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Colleague Collectors: A Statistical Analysis of Artists' Collecting Networks in Nineteenth-Century New York

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Abstract:

This article on the history of collecting in the United States during the nineteenth century is divided in two parts. Part I uses novel quantitative data and econometric methods to examine the extent to which socioeconomic factors systematically influenced nineteenth-century American art collectors' acquisitions. These statistical tests reveal that American artists were some of the most active collectors of contemporary American art during the nineteenth century. Part II explores the phenomenon of colleague collecting. It argues that nineteenth-century American artists collected one another's work to help each other in an art world and market with inconsistent institutional and commercial support.

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Colleague Collectors: A Statistical Analysis of Artists' Collecting Networks in Nineteenth-Century New York

by Diana Seave Greenwald

with Allan McLeod

Introduction

For centuries, cartoonists have lampooned art collectors' displays of social pretension. Consider, for example, Englishman George Moutard Woodward's *A Lilliputian Auction* (fig. 1) and American Udo Keppler's *The Magnet* (fig. 2). In Woodward's image (ca. 1804), large-headed "connoisseurs" in powdered wigs and spectacles debate the authenticity of a portrait of Cleopatra by "that great Egyptian master Correggio" while the aquiline-nosed queen on sale presides over the crowd's factually incorrect conversations. In *The Magnet* (1911), produced about a century later on the other side of the Atlantic, Keppler shows American financier J. P. Morgan using a giant magnetic dollar sign to pull the treasures of the world toward him across the ocean. When they arrive, the artworks will cover his money magnet, implying that Morgan's taste for art will add a veneer of refinement to his wealth. Beyond such caricatures, scholarship has also engaged with the association between wealth, social standing, and art collecting. In *L'évolution du goût aux États-Unis* (1938), a foundational study of American collectors in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, French scholar René Brimo wrote, "Quite often, one collects much as one dresses, for both acts are expressions of social decorum, signifiers of status. . . . One's era and city or country of origin, like the social class into which one has been born, are all factors that may lead one to collect."^[1]

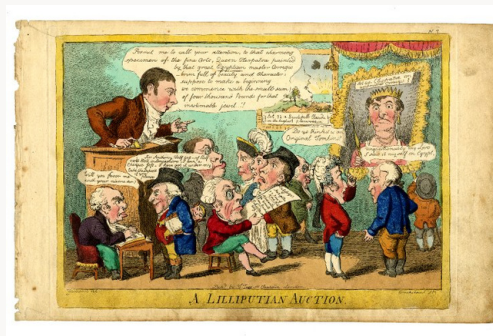


Fig. 1, Isaac Cruikshank after George Moutard Woodward, *A Lilliputian Auction*, ca. 1804. Hand-colored etching. British Museum, London. Artwork in the public domain; image available from: <http://www.britishmuseum.org>. [larger image]



Fig. 2, Udo Keppler, *The Magnet*, *Puck* 69, no. 1790 (June 21, 1911): centerfold. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of the Library of Congress.

[\[larger image\]](#)

The following article on the history of collecting in the United States during the nineteenth century looks at whether there is measurable evidence to support Brimo's claim that certain types of people are more likely to collect art than others. The article, which is divided in two sections, begins with an interrogation of the observed link between socioeconomic background and what kind of art a person chooses to collect. Using quantitative data, it examines the extent to which socioeconomic factors systematically influenced whether a nineteenth-century American art collector was more likely to collect contemporary American art instead of contemporary European art or works by Old Masters—and therefore whether or not a certain kind of art was particularly sought after by certain types of people, whether self-made men, New Yorkers, or any of the many other kinds of collectors whose holdings are examined here. After a brief review of various socioeconomic studies of art collecting, Part I then provides an introduction to a new database—the Historical American Art Exhibition Database (HAAExD), which I assembled in 2015 for my doctoral research—and to the statistical methods used to analyze it. A digital feature presents the results of the statistical tests, which reveal two striking conclusions: first, socioeconomic factors are generally not good predictors of the mix of artworks that nineteenth-century American collectors owned, and second, American artists were some of the most active collectors of contemporary American art during the nineteenth century.

This second revelation marks the conclusion of Part I and a transition to Part II, which delves into regression results indicating that American artists were active collectors of their peers' works. Why did they do this? My proposed answer depends on evidence culled from the following sources: the auction catalogues of six American artists' personal art collections; a case study on the painter Daniel Huntington; and analyses of various artistic and civic organizations to which Huntington and his peers belonged. Examining this quantitative and qualitative evidence, this essay argues that nineteenth-century American artists, particularly those active in and around New York City, collected one another's work to help each other in an art world and market that was otherwise characterized by inconsistent institutional and commercial support.

The primary goal of this article is to answer the two research questions set out in Parts I and II: (1) whether socioeconomic factors influenced nineteenth-century American collectors'

acquisition choices and (2) why nineteenth-century American artists were such active collectors of one another's work. In addition to answering these questions, this article also aims to introduce art historians to statistical methods that can trace causal relationships in data.

In art history and other humanities disciplines, scholars have often used descriptive statistics and graphing under the aegis of the digital humanities. These methods were pioneered by English literature scholars, notably Franco Moretti and Matthew L. Jockers.^[2] Using what they described as “distant reading” and “macroanalysis,” these two scholars were able to track, among other things, “the prevalence of novels by women versus men, [novels written] in the eastern versus western United States, and . . . information about title lengths and the frequency of title subjects over [centuries].”^[3] Art historians have followed the lead of this digital humanities work. A significant subset of digital art history—from Anne Helmreich's study of the movement of paintings marketed by the Goupil group of galleries to the ongoing Artl@s exhibition mapping project led by Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel and Catherine Dossin—is dedicated to digitally and quantitatively tracing trends in the art world over space and time.^[4] Part I of this article presents typical descriptive statistics like those seen in earlier studies. It then moves beyond a description of trends over space and time and uses econometric methods to examine *why* certain trends occurred.

This article is not the first to apply econometric methods to art-historical research. Studies using these methods have been previously published by the economic historians Kim Oosterlinck, Géraldine David, Jeroen Euwe, and Kathryn Graddy.^[5] However, these interdisciplinary efforts have focused exclusively on one topic: art markets. Economists and economic historians interested in the history of art have written mostly about the changing monetary value of art over time and what factors affect these changes.^[6] Even when economists engage with research questions that go beyond the market, auction data are central to their analyses.^[7] My work seeks to move beyond this preoccupation with markets and the data they generate.

When art historians turn to economic methods it is usually to answer research questions specifically about the art market. Examples of these efforts include Christian Huemer's collaboration with Oosterlinck and David; Noah Horowitz's *Art of the Deal* (2011); and Thomas M. Bayer and John R. Page's *The Development of the Art Market in England* (2011).^[8] With its focus on art markets and price data, this interdisciplinary research has siloed the application of economic methods within the study of art history. This article aims to demonstrate that statistical methods can also be used on data that are not restricted to monetary amounts, as well as be used to answer research questions that do not deal directly with the market.

Part I

Art and Class: A Literature Review

Did socioeconomic factors influence which art nineteenth-century American collectors

acquired? Scholars' answer to this question has been a clear "yes" since René Brimo's study in the early twentieth century. Brimo's work has not, however, been the most influential or cited theoretical text in the study of the history of collecting in America. Instead, the most notable work in this subfield is a book written not about nineteenth-century America but about late twentieth-century France: French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (1979). The book asserts that "there is an economy of cultural goods [with] a specific logic."^[9] This logic is determined by the education and upbringing—the *habitus*—of the participants in the cultural economy. Bourdieu writes:

In a sense, one can say that the capacity to see (*voir*) is a function of the knowledge (*savoir*) A work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is the code into which it is encoded. . . . A beholder who lacks the specific code feels lost in a chaos of sounds and rhythms, colors and lines, without rhyme or reason.^[10]

Because transacting in this cultural economy demands this encoding, Bourdieu concludes that class may be not only expressed but also defined and transmitted to future generations through the consumption of cultural goods. Finally, he argues that formation of class distinction on the basis of cultural tastes is particularly effective. While upwardly mobile people may be able to accumulate financial capital in one lifetime, cultural understanding is the product of "total, early, imperceptible learning, performed within the family from the earliest days of life and extended by a scholastic learning which presupposes and completes it. . . . [B]ourgeois families hand [this] down to their offspring as if it were an heirloom."^[11]

Since its publication, *Distinction* has established the assertion that cultural activities, tastes, and institutions are potent sites of class formation. Bourdieu's theories have been applied to American contexts by many scholars, two of the most influential of whom are sociologist Paul DiMaggio and art historian Alan Wallach. DiMaggio draws on the association between class and taste to argue that cultural institutions—museums, symphonies, etc.—aggregated, consolidated, and enshrined American upper-class taste for "high culture."^[12] Wallach's work has focused on the patrons of landscape painter Thomas Cole (1801–48), whose career, he says, "spanned the critical period in the history of New York in which an old aristocracy finally lost its grip on the city's cultural life to a 'new' bourgeois or middle-class elite." He then argues that Cole's art was molded by socially grounded preferences of the aristocratic or bourgeois patrons who purchased his artwork.^[13] This focus on the influence not just of individual patrons but of *types* of patrons has dominated this subfield of study.^[14]

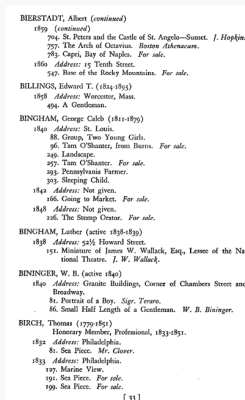
Ultimately, this literature presents a question that has endured for four decades: Can one define class-delineated tastes for art, and what is the effect of these tastes on artistic production? The answer according to current scholarly literature is yes, one can define class-delineated tastes for art. Yet, as John Ott recently wrote in a review essay about the history of collecting in America, "On the whole, much necessary work on the consumption of American art remains to be done [M]ost studies have been more descriptive acts of archival recovery rather than synthetic analyses of larger trends and developments."^[15] What Ott does not note explicitly is that many of the synthetic analyses that exist rely on the application of theories formulated for other geographies and eras—such as Bourdieu's—rather than to a specifically American time and place. This essay, in contrast, does not simply apply these foreign theories to nineteenth-century America. Instead, it uses new quantitative

data about art collectors in the United States to assess how well the theories fit the American context.

The Historical American Art Exhibition Database (HAAExD): Meeting a Need for Data

Many of Bourdieu's conclusions in *Distinction* relied, in fact, on quantitative analysis. Bourdieu surveyed hundreds of French people from different socioeconomic backgrounds living both in Paris and *en province*. He then tabulated the results and conducted statistical analyses of patterns in the responses. Obviously, scholars of the history of collecting in nineteenth-century America cannot access this kind of quantitative evidence today; it is impossible to survey hundreds of long-dead art collectors to solicit their opinions about visual arts, music, and literature. Therefore, to date, it has been difficult to apply the quantitative elements of Bourdieu's reasoning to historical collecting. While it is still impossible to emulate Bourdieu's methodology in a historical setting, however, a new original dataset—the Historical American Art Exhibition Database (HAAExD)—provides previously unavailable digital and quantifiable information about collectors' holdings and their socioeconomic backgrounds.

