

‘To Stabilize the Financial Position of the Leading American Orchestras’: The Impact of the Ford Foundation's \$80 million Program for Symphony Orchestras

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In 1966, the Ford Foundation began its ten year, eighty million dollar program for American symphony orchestras. Through a combination of matched endowment fund contributions and unconditionally distributed expendable funds, the Ford Foundation dramatically altered the condition of the professional orchestral community in the United States by encouraging longer seasons, more concerts, higher pay for musicians, and an improved artistic product. Considered quantitatively, the Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras—including the matching funds raised by the orchestras themselves—resulted in an outlay of more than \$160 million for symphony orchestras. Adjusted for inflation, that amount would be worth roughly one billion dollars in 2016, or more than six times the 2016 congressional appropriation for the National Endowment for the Arts.¹

The largest single act of arts philanthropy in the history of the United States, the Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras was a broad attempt to professionalize U.S. orchestras and legitimize orchestral performance as a serious career path. With multiple stakeholders, including orchestras, orchestral musicians, audience members, donors, community members, and the Ford Foundation itself, a comprehensive accounting of the Program for Symphony Orchestras and its efficacy requires the careful untying of an expansive web of causalities. Toward this aim, this essay is an initial examination of the impact of the Program for Symphony Orchestras on the orchestras, the musicians, and finally the Ford Foundation itself.

The Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras

As early as 1957, W. McNeil Lowry and the Ford Foundation’s Humanities and Arts program began researching what would become its signature program, an eighty million dollar program for North American symphony orchestras. The Foundation conducted years of research involving meetings in New York,

extensive correspondence, and visits to orchestras and communities throughout the country, and consulted managers, musicians, conductors, union leaders, and others concerning the needs of orchestral musicians and the problems facing American orchestras.

George Kuyper, manager of the Chicago Symphony from 1944 to 1959, became a lead consultant for the Ford Foundation, and described to Lowry several problems facing symphonic orchestras in the United States. Beyond the difficulties of building audiences, managing expenses, and cultivating donors, Kuyper articulated the struggle in finding musicians:

One of the great problems for the future is the shortage of players able to carry their weight. The Chicago Symphony added five new players this year and had to raid smaller orchestras like New Orleans, Kansas City and so on to do so. If the smaller orchestra dries up, the big ones will, therefore dry up too, because the conservatories are not training replacements.²

Ford Foundation staff interviewed conductor, impresario, and Metropolitan Opera broadcast commentator Boris Goldovsky no fewer than nine times between 1957 and 1964, and consulted with renowned conductors such as Leopold Stokowski and Fritz Reiner.³ Lowry's report of his discussion with Stokowski in November 1958 includes Stokowski's thoughts on the business of orchestras, and his insistence that orchestras could not support themselves through ticket sales alone: "Eventually we have to find a way to overcome these difficulties through foundations, government support or some other way. Government support, however, would require more taxation and people don't want to stand for it."⁴

Although foundation leaders talked extensively to conductors regarding the challenges faced by orchestras, they were also careful to forge relationships with the American Federation of Musicians and the American Symphony Orchestra League (ASOL, known today as the League of American Orchestras). Helen Thompson of the American Symphony Orchestra League appears to have

suggested the idea for a large-scale program for symphony orchestras sometime in 1959, and ASOL provided the Foundation with information on orchestra budgets as early as 1957.⁵ The Symphony Orchestra League provided the Foundation with information concerning orchestral budgets, expenditures, endowments, and leadership, and in 1964 Thompson relayed the results of a study to the Ford Foundation showing that during the thirty-five year period ending in 1962–1963, nineteen of the larger American orchestras had increased gross expenditures by 83 percent but average base pay by only 74 percent. In addition, although the number of concerts played had increased by 24 percent, the number of work weeks had only increased by 10 percent.⁶

Meetings with union leadership (the AFM) indicated not only the difficulties of a career in the orchestra (low pay, irregular employment schedules, etc.) but also trepidation regarding a large-scale infusion of Foundation funding. In a 1961 meeting with AFM president Herman Kenin and officials from the New Orleans, Atlanta, Seattle, Newark, Pittsburgh, and Detroit locals, many issues facing orchestral musicians were discussed. If the Foundation were to give large amounts of money to the orchestras, some worried that local donors might curtail their contributions under the assumption that costs were now covered by an enormously wealthy third party (a fear articulated in the literature as “crowding out”): “If the FF were to aid in the expanded program, care must be taken to make clear to the local citizenry that their help is still needed, perhaps more than ever.”⁷ Because the Foundation money wouldn’t exist in perpetuity, the orchestras would need to maintain ties to local donors while simultaneously receiving the Foundation’s support.

