn an income. Each period in history brought new problems to the person hoping to earn an income while at home. Two forces impacted upon the desire and ability to operate a business at home: society's attitudes and government's influence. An examination of the role of government in the development of home businesses will indicate its importance to the home business movement.

#### Federal Government's Role

Federal government's influence upon home based businesses has been both direct and indirect; at times subtle, at times obvious. Over the years, government policies have affected the decisions of people as they considered the possibility of operating a business in the home or were already actively engaged in a home business.

Government activities which have impacted upon home based businesses are not a recent occurrence. An examination of society in Colonial times provides evidence of the direct influence of government upon "cottage industries," as early home businesses were commonly called.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, cottage industries were an integral part of the life of both the rural and urban communities and were directly affected by laws of that time. Many of those laws were really a response of the Colonies to

England's rule and vice versa, serving in effect to penalize most Colonists, especially those in the production of goods. Men and women working in their homes had to endure the hardship of high duties on imported goods, prohibition on certain kinds of manufacturing in the Colonies (products that could be purchased from England), and prohibition of the shipment of goods from one Colony to another. In general, the manufacture of goods in the home was obstructed by various government regulations and policies.

Government policies and legislation put into effect since the 17th and 18th centuries which could have an effect upon home businesses have not been as punitive. In most instances the individual working at home was never specifically considered when certain programs and legislation were developed. He or she quite indirectly felt the effects.

When researching government publications for references to cottage industries and home based businesses, the most noticeable finding is the lack of references under these specific titles. This dearth of reference reflects the limited attention and importance attached to the specific concept of operating a business at home. In spite of the limited reference to home businesses, there is good evidence that many government departments and agencies did indeed attach value to the idea of working at home. Struggling entrepreneurs were often viewed as people with various levels of skill who were attempting to become self-suffi-

cient and as a result, potentially better citizens as contributors to the economy and ultimately, society.

Some government agencies appeared to assume a more paternalistic or condescending attitude toward the whole concept of people trying to earn an income while working at home. This type of work was considered to be merely a temporary or stop-gap measure until something more stable and permanent came along. The more negative attitude was particularly evident during the Depression years of the early 1930s. While the country was experiencing economic crisis, an obsession developed within the government that people must be kept busy. One obvious way to do this was to assist people in learning a craft or simple skill, such as sewing or chair caning, and let these people "keep busy" at home. The result of these programs was almost predictable. These same people chose to start up small businesses in their home, most of them craft related.

The development of crafts at home in itself tended to create generalizations about the nature of the people and the businesses themselves. Critics condemned them as frivolous and merely hobbies, not taken seriously enough to be given any type of government support. An exception to this rather critical view was made for the handicapped and elderly. People in these two categories were overtly encouraged to develop skills in some sort of handicraft both as a form of therapy and as a potential source for economic support within their own homes.

There is no wish to imply that every federal department, agency and program has been examined and included in this paper. Only those departments or programs which were in some way referred to in a government directory of publications were studied. The route was circuitous at best but provided some interesting findings, which follow.

#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

(USDA)

Some of the most basic and practical assistance to the home based business owner has been offered by the United States Department of Agriculture through its various agencies and programs.

Historically, the USDA has cared about, and for, the farmer and his family. Through its work the USDA has found itself in the position of not only attending to the business of agriculture but also the business of rural life. A study of farm life in America reveals a strong interest, particularly on the part of the women to develop ways to supplement the family income. For women in rural areas, work they could do at home was the only possibility--some sort of a simplified home based business. Ironically, farm men too were to look from time to time upon a home business as a means of support.

A study of the extensive activities and programs of the USDA reveals that several agencies are notable for their

involvement with people who had the need and interest in developing some sort of business in the home.

Central to the USDA's support of home based businesses has been the Cooperative Extension Service. Formed by the Smith Lever Act of 1914, Cooperative Extension has provided programs and publications covering every topic from chair caning to computers. It has been the County Extension Agents' personal contact with their clients that has kept the programs offered by Extension timely and meaningful.

The USDA Rural Development Service has been the program charged with the responsibility of providing rural development leadership and coordination. This agency initiates cooperative agreement between agencies to improve federal resource delivery to rural areas. One of its programs, the Federal Assistance Programs Retrieval System (FAPRS), was developed to assist rural community leaders in identifying federal programs that might be responsive to specific development needs, including crafts. This assistance would very likely come in the form of seed money and personnel to help an area expand craft workshops into small factories, a program commonly found in Appalachia.

The Farmers Home Administration (FHA), through loan or loan guarantee programs, has assisted craftspeople, craft cooperatives, public bodies, non-profit organizations, and other groups in securing funds for a variety of community, business and individual development activities.

The Science and Education Administration of the USDA, in cooperation with land grant universities and the Cooperative Extension Service, conducts a variety of educational and technical assistance activities in crafts. Programs vary from state to state.

The Farmer Cooperative Service (FCS), now part of the Agricultural Cooperative Services, has been a long-time supporter of handicrafts through a cooperative effort, recognizing the limitations that individuals can overcome by joining together. The FCS offered personal assistance in setting up a cooperative, along with advice on marketing, production and business practices. It has also been an advocate for the development of cooperatives for senior citizens with the thought that seniors might supplement their incomes, as well as be provided with an interest or hobby.

The USDA's involvement in helping people earn a living while working at home was strongly evident during the 1930's Depression. The small farmer was particularly hard hit by the Depression and it became virtually impossible for him to make enough money even to pay his property taxes. Two series of problems emanated from the Depression: widespread unemployment among wage earners in the farm family and the plight of people trying to eke out a bare existence by farming land that possessed limited agricultural possibilities in the first place.



The USDA believed a partial solution to this dilemma would be to offer farmers some part-time employment in factories or provide them the opportunity to earn money in a workshop within the home. As electric power, pipelines for gas, better rural roads and the telephone developed, various kinds of work could be easily done at home and factories could be built in more remote areas.

In 1930, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics conducted a study of Knott County, Kentucky, to gather data that might help in converting farmers into home business owners. Farmers and their families in Kentucky were becoming successfully involved in the production of consumer goods such as cane chairs, pottery, jams, and quilts. Many home businesses had become so successful that they had grown into full-fledged factories. The USDA report indicated that this kind of economic success had an overall positive effect upon the area. The standard of living rose, the feeling of isolation was reduced, young people chose to stay in the area because they saw the opportunity for employment, schools and medical services improved, and local facilities improved. The general conclusion from this study was unequivocal--rural development should be continued. Home workshops did have potential.

Rural handicrafts and arts had been an area of attention in Cooperative Extension since the 1920s as part of "live-at-home" programs established to enrich the farm home life. The 1930s Depression stimulated demonstration agents,

the people working closely with the farm families, to constantly come up with new crafts and improved techniques for older crafts. Farm families were literally desperate for skills they could use to earn some money and were also admittedly in need of recreational crafts to fill the long hours of idleness. Many agents took it upon themselves, frequently on their own time, to learn more about handicrafts so that they in turn could help develop better-quality programs for their clients.

The demands placed upon Cooperative Extensión intensified along with the Depression. More instructional workshops were requested as local farm organizations ran out of funds to sponsor their own activities. More cultural art programs were provided--many of them centering on topics such as photography, handicrafts, industrial arts, fine arts, and conservation of materials. There appeared to be no set format for the rural arts programs. They differed from state to state, depending upon the available resources to be found at local universities. Some university faculty gave quite generously of their time working with farmers and helping them develop a skill. Other faculty shied away from such activities, fearing the quality of the work produced by the farmer would reflect poorly upon the university. In most cases, however, the work of developing these art programs fell directly upon the shoulders of the home demonstration agent and home economics specialists.

Most handicraft found in rural America was produced mainly by women and usually reflected the farm life. The most honest description of their work would have been, unpretentious. For most women, the simple crafts they produced were an outgrowth of a hobby, not something they had conceived of as a possible consumer good. Threatened by the Depression, many women started to take more seriously the potential of their craft as a way to help out the family income.

Homemakers groups, supplemented by County Extension offices, had for years been meeting to make such handcrafted items as quilts, rugs, embroidered items, etc. The home demonstration agents, through their encouragement and teaching, helped these women develop a more creative approach to their crafts and to consider more carefully the materials used along with the designs they developed. Groups were encouraged to use materials indigenous to their areas, which included everything from honeysuckle vines in Mississippi to corn husks in Iowa.

The problems of home production were minuscule compared to the problems inherent in marketing the items. People really did not know where to start. Both Cooperative Extension and the Farmer Cooperative Service were instrumental in assisting these farm wives, turned producers, in finding appropriate outlets for their goods. Activities varied from county to county and state to state but a few basic methods of distribution seemed universally successful. County and

state fairs were natural outlets and demonstration agents were helpful in seeing that craft items were available for sale at the fair sites. Cooperatives also served as convenient outlets for the sale of goods and hundreds were established during the 1930s to aid the farm families. Demonstration agents assisted in arranging rural handicraft guilds as another source of support for these new crafts-people. Guilds frequently offered a facility for selling craft items that would not otherwise have been available in many rural locations.

As the demands of the Depression lessened, the Extension Services Division of Field Studies and Training in 1939 conducted a study of 47 states, plus Hawaii and Puerto Rico, in order to learn more about people involved in handicrafts. (USDA, 1946. #610) Findings from this survey include the following:

Persons engaged in handicrafts

Men 41%                      Women 67%

Purpose for which work is promoted

Maker's own use 77%  
Sale 8%  
Leisure 15%

Most popular craft

Needlework No. 1  
Furniture No. 2

Market for goods

Sold from the home            No. 1  
Sold house to house        No. 2  
Other markets: Home demonstration clubs, roadside stands,  
tearooms, cooperatives

## Other agencies providing assistance

Works Progress Administration  
National Youth Administration  
Office of Education  
Office of Indian Affairs  
Indian Arts and Crafts Board Conservation Corporation  
Universities  
Handicraft organizations

## Needs

Commercial market  
Better designs  
Improved craftmaking skills  
Additional instruction

Using these results, the USDA and most directly, Cooperative Extension, could develop programs and bulletins that addressed the specific needs of handicrafters.

The idea of profitable handicrafts has been a continual theme of USDA agencies since its successful start during the Depression. The Farmer Cooperative Services in 1972 produced a program aid entitled, "American Crafts--A Rich Heritage and Rich Future." In this publication the FCS acknowledged the difficulty thousands of rural American crafts producers were having marketing their goods. Many people turned to cooperatives for assistance.

The FCS, a supporter of cooperatives, acknowledges that all craftspeople are not members of an association but it does point out that strong craft associations do exist. These stronger craft associations are found in six rural areas--American Indian Reservation; Alaska (Eskimos, Aleuts, and Indians); Appalachia; New England; Ozarks; and the black South. Most of the associations are found in marginal rural

areas having a strong cultural heritage in crafts indigenous to the area.

The Farmer Cooperative Service always believed that the advantage of economic stability in the craft industry would result in preservation and broadening of the country's cultural heritage and experience. Further encouraging rural crafts would lead to a new awareness and appreciation of rural culture, not to mention economic development.

Further study into the success of crafts cooperatives was initiated in 1978 by the USDA's Economics, Statistics and Cooperative Service which absorbed the Farmer Cooperative Service. This agency conducted research hoping to identify craft associations in the United States, evaluate the impact of crafts in a region, and gain insight into the business activities of craftspeople. Educational and technical assistance activities of this newer agency are closely related. Both are intended to assist craft cooperatives to gain expertise in the business skills necessary to carry on a successful crafts business. The E.S.C. will assist in planning and conducting workshops dealing with the organization and management of a craft cooperative much as the Farmer Cooperative Service had previously done.

The Economics, Statistics and Cooperative Service estimates that currently 83 million people are engaged in some type of craft, mostly for therapeutic reasons and self-fulfillment. Those involved in crafts for income are estimated to be approximately 350,000.

Factors which have led to the growth of the crafts movement include an increased interest in the heritage of America and a diverse ethnic heritage in this country. In addition, people have more leisure time to spend on crafts. As people place new emphasis on personal qualities of hand-produced items and continue to demand quality craft products, the crafts industry will thrive.

Additional research findings by the USDA's Economics, Statistics and Cooperative Service reveal a noticeable increase in the number of craft organizations. Out of an estimated 700 such organizations, one-third have formed between 1970 and 1974, another third were formed between 1960 and 1970 and the remaining third prior to 1960.

Implications of the continued expansion of craft organizations and individuals involved in crafts for profit are significant for the USDA. Part of the success story of the 1970s is due to the previous contributions made by the various agencies of the USDA. The importance of the personal involvement of people within the agencies in working with their clients cannot be over-emphasized. No department of the federal government can show as much evidence of its positive impact upon the home based business owner as can the USDA. Most significant is the important fact that most of this assistance and influence came not through legislative action but simple and basic personal contacts with people.

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

The United States Department of Commerce, immersed in the development and promotion of business, within the past 20 years has found its way into the development of business conducted in the home.

The major branch of the Commerce Department most closely involved in the study and support of home based business is the Economic Development Administration (EDA). The primary function of the EDA is to help segments of the country solve particular problems related to the economy using a variety of methods and programs. The EDA's concerns relate to the establishment of programs to alleviate persistent unemployment and underemployment in economically distressed areas of the United States.

In 1966 the EDA, realizing there was very little analysis of the handicraft industry as it related to economic development, commissioned the National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institute, to prepare a report which was entitled, "Encouraging American Handicrafts: What Role in Economic Development?". This report, compiled by Charles Counts, was the Department of Commerce's major move in the direction of considering support of arts and crafts projects for economic development.

In the preface to this report, David Scott, Director of the National Collection of Fine Arts, commented that the National Collection was concerned with the broad encouragement of American art, including creative crafts. Mr. Scott



went on to say, "'Encouragement' is often linked to consideration of livelihood: and therefore the National Collection has been pleased to cooperate with the Economic Development Administration by sponsoring the present report, which related quality craftsmanship to its economic foundation" (USDC, Counts, 1966) .

The study undertaken by Charles Counts was developed with three major objectives in mind:

1. Determine the role of handicrafts in economic development
2. Develop policy guidelines for EDA's use in reviewing and evaluating such projects
3. Suggest specific administrative mechanisms for expert review and evaluation of future crafts projects submitted to the EDA

One can judge by these objectives outlined above that the EDA found itself involved in a subject area of which it knew very little, yet was willing to accept professional assistance.

