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Making Craftspeople: Negotiating Work, Price, and Markets in Contemporary Craft

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Making Craftspeople: Negotiating Work, Price, and Markets in Contemporary Craft

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Sociology

by

Paul James Morgan

Dissertation Committee:
Professor Nina Bandelj, Chair
Professor Judith Stepan-Norris
Associate Professor Keith Murphy

2016

DEDICATION

To

my parents Kathie and Patrick Morgan,

for always believing in me.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My path on this journey has benefited in innumerable ways from the kindness and support of many. Of central importance are the craftspeople who took time from their lives to share their stories and experiences with me. I am forever grateful and indebted to them.

My dissertation chair, Nina Bandelj, has long been a supporter of mine, taking me under her wing, offering guidance and steadfast belief in this project, my abilities, and me. It is no understatement to say that without her this dissertation would have never come to fruition. My committee members, Judith Stepan-Norris and Keith Murphy, were also consistently supportive, even when my own academic predilections became a bit too abstract. Judith Stepan-Norris pushed me to never stray too far from the empirical while also supporting my occasionally rambling theoretical interests. Keith Murphy was open to my ideas early on, supporting this project before it was even fully formed. And Francesca Polletta and Julia Elyachar who, while not on my final committee, read through and offered pointed comments on my draft, pushing me to stay grounded in my site and let it speak. The comments and critiques of these scholars are regularly on my mind, an academic conscience of sorts, as I forge ahead. While any errors or oversights in this dissertation are fully my own, the strengths that exist are most certainly rooted in their influence.

I have also benefitted tremendously from my time in the University of California, Irvine (UCI) Department of Sociology. It served as a home for me to navigate and investigate who I am as a scholar, applying to study demography and leaving as an economic sociologist. The UCI School of Social Sciences gave me various fellowships through the years, allowing me the needed space and time to focus on my work. The Center for Craft, Creativity & Design gave me financial support to collect the ethnographic data for this dissertation, an opportunity that otherwise would not have existed and for which I am thankful.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Making Craftspeople: Negotiating Work, Price, and Markets in Contemporary Craft

By

Paul James Morgan

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, Irvine, 2016

Professor Nina Bandelj, Chair

Crafts serve as a theoretically and empirically important site for investigating the sociological bases of economic phenomena. This dissertation highlights the convergence of price, value, labor, space, and consumption as integral points for conceptualizing the realities of entrepreneurial craft production. For this project, I conducted 29 semi-structured interviews with craftspeople who sell on Etsy.com and/or at Renegade Craft Fair, ethnographic observations at Renegade Craft Fairs, and content analysis of publicly posted price advice from Etsy and Pricerie to form the empirical foundation of this project. I first focus on the how craftspeople come to pursue craft as an occupation, highlighting familial influence and self-directed education. I point to how this forms the basis for later occupational trajectories that are entrepreneurial in nature, while also precariousness because of the financial instability of craft more generally. From there, I turn to how craftspeople determine the prices for their good. Initially, I highlight how the organizations that facilitate craft markets offer advice on pricing. I contrast this to the actual ways in which craftspeople actually price, pointing toward the variability of pricing practices. This variability is not a weakness, though, but is beneficial, allowing for self-determined needs and goals of the craftsperson, with labor value being the most common factor. Finally, I highlight the uniqueness of craft markets as novel spaces of consumption, distinct from both

bazaars and brick-and-mortar stores. This uniqueness allows for consumers and producers to experience extra-economic interactions and build social ties beyond mere consumption. It further points toward the importance for conceptualizing how the space of a market is integral in understanding how consumption operates. In sum, this dissertation serves as a basis for theoretically understanding the importance of craft as a sociological object alongside pointing toward ways that it is important for contextualizing labor, space, and consumption are important for pricesetting.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction, Literature Review, and Methods

On March 4, 2015 Etsy filed an Initial Public Offering (IPO) with the US Securities and Exchange Commission, a necessary first step in the process of becoming a publicly traded company. By April 16th, when Etsy made its debut, the corporation's value ended the day at $3.3 billion on the back of their shares trading for $31 each (de la Merced 2015). Obviously, there is much money to be made in crafts. While Etsy's is not unexpected, as the possibility of going public had been mentioned years earlier (Kalin 2008), this move offered the opportunity for insight into the modern market for crafts. As a globally oriented business created to facilitate the direct interaction between craftspeople and consumers, Etsy's filing gives understanding into the actual processes necessary to build and maintain infrastructure for an online market. Moreover, while it may be unsurprising to some, the financial management of Etsy up to its filing and their projection of the long-term profitability coincides with them highlighting the ways in which their business values are not entirely profit-oriented. One of their key values, sustainability, is highlighted as potentially reducing overall profits because they may shift their servers to higher-cost locations that have lower ecological impact. The idea that the foundational values of the business are similarly difficult to manage for business expansion unexpectedly mirrors many of the concerns and experiences of those craftspeople upon which Etsy's profits rely. While this dissertation is not concerned with the business of Etsy itself, as a multimillion dollar corporation looking to continually expand globally and publicly, this occurrence of this IPO, as this dissertation was drawing to a close, offers an interesting opportunity to begin thinking of organizational reality of craft as business generally before delving more deeply into the business

of craft for the actual craftspeople who conceive of, produce, and subsequently sell their crafted goods. Moreover, Etsy being a publicly traded company underscores that the markets for crafts, especially in the US, are not to be overlooked for their economic potential and profitability.

Throughout Etsy's filing, the company maintains a consistent narrative of concern for the craftspeople it relies upon alongside the motivating values which have been integrated as necessary concerns for the business, even when these values are not oriented toward profit maximization. While the corporate processes of Etsy are not the primary concern of the current project, their creation and maintenance of the infrastructure for the predominate online marketplace for craft makes these overlapping similarities all the more intriguing, especially since these aspects of the IPO highlight the concerns that originally motivated the current dissertation. Namely, how do craftspeople both value and set prices for the crafts they sell? In what ways may profit maximization be downplayed for noneconomic goals? In this initial formulation, the valuation is not merely a synonym for setting a price for a given good. Rather, the valuing process of what one sells does not inherently facilitate or coalesce into a price-form, though the valuation process can, in term, serve as a useful foundation for understanding how one arrives at the final price for which an object is offered, and when that price itself may differ from what the market may actually support. As this project has evolved in conversation with the craftspeople who took time from their lives to be interviewed, as well as through fieldwork at Renegade Craft Fairs, and observing the online marketplace that is Etsy, there has been an evolution of sorts, that the valuing and pricing of crafts is deeply tied into the aspects of identifying as a craftsperson alongside the processes of navigating markets. Altogether, the current dissertation is concerned with what it means to pursue craft as an economic endeavor parallel to the experiences of being a craftsperson more generally, and how economic as well as

noneconomic goals and concerns shape the experiences and intentions of craftspeople.

The Theoretical and Empirical Bases of the Dissertation

Before turning more fully to the specific theoretical positions and the empirical cases of this dissertation, it is important to offer some basis in the arenas of thought from which this project stems. Primarily, this project is most concerned with the field of economic sociology, especially the segment laying the foundations for an understanding of the cultural bases of economic behavior. It additionally draws from insights generated in the field of crafts studies more generally, as craft exists above and beyond its economic function as a consumable product. The sociology of work offers an additional salvo for fully contextualizing craftspeople as laborers alongside their cultural production. Finally, the production of culture perspective, a key theoretical system of thought within sociology, rounds out and unites the prior literature by being a key way in which organizations and institutions alongside individuals facilitate the creation and dissemination of objects as both economic and noneconomic. Together, these broad, theoretical settings are useful for fully framing the reality of craft.

Social Components of Economic Action and Interaction

Economic sociology has seen a strong transformation over the past 30 years in its formulation of the sociological bases of economic action and interaction. Key to the field has been the exposition of the concept of "embeddedness." First formulated by Karl Polanyi (1994), embeddedness was employed to emphasize the socially constructed nature of the economy. Polanyi notes that what he means by this concept is that "The human economy is embedded and enmeshed in institutions, economic and noneconomic" (1944:31). He notes that these

institutions can include “religion or government” or event technological advancement. Polanyi's argument is that, throughout history, the economy has been embedded, to varying degrees in different societies, within the political and social spheres. In essence, that the economy is subsumed under the political and social realms. His argument comes as a critique of neoclassical economists' contention that the form of the economy seen in the 19th-century is emblematic of the economy throughout time. Polanyi argues that this form came about through processes of gradual disembedding, which was intentional and not the result of a natural, social evolution. He traces overtime that the extent to which an economy is embedded within a society is largely due to the organizational and institutional settings of that society being the impetus for that economic formation. Polanyi’s critique stands as a thoroughly sociological critique, centralizing the importance of structures within society as importantly connected and co-constitutive. Polanyi presents his argument of embeddedness as a macro-level argument, looking at and comparing on the societal level and uses it to critique the disembedding for the deleterious affects it has on the broader society. While this approach has held some sway within sociological analyses (see Krippner and Alvarez 2007, Zukin and Dimaggio 1990 for discussions of the research trajectory spurred by Polanyi), it is actually the reformulation of embeddedness as defined by Mark Granovetter which has been the lightning rod of the new economic sociology in its quest further posit the importance of understanding the roles of noneconomic life in the economy.

Granovetter (1985) draws upon Polanyi's earlier argument but advances it in a different direction. The key argument that Granovetter advances concerns competing, yet amenable, conceptions of the bases of action in economic and sociological thought. Namely, Granovetter is critiquing the dominant views of action which sociology, predominately following the Parsonian tradition, and economics take toward human action writ large. In the case of economics,

Granovetter is critiquing the idea of individuals as utility maximizers who act without reference to others (from the dyadic to the macro levels). He sees economics as advancing an undersocialized view of actors, thereby discounting the social almost entirely. As far as a Parsonian sociology, Granovetter sees it as advancing an oversocialized view whereby individuals have internalized norms and values so deeply that they operate without any reference to the structural conditions within which they reside or the interactions in which they are participating. Granovetter argues that these are both atomistic conceptions because, in the former, the social does not matter and in the latter, once the internalization has been completed, there is no need to account for any relational components of economic action because all action can be predicted by value orientations. Because of these shortcomings, Granovetter offers an adjusted version of embeddedness as residing between the poles of under- and oversocialized individuals.

Granovetter's usage of embeddedness to move beyond the aforementioned approaches also moves embeddedness from a societal level of analysis and focuses most explicitly on embeddedness as a structural concern. He posits that embeddedness is that "behavior and institutions [of economic action] are so constrained by ongoing social relations that to construe them as independent is a grievous misunderstanding" (p. 482). In his formulation, to fully understand economic action, one must look to the structural position of individuals and the interactions in which they engage so as to fully understand what motivates a given action. It is not enough to simply formulate an idea of utility maximization or internalized values because both concepts ignore the context-dependent nature of action. This approach laid the groundwork for the bulk of economic sociology that followed, primarily using network methodology and theory to analyze the structure of relations.

Especially important for Granovetter is the building of trust in economic interactions, which not only facilitates interaction and exchange but is quite often the reason for specific exchanges to continually take place, even when an economically more advantageous exchange partner presents themselves. Granovetter's argument is not one which denies a conception of rationality or instrumentality, per se. Rather, Granovetter's argument is one in which economic action is best understood as relating to economic goals at the same time as being attenuated toward social goals. His attention on repeated patterns of social relations or social structures, provides a foundation for a structural perspective on various topics in economic sociology (cf. Podolny 1993; Uzzi 1996).

It must be kept in mind that, while these are differing conceptions of embeddedness, having invigorated differing research trajectories, these are not naturally opposed. Krippner and Alvarez (2007) argue that they are complementary and are looking at different, but related and important, facets of the economy. Polanyi focuses upon how "the social and economic are... mutually constituting" while Granovetter is focusing upon how "social relations shape economic outcomes" (p. 222). As such, integration of the two approaches, offers the ability to fully elucidate the economy from the most micro of interactions to the most macro of political economic thought.

These two approaches, while serving as the basis of much empirical and theoretical work, have additionally been critiqued as not being emblematic of the full range of ways in which embeddedness can exist. Moreover, they have done very little to explicitly serve as a basis for a cultural economic sociology. In the introduction to their edited volume, Zukin and Dimaggio (1990) conceptualize embeddedness as actually being of four differing types: cognitive, cultural, structural, and political. They conceptualize them as: cognitive embeddedness is the structured

mental processes undergirding economic action; cultural embeddedness is the shared understandings which are the basis of what is constituted as possible or reasonable economic action on the part of actors; structural embeddedness is largely aligned with Granovetter and stresses the patterns of exchange and social interactions through which economic action occurs; and political embeddedness is best conceptualized as issues of power which permeate economic action (including, but not limited to class and state). While it is not necessary at this juncture to delve into cognitive or political (structural already being discussed), it is cultural embeddedness that offers an extremely fruitful site for moving toward what economic sociology offers cultural sociology but also offering a site for further expansion of a cultural economic sociology.

Within the realm of cultural economic sociology, Viviana Zelizer can be seen as a leading proponent, highlighting the exact definitional quality which Zukin and Dimaggio outline. As such, much work can be seen as using her earlier and current insights as a basis for further research. While Zukin and Dimaggio note that Zelizer is emblematic of cultural embeddedness, this is not a title that has found much cache in her work. Work in economic sociology has maintained the Granovetterian structural embeddedness as the emblematic definition of what embeddedness means. For Zelizer, it is not simply the structure of relations which alone matter but it is the content, or meaning, of them that offers the key insight into cultural phenomena. Her attention, then, draws attention away from merely constructing a social network highlighting the existence of ties along, rather that the actual tie between individuals (or groups, organizations, and so on, though her focus stays on the microinteractional level) and to the actual navigation, creation, and maintenance of those ties alongside the actual meanings of the ties between individuals as the necessary site to attenuate a fuller understanding. Thus, it is not merely structural position devoid of concern for an alter. Her more recent work moves even more

explicitly away from the structural explanations of Granovetter, identifying economic action as relational work which is a process whereby individuals create differing types of economic actions in relation to how they orient toward the type of relationship they have. Thus, economic action is not simply structural, rather the structured relations are imbued with extremely varying conceptions of the relationship which are of utmost important in understanding economic action (Zelizer 2005 is highly foundational for this notion while more recent work in process has been formalizing the concept of relational work). Zelizer's overarching advancements of a cultural perspective on economic sociology have resulted in understanding just how crucially shape economic (inter)action (cf. Abolafia 1996; Bandelj 2008; Beckert 2008).

These approaches coalesce to highlight that the economy is a thoroughly social product, rather than merely the sum result of an unquestioned human nature, and is, in fact, consistently and thoroughly constructed and reconstructed through systems of human action and interaction. Alongside the actual, economic behavior, the realms in which this occurs must also be understood to be a fully social product.

Social Construction of Markets

Economic sociology has also offered key insights into understanding not only economic action and interaction, but has also done work to highlight the ways in which markets themselves are not the natural result of bartering, trading, and determining how to exchange limited resources. Rather, markets themselves are actively socially constructed. Harrison White (1981, 2002) highlights that actors (focusing on firms) and their behaviors are the sum result of their perception of other actors (firms) and the calculations that are made as regards these alters as far as competition, profit maximization, and so on. Rather than conceive of the market as merely

preexisting and that producers enter into them, White repositions the understandings of the markets as being actively constructed by the broader network structure of the firms in relation to each other. This gives a thoroughly sociological focus by highlighting social structure as the basis of the market as it actively constructs and reconstructs it as firms enter and exit it. Combined with Granovetter, White's focus gives a social structural emphasis to economic inter/action. Whereas Granovetter was focusing in many ways on producer-consumer relations, Granovetter highlights that producers are also responding to, and interacting with, other producers simultaneously. And it is these repeating responses and interactions that sufficiently give the opportunity for a market to adequately exist so that products are able to make it to consumers. Even entirely new products enter into markets that already exist and respond to the existing structure.

An additional line of inquiry in the construction of markets has followed along from science and technology studies, primarily via anthropology, and the concept of performativity. This focus, though, moves the attention from the social structural creation of markets but argues that the economy is thoroughly created by the disciplinary concerns of economics. Michel Callon's (1998) argument pushes forth the argument that the economy does not exist without the machinations of economists who create the necessary technological apparatus' that allow for the actual exchange of limited goods. MacKenzie (2006) pushes along these same lines by highlighting how financial markets are actively shaped by the practice of professional economics. In this case, the discipline of economics and the accordant arguments made about the economy, while professing to be merely descriptive of extant economic systems or predictive of certain outcomes based upon current economic information, are actively engaged in creating that which they describe and are leveraged in ways which guarantee anticipated outcomes. In

essence, economics is predictive of the economy because it creates that which it describes.

While, on the face of them, the two above approaches appear to be in disagreement, on locating where the market comes from, they are not inherently opposed. To assume that firms are not participatory in and in conversation with economics as a discipline would be shortsighted. Economists are regularly employed in organizations (for profit and non-profit) and governments. Thus, the specific insights of White make sense, especially as firms employing economists would actively seek to enact the models they bring with them in response to their competitors.

These two, major approaches dovetail closely with the broader, theoretical sentiments of economic sociology. The structural and relational components are leveraged as the necessary and useful facets that offer the opportunity for market formation and growth, applying the theoretical conceptions into more empirical examples. While the performativity perspective is often positioned as its own system of thought, it relies upon the relations between economics as a discipline (including economists) and the broader economy, to influence the resulting economic reality while bringing theory and society closer.

Value(s) & Price

The markets, once constructed, are reliant upon the possibilities for exchange, which coalesce around that most important symbol: price. It is at this point which economists have long been the leading voice, arguing forcefully for price, at its core, being found at the equilibrium between supply and demand. Economists have adjusted this in ways to account for potential variations in behavior, information, and the incorporation of externalities (Weber 2012). Together, these have given some strong foundations upon which understandings of

economic action occurs, though they have left aside much in the way of understanding economic action and interaction in sociologically grounded ways.

While there have obviously been key ways in which sociologists have forcefully rebuked the understandings of neoclassical economics, explicit treatments of price or value as a sociological object of study have not seen much centrality theoretically. These treatments that have occurred, though, span the range of thinking in economic sociology. Following a structural perspective, Uzzi and Lancaster (2004) highlight the pricing of the legal services market to find that relations between firms played an important role in what prices law firms charged their clients. On the other hand, from a social constructivist perspective on value and price, Charles Smith (1989) uses ethnographic observations of auctions to show how price is not something objectively assigned based on individual preferences but it is a result of collective decision making in an on going interactive process.

One of the strongest examples of the economic sociology of price is offered by Olav Velthuis (2005). Velthuis formally trained as both a sociologist and economist, not to mention art historian, tackles a difficult topic of economic argumentation: art. While economists have tackled art, especially to highlight how art is a relatively stable investment (Grampp 1989) or that the returns on the labor market for artists are lower (2002), it has not received as much of focus, quite largely because art exists as a singularity, which are a category of goods notoriously hard to price as regularly or stably as other goods because of their wholly unique nature (Karpik 2010). Rather than attempt to treat art as simply a singularity or identify a manner in which art can be reduced to an average, market commodity, Velthuis shifts the focus to understanding the sociocultural bases of prices. Whereas the neoclassical economic argument would be that prices simply signal value differentiation between artists so that consumers can make better choices,

Velthuis notes that prices for art are not adjusted for works that do not sell, which is a common approach to selling commodities which have remained on the market too long at a price which is clearly not drawing in purchasers. Additionally, Velthuis finds, given two identically sized art pieces by the same artist produced at the same time, even if most viewers see one of the works as having higher aesthetic worth, both are priced identically. To understand this, Velthuis turns toward a semiotic understanding of price whereby prices are not necessarily or only signifying the artwork as an object but also the artist, the dealer, and the buyer. The prices are constitutive of the hierarchy in place in the art world; interaction facilitates their formation; they designate the status of the artists, sellers, and buyers; they function as forming value, both economic and non-economic. That is, within a given market, prices are not merely to be understood as objective and independent but are constantly enacted and utilized to demarcate and understand the social relations between people within the market itself. As such, Velthuis' advancement in the sociological understanding of price covers an area of pricing that is less clear: the pricing of aesthetic objects.

Velthuis is emblematic of a cultural economic sociology due to highlighting the idea of meanings of the symbols and meanings of the ties between people. Prices are symbolic of the social relations of the art world in that the various social structures within the art world, the gallery system, the career paths of artists, reputations, etc. are all represented in the price of a given work of art. As such they are not predicated upon general economic conceptions of supply and demand but shared understandings the relationships and reputations within the art world.

All of this together, though, represents what Beckert (2011) notes is a continuing minimal amount of interest paid to prices by sociologists. In reviewing the literature, Beckert notes that there have been three primary ways in which sociologists have dealt with the idea of prices:

networks, institutions, and meaning. For networks, he points to the ways in which actors are embedded both within and outside the market, a primary concern with economic sociology. Moreover, these networks are engaged in various ways with systems of power, trust between individuals, and status hierarchies, all of which serve as primary explanatory features of how prices are set beyond, or outside, the market. As regards institutions, Beckert notes that this is primarily a historical concern, outlined by figures such as Durkheim, Weber, and Polanyi. In this approach, prices are the result not of the market itself or necessarily the networks within the market, but of the institutional regulations shaping and constraining prices and pricing mechanisms. Finally, Beckert points toward prices as meanings or formed by meaning. For this he illustrates that prices are imbued with meaning:

> First, [cultural approaches to pricing] deal with the development of the calculative tools that market actors use to evaluate goods to be exchanged. Second, they deal with the formation of expectations regarding events in the future. Third, they deal with the normative preconditions necessary for goods or services to become legitimate objects for market exchange and thereby to have prices attached to them. Fourth, they deal with the social constitution of preferences for certain goods. (p. 15)

Beckert takes these three primary approaches -- network, institutional, and cultural -- together initially as a survey of the field but utilizes them to note that, together, they offer a resounding critique of the idea that prices are anything but the simple outcome of supply and demand and presupposed by much of neoclassical economics. Separate, they offer key moments of rupture but together highlight the inherently sociological nature of the economy.

Often tied close to, not always synonymous with price, is the concept of value. While the value of a given item is regularly the exchange value as represented by a price-form, recent work has begun to understand that any given object may contain value(s) that supersede, or ignore altogether, a concomitant price-form. These forays, though, are in response to a relative dearth

of sociological analyses of value. The use of value within the sociology literature has historically been associated with value as plural, or values, dictating "what is ultimately good, proper, or desirable in human life" (Graeber 2001:1). From this vantage point, it has often served primarily as an orienting concept combined with a difficulty of empirical inquiry (Hitlin and Piliavin 2004). While recent social psychological attempts have been made to fully elucidate values as a sociological concept, these have suffered from two main shortcomings: a lack of broader engagement beyond sociology and ignoring the concept of value as highly individuated across individuals, groups, and contexts. For the latter, at best, most sociological literature has utilized an economic approach to the individuated value, an approach that Graeber (2001) defines as "the degree to which objects are desired, particularly, as measured by how much others are willing to give up to get them" (1). Thus, we have two primary conceptions guiding most sociological inquiry: values as an aggregate which seems to function primarily as a schema guiding thought and action; and value as economic exchange, valuing something enough that we will trade for it. Within this latter conception, value and price are conflated, and easily handled within economic understandings; we find value (or utility) in an object whose price we are willing to pay. If we do not value something enough (or find enough utility in it) its price point is too high.

While both are quite useful, they tend to ignore the formation/creation of specific value(s), the processes by which the value(s) change, and are predicated upon value being a stable concept for individuals. Moreover, these arguments are regularly kept in purely economic situations or focus on such things as family, politics, and abstract notions of what is valued, such as when Hitlin and Piliavin (2004) point to much research requesting individuals rank or rate various values. The implicit assumption here being that while individuals have many differing

values, some are stronger than others. In both cases, though, the ranking or rating has been largely free of context, ignoring that all values are not engaged in a given moment or space. In addition to this problematic assumption, the "values" which are commonly investigated, such as "freedom" and even issues of family values, are highly abstract and lack any definition by which all individuals respond similarly. When placed within a market, value as price becomes the predominate marker by which an individual's valuing is judged. These shortcomings, though, give rise to the current dissertation project, which aims to work out a potential path for understanding specific values in a particular context. This dissertation aims to address this by focusing upon values in craft specifically. As will be developed a little later, theoretically important values in craft are aesthetic value, labor value, use value, and consumer value for crafts.

While the idea of value has been important in sociology, as noted it has not been a key topic of investigation for quite some time. Recent forays into value have found a home within economic sociology and serve as a good starting point for the current project. Joanne Entwistle's (2009) work highlights how the creation and utilization of aesthetic value can operate. Working primarily on male modeling and department store buyers to investigate aesthetic value in fashion, she has explicitly engaged with the idea of what aesthetic means. Entwistle's work, like much work in sociology, takes the concept of aesthetic as relatively ambiguous but accepted as a notion which engages primarily with notions of beauty, utilizing similar terms such as "attractive... stylish, or chic" (9). She argues that these notions, while key terms used by many in the fashion world, are not only object- but also context-specific and highly unstable with a constantly changing meaning. The notion of beauty oftentimes focuses on subtle points of uniqueness and comes from a knowledge that is not readily known by the broader public.

Entwistle argues that, when they discuss identifying who could be a model or which models work best for a given context, many of the modeling agents discuss their knowledge as being internalized, gut feelings, existing as tacit knowledge. Altogether, these notions of a specific aesthetic give rise to Entwistle's argument that aesthetic value is predicated upon specific characteristics (that is, looking for specific physical attributes) and arises within an aesthetic market whereby varying clients are desiring specific looks. Rather than an idea of a "pure" or "perfect" beauty existing which can be (re)created time and time again, Entwistle explicitly argues for the idea of value being highly heterogeneous even within a given space, reliant upon expectations and prior knowledge which guide how certain objects (in this case, models or clothes) are valued for their given aesthetic qualities. As such we see that not only is aesthetic value constantly in flux, it is continuously being redefined.

This aesthetic value, though, also offers an interesting counter logic. As Mears (2011a, 2011b) notes, within aesthetic economies, models who have highly valued looks (or aesthetics) are more likely to be contracted for high status jobs. These jobs, which purposely aim to utilize models who are indicative or emblematic of the more preferred (and least available) aesthetic of the moment, are actually some of the lowest paying (regularly resulting in no pay). The aesthetic economy of modeling gives capital to the models not in the form of payment (or, at least, in high levels of payment) but in the form of cultural capital and reputations which have the potential for long-term of income. Mears underscores this point by discussing a male model who turned down every non-paying job, including Vogue, because he only focused upon profits, thereby reducing his long-term ability to continually obtain contracts and maintain a continual income. Mears highlights that status within modeling is not connected into the earnings associated with booking shows. Rather, the bodily labor associated with modeling is valued more for aesthetic

projects such as low and unpaid editorials.

While this all may be specific to the world of fashion because of its constantly changing seasons and high level of product turn over, I contend that Entwistle's and Mears' arguments can be pushed beyond fashion into discussion of aesthetic value more generally and that they are potentially influential beyond aesthetic value as well. At its core, the argument which Entwistle and Mears put forth is one whereby a specific market creates the value or values that exist within that market and does not incorporate values outside of the market. While this may, on its face, correspond to an economic understanding, to paraphrase beyond the realm of modeling, "a[n object's] value lies not in anything intrinsic to the [object], but is generated around the [object], through many different engagements and processes... value is created, accrued and attributed along the network in which the object... becomes entangled. In other words... value is not an essential quality of the object, but something assigned to it over its life course" (p. 58, emphasis in the original). The given aesthetic value of an object can not be reduced simply to a notion of supply and demand that models and clothes maintain their aesthetic value solely on whether people buy them or not. Before a process of economic exchange comes into being (as far as selling the final product), there is an existing set of aesthetic values which are then engaged in future exchanges in which the objects find themselves placed. Thus, value is in flux because of its life course and history, both within the market and outside of it. This is not altogether separate from Appadurai's (1986) notion of regimes of value whereby value moves through a potentially endless number of exchanges, at each moment being redefined but still existing in a certain form at that moment. Overall, Entwistle and Mears' argument is how I also conceive of aesthetic value and its creation/change being a process of negotiation in a given context.

Aesthetic value is only one domain in which craft objects can be conceived. Because of

the importance of the craftsperson in the creation of craft objects, labor value is an important site of investigation as well. Even if not traditionally understood as an economic sociology of price or value, Marx's (1992) treatise of the transformation of labor value into price sheds important insights into the pricing process. Marx's labor theory of value is grounded in production, in the labor necessary to make something. Marx sees very little basis for use being important for value, nor does he pay attention to interactions between buyers and sellers, producers and consumers. Rather, to identify the value of labor, Marx posits a "socially necessary labor time" as essential to the accounting for the variation in production time between laborers, amateur or professional. In his case, he was discussing the organization both before and during the transition to capitalist economies and within these times, Marx argues that all producers know the actual amount of labor that a given object requires and, even if they do not, they quickly learn when they take it to market, thereby adjusting the price that they post for their goods. This supposed general knowledge, though, is simply stated by Marx. On the whole, Marx calls attention to labor as a basis upon which to understand value of objects produced, and therefore their price. This potential importance, though, must advance not just along the lines of how craftspeople understand their labor and its relation to the price of the crafts they sell, but must also investigate their understandings of the labor of others to uncover how, and if, they conceptually engage with a notion of a "socially necessary labor time" or simply utilize the prices of others as signaling how they price, regardless of the labor put into the objects.

Theories of Craft

As the prior literature shows, the theoretical treatments and expansions have occurred primarily through their application. Rather than philosophical abstractions on "what is aesthetic"

or "what are markets," it becomes necessary to understand the empirical realities of the economy in action. To understand the social economy of craft, then, it becomes necessary to understand craft unto itself. Recently, there has been a growing interest in craft as a uniquely positioned and valid site of study. Much of this work has come forward in one of two ways: craft as understood through the lens of studio craft (with an occasionally strong use of art historical and fine arts writing), or the use of craft techniques and materials in arts practice. In the case of the former, Glenn Adamson (2007) notes craft's subordinate position to art, but uses that as its moment of interest for a theoretical undertaking. More recently, Koplos and Metcalf (2010) have offered up studio craft as a historical project, tracing its contested development from industrialization, which disrupted the connection between work and pleasure, through the contemporary times.

The Journal of Modern Craft has been instrumental in advancing the theoretical understandings of craft, with much space devoted to art with craft technique. Emblematic of this approach, Elissa Auther (2008) traces the difficulty for fiber artists to be accepted in the art world as well as their separation from the craft world, thereby highlighting the difficulty of fully removing the binary separating craft from art. This results in and allows for the possibility that craft, in various ways, will be assimilated into the arts, not existing as something distinct from them. On the other hand, Julia Bryan-Wilson (2009) highlights the work of Harmony Hammond, which utilizes craft techniques within an arts practice context. This removes the binary and identifies craft as a potentially queered undertaking.

Differentiating craft more forcefully from art and design, Howard Risatti (2007) offers a crucial starting point for why craft is important as a scholarly site of study on its own terms. Risatti highlights that craft, more so than art and design, is an undertaking that has been important throughout the history of humankind, and whose forms and structures have not

dramatically changed over time. Risatti looks to the core features and common elements of crafts to argue that, preeminently, crafts are objects that are intended for a specific purpose. At their core, crafts objects are applied objects, in Risatti's words "objects with an intentional applied function; they are objects intended to fulfill the purpose that initiated their making" (p. 26), their intended function.

