

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE INDIVIDUAL IN CREATIVE ART

A Study of Common Factors  
of Endowment, and Environmental  
Influence in the Successful Development  
of Creative Talent Among Painters

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the School of Education  
University of Southern California

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science in Education

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by  
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*This thesis, written under the direction of the Chairman of the candidate's Guidance Committee and approved by all members of the Committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Until recently, traditional opinion concerning the nature of an artist and his ability has been so firmly fixed that any study for causal factors in the development of individual talent in creative art has been deemed unnecessary. The layman has generally accepted the artist's inherited genius as the prime factor, a basement or attic furnished with poverty as a proper environment, an erratic temperament as a necessity to artistic expression, and general education as a stumbling block to his freedom. Changing fashions in art with extremes of Cubism, Futurism, and other Art Isms where the Novel and Unusual have allowed the mediocre to gain distinction along with Genius, tended to crystallize these opinions. But, as the transitional stage of modern art is beginning to pass, a new outlook has made questionable, some of the accepted opinions of the past.

### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The art world is now anxious to be on a footing with the rest of the educational world in the scientific guidance of its budding genius and eager to eliminate some of the mediocrity with which it has been over-burdened. It wants some precepts of guidance for sound recognition and proper development of real talent. The logical beginning for such a task has seemed to be in



the study of talent which has already been recognized, and, a search through the biographies of famous painters for common factors of endowment, and environmental influence in the successful development of their talent, has presented itself with promising possibilities.

## II. PROCEDURE

Selection of the artists. The first step in the study was the selection of famous painters who would make a fair representation of the leading countries of the Western Hemisphere. Eastern painters such as Hiroshige and Hokusai were not considered because of difficulty in getting accurate data, and difference in Eastern and Western standards of living. The final selection was based upon Fifty Famous Painters,<sup>1</sup> and the choice of ten artists and art teachers in Southern California, as to famous Western painters.

The blanks sent out ask for a choice of twenty famous painters from Giotto to Cezanne, and five painters since Cezanne but returns showed difficulty in decision, and in almost every case, the list was longer than twenty-five. With consideration of fair representation for each country, twenty-one which had been named most often, were selected

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<sup>1</sup> Henrietta Gerwig, Fifty Famous Painters (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1926)

for the first group. (Table I, page x) In the same manner, a second group of four modern painters was selected for comparison. (Table II, page xi)

Limitations of the study. The major difficulties of the biographical studies were those of obtaining sufficient and accurate data. The lack of information concerning the artists' mothers was lamentable. Data pertaining to the artists' relatives, other than the father, was difficult to find. Not enough was known about the childhood of the majority of the painters studied. Naturally, in the study of so many biographies, conflicting data was found. Individual biographies which offered more complete data than encyclopedias and general references had to be discredited in some places because of the intrusion of the biographer's own personality. Vasari's over-veraciousness, and Ludwig's and Van Loon's modern style are examples of extremes which made it necessary to be constantly conscious of the differences in standards with the change of time, even in standards of biographical portrayal. The numerous sources consulted brought to light errors of information and the common subjectivity of biographies. In disputed cases, the opinion of the majority, although still having the possibility of inaccuracy, was retained as the most reliable.

TABLE I  
 PAINTERS IN HISTORY SELECTED FOR STUDY

Painter	Nationality	Period	Votes Received
1. Giotto	Italian	1267?-1337	10
2. Titian	Italian	1477-1576	10
3. Rembrandt	Dutch	1606-1669	9
4. Michael Angelo	Italian	1475-1564	9
5. El Greco	Spanish	1545-50-1614	9
6. Leonardo da Vinci	Italian	1452-1519	9
7. Velasquez	Spanish	1599-1660	9
8. Cezanne	French	1839-1906	9
9. Raphael	Italian	1483-1520	7
10. Botticelli	Italian	1444-1510	7
11. Rubens	Flemish	1577-1640	7
12. Holbein (the younger)	German	1497-1543	7
13. Millet	French	1814-1875	6
14. Van Dyck	Flemish	1599-1641	5
15. Whistler	American	1834-1903	5
16. Frans Hals	Dutch	1582?-1666	4
17. Reynolds	English	1723-1792	4
18. Durer	German	1471-1528	4
19. Murillo	Spanish	1617-1682	4
20. Turner	English	1775-1851	4
21. Sargent	American	1856-1925	1

TABLE II  
 MODERN PAINTERS SELECTED FOR STUDY

Painter	Nationality	Period	Votes Received
Diego Rivera	Mexican	1886--	6
Pablo Picasso	Spanish*	1881--	4
Georgia O'Keeffe	American	1887--	3
Frank Brangwyn	English	1867--	3

\* Spanish nationality, but classed with the modern French painters.

Preliminary arrangement of data. The biographical data was recorded in the words of the biographer and arranged on two large individual charts for each artist. The first followed the outline of Points of Study in Table III, page xiii. The major references were placed in a side margin with the information obtained itemized opposite its authority. Information from minor references, doubtful data, and questions in the mind of the writer were recorded in appropriate columns in red pencil.

The second individual chart was a chronological chart which eliminated the confusion of ages and dates of events and was helpful in quick comparison between artists in the study of ages at entering art school, first success, active years of life, etc.

Final organization of data. When the individual charts were near completion, a master chart was made for further study. It contained a resume of the information gathered. Here, the Points of Study were those of the first charts, which, with the data gathered, seemed to have possibilities for summarization. (Table IV, page xiv) This information was arranged in four groups of items, those pertaining to heredity, those pertaining to early environment, those pertaining to art training, and those pertaining to the later years of the artists' lives. (Table V, page xv)

TABLE III  
POINTS OF STUDY FOR INDIVIDUAL CHARTS

1. Social Inheritance and Occupation
  - a. Father
  - b. Mother
2. Financial Status of Parent
3. Number of Children in the Family
4. Age at Appearance of Art Talent
5. General Education
6. Art Education
7. Other Talents and Accomplishments
8. Physical Energy - Age at Death
9. Cause of Death
10. Marriage and Love Affairs
11. Number of Children in the Family
12. Personal Appearance
13. Industry
14. How Received at the Time
15. Friends
16. Other Influences
17. Personality
18. Other Factors

TABLE IV  
POINTS OF STUDY FOR SUMMARY CHART

1. Fathers' Occupations
2. Social Inheritance
3. Age at Appearance of Art Talent
4. Physical Energy - Age at Death
5. Industry
6. Other Talents and Accomplishments
7. General Intelligence
8. Art Talent in the Family
9. Financial Status of Parent
10. Number of Brothers and Sisters
11. General Education
12. Travel
13. Art Training
14. Outside Financial Aid or Encouragement
15. Reception During Lifetime of the Artist
16. Financial Success
17. Age at Recognition
18. Marriage
19. Number of Children
20. Friends
21. Manner of Living

TABLE V  
SUMMARY CHART DIVISION

Inheritance	Early Environment	Art Training	Later Environment and Success
Charts 1 and 5	Charts 2 and 6	Charts 3 and 7	Charts 4 and 8
<p>Art talent            Relatives having talent            Age at entering art school</p> <p>General intelligence            Intelligence of parents                Fathers' occupations                Social inheritance            Intelligence of the artist                Other talents and accomplishments                Biographers' opinion</p> <p>Physical energy            Biographers' report            Age at death (cause)            Industry</p>	<p>Financial status of parent</p> <p>Outside help and financial aid</p> <p>General schooling</p> <p>Early companions and friends</p> <p>Brothers and Sisters</p>	<p>Art Schools</p> <p>Quality of training</p> <p>Years spent in study</p> <p>Other art influences</p> <p>Age at first success</p>	<p>Recognition during lifetime</p> <p>Social relationships            Marriage            Children            Friends</p> <p>Finances and living</p> <p>Financial success</p> <p>Manner of living</p>



A total of results for each item columnized, was then made and an average secured where possible and indicative of any profitable or clearer conclusion. The charts for the four modern painters followed the same identical plan of procedure.

This investigation makes no claims as to what factors of endowment constitute artistic genius or what factors of environment are most favorable to its development, but it has made visible some points which might seem to have a common ground, and has brought out some features of similarity and contrast in past and present trends in art and art educational methods which may be helpful to educators and art students.

## CHAPTER I

### INHERITANCE OF TWENTY-ONE FAMOUS PAINTERS

In the attempt to discover some of the common factors of endowment in the lives of successful artists, four different fields of inquiry were selected for research: Inherited Artistic Talent, General Intelligence, Physical Energy, and Character Traits.

Art talent. The study of inheritance of artistic talent, by investigations as to the number of relatives whose professions were along the line of art, brought little result because of unavailable data. In only eleven cases was any record of art talent among the artists' relatives found. In two cases, the father of the artist was a painter, and in one, the father was a goldsmith, which at that time was very closely allied to a painter's profession. In two instances, mention was made of some artistic expression of the mother, who in earlier times, not having the freedom of women today, expressed her talent at home in a bit of embroidery or some simple art considered becoming to a woman. The other six cases mentioned art talent of the father or some other member of the family. It is regrettable that so little accurate information about the ancestry of artists, especially that pertaining to maternal ancestors, is to be found.