Throughout these exchanges with Thompson and leaders of the American Federation of Musicians, several overarching concerns became apparent to Ford Foundation leaders. First, although it was necessary to guarantee year-long (fifty-two-week) employment for the players, it would only be possible if salaries increased enough for musicians to drop other non-musical, part-time jobs.⁸

Secondly, if there were to be a large infusion of Ford Foundation money, local fundraising mechanisms would need to be maintained and new ones developed. Finally, it would be essential not only to provide short-term operational support, but also to encourage the creation and augmentation of orchestral endowment funds.

Taking these issues into consideration, McNeil Lowry and his staff submitted a discussion paper concerning a “program for symphony orchestras” to the Ford Foundation’s Executive Committee in September 1964, a request for up to \$110 million to “consolidate, through one historic action, the position of the symphony orchestra in the United States.”⁹ Of this \$110 million, \$25 million would be granted as expendable funds, and \$77–85 million, in the form of Ford Motor Company stock, would be held in trust, and distributed to the orchestras after a period of ten years. Lowry explicitly outlined the mission of the proposed program:

The purposes of such a program would be 1) to maintain and improve the quality of performance of fine music by the leading orchestras in the country; 2) to increase the amount of quality music played by these orchestras; 3) to improve the financial situation of orchestral musicians and so to ensure an adequate supply of fine players both now and in the future; and 4) to stabilize the financial position of the leading American orchestras.¹⁰

Once the Ford Foundation’s board formally approved Lowry’s program, the Foundation notified the public about the Symphony Orchestra Program via press release on October 22, 1965.¹¹ Negotiations with individual orchestras during the following months determined appropriate allocations of expendable and endowment funds, and by June 1966, the sixty-one participating orchestras were privy to the grant terms and their individual allocations.¹²

Despite Lowry’s earlier hopes of a \$77–85 million trust, the approved trust was smaller, at \$58.75 million, with \$58 million comprising the endowment fund contributions of the Foundation and the remaining \$750,000 allocated to the two program beneficiaries for which no endowment funds were distributed: The

Symphony Orchestra of Puerto Rico, which was given \$375,000 to promote annual tours in the Caribbean, and the American Symphony Orchestra League, which received \$360,000 for the purpose of “strengthening the services” of that organization “to its Member Orchestras.”¹³ The money placed in trust was in addition to the expendable funds of \$21.65 million, which provided the orchestras with immediate support over the first five years of the program, regardless of each orchestra’s matching ability.

Thus, the participating organizations received a combination of expendable funds paid quarterly during the first five years of the program and endowment funds, payable at the termination of the grant period on June 30, 1976.¹⁴ In order to assure that they would raise the money, the endowment funds would only be released to the orchestras that succeeded in raising matching funds to the Foundation’s contributions. Although the orchestras received notice of the grant program in 1966 and could count on a certain level of expendable funds over the next five years, they were not entitled to any of the endowment money until 1976, and only then if they had demonstrated the ability to raise matching funds in the first five years of the program.

Evaluating the Efficacy of the Program for Symphony Orchestras

Regarding Lowry’s aforementioned goals of strengthening orchestras qualitatively—“to improve the quality of performance of fine music by the leading orchestras in the country” and “to stabilize the financial position of the leading American orchestra”—as well as quantitatively—“to increase the amount of quality music played by these orchestras” and “to improve the financial situation of orchestral musicians and so to ensure an adequate supply of fine players both now and in the future”—the symphony orchestra program relied on the matching requirement as its central mechanism.

Useful not only as a means to multiply foundation contributions, matching programs continue to be an effective motivating tool for arts patrons. Used not only by private foundations, but also by the National Endowment for the Arts, matching requirements have been explicitly applied since the 1960s. Earlier philanthropic programs in the Arts, like the Rockefeller Foundation's 1934 assistance to the Theater Department at the University of Iowa, implied a matching principle in that the Foundation would only provide a small amount of support to supplement monies raised by the local community.¹⁵

Describing the psychological imperative encouraged by matching programs, Michael Morgan, Music Director of the Oakland-East Bay Symphony Orchestra said: "Matching programs are always useful, because people for whatever reason feel inclined to donate when they think there is a match or when the thing is going to be doubled."¹⁶

Thus, although the multiplying of funds achieves the most palpable impact of a successful matching program, matching programs can also be—at their best—vehicles to develop sustainable fundraising mechanisms that will nourish institutions beyond the terminal duration of the matching program itself.