Arnold Whittick (1984) offers a partially useful distinction between art and craft, namely that "Art, in the sense of creation, is the original individual expression and design of a work, and craft is the skilled technical activity of communicating that creation or design in a material or medium" (p. 49). This distinction thereby reduces the category of art and enlarges the category of craft, not in the sense of medium (he stresses that medium is irrelevant) but by moving many objects commonly seen as art into the realm of craft. This is actually quite similar to Richard Sennett's (2009) idea that craftspersonship[1] has, at its core, a want of something done well as an end in itself. That is to say, that craft is, at its core, skilled work. Regardless of the arguments that surround this differentiation, the notion of craft as skill is tantamount. Craft is not posed as lesser than art, unless one creates a hierarchy of originality, but rather as an endeavor in which skill is most evident and a key, defining feature of any object interpreted as craft. This dichotomy creates a potential issue in terms of being able to delineate what originality actually is but maintains that craft should be celebrated for its key-defining feature of skilled creation. But how do we deal with the idea of identifying aesthetic value in craft by simply delineating a key component of craft? Investigating ways in which art has been understood also offers a route for

[1] While Sennet utilizes the idea of the "craftsman," there is often a de-gendering of the term to at least be "craftsperson," which is the phrase I continually use throughout this paper, not least of which is because the majority of my interviewees are women. One term, though, that is continually gendered is that of "craftsmanship." While clunky and without precedent, I utilize craftspersonship with the same reasoning as craftsperson: a concern for a gender neutral phrase.

understanding craft, as the two are continually kept close.

Within the philosophy of art and aesthetics, Arthur Danto (1964) laid the foundation for the institutional theory of art. Danto argues that it is not something inherent to the artwork itself, per se, that lends it the air of recognition as art. Rather, he states that "To see something as art requires something the eye cannot decry-an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an artworld" (p. 580). For Danto, a specific space for art, and the existence of art theory for explanation, are necessary prerequisites for something to be deemed art. George Dickie (2000), in a simplified definition, offers a potential route for investigating how one defines art that can be transposed to craft via Whittick. For Dickie "a work of art in a classificatory sense is an artifact of a kind created to be presented to an artworld public" (p. 228). This institutional theory of art offers an extremely succinct argument for how one defines art: art is whatever is to be seen by a specific audience for art. In this definition, the object on its own is not necessarily important. Rather, one can simply look to the individuals for whom the object is created as substantiating that object as art: gallerists, critics, and consumers of art. An easily demonstrable example is Marcel Duchamp's readymades, preexisting objects placed into a gallery context for an artworld public, therefore becoming art. Before applying this conceptual model to craft, a point must be dealt with, namely a critique of this definition. A regular critique of Dickie is that the institutional theory of art does not fully account for what art is because it ignores value, or any evaluation of art. More simply, it does not delineate good art from bad art, it simply defines art. To overcome this, and to allow for an engagement with value, Dickie adjusts the institutional theory of art to state "a work of art in a classificatory sense is an evaluable artifact of a kind created to be presented to an artworld public" (p. 240, emphasis in the original). This is Dickie's way of noting that art is whatever is put before a specific public

whereby it may be evaluated in many ways, none of which deny or reduce the object's claim to being art. Thus, context defines the parameters but leaves open a myriad of ways of valuing the object in question.

This theory of art, wherein the concept of an artworld is used as the apparatus to define art, dovetails nicely with work in the sociology of art, especially that following from Becker (1982), which details that the creation of art is not a solitary exercise but is, in fact, a collective activity which requires the coordination of artists, critics, buyers, gallerists, etc. for any conceivable work of art to exist. Moreover, Becker expands this notion to point out that there are multiple art worlds depending on the type of art (be it jazz music or abstract expressionist painting) and that the structures of these art worlds may differ as the multiple people who are within these worlds may vary. Whereas Becker is outlining the ability for art to be created, combined with Danto (and those who follow him), art worlds are fields (Bourdieu 1993) which facilitate the ability for art to be created while simultaneously guaranteeing their reception and acceptance as art works by a broader public. Additionally, Becker's theory of art highlights a continuum between art and craft specifically, where the distinction between the two is the idea of use. Craft, for Becker, is thoroughly tied to the use-value of the good and the steady removal of that use moves any given object to the status of art. To a certain extent, while Bryan-Wilson's (2009) discussion of Harmony Hammonds' floor pieces notes that, unlike traditional rugs meant to cover and soften, Hammonds' are rough and firm, not meant to be walked upon, nor something one would want to walk upon. This disjuncture highlights, to an extent, Becker's distinction between art and craft generally, though Bryan-Wilson's discussion, and Hammonds presentation, maintain the importance of conceiving of treating this work as craft, regardless of the loss of function.

While Whittick's overall argument of the distinction between art and craft does not, as far as I am concerned, fully delineate between art and craft, its emphasis on the skill in craft and the notation of the closely related nature of art and craft is useful. Given this, for the purposes of my project, an application of Dickie's approach to craft will be of more use. To paraphrase, craft in a classificatory sense is an artifact of a kind created to be presented to a craftworld public, which can be evaluated as valuable by the craftworld public. While this presents a craft world public as a homogenized totality, something that the institutional theory of art does, not all craft worlds or the inhabitants of those world, may respond as favorably to certain objects being defined as crafts. Unfortunately, this is a concern that is beyond the current project. For the purposes of my research, this public is located in specific markets for handmade goods where the objects can be evaluated according to whatever criterion a buyer would like to use but its claim to being craft is set in place. In a sociological sense, Dickie's adjustment works. As Gell (1998) has argued, a disciplinary theory must look like prior theories. For theories within sociology (especially the sociology of art), an institutional understanding has been the most common route.

In this dissertation, I aim to transport an adjusted version of the institutional theory of art to become what I conceive of as an institutional theory of craft. While various arguments (e.g. Risatti 2007) give a very specific definition of craft as an explicitly useful object wherein a craft object must contain (such as a bowl), cover (such as a quilt or clothing), or support (such as a chair), this is in an attempt to create a formal definition that sets crafts on its own terms not in relation to other object-types (i.e. art). Risatti supports his argument of what qualifies as craft as explicitly coming from a historical understanding of what has simply always been meant by crafted objects, simply identifying key connections between objects that allow for his taxonomy of these three types. Unfortunately, what his definition invariably does is removes, or even

disallows, the idea that the field of craft can, on its own terms, define what is a craft object both by virtue of the creator and the audience agreeing on this defining quality. Additionally, it also limits much evolution or change for the category of craft, limiting it to merely historical understandings, regardless of its continuing significance. This is not to say that I reject Risatti's theory out of hand, but that it is simply not inclusive enough of what may be deemed a craft object. As such, I will work through this dissertation with the idea that crafts are objects that are created for the craftworld publics. The majority of the objects in these spaces are ones that fit within Risatti's definition (clothing, knitting, sewing, and ceramic vessels are quite common) but will also move beyond his definition as the craftworld publics also identify items such as jewelry (which Risatti says is tangential to craft) as craft objects. For my purposes, I find it more important to respect how the sites I investigate include various objects as craft objects rather than exclude certain craftspeople/crafts simply because they do not fit within a stringent, theoretical taxonomy. Moreover, this allows me to approach my sites in a manner wherein the social component (i.e. producers and consumers interacting) define the subject at hand, rather than a formal definition that is predicated upon an asocial definition of crafts.

Work

Working and making are at the core of craft, which requires some understanding of what work entails. Generally, the sociology of work positions itself most strongly within an understanding of work exchanged for a wage and the attendant social processes and, most often, inequalities that this entails. This approach is understandable considering that the foundational texts of the discipline are consistently concerned with this form and understanding of work. Processes of industrialization, and the subsequent onset of postindustrial futures, resulted in

much focus on capitalist and proletariat relations, issues of labor exploitation, union formation, and continuing battles over the issues of wage labor, especially because it became the predominate form of work and income. These histories are important for understanding the idea of work in general but, then, how can craft and work be positioned more specifically, especially for purposes of this dissertation?

Eileen Boris (1988), in looking at the Arts and Crafts Movement, highlights the importance of conceptions of labor in the production of crafts. She notes that the main leaders of this movement, John Ruskin and William Morris, pointed toward the devaluation of labor in capitalist production and how it went hand-in-hand with what they argued were objects of low, or non-existent, aesthetic value when produced via machine. While the rhetoric of the Arts and Crafts Movement was a critique of capitalism, it unfortunately did not displace mass production because labor-intensive handmade goods could not compete with the substantially lower price of mass-produced goods. But, it still served as a rallying point for revaluing labor in relation to both the use that it creates as well as the aesthetic forms, which these objects inhabit. Additionally, the philosophy espoused within the Arts and Crafts Movement also corresponds to contemporary concerns such as sustainability in that it also promoted the durability of goods as a response to the rampant waste within mass production (Miller 2011).

More generally, Andrew Abbott (2005) reminds us that work is, of course, an economic phenomenon and that it is necessary for economic sociology to include work in a variety of conceptions. Abbott's point is not that work with an attendant wage is the only form that should be under investigation. His explication of the historically and structurally contingent nature of modes of work, from non-paid homework to volunteering up through paid labor are all important factors of consideration in discussing anything regarding labor writ large because what was once

unpaid may become paid, and vice versa. Diversifying economic sociological understandings even further, Beamish and Biggart (2006) bring attention to varying ways in which work is organized occurs in both market and nonmarket settings and how these influence everything meaning that undergirds the work alongside everything from relations to remuneration that may be received. Beamish and Biggart highlight that remuneration should not only be conceived of in terms of wage labor, but that the reasons for working may be exchanged for wages, payment, privilege, or even honor, depending upon the economic organization.

The issue of craft labor itself has a few, differing approaches. Maines (2009) highlights that, with the onset of industrialization, crafts steadily fell out of being a source of income and were transformed into a hobby. The point on which this pivots is the issue largely of deskilling in industries as a means by which labor costs can be reduced, alongside the introduction of newer forms of machinery to allow for easier opportunities for labor replacement, though there is also support that alongside the removal of skilled working in one case the opportunities for the creation and expansion of new skills can occur (Form 1987). We see the removal of skills and replacement of workers in various industries from canning (Brown and Philips 1986) to printing (Wallace and Kalleberg 1982) and so on. The ease of this distinction over time is highly contested, with recourse to understanding when and where these processes may occur. As Steiger and Form (1991) show with construction, workers and managers have found a system that allows for managerial control while also allowing for construction workers to maintain and expand their knowledge and control over the actual work process in ways that reduces alienation. Attewell (1987) highlights clerical work has not been deskilled, as generally reported, but has seen merely a change in the skills utilized.

Work and gender additionally adds an important wrinkle to keep in mind, especially

because of the gendered nature of craft. When looking at the experiences of work that take into account gender, it is highlighted again and again that there are differential experiences for women and men, with work being relatively gender segregated and regularly resulting in inequality for women ranging from differences in income to opportunities for advancement (Bielby and Baron 1986, Kanter 1977, Cohen and Huffman 2003). Within workplaces more generally, these issues of highlight that the labor expectations of women are often distinct from those of men, especially in terms of expectations regarding the types of emotional labor construed as central to their job roles, especially for service work (Hochschild 1983). Emotional labor is not solely the domain of women, though it is most overtly understood in workplaces predominated by women because of normative expectations of gendered behavior. The realities of these experiences point toward the ways in which the labor-based experiences of women shape their broader psychological and social experiences (Kahn 1990, Morris and Feldman 1996). Moreover, it is even noted that the service work entails not simply emotional labor but aesthetic labor, with expectations of specific presentations of self that correspond to culturally relevant aesthetics embodied in both the presentation of self and specific communication styles (Williams and Connell 2010, Gruys 2012). These approaches build upon considering the occupational realities that women regularly face and aid in highlighting the distinct ways that gender informs the processes of work above and beyond systemic discrimination that facilitates and maintains the lower pay for women (Huffman 2004; Cohen, Huffman, and Knauer 2009) and the motherhood penalty (Correll, Benard, and Paik 2007).

Feldberg and Glenn (1979) highlight how the most sociological studies of work focused predominately on men and, when occupational experiences of women were studied, resulted in a bifurcation in approach, men's experiences were analyzed as being influenced by their job

whereas women's experiences were analyzed as being influenced by their gender. This is a useful point to incorporate because it highlights an important conception that needs to be taken into account simultaneously: that gender is influential for work experience for people of all genders and that one's work is influential on their broader life, in ways that are not solely reducible to normative gender expectations, all while keeping in mind the structural and relational realities of individuals. This becomes especially important for this dissertation because it centralizes the importance of remembering gender in a stratified society alongside the need to focus directly on the occupational experiences of workers unto themselves, giving a fuller rendering.

What is there to make of these arguments, then? Together, these arguments highlight the occupational realities that exist, depending upon the type of work one is investigating. Broad, theoretical arguments are often easily refuted in certain domains. Regardless, this highlights that the issues of work more generally are constantly in flux and, dependent upon the levels of bureaucratization and managerial control, the issues of how much control and skill workers have can and will vary. Moreover, this work highlights a differing conception of craft that aligns more closely with the ideas that Richard Sennett (2009) presented before. Whereas Sennett was aiming to more fully understand the idea of craft by building on labor, histories of labor have aimed to understand the idea of craft labor especially through the understanding of Braverman's (1974) conception of craft labor being a space in which we can see the uniting of labor and knowledge, which continual focus toward mastery. Sennett aims to revive the concept of craft; Braverman aims to critique the political economy that resulted in the exploitation of labor. Together, we can see this approach and idea of craft labor being focused on a process and not a product, which has continually allowed for understanding craft labor in areas such as

electricians, construction workers, and even programmers.

Producing Culture

Issues of work, the organizational and institutional realities that go along with them, have found explorations not just in the industrial realms. Work has been undertaken to explicate the ways in which culture and cultural objects are structured, produced, and disseminated. The two primary ways this has occurred have been through the production of culture perspective, largely aligned with Richard Peterson's work, and the work of Pierre Bourdieu specifically on what he refers to as the field of cultural production.

The production of culture perspective is a major system of thought in understandings of culture and economy. Rather than focus on values, the intent is to identify the expressive elements across a range of what are conceived of as cultural products. It focuses on the six facets of law and regulation, technological innovation, industry structure, organizational structure, career trajectories, and markets to orient toward the ways in which culture forms, changes, and fades away and all of these naturally inform the economic conditions of cultural objects.

Law and regulation pays crucial attention to the ways in which the symbolic elements that can be produced are largely dependent upon how the legal field is structured and how certain forms of cultural objects are regulated. Who controls what can be produced or whether equal access to producers is assured both work to constraining or expand the range of symbolic elements produced (cf. Barron 2006, Griswold 1981, and Lee 2004). Technological innovation allows for communication and expression to change and offers new openings for expression (cf. DeNora 1995, Lena 2004, and Theberge 2004).

Industry structure focuses upon processes of institutionalization, specifically at the field

level. The form of these structures varies across differing cultural industries. Some cultural fields are dominated by very few, large firms which offer a limited range of cultural products, others have many, small firms offering a large range of objects, while fields span the two and comprised of firms of varying size falling into differing niches (cf. Crane 1992; DiMaggio 1982; Greve, Posner, and Rao 2006; and Peterson 1997). Organizational structure highlights how differing organizational structures are better suited to explore, support, create, and change different systems of symbolic production (cf. Crane 1997; Gitlin 1983; Lizardo 2009; and Peterson and Berger 1971)

Career trajectories pay attention to how actors move through various occupations within a cultural field. Alongside this, actors are always participating in collective activity. At every step, symbolic production is dependent upon where a career is situated within a field and the collectivity surrounding it (cf. Bandelj 2003, Becker 1982, Crane 1974, Fine 1992, Menger 1999, and Uzzi and Spiro 2005) Finally, the production of culture perspective places much emphasis on markets. Markets and cultural production take their most emphatic form in the ways in which consumer tastes are utilized as a basis for market formation. These tastes, while existing prior to the market and responding to existing symbolic forms, are then formed into markets to better respond to consumer demand, thereby shaping the symbols of producers who attempt to best fulfill extant demand (cf. Bielby and Bielby 1994; Dowd and Frederik 2003; Peterson 1997; and Salganik, Dodds, and Watts 2006). Together, these six facets coalesce allowing for understanding cultural objects at levels of attention, from an individual producer, through their career, up through the institutional realities. In essence, the production of culture perspective takes Howard Becker's arguments about the art world and positions the six predominate aspects of collective action that are the most influential.

Pierre Bourdieu's (1993) concept of the field of cultural production has similar preoccupations as the production of culture perspective, though his approach incorporates different levels of attention and sites of focus. Key to Bourdieu's theory is his incorporation of key concepts of power in ways that are abstracted and connected beyond the field in question, especially by incorporating a continual emphasis on issues of class and reproduction in art. Within this approach, Bourdieu is attempting to build a theoretical approach to understanding any given field, thereby offering an abstracting understanding of how it works, with an aim for highlighting the potential for some general principles by which all cultural fields work. For example, when discussing the world of writing, Bourdieu highlights the educational, organizational, and institutional issues at hand, points to relations between producers and consumers, especially within a market, and discusses the processes of consecration. Simultaneously, Bourdieu takes special attention to talk about the hierarchies in writing in various ways to denote the processes of power at play. He delineates how certain *types* of writing, such as poetry versus prose, both experience differing levels of legitimacy and import. He then moves to point toward the fact that there is not simply one type of prose, and that it is important to make distinctions between the predominant class character certain cultural products are aimed toward, with differences between high-brow and middle-brow, for example.

> "*Middle-brow art* [*l'art moyen*], in its ideal-typical form, is aimed at a public frequently referred to as 'average' [*moyen*]. Even when it is more specifically aimed at a determinate category of non-producers, it may none the less eventually reach a socially heterogeneous public. Such is the case with the bourgeois theatre of the *belle-époque*, which is nowadays broadcast on television" (125)

Thus, what we can see is a deepening of the complexity of cultural production by taking any given field, utilizing the six factors that production of culture identifies, while also incorporating systems of power within and between the fields more generally. To an extent, this highlights

some of the important ways in which the theoretical and philosophical discussions of art and craft above have operated, that by identifying certain craft production and producing art objects, there is still systems in place which accord a differential status (Auther 2009).

Toward an Economic Sociology of Craft, Price, and Value(s)

Building on existing sociological studies of price and theory of labor value, my goal is to provide one of the first economic sociological analyses of craft. Crafts are a strategic research site for an economic sociologist because they are cultural objects, which have use and aesthetic value. Moreover, the producer is often also the seller so labor value is not transformed into a price via an intermediary (or a capitalist in Marxian terms), but by the laborer directly. Given these characteristics of crafts and craftwork, they can importantly illuminate the processes of valuation, commodification, and pricing that sociologists need to understand better (Beckert and Aspers 2011). As Beckert (2011) has argued, the idea that prices are simply the result of supply and demand equilibrium is simply not enough. While neoclassical economics generally assumes that individual behavior is focused upon utility maximization with preferences and behaviors being stable over time (Becker 1996), thereby facilitating supply to respond to demand so as to shape the prices to find their equilibrium, Beckert (2011) points to the myriad ways in which price is shaped only marginally by supply and demand but rather finds itself set via networks, institutions, and cultural understandings.

In craft markets, networks are both between craftspeople as well as between craftsperson and consumer. In the current dissertation, the relations between producer and consumer are tantamount and influence price in interesting ways. Networks may also be leveraged in the form of status. On Etsy, they regularly present interviews and stories on craftspeople who sell through

their site, giving implicit support and validation to these craftspeople by presenting them to the broader community of users. Institutional influences upon prices in the craft markets I am investigating are less obvious as illustrated in the extant literature as it predominately revolves around corporations (cf. Aspers and Beckert 2011, Bourdieu 2005). Finally, cultural understandings of prices for crafts will likely follow the work of Velthuis in that the prices function as symbolic of reputation and quality of the objects being purchased. Therefore, higher prices are quite probably indicative of both the ability of the craftsperson (in terms of making but also in terms of creativity) as well as the quality of the materials (organic cotton, vintage wool, uncommon woods, etc.). Altogether, the markets for crafts offer the possibility to simultaneously investigate the three main ways, as outlined by Beckert, in which sociologists have undertaken studies of price.

I investigate craft markets as arenas of social life constituted by the interplay between prices and values, the cultural understandings of what is appropriate and what is inappropriate for the pricing and valuing of objects, and grounded in concrete interactions between craftspeople and buyers of craft. Engaging with these issues will advance both structural and cultural economic sociology.

My project takes Risatti's point about crafts as first and foremost use-objects as a starting point of an inquiry into the precise process in which craftspeople make their created objects available for potential use by consumers, including pricing and selling in person-to-person and online markets. I move beyond Risatti and link his emphasis on use-objects into how the use value of craft interacts with crafters' labor value and aesthetic value of objects, especially when taking into account craftspeople in relation to their intended audience (consumers), not just the object itself. While the current popularity of craft production does not seem to offer as sustained

a critique of the capitalist mode of production as the Arts and Craft movement did, it will also be important to address the philosophical similarities between the two, as well as their divergences as both operate, at least at the surface, in relation to the capitalist mode of production.

Specifically, I pay attention to how social relations, and the craft community-at-large in which crafters are embedded, influence their decisions on how to price. I do not assume that the craftspeople I study will simply follow ideas of supply and demand in how they determine the prices of the crafts they produce. Feedback from other craftspeople may be strongly predictive of whether craftspeople decide to raise or lower their prices, especially if the markets in which they are being sold attempt to regulate the craftspeople on whether they will be in competition with each other, therefore causing prices to drop, or whether craftspeople "collude" to not lower their prices, thereby reducing competition based simply on price and thereby allowing other attributes or values, such as aesthetics and use, be the primary component of sales. I also consider how crafters' understanding of their objects as having aesthetic and use value together with their perceptions of what consumers value matter in pricing. Further, I pay attention to how crafters view themselves (as artists, as entrepreneurs, as producers, and as craftspeople) to see how this may influence how they price their crafts. Finally, labor value is positioned to further guide price as the process of making and the importance of identifying objects as craft is a consistent effort of also centralizing one's labor in their production.

This approach is structured in a way that attempts to attenuate in important ways to the production of culture/cultural production perspective, centering economic sociology, and attenuates to work and craft more generally. By putting focus on producers, the fields in which they inhabit, and consumers, my approach follows along with Wendy Griswold's (2013) construction of a cultural diamond, namely that cultural analysis is composed of a focus on a

cultural producer, the object they create, those who receive (or consume) it, and the broader social world they inhabit. Moreover, Griswold stresses that each part cannot and should not be treated as independent of the others, rather that the relations between each should be considered as well. As such, this project, while starting with understanding craftspeople (cultural producers) as the starting point, continually looks to their connections to their work (to produce a cultural object), and their broader social world (including organizations and families), how they interact with consumers, and the spaces in which these occur.

Empirical Focus of Dissertation

Determining possible sites from which to better understand the intersection of craft and economy, two key marketplaces for crafts continually arise as exceedingly popular for both craftspeople and consumers: Etsy and Renegade Craft Fair. As discussed above, Etsy's recent move for an IPO builds on a long history of expansion and ever increasing profits. Renegade Craft Fair is the only craft fair system that is has shows across the United States that is not part of a professional craft organization. Together, they offer understanding the recent expansion of craft markets both online and in-person throughout the United States.

To gather a bit of an idea of what the current situation of craftwork looks like, some snapshots may be useful. For those not self-employed, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014) notes that there are approximately 4,750 people employed, either part-time or full-time, as craft artists[2] in May 2013 with a mean hourly wage of $17.60 and yearly income of $36,600 which are below the mean averages for all occupations ($22.33 and $46,440, respectively). Because of the process by which the BLS collects their data, this is a vast underestimation of the number of

[2] Occupational category: 27-1012 Craft Artists

craftspeople in the United States. Since the BLS's study is done via establishments, or "the physical location of a certain economic activity, for example, a factory, mine, store, or office." While this is obviously a low estimate, it does highlight that craft as work is not an extremely common occupation either. As noted above, the historical nature of craft as work is directly organized in ways that would have been captured by the BLS method had they not been largely lost to large-scale manufacturing and the off shoring of labor.

Etsy.com

Etsy.com is the predominate online marketplace for crafts. Etsy (2015) has incorporated reporting active sellers and buyers, thereby not including an inflated number of total site registrations, of 1.4 million and 19.8 million people, respectively. They additionally report that 2014 saw nearly $2 billion dollars worth of merchandise sales. To manage a site of this size, they have 685 employees with additional postings for hiring appearing on their website regularly. Altogether, these factors highlight the sheer number of people who utilize Etsy to buy and sell. While Etsy sellers can sell in three broad categories of handmade, supplies (intended for handmade goods), and vintage (items must be a minimum of 20 years old), the handmade category is by far the largest, and is the category which is most publicly affiliated with the site, appearing.

Contextualizing these numbers a bit, they represent a rapid growth for a company that was started in 2005. In 2007, "Etsy had nearly 450,000 registered sellers generating $26 million in annual sales. That same year, the company took in over $3 million in venture funding" (Reader 2015). Over the years, Etsy has regularly updated, expanded, and adjusted its functionality amidst concerns from both producers and consumers. As Rob Kalin (2008) noted,

they regularly received unsolicited feedback that they utilize to make the site more responsive to its users, which makes sense considering the relations between the company and the sellers upon who it relies have not always been positive.

Meg Marco (2008) reported on some of the issues that arose around sellers' shops being closed without warning or explanation, resulting in a difficult process of figuring out what happened or would need to be done to fix the situation, primarily around issues of what, on the surface, appeared to be non-delivery of purchased goods. Marco offers a quote from an Australian seller explaining that a buyer in the US complained that they had not received their package after approximately one and a half weeks. These instances did not appear to result in any contact checking on order status, the shops were summarily closed and paperwork was supplied that would allow for reports to the Cybercrimes unit at the FBI. Marco does note that "sellers are eventually able to get their accounts reinstated." While these are extreme examples, they highlight the difficulty that occurs when managing a site of, now, millions of people in different countries with potentially differing expectations on the delivery of goods, which is something that Etsy is merely facilitating but does not inherently have a direct managing hand in knowing the status of these orders. Rob Kalin (2008) noted that visitors to the site often expected it to function like Amazon and be just as searchable as Google, which are obviously high stakes considering they are preeminent sites for online shopping and searching, respectively.

These processes have been at the core of Etsy's expansion over the years with the search functionality being continually adjusted and refined with the intention that it will be as responsive as consumers expect while as useful as sellers prefer, including incorporating multiple languages and currencies so that language and exchange rate calculation would not be a

barrier to use. Buyers additionally are able to search based upon location if they prefer to purchase from local producers, though they are obviously able to utilize this search functionality for any location-based preference.

Registration as a buyer or seller is as easy as with any social media site, and represents a relatively common experience for most online users. Selling is a slightly more involved process once the aspects of postings are taken into account. Each seller enters in a variety of factors including a title, a price, a description, up to 5 photographs, a series of tags intended to be descriptive of the good, shipping and handling costs, and where they will ship. It costs $0.20 to post a listing and, if it sells, Etsy takes a 3.5% cut of the selling price. If an item does not sell, it is taken down after four months. Together, these represent that beginning to sell on Etsy is a relatively easy endeavor as far as setting up a shop and "stocking" it with items. Items do not necessarily need to exist when the listing is created, as it is quite common to see listings, utilizing a photo of a prior object made, that note that the item is made-to-order, usually with a description of what the actual turn around time will be.

Who and what qualifies as a seller has changed slowly over time. Initially, Etsy required that handmade items being sold were to be made entirely by the seller. One of my interviewees told me that a claim was made that she was not making all her own goods and Etsy contacted her with a multi-step response including photos of her making each portion of the item, all in a short timeline or else her shop would be suspended. They would allow for multiple makers being participatory as long as they publicly described themselves as a collective. In 2013, Etsy began allowing "designers" to be a determining category that allows for a seller to merely design a good, but they were able to hire the actual manufacturing of the goods.

Naturally, this highlights some of the difficulties of a marketplace for handmade goods.

Before the shift in 2013, materials did not need to have been created by the seller, thus know knitter was expected or required to shear a sheep and spinning their own yarn threads before knitting, no woodworker was expected to fell their own trees. Handmade in the context of Etsy has long been a requirement of the transformation of materials into a good, regardless of the source of the materials themselves. Regardless, the adjustment in terms has resulted in some new aspects of adjudication in terms of what qualifies as a handmade good to a broader public.

These adjustments are clearly the result of Etsy having to navigate their growth over time, especially with recently becoming a publicly traded company, an almost perfect example of a digital marketplace for craft meeting the handmade world of craft and potential negotiations that must occur to most fully manage firm growth in the face of what might be conceived of as the descriptive limits of theoretical pronouncements of a category of objects.

Renegade Craft Fair

Whereas the Internet has facilitated a growth of sales online, in-person craft fairs are still occurring. Renegade Craft Fairs (Renegade) are one such in-person craft fair. Renegade start in Chicago in 2003 and, over the years, has steadily expanded, adding Brooklyn, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Austin as stops (in that order), now having summer and winter fairs in each city. It has even gone overseas, with a fair in London once a year in London and recently held a pop-up fair in Portland, Oregon[3]. In a New York Times article, Faythe Levine, who has created a documentary and book on the revival of handmade, is quoted as saying, "Renegade has the reputation of being the show to do — if you can get into it… It's a destination" (Ryzik, 2007). Renegade reports that more than 50,000 consumers attended the 2011 Chicago summer fair (Tamarkin 2011), which occurred over a two-day weekend in September, just one of 10 separate

[3] Adding Portland gives coverage to all of the major US regions except for the southeast.

Renegade Craft Fairs that occurred that year (to say nothing of other local, regional, and national craft fairs). To put this in perspective, the American Craft Council, the major craft organization in the United States, advertises that they receive over 50,000 attendees though they present this as an aggregate of all of their shows (American Craft Council 2015). Renegade, in a single weekend, is matching and surpassing the attendance of a major craft organization's fairs. And this attendance highlights the rapid growth in popularity of Renegade, since the fair in Brooklyn just four years prior saw an estimated 20,000 visitors (Ryzik 2007), though this was without any "hard attendance figures."

Each stop has approximately 150 to 250 distinct sellers who are chosen by Renegade through a jurying process from a large pool of applicants. When applying, each applicant pays a $25 application as well as prepays the cost for their space if they are accepted, though if they are not accepted, they are refunded the full cost of the booth space. To share a 10-foot by 10-foot booth with another seller, it is $250 per seller; $500 is the cost if one wants the entire booth to themselves; sellers can even apply for a 10-foot by 20-foot[4] booth at a cost of $1,000; and those sellers who opt to rove pay $250. The majority of sellers are in 10-foot by 10-foot booths, with a mix of booths with only one craftsperson, and ones with multiple. The booths themselves are technically just a space that the craftsperson can fill in how they see fit, either renting items to aid in display, such as tables, directly from Renegade or they can supply their own. For the booths with two sellers in them, the most common sharing tactic is a split directly down the middle, with each seller on either side of the booth. Being a roving seller, of which there are only a few at each fair, involves the seller using a wagon or cart of some form that they drag or push around the fair itself.

[4] This is a very recent option and is extremely uncommon at the fairs.

While Renegade doesn't regularly publicize how many applicants they receive for each fair beyond noting that there are more applicants there are spaces, they did reveal some numbers in an interview. For the 2010 season,

> "We're just starting out in Austin, so we got about 250 applicants for 200 vendor spots. In Brooklyn, there are 250 vendor spots, and about 500 to 600 applicants. In Los Angeles, there are about 200 available spots and we get about 25 applications over that amount. In Chicago, there are 300 booths and 600 applications for the summer fair, and 150 booths and 350 applications for the holiday fair. In San Francisco, we have room for 300 booths, and we get about 425 applicants." Sue Daly (Ilasco 2013)

These numbers have apparently been on the rise ever since as Renegade has continued expanding the locations the fairs occur and it has kept expanding on its reputation.