Early appearance of talent. The research on inherited artistic talent of artists, based on the study of early appearance of art talent, brought more interesting and significant results. In every case, mention was made again and again, of the artist's interest in art during the years of his early childhood. In sixteen cases, the artist was said to have shown precocity in drawing. In the three remaining cases (Cezanne, Whistler, and Reynolds), where data was available, there seemed to be only great interest in drawing and art. Each of these three suffered the lack of expertness in drawing during their entire life. To what extent skill in drawing can be acquired, and, its relative importance to painting, are points of departure for other interesting research.

The average age at beginning study in an art school, was between twelve and fourteen years. At this early age, the talent of most of the artists studied, was sufficiently obvious, and they chose art as their profession. The earliest age at entering an art school, was eight years, recorded for Raphael. The latest was Millet at eighteen years. His late start seemed due to lack of finances, and need for his help at home. Reynolds was seventeen when he began study with Hudson. Before that age, he had been preparing to become an apothecary. Usually, the earlier painters who worked as apprentices, began study sooner than the painters

of the last two centuries. In every instance, it seemed that the child's pursuit of art was a determined following of his own natural desires. With several artists, this was at first against the will of the parents who were eventually persuaded.

General intelligence. The general intelligence of the artists of this study can only be estimated. Aside from the actual statements of biographers, the data for basis of estimation is drawn from the study of the fathers' occupations, the artists' social inheritance, and talents and accomplishments other than painting.

Fathers' occupations. The summary of occupations of the fathers of the famous painters is as follows:

Lawyers and Mayors . . . . .	6
Artists and Other Professionals . . . . .	6
Merchants and Tradesmen . . . . .	6
Farmers . . . . .	2
Unknown . . . . .	<u>1</u>
Number of Artists Studied . . . . .	21

Social inheritance. Summaries for social inheritance were made under the titles of Nobility, Middle Class, and Poor. The results showed the following:

Nobility . . . . .	3
Middle Class . . . . .	15

Poor . . . . .	2
Unknown . . . . .	<u>1</u>
Number of Artists Studied . . . . .	21

By far the greatest number came from the middle class. In the column headed Social Inheritance, Chart I, page 14, it may be noted that those placed in group Two were described by biographers with such adjectives as "cultured", "refined", and "good". Millet, though the son of poor peasants, was rated in group Two because his family is reported to have been of high ideals and "superior to its class". It was pointed out by one biographer, that many great men in France have come from this type of peasant stock.

Turner and Murillo were the only artists rated in group Three. Turner's father was a fashionable barber and hairdresser but a rather ordinary man, it seems. His mother was a woman of violent character, who died in an insane asylum. Turner's social inheritance is described as "poor, born in ugliness". If more were known of Murillo's childhood, he might possibly have been rated in group Two. His parents are reported to have been wealthy at one time, but at the time of Murillo's childhood, they were poor. His mother had a fruit stand while Murillo ran about on the streets of Seville. The latter point belongs to the chapter on environment, yet the basic cause of such conditions might belong to the study of heredity. His social inheritance is

described as "Humble Folk".

Review of psychological studies of intelligence and drawing. Several interesting recent psychological studies of the relation between aptitude in drawing and intelligence of children have been made. The general conclusions from studies made by students of research in this line have been, that with children under twelve years, the order of development in drawing is remarkably constant and that progress in drawing is indicative of the child's development in power of observation, analysis and judgment. Many parallels between the child's drawing and his formation of concepts have been found. In drawing, as in his power of forming images, his progress is from the simple to the compound. If this be true, the early development of drawing ability among the painters studied is significant to the study of the artists' general intelligence. In ascertaining this intelligence, a brief review of some of the outstanding investigations which have been made may prove valuable.

One of the first experiments was that of Max Lobsien, who compared the drawings of imbeciles with those of normal children and found that, age for age, the sense of proportion displayed by imbeciles was below that of normal children<sup>1</sup>. Other similar analyses made by Kerschensteiner

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<sup>1</sup> Florence Goodenough, Measurement of Intelligence by Drawings (Chicago: World Book Company, 1926) survey, p. 4.

pointed out qualitative differences as well as quantitative differences and lack of coherence in the drawings of the feeble minded.<sup>2</sup> Luquet,<sup>3</sup> who preserved every drawing made by his little daughter from the time she was three years and three months old until she was eight and a half, drew the following conclusions:

1. That children's drawings undergo much fluctuation from day to day.
2. That a new feature once shown does not invariably appear afterward, but that periods of time often elapse before its appearance becomes constant.

Kek,<sup>4</sup> in his study of special talent in gifted children, emphasized the difference between real creative ability and mere ability to copy and drew from his experiments that:

1. Cases indicating higher ability are also higher in general school work.
2. Mere copyists are rather inferior in school work.

Stella McCarty with data collected by the International Kindergarten Union observes that the majority of those who draw best are in upper levels of intelligence although the mentally superior do not necessarily excel in drawing.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Stella A. McCarty, Childrens Drawings (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkin Company, 1924) pp. 90-91.

That children draw that they know rather than what they see was shown in an experiment by Professor Clark of Stanford University, who set up as a study for drawing, an apple with a hat pin stuck through it. The younger children drew the line of the pin across the apple, disregarding the fact that it could not be seen in that place.<sup>6</sup> Florence Goodenough, Research Professor at University of Minnesota, 1926, made one of the most interesting studies of children's intelligence based upon drawings of the human figure used as the subject of objective tests in drawing. She traces the steps in the child's development in drawing and concludes in her third step - Observation of relationship, either quantitative or spacial, - "In general, it may be said that the brighter the child, the more closely is his analysis of a figure followed by an appreciation of the relationship prevailing between the elements which are brought out by his analysis."<sup>7</sup>

I. Q. estimates. The estimates of I. Q.'s of eight of the painters studied in this research were found in Genetic Studies of Genius Volume II by Terman and Cox.<sup>8</sup> These

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<sup>6</sup> Florence Goodenough, Op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>7</sup> Florence Goodenough, op. cit., p. 74.

<sup>8</sup> Catherine M. Cox, Lewis M. Terman, et al., Genetic Studies of Genius, Vol. II (Stanford University, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1926) pp. 47-163 and pp. 215-219.



estimates were made from the fathers' occupations and precocity in the early childhood of the artists. The painters of this study who had an I.Q. rating in Genetic Studies of Genius were Durer, Murillo, Raphael, Rembrandt, Reynolds, Rubens, Michael Angelo, and Leonardo da Vinci. The highest corrected I.Q. estimate for artists was that of Michael Angelo and Leonardo da Vinci, estimated at 180. The lowest estimate for any of the eight artists included in this research, was that of Reynolds whose highest corrected I.Q. was 145. Miss Cox believed that the I.Q. rating in Vol. II of Genetic Studies of Genius would be raised with more adequate data. Her guess as to the accurate I.Q. of Michael Angelo, was 200. The average first corrected I.Q. estimate for artists was 140. The average I.Q. estimate for all genius was 155. In the list of I.Q. averages which included philosophers, writers, scientists, musicians, artists, and soldiers, in the order here written, the highest, that of philosophers, was 185. Artists were next to lowest, 125 for soldiers. The next rating above artists was 145, the average I.Q. of musicians. In a group of Normal intelligence, the mediocre artist would still probably be above average, but less than the average of the mediocre philosophers, writers, scientists, or musicians, unless I.Q. averages change in a group outside of genius.

Other talents and accomplishments. The other talents

and accomplishments of the twenty-one painters were, in many cases, along the lines of related arts. Eleven of the group had talents other than those in the space-arts. In four instances, musical talent was mentioned. In five cases, there was literary ability, and in six cases, architecture. Accomplishments other than art were those of the philosopher, archaeologist, financier, courtier, goldsmith, diplomat, lecturer, and cavalier. The only conclusion that seemed evident was that the artists often had talents in other kinds of art and were sometimes gifted in lines entirely foreign to their own profession.

The section on general intelligence (Chart 1, page 14) which contains biographical opinions concerning the artists' intelligence, merely serves to second conclusions which are evident in the investigations mentioned: That the intelligence was above average.

Physical energy and industry. The physical energy of the artists, as indicated by length of life, industry, and biographers' statements, was superior in the majority of cases. The most salient point was that of their incessant industry. Fifteen were superior in effort and accomplishment, one averaged high, three were considered erratic, two were slow and laborious but ambitious and persistent. In almost every case of superior industry, there was record of

physical strength to back it. Michael Angelo, Botticelli, and Whistler were said to have been delicate children. In later years, Michael Angelo was superior in physical energy and industry, Botticelli rated average, but Whistler was one of the two who were lowest in industry and output of work. He began a hundred paintings and finished but twelve. The other artist scored low in industry, was Cezanne. He worked every day, but his method was extremely slow. He did not do as much in his whole life as another artist of his time, Renoir, did in ten years. On the other hand, superior industry and accomplishment of the famous painters was noted in instances like that of Rembrandt who left a thousand paintings, over a thousand drawings, and eighty-four etchings.