Concerning the Ford Foundation Symphony Orchestra Program, except for the Kansas City Symphony, the American Symphony, the Oklahoma City Symphony, the Festival Orchestra of New York, the Little Orchestra (N.Y.), and the Brooklyn Philharmonic, all of the orchestras met or exceeded their required matching amounts; at the end of the matching period a total of more than eighty four million dollars—nearly half a billion dollars of purchasing power in 2016—had been independently raised by all of the orchestras.¹⁷

For example, the New York Philharmonic was notified of a total grant of \$1.5 million on June 24, 1966.¹⁸ As the Foundation's letter to the Orchestra explains, \$1 million would be devoted to endowment funds (payable at the end of the ten-

year period) and \$.5 million would be designated as expendable funds and paid quarterly from 1966 to 1971. Like other premier orchestras, the New York Philharmonic was obligated to match each Ford Foundation endowment dollar at a 2:1 ratio. Thus, the total impact of the Program would be the \$1.5 million from the Foundation, plus the \$2 million raised by the orchestra itself, for a total of \$3.5 million.

The Minnesota Orchestra was required to raise \$4 million in order to claim a final endowment grant of \$2 million from the foundation. Already an orchestra experiencing a meteoric growth pattern, the required matching figure was easily surpassed, with a total of just under \$8 million raised by 1971.¹⁹

In the case of the Little Orchestra Society, a New York City orchestra that is still active today, the Foundation demanded at the start of the program in 1966 “that the Orchestra take effective steps to diversify its base of philanthropic support.”²⁰ Although the Little Orchestra’s 1971 report furnished to the Ford Foundation showed that it had managed to raise some money, it did so with more than 99 percent of its funding coming from the music director, Thomas K. Scherman, and the Scherman Foundation, a family foundation for which the conductor was a benefactor.²¹ In addition to the fact that the Little Orchestra simply failed to raise the required amount of \$350,000, the Foundation chose to discontinue the Little Orchestra from the Symphony Orchestra Program because it failed to diversify its fundraising base beyond its independently wealthy music director and his family fortune.²²

Although some of the orchestras were savvy enough to nurture and capitalize on their endowment funds, many of the less sophisticated ones were not. In addition, a successful matching campaign did not necessarily ensure long-term success. In the case of the Oakland Symphony, for example, successful matching efforts appear to have had the opposite effect, with the orchestra eventually filing for bankruptcy in 1986, despite receiving more than \$1 million as part of the

Symphony Orchestra Program. Beginning in the mid 1960s, the orchestra dramatically and unsustainably raised minimum weekly salaries from \$98 in the 1965–1966 season to \$225 in the 1969–1970 season.²³ By contrast, during the same period the Minnesota Orchestra and the Chicago Symphony raised weekly minimums at a considerably more incremental rate, from \$165 to \$205, and \$210 to \$295, respectively.²⁴

The Ford Foundation’s money worked best in cities where the money could be used to improve on an already stable situation. Danny Newman, who worked in marketing for the Lyric Opera of Chicago from 1954 to 2002 and authored the influential book *Subscribe Now!: Building Arts Audiences through Dynamic Subscription Promotion*, served as a Ford Foundation consultant for orchestras in the 1960s and 1970s. As an adjunct to the Symphony Orchestra Program, the Ford Foundation underwrote Newman’s consulting services for various orchestras, which largely focused on developing successful subscription sale campaigns. His reports to Marcia Thompson on his experiences with various orchestras document the wide variety of difficulties faced in the orchestral community, and serve as a frank appraisal of the orchestral business in the 1960s and 1970s.

With the Minnesota Orchestra, an aforementioned orchestra on a dramatic upward trajectory in the 1960s and 1970s, Newman helped the Orchestra transition from the unwieldy Northrop Hall—which was too large to fill with nearly 5000 seats—and increase ticket sales from 8,377 in 1969-1970 to 17,609 in 1975-1976.²⁵ Partnering with an enthusiastic and competent board, stable management, and a devoted audience base, the Ford Foundation’s efforts with the Minnesota Orchestra, through the Symphony Orchestra Program as well as the underwriting of Danny Newman’s expertise, exemplified the possibilities of philanthropy in the arts.