The HAAExD is a compilation of transcriptions of seven hard-copy indices created for exhibition in select venues (fig. 3 is an example of an exhibition list), plus information from one already-digital index, the Smithsonian American Art Museum's [Pre-1877 Art Exhibition Catalogue Index](#).^[16] An exhibition index is a list of artworks shown at an exhibition venue (e.g., an art academy, commercial gallery, museum, or temporary charity exhibition), and traditionally these indices have been used as finding aids for determining an artwork's provenance or establishing an artist's exhibition record. The HAAExD repurposes these indices as a source of data about which artworks—including original contemporary works, pieces from Old Masters, and *objets d'art*—were exhibited in the nineteenth century. Combining this information forms a database of 274,638 works of art exhibited around the United States during the long nineteenth century.^[17]



HERSTADT, Albert (continued)
1879 (continued)
794. St. Peter and the Castle of St. Angelo—Summ. J. Hopkin.
795. The Arch of Octavius. *Boston Athenaeum.*
796. Sept. Day of Naples. *For sale.*
1880 Address: 19 Third Street.
797. Bow of the Rocky Mountains. *For sale.*
BELLING, Edward T. (1811-1891)
1878 Address: Worcester, Mass.
494. A Gentleman.
BINGHAM, George (1811-1891)
1840 Address: St. Louis.
88. Group, Two Young Girls.
89. Two Children, from Basso. *For sale.*
249. Landscape.
250. Two Children. *For sale.*
251. Pennsylvania Farmer.
252. Sleeping Child.
1843 Address: Not given.
185. Going to Market. *For sale.*
184 Address: Not given.
186. The Swamp Ostrich. *For sale.*
BINGHAM, Luther (active 1838-1891)
1848 Address: 145 Howard Street.
191. Miniature of James W. Wallack, Esq., Lense of the National Theatre. J. W. Wallack.
BINSINGER, W. B. (active 1840)
1840 Address: Granite Buildings, Corner of Chambers Street and Broadway.
87. Portrait of a Boy. *Sgt. Truro.*
88. Small Half Length of a Gentleman. W. B. Binsinger.
BERCH, Thomas (1779-1861)
Honorary Member, Professional, 1833-1851.
1872 Address: Philadelphia.
81. Sea Piece. *Mr. Clover.*
1833 Address: Philadelphia.
190. Marine View.
191. Sea Piece. *For sale.*
192. Sea Piece. *For sale.*
[31]

Fig. 3, Mary Bartlett Cowdrey, *National Academy of Design Exhibition Record, 1826–1860*, vol. 1. New York: New-York Historical Society, 1943: 33. Publication in the public domain; available from: <https://archive.org>. [\[larger image\]](#)

These indices provide basic information about the artists, dates of display, and titles of works, and they also often list the name of the collector who owned the work in addition to other miscellaneous information, such as a work's medium and whether or not it was for sale. Most of the works in the indices are paintings, and those that are not have been explicitly identified as sculptures, photographs, or drawings. When artists' birth and death dates and nationalities were not listed in the constituent index, this information was added by consulting the [Getty Union List of Artist Names](#) and other online resources.^[18] Table 1 lists these indices and how many works each includes.

Table 1
 Sources of Data for the Historical American Art Exhibition Database (HAAExD)

Source of Data	Description of Dataset	Number of Works	Percentage of Total Works
Smithsonian American Art Museum's Pre-1877 Art Exhibition Catalogue Index (ed. James L. Yarnall and William H. Gerdts, 1986)	Index to a wide range of exhibition catalogues from small galleries and American art institutions not indexed in the large venues listed below.	135,227	49.24
<i>Publications in California Art, No. 7</i> : Exhibition records of the San Francisco Art Association, 1872–1915; the Mechanics' Institute, 1857–1899; and the California State Agricultural Society, 1856–1902 (ed. Ellen Halteman, 2000)	Index to works exhibited at a mix of juried and non-juried shows in Northern California from the 1850s to 1915.	52,143	18.99
<i>The Annual Exhibition Record of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts</i> , vol. 2, 1876–1913 (ed. Peter H. Falk, 1989)	Index to all works shown at juried and non-juried shows and special exhibitions at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. In this period, PAFA focused on contemporary American artists.	21,754	7.92
<i>National Academy of Design Exhibition Record</i> , 1861–1900 (ed. Maria Naylor, 1973)	Index to all works shown at the National Academy of Design. Exhibition rules changed over time, but shows were commonly used as a venue for members of the Academy to exhibit new work.	18,925	6.89
<i>The Annual Exhibition Record of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts</i> , vol. 1, 1807–1870 (ed. Anna Wells Rutledge, 1955; ed. Peter H. Falk, 1988)	Index to all works shown at juried and non-juried shows and special exhibitions at PAFA. In this period, PAFA focused on contemporary American artists and on displaying works of art-historical importance (from plaster casts to European contemporary art) in Philadelphia.	14,123	5.14
<i>The Boston Athenaeum Art Exhibition Index</i> , 1827–1874 (ed. Robert F. Perkins, Jr., and William J. Gavin III, 1980)	Index to all works shown at the Boston Athenaeum (a hybrid library, museum, and exhibition space), including a mix of contemporary American, Old Masters, and European contemporary works, along with medals and plaster casts.	11,148	4.06
<i>National Academy of Design Exhibition Record</i> , 1826–1860 (ed. Mary Bartlett Cowdrey, 1943)	Index to all works shown at the National Academy of Design. Exhibition rules changed over time, but shows were commonly used as a venue for members of the Academy to exhibit new work.	10,916	3.97
<i>American Academy of Fine Arts and American Art-Union</i> , 1816–1852, exh. cat. (ed. Mary Bartlett Cowdrey, 1953)	Index of the two other major art institutions in antebellum New York: the American Academy, which showed work by “eminent” American artists (mostly Benjamin West and John Trumbull), and plaster casts, and the American Art-Union, which purchased and exhibited contemporary American art and then distributed the works by lottery.	6,195	2.26
<i>Nineteenth-Century San Francisco Art Exhibition Catalogues: A Descriptive Checklist and Index</i> (ed. Ellen Halteman Schwartz, 1981)	Index to works shown at small galleries and single-artist shows in San Francisco during the nineteenth century. Complementary to the volumes of Halteman, <i>Publications in California Art, No. 7</i> .	4,207	1.53
TOTAL		274,638	100

There are advantages to aggregating this information in one database. Most importantly, it creates an unprecedentedly comprehensive record of what hung on gallery walls across exhibitions in seventy-two different cities and towns throughout nineteenth-century America. The database includes not only famous works but also all the lost art, repeat showings, copies, and generally less-accomplished work that formed part of the nineteenth-century artistic landscape. The scale and raw nature of the data make it distinct from a museum's curated inventory or even an encyclopedia of active artists, such as Oxford University Press's [Grove Art Online](#).

There are, however, also disadvantages to aggregating across venues, the primary problem being differences in the missions and exhibition rules of each institution or gallery. Compare, for example, data that come from exhibition records at an 1850 show at the Boston Athenaeum and data from a show in the same year at New York's National Academy of Design. At that time, there was a rule in place at the National Academy that only original works of art that had never been previously exhibited at the Academy could be shown at their annual exhibition. There was no equivalent rule in Boston, where the exhibitions often included copies of Old Masters paintings, parts of the Athenaeum's own permanent collection, and new original works.^[19] Without full knowledge of the exhibition rules, one might compare data from these two venues and, for example, overstate an argument about links between each city's social makeup and its antebellum taste in art. To avoid this sort of confusion, table 1 also includes a brief summary of exhibition rules in place at specific venues during the time covered by the HAAExD.^[20] This essay's analysis aggregates exhibitions across geographies and institutions in order to dilute biases created by specific venues' idiosyncratic rules.

This article analyzes a specific subset of data culled from the HAAExD: works of art with an identifiable listed owner, which accounts for 48 percent of works included in the database. A common practice among these institutions and private collectors was exhibiting multiple paintings per exhibition, and sometimes showing the same pieces on several occasions; as the average individual collector in the database owned and exhibited seven unique works, this explains the fact that while 130,000 works are matched with owners, there are not 130,000 *unique* collectors listed. Dividing this number by seven gives us an estimated 18,500 unique collectors in the database.

Of those 130,000 artworks, 42,484 belonged to what I have termed "top collectors," referring to those who are recorded as having owned more than the average number of works, or *at least seven* unique works of art. There are 1,725 top collectors. With the help of the Frick Collection's Archives Directory, Ancestry.com, and other genealogical sources, I was able to gather full biographical information—including birthplace, occupation, residence, profession, and socioeconomic status at birth—for 214 individuals in this group of top collectors. The biographical information about these individuals, combined with data from the HAAExD about their holdings, is the subset of data subjected to econometric tests probing the links between collectors' holdings and their socioeconomic backgrounds.^[21]

Tables 2 through 6 provide descriptive statistics about this sample of 214 collectors. Table 2 describes their typical holdings, and the data show that the average collector owned twenty-

four works of art, most of them American or from an unidentified maker. Some collections consist entirely of one type of artwork—for example, all contemporary European or all *objets d’art* and works by unidentified artists. Table 3 indicates the rough era during which the collections were exhibited and presumably assembled; it shows a fairly equal spread of collections acquired before, during, and after the Civil War.^[22]

Table 2
 Overview of “Top Collectors” Holdings

Category	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Total holdings	31.67	7	465
Number of paintings by American artists	8.83	0	120
Number of paintings by Contemporary European artists	1.55	0	43
Number of paintings by Old Masters	0.87	0	98

Table 3
 Distribution of Eras in which Collectors Acquired Art

Period of Collecting	Number	Percentage
Pre–Civil War	45	21.02
Pre– and post–Civil War	102	47.66
Post–Civil War	67	31.30

Table 4 presents demographic information about this group of top collectors. The most striking, although not surprising, characteristic is that most of them are men (97 percent). This table also lists how the collectors first acquired their wealth. Those listed as “Born with money” were born into at least an upper-middle-class family that could provide capital and connections for professional ventures. “Self-made” men and women were not necessarily born destitute, but they received no significant financial or social support from their families. Using these criteria, 43 percent of the collectors were born with money and 57 percent were self-made.

Table 4
 Demographics of Collectors

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	208	97.20
Female	6	2.80
Wealth Acquisition		
Born with money	91	42.52
Self-made	123	57.48
Occupations*		
Artists, photographers, or architects	87	40.65
Art dealers or related businesses	12	5.61
Sciences (engineers, scientists, doctors)	13	6.07
Literary (journalists, publishers, academics in the humanities)	35	16.36
Church	4	1.87
Transport (shipping and railroad)	22	10.28
Mining	2	0.93
Manufacturing	22	10.28
Merchants	39	18.22
Lawyers	16	7.48
Politicians	21	9.81
Independently wealthy (no profession; full-time philanthropists)	8	3.74
*Percentages do not add up to 100, since some collectors had multiple professions.		

The occupational data in table 4 allow for several interesting observations. First, the distribution of collectors is fairly even across most nonartistic occupations, each constituting between 5 and 15 percent of the sample, with lawyers and individuals in literary professions having a strong showing. Artists, photographers, and architects accounted for more than half the sample; it is important to note that this dominance is not the effect of men and women exhibiting their own works of art, as pieces created by the artists themselves were dropped from the sample.[\[23\]](#)

Table 5 groups collectors' birthplaces by census division (fig. 4). Reflecting the approximate distribution of birthplaces of the U.S. population in the mid-nineteenth century, most collectors were born in New England, the Mid-Atlantic, or abroad.[\[24\]](#) Table 6 shows the distribution of locations where collectors displayed their holdings. New England (division 1) and the Mid-Atlantic (division 2) dominate both in the number of collectors exhibiting their

collections and the number of artworks displayed. The Pacific (division 9), which includes California, placed third for both number of collectors and number of artworks. Since collectors often (although not always) displayed their holdings in the cities where they lived, table 5 likely also indicates where most of the art collectors in this sample lived.^[25] In Part II of this article, the data summarized by tables 2 through 5 are subjected to more rigorous statistical testing that will indicate whether or not there is a causal relationship between collectors' socioeconomic attributes and the art they owned. To be clear, these data about collectors' holdings do not necessarily record each person's *entire* collection but rather only the pieces that were exhibited in public at one of the venues included in the HAAExD.