The fairs are not merely a space in which booths are setup and consumers can just buy goods, though. Various corporations, such as ZipCar and The New York Times, also regularly have booth space at the fairs, giving information about their companies and offering discounts for signing up at the fair itself. How-to crafting booths, often underwritten by craft supply companies, are also regularly in attendance. Pébéo has attended multiple fairs, offering the opportunity to try their markets, or Vogue Knitting supplying visitors to Renegade during Chicago's fair with a pair of knitting needles, a skein of yarn, and a basic lesson in casting on and knitting so that visitors were able to begin exploring knitting. These opportunities are a common opportunity for fair attendees to not only dabble in a new skill but also walk away with a free gift they created. Local non-profits for a variety of causes are given space to spread their message. Each stop always has at least one DJ booth, regularly representing a local record shop or a local radio station, playing music throughout the entirety of the fair, dabbling in a variety of genres yet never approaching the domain of current top 40 hits or muzak that are so present in

most large-scale, brick and mortar stores. And food and drink[5], both alcoholic and non-alcoholic, are an ever-present feature of the fairs. All in all, Renegade presents a market ripe for noneconomic interaction alongside consumption.

Data and Methods

The data for this study was created utilizing a mixed method approach incorporating semi-structured interviews, ethnographic observation, and content analysis of online material. This approach allowed for a dataset composed of a variety of ways to fully understand the relations between craftsperson and buyer, between value and price, and between production and consumption by investigating both the shared understandings craftspeople have of craft, value, price, and labor as well as how they embody and enact these understandings in concrete contexts in which they are being responded to by consumers.

My analysis of craft fairs relies on the in-person ethnographic data I gathered by visiting the Renegades that occurred in the United States from May 2012 through May 2013. In all, I completed 10 trips to the field, visiting each site twice. For Brooklyn, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, I visited both a summer fair, occurring between June and September, and a holiday fair, occurring between November and December. Because the Austin Renegade Craft Fair regularly occurs the weekend of the Thanksgiving holiday, I attended the summer fair twice, both occurring during May.

My ethnographic approach overall was to inhabit the marketplaces as fully as possible. I

[5] Importantly, the Austin stop at the Palmer Events Center appears to be the least connected into contemporary "foodie" culture. The available food is situated in the Center's food serving area and includes items like Pizza Hut Personal Pan Pizzas. This appears to be less a strategic decision and more a common stipulation of events centers that food and drink be contracted through the center itself, rather than bringing in outside options.

would walk through the rows as well as stopping into stalls, looking at the objects for sale. I would chat with the sellers as well as consumers when they struck up a conversation. When possible, I would eat my lunches at the fairs themselves and would even take breaks by finding seating at the fair itself where I could still observe the space and occasionally chat with consumers who were sitting near me. This approach offered me the opportunity to not be invasive to sellers and consumers while also allowing me to comfortably be in the booths, walkways, and fair without sellers or consumers being aware of my presence as a researcher, thereby disrupting the economic actions and interactions. I would partake in the various how-to and DIY booths, ranging from painting coasters to knitting. These booths were offered by a range of local organizations and corporations, offering a mixture of local resources for exploring crafting to the consumers as well as giving them insight into identifying sources for possible materials.

Altogether, my time spent in the craft fairs totaled approximately 80 hours, not including the time spent outside of the fairs in the surrounding neighborhoods. While this, in total, appears to be a short amount of time, it is important to note that the fairs themselves only occur over a two-day period, ranging from 7 to 9 hours per day per location, averaging to 160 hours that the markets themselves are open throughout the entire year. It also became evident to me very rapidly that the craftspeople selling at Renegade were attuned to who they saw come in and out of their booths, with a few sellers asking me on the second day if they had seen me the first day. I always answered in the affirmative that I had been and if the conversation progressed further along the whys of my going two days in a row, I would note the research study I was doing. This was always met with intrigue and support and never with an observable discomfort.

In addition, I completed 29 interviews with sellers from Etsy and/or Renegade Craft

Fairs. It is extremely common for most sellers at Renegade to also have an Etsy storefront, thus having both in-person and online sales. I generated a list of potential interviewees using both random sampling and snowball sampling. For the randomly sampled Renegade sellers, I took the pre-existing list of sellers for the fairs and used a random number generator to give me a set of numbers. Since each location had sellers arranged alphabetically, I treated this as being in order with the first seller listed as 1 and through to the last seller. From there, I obtained the sample list of sellers, gathered their contact information from their online listings, either a publicly listed email or through a contact form on their online site, and sent them an email. For Etsy, I did a somewhat similar approach, with some necessary adjustments. On Etsy, one can limit their search to certain criteria such as type of object sold, location of sellers, and so on, but are unable to generate a list of all sellers. To facilitate a potential list, I set the search parameters to all US-based sellers in the "handmade" category, which supplied me with a set of pages of the most recently posted items. I again utilized a random number generator which I used to identify specific postings from which I was able to obtain a seller's name. I initially attempted to find a direct email to contact sellers, such as non-Etsy based business page, or even a Facebook business page listing an email. When I was unable to do this, I would contact them through their contact page on Etsy, as that is how they were presenting their preferred contact method. In effect, their Etsy contact page is akin to email as it generates an email to the seller. After a first wave of interviews were completed, I followed up with some of my interviewees for possible referrals of other sellers they knew who sold on Etsy or at Renegade, thereby generating a small snowball sample of interviewees, rounding out to 29 interviews.

The interviews lasted anywhere from approximately half an hour to 1 hour and a half. In two interviews, I interviewed partners simultaneously whereas the remaining were done with

individuals. The settings for the interviews included in-person, Skype, and phone interviews depending upon interviewee preference. Every interview was audio recorded so that they could be transcribed. The interview itself focused upon a range of topics from their backgrounds in crafts, the ways in which they price goods, their experience at fairs and/or online, their conceptions of their customers, how they approach selling crafts as a business, business goals, and general demographic[6] questions.

Each interview was transcribed by me so that I could go through and code, looking for overarching themes as well as moments of difference. I used both focused coding, where I analyzed the interviews with the major points of the literature in mind, with predominant focus on responses related to economics, labor, use, aesthetics, and consumers. In addition, thematic coding was utilized to delineate discussions of sales and interactions in in-person markets, especially at Renegade, and online. I also utilized both an open and focused coding scheme. This allowed me to identify occurrences that were grounded in the literature alongside emergent themes that were not anticipated *a priori*.

Analytically, I first approached my interviews and ethnographic observations by focusing most directly upon any occurrences of discussions on exchange, value, and price, both in terms of questions explicitly posed as such as well as when the interviewees themselves discussed these aspects in other questions or they appeared in the observations. Once I noted these moments, I then slowly expanded out, coding the broader responses that exchange, value, and price occurred in to contextualize their answers in relation to their broader answers, allowing for

[6] Demographic questions were placed at the end of the interview specifically because I asked for respondent's self-identifications, including for demographic categories such as race and gender, though I prefaced this section by explaining that I made no assumptions. While this did occasionally present some necessary clarifications when asking for gender, with one respondent answering with their sexual orientation while another answered with their ethnoracial background, it did not appear to create any undue difficulties or discomforts. One respondent explicitly thanked me for asking.

understanding the particular variations. From there, I then moved through each interview again, open coding the entirety of the interview, generating analytical categories grounded directly within the responses themselves. From this, I generated a list, grouped similar categories together into broader themes, and then moved through the interviews again without any of the prior codes visible, reviewing them for potentially alternative interpretations of the responses. Altogether, this offered the opportunities to understand not only prices and values but further contextualized them alongside the importance of issues such as space, precariousness, movement, family, education, bargaining, and labor. Content analysis of blogs and website descriptions from Etsy, Renegade, and Pricerie were directly focused upon the specifics of price and the ways in which they discussed price as a topic with special attention paid to any instances where *how* to price was centralized. This offered an opportunity to understand how craftspeople price in the context of the craft markets in which they sell.

An important note should be made regarding quotes. The incorporation of quotes is often a difficult exercise in how to relay a spoken communication in a written document. For all quotes, I have chosen to include aspects of the interviews including laughter, filler words, such as "um," "uh," and "like," and pauses, represented by the use of an ellipse ("…") because I want to represent not only what was said but also how it was conveyed. I find this important since even though the interviewees knew the general topic of the study before the interview, they did not know the actual questions that would be asked. As such, I believe that these aspects of communication are important facets and represent, however slight, the processes of recall and response of the interviewees themselves.

Dissertation Structure

Chapter 2 begins by understanding the processes of becoming a craftsperson. It accomplishes this through two primary modes: learning to craft and determining to craft as a business. Learning to craft highlights early exposure (predominately via family) and later exposure (predominately via friendship) as ways of developing both interest and ability in craft. Determining to craft as a business highlights how, what most often began as a hobby, becomes a route for occupational self-determination. Together, these two facets, learning to craft and determining to craft as a business, bring focus to the ways in which learning and identity are participatory in foundations of entrepreneurial cultural endeavors, especially at a scale regularly ignored by organizational studies and the predominate focusing on the firm.

Chapter 3 flows from chapter 2 to contextualize how craftspeople approach thinking of their labor economically. It begins by aiming to understand how craftspeople are advised to think of themselves and their work as an economic object. Chapter 3 gives direct attention to Etsy's constant and consistent effort to illuminate the "correct" way to price alongside the ways in which The Pricerie, a crowdsourcing platform that has recently received support from Renegade as a tool that craftspeople should utilize to aid in pricing, illustrates how to obtain a price through the responses of others. It then turns specifically to the ways in which craftspeople actually price their crafts. References to models such as those offered by Etsy are tantamount, though are regularly rejected as not being actually useful for generating a price that consumers would pay. This chapter argues that the advising of price is a project fraught with difficulties and uncertainties, and pricing is consistently identified as the hardest part of selling. Pricing is accomplished via trial and error, reference to other craftspeople, and as an amalgamation of values. They utilize various values, but especially conceptions of their own labor augmented

with aesthetics, as the basis for the price at which they sell a good. Though, even when focusing on an individual craftsperson, their pricing approach is not necessarily uniform across all goods they produce because of their negotiation of themselves, their work, and their consumers.

Finally, Chapter 4 aims to finally understand the actual spaces of consumption that craftspeople encounter. Chapter 4 aims to illuminate and understand the particular nature of craft markets in relation to the both brick and mortar storefronts and the existence of the bazaar. The "obvious," though constructed, stability of modern stores and the seeming anarchy, yet subtle stability, of the bazaar serve as useful foils for the actual instability that undergirds craft fairs in general. This instability, though, rather than antithetical to and undermining of economic interactions is an important and valuable factor of the experience of craft fairs as a space for in-person consumption and the creation and maintenance of long-term economic interactions and community building.

The ordering of the chapters in this manner aims to understand the economic aspects of craft in a specific logic. Beginning with chapter two, we can identify the ways in which people come to craft and then determine this as a potential occupation. The discussion then moves into how craftspeople navigate the broader field, by looking to the organizational and relational aspects of price determination as a way to investigate the broader contexts craftspeople enter into as they refine their approach to selling. Finally, the empirical focus of the dissertation turns to understand craft markets to investigate the realities of production and selling that craftspeople encounter.

CHAPTER 2

Becoming and Working: Learning to Craft, Navigating Work

The history of craft is regularly tied to two primary components of the life course: family and work (Koplos and Metcalf 2010). These two components as considered are instrumental in the maintenance and dissemination of both craft knowledge and crafts as commodities. Regarding the role of family, historically, early exposure to craft knowledge was considered tantamount, as were family networks and interfamilial ties, which aided in the creation of occupational opportunities for, mainly, young men via apprenticeship. From these familial components arose work-futures where the youthful exposure to craft was continually reaffirmed via laboring. It should be noted that whereas the path from apprenticeship in craft to occupation was relatively clear and an anticipated outcome for young men, the seemingly leisured-based craft endeavors of women and girls has historically served as an opportunity for paid work alongside non-remunerated household work (Boris 1986, Zelizer 1994). Together, these foci bookend the gendered assumptions and approaches to craft.

The current chapter takes these ideas of family and work and looks to understand them in the context of contemporary craftspeople. Namely, it aims to understand how exposure during one's childhood or young adulthood within family influences later craft occupation. From there, I look into how and when craftspeople begin to consider craft as work, and how they manage this transition process. It then comes full circle by including some ways in which family is again important in offering material support for craftspeople. Altogether, the chapter augments our understanding of craft by identifying contemporary ways in which family and work are still closely tied to the creation of crafts more generally, while it also exposes the precarious nature of

contemporary crafts work.

The Importance of Family for Early Exposure to Craft

While the notion of DIY and self-teaching are integral and important for the craftspeople I spoke with, their early exposure to crafts, or at least creative endeavors, did at times stem from their family, specifically the women in their family such as mothers and grandmothers. Unlike some (stereotypical) narratives of art creativity in solitude, my interviewees' narrative of craft did not work to hide the broader, social dimensions in and around craft. Indeed, interviewees provided overt discussions of learning from others through familial ties.

> "I would like to credit that I started doing a lot of crafts when I was really young through my grandma. Uh, growing up with her and she's Japanese so there's a lot of craft-based things in the culture. Um, just making things by hand and appreciating that kind of aesthetic. Uh, so I learned how to crochet and do all that kind of stuff when I was still in elementary school really. And then just redefined it and realized I wanted to do that as a career." — Lydia, 25, Fibers

Lydia gives a succinct and direct application of her early learning, its connection to the appreciation of craft aesthetics, and how it evolved over time in a manner that took it from hobby into a career option. Even if focused upon self-directed learning, this was tied to utilizing local and online communities as integral facets of learning. As Becker's (1982) seminal work has shown for the art, we can conclude that also craft is anything but a solitary practice of creative genius.

Another way that family becomes integral is through the central role it plays in the formative memories of one's craft. Kathleen, who works in fibers, highlights family transmission succinctly as how she learned, by noting that she learned from "My mom… I learned to sew when I was a little kid because she sewed all the time." I followed up by asking if she had ever taken any classes for sewing and she notes, "Um, in high school it was like a…

home economics class. We did a section on sewing. So I did, I did learn a lot in that, but, that's probably the only class I ever took on sewing." While Kathleen's exposure early on is clearly the basis of her continuous sewing, it can be augmented with additional learning elsewhere, though in Kathleen's case this "formal" course is not at all considered as the basis of her craft learning; rather, her mother's craft endeavors became her own endeavor that could later be augmented with a class instruction. This opportunity for augmentation, though, does not present itself automatically or as commonly as it once was. Home economics courses are continually dwindling (Graham 2013), so the opportunity for certain craft knowledge, such as sewing, is not as readily accessible as it once was in public school education. Arts education more generally has also seen a reduction in both its popular support and the attendant access for students, with a reduction in access and offerings especially for minority youth. Moreover, losses in arts education are also predictive of reductions in arts participation in adulthood (Rabkin and Hedberg, 2011). The opportunity for expanded sewing knowledge that Kathleen received is not commonly available nowadays, which highlights an opportunity to think through how others might augment youthful exposure.

Claire's experiences, while not specifically about lack of education access to things like arts education or home economics, also underscores that school is not an automatic source of craft knowledge, and additional learning can occur beyond it. "My mother's a kindergarten teacher so she brought home all of the crafting, so [laughs] I grew up with that… School never really taught me anything. It's all like my mother and homeschooling and trying things, watching people do stuff." Claire highlights the coalescing of family, self-directed learning, and non-family alters as opportunities for expansion in one's knowledge.

The emphasis on the social context of learning that came across from interviewees does

not suggest that one is unable to learn by oneself, merely that the social factors are especially important for aiding in a deepening of the connections with craft. The familial exposure to craft resonates with the histories of craft discussed at the beginning of the chapter, such as with the apprenticeship system. Hence, both historically and contemporarily, family connections matter and a parent often brings their child into the family pursuit. We see that even for craft as a hobby, the transmission of knowledge from parent to child, especially from mother to daughter, is continually present. This reveals that the social nature of craft is intrinsic to craft in general. While the craftspeople I spoke with all sell crafts part-time or full-time, their occupational stemmed from these earlier, hobby-based interests without conceptualizations of work. Moving beyond this, it also highlights the ways in which socialization within a family is a foundation for expanded learning in other social settings and institutions. While this focus within craft is simply highlighting early exposure to what would be considered a pastime, as Willis (1977) argues, experiences youth can have profound and long-term influence on occupational outcomes. And while Willis focuses on the reproduction of class structures via culture, it highlights the importance for cultural influence on later orientations, in this case the way that cultural production in youth can lay a foundation for later pursuing cultural production occupationally.

Learning to Craft

One of the largest ways in which many contemporary craftspeople differ from earlier eras of craft as labor, such as the guild system, is through the processes by which they learn. Largely speaking, crafts are the result not of apprenticeships or formal educations. Rather, self-directed learning and familial introduction serve as the foundations by which later occupational exploration occurs. While historically there is ample support for familial sharing of craft

knowledge, especially from father to son as a trade or mother to daughter as an appropriate feminine endeavor, this self-directed form is extremely modern, often mentioned alongside the loss of generational knowledge sharing.

To underscore this point, formal education is easily identifiable, demarcated by specific starting and ending points. Historical parent to child transmission at the bare minimum operated over a long period, with regular additions, adjustments, and expansions of the information being taught. The craftspeople I interviewed tended to not have such formal or continuous experiences. When I asked them about their beginning efforts in craftwork, they generally had difficulty in identifying a starting point. Often answers to the question about when they started crafting were vague, though they could more clearly identify when they started formally selling. Jessica, a jeweler, notes "Let's see, that's hard to answer because I stop and start um… I first started making jewelry as a hobby when I was in my 20s." Ken, a 60-year-old woodworker, said "I've been making crafts since oh, oh… the 90s. I did'em just as a hobby and, you know, sort of gifts to family and friends. Things like that." He then went on to note that he took oil painting at a young age and then, when a branch fell from a tree, he decided to try his hand at carving it, since he had seen that done. Both of these quotes highlight that for the people I spoke with, crafts generally are explored as an interest unto themselves long before an idea of them as a commercial enterprise enters the equation, though the actual beginning tends to be unclear in their memory. Moreover, the aspect of doing a craft in general was not necessarily tied to a specific idea or awareness of "doing craft." As Ken's quotes highlights, he notes multiple points in time at which his "doing" of craft is potentially disconnected from an overt reference to actually doing or producing a craft. His early exposure to woodcarving is not presented as a precursor to his current craft practice, but was presented as generally his childhood interest in

creative endeavors.

Though, how do people learn? The ability to ask family members still exists, although it is of a qualitatively distinct type. Interviewees mentioned learning from one's parent or grandparent during one's youth, or occasionally later in life, but also by reading a variety of books, magazines, or online resources. This corresponds to Maines' (2009) observation that crafts experienced a transition from work to hobby while also experiencing a strong proliferation in the written material that people were able to access to aid in learning and teaching one's self crafts. An important distinction, though, is that the current project proceeds from the inverse of Maines'. Namely, that there exists a process of transition from hobby to work, though extant access to written knowledge, now augmented by online repositories, is included as part of the learning process.

Modern technological innovation has also offered a route to learning crafts. Local community groups and organizations, video sharing platforms such as YouTube, and online forums like Ravelry.com (Martin and Pfister, 2013), serve as spaces where individuals with interests in certain crafts are able to form ties with those who share their interests, exchange knowledge, and advice as they learn their craft. Jessica, a jeweler who currently uses metal clay[7] to create her pieces, noted that

> "[I]n the course of being online and talking to other jewelers, the term 'metal clay' kept coming up. It has been around for awhile but I hadn't heard about it, and I happened to run into a friend of mine, who's also a jeweler, who said that she was

[7] The Society for American Silversmiths reproduces the definition of precious metal clay, which is referring to the most common type of metal used, from Rio Grande, a company aimed at supporting jewelers. Rio Grande (2015) notes that precious metal clay "consists of microscopic particles of silver or gold suspended in an organic binder to create a pliable material with a consistency similar to modeling clay[…] When heated to a high temperature, the binder burns away and the metal particles fuse to form solid metal that can be sanded, soldered, colored and polished like conventional material."

> teaching a basic class, um, at a local art, um, art academy not too far from me. And she said, 'Come on down, I'll give you all the basics, I'll tell you what you need to do, and you can see if you like it.' So, I went to her class and I took off with it, it was just the best thing. I, apparently, took to it immediately, started creating all kinds of things. Umm, and in her beginner's class I went way beyond what she was planning to show me. [laughs] Umm, and from there on in I just kinda took it on my own."

This initial exposure online translated into an in-person class, but highlights that information sharing regarding craft practice, including materials, are common online as a newer medium of knowledge exchange.

Contemporary Crafts and Informal Education

Contemporary craft culture highlights the informal nature of most craft education. The idea of self-taught art is often positioned as having an outsider status (Fine 2004) whereas crafts are currently strongly associated with an explicit rejection of the formal and traditional at the same time. Systems of apprenticeship for craft in the US are few and far between. While crafts do have an existence in the university (though primarily as part of an arts practice curriculum), the people I interviewed seldom studied craft through formal curriculum beyond an occasional course in school (middle school, high school, or college), as we saw from Kathleen' experience (see above). Rather, the closest analog to what would become a person's craft practice was studying fine arts in college. But even in these cases, their craft practices were not directly engaged in their studio experiences. In fact, only a few had formal craft education (and even in these cases it was predominately presented and treated as art education) and these were ceramicists or blacksmiths. While the arts education may have been foundational for these craftspeople in pursuing and understanding a creative occupation more generally, actual craft practice was their secondary endeavor.

In contrast, contemporary craftspeople selling via Renegade and Etsy are often self-taught with earlier exposure to various crafts in childhood via their immediate family, though this learning was seldom sustained. This highlights the opening of craft as a venue for a variety of skill levels and interests, and positions contemporary craft as somewhat akin to folk art (Fine 2004). Craftspeople are not expected to hew to traditional techniques nor are they expected to have spent years learning their craft before breaking out on their own. In fact, there appears to be much celebration and support of this system of people teaching themselves and honing their skills through communities rather than educational settings (Schor 2011). This occurs alongside an emphasis on individual expression (à la art) to aid in the differentiation of various craftspeople. Moreover, this further legitimates the idea of "handmade" being an aesthetic category unto itself. Whereas historical goals in craftspersonship were to minimize and obscure the hand in the pursuit of perfection, imperfections and variation are centered as not only important but integral. Etsy and Renegade both support the democratizing of craft knowledge through how-to posts in the former and offering spaces for workshops at the latter's fairs. The ability to make specific objects, regardless of understanding the exact processes or histories of technique that allow for completion do not pose an issue in these spaces.

One woman I interviewed, whose work is primarily skincare and home goods, stated that she was completely self-taught. Her initial interest in the crafts she makes stemmed from a seminar hosted by a museum on historical modes of candle making. She then turned to the Internet while she utilized this preexisting information to begin her hand at making candles, she "did a whole lot of trial and error and [laughs] and eventually found my own way to do it." This quote is a perfect summation of the processes of self-taught crafting: it is a not a direct path to making crafts and it does require learning and experimentation. Additionally, her process of

identifying her "own way to do it" highlights an effort for many of the craftspeople I interviewed. Her history of enjoying purchasing and using candles, with their varied scents, was able to be a starting point for identifying and exploring the scents that she would later decide to construct. And through the experimenting process, she was able to figure out her later interest in selling because it stemmed from her own, past enjoyment of consuming products. First, contemporary craftspeople who are learning outside of apprenticeships have to determine proficiency and adeptness in making the objects themselves. Craftspeople who decide to sell their work have no necessity to have their work judged by a more skilled craftsperson as to whether it passes muster. Consumers are left as the arbiter of quality in this case, with a sell being de facto support for proficiency. Second, and a bit less explicitly, to be able to differentiate one's own work from that of others is a continual process that craftspeople must undertake to make their objects discernible and preferable to consumers. From an economic perspective, it is important for one to distinguish his or her own work from the work of others, because this distinction allows for attracting potential consumers. While this can be achieved through pricing, which is especially important for objects that are similar to those offered by other craftspeople, it is also integral to craft markets for this difference to be largely identifiable aesthetically, such as the specific scents combined for a candle, the draping and construction of clothing, or the colors and patterns of accessories. The process of learning to craft, so integral to being able to craft as an occupation, also contains the necessity of setting one's work apart from that of others. These processes of differentiation, in essence identifying holes in the market, are largely the same types of processes that dictate the foundation of entrepreneurship more generally. The idea to create something unique and special initially for oneself highlights where the market is not fulfilling a want or need, and the transition to selling this gives the clearest

example of taking one's hobby into the market.

Transitioning to Selling

Lydia's quote above, while detailing her early exposure via her grandmother, also points to an additional, important point: reconceptualizing the craft that one is interested in as also being something that can be pursued as an occupation. As those I interviewed are craftspeople who are listed as selling on Etsy or at Renegade, it is important to determine the process(es) by which they determine when to sell their wares. By this I mean when they decide to sell their crafts formally and setup a regular system, rather than merely making them as hobbies, gifts, or occasionally selling them on an ad hoc basis. Especially considering that the processes of learning are not necessarily housed within educational institutions[8] or through apprenticeship, the idea of craft as occupation does not have an automatically logical process by which we can estimate how they came to be craftspeople. This process does not mean that I am studying an atypical sample of the population of craftspeople. Recall the extremely low numbers that the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports for the number of craftspeople in the United States being specified by working in certain organization types. Rather, I am studying a portion of the population of craftspeople who formally engage in selling their crafts, and the population is made up of hobbyists, part-timers, and full-timers with no overt distinction between them.

The craftspeople I spoke with predominately did not approach learning crafts as learning a trade, rather they oftentimes undertook crafts as a hobby, with little concern or interest in economic endeavors. Their general interests in being creative operate as a probable necessary

[8] BFAs in various crafts do exist, though these are not a necessary prerequisite to being a craftsperson. The BLS's entry on Craft Artists notes that a high school diploma appears as the only prerequisite.

stage, but it should not be assumed to be sufficient, as it was often an external push that led to pursuing craft as occupation.

For most of the interviewees, being drawn to making objects because of the interest in or need for originality and a desire to get away from overly branded items serves as the initial impulse in what later became an impetus for selling objects. This issue with mass produced goods becomes first and foremost an individual concern before craftmaking becomes an opportunity for responding to, and filling a market hole with, small-scale, artisanal goods.

> "I really started mostly because there really wasn't anything out there like I was wanting. You know? Like, my niece was born about five years ago and she was turning like one- or two-years-old. I was in New York with my boyfriend and, um, we're like, 'Woah, we're at FAO Schwartz,' like, we have to buy her that toy that she's going to grow up with. And I'm walking through the store and there's just nothing. Like, nothing that's speaking to me. There's nothing unique, like, there's… there's the animal toys but they, like, look super realistic and they're almost not huggable because they're so stiff and hard [laughs]. And then there's the other toys that are really cute but they're all, like, licensed and that kind of bugged me. I was, like, 'There's never gonna be that toy, I almost feel like, anymore that a kid can grow up with and it's like… like there other 15 friends don't have that toy.' So, it was important to me to create a design that was classic enough so that you could always grow up with it and it's not going to be like, "Woah! That was from the 90s.' You know? You know those toys they're all denim or something [laughs]. It was important for me to create a toy that would last through the years design-wise and quality[-wise]. And then also, um, that was fun enough and unique where they wouldn't see that anywhere else." Julie, 26, Fibers

Julie gives an extremely clear discussion that highlights some of the key ways we theoretically understand the importance of objects in general (Campbell 1996, Woodward 2001), their importance for gift-giving (Miller 2011), the importance of quality in craft (Greenhalgh 2002), and even the idea of timelessness (cf. Venkatesan 2011 for a discussion of craft as timeless and referential beyond itself housed in national issues and gift giving).

This interest in uniqueness and not seeing something out in the world that really fits what

they want is largely intrinsic to their foray into the realm of doing crafts as an occupation. While craft making may begin as a hobby, it regularly offers up the opportunity for new routes of work because of the responses they received from friends and family on the items they make that they should begin selling because people would pay for their work. Julie's work aims to both timelessness and uniqueness. Albert, the woodworker from earlier, began receiving requests to make items from family members as well as neighbors, both because they valued his work, and also because of his craftspersonship in relation to the more expensive, but lower quality, items that they could purchase in stores. These earlier support systems, both emotionally and financially, offered Albert an opportunity for conceiving of his hobby as a possible economic endeavor.

An important reason that craftspeople mentioned as important for selling their craft was a desire to do work that is fulfilling. The external validation offered the key moments for beginning to investigate craft as occupation, oftentimes through something as simple as setting up an Etsy page and posting some items for sale. The lowered barriers to bringing items to market do not even require initially making the decision to pursue craft as an occupation. Jessica, who works in metal clay, noted that she started selling as a way to recoup the money she was spending on supplies, so that she could continue making more jewelry. The ease of selling on Etsy allowed the opportunity to expand making more items. The sellers I spoke with have all been on the platform for at least a few years, many of them from near the beginning. They have benefited from a history of Etsy that was gradually expanding but without being crowded out by too many other sellers that their work would not be returned high in search results.

Navigating Full-Time

Being able to see the potential of turning a hobby and occasional income generator into an occupation is a necessary first step, it also requires engagement with the existing infrastructures of craft markets to identity outlets that would generate stable enough sales to make this work viable. Even being able to identify craft as potentially viable does not result in craft being actually viable.

An eye-opening moment for me during my field study came, not through a conversation with a craftsperson who was selling on Etsy or at Renegade. Rather, while at the Chicago Summer Renegade, I took some time to sit in the Vogue knitting booth, a free booth space where fair goers could learn to do basic knitting and, once they were done with the tutorial from the booth attendant, they were able to leave with a pair of knitting needles and a skein of yarn, enough to make a basic scarf. The woman who was working the booth worked at a local yarn store and we got to talking about whether I was from Chicago. I told her why I was at the fair and a bit about my research. I asked her if she sold and she told me that she did not other than occasionally selling items on an ad hoc basis. I asked her why she did not and she explained the difficulties of making enough money selling work, especially knitted goods. Because of her skill, she even would be in contact with fashion designers who wanted to utilize hand-knitting as components in their clothing. She explained the required pricing and labor hours and the subsequently large increase in the final cost of the item. Rather than reducing her own rate so that she could obtain a wholesale contract, she explained that it would necessarily increase the cost of the item by over $100 to have just that detail incorporated because of labor time, complexity, and material costs, something the designers were not willing to accept.

Her direct explanation of these issues were regularly brought to light during my interviews, especially because of the difficulties in paying one's self what one feels his or her

labor is worth. It is not just that full-time employment as a craftsperson is impossible, simply that the most direct expense that can be cut when sales are not going well is the craftsperson's income. Materials, posting fees, and booth fees are all sunk costs that are necessary for offering items to market. Throughout my interviews, the variation in self-pay was not invoked as a barrier to work, but simply something to be managed throughout work. This could require augmenting one's income with part-time jobs to help reduce the income uncertainty of self-employment, especially during the non-peak sales season. Even when working at other occupations, craftwork is centered as the primary occupational goal, and any additional work is merely meant to support this. But, before turning to that topic, it is important to spend some time on how those I interviewed identify selling opportunities, if additional support was necessary, and how the larger instability and seasonality of crafts consumption influenced the ability to sell.

Identifying Work

A continued issue regarding doing crafts as sole employment is that it takes a lot of time to produce crafts, but that it does not necessarily generate a lot of income. Remember that BLS's published numbers showed that craft artists see incomes below the national average.