Length of life. The average lifetime of the twenty-one famous painters was near 66.5 years. This was 3.7 years higher than the average taken from thirteen painters out of a group of two hundred and eighty-two eminent men from the studies of Cox and Terman.<sup>9</sup> In that study the average for artists' length of life, was 62.8 years. This was low compared to the highest average, 70 years, for statesmen. The average length of life for the group, was 65.8 years, and the least average length of life for the eminent men studied

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<sup>9</sup>Cox, Terman, et al., op. cit., p. 36.

was but one point lower than that for artists, 61.8 years for musicians.

The oldest artist of the study was Titian who lived to be ninety-nine; the youngest at death was Raphael who died at thirty-seven from overwork and bleeding which was done for cure in his time. The total summaries of Superior Physical Energy, and but Average for Length of Life, might suggest an over-expenditure of energy. Yet, Michael Angelo and Titian who were both rated superior in energy and industry, lived to be quite old. Besides Raphael, Velasquez and Van Dyck were the only other artists of the group whose death was reported to have been caused by overwork.

Personality. Careful records of all references to the artists' personalities were kept, and it was hoped that some significant common factors might appear. But, aside from the artists' natural love for beauty and their ambition, persistence, and the incessant industry which has been mentioned, there seemed to be no factors which were common to the group. Whistler was vain; Cezanne was careless of his appearance. Titian was shrewd; Rembrandt went bankrupt. Turner was stingy; Rubens was generous. Raphael was friendly and gay; Michael Angelo was solitary and melancholy. The spaces allotted to personality, on the individual charts, were simply a group of adjectives which formed distinct individual person-

alities. They were distinctive. Their likes and dislikes were strong; they seemed to care less for public opinion, and have less difficulty in forming their own, than the average person. The subjectivity of biographical opinion was perhaps more noticeable here, than at any other point. An example of this was the attribution of wit to artists. So many biographers made it a point, that it became probable that they merely attributed wit because they felt it a compliment to their subjects. Such examples as Giotto painting a fly on the nose of a portrait, seemed a common prank which showed a sense of humor, but no greater than average wit. If there be such a thing as a personality or temperament which belongs to artists, it must be found by a different method.

Summary of conclusions on the inheritance of twenty-one famous painters. The conclusions which were drawn from the research into factors of endowment, were but conclusions from the study of this specific group. Any generalization of such conclusions for all, or any artists, must depend upon future studies to make certain. The summary of conclusions on the inheritance of twenty-one famous painters showed the following:

1. Art talent of the famous painters seemed due to inheritance and showed up early in childhood; the artists were able to choose their life work during their youth.

2. The average intelligence of famous painters was superior to that of average individuals.
3. Famous artists came oftenest from the middle class, refined home, and their fathers belonged oftenest to the professionals and tradesmen of the upper middle class.
4. Some recent modern studies in psychology indicated a relation of intelligence to drawing ability.
5. Versatility was not uncommon among the famous artists, but their second accomplishment lay oftenest in other arts. Occasionally, they were also talented in entirely different lines.
6. The physical energy of the famous artists was, on the whole, above average; their average lifetime was 66.5 years.
7. Most of the famous artists worked incessantly and were superior in output of work.
8. Famous artists were individuals of distinct personalities; other than a natural love for beauty, and their ambition, persistence, and industry, no common qualities of temperament or character which could be recorded as belonging to the group, were obvious in this study.

Artist	ART TALENT		GENERAL INTELLIGENCE				PHYSICAL ENERGY		
	Relatives Having Talent	Age at Entering Art School	Intelligence of Parents		Intelligence of the Artist		Biographers' Report	Age at Death (cause)	Industry
			Fathers' Occupations	Social Inheritance	Other Talents and Accomplishments	Biographers' Opinion			
Giotto	None recorded	10	Husbandman (Farmer)	Reputable stock and descent Peasant	Architect	Precocious	Strength and Endurance	70 (?)	Industry incessant Sundays and all days (superior)
Titian	Several artists in the family	10	Councillor Soldier Podesta	Noble Aristocratic	Financier Musician Courtier	Superior	Always Healthy Nerves of steel	99 Plague	Worked like a man possessed (superior)
Rembrandt	None recorded	12	Miller	Father educated and respected Middle class	Etcher	Indifferent scholar	Of stolid race	63 (Heart trouble)	Never idle (superior)
Michael Angelo	None recorded	14	Podesta	Nobility Good	Sculptor Poet Architect	Superior	Enormous vitality	90 Old age	Went to work with impetuosity even at 75 (superior)
El Greco	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Architect Sculptor Philosopher Business man	Superior	Unweariedly industrious	64 to 69 (?)	Inclined to produce slowly (erratic)
Leonardo da Vinci	None recorded	14	Lawyer	Good Peasant mother (illegitimate)	Sculptor Architect Musician Engineer Philosopher	Superior	Unusual physical energy	67 (Paralysis)	Multiplicity of activities (superior)
Velasquez	None recorded	12	Lawyer	Nobility Long honorable record	Cavalier Talented in many branches of knowledge	Superior	Average	61 Overwork	Worked incessantly (superior)
Cezanne	None recorded	10	Merchant Banker	Good	None	Conscientious but not a prodigy	Average	68 Diabetes	Persistent Laborious all day, every day (slow)
Raphael	Father an artist	8	Artist	Refined	Architect Sculptor Archaeologist	Superior intellect Gifted	Delicate physique	37 Overwork and bleeding	Unceasing industry (superior)
Botticelli	None recorded	(13 Goldsmith) 16	Tanner	Well-to-do Ambitious Burghers	Goldsmith	Learned rapidly	Great physical vigor Vital power	66	Habits of work erratic and irregular (erratic)
Rubens	Grandfather a tapestry weaver	14	(Family of Merchants Druggists) Lawyer	Ambitious Middle class	Diplomat Writer Linguist Business man	Exceptional intelligence	Indomitable energy	73	Never a moment of inertia (superior)
Holbein (the younger)	Father, uncle, brother, and nephew were artists	Very early Probably 9	Artist	Refined if not aristocratic	Wood engraver Modeler Architect Decorator Designer	Superior	Great capacity for work	46 Plague	Untiring industry (superior)
Millet	None recorded	18	Peasant farmer	Family superior in mind to their class	None	Logical intelligent mind	Vigorous, physical force Unusual constitution	61 Hemorrhage (Worry and poverty)	Worked with furious energy (superior)
Van Dyck	Mother did fine embroidery	10	Merchant	Unusual refinement of home environment	None recorded	Precocious in learning	Average	43 Fatigue	Prodigious (superior)
Whistler	Father a skilful draughtsman	11	Soldier Civil Engineer	Good Puritan ancestry	Writer Etcher Played piano	Clever talker Disliked study	Delicate in youth	69	Began 100 portraits - finished about 12 (slow)
Frans Hals	Brother an artist	Unknown	Magistrate	Honorable patrician family	None recorded	Clever	Superior	82 (?)	In last years became indolent and idle (erratic)
Reynolds	Sisters painted	17	Clergyman Schoolmaster	Cultured	Lecturer Writer	Precocious	Average	69	Painted over 3,000 canvases (high average)
Durer	Family of goldsmiths	(13 Goldsmith) 15½	Goldsmith (Artist)	Honorable family	Engraver Wrote two books	Learned easily	Never physically robust Average	57 Fever	Excessive industry (superior)
Murillo	A distant relative was a painter	12	Mechanic	Humble folk	None recorded	Above average	Strongly built Perfect health	65 A fall	Industry unflagging (superior)
Turner	None recorded	9	Fashionable hairdresser and barber	Poor Born in ugliness	None	Not brilliant Ordinary	Plenty of vitality and energy	76	Immense industry (superior)
Sargent	Mother artistic Paternal ancestor painted	13 (Probably earlier)	Surgeon	Cultured puritan stock	Musician Linguist	Precocious	Inexhaustible energy	70 (Heart trouble)	Days strenuous with work (superior)
SUMMARY	11 with talent 9 none recorded 1 unknown	Average about 13 years at entering art school	6 Lawyers and Mayors 6 Artists and other Professionals 6 Merchants and Tradesmen 2 Farmers 1 Unknown	3 Nobility 15 Middle class 2 Poor inheritance 1 Unknown	17 had other accomplishments than painting			Average age at death 66.5	15 superior in industry 1 high average industry 3 erratic 2 slow in industry

## CHAPTER II

### EARLY ENVIRONMENT OF TWENTY-ONE FAMOUS PAINTERS

A study for common factors of environment was made from three different standpoints of investigation: 1, environmental influence in the artists' childhood and youth up to the age of twenty-one, including the attitudes of the Age in which the artist lived, home influence, general education, and early companions. 2, specific art schooling, travel, and other Art influences up to the age of twenty-one. 3, environmental influence and success in later years. A review of the artists' environment in their most impressionable years of early childhood and youth up to the age of twenty-one, shall be made in this chapter. Art training and later environmental influence and success will be discussed in following chapters.