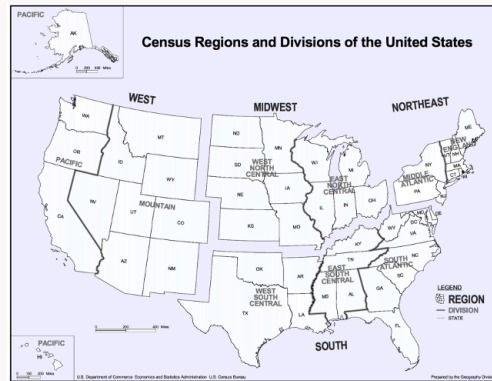


Fig. 4, United States Census Bureau, “Census Regions and Divisions of the United States,” 2007. Map in the public domain; available from: <https://www2.census.gov>. [\[larger image\]](#)

Table 5
 Birthplaces of Collectors

Division	Number of Collectors	Percentage
New England (1)	61	28.50
Mid-Atlantic (2)	62	28.97
East North Central (3)	14	6.54
West North Central (4)	5	2.34
South Atlantic (5)	13	6.07
East South Central (6)	11	5.14
West South Central (7)	0	0.00
Mountain (8)	0	0.00
Pacific (9)	1	0.47
Abroad (10)	46	21.50
Missing	1	0.47
TOTAL	214	100

Table 6
 Exhibition Locations of Collectors' Holdings

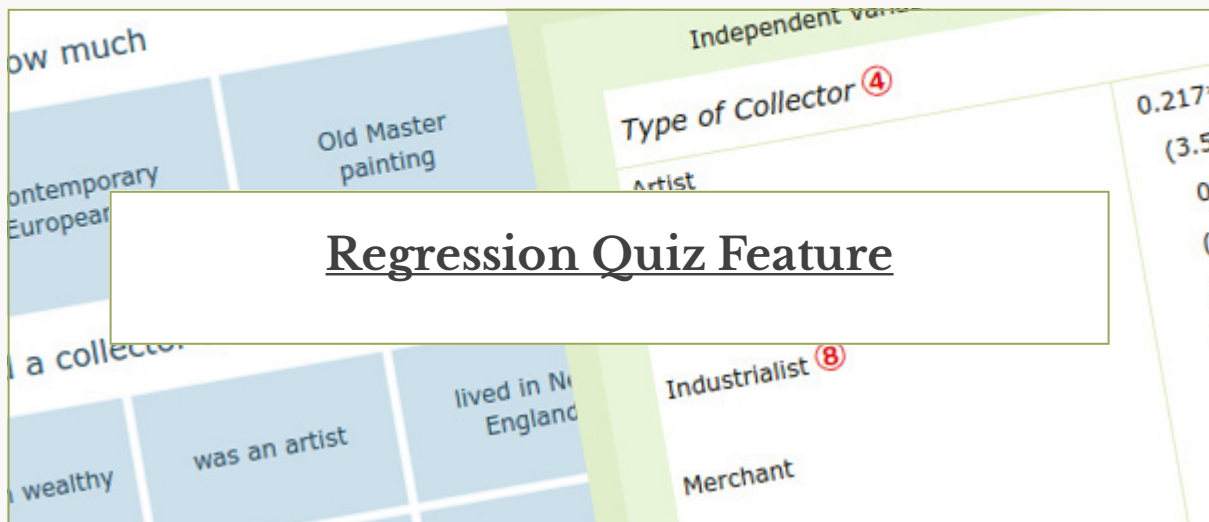
City & State	Division	Number of Collectors	Percentage
Boston, Massachusetts	1	23	10.75
New Bedford, Massachusetts	1	1	0.47
New Haven, Connecticut	1	2	0.93
Portland, Maine	1	1	0.47
Albany, New York	2	7	3.27
Brooklyn, New York	2	5	2.34
Buffalo, New York	2	2	0.93
New York, New York	2	38	17.76
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	2	28	13.08
Troy, New York	2	1	0.47
Utica, New York	2	2	0.93
Chicago, Illinois	3	13	6.07
Cincinnati, Ohio	3	14	6.54
Detroit, Michigan	3	6	2.80
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	3	3	1.40
St. Louis, Missouri	4	4	1.87
Baltimore, Maryland	5	14	6.54
Charleston, South Carolina	5	4	1.87
Washington, DC	5	1	0.47
Louisville, Kentucky	6	3	1.40
San Francisco, California	9	40	18.69
<i>Unclear/Multiple cities</i>	.	2	0.93
TOTAL		214	100.00

Regression Analysis: An Introduction and Results

As noted in this essay's introduction, econometric testing is common in economics and economic history, but it has only been applied to art history a handful of times.^[26] It is therefore necessary to provide a brief introduction to these methods. The primary econometric tool, and the one that is used here, is called regression analysis. Regression analysis is designed to determine whether an attribute, factor, or event had a demonstrable causal effect on a particular outcome. Regressions test how a variable or series of variables influence another variable. To do this, they distinguish between "explanatory variables" and "dependent variables" and then measure the effect of the explanatory variables on a

dependent one. It is easiest to explain regression analysis and the distinction between explanatory and dependent variables with an example that is far outside of art history: Consider that soil quality, number of days of sunshine, and amount of rain can help explain how much wheat a farmer grew in a given year. Using regression analysis, the environmental conditions—soil acidity, days of sunshine, and inches of rainfall—are explanatory variables, while the amount of wheat the farmer grows is the dependent variable. The regression quantifies the effects of each of these environmental factors on wheat yields. For my project about American collectors, the explanatory variables are the socioeconomic backgrounds of collectors—their wealth at birth, occupations, places of residence, etc.—and the dependent variable is the mix of artworks they owned.^[27] There are different kinds of regressions, and the type used in this essay is called an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) multivariate regression. (For more on OLS, see [this section of the Project Narrative](#)).

Typically, regression results are presented in tables. However, for readers new to econometric analysis, these tables can be difficult to read and interpret. Therefore, I have chosen to present the results of the regressions in this article in the digital feature below. Structured like an interactive quiz, the feature allows readers to see how different socioeconomic markers have an effect—or no effect—on collectors’ holdings. Furthermore, a traditional regression table is positioned alongside this interactive feature for readers interested in learning how to read regression results in their typical format.



[Note: Click to view the feature online.](#)

At first glance, interacting with the regression results of this study might seem to convey a strong presence of “non-results,” meaning results that are not statistically significant and therefore suggest there are no relationships between the collectors’ socioeconomic attributes and the contents of their collections. The regressions show some effects for female collectors—who were more likely to own contemporary European works—and for independently wealthy collectors, who owned more Old Masters paintings. However, as there are only six women and eight independently wealthy individuals among the 214 collectors, these results are susceptible to what economists call “outlier effects,” meaning they

are more at risk of being influenced by the data of only one or two collections or individuals. In general, these tests show socioeconomic attributes are not strong predictors of collectors' artistic choices, and this finding calls into direct question the prominence of arguments in the history of collecting that systematically link art collectors' backgrounds to their holdings as well as to their motivations to collect. It also serves as a warning to scholars not to overstate the relationship between collectors' backgrounds and their acquisition choices—even if select examples about well-known artists and patrons suggest there is a consistent causal link. However, rather than focus on the lack of demonstrated connection between collectors' socioeconomic backgrounds and their holdings, the remainder of this article focuses on the most robust positive result in the regressions: the role of American artists as active collectors of contemporary American art. American artists (defined as those artists who were born in the United States and/or spent the majority of their careers in the United States) had, on average, 20 percent more American artworks in their collections than any other group of U.S. collectors analyzed. This finding is further reinforced by the fact that American artists were apparently less likely to own contemporary European artwork. Why was this the case? The next section will address this narrower question.

Part II

Regression results like those presented in Part I use aggregated data about individual actions; in this case they tell us that nineteenth-century American artists were generally collecting one another's work, but they do not specifically reveal *why* they did so, and especially not why they did so as a group. Therefore, if we want to explore the motivations of the artist-collectors, it is necessary to conduct more focused quantitative and qualitative analyses—using more detailed descriptive statistics, case studies, and archival research—to examine these artists' motives for acquiring their colleagues' work. Focusing on artists active in and around New York City in the nineteenth century, this section draws on data about artists' personal collections sold at auction, information about the structure of the American art market, analyses of how arts institutions and social clubs responded to this market, and a more focused case study about the painter Daniel Huntington. In combination, these additional sources suggest that artists' collecting took place amidst a broader ecosystem of mutual support of one another's artistic and financial well-being—a way of helping fellow artists navigate the professional challenges of the nineteenth-century art world. This section argues that colleagues collecting each other's work should be understood as part of this ecosystem.

Artists as Collectors: A Brief Literature Review

Studies of artists as collectors constitute a distinct subfield within the history of collecting. Each study usually focuses on a single famous artist, from Rembrandt and Edgar Degas to Sol LeWitt and Damien Hirst. Over the years, scholars have attempted to use artists' personal collections as a source of insight into their thoughts and inspiration. The lead essay in the exhibition catalogue *The Private Collection of Edgar Degas* (1997), for instance, represents this general focus: "Like any great artist, Degas remains 'unknown'—the inner workings of his genius can be only imperfectly understood—but through an examination of his passions as a collector we may perhaps catch glimpses of his motives as an artist."[\[28\]](#)

There are, of course, exceptions to this narrow focus on illuminating genius. In his meticulous 1989 study of Peter Paul Rubens's collecting, Jeffrey M. Muller combed through

the artist's finances to understand how his collecting played a role in his economic life, and the 2016 exhibition *Painters' Paintings: From Freud to Van Dyck* expanded the literature by covering a range of artists and by including information about the collecting relationships between artists—the very concept this article seeks to explore in more depth.^[29] The catalogue for *Painters' Paintings*, which included the holdings of eight artists from four centuries and three countries, touches on these support networks, describing, for example, exchanges that attest to friendships between artists, as well as discussing in particular Degas's purchase of "paintings by his peers, or by artists younger than himself, in a gesture towards his less well-off comrades."^[30] These discussions are relatively brief, however, and because of the exhibition's chronological breadth, it ultimately reverts to the common theme of similar research and becomes a collection of monographic case studies whose main purpose is to enter the artists' minds and locate "critical clues for a correct, deep and multifaceted understanding of their art."^[31]

Studies of artists as collectors in nineteenth-century America are few and far between, and they have typically occurred as byproducts of monographic studies about well-known artists, such as those on Sanford Robinson Gifford (1823–80) and John Frederick Kensett (1816–72).^[32] Even the collecting activities of artists whose collections are largely intact, such as, for instance, Frederic Edwin Church (1826–1900), have been largely neglected by scholars. Church's art collections are preserved at his home in Hudson, New York, and include a significant number of works "made by his friends" who were also American artists.^[33] Yet, the scholarly literature interprets his collections exclusively as travel souvenirs, *aide-memoirs*, or as corroborating evidence of his broader interest in science and in presenting himself as an artist-explorer.^[34] By simply highlighting that artists systematically owned one another's works, this article makes a novel contribution to the existing literature about the history of art collecting in nineteenth-century America.