Findings of the study were most encouraging to the handicraft industry. Charles Counts stated that handicraft programs could make an important and unique contribution to the economic development of a particular area because of the physical and human resources readily available. These human and physical resources were sometimes reinforced by a rich cultural heritage which would make such a development practical. Handicraft production would also offer other advantages in that it could be adopted to different circumstances and economic settings. Also encouraging in the findings was

the recognition of the growing market for handicrafts in an expanding affluent society. Lastly, not to be overlooked were the long-range social and cultural values related to handicrafts which could be strengthening to the social fiber of a particular area.

After recognizing the potential of handicrafts, the EDA-sponsored report suggested that, in order to increase the earnings of handicraft workers and upgrade the industry as a whole, efforts might best be directed towards:

1. Improving the product's quality, particularly the design
2. Encouraging better production and business methods, especially marketing
3. Creating opportunities for training of craftspeople, especially in entrepreneurial skills.

Further findings suggested that some official coordination was needed between individuals, private organizations, and government agencies on both regional and national levels. Charles Counts also indicated in his findings that the whole effort, if undertaken, should be directed and coordinated by professionals in the arts and crafts fields.

Recommendations coming from the study were specific and tended to reflect the state in which the handicraft industry found itself at that time. The major recommendations suggested:

1. Further studies be made in areas where information is needed, particularly in regard to marketing

2. The EDA encourage handicrafts by giving technical assistance to carefully selected craft projects in depressed areas
3. The National Collection of Fine Arts of the Smithsonian Institute serve as a central repository for professional competence in evaluating the varied arts and crafts programs throughout the federal government.

This major report sponsored by the EDA examined a variety of topics from the definition of a handicraft to how and where handicrafts were produced. It considered the adaptability of handicraft production and recognized that the potential was limitless. Production could take place in remote areas where industry would not or could not locate, areas that were temporarily depressed and needing new industry, as well as areas not yet industrialized or resisting industry.

Marketing prospects for good quality handicrafts were considered to be outstanding. Suggested outlets for top-quality goods included the National Park Service gift shops, museum stores, and major department and specialty stores, all of which had more demand than goods available. Tourism would undoubtedly play a major role in craft marketing, notably in areas like Sturbridge Village, Massachusetts, and Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia.

The report bluntly stated the problems and needs relevant to the handicraft industry. Some of these problems included huge production costs of crafts, difficulty in finding commercial backers, lack of design control, lack of management and entrepreneurial skill, out-dated production

methods, poor business practices, and failure to know customer preferences.

Counts, however, had one problem singled out above all the rest. He believed the marketing of crafts ranked as one of the poorest managed enterprises in the United States. In his study he found that most gift shops were very low-level in taste and few owners understood the potential of handicraft merchandise. Retailers were criticized for not knowing how to promote handicrafts in a creative way. Most crafts programs lacked a well-thought-out marketing plan and schools failed to teach craftspeople business skills.

This 1966 study served as a springboard for several other Department of Commerce reports which continued to investigate the opportunities for people to work on handicraft in their homes.

In 1974 the EDA underwrote another study of the handicraft industry, similar to its 1966 study of Charles Counts. "The Potential of Handcrafts as a Viable Economic Force" recognized again the importance of handicrafts to the economy. By 1974 a notable change had taken place in the burgeoning craft market. The tourist market had increased significantly since the 1966 report. Not only were people interested in bringing back a "native craft" as a souvenir of a trip, they were purposely travelling to areas with the specific purpose of purchasing a regional craft item.

The results of this heightened interest in handicrafts did not go unnoticed by the EDA. "This 'outside' capital

produces a multiplier economic effect for an area in the form of spinoff expenditures for tourist services and other goods and services." (USDC, 1974). There appeared to be a consensus that the development of handicrafts could be considered a long-range investment, stimulating both public and private spending.

One of the most encouraging aspects of the 1974 EDA report was the recognition that there appeared to be a legitimate economic base for two values to a product that only a craftsman could provide: "quality and design." Such a positive statement about two rather value-loaded elements such as quality and design was indicative of the changing attitude on the part of this government department toward handicrafts.

On a less optimistic note the EDA recognized the great difficulty domestic craftsmen experienced in trying to compete with foreign-made handicrafts as well as machine-made, inexpensive articles. The significant wage differential made it possible for foreign-made objects to inundate U.S. stores at substantially lower prices than comparable U.S.-made items.

Compounding the situation of foreign versus U.S.-made handicrafts is the long-standing tradition of handicraft production in many foreign countries where crafts are an important and organized part of the economy. Government support in these countries is one reason why crafts have

been so strong, along with the very deep cultural associations crafts tend to reflect.

Frustrating efforts to study the handicraft industry in the United States are the obscure statistics on craftspeople, a major reason being that so many people choose to work quietly in their homes. No one government agency or private association is able to adequately describe the craftsman, either in terms of demographics or impact on the economy. Even as one combs the various federal and state budget allocations craft-related activities may or may not be apparent--depending on whether they were funded as a line item or part of a comprehensive program. Further complicating matters is the variety of purposes for funding crafts. For example, funding could be allocated for the training of craftspeople, for therapy programs, adult education, recreation projects, grants to special institutions, self-help for welfare recipients, plus numerous other categories. This general lack of information serves to frustrate research on the subject.

Not unlike the 1966 study on handicrafts, the 1974 study also included some suggestions basically focused on four broad categories: production, marketing, training, planning and coordination. The report called for technical assistance in the area of production, design, and business management, specifically addressing the problem of overpriced crafts of questionable quality.

The marketing of crafts continued to be a concern of the EDA. Craftspersons needed technical advice on the various aspects of successful marketing. In addition, capable entrepreneurs needed to be encouraged to enter the handicraft business. Suggested as a way to improve the marketing of crafts was the publication of a national catalogue of handicrafters which could serve to help retailers, as well as other organizations, in finding specially skilled individuals. Marketing of handicrafts could also be expanded if there existed a series of regional warehouses and showrooms to aid in the distribution and sale of handcrafted items.

The apparent naivete of craftspersons could be rectified if better training could take place earlier in the career of that individual. The EDA report encouraged craft schools and other types of schools to provide courses in marketing, management, and other related topics in order to better prepare the craftsperson to become a business person as well. There was a sense that standards needed to be established in the craft industry which could be carried over into the teaching of crafts so that certain levels of quality could be recognized and rated accordingly. Also related to the issue of training was the suggestion that vocational education programs in public schools be encouraged to consider the potential of handicrafts as a means of earning a living. This would mean attention to certain

standards of production and inclusion of courses that would address the marketing and management of handicrafts.

The suggestions involving planning and coordination of handicrafts followed the policies set forth in the 1966 report with the addition of two new ideas. Since financing of handicrafts is known to be a major block to their development, the report noted that a national directory, by state, of known and prospective sources for funding would be helpful. Also suggested was another national directory, by state, of craft-oriented organizations so that people could find the support they needed.

The 1974 report by the EDA addressed some related issues that were not examined very closely in 1966. One question always raised but seldom answered over the years had been the support that the federal government could or should offer to the handicraft industry.

In reply to that question of government support, the following suggestions were made:

1. Use existing resources--strengthen existing craft associations and state art councils
2. Be selective in programing--support only carefully-selected programs judged by professionals
3. Approach issues flexibly--leadership must be developed on the local level.

Although general, these suggestions were an attempt to specifically focus on handicrafts, an area not generally addressed by the Department of Commerce.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

We have no doubt that the majority of Indian craftsmen work in their homes, and the supplemental income generated is very important to individual and tribal economic life.... I think it's fair to say that we have firmly believed in 'home based businesses' for about fifty years (R. G. Hart, personal communication, January 9, 1985).

The United States Department of the Interior usually connotes land use and parks. Surprising to some has been its involvement in the support of home based businesses for a particular group, the Native Americans. The Department of the Interior assumes its responsibility for the welfare of the Native American through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which has been a part of the Department since 1849.

Of paramount concern to the Bureau was the ability of the Native American to earn a living. Options for this were few and not particularly encouraging. Indians were not located where they had ready access to traditional jobs. Very often the only jobs they had were government-funded relief projects carried on within the reservation. For many, the only way to obtain cash to supplement subsistence farming was through self-employment. Handicrafts afforded a means of employment in the home where all members of the family could participate.

Few people think of a Native American without reflecting upon some craft associated with Indian culture. Native American crafts are an inseparable part of Native American

life. These American arts and crafts fall into one or more of three classifications: works or objects of art, articles of utility, and souvenirs or mementoes of travel.

Several tribes relied solely on the sale of their handicraft production to support themselves. Navajos were well known for their weaving and silver jewelry and as early as 1935 sold over \$500,000 worth of crafted items. Pueblos were involved in pottery production which, for many, formed their sole source of income.

Some Native Americans who were desperate for cash income, were found compromising their cultural heritage in order to meet a growing consumer demand for products that were not truly representative of any one tribe. A case in point was the Navajo rug, a popular tourist item. No one seemed to care that the original Navajo weavings were blankets to wrap around the body and never intended as rugs. However, "rugs" sold better than blankets.

The Indian's attitude toward his home craft production was one of indifference, feeling that it was not real work, only a means to obtain a little spending money. Whenever a job of any kind would come along, all craft production would stop.

Being a home business, the workers were found scattered over wide areas, remote from any source of support, thus making it very difficult to organize or supervise craft production. Dealers or traders became the strongest influence upon Indian craftsmen. What these traders would buy greatly

affected the nature of the craft, its quality and its price. Always uppermost in the minds of everyone was the value of the craft as a souvenir item.

As growing numbers of Americans became attracted to Indian crafts, several problems arose. Poor quality imitations sold as authentic crafts, flooded various markets, resulting in fewer sales for the Native Americans and a hesitancy on the part of investors to purchase goods in which they did not hold confidence. All of those concerns paled in comparison to a far wider problem developing in this country, the Great Depression. Unemployment, already high on reservations, increased dramatically and the pressure to earn money at home was greater than ever before.

Congress responded to the serious problems revolving around the Native Americans and their craft work by passing an Act in 1935, forming the Indian Arts and Crafts Board. The purpose of the Act was to "promote the development of Indian Arts and Crafts and to create a board to assist therein, and for other purposes."

The Indian Arts and Crafts Board was to consist of five commissioners who would be appointed to four-year terms by the Secretary of the Interior. The commissioners, unpaid, would employ a professional staff to carry out the responsibilities. Although not mandated, the majority of the staff would be Native American. Board activities would be based on needs expressed by the Indians, Eskimo, and Aleut

peoples. As needs changed, the Board's direction would also change.

"It shall be the function and the duty of the Board to promote the economic welfare of the Indian tribes...and the expansion of the market for the products of Indian art and craftsmanship" (74th Congress, August 27, 1935, Chapter 748).

The Board was given powers under the Act to:

1. Undertake market research
2. Engage in technical research and give technical advice
3. Engage in experimentation directly or through selected areas
4. Correlate and encourage the activities of the various government and private agencies in the field
5. Offer assistance in management of operating groups for the furtherance of specific projects
6. Make recommendations to appropriate agencies for loans in furtherance of the production and sale of Indian products
7. Create government trademarks of genuineness and quality for Indian products and the products of particular Indian tribes or groups; to establish standards and regulations for the use of such trademarks; to license corporations, associations or individuals to use them; to charge a fee for their use; to register them in the United States Patent Office without charge
8. Employ executive officers, permanent and temporary, as may be necessary to carry out duties.

The Board did not make grants or loans or provide any sort of financial assistance, nor did it deal in arts and

crafts. The staff would attempt to identify potential federal, state and local support for a particular need.

One of the first orders of business of the Board was to combat the serious counterfeiting problems facing the Indians. The Act provided some tough policies.

Any person who shall counterfeit or colorably imitate any Government trademark used or devised by the Board as provided in Section 2 of this Act...shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, shall be subject to a fine not exceeding \$2,000, or imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both such fine and imprisonment (74th Congress, August 27, 1935, Chapter 748).

The excuse offered by merchants caught knowingly selling counterfeit Indian goods was that they had "no idea" the goods were not authentic. Pleading innocence usually allowed them to avoid any penalty. The Act of 1935 changed all of that: Section 6 states that, "any person trying to sell goods as Indian products when that person knows they are not, shall also be guilty of misdemeanor and subject to the same fine and imprisonment as stated in Section 5.

Accomplishments of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board as they have related to the Native American working at home have been varied and practical. Immediately after it was established, the Board set out to determine the state of Native American art, to learn what crafts were being produced and to locate the most outstanding craftspersons at the time. Ultimately, the Board hoped to expand markets for the products of Indian craftspersons.

The Board saw as critical the development of standards of genuineness and quality and set out to develop a list of standards for various craft items. (For an example of such regulations, refer to Appendix A for, "Regulations for Use of Government Marks of Genuineness for Alaskan Eskimo Hand-Made Products.") The Board also provided for a government stamp which was to be applied only to pieces meeting predetermined standards. This protection was considered critical to the success of returning credibility to the Native Craft Program.

One important aspect of the Board's work in developing standards was the public awareness campaign it undertook to assist distributors and consumers in being able to discriminate between genuine and imitation Indian products. As a result of these efforts, people were more sensitive to honest representation of Native American products and began to demand genuineness.

Within five years of its formation, the Indian Arts and Crafts Board had already established small laboratories to experiment with production methods and raw materials that were or could potentially be used by the Native Americans. Prior to this time, there was no formal way by which a craftsman could obtain technical information.

As part of the Board's work, it accepted an invitation from the Planning Committee of the 1939 World's Fair in San Francisco to assist with a special exhibit of Indian crafts. This exhibit was considered to be the first comprehensive

exhibition of both historic and contemporary works of Indians. It was the largest exhibition of Indian arts and crafts ever assembled. The San Francisco exhibition was followed by one at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1941. Both exhibits greatly contributed to the positive impression people began to form toward Native American art. Public awareness was high. The results of these exhibitions were encouraging. Demand for Indian products made at home rose dramatically, especially higher-grade products.

As markets expanded, the Indians themselves needed advice on production and marketing. Indians were noted to be shrewd traders. They generally sold to the highest bidder but seldom approached the customer first. Advisors would assist them in developing sales approaches as part of the marketing plan.

A major factor contributing to the popular demand for Indian products was the enforcement of protective legislation. District attorneys, cooperating with the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, were able to prosecute cases of misleading labels on imitation products, thus protecting both the Indian and the buyer from fraudulent merchandise.

