

**Introduction to the Paperback Edition of *Artists and Markets in Music: The Political Economy of Music during the Covid Era and Beyond* (Routledge, December 2024).**

The paperback edition of *Artists and Markets in Music: The Political Economy of Music during the Covid Era and Beyond* is to be released in December 2024, more than two years after the writing was completed for the hardcover and digitized versions. The content of the paperback edition will be the same as the hardcover edition. Therefore this news item serves as an Introduction to the paperback edition and discusses how some of the ideas and events occurring during the covid era found in the book have played-out since the writing for the book was finished.

**STATE THEORY and ENTREPRENEURIAL THEORY**

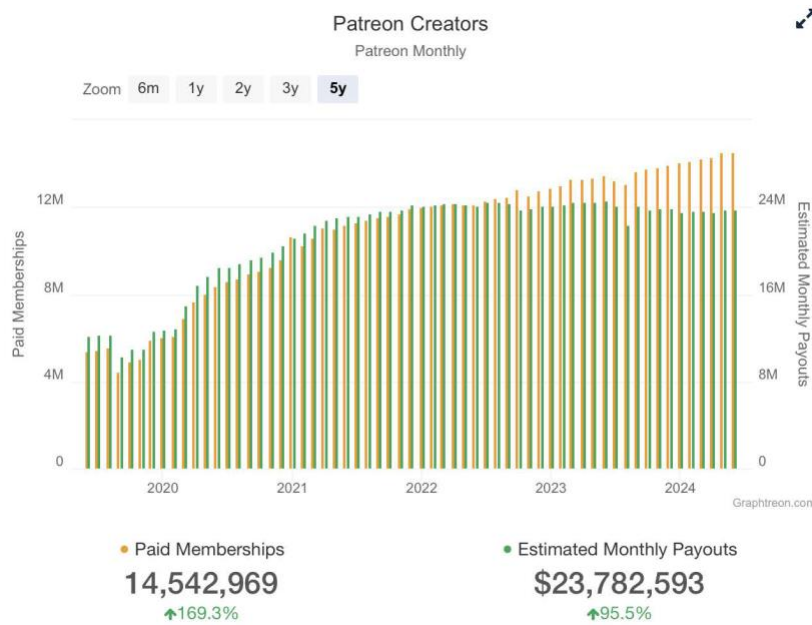
The main narrative in the book is the interplay between the state's response to covid and how artist-entrepreneurs react to the changing conditions faced in their musical practices during the mandates and lockdowns. The two spheres of analysis are of the state and the artist (musician). In what follows we explore first how the state is behaving during the covid era in light of findings after the book is finished. Simultaneously and consecutively we will discuss music markets, tying the findings to the research questions in cultural economics introduced in the book.

In Chapter 4 of *Artists and Markets* we use political economy, history, sociology and psychology to discuss how the state has the incentive to grow its discretionary power, how this has occurred historically during periods of crisis, and how the actions of the democratic state may push accepted boundaries of legitimacy during these 'emergencies'. The experts of the administrative state must create an expedited, 'vigorous', solution to the social problem, in this case proclaiming that the 'evidence-based science', as defined by the state-expert, must be followed at the expense of alternative approaches. We theorize that the state-expert, rhetoric aside, is endowed with the hubris of authority to become the human embodiment of science. Competing views must be suppressed because less extreme alternatives might cause cognitive dissonance in the ability and willingness of the public to follow the administrative state's plan. This would be politically and existentially unfeasible for the administrative state and the accompanying special interests.

**HISTORICAL EVIDENCE for CLAIMS MADE**

History is written with the hindsight which occurs only with the passage of time, a rule of thumb is 10 years. It is too early to tell if the increased power exercised by the state during the covid era has led to a permanently larger administrative state in that there are also forces which react against the state over-reach of the period. We can however demonstrate that the boundaries of state legitimacy are stretched during the covid era.