Colleague Collecting in New York: Further Quantitative Evidence

Let us now look beyond the regression results that simply affirm the notion that artists systematically owned one another's works of art. Turning now to auction catalogues, we can start to examine patterns within nineteenth-century New York artists' personal collections sold at auction. Transcribing and quantifying the contents of six American artists' collections corroborates the regression results on the matter of the frequency with which artists collected their colleagues' art, and these data also provide further insight into their collecting habits. An interactive overview of the kinds of artworks owned by these artists—Daniel Huntington (1816–1906), J. F. Kensett (1816–72), Samuel Colman (1832–1920), Seymour Joseph Guy (1824–1910), William Merritt Chase (1849–1916), and the photographer Napoleon Sarony (1821–96)—is presented in figures 5 through 10. Looking at the breakdown of the nationalities and eras of the artists included in these American artists' collections again underscores the regression results: American artists were active collectors of other American artists' work.

[PDF note: [Click to view the interactive pie charts online.](#)]

We can also explore the content of these artists' collections in greater demographic detail. In aggregate, 82 percent of artworks these artist-collectors owned were by artists younger than themselves. By interacting with figures 5 through 10, we can examine the particular

demographic details of the American artists collected by Chase, Colman, Guy, Huntington, Kensett, and Sarony. We see that American artworks belonging to some artists—notably Chase, Guy, Kensett, and Sarony—were overwhelmingly by younger artists. Huntington also owned a significant amount of work by younger artists, although this feature was, by comparison, not as pronounced in his collection. Colman also owned art almost entirely by younger artists, but in this case the result is largely influenced by one artist, Irish American painter William Magrath (1838–1918), who dominated Colman’s collection. Apart from both being Academicians at the National Academy, it is unclear what other links might have existed between these two artists that resulted in so much of Magrath’s work ending up in Colman’s collection.[\[35\]](#)

This pattern of patronage moving from older to younger artists suggests that artists’ acquisitions could help younger colleagues both professionally and financially. In her doctoral dissertation on J. F. Kensett, Melissa Geisler Trafton provides a detailed account of the artist’s many patrons.[\[36\]](#) Kensett’s colleagues particularly collected his work early in his career. Describing this support from other artists, Trafton writes, “Artists, if they were financially able, tended to support one another’s efforts.”[\[37\]](#) Kensett later paid this support forward himself: he both collected his friends’ and colleagues’ artworks and helped younger artists navigate the market. An 1873 eulogy for Kensett explicitly noted how the artist encouraged young artists with “kind words and a helping hand.”[\[38\]](#) We will see the same pattern of behavior when we look at the career of Daniel Huntington later in this section. (figs. 5, 5b, 6, 6b, 7, 7b, 8, 8b, 9, 9b, 10, 10b)

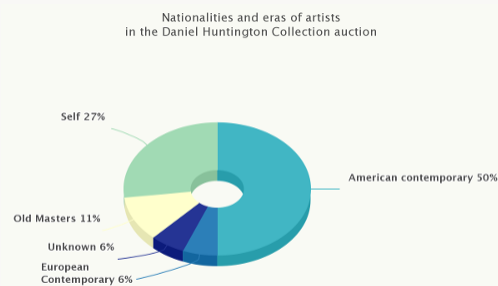


Fig. 5, Interactive pie chart of the Daniel Huntington Collection auction, January 27 and 28, 1916. Data transcribed from Keeler Art Galleries, *The Daniel Huntington Collection of Paintings*, auction cat. (New York: Alexander Press, 1916). [\[larger image\]](#)

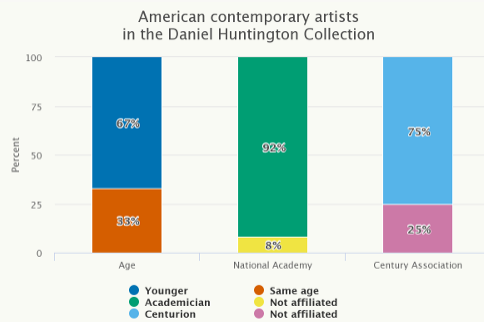


Fig. 5b, American contemporary artists in the Daniel Huntington Collection. [\[larger image\]](#)

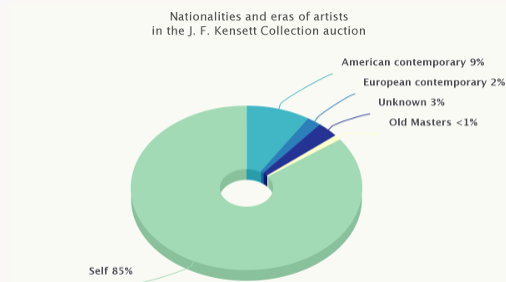


Fig. 6, Interactive pie chart of the J. F. Kensett Collection auction, March 24–29, 1873. Data transcribed from Robert Somerville, *The Collection of the Late John F. Kensett*, auction cat., no. 224 (New York: Association Hall, 1873). [\[larger image\]](#)

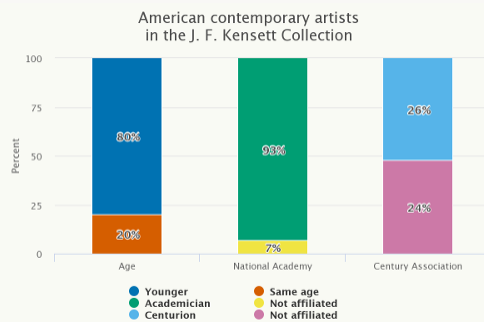


Fig. 6b, American contemporary artists in the J. F. Kensett Collection. [\[larger image\]](#)

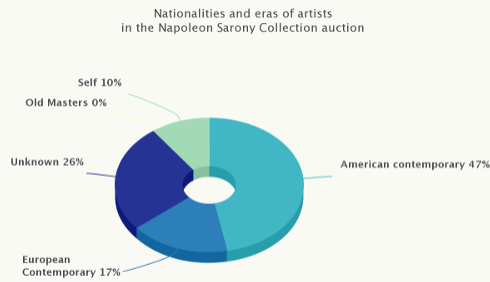


Fig. 7, Interactive pie chart of the Napoleon Sarony Collection auction, March 31 and April 1, 1896. Data transcribed from American Art Galleries, *Catalogue of Oil Paintings, Original Drawings, Arms and Armor, Antiquities, Indian Relics, Curios, Etc., Etc. property of Napoleon Sarony*, auction cat. (New York: American Art Galleries, 1896). [\[larger image\]](#)

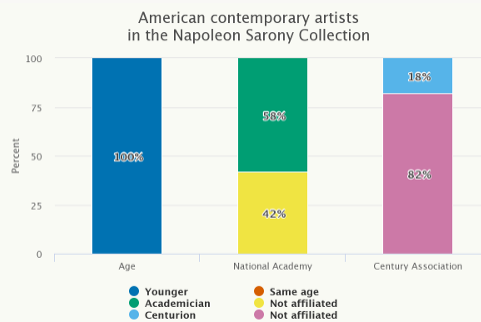


Fig. 7b, American contemporary artists in the Napoleon Sarony Collection. [\[larger image\]](#)

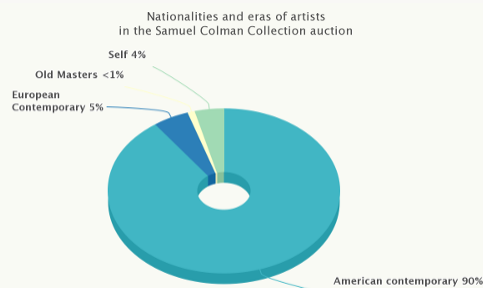


Fig. 8, Interactive pie chart of the Samuel Colman Collection auction, April 19 and 20, 1927. Data transcribed from Anderson Galleries, *The Art Collections of the Late Samuel Colman, N.A.*, auction cat. (New York: Anderson Galleries, 1927). [\[larger image\]](#)

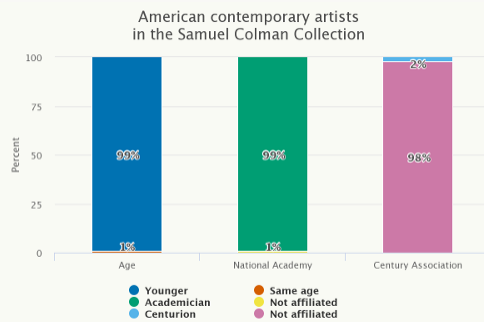


Fig. 8b, American contemporary artists in the Samuel Colman Collection. [\[larger image\]](#)

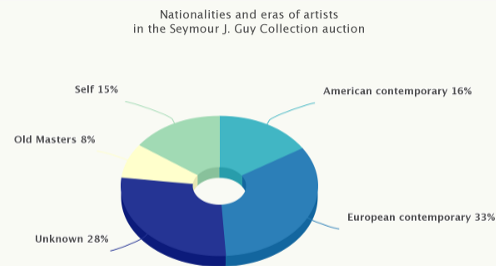


Fig. 9, Interactive pie chart of the Seymour J. Guy Collection auction, March 13 and 14, 1913. Data transcribed from Fifth Avenue Art Galleries, *Seymour J. Guy Collection*, auction cat. (New York: Fifth Avenue Galleries, 1913). [\[larger image\]](#)

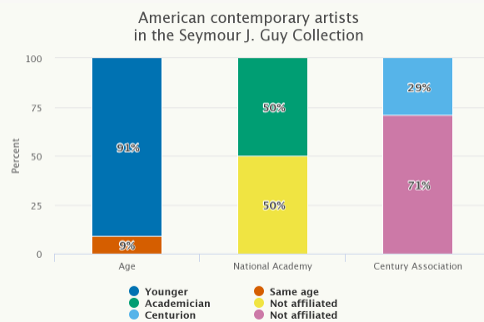


Fig. 9b, American contemporary artists in the Seymour J. Guy Collection. [\[larger image\]](#)

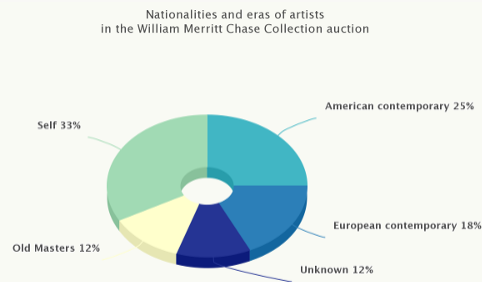


Fig. 10, Interactive pie chart of the William Merritt Chase Collection auction, May 14–17, 1917. Data transcribed from American Art Galleries, *The Paintings and Other Artistic Property Left by the Late William Merritt Chase, N.A.*, auction cat. (New York: American Art Galleries, 1917). [\[larger image\]](#)

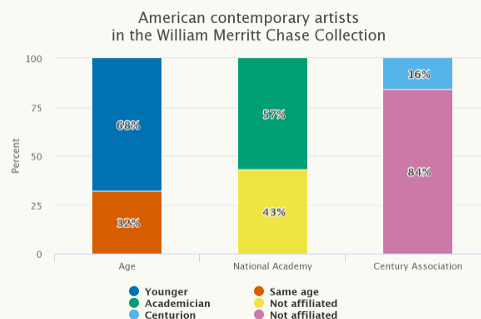


Fig. 10b, American contemporary artists in the William Merritt Chase Collection. [\[larger image\]](#)