The people I interviewed predominately conceived of their craftwork as a full-time occupation. However, some of these would occasionally pick up odd jobs/short term gigs as a way to make up for the instability of craftwork, a common feature of artistic occupations as well (Wassall and Alper 1992). Still others maintained other jobs more stably, either part-time or full-time, which allows them to partake in craftwork. In these cases, their interests in stable work elsewhere was related to their enjoyment of having other types of work, "I also just kind of… take value in all sorts of things other… that's not related to my art, so, in general I enjoy

having multiple jobs [laughs]." Maintaining a full-time job in addition to craft also offers the opportunity for meeting necessary expenses that are above and beyond day-to-day costs, such as education for one's partner, which would not be feasible without taking on school loans. Finally, working as a craftsperson also occasionally operates, especially for women, who are predominately stay-at-home-mothers, augmenting their household income with crafts. One woman I spoke with, when asked how she conceived of her craftwork stated "I would say it's still part-time." I asked if she had a full-time job and she responded, "Yeah, I'm a mom." I followed up by asking whether she wanted to pursue craft as a full-time job in the future and she responded highlighting how she is navigating work and motherhood.

> "[laughs] That's kind of where I'm at a crossroads. Uh, some days I just want to give up and be done with it all because it, you know, can be very overwhelming 'cause I have two-year-old twins. But, um, then there's other times where I'm really motivated and I have a ton of sales and people are really interested and I, I mean I have the means to make it bigger I just don't have the means as in production to make it bigger."

Her biggest block to that expansion was finding people she could trust as employees, so she was actively considering what it would take to expand and grow her business while also keeping in mind her children. The additional money that crafts can bring in also offers the opportunity to partake in one's interests while also working in the home, flattening a hobby onto work in ways that allowed for both. This category, while not largely represented in my sample, still highlights the economic opportunities craftwork presents for mothers, especially because of the opportunities for sales via Etsy and craft fairs. Since part of my sample is drawn from Renegade sellers, which juries its fairs thereby creating a gatekeeping mechanism for sellers, this is a probable reason that stay at home mothers were much less likely to appear in my sample. Though, the opportunities do exist for a much more part-time oriented approach to selling crafts.

Beyond those I interviewed, these opportunities can be seen amply in the growth of mommy blogging, with craft activities regularly represented, and another segment selling their crafts (Lopez 2009; Matchar 2013). In the cases of the people for whom craft was a secondary occupation or familial support, the concerns of the stability of income from craft were a smaller concern. This is not to say that it did not matter if they made sales. This is merely to note that the stability of their life outside craft offers the opportunity for craft to not be potentially debilitating if things went awry. Those for whom craft is their primary source of income, determining the ability to guarantee some semblance of stability in income becomes tantamount. One of the major reasons for this is because of the seasonality of consumption, of which crafts are extremely responsive, because of their common positioning as gifts, with the holiday season being a primary route towards income and sale maximization.

Etsy is also extremely aware of the seasonality of markets for craft, and the holiday season is the predominate time of sales maximization. Etsy makes clear references to gift giving during the holiday season via their newsletter emailed to site members, highlighting that the goods that can be bought on Etsy are potentially more meaningful than mass-produced goods purchased at stores. Recently, this became especially evident when, in its IPO filing (Etsy 2015), Etsy noted the seasonality of the market for craft to potential shareholders, that there are most assuredly quarter to quarter variations in sales that are inherent. Many craft fairs are positioned in relation to the holidays due to the increased foot traffic for gift giving. Renegade does this clearly through the second dates of the fairs each year occurring as holiday fairs so that consumers can begin their gift buying, though they are not the only craft fair that does this. Craftspeople are very aware of the different earnings between craft fairs during holidays and those during the rest of the year.

Negotiating Work Opportunities

Even though the holidays offer a route to increased sales, craft fairs can be largely uncertain. To be able to maintain income, the fairs offer an additional, necessary marketspace to meet new consumers, potentially create relationships for wholesaling, and in general increase the possible audience of their wares. Unfortunately, not all craft fairs are created equal for every craftsperson. When investigating a new fair, there is no way to know *a priori* which fair or fairs will be the best outlets. The amount of time spent at the booth at fairs creates a huge obstacle alongside the sunk costs of booth fees and travel costs. Spending an entire one or two days doing face-to-face sales eats directly into time one can spend making and posting to online marketplaces. While some craftspeople do craft in their booths, it is commonly a way to show off the process of their work as they are regularly stopping to interact with customers and sell items. Additionally, there are uncertainties for any fair regarding how well the audience will respond to their work. Thus, the investigation of any new fair requires necessary risks and potential losses. In general, the fairs that craftspeople return to time and again, with Renegade as a prime example because of this project's sample, reduce a craftsperson's expenses as they know how much the fair will cost them alongside a more predictable level of earnings. These are then coupled with their experiences at the fairs to determine whether they enjoy the actual fair itself. This participation in craft fairs highlights the noneconomic interests in craft fair participation by noting that, by at least breaking even, expenses have been covered and they have been able to participate in the social atmosphere of meeting their customers and also spending time with their fellow craftspeople in a social setting.

Even when certain fairs are known to be spaces worth the time and effort, Renegade

being a prime example, the fair jurying process introduces an additional barrier. There is no way to be certain that one will be accepted. I interviewed a blacksmith who had applied to Renegade multiple times over multiple years, and was continually rejected, predominately because his work was too "fine craft" and did not convey, as he puts it, a "DIY" aesthetic that Renegade constructs. To a certain extent, this is not altogether unsurprising because this particular blacksmith has gone on to show at an American Craft Council show, the preeminent fine craft exhibition tied to the primary, professional craft organization in the United States. His rejection cannot be assumed to correspond to an anticipated lack of consumer interest as he has made tens of thousands of his most popular selling item through his career. Another interviewee noted that she had done Renegade for multiple years and was not accepted one year. Rather than merely accept the rejection, she contacted Renegade directly to say that if someone dropped out, she would be happy to be on a sort of wait-list and, to her luck, she was selected to participate. While she did not know the explicit process of determining sellers, this experiences highlights that there is potential for maintaining contact and interest in the market for opportunities beyond just applying.

While part of my sample is drawn from craftspeople who sell at Renegade Craft Fair, none of them identified Renegade as their sole craft fair. Those who sold at Renegade highlighted that, for them, it is the preeminent craft fair to participate in, not the least of which is due to the broad popularity and large attendances at each stop. While this does not mean that other craft fairs cannot be as financially beneficial as Renegade, it underscores the reasons why Renegade regularly has repeat sellers fair to fair. To emphasize how financially beneficial Renegade can be, many sellers begin producing items for Renegade's holiday fairs before the jurying process has even begun. This lead-time is necessary because the large amount of stock

that must be on hand is unable to be produced in the short time between acceptance decisions and fair dates. Additionally, Renegade's popularity and renown includes Martha Stewart Living as an official sponsor, a corporate connection that would be hard to find at smaller, local craft fairs. The official sponsorship augments Renegade's advertising with the addition of Martha Stewart Living's outlets also touting the fairs to would-be customers.

The craft fair is not the only additional work outlet. Wholesaling is an important component that many craftspeople pursue as an opportunity because it expands their exposure to a variety of consumers. Contacts for wholesale occur at craft fairs as well as online. Etsy has recently formed a section of their site, to which craftspeople must apply before acceptance, that is explicitly directed towards connecting craftspeople with those who wish to purchase wholesale items, aiding producers in making contacts that are often difficult to make. Renegade has added an additional day to some fairs that are specifically for creating wholesale connections without the larger crowds of regular shoppers. These connections are also supplemented by a clear support system that aids in advising craftspeople on the hows of wholesaling.

As these examples show, craftspeople who start selling in a single outlet, usually online, diversify the outlets for one's work, whether it is crafts or wholesale, as these additional outlets provide necessary opportunities for some craftspeople to maintain their business, especially as a primary occupation. Indeed, it seems that diversification is necessary as it increases the probabilities of stable income.

Family Support

Frequently, interviewees mentioned aid offered by spouses and partners. Because of the reduced incomes in general, along with the instabilities of income throughout the year, aid and

support from spouses and partners is a key way that enables people's pursuit of crafts as a primary occupation, or even just to get-by financially, because it seems extremely hard to earn enough income to support more than one person in a household. Here a gender aspect is noteworthy. It is clear that craft as occupation is exceedingly gendered, with the majority of Etsy and Renegade sellers being women. Also my interviews yielded a higher proportion of women than men. The majority of men in my sample did not express that they needed support from their spouses, though some have partners who worked together with them on their craft businesses. The only man I spoke with who would be in this category was undertaking craft as a way to make some additional money due to recently being laid off. He was actively looking for a permanent job unrelated to craft.

On Etsy, there is a regular feature referred to as "Quit Your Day Job" where reference to the support of one's partner occasionally appears, though it is not presented as a key feature of the story. Rather, these Etsy features portray a craftsperson is who detailing how she or he was able to stop working a primary job and sell crafts full-time. Those featured occasionally reference the ability to make this transition because of the support of their spouse/partner whose additional income, and aid in tightening the family belt when necessary, are extremely important. In a feature on the shop CausticThreads (Voges 2013) the daunting move of selling full-time was a somewhat gradual process, "I considered quitting my day job pretty seriously when sales were consistent for several non-holiday months. At the same time my husband was promoted, and his promotion covered most of my day-job salary (I'm lucky to be covered by my husband's healthcare). This made the decision to quit my day job easier." A post on BookishlyUK's (Verity 2012) navigation of selling highlights how spousal support may also be more than just financial, "I love the entrepreneurial side of running my own business as much as I do the

creative side, and I think this really helps. Make sure you have an idea of how you will know you have been successful. My husband and I agreed on this together, which meant I knew he was totally on board, and I wouldn't be deluding myself if it wasn't working." While such features obviously serve as opportunity for Etsy to advertise the entrepreneurial opportunities, which are potentially afforded to sellers, it inadvertently highlights that financial support of one's family members becomes necessary for making the transition to sell. Featured craftspeople mention the testing of the waters as gradual and occurring over months or a year to make sure there is long-term stability. This is understandable due to the high rate of small business failure more generally, and those featured are sellers who quit more stable jobs to pursue their own interests.

On the whole, my interviews and content analysis of online material point to the difficulties of self-employment based on the uncertainties and instabilities of making craft a stable income-generating venture. From this, the support of family members is key in minimizing risk and facilitating small business opportunities for crafts people, especially since the majority of small businesses fail.

Yearly Goals

Throughout the process of pursuing work as a craftsperson, the issue of earning enough income cannot be underestimated. Rather than selling their labor to pursue a wage, the craftspeople I interviewed were all self-employed and had to continually navigate how much their labor was worth through their own conception and the realities of selling, which they faced. Their self-evaluated worth, though, did not automatically connect to how much they actually

paid themselves. While hourly wage[9] may make a useful entry point, this section will focus on the ways in which craftspeople conceptualize a yearly income, or how much they can earn by selling crafts. Focusing on yearly income make sense when we consider craft as an occupation, tying it to people's long-term career goals.

Income Goals - "More than I am now."

The clearest way in which craftspeople posit their craft as integral to their life both personally and professionally is through an understanding of what crafts bring them financially. What my interviewees offer, though, were not discussions of a specific amount of money. References toward income generally also entailed a discussion of what crafts offer them in terms of happiness or fulfillment, with living comfortably being the overarching goal. While the uncertainty of self-employment and running a business would result in much uncertainty regarding paying oneself a stable and certain wage due to the instability of money coming in, an expected specific income for oneself and the business is something that would be pretty expected for a business plan. However, this business approach to crafts self-employment does not appear to be a central or even existing part of starting to run one's business, based on my interviewees' accounts. Rather, the predominant theme in these accounts is the importance of being a self-employed craft person for non-economic, non-financial, concerns.

In response to my income question, one craftsperson hedged quite a bit before she finally said that she would be happy with $30,000 a year. She mentioned this amount not as an overarching goal but merely as something that she would be very happy to make. At the same time she admitted that she was embarrassed by how low that amount is.

[9] Hourly wages are discussed in Chapter 4.

> "If I wasn't in a relationship with someone I would be homeless or living on my mom's couch. I don't make an amount of money I am proud of by, not even close… Again, I don't need to be rich but I'd love to be in a place where if I wasn't on my own, I'd like to be making enough where I'm not qualifying for, like, welfare type programs… So, like, $30,000. I'd love to make $30,000. I don't think that's setting my sights very high. [laughs] In some ways I'm sort of embarrassed to admit that I would like to make that. Like, that's a goal to make $30,000 a year, because that's not much money in this day and age."

Another interviewee, who also pursued another full-time job, spoke about her current goal to be able to pay her partner's tuition and that once he was out of school, there would be a potential discussion about a specific amount as well as determining whether it was time to stop working full-time at another job and being able to pursue crafts as a sole occupation. The approaches to pursuing craft as a full-time job are continually reliant upon the markets in which the craftsperson finds her or himself. The blacksmith I spoke with has regularly had increased amount of work where he has been able to hire multiple employees, the numbers fluctuating depending upon how busy he is. A crocheter I spoke with noted that she was considering her future with her boyfriend and that the life she lives currently needs to be put into the perspective of a long-term relationship and how financial realities of craft are something that will need to be addressed. Another craftsperson, who works in multiple media, mentioned that she sold in a variety of outlets from online to craft fairs to galleries and shops, because these multiple opportunities gave her increased sales opportunities and allowed her to continually grow and expand her work. Thus, it is not as simple as one needs to augment their craft income with other incomes, or that one can craft as a full-time job. Rather, it is entirely dependent upon the realities of that craft world one finds him/herself in. What are the market opportunities that present themselves? How does the craft one makes relate to potential sales outlets? While the crocheter had recently landed a major, wholesale agreement with a well known company, it did

not automatically include future contracts, and she was not entirely sure she would want to engage in such a relationship again.

These goals highlight the additional aspects of self-employment that are often left out of the discussion. Self-employment is not merely a means-end oriented plan for income and profit maximization. An entrepreneurial concern with innovation, expansion, and accumulation are not what drives craftspeople toward craft as work. While these can often be present, the meanings of money include the importance of happiness and family, that self-determined work offers the opportunities of making meaning that is beyond the mere calculations of profit, and that they are continually able to determine their wants and concerns without regard to an employer who would have different expectations.

Discussion & Conclusion

This chapter highlighted that becoming a craftsperson who sells to earn an income is a process. From the notions of learning how to craft through to the negotiations of a variety of approaches to support sales opportunities, craftspeople utilize approaches to facilitate routes to sustaining their business in line with how they prefer it to be, whether that is staying as a hobby up through being a full-time occupation.

These trajectories are important as we continually investigate the changing nature of work and labor, especially with the technological opportunities offered through the expansion of social networks and online opportunities for finding sales outlets and new consumers. This highlights a sort of life course of craft for craftspeople. Family and friend exposure offer opportunities for craft as a hobby or general interest separate from, and largely not even conceived of as, an economic outlet. As their abilities increase and the opportunities arise for self-determining their

labor with a skill, which they already have, we then see the navigation of potential economic activities.

What do these things tell us about craft more generally? What do they tell us about Becker's (1982) art worlds? As Becker argues,

> "All artistic work, like all human activity, involves the joint activity of a number, often a large number, of people. Through their cooperation, the artwork we eventually see or hear comes to be and continues to be. The work always shows signs of that cooperation. The forms of cooperation may be ephemeral, but often become more or less routine, producing patterns of collective activity we can call an art world. The existence of art worlds, as well as the way their existence affects both the production and consumption of art works, suggests a sociological approach to the arts." (1)

This argument, which Becker then unpacks to highlight the ever present others beyond the artist and their work, brings the clearest attention to the necessary ways in which the socially-based nature of creative production occurs. In this chapter, I have highlighted the continual ways in which craftspeople consistently find themselves encountering others throughout the process of exposure to, learning of, and selling their crafts. In essence, we can identify a generally existing *craft world* that consistently incorporates a variety of people, organizations, and institutions that facilitate craft as an endeavor, from hobby to occupation. Family has historically and contemporarily been extremely important in the transmission of craft knowledge, and serves as one important part of the world. The infrastructure which allows for self-directed and community-supported learning, be it in digital spaces such as Ravely.com or more "traditionally" identifiable community spaces such as libraries, gives the much needed opportunities for expanding one's knowledge with and through others. Marketplaces, such as Etsy and Renegade as well as other online shops and craft fairs, operate as the spaces through which craftspeople may engage with consumers, and would-be consumers, so that they receive feedback, either through comment or consumption, about their goods. This feedback is further augmented by

such systems as jurying at Renegade as a preemptive feedback before engagement with broader publics. Beyond the experiences of those I interviewed, the craft world I have detailed does not incorporate other spaces, such as galleries focused on craft, which can be seen operating through the modern history of craft (Koplos and Metcalf 2010). As the quotes above highlight, craftspeople continually situate themselves in relation to others and these relations serve as the foundation for craft practices more generally, from hobby through occupation. These collective arrangements facilitate individual-level experiences in contemporary craft that craftspeople must navigate. Craft practice, whether purely for enjoyment through to work is continually and always social, underscoring an additional way which Becker's arguments of what constitutes a specific world is necessarily reliant upon ties between people. In the case of contemporary craftspeople, we see a regular reference toward the importance of family ties as generative of this world, especially incorporating generational ties between mothers and daughters.

Craftspeople who begin to sell their crafts are, by definition, entrepreneurial. Aldrich (2005) gives a clear summary of the analysis of entrepreneurship, which highlights the predominately firm-focused research. Pointing to Schumpeter's foundational argument, Aldrich notes that an early, key conception identified entrepreneurship as action, or "entrepreneurial behaviors" such as "introducing new goods and production methods, opening new markets, and obtaining new sources of raw materials." Recall Julie's point about shopping for a gift at the most famous toy store in the world and not finding anything that was satisfactory. She took this as a challenge to create a new good because there was a hole in the market. While Aldrich's review is primarily focused on firms, there is no need to treat entrepreneurship as only occurring in firms, though Aldrich's approach is pretty common for the broader field of entrepreneurship studies. The idea of entrepreneurship has clear overlap with the experiences of the craftspeople

with whom I spoke, though with necessary modifications due to scale. The craftspeople I spoke with tended to operate solo, being producer, manager, and CEO combined, in essence a firm of one. Aldrich's highlighting of the work of Kanter gives an additional factor of the entrepreneur that behaviors falls within: "[Kanter] also noted, however, that the ideal-typical entrepreneur was still someone who started his or her own business as an autonomous entity" (457).

Beyond these, entrepreneurship research is often focused on specific formations of how it can operate. Craftspeople as entrepreneurs correspond to some of the newer manifestations of entrepreneurial theory. Baker and Nelson (2005) put forth the idea of entrepreneurial bricolage to understand entrepreneurship in resource-limited environments, a process of "as making do by applying combinations of the resources at hand to new problems and opportunities" (333). The examples I have detailed above highlight again and again the ways in which craftspeople take what they already know and utilize it to engage in entrepreneurial behavior, and that entrepreneurship can incorporate extra-economic concerns. Preece (2014) applies this concept to a jazz organization and identifies how this approach also generates non-economically oriented ends, just as the creation of social value aimed at alleviating a lack of opportunity for showcasing art more generally while also facilitating the strengthening of a community that previously had few connections between practitioners. Together, these two adjustments highlight how entrepreneurship can be focused on a smaller-scale and incorporate concerns that are not merely profit maximization.

Women as entrepreneurs have been a rapidly growing segment of new business ventures (Morris, Miyasaki, Watters, and Coombes 2006), but not all entrepreneurs experience similar opportunity structures. Kleinrichert (2013), in discussing the philosophical and ethical foundations and potentials of women entrepreneurs notes that myriad obstacles are faced from

access to capital, broader systems of segregation, global disparities in opportunity. This should not be entirely surprising since entrepreneurship is regularly associated with normatively masculine characteristics (Gupta, Turban, Wasti, and Sikdar 2009). Moreover, specific entrepreneurial outcomes for women also highlight differing outcomes, especially regarding lower rates of growth as compared to men (Fischer, Reuber, and Dyke 2002). Intriguingly, these aspects of lower growth are at least partially based within women entrepreneurs having growth aspirations that are smaller than compared to men (Morris, Miyasaki, Watters, and Coombes 2006), highlighting a key way in which women's business ventures begin, on average, with differing long-term goals. When combined with arguments highlighting the gendered perception of entrepreneurs, the differential experiences for women entrepreneurs that are at least, in part, rooted within broader systems of gender which regularly disadvantage women in the workforce.

Importantly, these points about the gendered nature of entrepreneurship accord well with those who I interviewed. Their discussions of their interest in self-determined work were common but their intentions for growth were seldom large-scale. While the possibility of hiring additional people arose a few times, it was not a centrally important theme of their businesses. In fact, the majority of the craftspeople I interviewed were less interested in large-scale expansion and profit maximization that follows along predominant entrepreneurial thinking and more focused on their own work more directly. This highlights a unique way that crafts operate in the current market for goods. Since the idea of self-determined work, rather than working for others, is central in this pursuit, anticipating growth that removes one from actually making is somewhat counter to their founding interest in this work. Crafts then offer a way to conceptualize potential routes that entrepreneurial orientations need not focus on large-scale growth but can be centrally focused on job fulfillment and market opportunities that maintain a

small-scale, artisanal interest. Much like Schor (2011) points to, this site centralizes a way for entrepreneurial interest, especially for women, that is economically sustainable. This further connects into ways that gender informs entrepreneurial activities as extra-economic in their foundations, offering opportunities that are non-monetary while pursuing economic goals (Biggart 1989).

Altogether, the craftspeople I study create their own, independent businesses, aimed at introducing new products to market. From skincare to toys, the continual focus on uniqueness identifies a hole. Following this toward the processes by which craftspeople determine to begin selling, we see the particular ways in which an individual attempting to fulfill wants or needs can begin to explore a hobby and transition it into a business opportunity for those with similar wants or needs. They leverage their preexisting knowledge and interests as opportunities, rather than merely pursuing knowledge acquisition with an eye toward a subsequent pay-off down the road.

These individual-level explorations serve as a test of market interest, by identifying how their want or need has not been fulfilled. Through the hobby, they also receive what can be thought of as unofficial market feedback which helps facilitate the transition to selling and the formation of their business. By their friends and family happily wanting, or even requesting, gifts, they receive positive affirmation that what they are making has potential consumers. Ken's example takes us down a next step: custom orders from his neighbors. This once again offers a way to navigate the wants and needs of consumers while also generating useful information that can be actionable for entrepreneurial behavior to take place.

Craft businesses also offer the opportunity to consider entrepreneurship in a differing context than normal. As Aldrich notes (2005) "women were about 60 percent as likely as men to be nascent entrepreneurs" (463), a number which corresponds closely to the Small Business

Association's (2012) numbers. On Etsy, and among my interviewees, women make up the vast majority of craftspeople. While craft has a long and gendered history, especially focusing on the craft businesses created and maintained by men, the current moment offers the opportunity to rethink craft work alongside entrepreneurship in a way that centers the contributions, challenges, and experiences of women. The identification and navigation of hobby into a business venture routes these experiences as potentially gendered. This is especially important to consider because entrepreneurialism, a common facet of women's economic contribution beyond wage labor, the location of much small-scale craft production share an exceedingly interesting moment of overlap: the household. Paula England and Nancy Folbre (2005) remind us that women's economic contributions in the household are often overlooked or ignored. Ironically, the Small Business Association notes that 52% of small businesses are home based. And the strong majority of those I interviewed worked out of their home. While this should not be surprising as we well know that women have long played key roles in household economies (Boris 1986, Zelizer 1994), it is an interesting oversight for conceptualizations and analyses of entrepreneurship to privilege the firm, even when small businesses are majority home-based. Studying crafts serves as a great case for noting the convergence of key components of entrepreneurship for women's work and businesses.

Nicole Woolsey Biggart's (1989) work on direct selling organizations (DSOs) offers an opportunity for bridging the worlds of firm-level entrepreneurship studies, the micro-level buyer/seller relations, and the home-based business activities of women. While a focus on the direct sellers for organizations such as Mary Kay does not theoretically qualify as focusing on entrepreneurs proper, Biggart notes that this world utilizes the rhetoric and logics of entrepreneurship to attract and retain sellers, because direct selling operates on a schedule

determined by the seller. By highlighting a self-determined work schedule that is responsive to individual and familial requirements, the independence that is offered by "entrepreneurship" allows for women to navigate work and family in ways that affirm both. As such, it highlights how home and family can be especially important for women, without requiring one to be devalued by the other. In essence, the ability to conceive of one's self as an entrepreneur does not lessen the claim of being a mother or a spouse, and the interest in home life does not reduce the idea of being entrepreneurial.

By offering the abilities to simultaneously navigate home life and work life, connecting one's entrepreneurial interests alongside the realities of the home, Schor's (2011) arguments about the necessary transformations of labor and the economy toward small-scale production. Her focus on the opportunities afforded by small-scale production and entrepreneurial creative labor highlight ways in which individuals can navigate the precarity experienced in the labor market while also partaking in emotionally and socially fulfilling work, especially as it centralizes the home and the broader community as twin concerns in the face of continual, economic upheaval. Importantly, Schor's formulation incorporates the processes of this transition, of navigating adjusting production and consumption toward small-scale, ecologically minded approaches, and they require a dramatic re-approach across the economy to facilitate the opportunities for these new creative labor sectors to flourish. These potentialities, while attractive and seemingly integral to the interests and concerns that I studied, are still in a somewhat nascent stage, and craftspeople more generally are still performing self-determined labor in the face of the realities of the broader economy and its machinations.

The processes that I have discussed to this point, the ways in which exposure to craft facilitates craft practice and the ways in which craft becomes conceptualized as an occupational

opportunity lay the ground work for theoretically situating some ways in which the study of contemporary craft benefits from continuing to consider both work and family. These processes additionally offer some empirical ways of applying Becker's ideas of a world alongside the processes of entrepreneurship as integral to that world. Another important idea to consider in relation to craftwork, one very central to contemporary work scholarship, is the notion of precariousness.

The high rate of small business failure is a reality, and filling a hole in a market does not automatically mean market success. The formation of one's own business, then, is continually fraught with the concern of that business failure. In the context of craftwork, the precarious nature of their work can be looked at through two vantage points. Starting with the notion of their business more formally, it is important to discuss the generally unstable nature of self-employment and entrepreneurship. The "failure" rate of small businesses, often merely denoted as the rate of businesses which fail at some point, is highly contextual and regularly lacks much information regarding the reason that businesses cease, especially since small businesses sometimes close even when they are profitable (Headd 2003), so conceptualizing this as "failure" is limited. In an analysis of business survivability, Phillips and Kirchhoff (1989) note that about 40% of small businesses make it six years or longer, and that this strongly tied to the expansion of businesses as measured by employee growth in that increasing employee growth increases the chances of survivability. More recently, the Small Business Association (2012) estimates about 50% of businesses make it to five years and beyond. The current project is unable to estimate or approximate the failure rates for the type of craft businesses under study primarily because those I interviewed were operating extant businesses. Moreover, there is no readily available data that tracks craft businesses of the sort that sell online, such as through Etsy, or at craft fairs like

Renegade, especially because the legal requirements for registering a business may not always be satisfied. Regardless, these broad, business level statistics highlight the generally uncertain nature of business formation. Broad, statistical approaches to business founding and failure often leave out the experience of those working in the businesses, including such issues as experiencing grief upon unemployment (Shepherd 2003).

These individual level issues of craft work highlight an ever burgeoning issue within work that has become a recent, major area of discussion: precariousness. As Arne Kalleberg (2009) notes, precarious work is "employment that is uncertain, unpredictable, and risky from the point of view of the worker" (2). The experience of precarity is also seen as incorporating "income instability, lack of a safety net, an erratic work schedule, uncertainty about continuing employment, the blurring of work and nonwork time, and the absence of collective representation" (de Peuter 2011:419). The concerns around precarity occasionally incorporate attendant concerns around political and labor issues for creative workers more generally in attempting to determine and delineate how creative production is similarly disadvantage and unstable to precariousness in low paid occupations (de Peuter 2011, McKay 2014, Ross 2008). Morgan, Wood, and Nelligan (2013) point to the ways in which youth and creativity become closely aligned with precarious work, and how the instability it entails is not automatically conceptualized as a problem; "[Precariousness] is also synonymous with the idea that the shape and direction of the career is vague and unforeseeable and that the creative aspirant should be open to diverse possibilities and happenstance" (411). These points bring about the issue of precariousness as placing workers in a highly unsafe position regarding their livelihoods, though there are attendant, political manifestations as well as possible, future-oriented conceptualizations of work that incorporate the idea of precarity as a necessary stage of

occupational development.

While handmade revivalism is having a heyday of sorts, precariousness in craft production has both historical and contemporary manifestations. The formation of the Arts and Crafts Movement operated along both political and aesthetic dimensions, focusing on the negative effects of industrialized labor and its concomitant deleterious effect on the aesthetics of the objects produced. These broader arguments about precariousness in a variety of settings find strong, continuing support for labor. The theoretical abstractions presented above, where precariousness is not only articulated in relation to formal wage-based relations between employer and worker, is important, because while the empirical examples of precariousness concern wage labor, the experiences are more common. The importance of stable work, especially that in more traditionally understood workplaces, cannot be underscored enough, being important for additional, individual issues such as health and self-esteem (Malenfant, LaRue, and Vézina 2007). This approach makes sense because that is the predominant form of work. The effects, though, extend beyond direct, wage labor. Scrase (2003) points to how globalization has resulted in expanding precariousness for artisans because of ever expanding mass production creating cheaper products, both in terms of price as well as in terms of the potential quality of the goods. Recall the quote earlier about dreaming to make $30,000 alongside the necessary aid of her partner, else she would be homeless or have to move back in with her mother? Remember the examples from "Quit Your Day Job," noting the necessity of a partner? The familial support discussed highlights ways in which precarity may be managed. The examples of utilizing part-time work to fill in gaps is another approach. While the interviews focused on the craft work that craftspeople do as well as whether they need additional income, they did not focus on how to determine when to end the business. Regardless, these

regular instances of discussing one's partner or the utilization of additional work highlights that craftspeople consistently exist within a precarious situation, especially considering the seasonal nature of crafts consumption (Etsy 2015).

Contemporary craftspeople and the businesses they form extend historical discussions of craft to the importance of family and work. This work must continually be conceived in relation to the importance of entrepreneurship, the precariousness of self-employment, and nature of the craft world that makes up the social relations that facilitate and maintain craft more generally. Moreover, the gendered nature of craft, being predominately undertaken by women, offers a reminder that the focus of analysis on work and entrepreneurship needs to be expanded so that the the heterogeneous occupational activities of women are not overlooked or excluded.

CHAPTER 3

Crafting Price: The Variety of Factors in Pricesetting

In markets, price is regularly situated as the primary symbol bringing consumers and sellers into contact, with both attempting to get the best possible outcome. The current chapter takes the supposed meeting point of a price to understand how that price actually comes into being. While there have been subtle references to price throughout the history of sociological thought, a concerted effort to position price as an explicitly sociological, and necessary, site of exploration, has seen its strongest push only recently. This recent move has brought focus to the myriad ways in which prices, beyond being simply an equilibrium or mere profit maximization alongside consumer needs, are also relational in that they symbolize the underlying meanings of ties between actors.

Price is regularly treated and presented as the end result of a variety of social and economic processes. Whether it is put forth as the instantiation of supply and demand or the symbolic result of relations, price is presented as resolving some collection of events prior to it. While supply/demand may change price, price is still treated as not being its own object that may be meaningful. Much of this logic, stemming from neoclassical economic thinking, highlights the idea that prices result from a steady interplay of supply and demand, with price varying also by way of knowledge, cost, efficiency, externalities, and so on (Weber 2012). This approach is relatively direct, though complex in the creation of models aimed at predicting price stability, and focuses most effectively upon the ideas of individual level and firm level dynamics alongside utility models, though does little in the way of identifying the underlying meaning making processes and non-economic values that are also central to economic action (Zelizer

2012).