By contrast, Newman’s encounters with the Oakland Symphony Orchestra reveal a continuously struggling organization. Constant manager turnover, an

unpopular music director²⁶, an unfillable concert hall, and a deep-seated inferiority complex regarding the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra²⁷ all contributed to the difficult situation in Oakland which is best summarized in *Autopsy of an Orchestra: An Analysis of Factors Contributing to the Bankruptcy of the Oakland Symphony Orchestra*, a study commissioned in 1987 by the California Arts Council, the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, the James Irvine Foundation, Mervyn's Stores, The San Francisco Foundation, and the Wells Fargo Foundation. Although the authors of *Autopsy of An Orchestra* describe the many factors that contributed to orchestra's financial troubles, they specifically reference the inability of the orchestra's management to convert the Ford money into sustainable, positive change:

Radical change in organizations is not easy. But major reorganization may become a necessity for some mid-sized orchestras faced with insolvency. A change of the magnitude called for in Oakland's case would have meant a major confrontation with the artistic personnel. Since the availability of the Ford Foundation money and its match provided an early, nonconfrontational alternative for the Oakland board, it never faced the hard decisions until the funds were exhausted, and then it was too late to save the situation.²⁸

Finally, instead of placing money from the Ford Foundation into a restricted permanent endowment fund, the Oakland Symphony used the money to pay back a \$1 million loan that was taken out in 1972 to renovate the orchestra's home, the gigantic Paramount Theater. This misappropriation allowed for the orchestra to easily cannibalize the endowment, which consisted of less than \$250,000 by 1985, despite the orchestra receiving more than \$2 million—including matching funds raised by the Orchestra—as part of the Ford program. Ultimately unprepared to capitalize on the Ford Foundation's multi-million-dollar contribution, the Orchestra collapsed under insurmountable debt in 1986.

Although the bankruptcy of the Oakland Symphony Orchestra—despite its success in matching the Ford Foundation's endowment funds—was exceptional, orchestras large and small have continued to demonstrate considerable financial instability. In 1981-82, one third of the larger orchestras reported deficits; by the

1985-86 season, two thirds of these orchestras reported deficits.²⁹ Although several larger orchestras, including the Denver Symphony Orchestra and New Orleans Symphony were dissolved in the late 1980s along with the Oakland orchestra, the economic downturn that began in 2007 led to organizational strife in many U.S. orchestras. Because orchestras rely primarily on donations from wealthy individuals, the dramatic dive in real estate and investment security values led to a slow-down in contributions to even premier U.S. orchestras.

The declaration of bankruptcy by the Philadelphia Orchestra—one of the original ‘big five’ orchestras, along with the Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, and Chicago Symphony—in 2011, signaled that no orchestra in the United States was ‘too big to fail’. The result of many factors, including high turnover of administrative staff, an unsustainable contractual agreement with the musicians, and the myriad costs associated with the Kimmel Center—an extravagant new performance space—rendered the Philadelphia Orchestra extremely vulnerable to the financial crisis.³⁰ Although the Orchestra filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy—a means to reorganize existing contractual obligations—as opposed to the more draconian Chapter 7 filing, the bankruptcy signaled to many the decline of a once unrivaled brand.

A similar brand erosion occurred with the Minnesota Orchestra, which failed to perform from October 2012 until February 2014 because of contractual disagreements between musicians and management. Winner of a Grammy award in 2013, and hailed in 2010 by *New Yorker* music critic Alex Ross as sounding “...like the greatest orchestra in the world,” artistic excellence could not prevent what became arguably the most acrimonious contract disputes in the modern history of U.S. orchestras.³¹

Although both the Philadelphia and Minnesota situations occurred more than thirty years after the end of the Program for Symphony Orchestras, reverberations of the Program can be felt in the contentious contract negotiations

in each case. Because raising musicians salaries and building endowments was one of the primary goals of the Symphony Orchestra Program, its impact on the musicians, and by extension its impact on the relations between musicians and management can be acutely felt today. Michael Morgan, Music Director of the Oakland-East Bay Symphony Orchestra—a position he has held since the Orchestra was formed in 1990 to fill the void left by the bankrupted Oakland Symphony—recently described the modern implications of the Symphony Orchestra Program in grim terms:

They basically ruined the business...What they did was pump a lot of money into orchestras, which was great at the time...and just gave everyone huge expectations....It's like anything, in that once somebody gets something, they think they're going to have it all the time, and now everyone has really contentious negotiations...because everyone thinks there's more money around than there is. And all of that started back then, people and the players thinking there's a whole big pile of money being hidden from them somewhere, it makes the relations more adversarial when people think there's something being kept away from them.³²

Alluding to the fact that the Ford Program raised musician salaries and endowments without addressing the structural issues in the orchestra business—the consistent inability of ticket sales to cover expenses and the declining interest in orchestral music in the United States—Morgan highlights the difficulty in evaluating the Symphony Orchestra Program.