Collecting and Mutual Aid in an Uncertain Art World

Artist-to-artist collecting occurred in the broader context of an American art market that provided artists with little financial security and few clear paths for professional development. One major challenge was the limited numbers of professional art dealers active in the United States prior to the final decades of the nineteenth-century.^[39] Furthermore, those dealers who did establish themselves in the United States—largely, although not exclusively, on the East Coast—often focused on importing European art. The best-known examples of these pioneering dealers in the contemporary European market are Michel Knoedler (1823–78) and Samuel P. Avery (1822–1904). Avery actually sold his impressive collection of American art at auction in 1867 in order to dedicate himself to selling European art.^[40] In his diary, artist Jervis McEntee (1828–91) describes this lack of commercial representation for American artists and the need to cultivate dealers’ interest. In recounting a meeting with dealer Gustav Reichard in the 1870s, McEntee says he “gave some reasons [to Reichard] why we [American artists] thought it worthwhile for someone to deal in the best American Art. He seems a prudent pleasant man but I do not think would be able to do much. We are more and more impressed with the fact that we shall ultimately have to get some dealers to interest themselves in our work or we shall sink out of sight.”^[41]

Perhaps in part because they were largely neglected by art dealers, many nineteenth-century American artists received comparatively low prices for their artwork. Art historian

Kevin Michael Murphy's 2005 doctoral dissertation provides the most comprehensive overview of the structure of the American art market prior to World War I. He gathered information about the prices American artists were able to fetch for their works and discovered, not surprisingly, that blockbuster sales like those generated by Church and Albert Bierstadt were atypical. Using a sample of 124 American artists, he found that the greatest volume of demand for American paintings between 1850 and 1910 was at a price point between \$150 and \$249. This hovered around 20 to 30 percent of an average clerical worker's annual salary in the same period. Sales in the thousands of dollars were not uncommon, but they were certainly not the norm for American artists during this time.^[42] These numbers can be compared with the regular sale of academic European works for thousands, and sometimes tens of thousands, of dollars during the same period.^[43]

In response to these persistent commercial headwinds, American artists banded together. As Annette Blaugrund documented in her study of the Tenth Street Studio Building in Manhattan, mid-nineteenth-century artists took responsibility for marketing and selling their artwork, occasionally organizing shared studio receptions where they could show and sell new work.^[44] In addition to the studio receptions, artists founded a series of professional and social organizations to build community support, and these became a major force in the art world and have persisted into the present day.

In their focus on institution and club founding, artists were not exceptional. Throughout the nineteenth century, a wide range of "friendly" or "mutual aid" societies were founded in Britain, North America, and other Anglophone countries. These societies started as self-administered social clubs that also provided insurance benefits for members and their families in case of debilitating illness or death.^[45] Often organized among members of the same profession, these associations were, along with trade unions and charitable organizations, part of a system of professional and social support. As happened in other professions, the American artists' support institutions grew into an elaborate, interconnected system that came to have significant influence within the community.

The arts institution that most closely resembles traditional mutual aid societies was the Artists' Fund Society (AFS), created in 1859 and based in New York City. On the topic of a member's passing, the "First Annual Report" of the AFS describes how the death of William Tylee Ranney (1813–57) provoked action among artists to create "the most feasible plan, by which the widows and families of deceased members might be best provided for, and to extend a helping hand to the disabled members of the profession in [New York] City."^[46] The constitution of the AFS duly commits to this service, declaring, "From this fund, on the death of a member, unless otherwise provided for by will of the deceased member, the interest on \$1500 shall be annually paid to his widow for the benefit of herself and children."^[47]

The group of artists who formed the AFS aimed to not only supply funds to help members in need but also to provide publicity for their work. One way the AFS earned both money and attention was through yearly exhibitions for which each member artist "shall contribute annually to the society . . . an original picture, or one or more models in plaster, of his or her own production, of an estimated value of not less than fifty dollars . . . or in case of failure

thereof seventy-five dollars in money.”[48] These works were then shown and sold, with the proceeds benefiting the AFS.

Other New York–based organizations that were formed to support artists and their careers included the National Academy of Design and the Century Association. Modeled on the Royal Academy in London, the National Academy was founded in 1826 by a collective of artists who wished to encourage the arts and artists in the United States, and the institution’s founding of a school and staging of annual exhibitions were seen as integral to this mission of encouragement. The preface to the first National Academy exhibition catalogue stated: “The Artists of the City of New-York have [a]ssociated . . . for the purpose of mutual improvement and the instruction of their pupils.”[49] The new organization had three classes of membership—Academicians, Associates, and Honorary Members—whose positions were filled as described: “From the Associates alone, the vacancies in the body of Academicians were to be filled. Active members were to be residents of New York City and vicinity. Honorary Members were of two classes: nonresident professional artists, who on becoming resident were admitted as Academicians; and amateurs, patrons of the arts, and distinguished members of other professions.”[50] These membership categories achieved several goals. For artists, they presented a clear path for advancement: first appointment as an Associate, and then promotion from Associate to Academician. By providing honorary memberships for “amateurs, patrons of the arts, and distinguished members of other professions,” the National Academy linked potential patrons both to artists and to the network of likeminded support institutions. These links were further strengthened by the annual exhibitions organized by the National Academy, which regularly allowed artists to show (and implicitly sell) their newest works.

Similarly, the still extant Century Association (fig. 11)—formally incorporated in 1847, but informally active since 1829—was founded as a private club for “sympathetic, stimulating, and congenial companions in a society of authors and artists.”[51] Membership provided artists the opportunity to exhibit regularly in the clubhouse and potentially sell their works to other club members and members’ guests, some of whom were not only fellow artists themselves but also rich and accomplished New Yorkers working in banking, industry, and other fields.[52]



Fig. 11, Edmund Vincent Gillon, *The Century Association*, 7 West 43rd Street, ca. 1977. Polyester negative. Museum of the City of New York, New York. Image courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York.

[\[larger image\]](#)

Records of the Century Association's nomination process show that "visual artist" was the second-most common profession of members elected before 1920 (the most common was "lawyer and/or judge"), and the records also reveal that artists supported fellow artists by nominating and seconding them for membership (table 7). Looking at the sponsorship data specifically, we find that artists supported other artists about 56 percent of the time, a notable contrast to the data for members of the top ten most common professions, who supported members of the same profession only around 39 percent of the time. Further, one can tease out the behaviors of individual artists who drove this trend. Kensett supported nine candidates, of which five were artists, and of the twelve candidates Sanford Robinson Gifford supported, seven were artists.

Table 7
 Frequency with which Members of Different Professions
 Proposed Colleagues for Membership in the Century Association

Occupation	Number of People Proposed for Membership	Percent of People Proposed for Membership that Are of the Same Profession
Engineer	49	69.39
Doctor	124	62.90
Visual artist	254	55.51
Lawyer and/or judge	290	46.21
Educator	149	45
Clergyman	40	32.50
Merchant	19	26.32
Author	56	21.43
Banker and/or financier	33	21
Politician	78	5.13
Average	109.2	38.56

Many of the artists whose collections are analyzed in figures 5 through 10 were members of both the National Academy of Design and the Century Association; artists' relationships with various institutional structures can be examined in more detail through engaging with the interactive graphs in figures 5 to 10. Five of the six artists—the exception being Sarony—were members of the National Academy, and as it turns out, the majority of the American art in these members' collections was by fellow Academicians or artists who would later become Academicians. All but two of the artists (Chase and Sarony) were also members of the Century Association. Tellingly, most of the Centurions owned large numbers of works by their fellow club members.^[53] On the basis of these data, it is more than evident that colleague collecting followed paths of institutional membership and support, and this claim is further corroborated by a study of Gifford's patrons by Eleanor Jones Harvey, who notes that of the artists who purchased Gifford's work, most of them were fellow Centurions and Academicians.^[54] This trend is also significant in the collection of Daniel Huntington, as we will see in the next section.

Looking at the functions of three support institutions within the art community—the Artists' Fund Society, the National Academy of Design, and the Century Association—there is a clear common denominator linking the more traditional mutual aid structure of the AFS to the two clubs: all three provided members with the opportunity to exhibit and therefore sell their artwork. In doing so, not only did these institutions provide income insurance,

professional development, and opportunities to socialize, they also allowed artists to directly engage with the art market and potentially benefit financially. Similarly, the practice of American artists collecting the work of fellow American artists—as evidenced by the data in the HAAExD—served these same purposes. Artists were able to help one another financially by purchasing colleagues' work, and also support fellow artists' professional reputations by exhibiting that work and promoting it to a broader art-purchasing public.

Given what we now know about the network of both institutional and individual support that buoyed the American art world in the nineteenth century, let us now take a look at how one particular artist interacted with and within these systems.

Daniel Huntington: An Artist in an Environment of Mutual Aid

Born in New York in 1816, Daniel Huntington (fig. 12) was a descendent of a prominent Connecticut family and the son of a stockbroker.^[55] As a student at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, he crossed paths with artist Charles Loring Elliott (1812–68), who was executing a commission on campus. Elliott encouraged Huntington to pursue his artistic interests, and the young man took that advice and in 1835 became a student of Samuel Finley Breese Morse (1791–1872) in New York City.^[56]



Fig. 12, Unknown photographer, *Daniel Huntington*, ca. 1860. Albumen silver print. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Image courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.

[\[larger image\]](#)

Pragmatic in his approach to an artistic career, Huntington cultivated his skills as a portraitist alongside his experimentation with history and landscape painting; he understood portrait painting was a lucrative business that could support his other artistic interests. Huntington was quickly successful and even had his own student—Henry Peters Gray (1819–77)—by the time he was twenty-two, in 1838. He was elected an Academician of the National Academy of Design in 1840 and was a founding member of the Century Association. As art historian Wendy Greenhouse wrote in one of a handful of scholarly articles dedicated to Huntington, “Posterity’s persistent neglect of . . . [Huntington] seems ironically proportional to the prominence he enjoyed during his lifetime. Once regarded as a successor to Thomas Cole in landscape and Washington Allston in history painting, Huntington is now remembered mainly as an uninspired but prolific portraitist and as the figure who presided over the

National Academy of Design's descent into moribund conservatism in the second half of the nineteenth century."[\[57\]](#)

From his early success with the much-reproduced history painting *Mercy's Dream* (1841) (fig. 13) and the landscape *Coast Scene, Storm Passing Off* (ca. 1850) (fig. 14) to his celebrated late-career group portrait *The Atlantic Cable Projectors* (1895) (fig. 15), Huntington was a leading figure of the New York art world for decades. This status as a top American artist was consolidated by his leadership roles in a number of artistic institutions. He was the longest-serving president of the National Academy of Design, holding the office from 1862 to 1869 and then again from 1876 to 1891, and in addition to being a founding member of the Century Association, he was also a founder and vice president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Fig. 13, Daniel Huntington, *Mercy's Dream*, 1841. Oil on canvas. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia. Image courtesy of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. [\[larger image\]](#)