Not every Indian craft was a viable product. Some tribes had witnessed a decline in arts and crafts. The Board was very effective in bringing back certain crafts. Revival and continuity of crafts were aided by arts and crafts programs, Indian schools and craft clubs. Two positive outcomes from these revivals occurred simultan-

eously: Native American heritage was continued and money was available for the individual craftsman.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Indian Arts and Crafts Board concentrated on establishing tribal-owned crafts marketing enterprises, as well as marketing cooperatives, owned by the craftsmen themselves. By the mid-1950s, several enterprises were firmly established, including the Navajo Arts and Crafts Guild and the Hopi Silvercraft and Arts and Crafts Cooperative. Public demand for high-quality, Native American crafts was exceeding the available supply by the late 1950s. It was apparent that more Native Americans could be absorbed into the burgeoning crafts businesses. The Board attempted to help by providing training opportunities for individual craftsmen in their areas so that production could be increased. Professionals would give demonstrations combined with workshops and open them up to Native Americans in the community who were interested in improving or acquiring skills in certain crafts. The Board recognized that individual craftsmen could influence a whole culture by inspiring many others in the immediate tribal community.

In 1960 the Board recommended the founding of the Institute of American Indian Art to provide heritage-centered instruction to artistically talented Native American youth. The Institute was established by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1962. The success of the Institute has been documented by its inter-



national reputation for innovative and creative education. The program offered by the Institute has been cited as a model for governments with culturally diverse minority groups.

By the mid-1960s the Indian Arts and Crafts Board had turned its attention to the Aleuts and Eskimos in Alaska. Workshops were presented to provide opportunities for Native Americans in that state to explore new materials and processes. The Board assisted in establishing the University of Alaska Extension Center for Arts and Crafts to assure the continuance of Aleut crafts.

Due in large part to the formation of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, the state of Indian crafts in this country has never been better. Crafts as an art form has flourished and crafts as a means of revenue now amount yearly to several hundred million dollars, not to mention the preservation of a culture's heritage that may have been partially erased, had it not been for the crafts made in the home.

#### DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

(DOL)

An extensive examination of the Labor Department's activities over the years indicates an intense interest in any type of work being done in the home. At times the Department found itself caught between two opposing forces. On the one hand there was always a basic philosophical support of some forms of work done in the home, particularly

handicrafts. At the same time, plaguing the DOL was the growing problem of industrial homework which appeared in this country prior to the turn of the century. The Department of Labor studied both labor situations, handcrafting in the home and industrial homework. As the Department worked through the years to develop a system of checks and balances, it has become apparent that all forms of work in the home have been influenced by its intervention.

The welfare of the worker was the primary concern of the Department of Labor and the factor which precipitated numerous investigations into working conditions in both the factory and the home. These investigations quite often dealt with the health and well-being of women, as well as the serious concern about abusive child-labor practices.

Specifically addressing the welfare of women in the labor market was the Women's Bureau, a division of the Department of Labor. This Women's Bureau was organized in 1918 as a war agency of the Department of Labor under the name, "Women in Industry Service" to meet the emergencies of war conditions to the extent that they related to the employment of women. By an act of Congress in 1920, it was given a permanent legal status and its name was changed to Women's Bureau. The responsibilities of this agency were to look after the welfare of working women and to assist in improving their working conditions, efficiency and advancement on the job.

In carrying out these mandated responsibilities, the Bureau was expected to obtain and publish information on special problems relating to women in industry, as well as research relevant topics, recommending policy changes when necessary. There is no question that over the years the Women's Bureau has come down on the side of encouraging women to work outside of the home. This has not been so much a feminist issue but one of concern for the sweatshop conditions under which women found themselves while working in their very own home.

In 1919, the Women's Bureau published one of its earliest bulletins, Bulletin #9, entitled, "Home Work in Bridgeport, Connecticut." In addition to examining the extent of homework in Bridgeport, which was considerable, the bulletin reviewed industrial homework as it existed in 1919 throughout the country.

The report in Bulletin #9 noted that the attitude of the United States government regarding the problem of homework is apparent in a recommendation made at the beginning of World War I by the Quartermaster General's Department in its, "Standard of Employment in War Work." This standard stated that, "no work shall be given out to be done in rooms used for living purposes, or in rooms directly connected with living rooms in any dwelling or tenement. There were strong suspicions that the rationale behind this standard was not to protect the worker, as one might assume or hope, but rather to increase productivity. The belief was that

workers at home were difficult to muster. More importantly, employers did not feel they could get the maximum effort from people working in their homes as there was no direct supervision. During World War II all homework was prohibited under the Public Contract Act--in order to get the most efficient production for the war effort. The Women's Bureau concurred with the Quartermaster General and did not support work produced in the home.

The 1919 study by the Women's Bureau helped to surface many of the problems that government at both the state and federal level had to confront. In regards to child labor, it was apparent when children were in the home it was difficult to prevent them from working along with their mother. Women and children would continue to work in sweatshop conditions within the home unless strict licensing and inspection were put in place.

The Women's Bureau was able to produce a list of the kinds of work being done in the home. This master list was a compilation of lists from federal and state departments of labor, NRA code authorities, and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration home visitors. Work could be categorized according to the skill level of the worker. Unskilled or semi-skilled hand work which was sent out by the factory owner into homes formed the major part of all industrial homework. Items in this category included artificial flowers, baseball stuffing and stitching, clothespins, doll clothes, flags, lamp shades, tag marking,

and nut shelling. Skilled work sent and done entirely or in part by machine included leather glove production, dresses, and fur garments. Work that required skilled hand work of a repetitive nature, in addition to work done on machines, included beaded bags, caned chairs, and hand embroidery. These items were not considered to have any artistic value although the work applied was of a specialized nature.

The final category of homework referred to handicrafts having an art sale value. Craftspersons producing their own work for sale were not included as industrial homeworkers nor were women who did custom millinery work. Crafts which were listed included baskets, candlewick bedspreads, infants wear, hooked rugs, and knitted sportswear.

Obtaining accurate counts of the number of people performing homework was difficult. Many workers did not register with the state and handicrafters were almost nonexistent since no one kept a national registry of them.

Regulation of homework in this country became a state issue long before it was ever recognized by the federal government. In 1884 the state of New York passed the first state legislation relating to homework. The first law was declared unconstitutional so succeeding laws attempted to control homework through regulations of the sanitary conditions under which the work was performed. The method adopted was to license either the homeworker or the employer. A factory inspector became an important part of the system--issuing licenses, inspecting, and reporting.

Prior to this time, there had been an inspection system of factories only.

Efforts to protect the homemaker and the consumer were no longer confined to the state of New York. Many other states followed with their own legislation; some legislation applied to certain types of dwelling, some to certain products, while others applied to certain categories of workers. Regardless of the type of legislation, the ultimate goals were all moving towards the control of homework and in many cases its abolition.

Interest in the prohibition of homework was stimulated during the 1930s by the regulation of homework under the NRA code. The NRA code had essentially prohibited homework. The death of the NRA meant the rebirth of homework in some areas--a challenge facing the Department of Labor which had up to this time permitted homework to be regulated and policed by the states.

The government in 1936 passed the Walsh-Healey Act which included a prohibition of any industrial homework on federal contracts. Clearly a concern remained that labor abuses in the home must be curtailed.

The Women's Bureau in the midst of the confusion over homework posed the question--what next? The consensus of the Bureau was that there was a need to help the skilled craftsperson supplement the family income while caring for the family. The solution suggested seemed to encourage the women to leave their homes. This plan would assist in the

development of handicraft centers in rural areas, small towns, or city neighborhood sections in which women could find part-time employment at wage scales commensurate with their skills. Someone would have to coordinate the buying, selling, and overhead expenses of the center in order to permit adequate wages and yet allow prices the public could pay. The Bureau felt such centers must be protected from competing low-paid homework and any other competitive factors. This would be accomplished through advertising, trademarks and education. The idea of handicraft centers may have seemed practical, but before they could be developed the Department of Labor set before all workers something of a much higher priority.

The landmark year in the history of the labor movement in the United States was 1938. A wage and hour bill was enacted which advocates believed would bring relief to millions of underpaid workers in factories and homes as well as eliminate child labor. The regulation enacted to bring about these reforms was called the Fair Labor Standards Act. The basic thrust of the FLSA was to set minimum wages for workers and establish a system of control over the number of hours a person could legally work in any one day.

No specific mention of homework was made in the original FLSA. The Administration of the Wage and Hour Division clarified the application of the Act to homeworkers as follows: Since the Act contains no prescription to the place where the employee must work, it is evident that

employees otherwise coming within the term of the Act are entitled to its benefits whether they perform their work at home, in the factory or elsewhere (U.S. Department of Labor, Bulletin No. 1, 1938).

In 1939, recordkeeping procedures for homework were issued by the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor. In order to control industrial homework, employers were asked to obtain a work permit from the Wage and Hour Division of the DOL, and provide homeworkers with forms on which they could record the hours worked, pieces produced, etc. Both employer and employee were required to sign the forms at the end of a week's work.

The Department of Labor began its own inspection of homes in 1938 using the same methods previously adopted for inspection of factories. Home workshops would have to abide by labor laws that covered such areas as safety and health, hours, wages, accidents and child labor. No inspection system, state or federal, could solve the problem of homework abuse. Not every homeworker was registered and there were never enough inspectors to cover the thousands of homes requiring observation. Results of these inspections were less than encouraging--adequate records were not being kept by employers or the workers at home. Due to these flagrant violations, seven major industries were declared off-limits for homework.

The individual attempting to work at home was unprepared for a major addition to the Fair Labor Standards Act.



Probably no section of the FLSA had the Impact on future home businesses as did, "Employment of Home Workers in Certain Industries," 29 CFR, Section 530. Homework in seven very popular homework industries--women's apparel, jewelry, knitted outerwear, gloves and mittens, buttons and buckles, handkerchiefs and embroidery--was prohibited by 29 CFR, Section 530. An Individual could obtain a certificate of exception if that person met certain qualifications.

Homework was permitted if a person was aged, physically or mentally disabled, caring for an invalid, or was engaged in industrial homework prior to the date when the regulation became effective In a given industry. The date could be waived if it caused a hardship. Also exempt from this ruling were people working in sheltered workshops under the supervision of a state vocational rehabilitation agency.

A Department of Labor investigation could be ordered in any case where fraud was suspected. As part of a DOL investigation, a medical examination of the homemaker or invalid could be ordered or a certification of facts concerning eligibility for the certificate by designated officers of the state or federal government might be required.

New regulations prohibited homeworkers from performing work for more than one employer In the same industry, but nothing prevented them from applying for certificates to perform work in two different industries at the same time, provided they were eligible.

A special provision of the FLSA under Title 29, Part 530.12 was made for the American Indian producing jewelry. Nothing contained in the regulations was to be construed so as to prohibit the employment, as homeworkers, of American Indians residing in Navajo, Pueblo, and Hopi Indian reservations, engaged in producing genuine hand-fashioned jewelry. The homework had to be in conformity with predetermined conditions and every employer of one or more Indian homeworkers engaged in making handcrafted jewelry was required to file regular reports with the regional office of the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor. This information would provide the DOL with the names of the Indians, a description of the work they performed, the amount the worker earned each day, plus other pertinent information related to the homework. Still another group of homeworkers was drawing attention to its plight. An interesting situation was developing in the 1940s which clearly showed the impact that the FLSA could have upon a home industry and the people involved.

In the Southern Appalachians, a special home industry had developed in the 1920s. Homeworkers in remote areas were provided with fabric and paid by the piece to make tufted bedspreads. Wages were always quite low and the 1930's Depression served to further depress them. At this same time machine production was introduced which gradually replaced handicraft in the lower-priced spreads. As demand for cheap, factory-produced spreads increased, the market

for the better handmade spreads decreased. Factory employment increased and homework declined. Workers who attempted to remain at home and work under the new FLSA were forced to "doctor" their work sheets so that they would appear to be making the minimum wage and thus have the right to work at home. Unfortunately, they never could make a minimum wage since the handwork took so much longer on the better-quality bedspreads that they attempted to produce.

The problem of work in the home versus work in the factory caused many people to raise new questions. Should there not be some rules and regulations developed which would assist such home businesses as the tufted bedspread makers and enable them to continue? Many argued that Congress should be increasing employment opportunities, not discouraging them. As machine production in the factory usurped hand production in the home, handworkers obviously could not get as much per hour as machine workers. These homeworkers posed the question of whether there was anything in the law which prohibited people from being independent contractors so as to remove them out from under the provisions of the Wage and Hour Act. The Department of Labor replied that it did not feel in the ordinary case that a homemaker was an independent contractor. The feeling was that this person was an employee, as stated in Section .3a of the Wage and Hour Act. An employee was defined, "to include any person acting directly or individually in the interest of an employer in relation to an employee." The

rebuttal by the homeworkers argued that the person making bedspreads really did not follow work guidelines of employers but chose to work when and how she pleased-- working as fast or slow as she liked. They believed this put them in the category of an independent contractor. No, said the DOL. The employee still had to meet the orders of the employer in regard to style, quality, etc., thus they were workers.

The case regarding the homemade tufted bedspreads served as a reminder to many other home industries developing throughout the country. The Department of Labor, in its efforts to raise wages, cast a shadow over many people working in their homes for someone else. The situation prompted these people to stop and think about whether or not they were employees or independent contractors. The DOL made it very difficult for them to be the latter.

From their inception, homework regulations were written in such a way that they would be difficult to evade. Incorporated in these regulations was a broad, encompassing definition of "industrial homework." Under the FLSA, "industrial homework" was the production by any person in or about a home, apartment, tenement, or room in a residential establishment, for an employer, of goods from material furnished directly or indirectly for such employer" (29 CFR 617.101, April 18, 1942).

Attempts to evade this original regulation were numerous and in 1951, in referring to knit outerwear, the

Administration of the Wage and Hour Division of the DOL explained, "The Administration is of the opinion that the regulations were intended to apply to all employment in homework whereby goods are produced for or on behalf of members of this industry, regardless of the source of the materials used by the homeworkers, and has been enforcing the regulations on the basis that homeworkers employed in this industry were subject to the Act and the regulations whether they produced directly for an employer or distributor, or under a so-called "purchase and sale" or "agency" arrangements or other devices designed to disguise the employment relation."

Through the years various court decisions have been handed down as cases related to the issue of homework were handled. All affirmed the Administration's broad decision of persons covered by homework regulations. These decisions related to the Administration's ruling that homeworkers were employees and not independent contractors and that purchase and sale agreements cannot avoid the employer-employee relationship.