The current chapter aims to move forward by combining some of the conceptualizations in economics and sociology to position price as not only being affected by social processes, but also affecting social processes around it. Though, the primary focus on this chapter is on the ways in which contemporary craftspeople come to set prices on the goods they sell, it also presents that the organizations in which producers find themselves offer their own logics of pricing, and that these logics are themselves subject to change. The aim, then, of this chapter is to highlight the difficulty of pricing and that price is not merely an end result, but is a continually negotiated and navigated sociological object around which much debate, discussion, and change finds itself.

The idea of understanding how the organizations who create and maintain the markets simply give advice may seem somewhat unnecessary because they are not participatory in the actual sale (outside of infrastructure). Yet organizations occupy a central role in cultural production, which resolves itself in consumption, and have an important position in the literature. Alongside Becker's (1982) collective behavior argument, the production of culture perspective championed and led by Richard Peterson (Peterson and Anand 2004) positions the importance of markets and organizations for cultural objects more generally. Pierre Bourdieu's (1993) field approach to cultural production augments these both further. Together, these three perspective share a lot in common, continually drawing attention to not just the creator and not just the interaction with the consumer as sole determinants of prices. Rather, they are continually concerned with interaction, influence, power, and systems of evaluation alongside organizational and institutional influence on all factors of cultural objects. Bourdieu gives especially strong emphasis on the institutional factors in judgment with constant attention paid to issues of power

in determining the broader, cultural value of any given object. While Bourdieu's focus is primarily attending to distinctions between literature and poetry, these issues of categories of objects are continually reified. In a broad category of aesthetic objects, of which craft and art are often positioned such as in Becker, we can see that a hierarchy is maintained which results in those objects deemed less aesthetic, such as craft, receive lower price valuations. Together, these three approaches, while not overtly and automatically positioned within economic sociology proper, utilize the same approaches as economic sociology by looking to the relations and ties between people and within organizations and fields as primarily important in economic action and interaction.

Price theory highlights the firm-level and industry-level approach to pricing, which makes sense because it orients toward the broadest set of consumers and producers alongside the vast amount of economic capital that is exchanged in the world. What, though, of the system of price-setting for those who are entrepreneurial but who are not participatory in the systems of knowledge that stem from business schools educating a class of entrepreneurs and investors focused on growth and maximal profit? Contemporary craftspeople operate outside of beyond these areas of theory but must navigate them in the broader economy. This is important because it sets the stage for needing to conceptualize price-setting as also incorporating information acquisition, market knowledge, and individually oriented ethics and values part of the processes of self-determined labor more generally.

Why do these factors matter here? Because craftspeople sell their goods almost entirely in markets that are built and maintained by organizations who themselves are not participatory in the creation of these cultural objects. These organizations benefit from broader awareness of, and integration with, multinational corporations and brick and mortar stores, and these

engagements are necessarily important in the broader system by which craftspeople interact with the organizations who facilitate their sales. And with Etsy recently becoming a publicly traded company, it is important to keep in mind that these organizations have access to a vast array of information and knowledge to potentially transmit to their sellers. It is not unsurprising to see, then, that Etsy and Renegade both participate in giving and/or facilitating pricing advice for craftspeople. The aspect of pricing, as my interviewees continually reminded me, is one of the most difficult aspects of running one's business. Paying attention to how the organizations that facilitate craft markets advise pricing, also gives some insight into the power dynamics at play in determining what factors are considered as the most important for prices. Finally, as White (1981, 2002) argues, the relations between firms in determining prices for goods are of central importance. As I have detailed throughout, craftspeople look to other craftspeople not necessarily as competition but for broader social interests, such as a network of peers who understand each other. In the case of crafts, the markets are created and maintained by these organizations that, in turn, offer advice as a way to potentially manage the market when craftspeople are unable to compare themselves to each other to resolve a specific pricing problem. Craftspeople's approach to pricing follows very closely with their approach to learning their craft, with price becoming an assemblage (Marcus and Saka 2006, Venn 2006), or a varying object itself predicated upon heterogeneous and contextually important factors more than the result of a static model. Importantly, as Venn (2006) "assemblage can be seen as a relay concept, linking the problematic of structure with that of change and far-from equilibrium systems. It focuses on process and on the dynamic character of the inter-relationships between the heterogeneous elements of the phenomenon" (107). Thus, by keeping in mind price as an assemblage, this allows for considering both the structural realities of markets, especially those

where equilibrium can not be assumed, and the varying ways in which individuals within the market, such as craftspeople, orient toward this structural reality and their own conceptualizations of their work to determine the resulting price.

The Organizational Advising on Price

Any discussion of pricing must find accordance with the sociological factors that inevitably inform the resulting price. The prior chapters have situated the arguments in relation to the organizations I draw my samples from (namely Renegade and Etsy), but have yet to fully engage with the ways in which these organizations may play a strong role in business of craft beyond facilitating the exchange of crafts between producer and consumer. This chapter begins with a discussion of the types of advice, or factors focused upon, offered to craftspeople by members of these organizations as they go through the process of selling their work. It is important to note these components because this is a primary way in which the organizations are able to act as not merely facilitators of markets, but also potentially influence interactions within the markets. This especially becomes important because, as discussed earlier, coming to sell one's craft is done haphazardly and without regard to broader market forces or any formal education or background in business. Thus, information gathering on running a business becomes essential and any advice given by those managing the infrastructure for one's business is a logical starting point.

Etsy Advising

Etsy maintains a blog that regularly posts entries on a variety of foci, with the majority of blog posts being penned by Etsy employees. These posts range from advice for sellers

(combined into the Seller's Handbook), Featured Seller posts where sellers are interviewed, instructional posts for all site members to learn how to do or make a craft, trend highlights, and even guest posts with a special focus on having someone not employed by Etsy managed a board on the Etsy Pinterest page. These posts generally operate as a way to maintain community, facilitate interaction (albeit indirectly) by Etsy proper with sellers and consumers, and generate information that is beneficial for sellers and consumers.

The process of pricing one's goods for sale on Etsy is an extremely important topic as many sellers, both new and old, regularly proclaim that it is extremely difficult to "correctly" price their items. As Etsy notes, "Figuring out how to price your items can feel like the most challenging part of selling. Don't worry, it's normal to feel a little overwhelmed." This idea of "correct" pricing is one of the key items that comes up, time and time again, regardless of context, both in terms how Etsy approaches advising price, but also in how sellers conceive of and ask about price: there is a common understanding that the items for sale have a correct, or natural, price and sellers are tasked with identifying what their correct price is. But, before turning to some of the findings, a description of where I am drawing the data from is necessary.

Etsy first began their blog on October 6, 2006 with an entry titled "Featured Seller: GourmetAmigumuri." These types of blog entries are in the form of question and answer where the sellers describe themselves, their background in craft, personal interests, and even advice they would give to other sellers. For the first five months, Etsy tailored their blog simply to featuring sellers. It was not until February 1, 2007, after 53 features, that Etsy covered another topic: upcycling. Since then, Etsy has expanded the content of their blog, with popular topics including features on weddings including a handmade focus, craft history, aggregations of sales data for a given month, and features on sellers who were able to quit their day job. To date, there

have been 7,174[10] entries posted to the Etsy blogs. Generally speaking, these blog posts have become a major way in which Etsy communicates with buyers and sellers on a myriad of topics that are important for them and the broader crafting community.

For the current paper, specific components of the Etsy blogs are extremely helpful for understanding the advice Etsy gives to sellers on how to price their wares. The largest segment of seller focused blog entries are organized under what Etsy refers to as "The Seller's Handbook" which covers an extremely broad range of topics that sellers would find most helpful. Currently, the Seller's Handbook is presented with a "Best-of Archives" which gives 16 major categories, such as "Setting Up Shop," "Pricing," "US Taxes" and more. From there, each of these has a set of key posts that Etsy identifies as being a good starting point for that topic while offering a link to all entries within that category as well. The Price category contains 33[11] posts and is the source of the following analysis on how Etsy advises sellers on approaching price setting that this paper builds.

Formulas

An early blog stated that, even though entire semesters are spent on pricing in "fancy business schools… the one thing they teach? There is no magic pricing formula. Fortunately pricing is more art than science." This statement occurred at the end of the first year of blogging and seems to have been forgotten. The idea of pricing as "art" has recently been supplied with an equation, which sellers can use to price:

[10] This is up to the most recent blog entry "25 Small Gifts and Stocking Stuffers Under $25" and calculated by multiplying the number of pages that contain 15 entries (478 pages) and adding the 4 from the oldest page.

[11] There are a total of 827 entries in the Seller's Handbook of which 33 are currently tagged as Pricing though, on initial read through, appear to re-hash and update prior arguments.

"Cost Price (Labor + Materials Costs) x 2 = Your Wholesale Price"
"Wholesale Price x 2 = Retail Price."

While advising this, they stress that sellers should keep their prices connected to a wholesale price as a basis for retail price. This is explained as important for three major reasons: if they retail for a wholesale price, they stop themselves from being able to wholesale in the future; gives themselves little wriggle room if they want to discount their items; and are undervaluing their work. They give this equation as "a good place to start" from which they can then deviate depending upon their own situation and context. They even note that this equation may "have some self-induced sticker shock" but that sellers "may have been trying to compete with mass-produced goods, or pricing your work at an amount that you could afford." To explain the necessity of this, sellers are advised to "Remember that handmade items have more value, and perhaps you should price for folks who have more disposable income than yourself." Rather then explain why the sticker shock is most likely happening, Etsy turns toward handmade goods being more valuable than their mass produced counterparts, thus legitimating the price difference. Sellers are not informed that they are paying more for material costs and are also most likely giving themselves a higher hourly wage than their counterparts working in mass production, especially since sellers are advised to "be a good boss to yourself. Think of the time you've invested perfecting a skill or technique! Don't know where to start? How much would a skilled worker get paid per hour."

To put this pricing equation into context, a person knitting a scarf may have the following input and outcome. For a basic scarf, two skeins of yarn should be more than sufficient, costing approximately $10. An estimated 2 hours of labor (which is a low estimate) at the federal minimum wage would set the labor at $14.50 total (this obviously does not include the amount of time it takes to source materials, create and post listings, or package and ship items, which would

also factor in). At this point, a basic scarf would wholesale for $49 and would retail for $98. Once the factors that are not accounted for are factored in, the price would undoubtedly be well over $100. Note that, at this point, the formula is leaving out much chance for growth or augmentation of the business. Etsy has moved forward offering ever more refined equations and aid in pricing, depending upon the needs of the craftsperson which try to incorporate additional costs, such as the overhead necessary, such as rent, or making sure the labor involved in posting, preparing, and so on are also accounted for.

Since this format, Etsy has now started advising sellers to use what they refer to as the "Simple Formula." The Simple Formula updates the original advice by also accounting for expenses beyond materials, such as rent and tools/tool upkeep, alongside adding in profit. Whereas the original equation merely treated the price as predicated upon a multiple merely of materials and labor, the later advice begins to treat prices as also encompassing the potential needs of the business for both long-term stability (expenses) and possibilities for growth (profit). Expenses gives opportunity around the needs of the business as well as making sure that the price fully accounts for all manner of costs. Profit offers the ability invest in the business, purchase additional materials and tools, and expand in ways that would originally be curtailed without an influx of monies from the owner of the business.

The Simple Formula, while fully accounting for additional opportunities that would be necessary for the craftsperson, also begins introducing an ever more complex equation that is increasingly difficult to track all individual inputs, especially since certain items, such as rent, are relatively stable and would present a potentially decreasing proportion of the price as additional items are added for sale. To remedy this possible confusion, and make the management of price data simpler, Etsy posted a spreadsheet allowing sellers to utilize this

broader metric for determining prices with a focus no longer simply on generating a price for an individual goods but aimed at incorporating a yearly goal and the anticipated total number of goods to be made. This adjustment, then, allows for the individual prices of goods to be obtained in relation to one's hoped for annual income, with the prices for individual goods changing specifically in relation to how many are to be produced in relation to total goal amount. Material costs are able to be broken down, hourly rate, estimate of how much labor is required, as well as additional costs such as rented space[12] and advertising are also able to be entered. This specific item cost is then augmented with a profit margin before then calculating a wholesale price and retail price. While the equation used results in calculating the wholesale and retail prices, this augmented spreadsheet offers a level of detail and specificity that results in an ever-increasing cost. Moreover, because of the use of a spreadsheet, it allows for rapid testing of inputs (such as lower material costs, higher profit margin, etc.) to see how large or small an effect these would have on the final cost. In these cases, the price for a given object is able to be understood in every possible facet, including the specific and exact cost of materials and so on. What these accounting practices continually do, in their refinement of understanding costs and estimating profits, is push for an ever-increasing product. By incorporating additional labor costs in every possibly conceivable way, the item's cost increases as well. During interviews, these formulas were referenced as sorts of ideal typical ways of pricing, as models to aspire to. But these aspirations are met with reticence of fully enacting, because they result in a sales prices that is simply "too high." Craftspeople are aware of being able to charge more for goods, but only up to a point. There exists an upper limit that, while not necessarily identifiable, results in such regular sticker shock that consumers are simply unwilling to pay. This sticker shock, though, is

[12] Their example entry even advises to enter a cost for using one's own home if not renting an additional space.

primarily those prices that these types of formulas generate.

Additional Factors to Consider in Pricing

Etsy advises sellers to consider not only materials and labor but also their experience as a craftsperson (namely, the years they have spent learning and refining their craft), the complexity of their design, and the uniqueness of their vision as the creator of the piece. Experience is referenced as increasing how they compensate their labor in relation to increases in knowledge and how long they have been working at their craft. Complexity also is intended to have linear relationship with price in that, even if labor time is low, if the piece is more complex than others are able to do, then it should have a positive effect on price. Finally, the craftperson's unique vision in designing and making is stressed as being, yet again, a positive influence on price. This unique vision specifically points toward the sellers on Etsy as creating one-of-a-kind items (regardless if they are or not) and identifies this as an important conceptualization of how the items they are making are, in fact, worth more and should be priced accordingly. Throughout, Etsy only focuses upon ways in which sellers would increase their prices. The emphasis on "unique vision" and identifying the crafts as being singularities also potentially introduces a difficulty of comparison because the focus becomes not how are the items similar but how are they different, thus requiring a continual creation of a narrative substantiating the item, reducing the perceived ability for consumers to shop around for the best deal in a sea of seemingly identical items. These factors that are stressed are, in general, in opposition to Marx's conception of the socially necessary labor time. The better one gets at making a given craft is pushed to be continually rewarded and without regard to the abilities of craftspeople making similar objects. In essence, Etsy's advice incorporates labor but regularly positions it as one of

the less important factors in price.

Undervaluing/Underpricing

Sellers on Etsy are advised to increase their prices for a myriad of reasons. One item that has been stressed is that the crafts are worth more but that they are explicitly underpriced. "Challenge yourself to charge a price that makes you feel slightly uncomfortable. *Chances are, if you're like most creatives, you are possibly underpricing your work*. Really consider putting a price tag that pushes you up against any fears you're having – a price that challenges you to dream bigger" (italics added). Underpricing is, apparently, endemic to creatives and something that must be fixed. When craftspeople underprice, they "[send] the message that it's not the best quality; that it's cheap." Since "Our work is an undeniable reflection of who we are," by underpricing the items, craftspeople are not only sending messages about what they make but also who they are. This advice aims to, again, increase the prices of items on Etsy not only because they can be sold for more but also because the low prices, when artificially low, are symbolic of bad quality, though which quality or qualities is never stated, simply that consumers will regard the items as such. This corresponds quite well with Velthuis' (2005) finding that art works are priced to reduce the possibility that quality (whether it be aesthetic, in reference to the artist, or in reference to the gallery) is not deemed in a bad light. In much the same way, the concern with quality is connected explicitly to the ways in price reflects both on the work and the maker. It again stresses that sellers should be charging more. Simultaneously, it offers no notes or baseline on how to determine whether the sellers are underpricing and should raise their prices.

Etsy's only advice on figuring out if one is underpricing is that, "If you can't keep up

with demand that might mean you're undervaluing yourself." Thus, Etsy then moves into advising sellers to identify the equilibrium of supply and demand with only the overly simplistic metric of keeping up with demand, though no conceptualization of negotiating long-term versus short-term demand is taken into account, let alone how to adequately determine where consumer demand may be identified. But, what if sales disappear once the price is raised? In an Etsy Lab on pricing, when sellers raise their prices and do not see the sales that make this viable (i.e. at least maintain their income at the same rate before the price increase) they are advised to not lower their prices but that they should find ways to "add value" as cheaply as possible. Throughout, this is a continual emphasis on increasing prices and then, if this is actually detrimental to sellers, then a different approach is needed, but never resulting in a reduction of price.

This approach, while fraught with potential issues, does not automatically result in a loss of profits or sales. Stories abound of craftspeople who note that they sold more when their prices increased, even if they had to wait through a period of low sales. In the Etsy Lab, a story was told of a woman who worked with paper and was making what were postcards that she was pricing out at approximately $40+ dollars. Unsurprisingly she was not seeing many sales but when she was advised to reconceptualize the postcards as affordable, small pieces of art (in essence, rebranding and recategorizing them) she began to see her sales increase.

Price as Bringing in "Correct" Buyers

Price is advised to not only be representative of the crafts and the craftsperson, but also of the consumers. Price relates not only to earning more but also having a "correct" buyer as this also informs the value of the items being made. As one blog noted, "I definitely want my

paintings going to folks who value the painting as much as I do." And, if a seller decides to have a sale, another blog advises, "Sales can be a good way to attract new buyers to your shop and reward loyal fans. If you run sales and promotions, *make sure you're attracting the right buyers and maintaining the value of your work*" (emphasis added). Here the advice moves beyond just the price as reflecting upon the object and the craftsperson but even reflecting upon the buyer. Rather than conceive of the buyer having a value tied to the object, Etsy advises craftspeople must be careful because they may get the "bad kind" of buyer. Who the wrong buyer is, is unclear. I would hazard that to Etsy, the wrong buyer would be one who is simply looking for a deal and does not "correctly value" the crafted object their purchasing. Again, it is vague how one would determine this. Especially since Etsy regularly advises sellers to do tiered pricing: "Having a range of prices in your shop allows you to sell to different buyers. For shops selling higherpriced items, some simple pieces in your signature style will allow customers who don't have the money for your highend [sic] pieces to buy something from you."

While the above advice is presented quite simply and aimed at being easily utilized by sellers, it presents a process continually fraught with as much uncertainty as before. Sellers are told they should probably charge more for various reasons (symbols of quality, underpaying themselves, selling at "wholesale" prices, etc.). Once they have done this, if it has a negative effect on their sales, they need to maintain the higher prices and simply re-approach what they are doing to see how they can adjust, rebrand, alter, or otherwise differently conceive what they are selling to see if this will attract buyers. Unfortunately, it is ambiguous whether this has been helpful or hurtful across the population of sellers, or whether they have simply spent time and energy attempting this advice to only see no change in their outcomes.

I would like to complete this section noting that Etsy is cognizant that their advice may

not be helpful to or beneficial for everyone. This acknowledgement, though, arises in specifically legal contexts (such as advising on copyrights, consignment, or anything that requires a contract outside of Etsy). In these contexts, Etsy includes a disclaimer:

> "This information is for educational and information purposes only. The content should not be construed as legal advice. The author and Etsy, Inc. disclaim all responsibility for any and all losses, damages, or causes of action that may arise or be connected with the use of these materials. Please consult a licensed attorney in your area with specific legal questions or concerns."

Within the pricing sections, since Etsy is presenting it largely as how to think about pricing (though never engaging with the variation in context and how to determine whether certain portions of their advice are in the best interest of various sellers) they do not overtly address in a similar manner that their advice may be wrong, unhelpful, or even hurtful to certain sellers. While this is somewhat understandable considering this is presented as advice, as Etsy is positioned as the knowledgeable entity on pricing with these blog posts, I would hazard a guess that many sellers take the advice as fact, though that remains to be seen.

Renegade and Pricing

Formally speaking, Renegade does not operate as an organization giving advice as to how they think their sellers should price their wares. The closest set of information they give is that items for sale at Renegade tend to span the range from $1 to $250, though there are exceptions to this rule. Rather than set a specific parameter of how much items *should* cost, they merely request that sellers give explanation if their costs operate outside this range. Regardless, items that are a few hundred dollars or more are still uncommon at Renegade.

Recently, though, Renegade has begun participating in pricing advice, albeit in a somewhat indirect manner. A new crowd-source platform for receiving recommendations on

price, named The Pricerie, allows craftspeople to upload pictures of items, enter a description, and have people score the item according to "Originality," "Quality," and "Talk Value," give a price they think the item is worth, and a short explanation of their pricing/scoring and/or an evaluation of the piece in general (though the description is not required). Renegade is listed as a sponsor of Pricerie on the website, there are Renegade people who participate in pricing, and Pricerie has had booth-space at Renegade SF in 2014. While none of this marks Renegade as giving official advice, nor does it signal to what extent sellers at Renegade are utilizing Pricerie, it does serve as a slight insight into the price advise that is potentially aligned with Renegade itself.

Pricerie is structured somewhat akin to social media sites, where there are individual profiles for users. It also utilizes ranking systems so that individual users are ranked in relation to each other on their pricing advice history and ability. The more that one prices items that have been posted, they receive credits which are intended to be traded for some, as yet to be divulged, perks. Additionally, appraisers, as they are called, have titles in line with their level of scoring[13] where new appraisers are referred to as "Apprentice" while those who have more experience, earned via appraising items, are deemed "High_Priest[14]." Depending upon one's level, their profile receives a badge telling others what level they've achieved and utilizes a writing utensil to represent their ability. As an Apprentice, the writing utensil is a crayon. For High_Priests, the utensil is a fountain pen. Generally, these images correspond quite clearly to notions of ability and refinement, with writing utensils as metaphors (crayon for starting out, fountain pen as marking ability).

[13] Currently, it is unclear how one moves up because there are some appraisers who have a higher rank but much less of the point system.

[14] The underscore is how the level is rendered on the website. Not sure if it is a stylistic choice or a result of the way the site is coded.

The factors that go into price are not leveraged in a direct manner on Pricerie, though. Rather, the narrative that the seller constructs alongside the explanations pricers give are intended to serve to as justificatory of the price for any given item. The differing facets of originality, quality, and talk value are not weighed in any specific manner, they are potentially continually variable as a portion of price. Aspects of price such as materials and labor are expected to be part of the price but are not presented as such unless they fit within one of the three categories. For example, one craftsperson posted a geometric stainless steel planter. Multiple appraisers note that it is a common shape, though most often done out of ceramic. This point, though, presents some conflicting moments in the pricing. One appraiser remarks that it is not that unique due to its shape, another notes the material gives it uniqueness and, thus, its value. One appraiser points to the difficulty of the construction and that buyers may not know the work this type of construction requires. Altogether, comments such as these serve the craftsperson in determining what factors to present to possible consumers alongside the final price they determine. Yet, again, it is uncertain which becomes the most important. Stressing the look while acknowledging the similarity to ceramic planters? Focusing upon the difficulty of labor? While Pricerie results in a crowd-sourced price, the craftsperson still has to determine whether the price fits, how to describe it, and whether it fulfills necessities such as labor, material costs, and general expenses.

Similarities and Differences in Approach

It is extremely important to note the differences in pricing advice that occurs via Etsy and the advice on Pricerie. Whereas Etsy offers instructions on making sure that craftspeople are conceptualizing their labor and their work simultaneously while offering tools such as equations

that craftspeople can then leverage and use with intent that is specific to their offerings, Pricerie moves all discussion of pricing processes to the objects themselves and the narrative that can be built around said objects. Moreover, Pricerie clearly removes any notion of an equation for price, positioning prices as signs with generally understood referents. While it remains to be seen if these two approaches will offer similar pricing outcomes, their focuses highlight key similarities and differences in the source of key points of valuation in handmade goods.

Similar to both Etsy and Pricerie is the narrative of the object. This narrative may be visual, such as the ability to judge quality, difficulty, or aesthetic, alongside a verbal approach. Explaining the item, the process, the materials, or the meaning results in additional facets for consumers to respond to. These are fully necessary factors to consider when selling a good: giving an option to view the item and some explanation to make sense of said item. The actual facets of either of these will vary in unclear ways depending upon the craftsperson because no specific advice is given on which factor to give more weight to, simply that they are all present simultaneously.

One of the key differences in pricing is that Etsy has an explicit component of labor as part of the valuation process, clearly demarcating it in their pricing equations. Pricerie's closest approximation to labor is their detailing of "quality" which is a category best suited to the finished product and the way it translates into photographs. The key distinction is that Pricerie's labor component only factors into the two-dimensional reading of an object and whether that appears to meet a level of ability for the craftsperson, though the appraisers are not expected nor are they required to have any experience or knowledge to determine the actual quality of an object. Etsy, while including some importance on the actual, finished product, puts forth the specific demands that making actually requires. While they are focused on the notion of an

hourly wage, they take care to highlight that this is a necessary component of any pricing scheme. The narrative of the laboring, drawing focus to uniqueness or abilities that one has, expands upon this notion and gives it legibility to the consumer, whereas Pricerie assumes a large amount of preexisting knowledge of craft, or at least that the laboring of craft is self-evident[15].

Pricing Processes of Craftspeople

While the organizations that enable craftspeople to sell their wares are a good starting point for understanding the pricing of crafts, it is important to also understand the specific ways in which craftspeople actually do their pricing. Where possible, I will note the overlaps between Etsy's advice and the actual pricing practice, and whether Etsy is given any reference as influencing. Occasional references to the factors noted in Pricerie, but because of its recency in making a dent, these will be considered as overlap and should not be assumed to be as affecting the pricing processes.

Difficulties of Pricing

Both Etsy and Pricerie explicitly note that pricing is a difficult process, which is largely the least enjoyable part of being a maker, and this is partially true. Rather, the lack of enjoyment largely stems from the lack of knowledge craftspeople have regarding the how-tos of pricing. Determining the how of pricing and identifying where one's items prices will fall is undertaken

[15] Aesthetically, this a key breaking point with more classical notions of craft and labor. It is a common narrative currently to detail that all pieces are unique and will bear the signs of slight imperfections because of the handmade process. Inversely, the narrative of craft, especially in the Arts and Crafts Movement, was not that of mass variation and slight imperfections, rather it focused upon the continual refinement of ability and aesthetic concern opposed to machinery's limitations.

to move forward in sales. While equations offer a possible avenue, they are not an end point for setting prices, because there are market realities that producers must face.

> "There are at least a dozen different formulas for pricing your work out there. And I have tried several of them. It's a matter of figuring out how much you have used in supplies… and depending on the formula you use, you uhhh double it or triple it. People who quadruple it don't, umm, figure in overhead. If you double it, then you have to figure in overhead, which includes things like the box that it's in, the mailer it's sent out in, umm, the cost of putting it up online, those kinds of things. Once I figured out the cost of the supplies, then decided what the supplies cost and I've doubled it or tripled it, then I have to figure in my time. Well, when I first started out, I started out at $10 an hour. I would like to get $20 an hour. Well, when you add $20 an hour to a pair of earrings, they get really pricey. But, so, what I do is once I've figured all of that out and I've got a price, then I look at them and say, 'What would somebody *actually* pay for them? [Emphasis in original statement]. I'm in a depressed market here in Massachusetts… If I were in New York City I could probably get that price that I've set right off the bat. But here in Massachusetts people won't pay more than $30 for a pair of earrings. I figured out that that's probably the limit. Anything that I sell that's more expensive I have sold out of this area or online. So, there's kind of a balance that I have to make between what the amount of work that I actually put into something and the value that I've placed on it and what I can actually get for it. So I usually drop the price from there." Jennifer, Jewelry

These difficulties are not completely eliminated once a system of pricing is determined, because any new item has to be figured out, from the actual time to make an item, to determining the most appropriate materials[16], attracting buyers to the new item, and so on. New items, because they are able to piggyback off the experience the craftsperson has with their prior items, do not automatically fall into a preexisting equation of pricing anew, though they do not benefit from a given equation that the craftsperson uses. Additionally, the models regularly assume that the initial price that one arrives at will be a wholesale price and needs to be adjusted for a retail price, though this can not always be achieved. Marisa, a crocheter, notes, "And then I know you're supposed to times it by two, but no one's going to spend $85 on that, so…" Thus, craftspeople are constantly having to navigate the price for their crafts on what they can feasibly

[16] This depends on either the craftsperson's abilities and their intention for the final product.

sell them for, regardless of what an equation offers.

This process is highlighted by the fact that I asked my respondents whether, when they were making a new item, if they began with a cost in mind, if it developed during the making, or whether it was determined after the fact. It was exceedingly common for my respondents to note that any determination of pricing occurred after the fact. While the prices for new types of items may fall inline with prices for their prior items, it is almost never a clear demarcation of the new items materials costing X dollars, labor taking Y hours[17], applying a uniform profit margin, and then investing time and/or money in advertising these new items to both old and new customers alike. When asked whether they would price it the same as their other items, they would say that, generally, yes but that various determinations would have to be made since it was a uniquely new item to understand, especially since they could not be certain that the amount of material and labor cost would be *recognized* by the potential consumer.

While the approach of a uniform pricing algorithm would be argued as the most logical[18] approach to pricing, thus minimizing costs associate with the time needed to determine a unique approach to pricing each time, by treating new items anew when it comes to price, even when considering prior pricing techniques, allows for craftspeople to continually consider themselves alongside their consumers around price, highlighting the relational nature of price: it is continually connected to the ties that craftspeople have to the objects and the people, potential or actual, who consume them.

Underpricing as Endemic, Redux

[17] This is to say nothing of the costs for tools if the new items require procuring additional resources.
[18] If possible, I would prefer to utilize the term "logical" in all cases lest it appear that I am referring to my respondents as using illogical modes of pricing, even though I'm using this in the sense of economics.

Much like Etsy constantly notes, craftspeople regularly state that they began their practice charging much too little for their goods.

> "I charged less when I first start out because I was not well known, um, and not as in high of demand. As time went on my time became more precious, um, it became more valuable. I think when I first started I, when I very first started I didn't charge much at all for my time and I didn't make much profit. And then I started out charging $20 with an intent of 15 of that is gonna go towards me, five of it is for overhead. Umm… but, now that I'm in full-swing, $25 is appropriate for, for right now." Kerryanne

The idea of not valuing one's time appropriately, a gloss that was regularly employed in reference to one's labor, is a key way of slowly determining that the prices need to increase. In this aspect, the cost increases are not because of changes in materials or because they are fully conceiving of ever increasing profit opportunities. A printmaker I spoke with, when discussing raising his prices, said "I think a lot of [printmakers][19] really sell themselves short." When asked how she determined that her prices needed to go up, Marisa laughed and said,

> "It did. Like, I'm getting a lot of wholesale orders now, and if I'm going to have a retail space I have to have it be competitive, um, but also not underpricing the people I'm selling wholesale orders to. So, kind of just coming to that and realizing that, 'Oh!'"

When discussing one of her items, she then mentions that she realized she needed to raise her prices because she priced one of her items off of what she would pay for them, until she received a wholesale order and

> "[I] didn't realize that she wanted them for […] $9 because that's what she's thinking is the wholesale price. And I agreed, because she's practically a second mom and I worked for her for six years, I went to her wedding, she's a great lady, but I wouldn't give anyone else that price because now, knowing, that's two hours and I'm only making nine dollars?! That's less than minimum wage in Mexico. That's, you know, that's crazy. And, that's kind of when I realized, 'You're projecting wholesale prices on your Etsy because you're the person making it and you can, but if you're selling to other stores, you have to bump it up or they're

[19] Prior to this quote, he stated that he was speaking directly on printmakers, and not crafts in general.