In fact, musician salaries have risen dramatically as a result of the Ford Program. In 1965, Los Angeles Philharmonic manager W.O. Severs cited public teacher salaries as a target for orchestra member salaries: “He believes they should take teachers’ salaries as a yardstick with \$10,000 as the minimum salary....At the present this minimum is about \$7,500 or \$8,000.”³³ The comparison between the salaries of public school teachers and orchestral musicians presents an interesting comparison and a provocative commentary on the exceptional growth of the salaries of orchestral musicians.

As suggested by W.O. Severs, the average California public school teacher's annual salary in the late 1960s was just over \$10,000 (\$65,000 in 2016 dollars).³⁴ The philharmonic's average salary rose dramatically during the early years of the Symphony Orchestra Program from \$10,086 in 1966-67 to \$12,742 in 1968-69.³⁵ By 1972, the orchestra's *minimum* salary had risen to nearly \$15,000, by 1982 \$38,500, by 1992 \$66,480, and by 2000 \$89,880.³⁶ By the 2014-15 season, the musicians of the Los Angeles Philharmonic were guaranteed the highest base salary of any orchestral musicians in the United States, with an annual minimum of \$150,124, outpacing even the traditional 'Big Five' orchestras of Chicago, New York, Boston, Cleveland, and Philadelphia.³⁷

The Los Angeles Philharmonic was not the only orchestra in which musicians made less than public school teachers in the 1960s. In 1965-66 only in the 'Big Five' orchestras were median salaries higher than those of public school teachers.³⁸ But by the early seventies—when the Ford Foundation completed its distribution of expendable funds—salaries in many orchestras matched or exceeded local teacher salaries. Today, teacher salaries serve as an altogether ineffectual yardstick for the salaries of musicians in major orchestras. In none of the states with the twenty highest paying U.S. Orchestras did the *average* public school teacher's salary come close to the *minimum* salary enjoyed by orchestra members:

Orchestra	Average State Teacher Salary 2011-12 ³⁹	Base Orchestra Salary 2011-12 ⁴⁰
1 Chicago Symphony	\$36,636	\$144,040
2 Los Angeles Philharmonic	\$41,259	\$143,260
3 San Francisco Symphony	\$41,259	\$141,700
4 New York Philharmonic	\$44,370	\$134,940
5 Boston Symphony	\$40,462	\$132,028
6 National Symphony	\$51,539	\$126,984
7 Cleveland Orchestra	\$33,035	\$120,120
8 Minnesota Orchestras	\$34,035	\$111,566
9 Philadelphia Orchestra	\$41,192	\$108,750
10 Pittsburgh Symphony	\$41,192	\$100,110
11 Cincinnati Symphony	\$33,035	\$96,730
12 Dallas Symphony	\$34,234	\$90,814
13 Houston Symphony	\$34,234	\$82,160
14 Atlanta Symphony	\$33,673	\$81,640
15 St. Louis Symphony	\$29,857	\$80,680
16 Detroit Symphony	\$34,734	\$79,000
17 Indianapolis Symphony	\$33,574	\$78,000
18 Baltimore Symphony	\$43,003	\$65,000
19 Utah Symphony	\$33,268	\$59,000
20 San Diego Symphony	\$41,259	\$57,708

These data are not intended to compare the work done by orchestra musicians or public school teachers, but instead to illustrate how dramatically orchestral salaries have risen since the 1960s, when the Ford Foundation as well as orchestra executives cited comparisons between musician and teacher salaries. Concerning this dramatic increase in musician salaries, it is clear that the situation of top orchestral musicians benefitted dramatically—in terms of salary increases—during and after the Symphony Orchestra Program.