Influence of the Time and locality. Perhaps the greatest item in the study of environmental influence was the era in which the artist was born. In this essay, any intricate unraveling of the environmental influence of an Age was not possible; its magnitude and complexity make it a problem for a lifetime's study. Here, mention of a few noticeable points has seemed necessary.

Thought and expression of genius is built upon that



which has gone before, and that which surrounds it. It represents the ideals, interests, and needs of its Time. The important question of environment is: "Is it more likely to preserve, or to destroy the individual?" An age when all minds are turned toward growth like that of the Renaissance with its vigor of intellect, sensibility of emotion, sincerity, and ambitious spirit of youth, would naturally seem to be a better environment for a man of great genius, than an age when general thought is light and frivolous. In all cases of genius, an ordinary environment might seem to be an unfavorable force either pulling back toward tradition, or down to the normal. The inherited combative spirit of genius seems to push ahead. Nevertheless, it is significant that eight of the twenty-one painters belonged to the Renaissance, (including Giotto) and that several more of those near the head of the list, just followed that period.<sup>1</sup> Factors which ordinarily are judged as favorable to study and progress, may not be ideal to every individual's growth. Masters of Renaissance history have mentioned the struggles of that period. A man of boundless ambition and personality of strong contradictions, like Michael Angelo, is said to have but mirrored the serious graveness of the little city republic of Florence whose atmosphere was that of continuous

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<sup>1</sup> See Table I, page x, for dates of birth.

strife. A shrewd and worldly man like Titian is said to have reflected the gaiety and luxury of Venice in his time. And so it has been with each of the artists of the Renaissance, and all other periods in history; his genius has been bound in some way by the limitations of his own time. Born in a greater or lesser Age, he might have reached greater or lesser heights according to the adaptability and needs of the environment to his own peculiar genius. The artists representative of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; Reynolds, Turner, Millet, Whistler, Cezanne and Sargent are each expressive of their Age, but too recent for the true certainty of their greatness to be entirely established. What trends art may take, and what eminence their followers will have, remains, as does the greatness of the present Age, with future generations.

The immediate environment in the home city of each of these artists was in most cases, favorable to his development. The cities represented were Florence, Venice, Urbino, Augsburg, Basle, Nurnberg, Antwerp, Amsterdam, Paris, London, Madrid, Toledo, and Seville, all of which were cultural centers in the time of the artists who represented them. It was notable, too, that all the artists were dependent upon their finished art education in a city, for success. Self-development in art seemed to be sustained by study in an environment with more art opportunities than country life gave.

Financial status of parent and outside aid. The leap from dire poverty to greatness and success, by a few of the great men in history, has tended to create a common belief among the uninformed, that greatness is nurtured by poverty. This inquiry has sought to discover the amount of truth in this belief. Although impermanence in living and monetary standards made the study of the financial status of the parents of famous artists difficult, general agreement of the numerous sources of biography consulted, with the social inheritance and fathers' occupations as a guide, has brought out the following conclusions as to the wealth of the artists' fathers:

Wealthy . . . . .	8
Moderate . . . . .	8
Poor . . . . .	4
No Record . . . . .	1

These figures show 40 per cent of the fathers to have been in moderate circumstances, 40 per cent to have been wealthy, and 20 per cent to have been poor. The one example of real poverty was Millet, whose life was a continuous struggle. Wealth may not always make an ideal background for success, but on the other hand, fighting against odds was not brought out here, as anything but that which, if continued for long, weakens the health or spirit of the individual, and was quoted as an intervening cause of Millet's death. In each of the four cases of

poverty mentioned, there was some outside help which aided the artist to success. Even in the case of Millet, just mentioned, there was the help of the townspeople in sending him to art school, and the aid of influential friends throughout his life. Of the remaining three cases of poverty, Holbein, whose father seems to have suffered some financial difficulties, was surrounded by a family of artists and artist friends as a child. Murillo was adopted by an uncle. Titian's father was a noble aristocrat, extremely proud, and Titian evidently did not suffer the ordinary conditions of poverty. In Chapter I, the summaries made for the Fathers' Occupations (6 Lawyers and Mayors, 6 Artists and other Professionals, 6 Merchants and Tradesmen, and 2 Farmers) and the Social Inheritance of the artists ( 3 Nobility, 15 Middle Class, 2 Poor) placed the circumstances of artists' fathers much above those which are usually associated with poverty.

Brothers and sisters. The financial status of the artists' families would seem to indicate good home conditions, and seldom was there any report to the contrary. In 18 cases, data concerning the number of brothers and sisters in the family seemed reliable enough for averaging, which gave five as the average number of brothers and sisters for each artist or an average of six children in each family.

The largest family was that of Durer's parents, who had seventeen children of whom all but three died in infancy. In several families, the artist was the second-born, in two cases the first, and two cases the fourth. Of the remaining three families, the artist was third, seventh and tenth child. More complete data would undoubtedly cause the average to vary and might bring out some significant factors, but these records were inadequate to indicate any conclusion, either from the standpoint of heredity or environment.

Orphanage. The most noticeable point in the examination of the family life in the childhood of the artists, was the frequency of early death of one or both of the parents. In eight families out of twenty, one or both of the parents died during the artist's youth. Before they were twelve years old, Raphael and Murillo had lost both parents. In three other cases, the mother died, and in still three more, the father died, making a total of ten instances of a parent's death during the artists' youth. That the bereavement had any bearing on artistic success seemed doubtful. The high percentage of deaths appeared to have been merely coincident to this particular group; however, it was not to be ignored, or regarded as a negative element of environment for them, because it did not prevent the artists' success, or even appear to retard it. (Table VI, page 21)

TABLE VI  
CASES OF DEATH OF PARENT  
IN THE YOUTH OF FAMOUS ARTISTS  
OF THIS INVESTIGATION

Artist	Parent	
Michael Angelo	Mother	
Raphael	Mother	Father
Rubens		Father
Van Dyck	Mother	
Millet		Father
Turner	Mother	
Murillo	Mother	Father
Whistler		Father

General education. Although results indicated unusually good opportunities for refinement and culture, the actual general education of this group of artists did not have an average of more than ordinary. None were illiterate, but, only of Rubens, Velasquez, Whistler, and Cezanne, could it be said that the general schooling of the artist, was good. It appeared that the artists' early interest in art took time and interest from subjects of general education, but it was remarkable that most of the artists of this group read and studied all their lives, not merely along the lines of art, but in other fields which broadened their general knowledge and understanding. In many cases, they had enviable opportunities through the excellent surroundings in which they worked and through their patrons and teachers. Michael Angelo enjoyed the luxuries of the Medici palace for three years; part of Ruben's boyhood was spent as a page in the household of a countess at Audenardo; Raphael had the favor of the Duke of Urbino. Some other artists of the group had comparable opportunities in their youth. Among these was travel. Whistler and Sargent traveled most as children and it undoubtedly did much toward broadening their general education. The artists of this group traveled more in later life, and with a definite aim of seeing and copying great works of art, and, the influence of travel in the development of their art abilities was more noticeable than its broadening

effects upon their general knowledge. In the summary of the investigation of the general education of these artists in their youth, it is to be noted that there are many other ways to get an education than in a school, and, although the general average of school advancement, for this group, seemed to be scarcely beyond elementary grades, their other opportunities for learning exceeded those of the average boy or girl.

Early companions. The choice of childhood companions, where such was recorded, was worthy of consideration. Instinctively, they often chose friends who were also interested in art even before the days of their art schooling. But since very little has been recorded for the first ten years in the lives of the earlier artists, no conclusions can be made about the earliest friendships of the group as a whole. Between the ages of twelve or fourteen, and twenty-one, there was record of many associates who were talented and influential either in art or other fields. The atelier of the Master was often a meeting place for the Nobility and Intellect of the Time. The students of the atelier were, by their art talent, naturally a select group. Conclusions that these artists had youthful associates above average, do not appear at all exaggerated.



Summary of conclusions on the early environment of twenty-one famous painters. Conclusions on the early environment of the twenty-one famous painters, seemed to merit the following summarization:

1. Evidence of greatness and number, of the most outstanding and the least outstanding of the artists of this discussion, from various periods of history, indicated a correlation between the greatness of the era and the artists' greatness and degree of success.
2. All the artists received their early art education in cities which were cultural centers in the time of the artist who represented them.
3. Most artists of this group came from homes of wealth or moderate financial circumstances; those who did not, had the aid of outsiders or some other balancing factor, to their success. There was no evident relation between success and poverty in the lives of these painters. Moderate circumstances seemed most favorable.
4. Although eight of the artists of this group lost one or both parents before the age of twelve, their bereavement did not prevent success or even appear to retard it.
5. The average general schooling of the famous

painters was scarcely more than elementary, but the other cultural opportunities which they enjoyed were far above average.