> going to think, 'My wholesale price is half of what she's selling it for. And, also, they don't want it to be, 'You can get it cheaper online from the maker.' You have to match their pricing, too. They don't like that. [laughs]"

This results from the craftsperson's knowledge of mass produced goods, since prices for objects for sale at corporate stores operate as a metric by which prices and value are judged, hence her initial idea of what she would pay for her own item. This pricing logic, though, does not fully account for the actual realities of production and selling, especially when diversifying the marketplaces the craftsperson is entering. It is this formulation, that wholesale price is half of retail price, that is the most uniform equation that craftspeople I spoke with would regularly have to employ and respond to, and would then have to adjust their retail price to be in accordance with that possibility.

Referential Pricing

It would be completely misleading to expect that craftspeople do not keep track of or investigate the prices of those who make similar goods as themselves. While these others would regularly be rendered as competitors in economic and business literature, the discussion is not one of competition and reducing prices to increase sales. Rather, the prices of one's peers serve as a guide for items when the craftsperson needs some information on where to even begin. Here, this is not a direct conception of one's peers or friends charging a given price for their goods, but rather a way to understand or anticipate how the marketplace one inhabits informs the prices that are more conceivable to consumers. An extreme example, Kerryanne discussed her experience at a craft fair in Salt Lake City and how different her experience was there versus her regular east coast experiences.

> Out on the east everyone seems to generally keep their print prices between $10 and $15 for 8" by 10". Umm, if they're matted they're for more. Umm, and, like,

> poster-size, like 11" by 17" or 11" by 14" prints are priced at $20 to $25, depending on how they're packaged. Umm, but like out in Salt Lake, everyone was selling them, any print for $5 to $10. So, like, automatically my whole print was undermined by, like, $5. And that really hurt a lot of sales because everyone was expecting everyone to be cheap. And if you weren't cheap, then, 'Why the hell aren't you cheap?' Umm, and they would tell, which is also startling."

Kerryanne's point here highlights the relations simultaneously between producers as well as between producers and consumers. She notes that, generally, classes of goods are within a small range, and that it is relatively agreed upon at least implicitly. This agreement, though, is noted at not universal when it the craftsperson moves to a different marketplace where a differing approach is being used. Kerryanne's "high" prices in Salt Lake are not only put into perspective by her having lower sales than her peers, but consumers are also comparing the goods, regardless of the differing content, with some specifically question her pricing process.

This point dovetails quite nicely with two understandings to market happenings. White's (2002) focus on networks results in market more generally would highlight this referential quality as tantamount and important. Kerryanne's discussion is actually a perfect example of White's argument, and the closest to actual articulating the occurrence of his networks approach, in the construction of markets for goods utilizing referential pricing. Additionally, this offers the opportunity for craftspeople to begin estimating what could possibly be a socially necessary labor time. While Marx assumes these are generally known, there is no indication from those with whom I have spoken that they have this sort of knowledge or expectation regarding craftspeople similar to themselves.

The lack of focus on competition aligns with Etsy's advising as the focus remains around some intrinsic notions of the objects themselves, even when an equation is used, rather than a focus upon a continual need to maximize sales through whatever competitive means are necessary. This community approach to pricing functions on a "rising tides raise all ships" logic

where the competitive nature of sales is deemphasized and the focus is kept on the objects. By the removing a focus upon competition between producers, this adds an additional level of importance on the other facets of price, in this case aesthetic value becomes tantamount because while other objects may be similar, they are not the same, so producers leave consumer's aesthetic preferences as an unknown, but also reduce the potential of aesthetic judgment being passed. This is not all too dissimilar to Velthuis' (2005) arguments regarding art. In the case of crafts, though, the attempt at minimizing cost differential serves for both stabilizing evaluative judgments on the aesthetics of the crafts alongside labor.

Translating Values into Price

As discussed earlier, the field of crafts operates theoretically around the amalgamation of labor, use, and aesthetics. Bringing these conceptions into a specific interview proved much more difficult than anticipated, though. While use, aesthetics, and labor were of course considered, labor proved time and again to really be the primary mode by which craftspeople made sense of their work and pricing. Aesthetics, positioned predominately as mere difference (or, uniqueness) from other crafts follows closely. Finally, asking about use as an important facet is regularly treated as something that does not appear to have been thought about. This is not to say that they are not part and parcel of the pricing process of craftspeople, it is more that once concrete[20] items are accounted for the factors of price are much less clearly applied in a price-form.

Labor Value

[20] The notion of concrete is being used very loosely here, merely to denote the possibility for a specific economic entity, such as hourly wage,

The question of labor value falls into a specific aspect of hourly wages as its clearest sign. Though, rather than a specific rate which craftspeople are paying themselves, the hourly wage is tied in reference to two points: minimum wages as well as a goal-oriented hourly wage representing what they identify their labor being worth. Since self employment has the perennial issue of straddling personal income and the wellness of the business, it creates a potentially unstable position where the craftspeople I spoke with have to decide which receives the higher importance: the business, their income, or their general preference for this work over working for someone else. This potential instability, though, was regularly straddled with an attempt to fulfill all three simultaneously. The craftspeople I spoke with treated the instability as a reality of self-employment but not necessarily one that would result in them abandoning this occupation, even though their long-term prospects for work did not incorporate an endless increase in profit. Thus, the non-economic opportunities that this work affords, makes up for the potential issues with income. This is not an altogether unsurprising finding. Juliet Schor's (2011) work on plenitude highlights that the non-economic benefits of small-scale production and self-determined labor have the opportunity to increase general happiness alongside connections into community.

An outlier in this is one of the ceramicist I spoke with. She specifically incorporates an hourly rate for herself into her prices. She calculates her time spent making at $20 an hour and her time spent physically at craft fairs at $15 an hour. She set the cost for craft fair work in case she would ever need to hire someone to work the fairs for her. When asked if she also paid herself an hourly rate for the time spent on things like bookkeeping, mailing, etc. she responded that she did not but that it was a good idea. When we were ending the interview and I asked her if she had any further questions, she thanked me for the idea to incorporate pricing of her time

spent on the organizational side of her business. This situation, of setting hourly rates for both production and sales, and then potentially for all other business related work, is surprisingly anomalous in how many of these endeavors are simply not accounted for. Her focus here was directly tied to possible futures of expansion and hiring people. One other craftsperson I spoke with referenced this as generally her approach and goal, but she did not explicitly treat her hourly rate as stable and unchangeable. Rather, she was focusing her attention as possibilities and conceptions of labor. When asked if she had hired or would hire someone, she said that she did not make enough from her work to make that feasible, and that she may not anyway. Thus, these orienting valuations of labor are unique in their delineating different work and worth different amounts, but in all of them the labor required to actually make the objects is given priority and the highest rates, in contrast to the administrative labor.

Other craftspeople have vague amounts they pay themselves hourly, but they are more goal oriented or mere approximations, with the ability to actually pay themselves varying with how their sales are doing. This may take the form of "above minimum wage" which is usually around $15 an hour, though that varies depending on how well they are doing.

While not necessarily utilizing a specific calculation of one item taking X number of hours to complete mean it costs Y dollars, there is an awareness of complexity and difficulty that factors in for some. So, while there is no direct, linear relationship in these cases between time and price, it is common for craftspeople to be aware of difficulty of making, most easily identifiable in more time spent making resulting in higher prices, though the actual influence of time is too abstracted to be able to determine any average of time equaling a specific price.

Finally, Kerryanne told me that the items she has no interest in making, for whatever reason, have higher prices to discourage many people from purchasing them so, when she does

receive an order for them, it would be worth it to her. Her current hourly wage goal of $25, which is most regularly achieved for custom order work,

> "… will vary depending on, like, if I'm very busy, I may charge more. Umm… if a project comes in that isn't something of huge interest, but, umm, would be a potential good moneymaker, it would pay what I'm willing to do it for. So sometimes I up the charge for that. Umm… I know a few artists who do that. Umm… so, that's sort of how that developed."

When asked how this different pricing is determined, she said,

> "Currently, it's stuff that I don't want to spend as much time on. I have specific business goals and directions that I want to move towards. So, when I first started doing that I would do anything could get my hands on… Nowadays, I tend to turn a lot of projects down, ummm… And focus on things that will put me in directions and get me work in that scope. I'm particularly interested in illustrating and product design, costume design on movie sets, prop design. It's a weird mishmash but it integrates in ways. Umm… so, if I get someone who comes along on Etsy that wants, you know, hand-painted ornament of their, you know… original comic character for Christmas, umm… I might charge a friend or, like… a regular client $50 minimum for that, but I might double it in that way if they're willing to pay, I'll do it. But I'm not, you know, spending time on something I'm not particularly interested in that will get me in that direction but I'm still compensated for the work I've done."

When asked whether there was anything that she simply would not make, regardless of how much she could sell it for, her response comes clearest in her point, "You couldn't pay me to be racist. [laughs]".

Another way that an hourly approach factors in is not directly in terms of a specific hourly wage, but that prices follow a logic of how much labor they estimate it should take.

> "The way I price things is… how long I think it should take me, given what it is. Because I kind of come and go with it and, um, you know sometimes I have lots of time to work on it and I can do things very quickly and they turn out. And sometimes, you know, I've got a million other things going on and, um, my hands get rusty if I don't use them all the time and it takes longer, um. So there's quite a bit of variation there." Lydia

This coming and going, of conceptualizing the labor for an object as a general length of time has a close resemblance to Marx's socially necessary labor time. Though, in this case, it is

not a notion of how long an object takes to make based upon the average of all people making said item. Rather, it highlights the ways in which the craftspeople I spoke with have general ideas of how long it takes them to make something. Rather than a socially necessary labor time, it is rather an individually necessary labor time. This adjustment is useful when dealing with the ways in which much of contemporary craft is housed within a notion of uniqueness and differentiation alongside being self-taught. Whereas Marx was discussing laboring that was easy for people to identify, because of being in settings where one could gauge how long items took to make, the craftspeople I spoke with are not in those settings. Attempts at speeding up production are not inherently connected into increasing output to result in increasing profit.

Aesthetic Value

The issue of aesthetics has a long history in the writings on crafts. Whether it is the Arts and Crafts Movement's articulation of the supremacy of handmade over machine-made or mid-century movements in studio craft which served to push craft as being on par with art (e.g. Auther 2009), these projects have maintained an emphasis on aesthetics in crafts because of the constant interaction and close connections with the rhetorics of art. These theoretical treatments, whether they come from socialist arguments about labor or art historical investigations of objects and their maker, unfortunately do not have an explicit and translation from academic thought into conceptualizations of contemporary craftspeople. In the case of contemporary crafts, the most obvious way in which aesthetics are identifiable is not as a category or class of objects or motifs but via differentiation from the objects of other craftspeople. This difference is rendered legible by the articulation of uniqueness within and between objects, often as necessarily self-evident to aid in positioning one's crafts as the result of their own design and labor. Thus, we

can see the necessary points of entry around finding one's own style and form alongside a continual rendering of the labor of craftspeople as solitary, keeping it outside of production-level crafts where uniformity, repetition, efficiency, and maximization of output reign supreme.

The notion of uniqueness functions simultaneously by identifying difference from other craftspeople, but specifically for certain classes of objects. Thus, it is not merely that a ceramicist compares their work to weavers. Rather, a ceramicist making mugs would look to another ceramicist making mugs to determine the comparability of their items and where the differences lie whether it is difficulty of form, the glaze treatments applied, the type of firing the works went through and so on. Because of this, all continual emphasis upon difference is a continual dependence upon the larger grouping of objects that craftspeople find themselves in. This network of objects and makers, again, flows from White's arguments because the market is continually expected to stem from this actual network.

Uniqueness as necessary for differentiation reigns supreme as a goal and intention for almost all of the people I interviewed. This also regularly pops up in discussions of crafts in general, that one can find just the "right" item, a push toward the chance at finding objects that perfectly fit one's utility. The necessity of looking handmade continually rears its head as a key and important feature that is also legible to consumers and other craftspeople. It is not enough for objects to be identifiable as belonging to a specific maker, but the objects must exhibit traces of the making that went into them. Where as mass production and machining aim to minimize variation and maximize uniform output, which signals quality, it is necessary in the majority of cases. As a researcher in the field, I occasionally found myself puzzling over objects that were seemingly too perfect in booths where they were also present in identical multiples. While that is the mark of a master craftsperson who has perfected their craft, the emphasis on uniqueness

and push towards items often being marked as "one of a kind" positions the uniformity as nearly out of place. An interviewee who sews toys commented upon that sort of constant uniqueness as exceedingly perplexing to her, not because of the constant barrage of difference, but because of the difficulty of constantly making everything unique. For her, the process of crafting incorporates an emphasis on uniformity because it increases her manufacturing efficiency so that the amount of labor that is required of her is minimized. As she has a full-time job besides her craft business, if she did not minimize the amount of labor necessary, she would be unable to produce the necessary amount of work that allows her to accomplish the job and career goals she has laid out for herself. This does not mean that she experienced lower sales than her contemporaries, it merely set her apart specifically regarding a type of quality because her repeatability of forms. Importantly, her case highlights that the majority of items at craft fairs take the case of one of a kind to a very broad end, where even objects that are uniform tend to utilize some aspects of difference within themselves so that consumers can find the exact one that fits their preferred aesthetic.

Use Value

Recall that one of the primary, motivating aspects of craft, for both sociology (via Becker) and craft theory (via Risatti) is that crafts are continually demarcated by their functionality, or use value, as the leading facet. Unexpectedly, though, use value turned out to be the least discussable facet of the craft objects when interviewing. Use value's lack of explicit engagement is not to say that usefulness is never thought of. Rather, I continually received the impression that usefulness was a self-evident aspect of the goods and, by extension, is part and

parcel of the identity of the goods. If asking a ceramicist focused upon functional[21] work about their objects, explicitly asking about the usefulness of the objects results in redundantly asking about the objects being considered in the pricing process. On the inverse, when dealing with crafts that are less explicitly functional, and would fall outside the realm of Risatti's (2007) arguments, such as jewelry or screen prints, their lowered functionality resulted in me needing to repeat the question to the interviewee. Regardless, this self-evident approach gives some strength to the notion of function in craft, but destabilizes its importance in the economic character of craft. As with aesthetic value, this highlights a clear distinction between a theoretical argumentation around key features of a class of objects and the quotidian nature of most crafts production operating outside more academic avenues of creation and critique.

The Rhetorical Valuing of Crafts by Consumers

While partially discussed earlier, it is important to remember that any discussion of prices is, at least partially, responsive to consumer demands and expectations. The popularity of handmade goods is growing and my sites are no exception to this. In fact, they are key examples of this. Martha Stewart Living recently began a program to highlight and award producers of handmade goods with recognition and Renegade Craft Fair received recognition for creating the marketplaces for these goods and now features Martha Stewart Living at their craft fairs[22]. Etsy's popularity has grown since its foundation, with Style.com making a call to the fashion industry to increase its ties with producers, noting that consumers are interested in small-scale

[21] In the field of ceramics, there is regularly a distinction made between ceramic work geared towards function (such as dinnerware) and non-function (such as sculpture).

[22] At the 2014 holiday shows, Martha Stewart Living partnered with Toyota, offering free screen-printed bags and other small crafts for completing a survey for Toyota and then stamping attendees with a Toyota stamp so they are able to claim the freshly screen-printed tote.

production. This emphasis follows upon the narrative of an increasingly broad consumer interest in handmade goods.

Marisa, who works full-time as a crocheter, offers a key way of understanding how a broad, public interest in craft does not automatically mean that handmade prices are treated positively in all interactions.

> "And also crochet and knitting are pretty, pretty prevalent. Like, a lot of people do it. A lot of people know how. And in a lot of cases I get people saying, 'Oh, I really like this.' And then I'll kinda hear them mumble under their breath to someone else, 'I think I can probably do that.' … So, I'm not gonna pay $50 because I can do that. But you never will, you're never going to. You have, you know, three kids and laundry to do, you're not gonna have time to sit there and crochet yourself a scarf. But you think you will! You think you will! So they don't buy. So, I think it's, it's mass production of clothing … and the delusion that you'll do it yourself."[23]

This is not to say that consumers in craft markets are uniformly distrustful of the prices, their popularity and resultantly high sales for craftspeople should highlight that consumers in these markets generally accept the prices[24]. This follows from the earlier discussion of figuring out what prices local marketplaces will bear. In this case, though, it does not result in Marisa lowering prices. As was discussed earlier, she has had to raise her prices. These moments of disrupture in the craft marketplace offer an opportunity for understanding possible consumer resistance to certain prices. During a trip to the field for Chicago's summer fair, while standing some ways from the booths, observing people moving about, two women walked over and stood near me. They began discussing some of the items they had seen. One woman pointed out a baby onesie and noted that it cost too much. To underscore her point, she mentioned that they

[23] This comment was the result of asking how her material of choice, acrylic yarn, may put an upper limit on the prices she can charge. While her discussion was prompted by the fact that consumers of crocheted/knitted goods do not value acrylic as highly as animal-based fibers, she expanded more broadly into highlighting the key way of how consumers sometimes question the goods up for sale.

[24] Though, it is important to continually recall that this is a discussion of the consumers that predominate these marketplaces and not indicative or generalizable to consumers in general.

could go to Target and purchase a pack of onesies for $5 and just paint on them themselves. Obviously, I do not know if Marisa's prediction of the consumer's questioning of prices will result in a lack of follow through, but the mumbling of prices being too high, not in general, but especially because one can do it themselves (or, think they might be able to do it themselves) underscores a specific distrust of the pricing models employed. And when labor is the predominant factor in pricing, and a reference to materials is used as to why a price is too high, it serves to highlight that the labor costs are, however unintentionally, the part of the price that is distrusted.

Conclusion

Altogether, it is a difficult topic to have a clear answer to the question, "How are crafts priced?" because it requires an awareness of the highly variable nature of pricing processes. Rather, price in contemporary craft comprises a collection of approaches and a variety of factors that are continually adjusted, altered, and utilized in differing settings. Within these approaches, craftspeople are regularly considering not only themselves and their objects, but also their consumers, where they are selling, and what the ties between each mean; in essence prices become an assemblage, highlighting the structural realities of craftspeople alongside their heterogeneous orientations and experiences.

While it may be anticipated that the discussion of money and price would potentially induce reluctance on the part of my interviewees, none of those I interviewed expressed such a reticence. This was most likely due to the fact that, upon initial contact, I noted that my project was directly interested in understanding price and value for crafts. As such, all interviewees were primed to discuss the topic. While this may have primed them to discuss it, it did not

appear to induce them to prepare potential answers. I uniformly asked about their most popular selling item and, while they could usually identify what it was, many stumbled on the exact cost, often stating a price slightly lower than the actual price (for example, saying $23 instead of $25). Thus, their discussion of their process highlights the continually uncertain and changing nature of their pricing as they figure out what works best for their occupation. These processes, of increasing the sales price of a good, would become the closest to an economistic estimation of profit maximization, the craftspeople I spoke with did not discuss their prices in such a way.

When discussing prices in general, especially for those who are self-employed, it is important to bring attention to processes such as these because they highlight a clear distinction between the ways in which prices differ depending upon type and size of business. These are important because they highlight the ways in which knowledge of business and economics comes into play and can be destabilized by the realities of business in a variety of domains, requiring a contextual knowledge as extremely important to plan for long-term viability of a business. Moreover, one must not assume that profit maximization and cost minimization are the key goals of all businesses. The non-monetary aims of business, as mentioned in Chapter 2, such as supporting one's family, being comfortable, and being happy are factors that aid in determination of the formation and maintenance of a business, which are then associated with how prices are conceptualized as craftspeople determine how their business will evolve. That their prices are concerned with the region in which they reside highlight broader communal concerns. If a higher price can be obtained online and in other marketplaces, then there would be an expectation that efforts would be made to increase sales in these additional markets. Rather, by making sure that one's prices reflect local expectations, even if these reduce profit, is a way in which the nature of crafts continually relates to community

This communal nature also performs a network structure akin to White's in that craftspeople are aware of the prices others charge and can occasionally result in a general range of prices to charge, such as the prints example, the tendency for craftspeople to underprice highlights that referential pricing is not as common or as automatic as one might expect. New sellers would be assumed to price like their competitors and, yet, they are regularly not. They position primarily as a way of navigating their own labor value, determining how much to pay themselves and being reticent to pay themselves too much, even though the basis for this is unclear. Labor is, then, time and again one of the most unstable portions in craft even though it is directly through labor that crafts exist.

Together, the difficulties that craftspeople experience in setting their prices, which would be assumed to operate in line with the organizational advising, simply does not occur in any anticipatable ways, where one can project potential prices. In essence, crafts offer a space in which the literature on cultural production breaks down primarily because the organizational and institutional settings are much sparser and weaker than they exist for other creative fields. Yet, this is also potentially due to the fact that the extant literature is consistently focused on the fields of production of the most successful and publicly salient cultural objects. Richard Peterson's (1997) study of country music, which on the surface may seem to be focused on a cultural object that is continually derided as lower class, benefits from the organizational realities and institutionalized support of country music that grew up around it. Much like the earlier discussion of entrepreneurship noted the constant issue of failure but then focuses on how businesses survive, the literature on cultural production utilizes a similar approach by focusing generally on the successful, or least identifiable, practitioners there is a clear alignment between the institutions and the creators.

Within pricing for craft, there is also a return, at least in a way, of labor being a highly central basis upon which price is formed. The labor required is not an entirely sufficient nor is it an even fully explanatory variable. Regardless, through the previous analysis, the experiences of craftspeople are continually an experience of laboring with the idea of figuring out, or at least orienting toward, an hourly wage a large concern. This makes sense primarily because working in other contexts, for other people, incorporates either an hourly wage or a salary, a number intended to somehow reflect an exchange value for one's labor. For entrepreneurial craftspeople, navigating their own businesses also involves figuring out what their labor is worth, though to themselves and not determined by another. This navigation results in a major emphasis of all individual prices for goods being reflective at least partially of the labor involved more generally. And while there is no universal basis across these interviews, either within specific craft specialty or within one's level of experience, it still offers an opportunity for reflecting upon the importance of labor value as central to price in certain occupational contexts.

Unlike other studies, this study specifically looked to a more general population of craftspeople, specifically eschewing the formal professional organizations, to get at a more general way in which craftspeople approach selling. Even then, by sampling from Renegade for one set of craftspeople, a certain amount of success was already built in, potentially drawing craftspeople whose businesses and prices are more stable and certain than craftspeople who are just coming to selling and barely determining their prices. Regardless, those craftspeople I spoke with are operating outside of those more formal sectors and are having to operate their businesses with much less formal support, validation, and valuation than those who are more closely aligned with the fine craft world that is predominately gallery focused. The instability of price is, then, not surprising because the focus is on those currently making their way through the

craft world, not looking backward at those whose businesses survived through it to make a name for themselves.

CHAPTER 4

Novel Consumption Spaces: Craft Fairs and Consumption in Temporary Markets

The consumption of craft represents an important and growing facet of the economy. While specific numbers are difficult to identify for the craft industry overall, a report on western North Carolina estimates that the crafts industry alone brings in approximately $206,533,599 to the region's economy (Stoddard, Davé, and Evans 2008). Etsy saw approximately $895 million worth of goods sold in 2012, up from about $458 million in 2011. For in-person craft fairs, total sales of crafts rose from "$85 million in 1965 and… have surpassed $2 billion in 1980" (Neapolitan 1986). In 1981, the Northeast Craft Fair at Rhinebeck saw sales that approached $5,000,000 (Warren 2014). Undoubtedly, the billions of dollars within craft writ large signals that this class of objects is of importance as a facet of broader economies, be they local, regional, or national.

The goal of this chapter is to consider craft fairs as potentially emblematic of the larger whole or rising craft economy, and to investigate them as places of consumption. However, I do not consider the aggregate statistics of crafts to make an argument about the economics of craft. Rather, using ethnographic field observation and interviews, I examine how the spaces of craft fairs facilitate economic action and interaction. In particular I draw from Geertz's (1978) work on the bazaar and compare craft fairs and bazaars in terms of the information search for consumers and the dynamics of clientship in consumption. I also draw on a body of scholarship in economic sociology (Bandelj 2012, Wherry 2014, Zelizer 2013), which emphasizes the importance of social relations in economic behavior. While most of this scholarship has focused on places of production and exchange, I apply its insights to what I am referring to as *novel*

spaces of consumption, such as craft fairs, which are marketplaces that are temporary and variable. In particular, I take on a challenge that the spatial organization of craft fairs produces for consumption compared to more traditional space, which is the fact that these fairs are not stable marketplaces, they do not convene in the same places, they do not automatically involve the same sellers and buyers consistently, and involve large crowds. Given all this, they present seemingly anonymous and asocial spaces where sellers and buyers meet to foster consumption as mere economic exchange of money for goods. As such, craft fairs seem ideal for market spot transactions that the economics literature describes as the basis of markets. Is that so?

Crafts and Craft Fairs

Fairs, as a space for displaying, judging, and consuming cultural objects is nothing new. In fact, they have served as a central site of cultural consecration alongside facilitating consumption in ways distinct from everyday consumption (Moeran and Pedersen 2011). Craft fairs run a varying gamut, and the nomenclature varies as well with some utilizing "show" rather than "fair," such as the American Craft Council's Craft Shows. Regardless of this, fairs are integral. Moeran and Pedersen (2011) highlight that fairs, beyond merely being spaces for the exchange of goods for money, are centrally tied to entertainment, interaction, and symbolic delineations of identity and group membership. For crafts, fairs additionally have a long history, with the fair serving as a place for bringing goods to market and navigating their value alongside consumer response (Lampel 2011).

While modern fairs may operate identically to those prior to the Industrial Revolution, they still operate as spaces of legitimation. As Paulsen and Staggs (2005) have shown county fairs are a key site for understanding craft production and display, especially by highlighting how the broader organizational setting can be quite limiting. "By prioritizing adherence to

established categories and rules, judges, clerks and other fair staff constrain certain types of creative expression or interpretation" (144). As they note, this does not negate creativity, rather it merely results in specific limitations being put into place which guarantees legibility. While Harmony Hammonds rugs, far from being useful or even soft underfoot, are able to claim being craft even in an art gallery context (Bryan-Wilson 2009), it would be unlikely for them to be accepted as rugs at a county fair, highlighting the contextual nature of categorization for craft objects.

Fairs are additionally important beyond simply an opportunity for being around others for the purposes of consumption. Murphy (2015) highlights that fairs are also thoroughly embedded within quotidian politics. Through his study of Swedish design, Murphy points to how design fairs are part of a broader institution, including exhibitions, museums, and show rooms (such as Ikea) "rely on a certain kind of embodied experience to present Swedish design persuasively as a resonant cultural category" (204). Craft fairs are much of the same: oriented toward legitimizing a specific object of cultural production, crafts, while also heavily focused upon the centrality of experience. While Etsy posting will regularly incorporate sensory descriptions, they simply do not compare in any which way to the realities of fairs. A written description requires the reader to interpret based upon past experience, inherently building off the reader's prior experiences. Craft fairs, while the term may evoke memories, create their own experiences, offering attendees to have direct connection with crafts. And like the furniture fair Murphy discusses, craft fairs are also "firmly set in the *present*—though they ride on a current of forward momentum" (203, emphasis in the original), because consumers can directly touch the crafts. This importance becomes all the more important when considering the material reality of crafts.

Recall that, while often kept separate, the fields of arts and crafts[25] are, actually, closely related. The key distinction for arts and crafts in sociology, as outlined by Becker (1982), often comes down to differing organizational processes. Crafts themselves begin with a history of the knowledge of doing. Modes of creation, techniques, and preexisting processes of organizational structures surround crafts, dictating that, at their core, they serve largely as functional objects. Functional in this sense that crafts are intended to be objects that are used (such as a quilt is for warmth or covering a bed, a bookcase to hold books and other objects, ceramic vessels to carry food, a knitted scarf for warmth, and so on) (Risatti 2007). Aesthetic conceptions of beauty, when present, exist for handcrafted goods within the distinction of master craftspeople whose work is deemed the highest possible expression of craft because of their unique skill set of mastery is also an expression of aesthetics, with lowered levels of aesthetic reverence for younger or more inexperienced craftspeople. In contrast, for a handcrafted object to be conceived of as art, a devaluing process of the usefulness of the object must occur or else it remains a craft. To attain full status as a work of art, the craft's use must be completely removed. Throughout this, though, Becker continually embeds these discussions within the collective process by which craft is produced and received as having the primary place of importance in determining what is and what is not in a certain category. While "usefulness" is a given an importance, it is secondary to how the broader collectivity define what is a craft. One of the predominate places in which this determination occurs is within markets.

In the process of defining craft, craft fairs contain objects that qualify as craft primarily because these markets exist for moving craft from producers to consumers. For Becker, this is because of the organizational structure in place through which part of the collective activity

[25] This is somewhat distinct from recent arguments regarding craft, primarily as a verb form, where the focus is moved away from objects and toward issues of the processes of mastery regardless of context (cf. Sennett 2009)

operates. While Risatti's (2007) strong, theoretical argument about the specific facets of that can be called craft, most of the objects for sale at craft fairs do fit into one of his three categories. Beyond this, though, the specific importance of craft fairs in facilitating the production and consumption of crafts is not largely known. While this short, conceptual review of craft does not delve fully into the debates surrounding craft more generally, it offers a useful reminder into contextualizing the spaces in which crafts are sold, especially the craft fair.

Basirico (1986) offers one of the few discussions of craftspeople and craft fairs. Basirico's key insight is that there are three types of sellers at art and craft fairs. The first group of people is those who only participate in the fairs as sellers for a short period, merely as part of the process of professionalization. Once they have become professional, they stop participating in the fairs and predominately engage in direct sales. The second group is those who see art and craft fairs primarily as a means to staying in contact with others and the broader field, though they primarily operate outside of fairs. Those in this category do not locate their participation as a means to obtaining or maintaining professional status. The last category is comprised of those who sell only through the fairs and in no other venues (as in they do not take on custom work orders). Varying strategies of participation in craft fairs highlights how this influences decisions of craftspeople regarding the objects to produce: those who see it as a short-term process toward professional attainment move away from making small, simple, affordable pieces that are easily transported to relying upon custom order work. Those who stay engaged even when attaining professional autonomy rely upon both custom work as well as small pieces more easily sold at the fair. And those who only sell at fairs do not tend to take on custom work. Thus, while the objects at the fairs may be somewhat similar, these are connected into the broader systems of production around craft objects. Basirico's arguments are useful because they give a typology of

how craftspeople orient to craft fairs, though it has minimal to say in relation to consumers, other than how consumers fit into the orientation of craftspeople, such as those who go for community and not necessarily for sales. Generally, this typology is useful but is not completely applicable to the current setting. For one thing, the original research is from a pre-internet time, and the common ways for craft sales were at craft fairs or directly from homes or shops. As I have noted above, the craftspeople selling at fairs, also maintain online stores, and some also sell in brick and mortar stores. The current diversification of marketplaces for selling offers additional opportunities that exist that simply were not as easily available before.

