

# **Comparing Sample Frames for Research on Arts Organizations: Results of a Study in Three Metropolitan Areas**

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Deborah Kaple, Ziggy Rivkin-Fish, Hugh Louch, Lori Morris, & Paul DiMaggio

## *ABSTRACT*

This paper addresses a small but crucial aspect of research on arts organizations: how to define a sample frame, based upon which one can collect data generalizable to the population of cultural organizations as a whole. Researchers undertook case studies in three metropolitan areas: Philadelphia, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and Dallas/Fort Worth. They compiled, as complete as possible, a list of arts organizations based on printed sources and information from local citizens familiar with the nonprofit arts community. Then, they examined the extent to which different approaches to developing a sample frame would have captured the organizations by the group identified, and what types of bias each approach would entail. This paper reports on the findings from this research and discusses several theoretical and methodological dilemmas that emerged during the course of the work.

This paper can be found in the *Journal of Arts Management and Law*, Volume 28 (Spring 1998), pp. 41-66.