6. The youthful associates of the artists of this inquiry may be classed above average.

CHART 2

EARLY ENVIRONMENT OF TWENTY-ONE FAMOUS PAINTERS

Artist	Financial Status of Parent	Outside Help and Financial Aid	General Schooling	Companions and Friends	Brothers and Sisters
Giotto	Peasant A man of some means	None recorded	No record	From boyhood associated with the great minds of the time	No record
Titian	Poor nobility	None recorded	No record	From early years had powerful friends and patrons	1 brother 2 sisters (2nd son)
Rembrandt	Well-to-do	None recorded	7 years in grammar school Enrolled in University for about one year	Few friends	4 brothers 1 sister (4th son)
Michael Angelo	Moderate means	None recorded	Common school one year Advantages at the de Medici palace	Granacci At de Medici palace surrounded by intellectuals	4 brothers (2nd son)
El Greco	No record	No record	No record	No record	No record
Leonardo da Vinci	Moderately good	None recorded	Limited education in school but said to have read continuously	Few friendships Frequented the society of learned men	9 half-brothers 2 half sisters (1st son - illegitimate)
Velasquez	Wealthy	Help of Pacheco, his art master and later father-in-law	Good The best Seville could offer	At Pacheco's, saw and conversed with intellect of Andalusia	None
Cezanne	Wealthy	None	Very good Studied law in University	Zola, childhood friend	2 sisters
Raphael	Comfortable	Left in care of a priest and his step-mother at death of his father	No record (probably little)	Duke of Urbino Had many friends among elite of society	1 brother) Died in 1 sister ) infancy (3rd child)
Botticelli	Well-to-do burghers	Elder brother a prosperous broker	Good elementary	No record of early friends	3 brothers (4th son)
Rubens	Moderately wealthy	None recorded	Excellent	Moretus Many friends among noblemen and people of quality	1 brother (2nd child)
Holbein (the younger)	Moderate or poor (disputed)	None recorded (father an artist)	Appears to have had but little	No record of early friends	1 brother (No others mentioned)
Millet	Poor	Aid of townspeople and an uncle	Constantly interrupted Read evenings	No record of early friends	7 brothers and sisters (2nd child)
Van Dyck	Wealthy	None recorded Worked independently at sixteen	Taught by his mother who died when Van Dyke was 8 Little other recorded	Preferred the company of his rich patrons to that of his fellow students	12 brothers and sisters (7th child)
Whistler	Wealthy	Influential friends	Very good West Point - 3 years	Many influential friends	2 brothers 1 half-sister
Frans Hals	Wealthy	No record	No record	No record	4 brothers and sisters
Reynolds	Moderate	Aid of a neighbor	Taught by father (quality disputed)	No record of early friends	3 brothers and 3 died in sisters ) infancy (10th child)
Durer	Moderate	Perkheimer, wealthy aristocrat	Ordinary	Perkheimer and other influential friends	17 brothers and sisters - only 3 reached maturity (2nd child)
Murillo	Poor	Uncle adopted him when his parents died Apprenticeship free at Castillo's	Elementary	No record of early friends	1 sister (1st child)
Turner	Moderate	Aid of an uncle Worked professionally as early as 10	Brief	Girtin Few friends	None
Sargent	Wealthy	None recorded	Excellent Far better than most painters	Many faithful, worthwhile friends	4 brothers and sisters
SUMMARY	Wealthy - 8 Moderate - 8 Poor - 4 No record - 1	All the Poor recorded had some compensating advantage	Average for the group was equal to Elementary		The average for 18 cases recorded was a total of 5 brothers and sisters for each artist

### CHAPTER III

#### ART TRAINING OF TWENTY-ONE FAMOUS PAINTERS

The art education of the very early famous painters, can usually be described in a single statement. They began as apprentices in the studio of some popular artist of the day, and remained in apprenticeship until they, themselves, were masters. A close scrutiny of the whole art education of each artist, gives a broader picture.

Early development of talent. In Chapter I, the investigation of the early appearance of talent among the artists, revealed early interest in art and drawing, and, in the majority of cases, precocity. A great part of the time of the artists' childhood, in every case, was spent in drawing, until at an average age of fourteen years, he had mastered the rudiments of art, and was ready to enter systematic training for his life's work. Aside from the good cultural background of home and surroundings which was evidenced for the majority in Chapter II, there was little other art influence, before the age of ten, recorded for any of the artists of this study. The only Method evident before this age, for many, was that of self-teaching. The time spent in drawing in the very early years of the artists' lives, seems to have been considerable. The artists' training, before entering art school, as recorded from all the sources of investigation, is segregated as follows:

TABLE VII  
TRAINING BEFORE ENTERING ART SCHOOL

Artist	Art Training
Giotto	Drew well as a child. The story of Cimabue's finding him sketching a sheep on a stone, is now considered doubtful.
Cezanne	Had no ambition other than art. Took long walks with Zola, and they discussed the arts. Showed little talent in his first painting but always had his mother's encouragement.
Raphael	Precocious in art. When a little boy, saw the paintings in the Court of Urbino. Encouraged and helped by his father, who was also an artist.
Botticelli	No definite record.
Rubens	When a child, copied illustrations in a Swedish bible. His mother was determined that he should have every cultural advantage the world could give.
Holbein (the younger)	His father, nephew, uncle, and brother were artists. Taught by his father and encouraged by both parents and father's artist friends.
Millet	His early inspiration came from engravings in an old illustrated bible. His father and mother always favored his pursuit of art.
Van Dyck	At the age of ten, had mastered the rudiments of art.
Titian	Had natural aptitude for painting, but was not precocious. When a boy, painted with flower juices.

TABLE VII (continued)  
 TRAINING BEFORE ENTERING ART SCHOOL

Artist	Art Training
Rembrandt	Probably studied the landscape from his father's mill. Spent much of his time drawing.
Michael Angelo	Began to draw as soon as he could use his hands. Lived with the family of a stonecutter. Studied all the Florentine artists of his time, in the Brancacci Chapel. At fourteen, when he entered the studio of Ghirlandajo, could draw better than many mature artists.
Leonardo da Vinci	His father was a friend of Verrocchio, the artist. Received the encouragement of his father and his father's friends in his early attempts at drawing.
El Greco	No record of his youth.
Velasquez	At school, he turned his copy-books into sketch-books. Encouraged by his parents in the development of his talent.
Whistler	When a boy, he kept sketch-books which showed no signs of precocity, but obvious talent.
Reynolds	First copied pictures in books. Is reported to have read the Jesuit Perspective at eight years of age, but such precocity is disputed. All the Reynolds children drew and Sir Joshua, who was the youngest, also practiced drawing things and people. Is said to have received his first impulse to become a painter from the prints in a Dutch classic.

TABLE VII (continued)  
 TRAINING BEFORE ENTERING ART SCHOOL

Artist	Art Training
Durer	<p>At thirteen years of age, made a drawing of himself and other sketches which exhibit remarkable ability and skill.            The workshop of his father was undoubtedly an inspiration to him.</p>
Frans Hals	<p>Nothing known of his youth.</p>
Murillo	<p>Showed inclination for art by scribbling on his school books and on the walls.</p>
Turner	<p>His facility for sketching was remarkable even in early years.            Copied drawings and made sketches at every opportunity.</p>
Sargent	<p>Went sketching with his mother, and drew, everywhere he went.            Collected reproductions of the famous paintings in the museums he visited during his boyhood travels in Europe.</p>

Art schools. The art schools attended were of several different types. In the early apprentice school, the pupil lived at the home of the artist for the number of years apprenticed. He first ground colors and did odd jobs about the studio. Later, he copied the master and drew from still life models. Many of the artists soon became more skilful than their masters, but had developed very little individuality, by the time they began working alone. Plagiarism, in the time of the Renaissance, was not looked upon as it is today; Raphael deliberately took ideas from the paintings of his master, Perugino, without any opposition. The early schools based development upon draughtsmanship, and worked from that point into composition and color. The training was rigid; there were not many diversions in the art field for these earlier artists.

The art training of Millet, Reynolds, Turner, Whistler, Cezanne, and Sargent was more comparable to that of present day artists. With time, the number of sources for art study naturally increased, and self-teaching became more evident. The average number of teachers with whom the artists of the apprentice schools studied was a small fraction over two. Night schools and special courses in art made the average number of teachers for later artists much greater, and impossible to average fairly. Turner had studied with ten different masters before the age of fourteen. Whistler,



Cezanne, and Millet studied in Paris, the most outstanding art center of the time. Turner and Reynolds had their first art schooling in London.

Quality of training. The quality of art training, as shown in the chart on Art Training, (page 35) was the best that could be had except in the case of the first masters of the two Spanish painters, Velasquez and Murillo. Velasquez remained about a year with Herrera, who was known as a "harsh tyrant" with average ability, and Murillo remained about two years with Juan del Castillo, classed by one biographer, as "one of the worst painters the school of Seville has produced". The art training of the artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries seemed to have been good, but extremely varied. The total average for the entire group, was, The Best Teachers of the Time.