In the first instance we find that the covid era ends politically in April 2023 when the ‘national emergency’, with accompanying federal powers, is declared over by the US president. In *Artists and Markets in Music* we find that the emergency has ended culturally and socially by April 2022 in that crowdfunding to artists peaks during this month. Subsequent analysis shows that April 2022 is indeed the peak of local and decentralized mutual aid in terms of crowdfunding dollar amounts. Crowdfunding is seen as less necessary as the economy opens-up by April 2022 despite the on-going ‘national emergency’. In general Individuals and local communities have moved-on from covid a year before the federal state gives-up its ‘emergency’ powers.



All screen print illustrations by author

During the covid era hundreds of billions of dollars in ‘emergency’ appropriations are passed to the states and cities and these jurisdictions have until the end of 2024 to expend the monies, years after they are appropriated. This illustrates the point in the book that the emergency (deficit-financed) federal intergovernmental transfers made during the covid era are made for political reasons more than for expedited emergency reasons under which guise and legal authority the transfers are made. The timing of the events described here reiterates the proposal in the book that coercive state policy *follows* voluntary transactions in exchange. In the book we give examples of individuals and institutions taking preventive measures to minimize the spread of covid *before* the (over-reacting) state measures and after the event we find the state prolonging the increased discretionary power engendered by the state-declared ‘emergency’.

An example of a carry-over in the administrative state's behaviour from the covid era through today is the continuous attempt (or at least rhetoric) to secure a means for forgiving college student loans before the 2024 presidential election. This despite questions surrounding the legality of such a policy and despite studies showing that this is regressive policy in that college graduates earn 40% more than those without college degrees (polling shows those with college educations are more likely to vote for the incumbent party).

In Chapter 4 we discuss how the presidential administration during the covid era pushed the boundaries of legitimacy by unilaterally taking action which is better left to legislation, with the knowledge that the actions would likely be overturned by the supreme court. The two examples we give are the CDC's August 2021 moratorium on renter evictions for non-payment and the September 2021 OSHA's mandate for private firms to implement a vax-or-test policy. Both of these executive orders were declared unconstitutional by the supreme court. The administration created a 3-month window for compliance with the OSHA mandate, which shows the fallacy and hypocrisy of 'emergency' measures rhetoric (2 weeks to flatten the curve?) to legitimize state power grabs. It is likely that the pandemic has become endemic by this time in many locations, making further mandates violations of civil liberties without any public benefits. The administrative state hubris created during the covid era, where intentional institutional checks-and-balances in the US's constitutional political economy are ignored, has continued in through today as exemplified by the case of student loans.

As mentioned it is important that the administrative state and its anointed experts are seen leading (having a legal monopoly on) the effort to solve the social problem. Just as central bankers and treasury officials use economic 'science' to guide the macroeconomy through the business cycle, the public health official uses science to solve the social crises of a pandemic (the pandemic turns endemic early-on, time and place depending on local knowledge). However as theorized in *Artists and Markets*, the state-expert is not using science, and is in fact denying the scientific method by suppressing facts which could refute the state's conclusions. Subsequent analysis including the twitter files has shown that there was as expected under our state theory overt censorship to ensure the correct messages and image values are contained in mass (depersonalized) communication.

In November 2022 it is discovered that during the early covid era prior to the November 2020 presidential elections, the US government through the State Department is providing grants to the Global Disinformation Index ([https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley\\_to\\_dos\\_-\\_gdi\\_funding.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_to_dos_-_gdi_funding.pdf)). The GDI makes specific media buy 'recommendations' for firms engaged in advertising and promotion. Findings counter to the statist narrative are determined at risk for the dissemination of disinformation. Platforms which promote solutions which are not part of the one-size-fits-all administrative-state narrative of universal vaccine mandates and economic lockdowns are placed on a list of media outlets to be boycotted. This list of media outlets to defund is called

the Dynamic Exclusion List ([disinformationindex.org](http://disinformationindex.org)). After a Congressional investigation the US State Department stops funding the Global Disinformation Index in 2022.