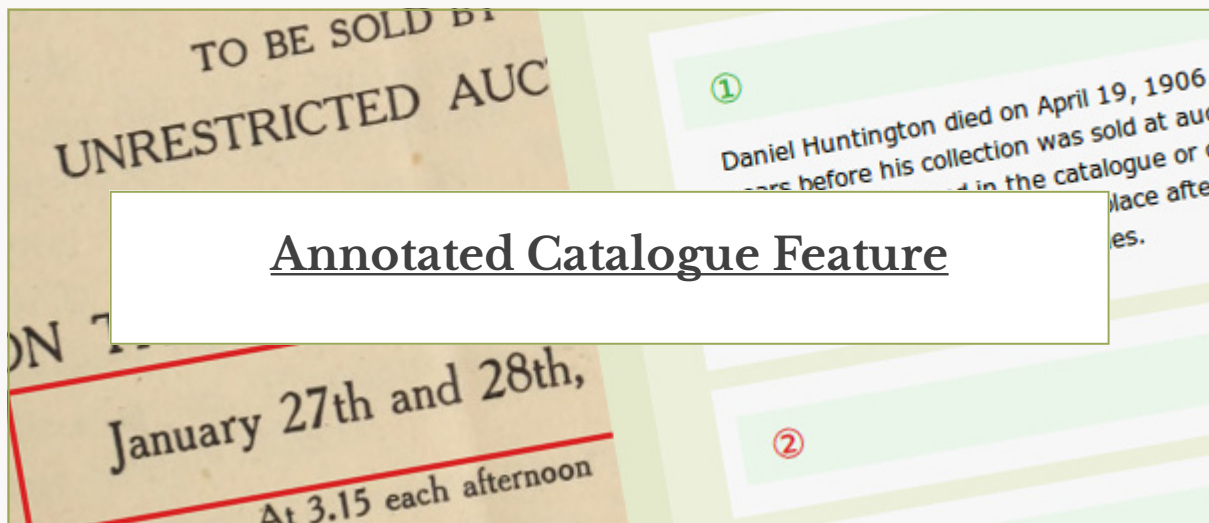
Fig. 14, Daniel Huntington, *Coast Scene, Storm Passing Off*, ca. 1850. Oil on canvas. Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, Maine. Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art. [\[larger image\]](#)



Fig. 15, Daniel Huntington, *The Atlantic Cable Projectors*, 1895. Oil on canvas. New York State Museum, Albany. Image courtesy of the New York State Museum, Albany. [\[larger image\]](#)

Huntington's holdings, formally called the "Collection of Paintings formed by the late Daniel Huntington," was sold on January 27 and 28, 1916, by George Keeler of the Keeler Art Galleries. The sale took place ten years after the artist's death, and although no executor or estate is listed in the catalogue, the precipitating event for the sale seems to have been the 1915 death of Huntington's only child, Charles Richards Huntington.^[58] The first page of the catalogue describes the collection as including "some 50 examples of Mr. Huntington's own work . . . [and] a number of paintings by prominent early American and English artists." In addition, the catalogue states that the collection "contains over 30 examples by J.F. Kensett, N.A. which were purchased by Mr. Huntington at the Kensett Executors' Sale."^[59]

This qualitative description matches the quantitative breakdown made possible by transcribing the catalogue. One discrepancy is that the auctioneers rounded up the thirty-nine lots of work by Huntington on sale to "some 50 examples." (This generous rounding can also be attributed to several lots including multiple sketches.) As for the number of Kensett paintings, there are indeed thirty-six paintings, and all of these, according to notes in the catalogue, were purchased at the posthumous Kensett sale. There are an additional thirty-five works by American artists who were active at the same time as Huntington, sixteen Old Masters paintings (or paintings identified as such), and nine works by modern European artists. The remaining eight lots are either objects—such as Huntington's easel—or works by artists whose nationalities or dates of birth are unknown. Several pages from the Huntington auction catalogue have been reproduced and digitally illustrated and annotated to accompany this article to provide further detail about the content of Huntington's collection and his relationship to the artists he collected.



[Note: Click to view the feature online.](#)

A contemporary description of Huntington's art collection exists in a profile written about the artist toward the end of his life. The anonymous writer interviewed Huntington in his home and attached studio. The text reads: "The artist's home impresses the visitor as an ideal one. The furnishings are handsome, not extravagant, the walls burdened with valuable paintings gathered from all parts of the world, but chiefly by American artists."^[60] Here again, like the details in the auction catalogue of the posthumous sale of his collection, this article notes that Huntington was principally dedicated to collecting American art.

We can also analyze Huntington's collection using information from the artist himself. There is extensive correspondence between Huntington and his family members—principally his father, brother, and nephew—preserved on microfilm in the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art, including letters that cover the years 1846 and 1847 and then a period of about two decades from the late 1870s to 1901. Huntington often discusses his business affairs with his family members, providing updates about commissions, dealings with patrons, and the activities of his fellow painters. He also describes his engagement with the New York art community. Frustratingly, as with the records of many art collectors, Huntington's preserved letters do not specifically address his collecting or his motives for buying particular works of art; nonetheless, they indicate that Huntington was deeply enmeshed in an ecosystem of artists active in nineteenth-century New York. His letters recount the ways in which artists were formally tied together by institutions like the National Academy and social clubs like the Century Association, and how they were further linked by friendships solidified during many meals and sketching trips taken together.^[61]

In a series of letters written to his father in the winter of 1846, Huntington talks about his struggle to take over a government commission from the artist Henry Inman (1801–46), who had died unexpectedly earlier that year.^[62] He writes that Congress did not like Inman's initial designs and has been slow to allow him to take over the job. Frustrated, he says, "I do not feel under any obligations to continue the offer . . . [O]nce clearly is enough to redeem

the honor of Inman—which was the object.”[63] Although his dedication to Inman clearly had its limits, Huntington’s involvement in “redeem[ing] the honor of Inman” does not appear to have been confined to rescuing his congressional commission. In the same letter, he states that the “Inman Gallery is doing well,” referring to a memorial exhibition mounted to raise money for Inman’s widow and children.[64] Huntington was a member of the organizing committee for this charitable venture. In another letter, he notes the success of the show, writing that the “Inman exhibition which was supposed to have closed today is to be extended until Saturday on account of the pleasant wealth.”[65] The exhibition raised \$2,000 for Inman’s family and seems to have planted the seed of the idea for the Artists’ Fund Society.[66]

Even as Huntington was personally involved in efforts to support the reputation and surviving family of his deceased colleague, he simultaneously drew on assistance from other members of the artistic community, particularly to help him navigate the situation of Inman’s state commission. Various men involved in the New York art world intervened on Huntington’s behalf, including “Prosper M. Wetmore—who has lately been in Washington—[who] is trying to stir [members of Congress and] made 3 appointments to meet the committee.”[67] Wetmore, a merchant, military officer, educator, and art collector, was named as an honorary member of the New York Sketch Club, the forerunner to the Century Association.[68] Huntington also recounts that American Art-Union president Abraham M. Cozzens, a fellow founder of the Century Association, was “exerting his usual energies” on Inman’s behalf, in part by recruiting a lawyer that had “an extensive influence.”[69] Analyzing the details surrounding just the aftermath of Inman’s death, we get a sense of not only how connected Huntington was in the nineteenth-century New York art community but also how much he both provided and received support within that network. Huntington was only thirty years old at the time of Inman’s death, but the give-and-take that characterized his interactions during that ordeal continued throughout Huntington’s long life.

Huntington’s collection further underscores his commitment to other artists within his circle; in all, 92 percent of the works by American artists in Huntington’s collection were by either Associates or Academicians of the National Academy, and 75 percent were by members of the Century Association. In the final decades of his life, the artists in his collection that were the same age as or older than him were all close friends and members of the artistic institutions in which he participated, and a number of them were then at the helms of those institutions. Among these peers were Centurion Thomas Prichard Rossiter (1818–71), with whom Huntington spent time in Europe; Asher Durand (1796–1886), the president of the National Academy of Design before Huntington’s first term and a fellow founder of the Century Association; dealer S. P. Avery (1822–1904); and Henry Gurdon Marquand (1819–1902), president of the Commissioners of Public Parks.[70]

Huntington bought works by younger artists as well, and in fact most of the artists whose works Huntington owned were about a generation younger than he, including Alexander Helwig Wyant (1836–92), William Trost Richards (1833–1905), Homer Dodge Martin (1836–97), and Ralph Albert Blakelock (1847–1919). In addition to supporting younger artists through purchasing their work, Huntington also shared advice. In one letter he recalled the time he gave a copy of one of his pieces to a “young lady art student who called here to show me some studies she had painted & proposed sending to the [National Academy] Exhibition.

I thought it might be of some service to her to see what might be expected of a cut-thro[at] hanging committee.”[71] In an 1891 letter that is only partially preserved, Huntington’s tone is more inspired than disappointed when he writes about his position as a seventy-five-year-old man in the art world at the end of the century: “At my age I cannot expect to go [on] making money by portraits. There are a number of young and ardent painters who are more and more attracting public notice and meriting success.”[72] The fact that Huntington’s collection held the work of so many younger artists supports the reading of his tone as more proud than bitter. He seems to have wholeheartedly applauded and encouraged the success of the younger generation.

There is, however, one idiosyncrasy of Huntington’s collection that must be addressed in more detail: his purchase of thirty-six Kensett pieces at the posthumous sale of the artist’s work. This purchase of a large number of works by a deceased colleague does not fit the pattern of Huntington’s other acquisitions, and as, unfortunately, there are no letters preserved from the years of Kensett’s death or the sale of his works—1872 and 1873, respectively—we cannot know definitively why Huntington made those purchases. Perhaps he viewed them as an investment. Records show there *was* a financial frenzy surrounding the 1873 sale of Kensett’s works, and Huntington may have been reacting to that.[73] As Jervis McEntee wrote in his diary:

The Kensett sale netted \$127,000 exclusive of frames. Besides there is this summer’s work \$20,000 and his private collection \$4,000. I was in hopes this would call immediate attention to American Art but although it brought buyers from all parts of the country, only one or two have been here at the Studio Building.[74]

Not only did the Kensett sale not live up to McEntee’s hopes to build the reputation of the American art market, but in fact prices for American landscape painting quickly deteriorated after the Kensett sale. On the eve of World War I, the value of Huntington’s investment had dropped to a tenth of what it had been in 1873.[75] Furthermore, the fact that Huntington kept the Kensett paintings until his death (thirty-three years after their purchase) suggest his motivations to collect the artist’s work went beyond pure financial gain.

And indeed, it’s not hard to guess why Huntington was so fond of Kensett’s work. Both were members of the National Academy and the Century Association, and the two were close enough friends that Huntington served as a pallbearer at Kensett’s funeral.[76] In contrast to Huntington’s efforts to support the surviving family of his friend Henry Inman, in this case Kensett died a bachelor, with no widow or children left behind in need of income, and so Huntington was not merely buying the work as a way of helping the heirs. (Kensett’s heir seems to have been his brother Thomas, who was successful in his own right and ended up donating to the Met what art he had in his collection.[77]) Perhaps, then, Huntington cared about Kensett’s honor and reputation, and his purchase of those thirty-six pieces was therefore an homage to his deceased friend. Meditating on the death of his friend, colleague, and former student Henry Peters Gray, Huntington was particularly concerned that Gray’s positive personal attributes and the quality of his artwork be remembered.[78] Huntington’s preoccupation with Gray’s and Inman’s legacies, his leadership of the mutual-aid-focused Artists’ Fund Society, and his numerous purchases at the Kensett sale all suggest that his personal commitment to support his friends and colleagues was not only strong but *so* strong that it persisted even after their deaths.

Taken alone, Huntington's letters reconstruct a portrait of a man deeply invested in the success of his fellow American artists, but when taken as evidence of the culture within the art community of nineteenth-century New York, we can more fully appreciate what Huntington's experiences tell us about the robust and manifold connections that existed between artistic colleagues in this time and place. A web of institutional memberships as well as friendships, this highly developed network of professional and personal support played an important role in the American art world, and the practice of colleagues collecting and exhibiting one another's work should be understood as an integral part of the system through which artists were able to band together in order to help each other succeed.

Conclusion

This essay has used novel data and a blend of quantitative and qualitative methods to make two points about collecting in nineteenth-century America. First, it demonstrated that there appear to be limited systematic and demonstrable causal relationships between art collectors' socioeconomic backgrounds and their acquisitions. This failure to quantify any relationship between class and taste for art runs counter to the predictions of the existing literature. However, this exercise did identify one clearly positive relationship: the widespread occurrence of nineteenth-century American artists collecting one another's works. Using qualitative evidence about art-community institutions as well as information gleaned from the letters of artist Daniel Huntington, this essay argues that colleague collecting was an important strategy employed by artists to further the success of their colleagues in the uncertain nineteenth-century American art world.