Other art influences. In the apprentice school and in the Academy, the earlier artists had a better opportunity to learn the methods of their Masters and fellow-students than the later artists had, through short association in classes. But, in almost every case, the artists seized upon every advantage at hand; they visited museums and exhibits, they studied, they practiced alone. A few traveled, but not many, at this early age.

Years spent in study and age at first success. The average number of years which the artists of this inquiry spent in systematic study, was almost equal to the time the average youth of today spends in high school and college. Except for Turner, the number of years which the later painters spent in school was less than that of the earlier painters. The success of many of the earlier painters was recognized even before they had finished their apprenticeships. The school life of the later group seemed to be more of an uncertain struggle, but with their delayed start in art schooling they arrived at success at about the same age as the earlier painters except in one case. Cezanne, because of his new outlook on art, was scarcely recognized until he was sixty-six years old. Not including Cezanne, the average age at first recognition of their work was about twenty-two years. Including Cezanne in the average, it was near twenty-five years. Turner, Van Dyck, and Murillo were making their own way at the age of fifteen. Holbein was earning his living by art, at sixteen.

Summary of conclusions on the art training of twenty-one famous painters. The art training of the twenty-one painters may be summed up in the following statements:

1. The development in drawing, through observation, practice, and environmental influence, by the famous painters, before entering art school, was

remarkable.

2. Famous painters of this research usually had the best instructors and went to the best schools of their time. The average number of schools attended in the old apprentice days was but two; artists of later days averaged more.
3. Most of the famous artists took advantage of all art opportunities within their reach.
4. The average number of years spent in the systematic training of an art school, by the artists of this group was eight years. The older masters often spent more time in apprenticeship; the later artists usually spent less time in art school.
5. The average age at first recognition of the artist's work was about twenty-three years, although Cezanne, because of his new outlook on art, was not recognized until he was sixty-six years old.

Artist	Age at Entering Art School	Art Schools	Quality of Training	Years Spent in Study	Other Art Influences	Age at First Success
Giotto	10	Cimabue ? Giovanni Pisano ? -Disputed-	Best of the time	Unknown	Native town of Vespignano and City of Florence	Early 20's Most independent, original artist in Italy
Titian	10	Zuccato Senseria Bellini and sons	Mosaicist and painter Best painter of time Eminent painters	9	Giorgione, a fellow pupil Palma Vecchio City of Venice	18 Portrait of Barbarigo
Rembrandt	12	Swanenburch Pieter Lastman	Architectural painter trained in Italy Popular atelier of the time	10½	Roeland Rughman Amsterdam Self-teaching - 7 yrs	22 Works of remarkable excellence
Michael Angelo	14	Ghirlandajo Bertoldo at di Medici's	Most popular master in Florence Best of the time	6	Florence	18 Stood alone in the realm of art
El Greco	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	28 or 29 In Rome
Leonardo da Vinci	14	Verrocchio	Not only one of the great creative forces of the time, but a first-rate craftsman	7	Botticelli	18 Painted pictures that aroused the art world's admiration
Velasquez	12	Herrera Pacheco	A harsh tyrant, but one of best known Excellent teacher	6	Self-instruction Direct studies from nature	25 Equestrian portrait of Philip IV
Cezanne	10	School of St. Joseph Courses at museum Paris	Spanish monk Good	(5)	De La Croix Baroque Painters Tintoretto, Courbet, Rubens, and Pissarro	66 Exhibit in Autumn Salon
Raphael	8	Father's studio Timoteo Viti Perugino	Average One of the largest schools in Italy	9-10	Court of Urbino Michael Angelo Study of antiques in Rome	19 First independent work
Botticelli	(13-Goldsmith) 16	Botticelli Fra Filippo Lippi	Goldsmith Famous artist	12	Florence	22 Considered the best painter in Florence
Rubens	14	Tobias Verhaecht Adam Van Noort Otto Vaenius	Landscape painter of Jesuit School Court painter Famous Flemish painter	6	Antwerp	20 Admitted to the Guild of St. Luke
Holbein (the younger)	Very early Probably 9	Father's studio Hans Herbst at Basle	Good Best of time in that country	About 10 years with his father	Augsberg and Basle	21 Had become a real master
Millet	18	Mouchel Langlois De La Roche - Paris Evening school - Paris	Studied under David Studied under Gros Good	(7)	Incessant visits and copywork at Louvre	26 Picture accepted by Academy
Van Dyck	10	Hendrick Van Balem Rubens	An historical painter of great merit One of the greatest painters in history	11	Italian influence	18 Became member of Guild at Antwerp
Whistler	11	Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in Russia Paris (Atelier of Gleyre--Courbet)	Good Ingres-tradition	(5)	Travel Learned about etching when a draughtsman in the Coastal Survey	26 First picture admitted to Royal Academy
Frans Hals	Unknown	Karl Van Manders Rubens ? Antonio Mor ? Van Noort ? -Disputed-	Best of the time	Unknown	Unknown	33
Reynolds	17	Hudson	Best portrait painter in England at time	4	Mediterranean trip with Captain Keppel 2 years study in Rome	23 Portrait of Captain Hamilton
Durer	(13-Goldsmith) 15½	Father's shop Michel Wolgemut Brothers of Schongauer	Goldsmith A noted artist Famed metal engravers	9	Travel	25
Murillo	12	Juan del Castillo Velasquez-in Madrid	No genius - Murillo learned little from him Famous painter	11	Practice from still life	22
Turner	9	Had seven masters before he was fourteen Royal Academy	Good Best in England	At least 9	Sketching with Girtin Copying for Dr. Monroe	15 Exhibiting in Royal Academy
Sargent	13 (Probably Earlier)	Took drawing lessons wherever possible Florence - Academy Paris - Duran	Good	(6)	Travel Museums Books	21
SUMMARY	Average about 13 years	Average number of schools attended by earlier artists - a fraction over 2 Later artists attended more	Average - Best of the time	Least average estimate - a little over 7 years		Average 23 years excluding Cezanne Average 25 years including Cezanne

CHAPTER IV  
LATER ENVIRONMENT AND SUCCESS  
OF TWENTY-ONE FAMOUS PAINTERS

The environment of the artists after they had left art school, was one which they themselves had helped to create. The information concerning this period in their lives was organized into the four following channels of interest:

1. Recognition and acceptance of the artists' works.
2. Later growth in artistic power.
3. Social relationships, including marriage, children and friends.
4. Financial success or failure, and manner of living.

Recognition and success. In the early days, artists were ambitious to attain the favor of the Pope, a King, or some member of Nobility. That was the highest honor they could receive. The artists of this group, who painted for a Pope, were Michael Angelo, Raphael, Giotto, and Botticelli. Eight of the remaining artists were Court Painters. Four of these were knighted, and one, Velasquez, received the Cross of Santiago. All of the other nine artists had some amount of recognition before they died. Murillo clung to his home town which showered him with favors; Turner was always recognized by the Academy; Rembrandt and Hals enjoyed periods

of success. El Greco had many commissions for which he received ample pay. Whistler had fair recognition in Paris, though England was at times unsympathetic. Sargent received decorations and diplomas from many countries. Cezanne and Millet received the smallest recognition, but in spite of their unpopularity, Millet had the favor of the Salon and the Academy, and Cezanne began to be noticed in the later years of his life. The reverence of Italy toward art brought its artists a finer quality of recognition than the artists of countries where art was considered more of a common trade. Durer, for example, enjoyed greater fame and luxury in Italy than in his own home city of Nurnberg.

Later growth in artistic power. Ten of the twenty-one painters developed one or more of the arts allied to painting.<sup>1</sup> Their talent enabled them to work along the lines of architecture, sculpture, designing, and engraving. Their growth in individuality and artistic power, through industry and perseverance, was even greater than their precocious development in early youth. They continued study and practice, they experimented, they traveled to other cities and countries to study and copy the works of other masters. They worked incessantly; their output was enormous.

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<sup>1</sup> Column 6, Chart 1, p. 14.

Social relationships. The more personal affairs of these artists seemed to have had but little direct effect upon their artistic production. Their own attitude toward their environment was, to a degree, apart from their art. At times, the amount and type of creation changed, but the quality seemed to remain the same. Although, as a group, they had many interests, it was evident that art came first.

Fourteen of the twenty-one artists married, some of them twice. Eight cases of irregular attachment were noted. Frans Hals, who was married twice, had ten children, the greatest number reported for any family. Of those who married, Durer was the only one having no children. Seven of the artists never married. Of the sixty-six children which gave an average of over four for each of the fifteen artists who had any, either legal or illegal, seven were said to have died in infancy. Of those who remained, only sons of El Greco, Murillo, Titian, and Hals were mentioned as having had talent in art. Little was known of the others. Only eight of the marriage ages were recorded. Their average age, at marriage, was 29.9 years.