During this early period of the covid era there is the meme of the Swedish model which prioritizes using scarce resources to protect the most vulnerable while keeping the economy and schools open and empowering individuals and local communities to act in a responsible manner. This approach is codified in the Great Barrington Declaration of October 2020 by dissenting epidemiologists and public health scientists who state they are concerned about the mental and physical harms that the lockdown and vaccine mandate approach inflicts on society ([gbdeclaration.org](http://gbdeclaration.org)). Media outlets containing information about these alternative solutions to the harmful mandates of the US Government are declared sources of disinformation and are to be defunded by correct-thinking advertising purchasers. Specifically, the *New York Post* and *Reason* magazine are numbers one and two on the GDI's Dynamic Exclusion List and are the most outspoken against the draconian approach of the US administrative state.

The screenshot shows the website [disinformationindex.org](https://disinformationindex.org). The page title is "The Global Disinformation Index" with a subtitle: "taken together, bias, sensationalism and targeting distract, divide and, as a result, disinform." Below the title, there is a paragraph: "Here are the ten sites that showed the least and greatest level of disinformation risk. Read on to find out how GDI determined this, what the data shows about the news media market overall, and what you can learn more about in our forthcoming report." Below this text is a table with two columns: "Least risky sites" and "Riskiest sites".

Least risky sites	Riskiest sites
NPR	New York Post
AP News	Reason Magazine
The New York Times	RealClearPolitics
ProPublica	The Daily Wire
Insider	TheBlaze
USA Today	One America News Network
The Washington Post	The American Conservative
BuzzFeed News	The Federalist
Wall Street Journal	Newsmax
HuffPost	The American Spectator

## STATE CENSORSHIP of VALUE-MESSAGE

Censorship occurs when advanced threats of government action are made against future acts of speech. In July 2021 *Reason* finds that the Biden administration is censorious and is violating the constitutional right to free speech as it is, as expected under our state-theory, controlling the flow of information (evidence) to match the administrative state's definition of what is 'evidence-based science'. According to *Reason*, President Biden accuses Facebook of murder for allowing postings about alternative solutions to covid on its platform. This in itself is simply the fear-mongering bullyish rhetoric we expect of establishment politicians seeking to grow state power (and their own) because social media sites are platforms and not content providers according to Section 230 of the Telecommunications Act. Facebook and other two-sided market providers are not responsible legally for what platform users post on the internet.

The censorship is evident only when the Surgeon General threatens to treat platforms as content providers, which would then ruin their business models. The threat of government action (legal and regulatory measures) for not removing content which provides evidence against the administrative state's science is by definition censorship. Politicians today in the post covid-era still threaten 'big media' with overturning Section 230 if they don't like what messages and value-images platforms contain, asking that platforms censor messages which run counter to the statist message with the threat of anti-trust and other legislation.



The covid-era censorship includes the 2020 Presidential elections. In October 2020 three weeks before the presidential election the *New York Post* publishes a front-page article stating that a laptop belonging to the President's son is left unclaimed at a repair shop and that the laptop contains information about the laptop owner and his father working together on business which was then under the portfolio of the father while Vice-President of the United States. After the *Post's* story and before the election, state-owned National Public Radio (NPR) claims that incriminating materials on the laptop are "discredited by U.S. intelligence and independent investigations by news organizations" while political operatives declare 'Russian disinformation' ([https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley\\_to\\_dos\\_-\\_gdi\\_funding.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_to_dos_-_gdi_funding.pdf)). We know NPR's investigative reporting to be real 'disinformation', 'misinformation', false information or lies. In June 2024 the owner of the laptop pleads guilty to tax-evasion charges based on information contained in the laptop after admitting ownership of the laptop in February 2023.

It is only after this admission that the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* acknowledge the provenance of the laptop. Like NPR, these news outlets are deemed "least risky sites" by the US State Department-funded Global Disinformation Index and therefore safe places to advertise while as stated the *New York Post* is on the Dynamic Exclusion List. It is of course unknown and unknowable that if the truth of the veracity of the laptop claims were more generally known how the 2020 presidential elections might have unfolded. We also note that the guilty plea of the owner of the laptop, without any culpability on behalf of the father, occurs while the father has declared that he is running for a second term as president. Although both major parties in the US political system use the state to further their interests (and vice-versa), the bureaucrats and technocrats who are the permanent employees of the welfare-warfare state support the