These insights into the history of collecting in America are, however, only two of several possible conclusions readers can draw from the essay. More important than these subfield-specific points about nineteenth-century American art is the broader methodological innovations that this essay models. It shows that quantitative and qualitative analyses can be combined in the same art-historical argument and complement one another. Furthermore, it shows that quantitative analysis that is more sophisticated than descriptive statistics or line graphs can be used in art-historical analyses. Finally, this essay demonstrates that there are art data sources beyond monetary figures that can be used in conjugation with econometric analyses; it is in fact possible to engage with the questions set forth in qualitative art-historical literature by using quantitative methods. Data-driven economic histories of art need not be limited to topics related to the histories of art markets or questions that can be answered only with auction data.

My call for the use of regression analysis to answer art-historical questions beyond direct inquiries into the art market actually builds on an example of this kind of work from the 1960s. In 1964, renowned art historian Jules Prown discovered the utility of regression analysis and was able to demonstrate the presence of a link between the socioeconomic backgrounds of sitters for portraits by American painter John Singleton Copley (1738–1815) and those same individuals' preferences in styles of portraiture.^[79] When Prown presented his work at the annual meeting of the College Art Association, his first slide, which displayed an IBM punch card (used then for data computing), was "roundly booed." After the conclusion of his session, a senior art historian "berated [him] loudly in the aisle for [his] apostasy."^[80] After this response, Prown predicted that art historians would soon use

computing power as “automated retrieval systems” for images and information but said they would resist its more complex statistical uses. This has proved true.

Prown quoted colleague George Wilson Pierson to summarize the difficulties of integrating quantitative analysis into the study of art history: “What have the humanities and computers to say to each other? Are they not strangers, perhaps enemies, at heart? By definition the humanities should be concerned with quality and with individual man, computers with things in quantity or men in the mass.”^[81] While it stands that a close view of particular artworks and artists will always be necessary for art-historical scholarship, it is valuable to also consider the macroscopic view of artistic trends, as revealed by data-driven methods of research. By providing analyses that focus both on individual artworks and on general trends made visible through the use of statistics, scholars, I believe, can place art in more complete socioeconomic and cultural contexts.

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Notes

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[1] René Brimo, *The Evolution of Taste in American Collecting*, trans. Kenneth Haltman (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016), loc. 2451 of 15317, Kindle.

[2] Matthew L. Jockers, *Macroanalysis: Digital Methods and Literary History* (Champaign-Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013); and Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History* (New York: Verso, 2005).

[3] Pamela Fletcher, “Reflections on Digital Art History,” *CAA Reviews* 18 (2015), [doi:10.3202/caa.reviews.2015.73](https://doi.org/10.3202/caa.reviews.2015.73).

[4] Pamela Fletcher and Anne Helmreich, with David Israel and Seth Erickson, “Local/Global: Mapping Nineteenth-Century London’s Art Market,” *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 11, no. 3

(2012), <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/autumn12/fletcher-helmreich-mapping-the-london-art-market>; and the Artl@s project, available at <http://artlas.ens.fr/en/>.

[5] Kim Oosterlinck, "Art as a Wartime Investment: Conspicuous Consumption and Discretion," *Economic Journal* (2017), [doi:10.1111/econj.12391](https://doi.org/10.1111/econj.12391); Jeroen Euwe and Kim Oosterlinck, "Art Price Economics in the Netherlands during World War II," *Journal for Art Market Studies* 1, no. 1 (2017), [doi:10.23690/jams.v1i1.6](https://doi.org/10.23690/jams.v1i1.6); Kathryn Graddy, "Taste Endures! The Rankings of Roger de Piles (†1709) and Three Centuries of Art Prices," *Journal of Economic History* 73, no. 3 (2013); and Géraldine David and Kim Oosterlinck, "War, Monetary Reforms and the Belgian Art Market, 1945–1951," *Financial History Review* 22, no. 2 (2015): 157–77. Also worth mentioning is the ongoing work of Léa Saint-Raymond on the art market of nineteenth-century France; she is trained as both an economist and an art historian. For an example of her scholarship, see her article on Félix Ziem in *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*.

[6] Victor A. Ginsburgh and David Throsby, eds., *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2006–13); William N. Goetzmann, Luc Renneboog, and Christophe Spaenjers, "Art and Money," *American Economic Review* 101, no. 3 (2011): 222–26, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29783743>; and Oosterlinck, "Art as a Wartime Investment."

[7] Christiane Hellmanzik, "Location Matters: Estimating Cluster Premiums for Prominent Modern Artists," *European Economic Review* 54, no. 2 (2010): 199–218; and Karol Jan Borowiecki, "Geographic Clustering and Productivity: An Instrumental Variable Approach for Classical Composers," *Journal of Urban Economics* 73, no. 1 (2013): 94–110.

[8] Géraldine David, Christian Huemer, and Kim Oosterlinck, "Art Dealers' Strategy: The Case of Goupil, Boussod and Valadon from 1860 to 1914," unpublished working paper (January 19, 2014), <http://som.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/Oosterlinck%20paper.pdf>; Noah Horowitz, *Art of the Deal: Contemporary Art in a Global Financial Market* (London: Princeton University Press, 2011); and Thomas M. Bayer and John R. Page, *The Development of the Art Market in England: Money as Muse, 1730–1900* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2011).

[9] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Oxford: Routledge, 1984), xxv.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., 59.

[12] Paul DiMaggio, "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston: The Creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America," *Media, Culture and Society* 4, no. 1 (1982): 33.

[13] Alan Wallach, "Thomas Cole: Landscape and the Course of American Empire," in *Thomas Cole: Landscape into History*, ed. William H. Truettner and Alan Wallach (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 34.

[14] Wallach explicitly noted the influence of Bourdieu and his theories in a recent essay. He writes, "And it is to Bourdieu that we must now turn to begin to account for the transformation of taste and the redefinition of high art that led to aestheticizing tendencies. For if we accept Bourdieu's argument that a striving for 'distinction' lay at the core of bourgeois identity, then it stands to reason that the trends I have been describing [aestheticizing tendencies] roughly coincided with and were integral to the emergence of an increasingly powerful and unified bourgeoisie, a class working towards securing cultural hegemony via the creation of institutions." Wallach, "Rethinking 'Luminism': Taste, Class and Aestheticizing Tendencies in Mid-Nineteenth-Century American Landscape Painting," in *The Cultured Canvases: New Perspectives on American Landscape Painting*, ed. Nancy Siegle (Lebanon, NH: University of New Hampshire Press, 2011): 115–47.

[15] John Ott, "Patrons, Collectors, and Markets," in *A Companion to American Art*, ed. John Davis, Jennifer A. Greenhill, and Jason D. LaFountain (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 525–37.

[16] Using a combination of funds from Wadham College, Oxford (Pollard Grants), and money saved from a series of pre-doctoral fellowships, I was able to work on this project with a team of professional transcriptionists based in the Philippines. I located the team via Upwork.com, a freelancing site. I transcribed about 20 percent of the hard-copy indices myself, and the freelancers transcribed the remaining 80 percent. I worked with another freelancer I found on Upwork to web scrape the Pre-1877 Art Exhibition Catalogue Index, with permission from art inventories coordinator Robin Dettre. In total, the cost of this transcription and web scraping help was just under \$8,000.

[17] For full information about the Historical American Art Exhibition Database, see Diana Greenwald, "Painting by Numbers: Case Studies in the Economic History of Nineteenth-Century Landscape and Rural Genre Painting" (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2017).

- [18] Other online resources include Artnet, Grove Art, and Wikipedia. Getty database last accessed April 22, 2015, <http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/ulan/>.
- [19] Greenwald, "Painting by Numbers," 87–108.
- [20] For further information about the HAAExD, see Greenwald, "Painting by Numbers," chapter 5.
- [21] These top collectors were identified with the help of the HAAExD, but as the database captures only information about works of art shown in public exhibitions, other sources were consulted for additional information about the contents of these collections. These additional sources include auction catalogues, private inventories, and catalogues from charity exhibitions. In the dataset that supports this article, it is noted when data about the content of collections came only from the HAAExD and when it was supplemented with information from other sources. There is also an implicit bias that determines which collectors have socioeconomic data available for analysis. They are most often men who were notable in their communities and for whom obituaries were written. While Ancestry.com and other genealogical services have mitigated this bias, they have not eliminated it. Readers interested in obtaining this data may email the author directly.
- [22] There is a potential problem with this assumption: collections can of course be assembled for years prior to the time of exhibition. Also, whether a collector displayed his or her holdings while still actively acquiring items varies radically from case to case. Assuming that collections were exhibited at least once within roughly two decades of acquisition, as qualitative evidence suggests, one can roughly classify collections as ante- or postbellum.
- [23] Matches between artists and owners include some "fuzzy" matches, such as when first initials and last names seem to correspond to a full first name and last name but can not be confirmed as a definitive match.
- [24] Digital Scholarship Lab, University of Richmond, "Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States," accessed May 31, 2016, <http://dsl.richmond.edu/historicalatlas/>.
- [25] The most prominent exception to this rule is New Orleans collector James Robb, whose collection was shown around the United States throughout the nineteenth century. The HAAExD records its exhibition in Cincinnati, New Orleans, Boston, and Chicago. Robb was born in western Pennsylvania but made his money in banking in Chicago, New York, and ultimately New Orleans. ("The Son of a Poor Widow; How He Rose from Poverty to Affluence," *New York Times*, August 2, 1881.) Robb's papers are at Historical New Orleans, and a mention of his collecting appears in Isaac Monroe Cline, *Storms, Floods and Sunshine: An Autobiography with a Summary of Tropical Hurricanes* (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing, 1951), 126–28.
- [26] Examples of regressions used to answer art-historical questions include Bayer and Page, *Art Market in England*; Graddy, "Taste Endures," 766–91; and Oosterlinck, "Art as a Wartime Investment," 1.
- [27] The best explanation of regressions for historians is in Charles H. Feinstein and Mark Thomas, *Making History Count: A Primer in Quantitative Methods for Historians* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 93–114, 231–99.
- [28] Ann Dumas, "Degas and His Collection," in Ann Dumas, Colta Ives, Susan Alyson Stein, and Gary Tinterow, *The Private Collection of Edgar Degas* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 3.
- [29] Jeffrey M. Muller, *Rubens: The Artist as Collector* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); and *Painters' Paintings: From Freud to Van Dyck*, exhibition, June 23 to September 4, 2016, National Gallery, London.
- [30] Anne Robbins, "Possession: Painters' Paintings," in *Painters' Paintings: From Freud to Van Dyck*, ed. Anne Robbins (London: National Gallery Company, 2016), 8–9.
- [31] *Ibid.*, 21.
- [32] Melissa Geisler Trafton, "Critics, Collections, and the Nineteenth-Century Taste for the Paintings of John Frederick Kensett" (PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2003); and Eleanor Jones Harvey, "Tastes in Transition: Gifford's Patrons," in *Hudson River Visions: The Landscapes of Sanford R. Gifford*, ed. Kevin J. Avery, Franklin Kelly, and Claire A. Conway (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003).
- [33] "The Collections," Olana: Frederic Church's Masterpiece website, Olana (NY) State Historic Site, accessed July 17, 2016, <http://www.olana.org/explore/the-collections/>.
- [34] See Gerald L. Carr, *Frederic Edwin Church: In Search of the Promised Land* (New York: Berry-Hill Galleries, 2000); Gerald L. Carr, *Frederic Edwin Church: Romantic Landscapes and Seascapes*

(New York: Adelson Galleries, 2007); and Jennifer Raab, *Frederic Church: The Art and Science of Detail* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 163.