The argument over homework versus work in the home continued to simmer. In a 1958-1959 report the Department of Labor noted that over 7,000 homeworkers were typists and accounted for fifty-two per cent of people doing machine work. Thirty-six percent of machine workers were doing cutting or sewing. Ironically, typists did not have to

prove physical disability in order to work at home, while sewers did.

The case of the typist versus the sewer was indicative of the new issues facing the DOL as more people chose to establish a place of work in the home. The questions being raised about who should and could work legally at home were presented to a Department of Labor unprepared to provide a satisfactory answer.

Homework never disappeared as the Department of Labor had hoped. Instead, homework went underground and proliferated. By 1980 the issue erupted with a new resurgence and sides were taken as never before. Some people called the resurgence of work in the home a resurgence of sweatshops, while others saw it as a perfectly acceptable way to earn a living.

At the center of the controversy over work in the home were women contentedly knitting ski caps in their Vermont homes. Apparently, several women had been contracted by ski cap manufacturers to make handknit caps. These women were pleased to have the chance to remain in the comfort of their homes with their families and earn an income.

Unions adopted another view. When learning of those operations, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), along with the AFL-CIO, charged that the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29CFR, 530, was being violated and all such manufacturing should cease.

The unions approached the case from several fronts. They argued that apparel manufacturers have fixed overhead costs, while a homemaker often pays his/her own costs, which are often lower. Factory owners must pay for vacation and sick leave, while homeworkers receive none of these, giving the employer of homeworkers a lower operating cost and an unfair advantage. The union also presented the issue of sweatshops, which were once again becoming a major problem in the apparel industry. Sweatshops employed non-unionized workers, many of them illegal aliens. The ILGWU hammered away on this subject, claiming that work in the home was already or could certainly lead to more sweatshops and ultimately abuse of the worker.

Supporting the labor union on the issue of work at home was the National Consumers League (NCL). The NCL believed that enforcement of the FLSA would preserve the minimum wage, prevent child labor, deter unfair competition to factory owners, preserve women's rights, assure rights of workers to unionize, and provide enforcement of the occupational health and safety laws. The NCL urged knitters to form a producers cooperative much like the USDA Farmers Cooperative, instead of serving as an employee of a manufacturer.

Rebutting the arguments of the ILGWU and the NCL are advocates of the "new homework." One such advocate, the Attorney General of the State of Vermont, John Easton, Jr., disputed the argument that people working in homes would be

underpaid, abusive of child labor rules or suffering in unhealthy working environments. Easton argued that times have changed and that homework regulations are overbroad and outdated. People no longer automatically leave home to work in a factory and, according to Easton, many live in areas of the country where there are no conveniently located factories. The cost of travel and child care would put factory work out of the reach of those people.

It should be noted that during this time a return of real sweatshop conditions was occurring in New York City and Los Angeles. Workers, mainly illegal aliens, were experiencing much the same exploitation as workers did prior to the FLSA. Ironically, the interest in home based businesses was peaking at the same time, thus catching the DOL in the middle.

The argument of fairness resurfaced during the early 1980s debate. As one person questioned, "Are we to assume that only workers in the seven prohibited industries would be exploited? Should we assume, for example, that people who stay at home and stuff envelopes are always well paid, never abused, etc.?"

After hearing from all sides, and with the support of the Secretary of Labor, James Donovan, the Department of Labor, on October 9, 1981, rescinded the restrictions on employment of homeworkers in the knitted outerwear industry. Essentially, home knitters could be free to work, provided



they and their employers complied with the DOL regulations requiring work permits.

Opposition to the 1981 ruling was strong and after much effort, the opponents presented their case to the U.S. Court of Appeals. On November 19, 1983, this Court revoked the earlier 1981 ruling on the grounds that support of the recession was inadequate. The Court of Appeals did not find that the DOL had presented enough evidence on behalf of the home knitters.

The Department of Labor maintained that it could effectively enforce the FLSA and that there appeared to be no more violations in the home knitting business than there were in the six remaining restricted industries. Its argument did not convince the Court and on February 29, 1984, the Court of Appeals Issued its mandate, reimposing the ban on home knitting after a period of two years during which time homework in the knitted outerwear industry had been legal.

Banning homework in the knitted outerwear industry seemed to many as a giant step back, although it was heralded by the labor unions as a well-deserved victory. The hearings and debates on the subject of whether or not people should be allowed to knit for profit in their homes had covered a period of four years. All of the time and energy, not to mention cost, affected only 120 individuals who were actually employed as homeworkers in the knitted outerwear industry. The industry as a whole employed

approximately 63,000 people, most of whom were workers in a factory setting. In spite of the very small number of people involved, on March 27, 1984, the DOL published an emergency temporary ruling suspending the ban on homework mandated by the Court of Appeals on February 29th.

The final ruling on homework in the knitted outerwear industry was signed on December 5, 1984. The ruling established a certification system for employers who wish to employ homeworkers in the knitted outerwear industry. Employers would be required to obtain a certificate from the Department of Labor authorizing their employment of homeworkers. Employers in the knitted outerwear industry who did not obtain the required certificate would be prohibited from employing homeworkers. The DOL continued to view with disfavor employees referring to themselves as independent contractors. If the work done follows the usual path of an employee, that person is an employee.

The Department of Labor appears inclined to do away with restrictions on six remaining industries where homework is prohibited women's apparel, jewelry, gloves and mittens, buttons and buckles, handkerchiefs, and embroidery. The Department believes that the current restrictions are too harsh in light of a changing society and deprive people of their right to work in their own home. Many Americans are consciously choosing to operate a business at home--others would be unable to work if they could not do so in their own home. Regardless of further steps to relieve current

restrictions on homework, the Department of Labor will still play an important role in seeing that labor abuses do not occur in the home which in any way would affect the worker or his or her family.

## FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

### (FERA)

The federal government became acutely aware in the early years of the Depression that many people were neither being supported nor encouraged by existing federal programs. Men and women in both urban and rural areas of the country were desperately in need of work. Assistance to millions of these people came in the form of the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933. The purpose of this Act, as approved by President Roosevelt, was "to provide for cooperation by the Federal Government with the several states and territories and the District of Columbia in relieving the hardship and suffering caused by unemployment, and for other purposes" (Works Progress Administration, Monograph VI, 1933-1935). The Act was to be in effect for two years during which time training programs as well as public works projects would be established.

As part of the FERA program, an investigation of rural America was undertaken to determine probable causes of the depressed conditions on farms and recommend solutions in addition to what federal relief programs were already offering. Results of the study of rural America included

suggestions that farmers resettle in areas where land was better and that they essentially remain in farming. No mention was made at this time that farmers and their families consider developing a business or improving skills that would enable them to supplement their farm income.

Although every good intention was imbedded in the FERA with the hope that it would solve the severe unemployment at the time, no one could wipe away the problem. By 1935 unemployment was at an all-time high and a stern President Roosevelt reacted in his annual message to Congress on January 4, 1935. Discouraged by the lack of positive results from his FERA, he ordered, "work must be found for able-bodied but destitute workers...the Federal Government must and shall quit this business of relief" (Works Progress Administration, Monograph VI, 1933-1935).

On January 7, 1935, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration was superseded with a coordinated authority charged with the orderly liquidation of the present relief activities. The new program was to be governed by a new set of principles, some of which were:

1. All work undertaken must be useful
2. Projects shall be labor intensive
3. Projects shall be self-liquidating in the sense that the government might expect to get its money back
4. Projects should compete with private enterprise as little as possible
5. Projects should be located where they will serve the greatest number of unemployed.

On January 7, 1935, the directors of Emergency Education and of Women's Work were asked to cooperate in the development of a program for vocational training in home economics and crafts, and training for household work. Areas to be covered included canning, making and remodelling clothing, rug weaving, plus the making of soap, bedding, baskets, toys, wicker furniture, etc. The USDA assisted in some of these programs through its cooperative extension programs. This joint effort was the beginning of a continued program to assist people in developing skills that would enable them to earn some income while working in the home. Projects were numerous and bound up in the proverbial "red tape" but the intent was honest--to help people survive by providing for themselves. Throughout this whole period, the concept of operating a home business never received much attention. Nevertheless, people found themselves in business as they developed skills in producing a good or service in their homes.

Although not necessarily encouraging home businesses, the FERA did seriously encourage self-help cooperatives. These cooperatives were an outgrowth of the barter associations which people used to a great extent during the Depression. The cooperatives involved the home production of staple food products, clothing, and home furnishings which were consumed by the workers themselves. By the end of 1935 there were 185 such cooperative organizations throughout the country.

On May 6, 1935, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration was officially closed and the Works Progress Administration was established to expedite work programs already in effect. Most programs under the FERA were transferred to WPA, using the same personnel in most cases.

The Works Program represented a combination and coordination of most of the federal agencies including WPA, Public Works Administration, Civil Conservation Corp, Resettlement Administration, Rural Electrification Administration, plus regular departments of the U.S. government.

Employable persons on the emergency relief rolls, who included artists, writers and craftspeople, were included in works programs covered under the WPA. Under the Division of Professional and Service Projects of the WPA, monies were subject to allotment and recession by this Division. Selection of projects to be carried on in a locality were guided by two considerations: the abilities of the available personnel and the need and desire of the community in question.

The significance of this program established in 1935 was the attention it paid to arts and crafts. Three major categories of support under the Service Projects included: adult education, which encompassed vocational education and avocational leisure-time activities, recreational projects, and museum projects.

Federal projects related to the arts included creative work in graphics, plastic art, handicraft, poster work, teaching of arts and crafts, and preparation of exhibits.

Creative arts projects were chiefly devoted to the production of works that could be developed in public buildings. Only one restriction was placed upon the subject matter. It had to be American, whether naturalistic, symbolic, legendary or historical. Handicraft projects were usually used in decorating public areas.

For many Americans, the opportunity to attend a class in order to learn how to make a craft item was especially important. Artists and craftspeople employed in W.P.A. projects taught their particular arts and crafts across the country in a wide variety of locations, including military bases and hospitals. It is very conceivable that many of these crafts became for some people the basis for an income, whether they first learned the techniques for rehabilitation or leisure time needs.

Arts projects under the W.P.A. were conducted from 1935 to 1939 when Congress finally objected on the grounds that no local contributions were required for support. On August 31, 1939, the monies were reaccessioned and this particular phase of the program ended.

#### NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Handicrafts have traditionally formed the major category of products produced and sold through home based businesses. These items ranged in value and quality from very poor to excellent. Some were national treasures,

others national junk. Some handicrafts provided a livelihood, others merely a way to "while away the time."

Although various federal departments and agencies had supported and encouraged crafts, both as an art form and as a means of earning a living, there was no one specific agency or program directly responsible for crafts. Thanks to the National Endowment for the Arts, support became available on an official level.

The National Endowment for the Arts is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1965 to encourage and support American arts and crafts. It receives annual appropriations from Congress from which it awards matching grants to non-profit, tax-exempt arts organizations of "outstanding quality," and fellowships to artists of "exceptional talents." The National Endowment for the Arts also provides a minimum of twenty percent of its program funds in matching grants to state arts agencies and to regional arts organizations.

Although at first glance this program may have appeared to be the long-awaited answer to every struggling crafts-person's wish, there were serious limitations. Until 1972 the National Endowment for the Arts placed no particular emphasis on crafts and no single endowment program existed through which assistance could be provided for the promotion and development of crafts.

The American Crafts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts met in 1972 to both discuss the crafts field



and to develop programs that would meet the needs of craftspeople. The outcome of this meeting made it clear that the crafts area would be included in the Visual Arts programs under the National Endowment for the Arts.

As officially stated, the National Endowment Visual Arts Program seeks to:

1. Bring craftsmen into elementary and secondary schools
2. Assist professionally-directed, community-based arts organizations
3. Bring craftsmen for short-term residence into art schools, museums, etc.
4. Assist in placement of quality crafts in public places
5. Assist in developing workshop programs to help in developing quality crafts
6. Enable craftspeople to have time off to advance their profession
7. Assist museums in purchasing, exhibiting, and preserving craft collections.

The Visual Arts Program has been of considerable significance to those individuals who have a craft-oriented home business. The support available to them from the National Endowment for the Arts is direct, of high quality and supportive. Although the objectives of the Visual Arts Program do not address improvement of crafts for commercial gains, it goes without saying that this can be the result for the craftsman. No other government program so directly addresses the craftsman's special needs, either through grants or other forms of support.

## NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT

(NRA)

As the Depression deepened, more and more people were willing to work any job for almost any pay. This attitude increased the numbers of those individuals working at home, primarily in very inhumane industrial homework situations. As this situation accelerated, a plan was prepared which would for years to come affect the potential opportunities for working at home.

The desperate business climate which existed in 1933 and the failure of other methods to prevent the downward spiral of the economy prompted President Roosevelt's proposal for the National Industrial Recovery Administration. This program was established under the provision of Title I of H-R 5755, 73rd Congress, June 16, 1933. The Act was limited to two years, although the President was authorized to end it sooner if he deemed appropriate. The President felt government must intervene in a more competitive manner in order to put the country on its feet. The major thrust of the program was to put people to work.

The method by which this major goal was to be accomplished was to encourage cooperative action within industry itself and to direct government expenditure towards public works.

The Provision of the National Recovery Act was divided into three sections or titles. Title I applied most

directly to home businesses with a number of specific objectives relevant to work at home.

It is important to note some of the more important Title I objectives directly related to homework:

1. To promote the organization of industry for the purpose of cooperative action among trade groups
2. To induce and maintain united action of labor and management under adequate government sanction and supervision
3. To promote fullest possible utilization of the present production capacity of Industries
4. To avoid undue reduction of production
5. To Increase the consumption of Industrial and agricultural products by increasing purchasing power
6. To reduce and relieve unemployment
7. To improve standards of labor
8. To otherwise rehabilitate industry and to conserve natural resources.

Industrial homework was to become a "thing of the past" if these objectives were met to their fullest.

The intent of the Act was for each trade or industry to establish standards on the basis of which all enterprises in that trade or industry should conduct business. There really was little room for compromise. If the initiative was not taken by the trade association, the President would develop these "codes of fair competition" himself. The Federal Trade Commission had the power to expose any unfair competition that might be found by the development of the codes themselves.

Under the NRA manufacturers undertook to set code standards that raised wages and shortened hours for factory workers. These same manufacturers were forced to consider industrial homework from the point of view both of labor standards and competitive trade practices.