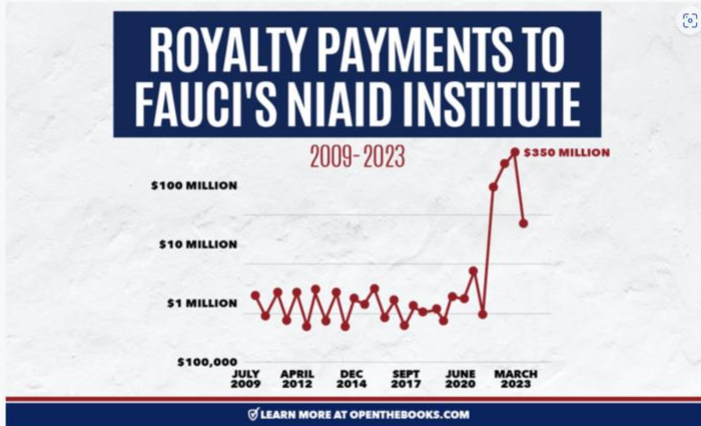
incumbent's party by a vast majority. For example Kuvett (2022) finds that Federal Reserve Bank economists are registered as Democrats versus Republicans at a ratio 10 to 1. The ratio for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System is 48 to 1 Democrat, the ratio for economists at the Cleveland Fed is 3 to 1 and the San Francisco Fed is 12 to 1.

([https://www.independent.org/pdf/tir/tir\\_27\\_2\\_01\\_kuvvet.pdf](https://www.independent.org/pdf/tir/tir_27_2_01_kuvvet.pdf))

#### PUBLIC CHOICE THEORY and VACCINE MANDATE

Public choice theory helps us to understand why the US administrative state prioritizes a pharmaceutical solution to covid as opposed to the less harmful Swedish model (which retrospectively is not an outlier in terms of deaths or excess deaths). One reason that the Swedish model, which better conforms to the Bill of Rights, is replaced by the pharmaceutical model might be because administrative-state technocrats and bureaucrats have something to gain from the pharma model. An investigation based on information obtained under Freedom of Information Act by OpenTheBooks.com finds that US government employees working for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) receive more than \$700 million in royalty payments from pharmaceutical firms from June 2020 to March 2023. The Bayh-Dole Act of 1980, amending the Patent and Trademark Law, authorizes the NIH to assign patent royalties for inventions and discoveries funded by the US government.

In this case the legislature is no check on the administration as 228 members of the US Congress received donations from Pfizer prior to the 2020 elections (<https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/557610-pharmaceutical-industry-donated-to-two-thirds-of-congress-ahead-of-2020/>). Congress appropriates about \$40 billion per year to the NIH prior to the covid era and the NIH has a \$50 billion budget request for fiscal year 2025. With these types of incentives, we can understand why the vaccine mandate is chosen despite the mental and physical harm (correctly) warned about in the censored Great Barrington Declaration.



Logarithmic chart showing the massive increase in third-party (pharma) royalty payments to nearly 260 scientists employed by Fauci's NIAID during the pandemic.

By Adam Andrzejewski, OpenTheBooks CEO/Founder | Published at [OpenTheBooks Substack](#)

https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/557610-pharmaceutical-industry-donated-to-two-thirds-of-congress-ahead-of-2020/

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**HEALTH CARE**

**Pharmaceutical industry donated to two-thirds of Congress ahead of 2020 elections: analysis**

BY OLAFIMIHAN OSHIN - 06/09/21 3:16 PM ET

More than two-thirds of Congress cashed a check from the pharmaceutical

Minority groups' uninsured rates plummeted under Affordable Care Act: Research  
4 MINUTES AGO

Will Judge Merchan sentence Trump to prison?  
6 MINUTES AGO

Gaza protesters disrupt Harris appearance on Jimmy Kimmel show  
15 MINUTES AGO

Coons: Biden has 'diminished energy' but remains 'sharp and commanding'  
19 MINUTES AGO

Biden's abiding support for Israel will lose him the election  
36 MINUTES AGO

Jill Biden crisis-crosses Atlantic to attend day 5 of Hunter Biden trial  
42 MINUTES AGO