While Basirico (1986) provides a categorization of sellers who participate in fairs, Hibbert and Tagg (2001) focus on consumers at craft fairs, and their motivations to attend. These authors find that craft fair consumers tend to be there for four main goals: to purchase gifts for others, to purchase for self, for the atmosphere of the fair, and to participate in a space that facilitates experiencing and exploring of crafts[26] or creativity. Importantly, Hibbert and Tagg are noting that these spaces are not merely spaces for the simple procurement of objects. Rather, individuals who visit craft fairs have multiple motives that exist in addition to consuming, and they may be attending even without explicit intentions of consuming. They offer this is a way understand the disjuncture between one's shopping goals (i.e. what they intend to consume) and their actual shopping behaviors (whether they purchase their intentions, additional items, or nothing at all). Hibbert and Tagg highlight that consumers may enter marketplaces without an intention to consume but for an overarching, experiential goal, with a key space for understanding. Interactions between producer and consumer are a key factor they note, highlighting that in their study some craftspeople did not fully appreciate the non-consumptive

[26] Consumers for them are not in the process of making crafts in these spaces, they are able to discuss and experience the crafts first-hand as they peruse the differing objects and converse with the craftspeople.

oriented interests of consumers and did not engage their audience as fully as the audience would have liked. Altogether, while Hibbert and Tagg are primarily interested in consumptive behavior in a marketplace, their focus on craft fairs offers a key way to understand the economic oriented behavior (consumption) and non-economic oriented behavior (interaction and experience). Together, these aspects highlight the importance for understanding craft fairs more fully, especially in relation to consumption, because they exist as extremely social spaces beyond mere economic actions.

The Spatiality of Consumption

The spaces of consumption serve as a key component in the sociological understandings of consumption, albeit with a somewhat limited exploration of what exactly the concept of space is. Michel de Certeau (1984) offers a definition of what, exactly, space should be conceived of, especially as distinct from place. As his broader concern is the everyday, or the generally quotidian nature of life, it functions as especially fruitful for understanding consumption practices. Because of this, it is fruitful to quote him at length.

> "A space exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities… In short, *space is a practiced place*." (p. 117, emphasis in the original)

de Certeau's argument about what constitutes space offers a thoroughly social understanding, that one must take into account that movement is the key component which produces space. This distinction of space from place aids in identifying the nature of consumption in markets because, rather than merely noting that consumption happens in an

amorphous "there," it positions the necessity of understanding all what occurs there that makes it what it is. Marketplaces alongside other arenas of life have their own processes that make them they are as distinct from other places. Gieryn (2000) asks, "If place matters for social life and historical change - how?" and notes that this includes "arranges patterns of face-to-face interaction that constitute network-formation and collective action" (473). Thus, a sociology of space is fully ensconced in discussions of interaction, any interaction, because it facilitates and frames the social relations. Thus, the spaces of craft consumption are tied to the ways the space may facilitate, or even hinder, the interactions between producer and consumer, especially as those interactions occur beyond merely procuring ends.

Geertz's (1978) bazaar highlights consumption in space, albeit in a somewhat less obvious manner, specifically regarding information scarcity.

> "To start with a dictum: in the bazaar information is poor, scarce, maldistributed, inefficiently communicated, and intensely valued. Neither the rich concreteness or reliable knowledge that the ritualized character of nonmarket economies makes possible, nor the elaborate mechanisms for information generation and transfer upon which industrial ones depend, are found in the bazaar: neither ceremonial distribution nor advertising; neither prescribed exchange partners nor product standardization. The level of ignorance about everything from product quality and going prices to market possibilities and production costs is very high, and much of the way in which the bazaar functions can be interpreted as an attempt to reduce such ignorance for someone, increase it for someone, or defend someone against it." (Geertz 1978:29)

While Geertz is not explicitly referencing the space of the bazaar, the nature of this description is highly contingent on the physical layout of the space. The interactional idea of knowledge, discerning quality of a seller's good, comparing prices between seller's, location of specific types of goods, and so on are, of course, of prime importance. The physicality of the space is made possible by being inhabited by buyers and sellers. And through this, an understanding and knowledge of the space more generally is also imbricated because consumers

must navigate the bazaar to gather information and make connections with sellers, goods, and others. To understand a marketplace, one should then understand how people inhabit it. Consumption may be one of the most quotidian acts in the modern era, largely considering the rampant growth in consumption commonly referred to as the consumer revolution (McCracken 1990).

The occurrence of this revolution has been a focus of various literatures. In sociology, Zukin and Maguire's (2004) overview highlights that research has situated much of the evolution of the importance of consumption as occurring not only because of social structural changes and media, but also by highlighting how consumption can function simultaneously to demarcate individual identity alongside collective identity. These latter areas pull understandings of consumption away from a focus purely on the processes of production, where consumption is often treated as naturally mirroring on the other end, and into an emphasis on the ways in which individuals use consumption for their ends and have power in the process. This is an important adjustment because, as Zelizer (2005) argues, consumption is an inherently relational process that is not the simple outcome of, or response to, production. For Zelizer, consumption incorporates "the negotiation of meaning, the transformation of relations in the course of economic interaction, and the social process of valuation itself" (351). Because of this, consumption is not merely an "economic transaction" but a cultural one. This means it is not merely focused upon utility maximization but it is also concerned with meaning that consumers attach to their consumption practices, the meanings generated by consuming, and symbolic nature of what is consumed beyond wants and needs.

In this vein, Daniel Miller (1998), highlights how the process of consuming contains within it a "normative expectation that most shoppers will subordinate their personal desires to a

concern for others, and that this will be implicitly legitimated as love" (40). Herein, Miller highlights that the process of procuring provisions is consistently thought of as symbolic of the love that a mother has for family and notes that this is distinct from other forms of shopping, such as that which occurs in malls. Frederick Wherry (2008) brings focus to artisan economies by noting that histories in which certain countries have been labeled as "backward" reduce the perceived authenticity of the goods within these markets, and the ways in which tourists and others come to consume within them. Altogether, these studies provide a sociological understand of consumption by noting the ways in which extra-market factors inform experiences of the markets themselves. However, they pay less attention to how the actual spaces of consumption themselves may influence consumption and the role of sociality in it.

Gregson, Crowe, and Brooks (2002) push forth the idea that investigations of consumption need to attend to the fact that the space of shopping is not merely contingent upon a given space, but that all spaces are in relation to other spaces of consumption. This allows for understanding that the manner of consumption is contingent upon the space in which people find themselves, especially as practiced. The experiential component of shopping is tied to varying engagements with the shop space itself, and how these engagements are tied to the processes of consumption in other spaces, the purposes for consumption, and one's prior experiences with shopping more generally (Crewe 2003). This has also aided in moving studies away from spaces that are traditionally associated with the idea of consumption, such as malls, toward a broader conceptualization of the full range of consumptive practices, their attendant locales, and the relations between location, communities, identities, politics, and the like (Jayne 2006). The processes of consumption within a given space are not merely related to one's ability to purchase the goods for sale. Consumers also find themselves negotiating the space in relation to their

feelings of inclusion and exclusion, largely related to the organization of the space and how it enables or constrains their ability to determine whether anything is being sold that they are interested in alongside non-shopping related access, such as whether they feel as if they are able to use the restroom even if they do not purchase anything (Williams, Hubbard, Clark, and Berkeley 2001).

As is detailed in the next section, while this project is focused on specific set of craft fairs, Renegade, these fairs occur in five, major American cities. This leads to the necessity of considering the ways in which the larger city may be influential. Because of the locations in question, and the predominant places where the fairs occur, a mention on gentrified neighborhoods is especially useful. Bridge and Dowling (2001) point to the ways in which gentrified neighborhoods elicit consumption tied to the new middle class, alongside a consumption oriented toward "individualised rather than mass consumption" (105). Together, these understandings of the nature of craft alongside the processes of the spatiality of consumption lead to investigating craft fairs as consumption spaces, which do not benefit from the stability of traditional consumption spaces.

Theoretically, the geographic approach to consumption, predominately stemming from cultural geography, dovetails quite nicely with the push toward relational and cultural understandings of economic action arising in sociology. The approaches put emphasis on focusing on actions and interactions within markets as thoroughly cultural and undeniably social above and beyond the procurement of goods. Zelizer's (2013) work brings focus on the relational nature of all economic activity, of which consumption is thoroughly included.

> "In brief, in all economic action, I argue, people engage in the process of differentiating meaningful social relations. For each distinct category of social relations, people erect a boundary, mark the boundary by means of names and practices, establish a set of distinctive understandings that operate within that

> boundary, designate certain sorts of economic transactions as appropriate for the relation, bar other transactions as inappropriate, and adopt certain media for reckoning and facilitating economic transactions within the relation. I call that process relational work." (146)

Zelizer's attention brings us to the continually social nature of economic action and reminds us to continually conceptualize the relations between actors alongside the ties they form. Zelizer's call is to move beyond the firm, so privileged in sociological analysis, and into a broader conception of economic activity: consumption, households, gifts, and so on. Bandelj (2012) reminds us that "*relational work will be more prominent and elaborate in economic situations that are more uncertain and ambiguous*. This is because such situations are less scripted, less standardized, and more open-ended" (185, emphasis in the original). Even in these unscripted moments, the behavior of actors is still strongly imbued with their personal experiences, their histories, and meaningful, even when they are not consciously construed as so (Wherry 2014).

Thus, not only must the sites of consumption be included in the analysis of consumption as a cultural practice, but also the temporality of the space is especially illuminating for economic practices, because the often scripted nature of economic behavior and consumption is potentially changed when encountering a novel space of consumption. Craft fairs, due to their regularly short appearances and ever shifting nature serve as strategic research sites for this agenda.

The Sites of Consumption: The Ethnography of Renegade Craft Fairs

Where, though, do we situate the contemporary craft fair as a marketplace? It does not contain the history of the Wherry's artisan economies, though the items for sale, at least materially, may be similar. It does not have the corporate longevity of Miller's brick-and-mortar

stores. Much like Geertz's (1978) bazaar, "the empirical situation is extremely complex" (29). I use here the case of Renegade Craft Fairs as illustrative of broader experiences of craft fairs, not only because of these fairs' growing popularity, but also because craftspeople sell at a variety of fairs. Because of this, drawing from Renegade offers insights into consumption at craft fairs more generally.

This chapter draws from a combination of the ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the craft fairs alongside the interviews with craftspeople who have sold at Renegade. This allows for understanding the spaces themselves generally and the position of the sellers in the fairs specifically.

Craft Fairs as Market Spaces

Since the primary focus of this chapter is on Renegade Craft Fairs, it may be useful to review them a bit. Renegade are markets where physical goods are exchanged face-to-face between consumer and producer/seller (or, occasionally, a producer's close acquaintance such as a romantic partner, a parent, a friend, or another producer with whom they are sharing the space). Sellers are predominately white women (though sellers are not entirely homogenous, with sellers of color and men as well), while consumers are more heterogeneous, with a broader representation of races and genders (though there tend to be more women than men consuming in this space, in line with consumption of goods generally). The Fairs themselves, far from being permanent spaces, are held in 5[27] US cities twice a year: Austin, Brooklyn, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. The first set of fairs are the Summer Fairs which occur between May and September and the second set are the Winter/Holiday Fairs which occur between

[27] At the time of the data collection, Renegade was in 5 cities. They have since expanded.

November and December. Each fair lasts two days, usually for no more than 8 hours at a time. Depending on the city and the time of year, the fairs themselves vary depending on whether they are held indoors or outdoors as well as the type of building in which they are held. While at any particular fair, the consumers are predominately from the surrounding areas, the producer's locations of origin are much more varied. Many of them are local as Renegade puts emphasis on the importance of local consumption. There is much representation at each stop from throughout the broader US, though it appears to generally be regional with those from the surrounding cities and states being predominant, and the occasional international seller (almost entirely Canadian).

Returning to a point made earlier in the paper, that over 50,000 consumers attended the Chicago summer fair over a two-day period, an observation from my ethnographic fieldwork may hit home the sheer volume of consumers in relation to the spaces of these fair. At the Chicago winter fair in 2012, the mass of people who were buying was extremely dense with one seller joking with a consumer that, "As long as the fire marshal doesn't come in, we're all right." Though, not everyone in the space was pleased with the sheer difficulty of attempting to move through the space. Two consumers who were attempting to shop together decided that it was too difficult. The woman commented, "I want to look at everything" to which the man she was with responded "Me, too. I can't see anything." In return, the woman said, "Yeah, this is pointless" at which point they both immediately walked out of that room. As it was too difficult to attempt to follow them without pushing by people, I slowly moved on and, within a few minutes, overheard another person comment, "I gotta get out of this room" as they referenced the entry/exit. These attendees of the fair seem to have left that area of the craft fair before they made any purchases, which points to a clear way how physical organization of market space, once inhabited with consumers, influences consumption to the point of potentially curtailing it.

From Bazaars to Fairs: Novelty and a Lack of Information

These same features that are endemic to bazaars are a major feature of craft fairs. This can primarily be situated within the realm of these craft fairs being marketplaces that are inherently novel. Whereas most research on consumption focuses upon marketplaces that are stable such as brick-and-mortar stores, online retailers, and bazaars, craft fairs have none of the stability of these. Each craft fair presents consumers with a brand new set of information that they must evaluate, with consumers having little knowledge beforehand of the marketplace they will be entering. Many factors relate to this continual ignorance from fair to fair and from year to year. The sellers who will be at each location is not publicly known until shortly before the fair itself, with Renegade announcing the lists approximately 3 to 6 weeks before the fairs themselves. In fact, this temporality is central to the reality of fairs, as their short term nature is a defining feature (Moeran and Pedersen 2011), predicated upon a variation from event to event. Because of this, knowledge of the fair, objects for consumption, and sellers more generally becomes inherently destabilized, which is distinct when comparing to brick-and-mortar stores, bazaars, and online retailers.

The primary reason for the list of sellers being published is linked to the fact that the fairs themselves are juried. This booth cost includes advertisement by Renegade, but all vendors are required to supply their own display setups, including tables and chairs, or they can rent them for an additional fee directly from Renegade. The exact process of jurying is not publicly known. Sellers I spoke with who had participated in multiple Renegades prior still had the potential for not being accepted at later fairs, regardless of their potential popularity or rapport with Renegade itself. These jurying processes did not appear to be a source of annoyance, however, and

appeared to be an understood barrier to selling. While the exact process of jurying is unknown, Renegade notes the necessity of uniqueness and diversity (jewelry being a category that has many applicants, so is difficult to be accepted) in what one makes. Additionally, sellers who have attended before are expected to explain how they have progressed, grown, and changed since their previous attendance. The majority of the sellers I interviewed who had sold at Renegade, participated multiple times, and regularly expressed interest in continuing to sell at Renegade, both for the economic boon it offered as well as being a social setting they enjoyed participating in.

The sellers know ahead of time whether they have been accepted or not. For the 2014 Brooklyn fair, applications were accepted from January 31st through February 21st, with all sellers receiving a notification of their acceptance or rejection by February 27th. This list appears to change, though, since sellers are able to decline participation, which may be one reason that Renegade does not announce the full list for some months. One seller I interviewed told me that for one fair she had been rejected but was later added to the list of sellers, quite probably due to someone else having to back out, though she was never told why and she did not explicitly ask. Ostensibly, these adjustments, changes, and replacements are done before the public is made aware of who the possible sellers could be[28]. Even then, what is made publicly available is a webpage of logos, each made active with a web link to each seller's online presence (some of which are less than informative, though most have at least some basic,

[28] Accepted sellers can cancel participation up to one month before the fair and still receive their booth fee minus the jurying fee of $25, after which they can be refunded 50% if it is still two weeks until the fair. Anything less than two weeks before results in the seller forfeiting the full booth fees. The lists of sellers displayed on Renegade's site do not seem to change regularly, so it appears that they attempt to announce the sellers once the first deadline is near/passes, thereby minimizing the probability of sellers backing out after they have been announced as participating.

descriptive information regarding the seller and their wares)[29]. While these links offer the opportunity for would be consumers to plan their consumption before heading to the fair, it is unclear whether this is actually the case. To say nothing of the extremely time consuming process of going to each seller's webpage[30], the craft fairs themselves are full of consumers who are continually looking from booth to booth to identify items for sale. Rather than merely search behavior wherein consumers are looking to purchase predetermined items of interest, the search behavior of consumers at these craft fairs appear to function primarily as a process of data gathering, attempting to more fully identify what items are available for purchase and whether these items fit within a certain need or want, whether that need or want was determined prior to the fair is largely unknowable, though the holiday/winter shows do have many consumers verbalizing the potential for various items as gifts. These observations would differ from what we would expect if we assumed that consumers at craft fairs were attempting to minimize their search cost. Utilizing the advertised sellers on Renegade's webpage would save consumers much time and effort in determining what items, if any, at the fairs would warrant them attending the fair and purchasing any items. The simple fact that consumers regularly move from booth to booth, looking at all of the wares for sale highlights that they have not attempted to reduce their search cost, so that from this point of view at least, their consumption behavior does not aim at efficiency. This follows along with Hibbert and Tagg's (2010) points about the noneconomic facets of craft fair consumption. Renegade highlights that consumers are continually engaging with the space in ways that are oriented in multiple ways and not merely concerned with

[29] Additionally, while sellers often have a name that is indicative of what they make, or at least use a photo of an item they make, some sellers use names and images that are not indicative of the items they make, thereby requiring would-be planners to go to every site to have an inkling of what will be completely on offer.

[30] It is unclear how much consumers actually explore the listings before the fair, if at all. Renegade has included a request for those on their list-serv to complete a survey, which includes a question on whether this is something they do.

procuring an item that fits some predetermined intention. If this were so, consumers would not continually be moving booth to booth, regularly perusing, looking, and touching items for sale but would be more prone to satisficing when they found an item that was good enough so they could subsequently reduce the amount of search necessary. While at the craft fairs, I regularly overheard consumers talking about items they saw at other booths, comparing and contrasting the crafts they were looking at. Oftentimes, the phrase "I'll be back" was stated to the craftspeople, intending to look further on but that they would be returning to purchase later. Even when they were not intending to purchase that day, consumers regularly asked for a business card and whether they sell online, as a signal that they would be purchasing later. While this could be assumed to merely be an exercise in attempting to deflect that they were not actually interested in purchasing items right then, those I interviewed noted that they regularly sold items online after craft fairs to people who had taken their cards, or even to their friends who referred them through those business cards. This highlights that the idea of "search cost" as being oriented to a short-term end is not necessarily useful when discussing a specific marketplace. The type of information being gathered becomes useful for later consumption as well as an opportunity for adding to existing ties, bringing a craftsperson to a friend or family member's attention because they may be interested in that specific work.

The Difficulties of Movement

To return to an earlier point, the lack of information is a key highlight of the ways in which consumption exhibits and entails one major barrier. This finds a strong expression in that movement is regularly curtailed, though this does not seem to be a deterrent to the strong majority of the people there to shop. In fact, the desire to shop seemed to overtake any concerns

for the space or the crowd. Continually, I would find myself at an impasse, unable to move in any direction, as a swirling mass of people walked, shoved, and slid around. As my initial concern during fieldwork was always to be as unobtrusive as possible, I made sure that I minimized any possibility of me having to push past a person as I walked through the spaces. This became a detriment in some cases as I would often be shunted to the side, holding up people behind me as I waited for others to move around me in the space. As my focus was not directly on consuming in these spaces, my approach to movement was at odds with the rest of the fair attendees who seemed to be much less concerned with the space they were taking up and whether their movements impeded or affected other attendees.

The awareness of movement in the space was also accompanied by a variety of moments wherein consumers were more concerned about seeing what was for sale than they were about their inhabiting of the space and those around them. This occurrence made its largest most prominent appearance for me in fieldnotes in two places because they also included extremely vivid memories. Both times were in relation to people pushing strollers through the crowds. While strollers at Renegade would often begin as enabling the wheeling of children around, most strollers ended up as de facto shopping carts, with the parents carrying their children or their children walking alongside and looking at the crafts. This is not entirely surprising. The mass of sites, sounds, crowds, and objects around are obviously just as interesting to children as they are to their parents, though possibly for other reasons. Children not being in their strollers never appeared to occur because parents wanted to use them as carts, but rather children would squirm, whine, make noise, or simply request to get out of the stroller and join their parents in looking around and moving through the fair.

Once the strollers became shopping carts, there was often very little concern for where

they were heading or whether the stroller would potentially run into people or tables. As one woman commented to the man that she was with at the San Francisco holiday fair, "Don't you think when you get this far back that you'd be, 'this is too crowded, I need to get out of here with my fucking stroller?'" In a similar situation during the Chicago holiday fair, a man, who seemed to be separated from his children, was pushing a doublewide stroller entered into one area directly behind me and kept pace with me throughout. As we both moved around looking at all of the tables, slowly making our way around the room, he would continually stop paying attention to what was in front of him and, whenever I had to stop abruptly or simply stop walking because of a person in front of me, he would accidentally ram his strolled directly into my achilles tendon. At no point did he apologize, he would sometimes pull it back slightly, and other times simply hold it in place until I moved forward. Every time it occurred, I would look behind me and he would be looking at what was on the table in front of him, seemingly unconcerned with what his stroller was striking.

These examples highlight how the zeal to gather information about what is for sale, alongside the intense popularity of this marketplace resulting in extreme crowding, results in behaviors wherein consumers are completely unconcerned with others around them. The behaviors in these spaces take on a flavor more akin to the release of limited edition items or extreme discounting, such as that during Black Friday, both of which are atypical of regular consumptive behavior more generally.

From Bazaars to Fairs: Clientship and Bargaining

While craft fairs fit within Geertz's (1978) articulation of the bazaar regarding information, they are largely distinct along the two major axes Geertz proposes as being of

primary importance at bazaars: clientship and bargaining. Clientship for Geertz is the idea that buyers and sellers enter into patterned relationships, whereby the seller relies upon building a steady and reliable clientele who repeatedly purchases from them. In turn, sellers come to rely upon the buyer to offer the items that they need when they need them. In the bazaar, the process of clientship aids in the reduction of search cost: sellers are able to determine which buyers are most likely to purchase from them while buyers are able to reduce search costs by not needing to continually compare the cost of items from one seller with those of another.

The first barrier to clientship forming, at least in terms of purchasing at the craft fair itself, is that from fair to fair, even in the same city, the sellers vary widely and are constantly and consistently changing. This instability in terms of sellers and, in turn, objects for sale, stem primarily from Renegade's interest in offering a marketplace that is predicated upon uniqueness and newness, both between sellers as well as with specific sellers over time. As Renegade notes, sellers should offer "innovative and original items produced using traditional craft methods but not based on any pre-existing patterns or products" and also that those who have sold or applied in the past have "progressed since participating in or applying to past fairs. We're looking to see whether or not you've produced new items or designs, so we can keep the Fair fresh and exciting year in and year out for shoppers" (Renegade Craft Fair 2013). Altogether, the inability to regularly attend a fair since each city has them for 4[31] days a year, the fact that sellers regularly change from one event to the next, and the products that are available are continually pushed to be new and unique creates a massive barrier for consumers to create or maintain clientship specifically at the Renegade Craft Fairs[32].

[31] For 2014, Renegade Craft Fair joined forces with the South by Southwest festival in Austin and had three-day fair during SXSW.

[32] This is not to say that clientship does not occur. Simply that clientship could, at best, have an initial contact at the

This is not an entirely unsurprisingly situation in terms of craft fairs. As Hibbert and Tagg (2001) argue in their study of the purchasing behavior of craft fair consumers, there is largely no habitual behavior, of which clientship would be one. This is primarily due to the fairs being short-term events that vary not only from fair to fair, but even the same fairs differ year to year. In comparison to the more common consumer spaces in which the average, US consumer finds themselves, such as supermarkets or clothing stores, and in relation to bazaars, consumer behavior at craft fairs is largely distinct.

Thus, clientship for contemporary crafts is not tied to any specific craft fair itself. Rather, sellers and buyers build patterned relationships across different consumption spaces. Craftspeople reported to me that they have repeat customers, but that these customers are not tied to one location of consumption. The customers regularly move from fair to fair, online to offline and back again, with the craftsperson. This is managed by craftspeople through maintaining mailing lists (almost always electronic) where they are able to announce any upcoming events that they will be selling at. Sellers I interviewed also maintain an online marketplace, which allows them to sell year round, rather than requiring them to rely solely upon in-person sales. And while the interaction between consumer and craftsperson increases the potential for a sale, these sales are not always tied to the craft fair itself. Sellers report that consumers ask for business cards and whether they sell online so that they can purchase certain items at a later date, either because they have already reached their maximum they anticipated spending on that day or, during the holidays, the buyer may be considering a purchase for themselves that they are delaying until their broad gift purchasing is completed. Even when buyers do not explicitly mention to the craftsperson that they will be buying at a later date, they do receive emails from

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fairs but would most likely rely upon other marketplaces to be able to function for any discernible amount of time.

people who first saw their goods at one of the fairs. For contemporary craftspeople, their maintenance of clientship relies upon not merely a relationship with consumers at a given market but simultaneously on maintaining, primarily electronically, multiple modes of accessibility for their consumers that support nurturing such relationships, including updating consumers about their attendance at upcoming fairs. Technological devices of electronic communication enhance the social relations that are formed in craft markets. Augmented by the ability to purchase goods online, alongside the nearly universal opportunity to use mobile monies technologies, with Square being the most commonly used, to buy goods at fairs, these technologies are continually tied into the systems of exchange and interaction. One jeweler I met at the fair noted that when consumers pay with cards, she charges tax but if the consumer uses cash, she "eats" the tax. The charging of tax allows for offsetting the fees involved in using mobile money technology. It also offers the opportunity for turning a simple discussion of payment type into something the craftsperson can use to their advantage. By offering these different options, one of which reduces the expense for the consumer, the craftsperson is able to illustrate this difference not as merely an additional expense for them (mobile monies) but as a way that they are offering a sort of discount or gift to the consumer ("eating the tax"). This goes along with what we know about the importance of technology in shaping economic interaction, in this case the leveraging of sales tax as corresponding to the expenses of technology. These technologies can also participatory in the creation of the price by determining what the actual sales price is. They also offer an opportunity for potentially making repeated, meaningful connections so that spot-transactions can become repeat transactions replete with meaning.

Beyond clientship, Geertz's emphasis on the importance of bargaining is an extremely subtle practice at the craft fairs. Not one instance of bargaining was observed across any of the

fairs, though interviews with sellers confirm that it does happen. Posted prices are largely treated as final prices and, as such, consumers look for objects that fit within their budget rather than aiming to get objects of want to fit within their budget.

Explicit bargaining also appears to be something that most sellers are less than happy with. One seller, a print maker, told me that "it's kind of obnoxious, I think, for people to ask for discounts" and then goes onto say

> "Every time someone will ask to do this, um, you know, I'll be at a show. You don't get this problem on the website. People don't email you and say, 'Hey, I want to buy this product on your website where it says 30 bucks how about you, how about, I only have 25 bucks.' You know? Which is of course horseshit. 'Um, I've only got 25 bucks will you give it to me for 25?' They don't do that on the website, they *will* do that in person, there's always somebody, and it's usually somebody trying to impress somebody else. You know, some, some douchebag who's trying to impress his girlfriend like, 'Look, I can talk this guy down.' Like 'Hey, can you give me this, can you give me this print for 20 bucks?' Um, that's insulting to me because that implies, you know, that they think that my work of a lesser value than I have it priced at and also that they think, you know, I am desperate enough to make the sale that I would cut my own quarter, uh, to make it. So, you know, unless um… unless I take the initiative to offer somebody a discount based on their showing me that they think my work has value, I'm gonna tell them to go fuck themselves. Make sense?"

This becomes an important illustration of the way in which bargaining is not inherently a system of aiming for minimization of price for consumers but rather a process of sociality that extends beyond the economic interaction. In this example, rather than price negotiation being the process of buyer and seller aiming for equilibrium, it highlights how, for the printmaker, the attempt to reduce his cost is merely a display of power meant to garner the recognition of others outside of the economic interaction and incorporates issues of respect for and valuing of the work of the craftsperson.

Occasionally, bargaining occurs when people are interested in buying multiple items and they ask whether they can get a little help to enable buying so much. This process of bargaining,

where the discount is requested through the purchase of multiples is more accepted because of the purchasing of multiple signifies a stronger connection with what the craftsperson is producing alongside an increase in sales. For Nathan and Claire, who sew and construct figures[33], they experience these processes of price reduction in various ways, from direct asks to offering without prompt.

> Claire: "Sometimes people even come to us and are like, 'Can you maybe, like, 10 bucks off?' and, like, depending on the situation we'll say yes or no and sometimes they'll be like 'If I buy two can I get can I get it cheaper and we're like, 'Oooh.'"
>
> Nathan: "Most of the time it's like if somebody comes up to us and is like, "Oh, we have like three of these in our den and we have, like, you know…" and it's like, "You know, awesome, like if you're gonna get another one then we can cut you a little bit of a discount" which is usually like five bucks off, ten bucks off just for being like a repeat customer kind of thing. Very rarely will if someone comes up to us and says, 'Can I have that for cheaper?' we're like [laughs] 'What? No.' But it happens sometimes. And it depends."
>
> Claire: "Sometimes it's the only way to get rid of it and we're like, "Okay. [affects annoyed tone of voice] Alright. I'll do it.' [laughs]."
>
> Nathan: "Yeah, if it's something we've had for a really long time and it's just not moving, we'll give it to'em. Or if it's like a little kid who doesn't have enough to get, you know, the thing he wants."
>
> Claire: "But mostly it's like, if somebody buys a lot then we're, like, 'Okay, you get a discount because you buy a lot.' There was this one lady in LA Renegade who bought six or seven and we're like, 'Okay, we give you a nicer discount because you make our day right now."
>
> Nathan: "So, yeah, it's usually if it's multiple purchases or if it's a repeat customer we'll try and give them a discount."

As illustrated by Claire and Nathan's back and forth explanation of how haggling and price reduction works, the process of offering discounts predominately occurs when interacting with prior customers or those who are about to purchase multiple. Importantly, they draw

[33] Unlike toys, these are not able to be played with.

attention to their offering a discount in these instances, sometimes to possibly make another sale but also as a sort of thank you for being a repeat customer. By leveraging this repeat customer discount, they work to change what may have, initially, appeared to be a spot-like transaction into a deepening relation. The discount becomes a gift to strengthen the tie between them and their customer and offering up potential for future interactions and transactions as well. This version of a gift, while not appearing similar to the more commonly known examples of a gift exchange (Mauss 1990, Zelizer 2010) still serves a similar social function while simultaneously supporting and supplementing a monetary exchange.

These processes of determining the worthiness of the consumer receiving a discount is not just for repeat customers, but also regarding children and the difficulty of declining a sale because of a reduction in profit. The child represents an instance where a request for price reduction is not due to an attempt to haggle, but is an instance of the child noting that they do not have enough money and this being treated as entirely truthful and rather than treating this as an unfortunate case where a person who may like the object is turned away the child is accommodated. Claire and Nathan are not the only ones who have encountered this. Another craftsperson, who creates toys, when asked if she would ever charge less for an item for a specific customer said,

> "Yeah, I really have a soft spot for kids. You know? [laughs] Um, there was this, you know, one girl who came up and she wanted a rabbit and the rabbit's like $30 and it's such a pain in my ass to make that rabbit [laughs] but she really wanted it and her mom only gave he like 15 bucks. And it looked like she was about to cry and was just like, 'Here, just take it.' Like, I'll just, 'Like, just give me 10 bucks, keep the five, like, I just want you to be happy.' [laughs] So they're definitely my soft spot, yeah, little kids.

These occurrences highlight the ways in which the relations between producer and consumer are not constant and the potential for discounts is applied in various ways and not in a

uniformly constant manner. Moreover, it highlights another process of meaning making of relations between producer and consumer, the *type* of economic action (here, the reduction profit) becomes indicative of *how* the seller regards the buyer. Offering a discount to a child carries an entirely different meaning than one for an adult, where the sale to the child represents a positive feeling whereas a one-time customer just requesting a discount does not warrant similar feelings. Discounts for people who appear to respect one's work can be acknowledged, especially if they are a repeat customer. This highlights that the craftsperson is recognizing the positive evaluation from the consumer that is above and beyond their merely wanting a specific good.