The establishment of uniform labor standards through the codes for the various industries brought a recognition of the menace of homework. "Peer pressure" was brought to bear on the part of manufacturers. Employers who were willing to pay fair wages to their employees knew they would be helpless against employers who chose to use homeworkers. Leaders in various industries accepted the fact that homework had to be discouraged and in most cases abolished or heavily regulated.

One hundred and seven codes were written for different industries. Ninety abolished homework, ten restricted homework to specific operations or provided for a gradual reduction in homework and seven permitted homework to continue but provided for the establishment of piece or wages rates. The codes lacked uniformity and resulted in some industries suffering severe hardships. In general, this lack of uniformity was confusing not only to workers and employers but also government and its enforcement agents.

A special homework committee was appointed by the NRA in March, 1934, to study the whole homework situation and to make recommendations. This study was conducted by the Women's Bureau and Children's Bureau of the Department of

Labor. The purpose of the study was to ascertain the conditions under which homework was being carried on in industries where it had not been abolished by codes. Findings of these studies indicated varying degrees of success. Problems were encountered in efforts to abolish or regulate homework because the workers were scattered and frequently moved from one home to another, thus being very difficult to trace. Employers often lived in one state and employed homeworkers in another state. State and federal inspectors who happened upon a homework violation would have little chance of ever finding the employer in this case. As a result of all this confusion, inspectors were faced with the dilemma of ascertaining who should be charged with the homework violation and preventing its reoccurrence.

Authorities found it virtually impossible to bring about prohibitive code agreements except in instances where employees were strongly organized. Employees did as they wished or attempted "to get around" established codes in whatever way they could. In the end, even the most ruthless of employers knew that sooner or later he too would have to abide by the code. Regardless of the abuse of the rule, the codes did work. Homework was controlled and gradually eliminated in most industries.

The intent of the NRA was to completely abolish industrial homework leaving no one eligible to work at home. For some people this edict proved to be crueler than the homework itself. Some categories of people were in critical

need of homework as it was their only possible means of livelihood. On May 15, 1934, President Roosevelt issued an Executive Order exempting certain groups of workers from homework provisions of the codes. Certificates were issued to physically incapacitated workers, workers too old for adjustment to factory life and workers whose services were needed in the home to care for an invalid.

The result of the May 15 Executive Order was the opening of a Pandora's box. On July 24, 1934, the President of the Homework Protective League of America sent a radiogram to President Roosevelt. "Homeworkers Protective League besieged by mothers with dependent children deprived from earning livelihood because NRA prohibits against industrial homework. New York Labor Law permits homework. These mothers petition your Excellency amend executive order May 15 include them in permissive class" ("Homework Plea", 1934, p. 3). This appeal brought to the attention of many the dual set of restrictions people were under, one from the state and the other from federal government. Over the years, most states had established labor regulations that addressed the problem of homework and its regulation. The NRA crossed all state lines and superceded any state policy.

The President stood firm on his policies in spite of the strong plea to permit mothers to work at home. Most authorities agreed with him, feeling strongly that allowing mothers to work at home would be a serious setback to the successful control of homework.

Women around the country were quite disturbed by the President's stand and felt unfairly discriminated against. On October 3, 1934, two women, Mrs. Nanette Sabatini and Mrs. Rose Perricone of New York City, were granted permits to work at home, due to family obligations. The judge ruled that the NRA homework provisions were aimed at manufacturers, not workers, and allowed them to work at home in industries where homework had been totally abolished.

The National Recovery Act was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1935. With the end of federal control, a number of states were stimulated to adopt new or stronger homework curbs.

The NRA was designed with the belief that it could speed the process of economic recovery. It was designed to spread the available work by a reduction of working hours per week. It, in effect, changed the relations between employers and labor organizations forever. Working at home became a major government issue for the first time in history and the decisions surrounding homework became more significant as they directly impacted upon so many individuals and their families.

#### SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

(SBA)

In 1953 an independent federal agency was formed to assist the small business owner. This agency, created under the Small Business Act of 1953 was to be known as the Small

Business Administration. Its mission, as stated in the founding charter: "...should aid, counsel, assist, and protect, Insofar as possible, the interests of small business owner...and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of the Nation" (Whitnak, 1983, p. 483). Although the very name implies that it would be the natural support system for the typical home based business operation, the SBA unfortunately was not formed with the home business in mind. In fact, to this date no universally accepted definition of a small business has been formulated. For purposes of the Act, the general feeling was that a small business should be independently owned and operated with the maximum number of employees varying from one industry to another. In general, small business meant an organization with probably fewer than 250 employees, located away from the home, with good growth potential. The SBA has proven to be a source of financial support for eligible small businesses, plus a major source of information and expertise on every aspect of operating a small business.

The home based business owner has never been completely ignored by the SBA, in spite of the fact that home businesses do not receive top priority. Several publications have appeared over the years which are specifically directed to the handicraft and home business operator.

In a 1966 publication, "Handicraft and Home Business," the SBA recognized that often a hobby can be turned into a profitable business. Advice to the hobbyist-turned-entre-



preneur was: (1) know how to make an Item; (2) get a basic knowledge of marketing; (3) develop a knowledge of management; (4) check with local licensing bureaus before starting a business.

As the craft movement grew in this country, the SBA expanded its publications directed toward people in the crafts. In an SBA publication entitled "Handicrafts," author Robert W. Gray acknowledges that many people enter the handicrafts field because they think it offers more freedom and more opportunity for creativity and self-expression than other professions. Gray admonishes craftspeople to be aware that people get paid only for the time they work. Perhaps this advice best illustrates the SBA philosophy--be practical about what you can put into and expect to get out of a business.

By the 1980s the SBA could no longer ignore the growing lobby of home based business owners. In 1984 the Small Business Administration and the National Association for the Cottage Industry entered into a Cooperative Technical Assistance Agreement to provide management counselling and training to individuals owning small businesses who were in need of such services and were financially unable to afford the cost of private consultants. In essence, this agreement provides for a system whereby the SBA would transfer most requests for help coming from home based business owners over to a member of the National Association for the Cottage Industry. (See Appendix B for complete agreement.) The

cooperative arrangement probably came none too soon for both parties. The SBA, deluged by requests to help the home based business operator and the National Association for the Cottage Industry, eager for support, needed one another. Above all, the 1984 cooperative effort calls attention to the fact that the SBA must now recognize that small businesses in the home are a part of the social and economic system of this country.

The Small Business Administration stands today as the prime source of information for the home based business operator. The counselling and publications available in this agency far exceed the same sort of help available in any other government agency or department.

## CHAPTER III

### SURVEY STUDY

#### Use of Descriptive Survey

This study used two distinctly different approaches to collection of data and background information.

The first approach is historical, used to examine the subject over the past 100 years. Journals, essays, books, newspapers and periodicals were reviewed with the intention of organizing the information in such a way that the evolution of work in the home should become apparent.

The second approach was the use of a descriptive survey. This phase of the study following the historical work, was a mailed survey of Franklin and Berkshire County home based business owners (see Appendix D).

"With the exception of surveys based on a search of records, surveys are dependent on direct communication with persons having characteristics, behaviors, attitudes, and other relevant information appropriate for a specific investigation" (Isaac & Michael, 1981, p. 128). Surveys thus become reactive as the respondent is being asked to give an opinion or general information and as such may solicit misleading data.

The mailed questionnaire is the most commonly used survey as it is inexpensive, can be self administering and anonymous. On the contrary a low response rate can occur

along with little validation that the questions were understood or answered by the intended respondent.

In spite of the limitations associated with the mailed questionnaire it offers the best vehicle by which to collect data from a diverse and widely dispersed population.

A questionnaire was developed to survey home business owners in Franklin and Berkshire Counties in Massachusetts.

The survey was financed by a grant from the Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station, College of Food and Natural Resources, University of Massachusetts.

The questionnaire was designed to obtain the following data:

1. Participants were asked to identify their type of business, describe the extent of their involvement and indicate their interest in the business presently and for the future.
2. Participants were asked why they were involved in their particular businesses, what rewards they received, the general frustrations that came with such work and why they felt they had reached their current status.
3. Participants were asked to list their highest level of education completed, any additional work they had done and what they expected to do in the future. They were also asked a series of questions in relation to sources of help to determine where the potential providers of assistance may be found in the future.
4. Data were reviewed to determine if there were any developing trends in these cottage industries.

### Population

#### Survey of Berkshire and Franklin Counties

The population for this survey came from Berkshire and Franklin Counties. Franklin and Berkshire Counties shared

several important commonalities. They were both adjacent to Hampshire County where the University of Massachusetts was located and the research was conducted. Both counties had large rural areas where individuals and families had settled and established home based businesses of various types. These counties were recognized as areas where numerous cottage industries existed, especially the more craft-oriented businesses. Cooperative Extension Home Economists in both counties had developed active programs to support the growing home based businesses within the respective counties and could lend their support to this research.

The sample used for the Franklin and Berkshire county survey was obtained from a compilation of names of people who were identified as possibly having a business in the home. The individuals and agencies which cooperated by permitting their lists to be used or by permitting this author to look through their records may be found in Appendix E.

The intention of the survey was to contact individuals who operated a home based business that was product oriented. The one type of home based business that was purposely excluded was in-home child care. Due to the fact that most child care providers were regulated by state and federal governments it was felt by this author that their work fell beyond the limits of the more traditional home business.

Assembling a list of names was laborious and required a good deal of follow-up as one name led to another and duplicates appeared throughout the search for names. When completed the mailing list represented 553 names in Franklin County and 529 names in Berkshire County.

Limitations of this sample were always obvious from the start as the names on lists for both counties could not be confirmed as people who actually owned a home based business. Although there were some very short lists of home business owners they would not have served as a representative sample in themselves.

The solicitation of names of individuals who operated a business from the home was a delicate procedure. Many people operating a home business did not want the state or federal government to know of their existence for reasons related to tax purposes. Other names were released reluctantly because they formed the nucleus of a successful craft fair and organizers wanted some exclusivity. Organizations providing names were uneasy that they might be invading the privacy of people with whom they worked. In every case assurance was given that once the mailing list was compiled and the surveys mailed, the list would be destroyed. In addition, the surveys were not coded in any way in the hope that the sample population would feel more open with their replies.

## Design of Instrument

The instrument included questions which were relevant to the grant proposal but not pertinent to this study. Those questions which were not relevant were deleted when the data were analyzed for this paper.

The original survey was designed with the assistance of faculty members in the School of Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. To test the survey and determine if it would solicit adequate replies a pilot study was conducted in Springfield, Massachusetts with the cooperation of the Program Coordinator for Hampden County Cooperative Extension. The Program Coordinator distributed the survey along with a comment sheet to members of a home "sewing for profit" group she was facilitating. She was able to collect and return 10 completed questionnaires with comments. This sample was helpful in simplifying the final questions. Following the pilot study, the questionnaire was revised and prepared for mailing.

The survey had been designed to provide both very specific information that could be quantitatively analyzed as well as a number of open-ended questions necessary to get more expansive replies.

It was the hope of the author that respondents would feel encouraged to answer the questions with as much honesty as possible and not feel intimidated by the instrument itself.

### Data Collection

The mailed survey was accompanied with a cover letter personally signed by the author, along with a stamped, pre-addressed envelope (see Appendix D).

Two weeks following the initial mailing of all surveys a postcard was sent to each person on the list, reminding that person to complete the survey and return it at once if he or she had not already done so. No further follow-up was done and the mailing list was destroyed.

### Data Analysis

The major goal of the research was to examine the data and determine the patterns that emerged through the use of descriptive statistic interpretations. Once the distribution of the data was obtained it was evaluated by determining the means and rankings. Replies to questions that solicited an open ended reply were categorized and ranked in order of significance. This method of statistical analysis best matched the style of the survey and could easily be disseminated to those individuals and organizations in need of such information.

### Significance

The data from the survey (Appendix F) was used to develop a demographic profile of home business owners as well as a sense of their needs and personal feelings about



their current situation. When possible, comparisons were made with home business owners in the past. This information could then be passed on to individuals and organizations interested in offering support. Community colleges, Cooperative Extension, and local community development agencies had all expressed an interest in such information so that they might better serve their clients.

### Results

The purpose of this study was to examine home based businesses from an historical perspective as well as a focused basis within Franklin and Berkshire Counties in Massachusetts. Since the survey instrument (see Appendix D) included questions which were pertinent to the purpose of the original grant but not to this study, only those questions relevant to this paper have been covered. The following questions posed in Chapter I are discussed.

How has society viewed individuals who worked at home, has this perception changed, and what were the critical periods which impacted upon work in the home? Although not intentioned, much of the information presented referred to women who earned an income in the home. For most of the 100 years studied it was the woman who did most of the income earning within the home. From 1880 to 1920, industrial homework was prevalent and most women of the lower socio-economic groups who had to work participated in this type of employment. Women of middle and upper socio-economic groups

needing income avoided industrial homework but had to struggle to find alternative work since society frowned upon these women holding a job at all. As a result, women were ashamed to admit that they had to earn a living and when they did attempt to earn an income while at home, often did so in secrecy. There were very few "respectable" alternatives for work in the home. Some women gave lessons, while others tried to capitalize on their homemaking skills. Observers of this period would have to admit that there was no easy way to earn an income in the home.

From 1920 to 1940 attitudes changed, due in large part to the need for women to work outside of the home during WWI. When women returned to the home they found greater acceptance for their ability to earn income. Many women became more active in home businesses and started to see more encouragement from organizations and publications directed to their interests. The Depression also impacted on how people survived financially and both men and women performed nontraditional work during that hard economic period in the United States. It was during the Depression that men started to get involved in work in the home and there was no lack of encouragement for them to do so.

The period from 1940-1960 boosted the possibilities for women to earn an income while at home as they again proved themselves during WWII either by working in factories or running home businesses. Men also moved into home businesses during this war. The period following the WWII saw

women returning to the home in order that the returning military men could have their old jobs back. These women were much more conditioned to working and found it difficult to go home and sit passively after several years of earning a good income. This feeling of boredom precipitated a growing interest upon women to become more independent, many starting home businesses.

The years from 1960-1980 were proof of the major shift in society's attitudes towards women, work in the home, and roles within families. The upheaval in the 1960s created by the Vietnam War and the rebelliousness of youth shook many mores of the time. It became acceptable for men and women to work where they pleased and they did. Home businesses grew daily and gathered the support of government, organizations related to home businesses and society in general. Part of this new work style can be credited to the significant growth in the popularity of crafts where men and women played equal roles. The introduction of technology provided alternative career possibilities in the home and seemed to give a credibility to such work. Although not completely erased, the stigma attached to the idea of work in the home was greatly diminished.