Republican group pushing back on Trump immunity claim in \$2M campaign  
46 MINUTES AGO

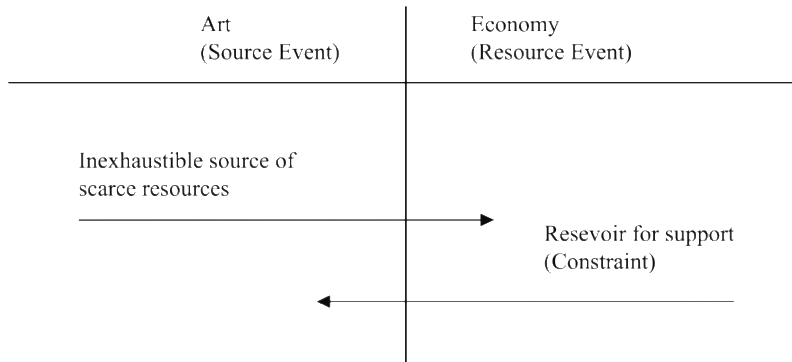
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1 CNN host, Dr. Phil disagree over Trump trial: 'I don't understa...



## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART and ECONOMY



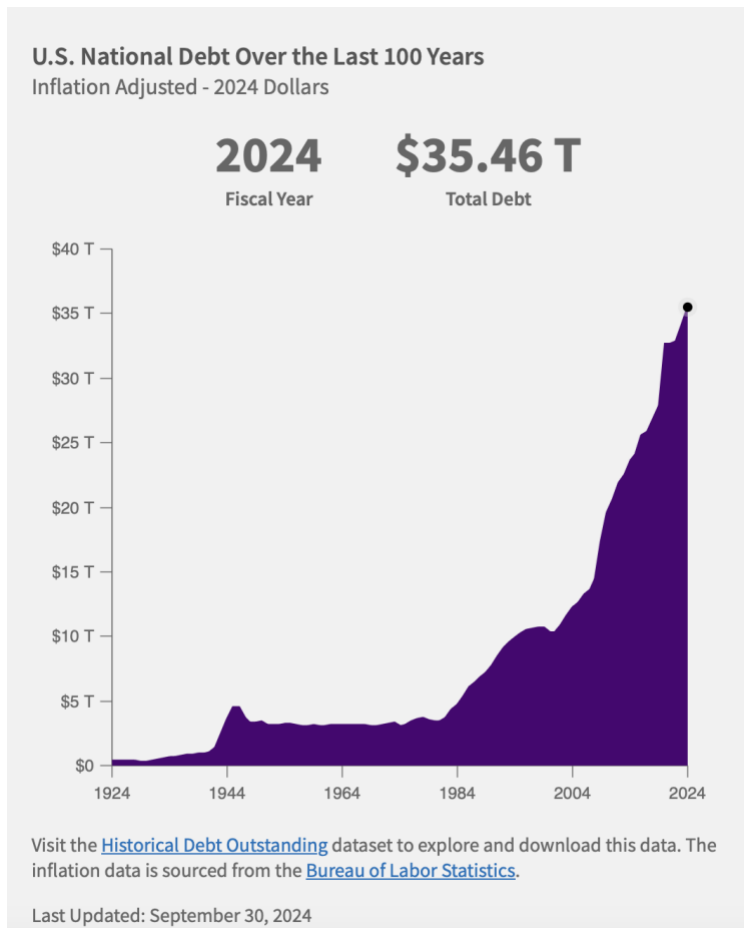
As mentioned one of the themes in *Artists and Markets in Music* is artist as entrepreneur. This concept ties to one of the canonical findings in cultural economics which is that artists are driven to create and work for others only to the point where necessary to support their artist's craft. Art is a calling rather than an occupation or vocation. The economy provides the support for the 'inexhaustible' supply of art. In the survey we conducted for the book we find that the majority of musicians agree that "good art can come from bad times". However there comes a point in which the economy is not providing the surplus needed to support artists.