Even though there are instances of bargaining that occur, they are few and far between, in line with the fact that bargaining in most[34] US marketplaces is extremely uncommon and is additionally responded to with suspicion or offense. The broader cultural facets of consumption, making certain economic interactions more or less legitimate, reduce the propensity for consumer led bargaining to occur at craft fairs. In turn, price adjustment becomes largely seller led and most commonly occurs in one of three ways, all of which are usually set by the seller before, but occasionally during, the fair and available to all: sellers offering a reduced price for the purchases of multiples (for example, t-shirts for $25 each or two for $40); offering a discount, usually only on certain items, for the fair (for example, 15% off a specific category of items); and reduced-price items either categorized as seconds (lower quality or slightly imperfect items) or prior seasons. These approaches are posed specifically as an opportunity to clear inventory and to make room for the current or future creations. These sales, much like in brick and mortar stores, are placed in booths away from the primary points of vision, sometimes in

[34] There are, of course, certain marketplaces where bargaining is more common, such as swap meets.

boxes beneath the tables or in a rear corner. The sale of discounted goods, though, is not universal and most booths do not have explicitly advertised or posted sales. One interviewee told me that he stopped selling seconds and reduced priced goods because it not only reduced the amount he sold, because even the consumers who would pay full price were drawn to the sale bin, it also reduced the interaction that consumers had with his pieces more generally. Occasionally, there are end of fair sales, both to reduce the amount of merchandise that needs to be transported but also as a way to offer a final push in maximizing sales. Thus, craft fairs occupy an intriguing space of their own as regards the information that consumers have but have none of the specific features that grew in bazaars to overcome this limitation.

Finally, price reduction can occur even when the buyer states that it is unnecessary. During one of my fieldwork trips, I purchased a necklace for the person I was staying with as a thank you as well as a belated birthday gift. She had gone to the fair the day prior and commented upon the necklace as being one she really enjoyed. I purchased it the following day, at which point it was the last available necklace of that style. The seller apologized for this and said she would sell it to me for a lower amount because it was the "display." I said that it was unnecessary and that I was happy to pay full price. She was adamant that it being a display piece was important and charged me the lower price. This was a seller who was extremely popular at the fair, making many sales and would later go on to make large wholesale connections and sell her jewelry in many outlets, so the need to create a connection that would result in me being a repeat customer was not economically necessary. My own position as a researcher in the field, was tested slightly in this context. While it would be assumed that almost all consumers would thank the seller for the discount, especially as it was unanticipated, I was hyperaware of the fact that I would, of course, be making field notes of these interactions for later analysis. Thus, I was

quite probably more comfortable paying the full price because I was also aware that there were broader benefits to this exchange. Thus, my pushing for paying full price likely should be regarded as somewhat anomalous at a craft fair. Regardless, as these examples illustrate, sellers will participate in actions that are economically irrational (reducing the amount they can make) because they are extremely important socially as an opportunity to making a connection to the buyer beyond merely making a sale. The connection to a consumer, even if that consumer does purchase future goods, gives the opportunity to later interactions around the good purchased and how the buyer is (hopefully) still utilizing that good. The craft is then emblematic of the craftsperson and the continued use of it by consumers allows for a fulfillment of their labor. The relational qualities of the sales are given precedence over the economic qualities. This was illustrated time and time again during interviews when craftspeople would report their utter enjoyment of the craft fairs, being able to meet and talk to consumers in person, and make connections with other craftspeople. These opportunities allowed for reducing the potential isolation of predominately working from home. They also offer the opportunity to detail the pieces they are selling, receive direct feedback regarding their goods, and generally have the opportunity to interact with others as a means to its own end. Altogether, these are not leveraged directly as means to increase sales. Rather, they are positioned as an opportunity to engage with others while being a craftsperson because of the market context, something not offered when merely producing goods for sale. While those I interviewed noted that Renegade was the best for sales compared to other craft fairs, this was seldom given precedence over the opportunities for social interaction. When asked about their experiences at craft fairs, Nathan and Claire responded excitedly.

Nathan: “I love’em. We look forward to’em every year whenever they come up.”

> Claire: "They're just so much fun to be at 'cause there's people of the same understanding and same set of mind. And you don't have to explain yourself, they just like get it. You're there and you get the other people's craft and they understand what you're doing and you trade and you talk and you exchange experiences. It's really fun."
>
> Nathan: "And I think the people that, like, go to craft fairs, that the customers that go, tend to have a higher understanding of what's going on than just selling to the general public."
>
> Claire: "They go there because they seek it out they don't just pass by and go, 'What is this?'"
>
> Nathan: "But, also, just to be in that environment of being around so many other artists, like, for us who are, cave trolls [laughs] We love it. [Claire interjects 'You are!'] We love being out there with the people."
>
> Claire: "You sit in your room all day [laughs] No, it's just enlightening and rejuvenating."

This continual reference toward the connections between these producers and the other producers highlights what Zelizer (2012) means about the importance of relational understandings. Were Nathan and Claire operating along a purely economic maximization logic, then we would not see them excitedly discuss their enjoyment of craft fairs as an opportunity to socialize with other producers, especially to trade away their goods, but as a space of competition. But, we do see the fact that they are creating, maintaining, and conceptualizing ties between themselves and the people they encounter at fairs, especially other craftspeople, as their equals and without a concern for competition or guaranteeing sales to the detriment of others. The above quote is not uncommon when asking craftspeople about why they go to fairs. When asked why they go to craft fairs, those I interviewed would often begin by discussing the financial benefits, which makes sense as these questions followed from discussing their pricing practices. Though, they did not stop at discussing just the economic benefits (or losses) of craft fairs. The above quote is indicative of the regular ways in which non-economic facets of craft

fairs are also strong pulls for attendance. In fact, craftspeople relish in the opportunity to share stories, purchase the work of others, or even trade for it. The meaning of these connections thus transcends a market where all consumption is treated as a zero-sum game and turns it into a network of like minded producers who are excited by the existence of other producers and the comfort of being in a space where there is understanding regarding what one is making.

Discussion and Conclusion

What, then, do craft fairs tell us? Craft fairs present us important information regarding consumption as well as the relations between producers and consumers. The novelty of the marketplace from fair to fair limits the ability of consumers to build up patterns of social relations that economic sociologists have found to be key for economic behavior (Granovetter 1985, for review see Smith-Doerr and Powell 2005), presenting a market space seemingly more conducive to "economic" arm's length spot transactions. However, in my ethnography of craft fairs I discovered that these market spaces are nevertheless full of sociality. Fairs create many moments for producers and consumers to interface, creating moments in which social meaning is expressed, such as gestures of gift giving and community building through various ways of deciding upon how much of a payment to require in exchange for craft items. More directly, integration into craft market outside of fairs, enabled by technology of electronic means of communication and electronic sales, actually fosters social ties, either because customers come to see specific sellers they already know, or because these sellers also make their items available online at Etsy.com. All this makes repeated interaction possible. It is clear from my field research that consumption in a supposedly anonymous and crowded space of a craft fair, is a thoroughly social process. It is not merely about the trading of money for goods but also the ties

behind them, the meaning that is given, the social identities of buyers and sellers, and the inherently social nature of economic action and interaction that extends well beyond the calculations of profit maximization and utility.

Altogether, craft fairs give much insight into marketplaces. Because of the short-term nature of most craft fairs, often being only a couple days monthly, seasonally, or even yearly, their offer an opportunity to begin understand how consumption operates in spaces where consumers are unable to rely upon preexisting knowledge of the marketplace they are entering. Thus, the habitual nature of consumption in brick and mortar stores or the bazaar is not the only form of consumptive behavior. Rather, consumers have the opportunity to enter spaces in which their prior experiences offer little in the way of navigating the sea of choices presented to them. Craft fairs then can be thought of largely unique as far as consumption spaces. While the flea market may be thought of as a close analogue, because there is variability in what is on offer as the goods are usually second-hand, sellers are relatively stable at flea markets, returning weekly or monthly and usually selling similar goods each time (Gregson and Crewe 2003). Access to flea markets is limited almost entirely by willingness to pay the cost of booth space. Craft fairs do not have such regular occurrences, and the seller variation is much higher.

Why would consumers be attracted to such markets, then, when crafts can be easily bought online and in various brick and mortar stores? Jens Beckert's (2011) argument about how the consumption of goods functions to meet not only physical and social needs but also imaginative needs in what they offer consumers.

> "The imaginative performance of goods has in common with positional performance that the goods are valued for symbolic qualities; in both cases, the value of the good is based on ascribing qualities to it that transcend its materiality… Imaginative performance comes into play when the owner sees the good as a "connection" to espoused ideals symbolically represented in the object." (110).

Why, exactly, is Beckert offering this distinction? The imaginative and psychological components of potential consumption are importantly distinct from the post-consumptive interaction that occurs. Consumers imagine what a good may/will bring them, which may not automatically match the later, relational aspects of the good. Moreover, the experiential aspects of the good one consumed are also participatory in the experience *in addition to* their relational nature. Thus, when one consumes a craft they have the images their use calls to mind alongside the way in which other regard their consumption of handcrafted goods. The aspects together, the social position consumption begets alongside the imaginative, offer a possible hypothesis of why thousands of people regularly attend Renegade, braving crowds to purchase goods. They cannot be certain that the goods they may eventually buy will be available elsewhere, especially considering the one of a kind nature of contemporary craft. The social and relational components of attending the fair that are above and beyond the actual goods to be purchased offer further reasons to enter the space. These social psychological factors should not be discounted as probable reasons that the seeming irrationality of craft fair attendance is actually extremely rational to those in attendance. Recall Hibbert and Tagg's points about how craft fair attendance extends far above and beyond mere consumption of goods.

Important to note is that studies of craft fairs have focused primarily on why craftspeople sell there or why consumers attend. This chapter, while hewing toward craftspeople's experiences at fairs, has attempted to offer a preliminary bridging. By focusing on producers' experiences and interactions alongside the physical makeup of spaces, this chapter gives some opportunities for hypothesizing upon the reasons that draw so many consumers. It additionally gives the opportunity to understand multiple ways that marketplaces are highly variable and contingent, and the physicality should be taken into account whenever possible so that consumer

behavior is fully understood *in situ* with all of the attendant social and cultural weight that entails. The consumer revolution that has been detailed, focused as it is on the continual expansion on rates of consumption in the United States especially, while it does contain aspects of the psychological and social joy that it may bring, is additionally contextualized by understanding that by participating in and attending craft fairs, consumption continually contains within itself action that is non-economically oriented, such as the relational opportunities and entertainment experiences of engaging with crafts and more.

By investigating craft fairs, our understanding of the spaces of consumption is broadened as well as the importance of the stability or temporality of the space in facilitating smooth, economic interaction. Following from this, further research needs to investigate the full effects of space and place on consumption across the type of marketplace, and how consumers may navigate multiple spaces across their economic actions. Additionally, these investigations can centralize an additional component not addressable here, namely the ways in which gender is central in these processes. Since the majority of both producers and consumers at craft fairs are women, a comparative focus on the the gender of a space, varying in relation to other spaces of selling where gender composition is different. Moreover, a focus on the sales techniques craftspeople use at fairs could be contextualized in relation to salespeople in department stores along the lines of aesthetic labor, to see if the processes of emotional management and interaction take on distinct forms. While these are not addressable in this project, this chapter does offer a basis upon which understanding general experiences in craft fairs can be informative for generating comparative approaches.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

Craft is an extremely important site for understanding looking at the interplay between cultural production, consumption, work, and the economy more generally. As this dissertation is concerned with what it means to pursue craft as an economic endeavor parallel to the experiences of being a craftsperson more generally, and how economic as well as noneconomic goals and concerns shape the experiences and intentions of craftspeople, it has aimed to understand these specifically through the experiences of becoming a craftsperson, price setting, and marketplaces. Entrepreneurship and self-employment allow for an additional way to consider the issues of business formation and maintenance. The interactions between craftspeople, marketplaces, and the organizations that facilitate craft consumption serve to contextualize and understand the sociological foundations of economic action and interaction. Precariousness becomes necessarily situated in craft as closely tied to entrepreneurship while also being related to the issues of the markets with which craftspeople are engaged.

This dissertation has not aimed to offer a definitive answer on: how is craft important economically? First and foremost, that sort of answer will always only be partial. Studies and reports may focus on the economic importance for a region, such as the amount of money generated in North Carolina (Stoddard, Davé, and Evans 2008). Or, they may focus on the changing nature of organized labor and the craft occupations therein (Conell and Voss 1990). Crafts in tourism and consumption also highlight an additional facet that has been investigated (Wherry 2008). What all of these approaches share, and what this current project builds from, is that the realm of craft is quite large and difficult for any individual study to fully cover every important factor that may be conceived of as converging on the economic. What this dissertation

does is offer some ways of contextualizing and highlighting how craft exists at the current moment. It does not aim to be exhaustive and universal in this. Though, by drawing on two of the major marketplaces for crafts, it does offer some key ways of understanding craft as both a cultural and an economic object more generally.

As Mario Small (2009) notes, the idea of generalizability in qualitative research that aims to emulate the statistical explanations of quantitative research is not only fraught with problems but also begins with assumptions and expectations that are nearly impossible to meet. He points out,

> "When Geertz (1973) wrote on the cockfights in a small Balinese village, many expected his theoretical model (of how games can embody societal power relations) to be applicable to other sites, but few expected the empirical findings to be so applicable – that is, for cockfights to look similar or to follow the same rules in other villages throughout or outside of Indonesia." (9)

In the same way, the current project operates from a similar conceptualization of the issue: what is the situation for this group of craftspeople *and* what are the potential, theoretical implications of this study in other contexts? It does not assume or aim to explain the exact ways that craftspeople and consumers encounter all craft marketplaces. What it does do, though, is give the opportunity to understand how craft markets may be structured, what the space of these temporary events say about consumption, and how the theoretical insights of other marketplaces regarding space are not as easily transferrable here. In fact, the highly contextual nature of this study can offer ways to approach craft markets, to understand consumption in temporary spaces, to identify how consumption may differ in atypical markets, how early influence is still informative for later work, additional ways that price is variable and contextual, and the issues surrounding entrepreneurship and its connections to precariousness.

The highly contextual nature of the study is therefore useful for understanding the ways

in which some craftspeople who sell at Etsy and Renegade conceptualize the economic facets of craft production and consumption, against which other studies are able to evaluate the contingent nature of those spaces. Thus, this study does not aim to be the most exhaustive, generalizable, universal understanding of craft production and consumption, craft markets, and craftspeople. It simply aims to understand a contextual, empirical reality that might otherwise be lost or obscured in a different type of study.

As the current project shows, contemporary US craft is strongly tied to the issues of work, economy, consumption, and cultural production, with each chapter focusing on some ways these factors unfold. While they operate relatively independently, highlighting specific ways of looking at craft, they also coalesce in important ways, especially when concerned with the idea of craft as collective action. Recalling Howard Becker's (1982) argument around art worlds, that the production of art objects is not a solitary process but the result of the larger social, organizational, and institutional arena surrounding a given artist, this current project has aimed to focus on this sociological approach in identifying the sort of world, or worlds, that craftspeople inhabit when approaching craft as an economic endeavor. As Becker highlights, the art world is what allows for the opportunities for economic exchange to occur. Bourdieu's (1993) concept of the field of cultural production offers a useful and necessary abstraction, for understanding the ways in which cultural objects come to be.

> "[T]he more the field is capable of functioning as a field of competition for cultural legitimacy, the more individual production must be oriented towards the search for culturally pertinent features endowed with value in the field's own economy. This confers properly cultural value on the producers by endowing them with marks of distinction (a specialty, a manner, a style) recognized as such within the historically available cultural taxonomies." (117)

Bourdieu is helpful to quote at length here because he highlights that the field of cultural production has internal logics that are simultaneously aimed at creating and maintaining a

hierarchy through competition, and the aesthetic components of goods must be legible. This legibility becomes necessary in a variety of ways. For Etsy, this has historically required explanation and justification that the handmade goods are, in fact, handmade and not the result of mass production. While Etsy has loosened these rules and allowed for designers to outsource the manufacturing of their goods sold on Etsy, the concept of handmade is still reliant upon the legibility of craft more generally. In a more exact rendering of Bourdieu's argument, Renegade's jurying process, which is also common at many others fairs, is a specific process by which judgment is rendered on the "culturally pertinent features" of the crafts and simultaneously "endow[s]" craftspeople "with the marks of distinction" because their inclusion in the craft fair gives a legitimacy of quality, concept, and aesthetic that is not inherently present without the organizational support. As one of my interviewees noted, he was not accepted to sell at Renegade because his pieces did not fit a more DIY aesthetic, though he has received support and recognition from the American Craft Council, so his abilities as a craftsperson are clearly not in dispute.

Chapter 2 considers a trajectory of craftspeople to understand the background of craftspeople alongside their later determination of craft as work. By looking to their original exposure, often through family, and their navigations of learning, resolving into how they navigate craft production as a full-time occupation, it aims to highlight that craft production is not merely a point of objects coming to be sold. Rather one's history and determination is important, noting that one is not merely creative or a craftsperson, but has experiential histories and learning processes that aid in the determination of craft as work. These histories are then taken in relation to understanding the ideas of entrepreneurship and precariousness. In the process of selling one's crafts, craftspeople operate as entrepreneurs and are highly vulnerable to

the difficulties of small business longevity, which results in a precarious position as the potential loss of their business is directly tied to a loss of their income.

Chapter 3 then takes a look at what is often referred to as the hardest part of selling: determining the price for one's goods. It begins by understanding the facets craft marketplaces advise as being important for price determination, highlighting the differing ways different organizations conceptualize price. It then turns to look at the conflicting foci of price forms, all before craftspeople themselves take on the task of price setting. The approaches craftspeople utilize are slightly related, but predominately different from, the organizational advice, often needing to lower their price because the equations and advice given result in prices that would reduce sales. While craftspeople do raise their prices over time, they do not progress as regularly as advised, with their own labor value being the most variable aspect of their prices, and the one that is the easiest to reduce, so that sales can actually occur. Additionally, craftspeople are generally aware of the prices others charge and keep these in mind as they determine their subsequent prices, though it does not appear to be fully predictive.

Finally, this dissertation highlights the difficulties of craft sales through craft fairs themselves, largely as they are distinct from the more common sites of consumption such as brick and mortar stores and bazaars. Specifically, craft fairs serve as a social outlet for craftspeople to be around those with similar interests to themselves while also interacting with consumers. The spaces, though, are extremely difficult to navigate from a consumption standpoint, which should result in a reduction of consumer interest in attending the fairs because of an increase in search cost. In contrast to this, consumers regularly appear to enjoy the craft fairs, partaking in non-economic interests alongside consuming, all while attempting to reduce their lack of information of objects for sale. Moreover, these issues make broader sense when

put in relation to the fact that crafts are available in various places, including the fact that all of the sellers I spoke with who sold at craft fairs also maintained online stores, which would be easier for consumers to navigate and manage then attending a wholly unique marketplace where they would encounter difficulties in consuming. Altogether, this structure aims to continually winnow down the issues crafts as economic objects go through from initial exposure, into work, price, and finally being brought to market.

Altogether, the chapters are continually embedded within Griswold's (2013) broader understandings of culture more generally by looking to the social worlds of craftspeople, their ties to consumers, their objects, and the organizations they must navigate. Moreover, their individual points also offer clear spots of overlap. Chapter two, by looking to understand how craftspeople come to think of craft as work, is augmented by chapter three's discussion of price increases over time, highlighting how careers and prices can go hand in hand, very much in line with Velthuis (2005), because it is through the process of continually selling, and determining the worth of their own value based upon their earlier craft work, that we can see a regular modification of prices. Chapter four's discussion of referential pricing, embodied in the example of selling in Salt Lake City versus on the east coast, gives a moment of reflection on place, and how local understandings of legitimate prices informs the experience in a given space. These local understandings, that one may not anticipate when they conceptualize their own broader, social world have the potential for a stark realization when the prices are responded to, not merely through non-consumption, but through actual commentary from consumers. Finally, chapter two's discussion of precariousness is augmented by chapter three's discussion of the instability of labor value in relation to price. Craftspeople are consistently aware of the difficulty of their work. And while they may not discuss a formal or specific yearly income goal, they are

regularly encountering the difficulties of earnings when they deal with their pricing. As such, they are constantly negotiating their own precarity in ways that may continue it. Altogether, these connections, and more, ground the sociological realities of economic phenomena. Market interactions are not independent of individual level conceptualization of self. Work issues and entrepreneurial orientations are augmented by the realities of non-economic interests, such as community and sociality. Price is not merely economic and we can see, in various ways, that organizing an analysis initially around price unearths the social realities above and beyond the economic.

These connections and approaches to how cultural objects are produced are further augmented by the production of culture perspective. Drawing explicit attention to the various facets that underscore culture. The institutional and organizational factors, once again, receive a predominant arena of focus, though they also incorporate aspects of career trajectories as useful in understanding production. While the career trajectory is partially addressed in the dissertation, through an understanding of how craftspeople make the determination to craft as an occupation rather than a hobby, some of the most studied factors are still organizational.

While the navigation of the organizations has been the focus up until now, it is important to consider a key, organizational transformation that has occurred during the research: Etsy becoming a publicly traded company. Etsy's opening day on the market heralded some potentially positive futures for the company, which would hopefully trickle down for the craftspeople who utilize the platform to facilitate sales as well interact with consumers and other craftspeople. Initially, Etsy set their opening stock price at $16 a share, and saw that rise to $31 on opening day of April 16, 2015 (Park 2015). This initial sign of support has been somewhat short lived with share prices dropping to $16.89 by May 20, 2015 in the wake of announcing a

quarterly loss (NASDAQ.com News 2015, Nasr 2015). The reported losses by Etsy should not necessarily have come as a surprise though. As Etsy (2015) noted in their IPO filing, there is a definite seasonality to craft consumption, and this quarterly loss occurred during a time that sales on the site slow and highlights how important the individual sellers are for Etsy's operations, and vice versa. And it is this specific instance that I think is especially telling for the project at hand, because the organizational and institutional realm in which craftspeople find themselves is also constantly shifting, and they may have to anticipate how to respond to these changes. As some interviews were conducted after Etsy filed their IPO, the thoughts on Etsy going public have ranged between ambivalent on the topic until seeing what the results are down to the suspect of the possible effects on sellers. The existence of these concerns are not without precedent in relation to Etsy. Etsy earlier changed their seller requirements and began allowing large-scale manufacturing and off-shoring of production in ways that began to negatively affect individuals, from reduction in page views to reduction in sales (Whitehead 2014). In the ever-expanding endeavor to secure market share, Etsy's adjustments have made completely logical, economic sense because they are aimed at increasing profits and identifying some extremely fruitful ways.

Etsy itself has seen its legitimacy as a business grow even further, with CEO Chad Dickerson being nominated to a presidential advisory post on the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations (Office of the Press Secretary 2015). Both Etsy and Renegade have also built and maintained relationships with more traditional brick-and-mortar, big box retailers by creating opportunities for craftspeople access to potential wholesaling at these retailers underneath a banner of either Etsy or Renegade. These changes and expansions are important to keep in mind because craft markets are not merely small-scale marketplaces that are anachronistic in the 21st century, even if the idea of craft can be seen as a sort of backward

looking endeavor. By connecting with corporations, becoming publicly traded, and even have the CEO of Etsy recognized as having useful insight for advising on trade, craft markets should not be treated as anomalous and independent of the broader, economic and political sphere.

What is there to make of the recent happenings? These processes highlight the continually changing and expanding nature of the organizations that create and maintain the marketplaces for the selling of crafts. But, the idea that the markets are merely facilitating production and consumption would be overly limited. Rather, these organizations are actively engaged in creating the markets for crafts, offering legitimacy for the type(s) of crafts available, and participating in the broader political and economic endeavors that will have potentially positive ramifications for these markets down the road (by expanding consumer bases via wholesale connections or being participatory in shaping national policy on trade, which is especially fruitful for Etsy considering its ever expanding interest in global operations). Additionally, Etsy's earlier warnings that profits will be variable and seasonal became a reality immediately, now placing Etsy's approach toward a socially concerned marketplace run up against a more profit-oriented sector, highlighting how craftspeople themselves have to continually engage with their own interests and concerns alongside the broader economy and system of prices.

Processes of market creation are part and parcel of the literature in economic sociology, with much influence from the writing of Michel Callon (1998) and Donald MacKenzie (2006) on performativity. Whereas they focus quite broadly on how the economy writ large is actively shaped by the discipline of economics, the activities of craft organizations above become participatory in a similar project. The strong, organizational influence on craft markets situates Etsy and Renegade as key players in the determination of legitimacy of craft objects and their

attendant economic features for the broadest array of craft consumers. Economic features such as price, being actively advised by the marketplaces, in turn gives social foundations for the subsequent price setting practices of craftspeople in the markets. While an awareness of consumers is given, especially in the form of the idealized "correct consumer," the markets do not treat the interaction between producer and consumer as being predominately important in price determination. Rather, they treat consumption as needing to be shaped and advised so that it occurs in a way that is acceptable to the broader organization. Etsy's very specific and uniform price advice is especially important here because they materially benefit by price increases: they receive more in fees. At the same time, it is also necessary for them to be participatory in shaping consumer preferences which, in the case of craft, is to focus on the ideas of quality and uniqueness which secure craft as distinct from mass produced goods and therefore deserving of increased worth to consumers. I do not want this to sound as if it is predatory or misleading on the part of Etsy, because it is obviously in the interest of any business to guarantee stability and aim for increased profits. But it is a clear way in which the market should not be treated as mere the aggregate outcome of individuals meeting other individuals. The broader organizational and institutional setting is always participatory in the maintenance of the market(s) upon which it sits, and we should not expect any market, regardless of scale, to be any different.

Beyond the idea of the shaping of the market, the existence of the price form is shown here to be still extremely social in its foundations, continually reliant upon various ever shifting factors. From the organizational explanations to the individual level rendering of prices, we can see that certain values come up time and again and key factors in the price for crafts. Labor value rears its head as the predominant value in price, something which the literature more

broadly has moved away from. While a universal labor theory of value is overly simplistic, what the current study offers is a way to identify when labor is the predominant value. Other studies focusing on price and value are consistently highlighting the price for goods in exceedingly complex and abstract locations such as fashion modeling (Mears 2011a, 2011b), wine (Garcia-Parpet 2011), art (Velthuis 2005), and auctions (Smith 1990), to name a few. In all of these cases, what is continually centrally important are the other participants in the process who are entirely separated from the process of production. Even in the world of art, the gallerist steps in as centrally determinant in relation to prices. Craft is predominately led by direct sales from producer to consumer and, even though they must usually be reliant upon some broader organization to facilitate the opportunity to meet consumers, the price determination is their own. And at that moment, labor value and the paying of one's self becomes, time and again, the easiest and most manipulable factor. Why does this matter, though, and what can it tell us about these broader organizational forms? To a certain exist, what it is highlighting is that the ever-expanding natures of capitalist production, bureaucratization, and financilization allow for a multitude of values to be identified in differing facets and amounts dependent upon the market in question. By looking at a simplified market, where direct sales occur between producer and consumer, these additional abstractions of other studies make even clearer sense because they map onto capitalist development.

Finally, it is this very nature why the issue of craft is necessary for understanding some keys ways of conceptualizing and approaching the issues of entrepreneurship and precariousness. When the most malleable factor in a price is labor value, and the seller is the one who is simultaneously affected by this, it results in a continued precariousness for both the livelihood of the craftsperson *and* the business. If the business goes under, what are the chances that the

craftsperson will not be negatively affected? The idea of precariousness, so heavily focused on labor markets more broadly and the negative affects of capitalist expansions for workers, is conceptually linked here. But craftspeople as CEOs and workers are putting themselves in the precarious position because they actively want to be craftspeople in opposition to other work which could be more economically fruitful. It is a difficult and stressful position to be in, but it also carries with it the perks of entrepreneurship as far as self-determination that it offers a way to look at and think of the ways that one should not merely think of entrepreneurship as a high stakes high reward only game. In fact, craft allows for looking at some ways that gender may be extremely influential in the *type* of business endeavor one undertakes alongside giving a perfect way to look at the home-based entrepreneurship, which is the predominant form.

This idea of home-based entrepreneurship gives an additional potentiality for critiquing the current state of capitalist economic development that results in ecological destruction. As Juliet Schor (2011) has noted, economic development that is merely oriented toward extracting resources to maximize monetary earnings without regard for the sustainability of that economic system, and the resources requisite in that development, is on a crash course toward complete destruction. Her push for a small-scale oriented production that centers the community, through reducing working hours, reducing consumption, increasing social ties, and increasing cooperative living utilizes craft production as a partial model for attempting to avoid this course. The experiences of the craftspeople in this study highlight their experiences of attempting to embody Schor's arguments alongside navigating the realities of the current economic system. By having to compete with mass produced items, made with an ever reducing wage for laborers, craftspeople must justify the broader, social value of their own labor that extends beyond mere exchange. And, because of this, the current project gives an empirical example of some ways

that an alternate approach to production and consumption can be potentially beneficial for not only individuals but communities.

In reflecting on this project, some necessary caveats to the research as well as some potential new areas of research have become necessary. The microlevel of this study, with a smaller sample size augmented with ethnographic observation and content analysis, should not be conceived as offering a full investigation of these sites. Rather, this approach has offered for multiple ways of approaching the possible ways of understanding, analyzing, and conceptualizing ways to think of craft and offers a foundation of possibilities that other studies may utilize as informing some possible observations.

From the findings that have been generated, it does serve for some key, empirical situations that could benefit from further investigation. First: how distinct are the experiences of differing types of craftspeople? Most studies predominately focus on a singular craft, such as knitting. This study did not preemptively limit by craft practice and offers some insights into craft as a somewhat more general category. Later studies should aim to stratify craft practice further to understand whether variation in experience may be dependent upon the type of craft production. Second, what is the nature of temporary markets? As pop-up markets are being identified as a growing trend in bringing items to market, ranging from small scale producers such as craft fairs up through large-scale corporate conglomerates utilizing them for additional ways of advertising and connecting with consumers (SBO Editor 2015, Townsend 2010). While they may be economically fruitful, the actual experience of consumers in these temporary marketplaces are largely unknown. While the current project offers some insight into how consumers navigate these markets, are the experiences in other pop-up spaces similar?

The connections between both Etsy and Renegade with mass production based businesses

also allow for questions to be asked regarding how these corporations identify new products to produce, understand consumers wants, and potentially offer a way to investigate where large-scale trends find their early inspiration. For example, why do stores like Crate and Barrel decide to carry small-scale produced goods, and how does this influence how consumers relate to other items for sale at Crate and Barrel? These sorts of relationships can offer the opportunity to uncover how consumers even understand the production of goods and whether they have concerns regarding labor as important in determining to purchase certain items.

While the current project does not answer these above questions, it is hoped that it can serve as a springboard to expanding our understandings of craft and economy more generally. Beyond this, it hopes that further studies situate and centralize the potential concerns of labor and gender in understandings of entrepreneurship alongside the ways in which space is important for consumption to occur. Craft is clearly grounded in some ways within the broader field of cultural production, the organizations that maintain the markets, and the relations between producers as well as between producers and consumers. By making sure that we conceptualize the issues that arise around the creation and maintenance of one's business, experience within the broader community, and the navigation of learning and work orientation, we can keep in mind important ways crafts exist more generally as well as the possible ways that micro-determinations of price operate.

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