What role has the federal government played in the development of home based business? Which federal agency or department made the greatest impact upon past and present home based businesses? The answers are as varied as the home businesses in the United States. Government's

influence may not be apparent to the casual home business owner because much of the legislation affecting home businesses was put into place years ago. Yet, every person operating a business from the home today is impacted by federal government.

Whether a farm family survived during hard times often rested upon the success of a small business operated at the side of the road or from a farmer's wife's kitchen. The Department of Agriculture very early on recognized the need for support of small farm businesses and offered technical advice as well as opportunity for marketing home produced products. Both men and women benefitted from the numerous programs at the federal, state, and county levels provided by Cooperative Extension Agencies.

The Native Americans, this country's first home business operators, were literally saved by the Department of Interior's work in legitimizing and protecting their hand-crafted work (see Appendix A).

The Department of Labor through its oversight and legislation concerning illegal sweatshops changed the nature of work in the home forever. The prohibition of most types of home production which led to sweatshop conditions forced many factory owners to face their responsibilities towards their workers. Sweatshops still exist today but the difference between the current situation and those prevailing at the turn of the century is that current owners can be prosecuted when discovered.

The Federal Emergency Relief Administration and the National Recovery Act provided temporary assistance to people during the Depression years. Through these programs, individuals could get training and support in establishing a small, home business which provided the only means of support for families.

Craftspeople owe much to the Department of Commerce for its work in supporting and encouraging crafts throughout the United States. Advisors, workshops, and written materials were provided to the novice craftsperson, resulting in a stable and thriving crafts industry in this country.

Artistic merit of crafts was at last recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts. When this federal program took over the support of the crafts in this country a new credibility was given to crafts which heretofore had not gained national respect.

In the 1980's the federal program which contributed most significantly to the home business operation was the Small Business Administration. Expertise, advice, and alliance with home based business organizations (see Appendix B) as made the SBA the major government supporter of home businesses.

It would appear that the role of government in supporting home based businesses has been important and one that has impacted upon every type of home business today.

What is the current profile of a Berkshire and Franklin county home business owner? (See Appendix F for complete

survey results.) The typical home business owner in Berkshire and Franklin county is a married female, between the ages of 31-40. She has one or no children living at home, earns less than 20 percent of the family income in her business. She is not employed outside of the home and spends less than 6 hours a day on her home business. She is involved in a craft business, very likely some craft related to sewing or needle-work.

Experiences Franklin and Berkshire county home business owners have in common with past home business owners. (See Appendix F for complete survey results.) An examination of past home workers and current home workers indicates that the home business owners have always been predominantly women. The types of businesses that women operated over the years are very similar to the ones found in both counties today. The products are much the same, with items made that are related to traditional skills associated with women, specifically fabric and needle crafts (see Tables 4 and 8).

Throughout the history of home based businesses several issues were commonly occurring and can be found even today in Berkshire and Franklin counties' home businesses. Those points to be considered include goals of home business owners, problems associated with the business, status within the community, sources for support, future needs, advice offered by home business owners and extrinsic and intrinsic requirements (see Tables 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 9).

TABLE 1 GOALS OF HOME BUSINESS OWNER WHEN STARTING A BUSINESS. (Survey Question 12) Respondents could give more than one answer. The most commonly given replies are listed below.

Goals	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Income	112	54
Success	57	26
Independence	42	20
Expand business	22	11

Over half of the respondents replied that their goal was income. This same goal was evident from the start of the very first home business. People worked at home because they needed money. Respondents to Question 12 also indicated that they wanted success and independence. These goals would be indicative of the changing attitudes towards work and life goals as apparent in the 1960s and 1970s.

TABLE 2 WHAT PROBLEMS RELATED TO YOUR BUSINESS DO YOU FORESEE IN THE FUTURE? (Survey Question 15) Respondents could give more than one answer. The most commonly given replies are listed below.

<u>Problem</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Marketing	29	14
Capital	23	11
Space	15	7

There was never a decade that passed that the difficulties with marketing a home produced item did not arise. Marketing has been an extremely difficult hurdle for home based business owners to overcome. From the roadside stand of the 1930s to the craft fair of the 1980s the dilemma of how to find customers has gone hand in hand with the home business.

TABLE 3 AS A PERSON WORKING AT HOME DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE THE STATUS OR RESPECT IN THE COMMUNITY THAT YOU DESERVE? (Survey Question 16)

<u>Opinion</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	110	63
No	66	38

The status of the home business owner has climbed considerably since 1960. Prior to that time home businesses were not perceived as significant and in earliest times were only seen as stop-gap measures for the financially restrained owner. Still, the issue of respect is not dead and sixty-six people indicated that they felt a lack of respect for what they were doing. From the very earliest attempts to earn income while at home there existed a need to function covertly so as not to let neighbors know, thus risking the chance that the person would not be respected. Even articles in magazines would be somewhat condescending towards women who tried a home business. Part of this lack



of respect came from the perception that women were only collecting "pin money", just a little money with which to have fun. The transition from earning pin money to the operation of a serious business was something the public did not understand nor respect until the 1970s.

TABLE 4 WHERE DID YOU GAIN THE SKILLS YOU USE IN YOUR WORK AT HOME? (Survey Question 18) Respondents could give more than one answer. The most commonly given replies are listed below.

<u>Source</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Self taught	182	88
School	102	49

Home based business owners today in Franklin and Berkshire counties are no different than their earlier counterparts. People have generally relied on a self-taught skill to use as their basis for a business in the home. From the time when women sold food products and men sold wooden birdhouses, individuals have followed the advice of experts and used the skills they knew best in order to earn a living in the home. Even using computers and other more sophisticated equipment are either using a self taught skill or one they learned in school.

TABLE 5 THINKING OF THE FUTURE, IN WHAT AREAS COULD YOU MOST USE HELP? (Survey Question 27) Respondents could give more than one answer. The most commonly given reply is listed below.

<u>Help</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Marketing	127	64

This need for assistance in marketing appears again in the survey results, only underlining how important marketing is to the success of a home business. Home business owners over the years have tried every way possible to get their goods to the customer. Roadside stands, shops within the home, consignment shops, fairs, and mail order are examples of the variety of methods used in the past. Today, home business owners use some of the same types of outlets. In addition, some have become more aggressive and initiated wholesaling operations while others have built strong mail order operations. Still, marketing remains the major area where further help is needed. This lack of marketing expertise should come as no surprise as the background of most home business owners, both past and present, shows little education relative to marketing. People use their skills first and then realize their lack of marketing ability.

TABLE 6 WHERE WOULD YOU FEEL MOST COMFORTABLE ASKING FOR ADVICE ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS? (Survey Question 28) Respondents could give more than one answer. The most commonly given replies are listed below.

<u>Advisor</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Friends	121	60
County Extension	88	44
Small Bus. Admin.	82	41

Apart from friends who offer advice on a home business, the next most commonly used source for advice is Cooperative Extension. This use of Cooperative Extension reaches back to the 1920s when county demonstration agents assisted rural home business owners in developing skills and marketing the product. Today, Cooperative Extension has been pivotal to the success of home businesses through its programs supporting home based businesses within the state of Massachusetts. Respondents in both counties have had access to programs and individual assistance provided by Cooperative Extension Specialists.

TABLE 7 IF YOU COULD OFFER SOME WORDS OF ADVICE TO SOMEONE PLANNING TO START A HOME BUSINESS, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO HIM OR HER? (Survey Question 38) Respondents could give more than one answer. The most commonly given replies are listed below.

<u>Advice</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Set goals	32	18
Know your craft	30	17

(continued next page)

TABLE 7 continued

<u>Advice</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Have good marketing skills	30	17
Get help	23	13
Like what you are doing	18	10

Advice offered by current home business owners in Franklin and Berkshire counties is the same advice espoused for a hundred years. Home business owners were encouraged to make a plan and use the best skill they had. Again, the importance of marketing is apparent and underlines how very important this aspect of business is today, just as it was in the past.

TABLE 8 WHAT TYPES OF COTTAGE INDUSTRIES EXIST IN BERKSHIRE AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES? (Survey Question 1)

<u>Craft related work</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Needlecrafts (includes weaving, designing, quilting)	89	43
Crafts(includes stuffed animals, scrimshaw, dolls leather, baskets, etc.)	46	22
Artwork, graphics, sculpture & painting	32	16
Jewelry (includes gold & silverwork)	19	9

(continued next page)

TABLE 8 continued

<u>Craft related work</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Woodwork (includes furniture)	18	9
Pottery & glass	10	5
Plants & flowers	9	4
Bookkeeping	7	3
Writer	6	3
Motorcycle, car and bike work	3	1
*Other	39	19

\*Includes gun making, day care, research, sign making, photography, engraving, consulting, musical instruments, catering, teaching.

The survey results indicate that crafts form the basis for the majority of home businesses. The only home business which appeared at least five times as a response and represented a service was bookkeeping. Other service providers did respond such as consulting, teaching, and catering but the numbers were not significant. This may not be a true profile of the counties but rather an indication that service providers are not listed in a way that they can be easily identified. Most craftspeople can be found through lists of craft fair participants and other sources.

TABLE 9 WHAT ARE THE EXTRINSIC AND INTRINSIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE OPERATION OF A SUCCESSFUL COTTAGE INDUSTRY?

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Extrinsic Requirements

Support of family and friends (Question 8)  
Time in which to work at home (Question 7a)  
Freedom from distraction (Question 11)  
Space for work (Questions 11 & 14a)

Intrinsic Requirements

Self discipline and motivation (Question 11)  
Need for feedback and interaction (Question 17)

Intrinsic Rewards

Doing what one likes to do (Question 37)  
Opportunity for creativity (Question 37)  
Personal reward and challenge (Question 37)  
Independence (Questions 5 & 17)  
Being with family (Questions 10 & 17)

---

The thought of operating a business from one's home offers great appeal to many prospective home based business owners. The illusion of convenience coupled with proximity to family often seems too good to be true. It is. The reason so many people choose to have a home business, the family, is the same reason so many people complain about lack of space, interruptions and the need for more time. Running a home and business from the same place begs for problems. To be successful, a person must be highly motivated along with possessing strong self-discipline. These qualities are identified by those surveyed as major intrinsic needs. The ironic twist which is most evident in home

businesses is the reason for being at home is also the reason for most people's problems.

What are the perceived needs of business owners related to improvement of selected business skills? (Survey Question 27) In replying to Question 27, home business owners indicated that they needed help in interpreting and filing state and federal income taxes. They also needed assistance in financial planning and in determining the legal aspects of their businesses. The improvement of skills was listed as important to some business owners but was not as important as some other needs.

Further indicators of areas where assistance is needed on the part of home business owners can be obtained from the survey itself.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

This research was intended to provide an original approach to the study of home based businesses, both from an historic perspective and one more focused within Franklin and Berkshire Counties in Massachusetts. The historical review examined the concept of earning income in the home from 1880-1980 with a special focus on society's attitude towards such work. The Federal government's role in the development of home businesses was examined over the same period of time. The current home business owner's situation was studied through the use of a two county survey conducted as part of a research project sponsored by the Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station.

The major questions which the study addressed drew upon both the historical review as well as specific survey questions. How has society viewed individuals who chose to earn income at home? From 1880-1960 those individuals who by default or choice attempted to earn an income in the home were not highly regarded. They lacked the respect of society and were often treated in a rather condescending manner by social observers and the press of the period. In 1960, as attitudes towards many of society's norms shifted, the concept of individuals earning an income in the home began to gain respect. By 1980 an entire network of organ-



izations was in place to support and encourage those individuals and families who wished to earn their income in the home.

Has society's perception of people earning in their homes changed with time? In 1880, a woman forced to produce items in her home for sale in a consignment shop felt obliged to take those items to the shop in the middle of the night so that her neighbors would not know she was involved in such work. In 1980, a man or woman could make the decision to operate a business from the home, find classes and support from both private and government agencies, and do so with the knowledge that hundreds of thousands of people were doing the same thing.

What role has government played in the development of home based business? The answer to this question would differ depending upon which home based business owner one polled. Unquestionably, the Department of Labor's efforts in legislating and controlling industrial homework impacted upon the largest number of people and affected the type of work which could legally be completed in the home. The Department of the Interior can be credited with saving the Native American home produced crafts from misrepresentation and fraud. The Department of Agriculture should be credited with offering the most personal assistance to men and women in rural areas who needed help to maintain the small home businesses they operated. The Department of Commerce contributed much needed professional assistance to the develop-

ment of the home crafts. The Small Business Administration appears most recently to be the agency of Federal government that is prepared to assist home based business operators with both financial and professional assistance.

What were the critical periods during the last one hundred years that impacted most significantly on the concept of earning in the home? World War I provided opportunities for women to work outside of the home and for those who could not, some were forced to start a small home business. The Depression of the 1930s produced a situation where people would try anything in order to survive. During this period producing and selling home produced goods was acceptable. World War II was significant because it not only brought women into the workforce but following the War, many wished to continue to earn money for their families. This encouraged women to try a home business. It was also during this time that men started home businesses related to production for war equipment.

Do Franklin and Berkshire counties home business owners share experiences common to previous generations of people earning income in the home? The types of businesses commonly pursued in the home today are very similar to those found over the past one hundred years. The basic frustration with marketing a home product still exists today and although changing, the lack of status within the community continues to concern home business operators.

What are the extrinsic and intrinsic requirements for the operation of a successful cottage industry? The home business requires adequate space, time for the performance of the work, and freedom from interruption. Home business owners also need the support of family and friends so that they can pursue their need for independence. Often these needs come into conflict due to the family involvement.

### Implications

This study, in presenting an historical review of earning an income in the home, gives another perspective on women and their struggles to become self-sufficient. It serves as a reminder that industrial homework was not the only form of work for pay in the home. Most importantly, the research shows that even after 100 years the same type of home businesses are in existence and some of the same problems associated with them are plaguing current owners. This research will be a fresh approach to the study of home businesses as it is a reflection of what was written and said about such work. It is not validated by government statistics because the type of home businesses referred to in this paper were never counted or referenced by private or government agencies.