In the book we describe how the US central bank uses unprecedented monetary expansion beginning with the Great Financial Crisis of 2008 and which was then picked up again during the covid era. By the middle of 2022 this money printing (typing into existence) combined with the largest deficit spending since World War Two leads to the highest inflation in the United States in 40 years. Inflation hurts those worse-off because the poor now have to pay more for essentials while the more wealthy see asset appreciations. For example we find that during the covid-era easy money asset bubble we see legacy musicians like Dylan and Springsteen selling the rights to their music for hundreds of millions of dollars.

### PROGRESS OF THE STATE

As stated we see government spending increase during an 'emergency' as this provides cover for politically-based fiscal transfers. During this high-inflation period after the covid 'national emergency' is declared over, Congress is deadlocked on the Inflation Reduction Act. The Vice President breaks the tie and the IRA is passed. However the name of the act is an Orwellian abuse of language because government deficit spending increases the costs of goods and

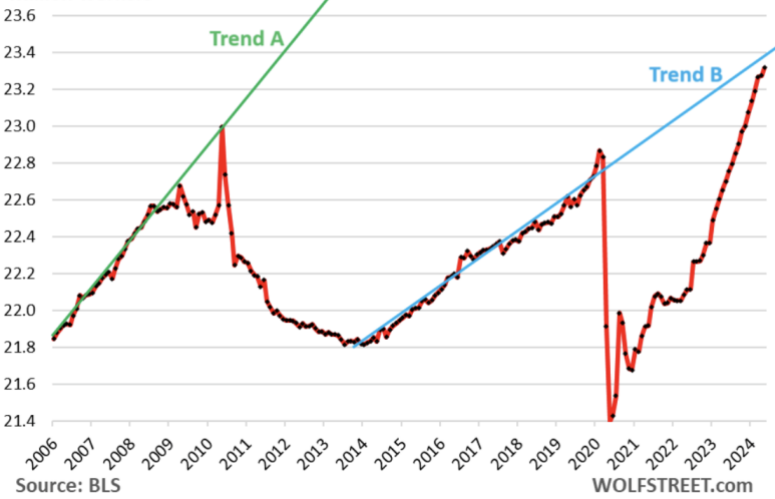
services rather than reduces prices because there is no incentive to economize. Government spending has no residuals, there is no profit and loss accounting, and there is the tragedy of the fiscal commons. The majority of IRA appropriations, more than \$1 trillion, are for corporate welfare in the form of renewable energy projects. The fiscal situation is so bad that Fitch downgrades the risk-rating of US government debt in August 2023.



Additionally and as expected under our state theory, a winner in the government spending largess of the period is the state itself which sees an increase in the number of state employees (and consequently votes and donations for statist politicians). In 2021 public sector employment increases by about 392,000, in 2022 by about 299,000, and about 709,000 in 2023. The number of state employees per capita in the United States is greater than that of the People's Republic of China.

### Jobs in Government: Federal, State, Local, incl Education

Million workers



### THE BOWIE THEORY

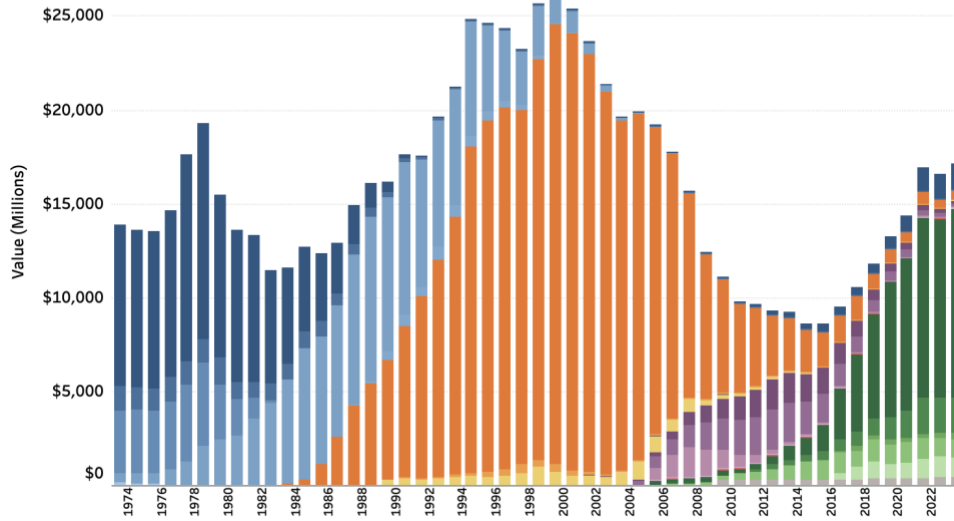
The Bowie Theory is about the fact that the internet economy and the digitization of music means musicians are earning less from recorded music so therefore must increase their public performances for income. However as discussed in the book of course live music in the United States virtually ceases with the lockdowns and mandates. In our survey we find that most musicians have made entrepreneurial pivots into on-line music production and distribution. As predicted we see an rapid increase in streaming revenues in the covid era which then levels off in the post-covid era. A finding in cultural economics is that when an artist increases their online presence this creates positive spillovers into the demand for in-person performance. As a result we see a rapid rise in concert revenues in the post-covid era to around 40% greater than pre-covid.