Conclusion: The Ford Foundation and the Symphony Orchestra Program

Having discussed the impact of the Ford Foundation’s Program for Symphony Orchestras on orchestras and musicians, I conclude by contending that the Program also had a dramatic effect on the Ford Foundation itself. Like the orchestras that it funded, the Ford Foundation was, in the 1950s and 1960s

experiencing a rapid transition, from a small organization with a local focus, to a multi-billion dollar international institution.

Central to this transition was the first public offering of Ford Motor Company Stock in the mid 1950s, which had previously been owned almost entirely by the Ford Foundation. The gradual sale of the stock enriched the Foundation to an unprecedented level of prosperity that dwarfed the Rockefeller Foundation, the second largest foundation in the United States.⁴¹ The creation of Lowry's Arts and Humanities Program in 1957 and the subsequent Program for Symphony Orchestras were the direct result of the Foundation's wealth. The entirety of the endowment trust created for the participants in the Symphony Orchestra Program consisted of Ford Motor Company Stock; thus, the fortunes of the individual orchestras—at least from 1966 to 1976—mirrored the performance of the Ford Motor Company.

In addition, by distributing stock to the grantees, the Ford Foundation contributed to its mission of diversifying its investment portfolio while simultaneously guaranteeing that the shares would be held in trust for at least ten years. As a result of this arrangement, the Ford Motor Company and its shareholders were shielded from the uncertainty of a sale of \$58 million in shares—the total amount of the endowment trust.

This mutually beneficial outcome surely pleased Henry Ford II—the grandson of Ford patriarch Henry Ford—who in 1966 was a member of the Ford Foundation's Board of Directors while concurrently serving as Chairman of the Ford Motor Company's Board. But the Symphony Orchestra Program also had ramification on the grant-making activities of the Foundation, and specifically the Foundation's efforts in the Arts.

As early as 1973, some Ford Foundation officials largely characterized the Symphony Orchestra Program as misguided. Ford Foundation staff member Paul

Ylvisaker predicted that “all it would do is raise the union wages and would put the orchestras right back where they had been.” Describing the Program overall as “a disaster from start to finish,” Ylvisaker’s claims were based on the idea that without drastic changes such as raising revenues, lowering expenses, and building audiences, the Foundation’s contributions would ultimately fail to foment any sustainable change.⁴² In her 1973 oral history, Marcia Thompson (not to be confused with Helen Thompson, the ASOL director), the Ford Foundation Program Officer presiding over the Symphony Orchestra Program, distrusted the abilities of the individual orchestras to manage their own large endowments: “If we had to do it over, if we had that \$80 million...I wouldn’t start out with endowment because I think endowment is only as good as the management of the endowment or the management of the institution, and I just don’t think most symphony orchestras have disciplined themselves sufficiently.”⁴³

Echoing Michael Morgan’s aforementioned comment that the Ford Program encouraged a situation where “everyone thinks there’s more money than there is,” Marcia Thompson recalls the Program—from the perspective of the Foundation—in similar terms:

Unfortunately, that program paid out over a number of years, so there was a tendency, on the part of some boards, to think that there was a jackpot of money that they had acquired. At the end of the period, by that time without realizing it, they had already spent it. On contracts and other things.⁴⁴

As a result of the difficulties encountered during the Symphony Orchestra Program, the Ford Foundation and specifically the Program in the Humanities and the Arts ultimately pivoted away from large endowment programs. Marcia Thompson continued: “We got to the point of not wanting to give money for endowments, but to give money for performance and salaries, and involvement in communities.”⁴⁵ Beginning in the early 1970s, the Foundation made ‘stabilization’ grants to individual arts institutions, which gave the Foundation ‘teeth’—as described by Thompson—via more hands-on involvement:

Well, you set some performance targets, rather than just giving out money, and the Stabilization Program required that there was certain monitoring by the board about their funds, and what they replaced, and what they used. I mean, we put some teeth into it, we'll put it that way. Instead of just making the grant, and expecting that they had the capacity to do certain things. Stabilization put some requirements on, in terms of reporting and demonstration of leadership abilities.⁴⁶

In conclusion, the Ford Foundation's Program for Symphony Orchestras created very different outcomes for its various stakeholders. For orchestral musicians in grantee orchestras, the Symphony Orchestra Program undoubtedly created a more lucrative working environment, as defined by longer seasons and larger salaries. In orchestras that expanded to fifty-two week, or nearly fifty-two week seasons, musicians were able to drop other musical—and/or non-musical—part time jobs, and focus on life in their orchestras. But for the orchestras themselves, as argued by Michael Morgan and evident in the downfall of the Oakland Symphony Orchestra, the Ford Program failed to stabilize many orchestras, and in some cases led to dire consequences. Finally, for the Ford Foundation, the results of the Symphony Orchestra Program led to a dramatic stylistic shift in grant making, and a tempering of expectations regarding the impact of large-scale programs in the Arts.