The nature of art and the industry necessary in filling all the commissions to which the artist were entrusted, necessitated their maintaining some reserve, but a solitary nature seemed characteristic of but few. The artists who had friendly social natures were in the majority. Some, like

Whistler were dependent upon society for inspiration. Their positions gave them an opportunity to associate with the leading men of their time. In the column on companions and friends of chart 4, page 42, a few of the friendships have been recorded. That the artists had many notable and worthwhile friends, was evident.

Financial success. Although the original amount paid for paintings was beggarly compared to the enormous sums they have brought since, the majority of the artists accumulated wealth. In many cases, biographers attempted to determine money values in terms of today. Such calculation naturally involved some inaccuracy, but was of greater value than an unmeaning statement of guilders, florins, or ducats. The estimates of the artists' wealth or poverty were built upon the monetary and living standards of their own time. Those reported as wealthy were Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian, Rubens, Van Dyck, Turner, and Reynolds. Those who were in good circumstances were Leonardo da Vinci, Giotto, Holbein, Velasquez, Murillo, Durer, and Sargent. Five of the painters were said to have gone bankrupt or ended in poverty because of mismanagement. Those belonging to this last group were Botticelli, El Greco, Rembrandt, Frans Hals, and Whistler. Those who received the smallest financial returns for their work were Millet and Cezanne. The latter



had the good fortune of inheriting the wealth of his father. Millet was the only one of the entire group of twenty-one painters who remained very poor all his life.

Manner of living. The artists' reaction to success was comparative to the reaction of a group taken at large today. Raphael, Titian, Rubens, and some others lived in palaces like princes while Michael Angelo who left the equivalence of about a hundred thousand dollars, and Turner who left nearly five hundred thousand pounds and numerous paintings which he had hoarded, lived like hermits in squalor. Two, Giotto and Cezanne, seemed to have always lived simply, regardless of wealth. Of those who have been mentioned as having ended in poverty because of mismanagement, El Greco, Rembrandt, and Whistler went into debt, and lived beyond their means. Whistler succeeded in making a new start, but the others died in financial circumstances which were growing worse each year. The tendency in manner of living was toward extremes in luxury or simplicity.

Summary of conclusions on later environment and success of twenty-one famous painters. In review of the later environment and success of the twenty-one painters, the following conclusions were evidenced:

1. All the artists of the group were recognized for

their genius, during their own lifetime. Many of them enjoyed the highest honors.

2. The artists' later growth in power was as remarkable as their early precocity. Many developed skill in lines other than painting.
3. Over half the artists married and had families of an average of more than four children of whom but few showed any talent in art.
4. More artists were friendly and socially inclined than solitary; they had many noted friends.
5. All the artists except Cezanne and Millet received ample remuneration for their work.
6. Over half the group left considerable wealth at death.
7. The manner of living was usually, but not always, affected by the wealth of the artist. The tendency was toward extremes in luxury or simplicity.

Artist	Recognition During Lifetime	Social Relationships			Finances and Living	
		Marriage	Children	Companions and Friends	Financial Success	Manner of Living
Giotto	Painter to the Pope and King of Naples	Yes Young	6	Dante and other famous men of his time	Wealthy Owned several houses and estate of father	Thrifty and Prudent
Titian	Court Painter Knighthed	Yes At 48	6	Pietro Aretino Sansovino Giorgione Ludovico Aristo	Rich Lordly income and stately mansion	Lived magnificently but with habitual prudence
Rembrandt	First recognized as the leading portrait painter in Amsterdam. Later years not so successful	Yes At 28	6 (one was illegitimate)	Rabbi Jan Six Jan Lievens Coppenol	Began successfully Went bankrupt and remained a pauper	Fine studio but plain living at first Later lived in poverty
Michael Angelo	Regarded reverently Painter to Popes	No	None	Great men of the day Vittoria Colonna Tomaso Cavalieri Giorgione	Wealthy Left about \$100,000 at death	Miserly, squalid habits but with himself only Lived like a monk
El Greco	Lost the favor of Philip II but recognized by the people of Spain	No (?)	1 illegitimate (?)	Few recorded Pacheco	Enormous income Died in debt	Extravagant 24 room palace Indulgent Bohemian
Leonardo da Vinci	Well received Painter to the Duke of Milan and King of France	No	None	Duke of Milan Perugino Botticelli King Francis I - France	Wealthy	Luxuriously - main- tained numerous ser- vants and fine equipage
Velasquez	Court Painter Received the Cross of Santiago	Yes At 19	2	Artists of the time Philip IV of Spain Olivarez	Wealthy	Lived at King's court Always had his own personal slave
Cezanne	Almost unknown	Yes at 27	1	Manet, Fantin, Renoir, and other artists of his time (misanthrope)	Inherited wealth of his father Made little himself	Lived simply
Raphael	Painter to Pope	No	None	Fra Bartolommeo Baccio d' Agnolo Popes Julius X - Leo XI Castiglione	Rich	Lived in a palace in princely state
Botticelli	Painter to Lorenzo de Medici and Pope Sextus	No	None	Leonardo da Vinci Savonarolla Pope Sextus IV	Became rich but never could keep money	Lived improvidently Died a pauper
Rubens	Court Painter Knighthed	Yes - twice First, at 32	6	Queen Isabella Velasquez	Rich	Lived by schedule in a palatial house
Holbein (the younger)	Painter to King Henry VIII of England	Yes at 22	6 (two were illegitimate)	Erasmus Sir Thomas Moore King Henry VIII	Well-to-do	After 1537 connected with all that was highest in society Drew salary in advance
Millet	Recognized by the Salon and the Academy Received medals	Yes	3	Azevedo Grouchy, Langlois, Corot, Rollin, and artists of his time	Pauper	Lived 27 years in a three room cottage
Van Dyck	Court Painter Knighthed	Yes At 40	2 (one was illegitimate)	Rubens Charles I of England	Wealthy	Lived in handsome style Extravagant
Whistler	Fair recognition in England Academy in Paris	Yes	1 illegitimate	Albert Moore Fantin Latour Legros Oscar Wilde	Good start but extrav- agance caused bankrupt- cy - started anew	Expensive tastes Always in debt
Frans Hals	From 1630 to 1640 acknowledged First Painter in Holland	Yes - twice	10	Little record	Fair pay Poor business man	Not pretty Drunkard Died in almshouse
Reynolds	Court Painter Knighthed	No	None	Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith, Sterne, Burke, Garrick, and literary men of Age	Rich Received about 6,000 pounds annually from portraits	Fine house and furnishings Stringent economy
Durer	Reputation spread all over Europe	Yes at 23	None	Perkheimer Melancon All first masters of his age	Well-to-do Left over \$50,000 to his wife	Comfortable Expensive dress Money conscious
Murillo	Idol of Seville Scarcely known beyond Andalusia	Yes	5	Many friends among fel- low artists and most cultured of Seville	Wealthy	Fine home Entertained much but was thrifty and modest
Turner	Royal Academician for nearly fifty years	No	4 illegitimate	Few friends	Rich Left 145,000 pounds and numerous paintings	Lived like a hermit with miserly habits
Sargent	Received decorations and diplomas from many countries	No	None	Artists of his time Kept old friends and made many new ones	Wealthy	Took little interest in money but lived on a generous scale
<b>SUMMARY</b>	4 Painters to a Pope 8 Court Painters 8 Other recognition 1 Almost unknown	14 Married Average of 29.9 years for age at marriage (8 averaged)	15 had children Average 4.6 each	(Further data - Chart 2, page 26)	14 wealthy or in good circumstances 5 bankrupt 1 poor always	

## CHAPTER V

### COMMON FACTORS OF ENDOWMENT, AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCE IN THE LIVES OF FOUR MODERN PAINTERS, COMPARED WITH SUMMARIES FOR TWENTY-ONE FAMOUS PAINTERS IN HISTORY

Customs of today are vastly different from those in history. Art standards have changed; the outlook has even seemed to remold the artist himself. The question as to whether the salient points brought out in the summaries of the previous chapters, would be common to the lives of more recent painters, has made study of a few of our present day artists seem necessary to the completion of this research.

The living artists were selected as representative of the modern era. A review of their lives, from the standpoint of Heredity, Early Environment, Art Training, and Later Environment and Success, has mirrored the study of famous painters in history with enlightenment on factors of heredity and environmental influence which may be common to artists as a group.