# U.S Recorded Music Revenues by Format

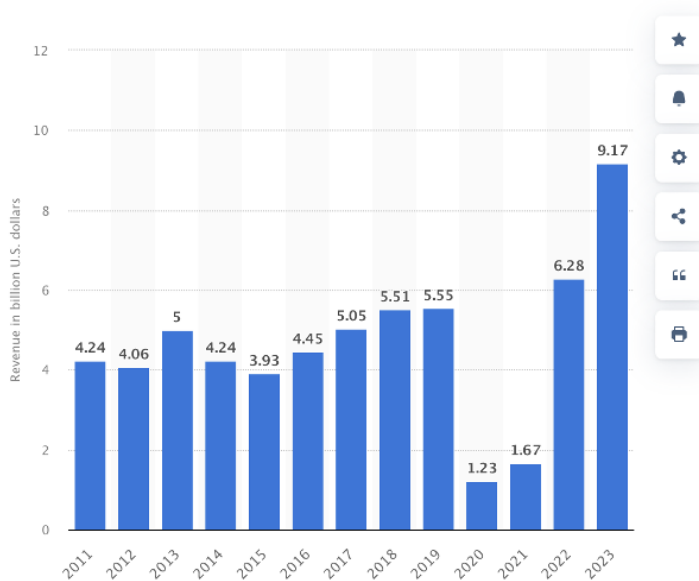
Adjusted for Inflation, 2023 Dollars

1973 to 2023, Format(s): All

Source: RIAA

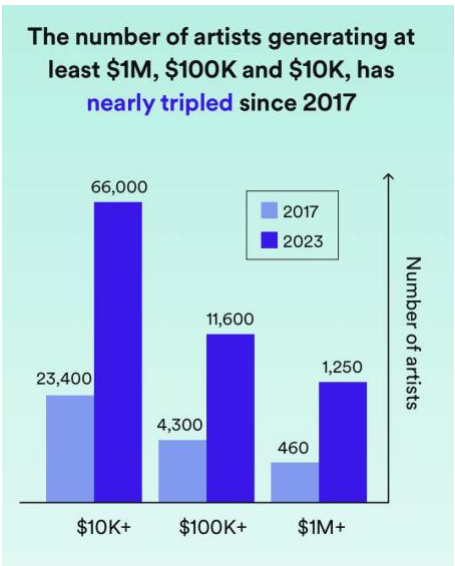


## Music tour gross revenues from 2011 to 2023 worldwide



© Statista 2024

We would also expect the state to *follow* this trend with a self-interested turn, which we do in anti-trust interest against Ticketmaster, a perennial strawman favorite for the administrative state, with calls for breaking-up the monopoly as an example of price-gouging the consumer. This a form of popular democracy. As discussed in *Artists and Markets in Music* this is a fallacy of how the market is measured by regulators in that we know from Spotify streaming data that artists who are not superstars are gaining revenues relative to superstars because the internet economy has reduced the cost of producing and consuming new music online. This online presence then carries over into in-person concert attendance for (alternative) events which aren't covered in regulators' definition of 'the market'. The evidence is selective based on results to be achieved.



Source: Spotify