¹ "National Endowment for the Arts Appropriations History," National Endowment for the Arts, Accessed July 2016, <https://www.arts.gov/open-government/national-endowment-arts-appropriations-history>.

² "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with George Kuyper, Manager, The Chicago Symphony, Chicago," November 4, 1957, box 29, W. McNeil Lowry Papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (hereafter cited as WML).

³ See "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with George Kuyper, Manager, The Chicago Symphony, Chicago," November 4, 1957, box 29, WML; "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Leopold Stokowski, Musical Director, Houston Symphony," November 7, 1958, box 37, WML; and "Music Interviews," February 9, 1965, box 37, WML.

⁴ "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Leopold Stokowski, Musical Director, Houston Symphony," November 7, 1958, box 37, WML.

⁵ See Edward F. D'Arms to Helen M. Thompson, December 1, 1959, box 37, WML; and "Metropolitan and Major Orchestra Listings," November 13, 1957, box 62, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, Rockefeller Archive Center (hereafter cited as RAC).

⁶ "Interview with Mrs. Helen Thompson, Executive Vice President, American Symphony Orchestra League," October 8, 1964, box 37, WML.

⁷ This theoretical process of government funding compromising private funding has been referred to as "crowding out" in economic literature. For an empirical study of the relationship between private donations and the NEA see Jane K. Dokko, "Does the NEA Crowd Out Private Charitable Contributions to the Arts?" *Finance and Economics Discussion Series*, Divisions of Research & Statistics and Monetary Affairs, Federal Reserve Board, Washington, D.C., 2007.

⁸ In a 1958 interview with the Foundation, Thompson articulated full-time employment and a living wage as her two greatest needs for orchestras. See "Humanities and the Arts Staff Work--Interview with Mrs. Helen Thompson, Executive Secretary, American Symphony Orchestra League," March 20, 1958, box 37, WML.

⁹ "Humanities and the Arts Program Discussion Paper: Program for Symphony Orchestras," September 24–25, 1964, box 63, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Sigmund Koch to Harold L. Gregory, October 22, 1965, box 31, WML.

¹² "Telephone Calls from Orchestras After Receipt of Letters of Grant," June 29, 1966, box 30, WML.

¹³ "Puerto Rico Symphony Developmental Funds," 1971, box 30, WML.

¹⁴ Ford Foundation: Grants, April 11, 1963–December 5, 1968," *The New York Philharmonic Digital Archives*, accessed November 2015, <http://archives.nyphil.org/>.

¹⁵ "University of Iowa – Dramatic Art," April 11, 1934, RG 1.1, FA386, folder 24, box 3, Rockefeller Foundation records, Projects, RAC.

¹⁶ Interview with Michael Morgan, Oakland, CA, June 17, 2016.

¹⁷ "Special Report: Symphonic Strains (Financial)," February 1, 1973, box 29, WML.

¹⁸ "Ford Foundation: Grants, April 11, 1963–December 5, 1968," *The New York Philharmonic Digital Archives*, accessed November 2015, <http://archives.nyphil.org/>.

¹⁹ See "Financial Position of the Minnesota Orchestral Association," 1971, box 30, WML; and Minnesota Orchestra Reconciliation, 1971, box 30, WML.

²⁰ Notes on the Little Orchestra Society, 1972, box 30, WML.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Interestingly, the Scherman Foundation continues to operate in New York, and has on its board of directors Marcia Thompson, the Ford Foundation Program Officer who supervised the Symphony Orchestra Program.

²³ Oakland Symphony Wage Scale, 1970, box 27, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

²⁴ "Chicago Symphony Union Contract," October 12, 1973, box 29, WML; and "Economic and Financial Survey 1965–1970 of Non-profit Performing Arts Organizations," 1970, box 27, Ford Foundation records, Education and Public Policy Program (EPP), Office of the Arts, Program Files, RAC.

²⁵ "Memorandum: Danny Newman to Marcia Thompson," March 26, 1976, Ford Foundation records, Grants Them-Tw, RAC.