The review of the Federal government's role in home businesses offers original insight into the awareness and support of government to the plight of home business owners. The research does not give cause for celebration or condem-

nation as there are obvious contributions to the concept of work in the home from various agencies and departments within the Federal government. What was missing from the government's involvement was a conscious attempt on the part of the government to look at the possibilities home businesses offered to people in both rural and urban settings. The work and assistance provided by government was piecemeal and uncoordinated. One can only speculate what an impact the programs sponsored by all levels of government would have had on home businesses if they had been organized by one agency.

The survey of Franklin and Berkshire home business owners tells the most current story of the interests, needs, and status of home business owners. These are not people who have lived in isolation nor are they uneducated. They reside in areas where an attempt to offer assistance has been made. Even with the help of private and government agencies, these home business owners still experience some of the same problems people without much help at all experienced over the last 100 years. It would appear that agencies which can provide services to the home business owner must continue to do so, using ever more creative approaches in order to reach and assist these people.

#### Recommendations

The historical review of work in the home touched upon a number of areas where further work is merited. The

Woman's Exchange and its role in the lives of women is one of interest and potential. Immigrant women who arrived in the United States at the turn of the century were active in the production of goods in the home. Their participation in home businesses could be further documented.

A more in-depth review of the various agencies and departments of the government might produce some new insight into the contributions made over the years and also indicate where further work by government might be of use to home business owners.

For the most practical continuance of this research the results of the survey offer the potential for more investigation into current and future home businesses. A natural follow-up to the survey should be personal interview with home business owners in Franklin and Berkshire counties to see if their needs and aspirations have changed and what specific services would benefit them at this time.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides an original approach to home business: how it originated, developed and came to the place it takes in the late 20th Century. The findings offer assistance for organizations and individuals interested in promoting and servicing home businesses.

APPENDIX A

REGULATIONS FOR USE OF GOVERNMENT MARKS OF  
GENUINENESS FOR ALASKAN ESKIMO HAND-MADE PRODUCTS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INDIAN ARTS AND CRAFTS BOARD

WASHINGTON

Regulations for Use of Government Marks of Genuineness  
for Alaskan Eskimo Hand-Made Products

The following regulations governing the use of Government trade-marks of genuineness for Eskimo products are promulgated pursuant to sections 2 and 3 of the act of August 27, 1935 (49 Stat., 891; U.S.C., title 25, secs. 305a, 305b).

The use of Government trade-marks in an unauthorized manner, or the colorable imitation of such marks, is subject to the criminal penalties imposed by section 5 of the said act, which provides:

"Any person who shall counterfeit or colorably imitate any Government trade-mark used or devised by the Board as provided in section 305a of this chapter, or shall, except as authorized by the Board, affix any such Government trade-mark, or shall knowingly, willfully, and corruptly affix any reproduction, counterfeit, copy, or colorable imitation thereof upon any products, Indian or otherwise, or to any labels, signs, prints, packages, wrappers, or receptacles intended to be used upon or in connection with the sale of such products, or any person who shall knowingly make any false statement for the purpose of obtaining the use of any

such Government trade-mark, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be enjoined from further carrying on the act or acts complained of and shall be subject to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 or imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both such fine and imprisonment." (U.S. Code, title 25, sec. 305d.)

1. Government marks of genuineness for Alaskan Eskimo hand-made products may be affixed to articles meeting the conditions specified in section 2 of these regulations by persons duly authorized by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board to affix such marks.

2. No article may carry the Government mark of genuineness for Alaskan Eskimo hand-made products unless all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) The article is hand-made by an Alaskan Eskimo.
- (b) The article is hand-made under conditions not resembling a workshop or factory system.
- (c) All raw materials used in the making of the articles are of native origin except:
  - (1) Commercial fasteners.
  - (2) Calfskin trimmings for decorative borders on parkas and mukluks.
  - (3) Tops for mukluks made of commercial fabric.
  - (4) Commercially made draw-cords for mukluks.
  - (5) Commercial fabrics for parka linings.
  - (6) Sewing thread and glass beads.

3. All marks shall be applied to the article with a rubber stamp to be furnished by the Indian Arts and Crafts



Board. Each stamp shall bear a distinctive letter and may be used only by the person to whom it has been Issued. With the addition of the distinctive letter, each stamp shall read:

HAND-MADE  
ALASKAN ESKIMO  
U S  
INDIAN ARTS 7 CRAFTS BOARD  
I D

or, in the case of articles too small to carry this stamp:

U S I D  
ALASKAN ESKIMO

On baskets and fabrics which offer no surface for the application of such a rubber stamp, the stamp shall be placed on a paper tag attached to the article by a wire caught in a lead seal disc that shall be impressed and made fast with a hand seal press furnished by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board.

Promulgated by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board on  
December 23, 1938

John Collier, Chairman

Approved January 23, 1939 Harry Slattery,  
Acting Secretary of the Interior

APPENDIX B

AGREEMENT BETWEEN SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
AND NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE COTTAGE INDUSTRY

A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

AND

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE COTTAGE INDUSTRY

WHEREAS, the Small Business Act contemplates the cooperation of business and professional associations in providing voluntary technical and management assistance to the small business community, and

WHEREAS, the National Association for the Cottage Industry desires to cooperate with the Small Business Administration in providing such assistance,

NOW, therefore, it is agreed by and between the National Association for the Cottage Industry and the Small Business Administration as follows:

1. The National Association for the Cottage Industry agrees to participate in educational programs and provide management counseling and other assistance to small business as requested by the Small Business Administration.
2. Upon request by the Small Business Administration for such assistance to an individual business, the National Association for the Cottage Industry will designate an appropriate member at the local chapter level to provide such requested service.
3. Small Business Administration requests will be forwarded to the Chapter Director as designated by the National Association for the Cottage Industry.
4. All liaison between the Small Business Administration district office and the local chapter of the National Association for the Cottage Industry will be with the local chapter level coordinator as designated above.
5. Any requests for counseling will be forwarded to the designated local representative of the National Association for the Cottage Industry. It is understood that such counseling or other assistance shall be performed by the National Association for the Cottage Industry free of charge, unless the National Association for the Cottage Industry members become members of the Service Corps of Retired Executives or Active

Corps of Executives, in which event transportation and subsistence expenses may be paid in accordance with the Small Business Administration's rules and regulations.

6. Upon completion of counseling, and at monthly intervals during extended counseling cases, the local chapter member through his Chapter Director will provide the Small Business Administration district office with a report of assistance rendered on Small Business Administration Form 1062, "Management Counseling Report."
7. All information received and developed, in the course of counseling by a member shall be kept in strict confidence. The member will not (1) solicit or accept compensation for any services to clients assigned to them, (2) recommend the purchase of goods and services from sources in which our member has an interest or represents, (3) request or accept fees or commission from third parties who have supplied goods or services to a client, upon the National Association for the Cottage Industry member 5 recommendation and (4) concurrently serve competing clients without full disclosure to all parties.
8. Upon completion of member services rendered voluntarily in accordance with the provisions of this agreement, said member shall not be precluded from performing, for compensation, such services as requested by assigned clients.
9. Since a member's services are given voluntarily and gratuitously, it is understood and agreed that neither the association nor any of its members will assert any claim for compensation for such services against the Small Business Administration, its officials or employees, prospective or existing, or the business or businessperson counseled pursuant to this agreement. It is further understood and agreed that the Small Business Administration cannot assume any liability for any expenses incurred in providing services under this agreement. We reserve the right to accept or decline assignment and a member may withdraw from assignment and/or as a volunteer at any time upon written notice to the Small Business Administration and the client.
10. That the SBA interview the National Association for the Cottage Industry members prior to assignment to ensure proper utilization.

FOR THE ASSOCIATION:

Coralee Smith Kern  
Executive Director  
National Association for the Cottage Industry

Date

FOR THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION:

James N. Thomson  
Associate Administrator  
for Management Assistance

Date

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO BERKSHIRE AND FRANKLIN COUNTY  
HOME BUSINESS OWNERS

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS  
AT AMHERST

Division of Home Economics  
Skinner Hall, Amherst, MA 01003

January 8, 1985

Dear Berkshire County Resident:

Your name has come to my attention as a person who does all or part of your income-producing work at home or is considering a home based business.

I am currently doing a study of craft and other home based businesses in Franklin and Berkshire Counties. I wish to find out what people involved in work at home need so that their businesses can succeed, thus assuring financial stability for them and a better economic climate for these counties.

The purpose of the survey you find accompanying this letter is to learn more about those of you involved in some type of work at home. Would you please be willing to do me a favor and spend a few minutes in completing and returning this survey? Your replies are important to the success of the study. Only a limited number of Berkshire and Franklin County residents have been selected. You count!

Even though some of you may consider yourself fortunate to be very successful at what you do, countless other people are still struggling to keep their businesses going. Your success story would be very important and I urge you also to complete the survey.

The results of this study will be used as a guide by Community Colleges, Cooperative Extension, and other local agencies so that they might provide personal assistance and programs to people wishing to work at home but who may be having a difficult time either getting started or staying in business.

A survey is just about the only way I can reach you and I am hoping you will agree that my interest is sincere and the information will be used to benefit both individuals and the counties. I would be pleased to talk with you personally, answer questions you have, and send you a copy of the results. You can reach me at (413) 545-2392.

Please be assured that all replies are confidential.

I thank you for any and all attention you give to this letter and survey and extend my best wishes to you in your work at home.

Cordially,

Catharine Porter, Faculty Member  
Division of Home Economics

CP/sas  
Enclosure

APPENDIX D

SURVEY MAILED TO HOME BUSINESS OWNERS



**Home-Based Business Survey**  
**Berkshire County**  
Division of Home Economics  
University of Massachusetts at Amherst

The survey begins on the next page. Many questions may be answered by a simple check (✓). Other questions may require short answers. Feel free to make comments on this page or as you go along.

If you were involved in a craft or other work at home but are no longer doing that work, please answer the survey and state that you are on to other things.

If you are planning to start up a craft operation or other type of work at home, please say so below and answer whatever questions you feel you can relate to on the survey.

When you have completed the survey place it in the prepaid return envelope and drop it in the mail. Thanks!

Description of Business:

1. Tell me about your work at home. What do you do?
  
2. How many years have you been in this present business?  
\_\_\_\_\_ years
3. Approximately, what percent of your total family income comes from your business at home? \_\_\_\_\_%
4. Are you also employed outside your home in another business?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
5. Did you leave a job in order to work at home? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
5a. If you left a job can you explain why you did so?
  
6. Do you employ other people? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
6a. If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_  
6b. If you do employ others, are they working in their own home for you? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
7. How many hours per day do you devote to your home business?  
\_\_\_\_\_ hours  
7a. In order to accomplish what you want to do with your business, is the number of hours you spend:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Too many  
\_\_\_\_\_ Just right  
\_\_\_\_\_ Too few
8. Who encouraged you to start a craft or other home business?  
(Check as many as you wish)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Friend  
\_\_\_\_\_ Family member  
\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher  
\_\_\_\_\_ Myself  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

9. Who, if anyone, tried to discourage you from starting a home business? (Check as many as you wish)

\_\_\_\_\_ Friend

\_\_\_\_\_ Family member

\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_ Myself

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

10. Why did you choose to locate your business in your home rather than a commercial building?

11. What specific problems and frustrations do you encounter working at home?

12. What were the "dreams" or goals you had for your home business when you started?

13. Have these dreams or goals changed over time? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
13a. Can you explain?

14. Would you like to someday move your business out of your home?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
14a. If yes, can you explain why?

15. What problems related to your business do you foresee in the future?

16. As a person working at home do you feel you have the status or respect in the community that you deserve? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

17. What do you feel you may be missing by working at home? (Pros and Cons)

Future Needs:

18. Where did you gain the skills you use in your work at home?  
(Check as many as you wish)

\_\_\_\_\_ School

\_\_\_\_\_ On the job

\_\_\_\_\_ Workshop

\_\_\_\_\_ Family member

\_\_\_\_\_ Friend

\_\_\_\_\_ Self-taught

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

19. Check the highest level of education that you have completed.

\_\_\_\_\_ Grade School

\_\_\_\_\_ High School

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 - 2 Year College

\_\_\_\_\_ 4 Year College

\_\_\_\_\_ Advanced degree

20. If you attended or completed high school, describe if you can, any high school courses that prepared you in any way for your business.

21. If you attended or completed college, describe if you can, any college courses that prepared you in any way for your present work.
22. Are you now attending school? (Check one)
- Yes, full-time
- Yes, part-time
- No
23. Have you taken any special courses or attended workshops that have helped you in your business?  Yes  No
24. Have you taken any special courses or attended workshops that have helped you in your business?  Yes  No
- 24a. If yes, what agency or school taught them?
- 24b. How helpful were these courses? (Check one)
- Very helpful
- Helpful
- Not helpful
- 24c. Describe any shortcomings of the courses you took.
25. Do you know where you could go for further training or any kind of help for your business?  Yes  No
26. Other than a regular class or workshop, have you ever tried to get basic advice on how to run your business?  Yes  No
- 26a. If no, why not?
- 26b. If you did try to get advice, where did you go?
- 26c. Did you get the help you expected?  Yes  No

27. Thinking of the future, in what areas could you most use help?  
(Check as many as you wish)

- Taxes
- Finances
- Legal Aspects
- Marketing of product
- Skill improvement
- Basic moral support
- Other (please be specific)

28. Where would you feel most comfortable asking for advice about your business? (Check as many as you wish)

- Bank
- Attorney
- County Extension
- Small Business Administration
- Internal Revenue Service
- Friends
- Other (please specify)

29. What is the most convenient time of the year for you to attend a course or workshop?

- Summer       Fall       Winter       Spring

30. What is the most convenient time of the day for you to attend a course or workshop?

- Morning       Afternoon       Evening

31. What is the most convenient time of the week for you to attend a course or workshop?

- M       T       W       TH       F       S

32. What is the most convenient way for you to get the help you need?

- One-day workshops
- Semester course for college credit
- Newsletters & other help through the mail
- Two or three day workshops
- Informal group meetings

Background:

33. What is your current marital status?

\_\_\_\_\_ Single \_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed

34. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ years

35. What is your sex? \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ F

36. How many children do you have living at home? \_\_\_\_\_

Basic Feelings and Advice:

37. If you were first starting out to earn a living, would you choose to do what you are currently doing? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

37a. Why?