Inherited talent. Inquiry as to heredity of art talent, found that each of the modern artists had other artistic relatives. More complete data in the earlier study would probably have made its results similar. Early display

of art interest and precocity in drawing was similar in average to that of the first study. (Chart 5)

General intelligence. Judging by the factors of Fathers' Occupations, Social Inheritance, Biographical Opinion, and Other Talents, the intelligence of the modern group of painters was also above average. (Chart 5)

Physical energy and industry. The terms used by biographers in describing the physical energy and industry of the modern painters were indicative of greater than average industry and ordinary physical energy. (Chart 5)

Early environmental factors. The financial status of the fathers of the modern painters seemed to have been moderate. None were poor. Diego Rivera had the aid of the government of Vera Cruz in his study abroad. The artists came from cultured homes. (Chart 6)

Art training. The study of art among the modern group of painters was comparable in type to that of Cezanne, Whistler, and Sargent of the first group. That of Diego Rivera was the broadest. It was representative of the best and most complete art training offered in the modern world of today. The training which Brangwyn had in his father's workshop and through practice in commercial art seems on a level with that of Holbein. Georgia O'Keeffe represents the

CHART 5

INHERITANCE OF FOUR MODERN PAINTERS

Artist	Art Talent		General Intelligence				Physical Energy	
	Relatives having art talent	Age at entering art school	Fathers' occupations	Social inheritance	Other talents and accomplishments	Biographers' opinion	Biographers' report	Industry
Diego Rivera	None recorded	11	(Family of soldiers) Teacher	Middle class Culture	None recorded	Learned to read at five	Often ill when a child Average	Weeks of furious painting
Picasso	Father	Very early	Drawing teacher	Good	None recorded	Superior Inventive	None recorded	At 18 made two pictures a day
Georgia O'Keeffe	Three sisters Two grandmothers	17		Refined	Commercial art Supervisor of Education	Good	Average	Days given over to painting
Frank Brangwyn	Father Uncle	Early	Architect	Middle class Refined	Etching Design	Good	Great vitality of nervous system	Paints at white heat or not at all

CHART 6

EARLY ENVIRONMENT OF FOUR MODERN PAINTERS

Artist	Financial Status of Parent	Outside Help and Financial Aid	General Schooling	Companions and Friends	Brothers and Sisters
Diego Rivera	Moderate	Granted 300 fr. a month by the Gov. of Vera Cruz for study	Taught by aunt and father 3 months regular schooling	Russian friends Picasso and other artists	7 brothers and sisters - all died but one (Diego a twin)
Picasso	Moderate	None recorded	Little recorded	Many friends among the best artists of his generation	None mentioned
Georgia O'Keeffe	Moderate	None	University graduate	Almost a recluse	3 sisters
Frank Brangwyn	Moderate	Rathbone's criticisms and suggestions	Dames school and a middle class school	Kindly and Friendly Other artists	2 sisters

best art training in America While Picasso represents that of Europe. The early development of art talent, number of years spent in study, and the ambitions in self-teaching, visiting museums, and travel have averages equal to those of the earlier painters. The latest age at the first recognition of success was thirty-three. (Chart 7)

Later environment and success. Due to the fact that all the painters are living, the study of the later environment and success of modern painters was necessarily incomplete. A quotation concerning the present recognition of each has been recorded in Chart 8. Although the four modern painters now seem to be well paid, the monetary recognition of their genius came at a later age than that for the majority of the famous painters in history. The patronage of Popes and Nobility, the use of art in the churches, the lack of fine photography, and scarcity of good painters, caused greater demand for the artists in history. Although, today, the world has more art and more artists, the wealthy connoisseur patronizes the artists in history more than those of his own time.

The growth of the modern artists in later years has been apparent in their work, but novelty of invention and changeability has seemed to retard the steady development of power which was evidenced among the early famous painters.



CHART 7

ART TRAINING OF FOUR MODERN PAINTERS

Artist	Age at Entering Art School	Art Schools	Quality of Training	Years Spent in Study	Other Art Influences	Age at First Success
Diego Rivera	11	Academy of Beaux Arts in Mexico Europe	Studied under the best artists of his time	10	Studio at home Travel Picasso	20 First one-man exhibit
Picasso	Early	Father Academy in Barcelona Paris	Very good Good Best of the time	All his life	Practice of invention and self-teaching in art	18 Paris
Georgia O'Keeffe	17	Chicago Art Institute N.Y. Art Students League Columbia U.	Among the foremost art schools of America	Over 5 years	Advertising and practice in commercial art Art teaching	33 Show at Anderson Galleries in N.Y.
Frank Brangwyn	Early	No academic training		All his life	Copywork in museums William Morris shop Father Travel	18 A picture accepted by Royal Academy

CHART 8

LATER ENVIRONMENT AND SUCCESS OF FOUR MODERN PAINTERS

Artist	Recognition During Lifetime	Social Relationships			Finances and Living	
		Marriage	Children	Companions and Friends	Financial Success	Manner of Living
Diego Rivera	Recognized all over the world	Yes		(See Chart 6 page 46)	Contracts averaging about \$23,000 each	Simple home at St. Angel Mexico City
Picasso	His paintings hang in all the greatest collections	Yes	Yes	(See Chart 6 page 46)	Wealthy	Studio always bare Fine Apartment in Paris
Georgia O'Keeffe	Foremost woman painter of the world	Yes at 37	No	(See Chart 6 page 46)	Well paid	Lives simply on a 30th floor in N.Y.
Frank Brangwyn	Considered one of the best painters of the present day	No		(See Chart 6 page 46)	Well paid	Attractive home tastefully furnished Modest

The extravagance and princely living of some of the famous painters in history was not true of the modern painters. Although they seemed keenly interested in people and world affairs, they lived simply and independently, placing a premium upon time, and reserving the greater part of it for the pursuit of their talent.

Summary of conclusions on inheritance and environment of four modern painters. The fewness of cases in the study of the modern painters, the necessary incompleteness, and the uncertainty of their future recognition, made it a study which has value only as a supplement to the major study of twenty-one painters. In comparison of the two studies, the summary of conclusions was as follows:

1. All the factors of heredity among the four modern painters seemed to compare favorably with those of the painters in history.
2. The factors of early environment among the modern painters paralleled the averages in factors of early environment of the twenty-one famous painters. No outstanding differences were apparent.
3. The art training of the modern painters was like that of the famous painters, in amount and in quality.
4. The outstanding differences between the later environment of the modern painters and that of the

painters of the first study, was in wealth accumulated and manner of living. None of the modern painters lived on the extravagant scale that was evidenced in the lives of some of the earlier painters.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS \*

The purpose of this research was to discover the truths and fallacies in common impressions about artists as a group, and to organize the facts in a way that would minimize hearsay and opinion and form some precepts of guidance for sound recognition and proper development of real talent in art. Therefore the perspective given in the preceding chapters bears reconsideration, not merely for correcting impressions about artists, but also in ascertaining common factors which might aid in the guidance and training of art students.

Common factors of heredity. In the final analyses, the following generalizations were made for factors of heredity:

1. The artists' genius seemed due to some special inheritance or inherited combinations of attitudes and capacities which showed up at an early age; talent in fields other than painting was not uncommon.
2. Genius in art came oftenest in families of intelligence and refinement. Superior intelligence accompanied superior talent in art.

3. The incessant industry characteristic of the artists, was usually backed by superior physical strength and nervous energy.
4. Love of beauty, ambition, and industry were the only qualities of temperament or personality which were obviously common to the group. The artists had an unusual amount of individuality.

Environmental influence. The final conclusions drawn from the summaries on earlier and later environment were as follows:

1. The most salient point in the artists' environment was the trend of thought in the Age when they lived; there appeared to be a relation between the greatness of the Age and the greatness of the artist.
2. The famous artists usually came from homes of the upper middle class in wealthy or moderate circumstances. Their genius was nurtured in an environment which offered superior cultural and art opportunities.
3. Long years spent in the school room was not characteristic of famous artists, but the other advantages which they had were superior, and balanced the lack of general schooling.

4. The genius of the artists was developed in cities which were noted as art centers.
5. The Quality of the work produced by the artists seemed in no way lowered by ordinary disappointments and sorrows in life.
6. Most famous artists enjoyed the friendship and association of the greatest thinkers of their time.
7. Nearly all the artists were recognized during their lifetime, and received ample remuneration for their work. Many enjoyed the highest honors and became wealthy.
8. The tendency in manner of living was toward extremes in luxury or poverty.

Common factors in art training. The review of summaries for art training brought out the following conclusions:

1. The artists began drawing very early; by the age of twelve or thirteen, their genius had usually become so apparent that they had chosen art as their life's work and entered systematic study which lasted from eight to twelve years in the best schools, and under the best instruction of the time.

2. Individuality in artistic genius had its greatest development after the days of training in apprenticeship or the academy.
3. Self-teaching through observation and practice was present throughout the artists' lives.
4. The famous artists took advantage of opportunities for study and development of their artistic genius.

The final summary of conclusions just presented has brought out some factors in heredity and environment which have refuted popular opinions about artists, and seem worthy of consideration in planning the guidance program for the talented pupil in art. Many other questions pertaining to art and art training have arisen during this inquiry -- Why have there been no women painters of the first rank? -- How much can taste be influenced by training? -- How important to artistic success is Freedom from Convention? -- Can True originality be destroyed? -- How far in self-teaching can gifted pupils go? -- Will mediocre art be the result of the surplus of such assimilative material as pictures, books, exhibits, and collections which are so common in art education today? It is hoped that these questions will incite others, and that more earnest study and research will be done along art lines to bring better



understanding of art, finer art training, and less mediocrity  
in production.

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