²⁶ Newman mentions a meeting in 1976 in which the Board President "feel that the recent attack on the Musical Director (Mo. Harold Farberman), in the press, inaccurately stating that 90% of the orchestra musicians want him out, has hurt the subscription new sales and retarded the rate of renewal." In fact, evaluations completed by the Oakland musicians completed in 1972 suggest that Farberman was incredibly unpopular, with only four of seventy respondents answering 'yes' to the question: "would you like to have him conduct our orchestra again?" Equally unpopular in the press, San Francisco Chronicle

critic Heuwell Tircuit wrote in 1973: “A week ago, without mentioning Watergate, I wrote a calm, rather friendly letter to President Nixon trying to offer logical reasons as to why he should resign. Clearly, it is time to begin composition of such a letter to Maestro Farbman. Farbman has managed, if only passively, to destroy the Oakland Symphony, its personnel, repertory, performance standards and reputation.” See Heuwell Tircuit, “Oakland Symphony’s Decline,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 1, 1973., “Conductor Evaluation Sheet,” December, 1972, Oakland Symphony Archives, Museum of Performance + Design, San Francisco, California. and “Memorandum: Danny Newman to Marcia Thompson,” September 2, 1976, Ford Foundation Records, Grants O-R, RAC.

²⁷ Articulating a common refrain, Ford Foundation Program Officer Oleg Lobanov wrote of the contrasts between the Oakland and San Francisco orchestras based on a visit in 1972: “The Oakland concert struck me as routine, but it did include a piece by a 22 year old black student of Gunther Schuller, Primous Fountain....It was not the work of a well-trained musician, but it was interesting....The real highlight of the trip, however, came two days later at the San Francisco Symphony concert....All in all, one of the finest concerts I’ve heard in years.” See “Oleg Lobanov to Files,” January 25, 1972, Ford Foundation Records, Grants O-R, RAC.

²⁸ M. Melanie Beene, Patricia A. Mitchell, And Fenton Johnson, “Autopsy of an Orchestra: An Analysis Of Factors Contributing To The Bankruptcy Of The Oakland Symphony Orchestra Association” (San Francisco: Melanie Beene, 1988, 2012), 77.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.

³⁰ Michael G. Mauskopf, “Enduring Crisis, Ensuring Survival: Artistry, Economics, and the American Symphony Orchestra” (Ph.D diss., University of Michigan, 2012), 256.

³¹ Alex Ross, “Musical Events: Battle of the Bands,” *New Yorker*, March 22, 2010, 81.

³² Interview with Michael Morgan, Oakland, CA, June 17, 2016.

³³ “Los Angeles Philharmonic: Morning and Luncheon Meeting,” March 11, 1965, box 30, WML.

³⁴ “Estimated Average Annual Salary of Teachers in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, by State or Jurisdiction: Selected Years, 1969-70 through 2009-10,” *National Center for Education Statistics*, March 2010, accessed July 2016, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10_o83.asp.

³⁵ “Symphony Orchestra Program Questionnaire: 1966-1969,” July 29, 1970, Los Angeles Philharmonic Archives.

³⁶ “Comparative Salaries—1952-2002,” *Senza Sordino*, March 2001, 8.

³⁷ Jeffrey Fleishman, “Tales of Obsession and Perfection: The Musicians of the L.A. Phil,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2015, accessed July 2016, <http://graphics.latimes.com/la-phil-2/> LA Times, *Tales of Obsession and Perfection: The Musicians of the L.A. Phil*.

³⁸ “The Ford Foundation: Millions for Music—Music for Millions,” *Music Educators Journal*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (Sep., 1966), 84.

³⁹ “2012-2013 Average Starting Teacher Salaries by State,” *National Education Association*, December 2013, accessed July 2016, <http://www.nea.org/home/2012-2013-average-starting-teacher-salary.html>.

⁴⁰ “Top 20 U.S. Orchestras by Pay,” *Star Tribune*, October 6, 2012.

⁴¹ “The Large Foundations,” April, 1960, box 3, Ford Foundation records, Office of the President, Office Files of Henry T. Heald, RAC.

⁴² “Interview with Paul Ylvisaker for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project,” October 27, 1973, box 3, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 47.

⁴³ “Interview with Marcia Thompson for the Ford Foundation Oral History Project,” August 28, 1973, box 3, A Guide to the Ford Foundation Records, Oral History Project, RAC, 25–26.

⁴⁴ Interview with Marcia Thompson, Tarrytown, NY, June 9th, 2016.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.