38. If you could offer some words of advice to someone planning to start a home business, what would you say to him or her?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

Catharine Porter  
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University of Massachusetts  
Amherst, MA 01003

APPENDIX E

COOPERATING INDIVIDUALS AND AGENCIES



Franklin County

Don Yasso, Greenfield Community College

Gretchen May, Franklin County Cooperative Extension

Arts Council of Franklin County

Millers River Self Help Network

Franklin County Community Development Center

Franklin County Chamber of Commerce

Orange/Athol Chamber of Commerce

Berkshire County

Central Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, Pittsfield

Women's Services Center, Great Barrington, MA

Women's Services Center, Pittsfield

Northern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, North Adams

Pittsfield Girls Club

Berkshire Council of the Arts

Mary Kelly, Berkshire County Cooperative Extension

Berkshire Community Action

Alice Halvorsen, shop owner, Peru, MA

Berkshire Community College

Southern Berkshire Community Action, Great Barrington, MA

Other

Leverett Craftsmen and Artists

Arts Extension Service, Division of Continuing Education,  
University of Massachusetts

Division of Non-Credit Programs, Western New England College

Small Business Development Center, Springfield, MA

Women's Programs, Division of Continuing Education,  
University of Massachusetts

Joan Sweeney, Women's Equity Program, University of  
Massachusetts

APPENDIX F

SURVEY RESULTS

## SURVEY RESULTS

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<u>Sex</u>	n	%	Valid %
Females	151	73	
Males	56	27	
n	207		

### Age

21-30	28	14	14
31-40	86	42	44
41-50	43	21	22
51-60	27	13	14
60-over	10	5	5
no response	13	6	
n	207		

### Marital Status

Married	157	76
Single	25	12
Divorced	22	11
Widowed	3	1
n	207	

### Children Living at Home

None	79	38
One	63	30
Two	41	20
Three	19	9
Four	2	1
Five	2	1
Six	1	.4
n	207	

SURVEY RESPONSE RATE

Surveys Mailed

Franklin County

n

Mailed	553
Returned to sender	48
Adjusted survey potential	505
Surveys received	89

Berkshire County

Mailed	529
Returned to sender	53
Adjusted survey potential	476
Surveys received	118

Summary of Both Counties

%

Total Adjusted Surveys	981
Total surveys received	207
Response rate	

21

## SURVEY RESULTS

When more than one response was accepted the % reported represents the proportion in the sample who gave that specific reply, based on n=207.

### Description of Business:

1. Tell me about your work at home. What do you do?  
(More than one response accepted)

<u>Craft Related Work</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Needlecrafts (includes weaving, designing, quilting	89	43
Crafts(includes stuffed animals, scrimshaw, dolls leather, baskets,etc.)	46	22
Artwork, graphics, sculpture & painting	32	16
Jewelry(includes gold & silverwork(	19	9
Woodwork(includes furniture)	18	9
Pottery & glass	10	5
Plants & flowers	9	4
Bookkeeping	7	3
Writer	6	3
Motorcycle, car & bike work	3	1
*Other	39	19

\*Includes, gun making, day care, research, sign making, photography, engraving, consulting, musical instruments, catering, teaching, etc.

2. How many years have you been in this present business?  
(n=204)

<u>Years</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1-5	104	51
6-10	65	32
11-15	16	8
16-20	8	4
21-25	5	3
26-50	6	3
No Response	3	

3. Approximately, what percent of your total family income comes from your business at home? (n=151)

<u>% Income</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
< 10	40	27
10-20	34	23
21-30	7	5
31-40	8	5
41-50	2	1
50-100	58	38
Varies	2	1
No Response	56	

4. Are you also employed outside your home in another business? (n=203)

<u>Reply</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	85	42
No	118	58
No Response	4	

5. Did you leave a job in order to work at home? (n=194)

<u>Reply</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	71	37
No	123	63
No Response	13	

5a. If you left a job can you explain why you did so?  
(n=71)

<u>Reason</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Need for Independence	27	38
Quit or Lost Job	16	23
Retired/Disabled	9	13
Family Concerns	8	11
Improve Skills	3	4
*Other	8	11

\*Other includes explore other options, work part-time, need more income, survival.

6. Do you employ other people? (n=202)

<u>Reply</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	48	24
No	154	76
No Response	5	

6a. If yes, how many? (n=48)

<u>Workers</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1-3	28	58
4-6	7	15
7-10	1	2
Varies	9	19

6b. If you do employ others, are they working in their own home for you? (n=48)

<u>In Home</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Yes</u>	23	48
<u>No</u>	25	52



7. How many hours per day do you devote to your home business? (n=184)

<u>Hours</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1-2	27	15
3-4	32	17
5-6	30	16
7-8	29	16
9-12	47	26
Varies	19	10
No Response	23	

7a. In order to accomplish what you want to do with your business, is the number of hours you spend: (n=196)

<u>Opinion</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Too Many	20	10
Just Right	72	37
Too Few	104	53
No Response	11	

8. Who encouraged you to start a craft or other home business? (More than one response accepted) n=207

<u>Encourager</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Friend	66	32
Family member	76	37
Teacher	7	3
Myself	187	90
*Other	16	8

\*Others included craft center, professional colleagues, school, sales representative, and creditors

9. Who, if anyone, tried to discourage you from starting a home business? (Check as many as you wish) n=207

<u>Discourager</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Friend	18	9
Family Member	44	21
Teacher	3	10
Myself	9	4

<u>Discourager</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
*Other	5	2

\*Others included business people, Division of Employment Security, fellow worker in former job

10. Why did you choose to locate your business in you home rather than a commercial building? (Some respondents gave more than one answer) n=194

<u>Reasons</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Cost(Savings)	81	42
Convenience & Time Savings	49	25
Family Commitments	39	20
Seasonal/Flexibility	11	3
Hobby/Part-time	17	9
Space	8	4
Tax Benefit	8	4
Independence	6	3
Experiment	6	3
Privacy	3	2
Health	2	1
No Response	13	

11. What specific problems and frustrations do you encounter working at home ?(more than one response accepted)

<u>Problems</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Distractions	123	59
Space	25	12
Self Discipline & Motivation	22	11

<u>Problems</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Time management	19	9
Lack of Status	18	9
Isolation	15	7
No Personal Time	12	6
Lack of Business Expertise	9	4
*Other	6	3

\*Includes help in marketing, energy consumption, visibility, obtaining materials

12. What were the "dreams" or goals you had for your home business when you started? (More than one response accepted)

<u>Goals</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Income/Profit	112	54
Success	57	26
Independency	42	20
Expand Business	22	11
Be With Family	13	6
*Other	18	9

\*Includes Hobby, gain a reputation, personal fulfillment

13. Have these dreams or goals changed over time? (n=184)

<u>Response</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	89	48
No	95	52
No Response	23	

- 13a. If Yes, can you explain? (Based on 89 replies)

<u>Reasons</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Need more income & Security	11	12
Need to Expand	10	11

<u>Reasons</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Unrealistic Goals	8	10
Self Autonomy Difficult	7	8
Need Professional Help	5	6
Less Time for Work	5	6
Need to Diversify	4	5
*Other	10	11

\*Includes health, change in family and work status

14. Would you like to someday move your business out of your home? (n=172)

<u>Reply</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	60	35
No	112	65
No Response	35	

14a. If yes, can you explain why? (n=60)

<u>Reasons</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Need Space	12	20
Expand	10	17
Distractions	8	13
Privacy	5	8
Need Exposure	5	8
Effeciency	4	7
Need Partner	4	7
Isolation	4	7
*Other	8	13

\*Includes need for professional atmosphere, wish to make better quality product, divorce, changes in family.

15. What problems related to your business do you foresee in the future? (n=156)

<u>Problems</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Marketing Product	29	19

<u>Problems</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Capital Funds	23	15
Space Needs	15	10
Time	14	9
Competition	13	8
Finding Workers	11	7
Business Mgt.	10	6
Health	7	5
Government Reg.	7	5
None	6	4
Distractions	3	2
Lack of Business Services	3	2
*Other	13	8
No Response	51	

\*Other includes stress, supplies, isolation, family, lack of recognition.

16. As a person working at home do you feel you have the status or respect in the community that you deserve?  
(n=176)

<u>Opinion</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	110	63
No	66	38
No Response	31	

17. What do you feel are the Pros and Cons of working at home? (Respondents could give more than one answer)  
n=153

<u>Pros</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Independence Flexibility	26	17
Close to Family	15	10
Convenient/ Save money Dress simply	20	13
Love the work	11	7
Low Stress	2	1

<u>Cons</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
No feedback, interaction, stimulation	94	61
No status/ recogniton	16	10
Irregular income	12	8
Distractions	7	5
Marketing	7	5
Job security/ benefits	6	4
Self discipline	3	2
*Other	4	3
No response	54	

\*Other includes lack of privacy, effeciency,  
family, need for partner

### Future Needs

18. Where did you gain the skills you use in your work at home?

<u>Skill Source</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Self-taught	182	88
School	102	49
On the job	101	49
Workshop	73	35
Friend	51	25
Family member	49	24
*Other	13	6

\*Other included books, craftspeople, men's group,  
artists, 4-H Club, conferences, apprenticeship,  
accountant, private classes.

19. Check the highest level of education that you have completed.

<u>Level</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Grade school	7	3
High school	39	19
1-2 year college	54	26
4 year college	78	38
Advanced degree	29	14

20. If you attended or completed high school, describe if you can, any high school courses that prepared you in any way for your business. (n=95)

<u>Courses</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Art	22	23
Home ec.	21	22
Business	19	20
Typing	16	17
Math	15	16
English	13	14
Industrial arts	10	11
Languages	2	2
Dance	2	2
No response	112	

21. If you attended or completed college, describe if you can, any college courses that prepared you in any way for your present work. (n=105)

<u>Courses</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Art & design	43	41
Business	32	31
Liberal arts	15	14
Home Ec.	3	3
*Other	19	18
No Response	102	

\*Other includes communications, physics, zoology, occupational therapy, etc.

22. Are you now attending school? (Check one) n=200

<u>Response</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes, full-time	9	5
Yes, part-time	21	11

<u>Response</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
No	170	85
No Response	7	

23. If you are presently attending school, are you taking courses that will help you in your home business?  
(n=30)

<u>Helpful courses</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	22	73
No	8	27

24. Have you taken any special courses or attended workshops that have helped you in your business?  
(n=188)

<u>Taken courses</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	118	63
No	70	37
No response	19	

- 24a. If yes, what agency or school taught them? (n=118)

<u>Agency</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Workshops sponsored by various agencies	53	45
College (includes workshops & seminars)	50	42
Cooperative Extension	18	15

- 24b. How helpful were these courses? (Check one) (n=118)

<u>Helpful</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Very helpful	71	60
Helpful	47	40
Not helpful	0	



24c. Describe any shortcomings of the courses you took.  
(n=42)

<u>Shortcomings</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Course lack detail	14	33
Cost, time, travel	11	26
Not for small, home business	9	21
Poorly taught	8	19

25. Do you know where you could go for further training or any kind of help for your business? (n=189)

<u>Help source</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	128	68
No	61	32
No Response	18	

26. Other than a regular class or workshop, have you ever tried to get basic advice on how to run your business?  
(n=192)

<u>Sought Advice</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	105	55
No	87	45
No Response	15	

26a. If no, why not? (n=45)

<u>Why Not</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Business too small	23	51
Don't know where to go	12	27
Don't feel need	7	16
Not interested	3	7
No response	42	

26b. Source of advice (n=105)

<u>Source</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Friend	23	22
Business people	22	21

<u>Source</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Accountant	20	19
Crafts persons	15	14
Books & periodicals	15	14
College & Adult Ed.	13	12
Family	10	10
Cooperative Extension	9	9
Workshops	8	8
Banks	7	7
Attorneys	6	6
Small Business Admin.	5	5
SCORE	5	5
Consultants	4	4
*Other	8	8

\*Other includes insurance agent, employer, customers, etc.

26c. Help as expected (n=108)

<u>Help</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	92	85
No	16	15
No response	99	

27. Thinking of the future, in what areas could you most use help? (Check as many as you wish) (n=198)

<u>Help needed</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Taxes	90	46
Finances	95	88
Legal aspects	79	40
Marketing	127	64
Improve skills	62	31
Moral support	72	36
*Other	21	11

\*Other included time management, pricing, decision making, personnel management, how to find supplies.

28. Where would you feel most comfortable asking for advice about your business? (Check as many as you wish).  
n=201

<u>Advisor</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Bank	31	15
Attorney	53	26
County Extension	88	44
Small Bus. Admin.	82	41
I. R. S.	16	8
Friends	121	60
*Other	18	9

\*Other included accountant, consultants, business people, associates, trade organizations

29. What is the most convenient time of the year for you to attend a course or workshop? (Some respondents gave more than one reply) n=156

<u>Time of year</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Summer	51	33
Fall	50	32
Winter	68	44
Spring	73	47
Anytime	8	5

30. What is the most convenient time of the day for you to attend a course or workshop? (Some respondents gave more than one reply) n=156

<u>Time of day</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Morning	83	53
Afternoon	56	36
Evening	104	67

31. What is the most convenient time of the week for you to attend a course or workshop? (Some respondents gave more than one reply) n=156

<u>Day of week</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
M	64	41
T	61	39
W	51	33
TH	44	28
F	27	17

<u>Day of week</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
S	45	29
Any Day	23	15

32. What is the most convenient way for you to get the help you need? (Some respondents gave more than one reply)  
n=156

<u>Convenient</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1-day session	122	78
Semester course for college credit	15	10
Newsletters etc.	112	72
2-3 day workshop	56	36
Informal group	73	47

(Replies to questions 33-36 can be found in Table 1.)

### Basic Feelings and Advice

37. If you were first starting out to earn a living, would you choose to do what you are currently doing? (n=192)

<u>Do again</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	98	51
No	94	49
No response	15	

37a. If Yes, Why? (n=98)

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Likes it	55	56
Creativity & freedom	22	22
Reward & Challenge	15	15
Profitable	11	11

If No, Why? (n=94)

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Not profitable	52	55
Requires skill & money	19	20
Too much time & work	13	14
Lonely	5	5
Status	3	3
Boring	2	2
Family demands	2	2

38. If you could offer some words of advice to someone planning to start a home business, what would you say to him or her? (n=178)

<u>Advice</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Set goals & make a plan	32	18
Know your craft well	30	17
Have good marketing skills	30	17
Get needed help & advice	23	13
Like what you are doing	18	10
Work hard	16	9
Produce a quality item	16	9
Be patient	15	8
Get family support	12	7
Self confidence & motivated	12	7
Know good business practice	10	6
Start on small scale	9	5
Need adequate time	8	5
Need adequate financing	7	4
No response	29	

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