[35] There is very limited information available about Magrath apart from his brief official National Academy biography and a short notice in John Caldwell, Oswaldo Rodriguez Roque, and Dale T. Johnson, *American Paintings: A Catalogue of the Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, vol. 1, *Painters Born by 1815* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1965), 531–32. Bizarrely, he also appears on websites dedicated to identifying Jack the Ripper; a basic Google search of his name links to sites about Jack the Ripper that suggest Magrath's locations match up with those of the serial killer and that someone with a similar last name was listed as a suspect.

[36] Trafton, "Paintings of John Frederick Kensett," 70–180 and Appendix C.

[37] Trafton, "Paintings of John Frederick Kensett," 121.

[38] Quoted in *ibid.*, 108.

[39] Malcolm Goldstein, *Landscape with Figures: A History of Art Dealing in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[40] Henry H. Leeds and Co., *Catalogue of the Private Collection of Oil Paintings by American Artists Made by Samuel P. Avery* (1867), <https://archive.org/details/b1468922>; Madeline Fidell Beaufort and Jeanne K. Welcher, "Some Views of Art Buying in New York in the 1870s and 1880s," *Oxford Art Journal* 5, no. 1 (1982); and Helmreich and Fletcher, "Local/Global."

[41] Jervis McEntee diary, entry for October 19, 1876, Archives of American Art, Reel D180, frame 144.

[42] Kevin Michael Murphy, "Economics of Style: The Business Practices of American Artists and the Structure of the Market, 1850–1910" (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2005), 63–65.

[43] Leanne M. Zalewski, "The Golden Age of French Academic Painting in America, 1867–1893" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 2009).

[44] Annette Blaugrund, *The Tenth Street Studio Building: Artist-Entrepreneurs from the Hudson River School to the American Impressionists* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997).

[45] Simon Cordery, *British Friendly Societies, 1750–1914* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 13.

[46] "The First Annual Report of the Artists' Fund Society," in *Constitution and First Annual Report of the Artists' Fund Society of the City of New York* (New York: G.A. Whitehorne, 1861), n.p.

[47] "Constitution," Article 6, Section 2, in *Constitution*, n.p.

[48] Trafton, "Paintings of John Frederick Kensett," 121.

[49] Thomas Cummings, *Historic Annals of the National Academy of Design, New-York Drawing Association, etc., with Occasional Dotings by the Way-Side, from 1825 to the Present Time* (Philadelphia: George W. Childs, 1865), 34.

[50] Eliot Candee Clark, *History of the National Academy of Design, 1825–1953* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), 16.

[51] "Century Association," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 2nd ed., ed. Kenneth T. Jackson (Cumberland, RI: Yale University Press, 2010), 226.

[52] Murphy, "Economics of Style," 38–40.

[53] This is not true for the Colman collection, since William Magrath was not a member of the Century Association; excluding Magrath, however, all of the artists in Colman's collections were fellow Centurions.

[54] Harvey, "Tastes in Transition," 77.

[55] Wendy Greenhouse, "Daniel Huntington and the Ideal of Christian Art," *Winterthur Portfolio* 21, no. 2/3 (1996), 105.

[56] William H. Gerdts, "Daniel Huntington's *Mercy's Dream*: A Pilgrimage through Bunyanesque Imagery," *Winterthur Portfolio* 14, no. 2 (1979), 171.

[57] Greenhouse, "Daniel Huntington," 103–5.

[58] Ancestry.com, https://www.ancestry.com/genealogy/records/charles-richards-huntington_35808698.

[59] George W. Keeler Art Galleries, *The Daniel Huntington Collection of Paintings* (New York: George W. Keeler Art Galleries, 1916), n.p.

- [60] Anonymous draft of an article on Daniel Huntington (undated fragment, 11 pages), page 2, reel 4857, Huntington family papers, 1792–1901, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (hereafter Huntington family papers).
- [61] Huntington family papers.
- [62] “Inman, Henry,” National Gallery of Art artists’ biographies, accessed October 30, 2017, <https://www.nga.gov/Collection/artist-info.1412.html>.
- [63] Daniel Huntington to Benjamin Huntington (father), March 1, 1846, page 2, Huntington family papers.
- [64] Ibid., page 3; and William H. Gerdts, “The Henry Inman Memorial Exhibition of 1846,” *Archives of American Art Journal* 14, no. 2 (1974): 2–6, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1557027>.
- [65] Daniel Huntington to Benjamin Huntington, March 10, 1846, page 2, Huntington family papers.
- [66] “Inman, Henry,” National Gallery of Art artists’ biographies.
- [67] Daniel Huntington to Benjamin Huntington, March 1, 1846, page 1, Huntington family papers.
- [68] Prosper Wetmore letters, 1834–47, reel 4283, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.
- [69] Daniel Huntington to Benjamin Huntington, March 1, 1846, page 2, Huntington family papers.
- [70] Daniel Huntington to Channing Huntington (nephew), March 11, 1891, Huntington family papers; and Greenhouse, “Daniel Huntington,” 108.
- [71] Daniel Huntington to Helen Huntington (wife of his nephew Gurdon), February 23, 1890, Huntington family papers.
- [72] Daniel Huntington to unknown recipient, fragment ca.1891, Huntington family papers. The letter fragment is estimated to be from 1891 based on Huntington’s having written, “A week ago I resigned the Presidency of the Academy & tonight it will take effect.” His second term as president of the National Academy of Design ended in 1891.
- [73] Trafton, “Paintings of John Frederick Kensett,” 121.
- [74] Jervis McEntee diary, entry for April 4, 1873, quoted in Trafton, “Paintings of John Frederick Kensett,” 113.
- [75] Kevin J. Avery, “A Historiography of the Hudson River School,” in *American Paradise: The World of the Hudson River School* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987), 10.
- [76] Trafton, “Paintings of John Frederick Kensett,” 114–21.
- [77] Information provided in a July 2017 email from Melissa Geisler Trafton.
- [78] Daniel Huntington to Channing Huntington, n.d., Huntington family papers. The letter is undated, but the text makes clear that it was written between November 8 and December 21, 1877.
- [79] Jules Prown, “The Art Historian and the Computer: An Analysis of Copley’s Patronage, 1753–1774,” in *Art as Evidence: Writings on Art and Material Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 51.
- [80] Prown, “Introduction,” in *Art as Evidence*, 4.
- [81] Prown, “Art Historian and the Computer,” 51.

Illustrations

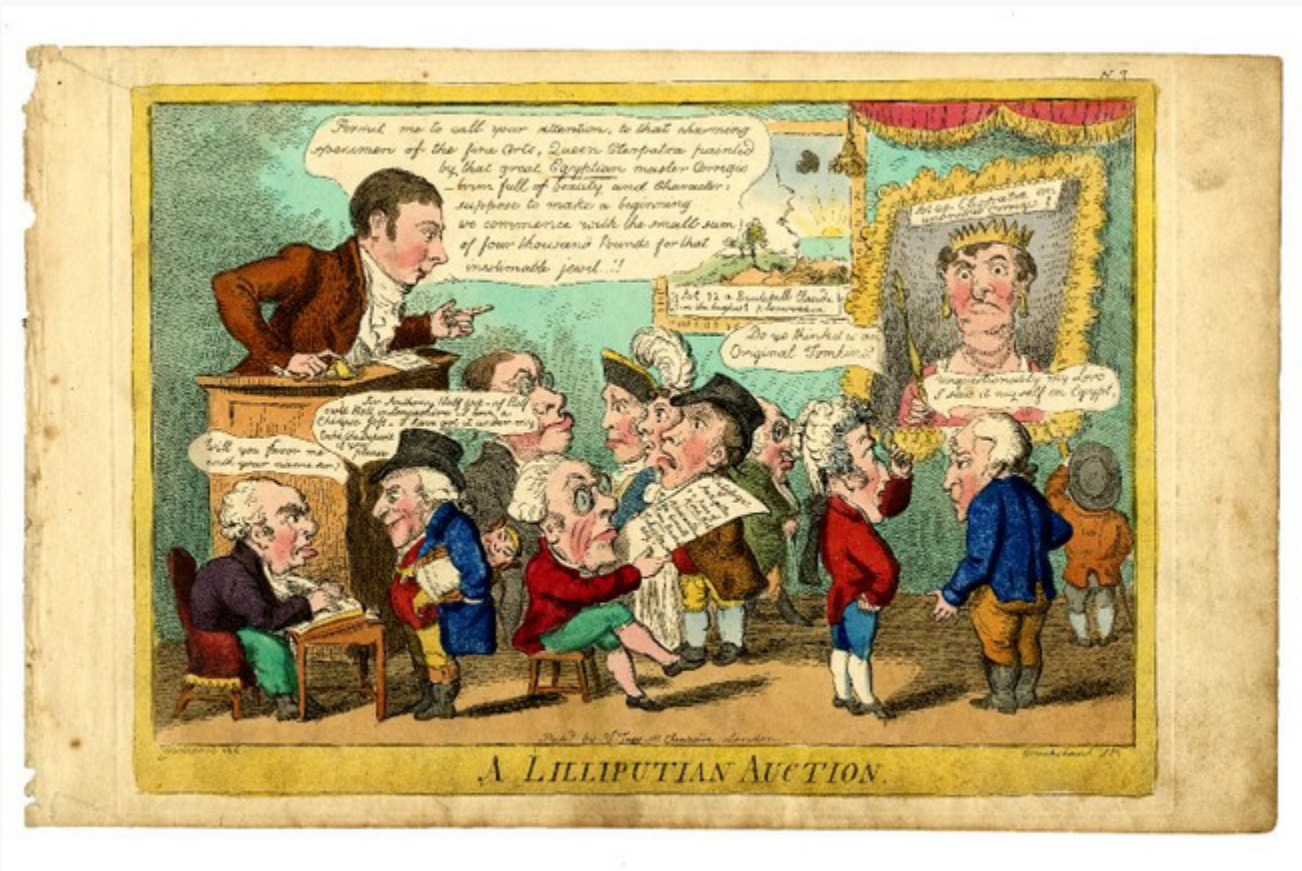


Fig. 1, Isaac Cruikshank after George Moutard Woodward, *A Lilliputian Auction*, ca. 1804. Hand-colored etching. British Museum, London. Artwork in the public domain; image available from: <http://www.britishmuseum.org>. [return to text]



Fig. 2, Udo Keppler, *The Magnet*, *Puck* 69, no. 1790 (June 21, 1911): centerfold. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of the Library of Congress.

[\[return to text\]](#)

- BIERSTADT, Albert (*continued*)
1859 (*continued*)
704. St. Peters and the Castle of St. Angelo—Sunset. *J. Hopkins*.
757. The Arch of Octavius. *Boston Athenaeum*.
783. Capri, Bay of Naples. *For sale*.
1860 *Address*: 15 Tenth Street.
547. Base of the Rocky Mountains. *For sale*.
- BILLINGS, Edward T. (1824-1893)
1858 *Address*: Worcester, Mass.
494. A Gentleman.
- BINGHAM, George Calcb (1811-1879)
1840 *Address*: St. Louis.
88. Group, Two Young Girls.
96. Tam O'Shanter, from Burns. *For sale*.
249. Landscape.
257. Tam O'Shanter. *For sale*.
293. Pennsylvania Farmer.
303. Sleeping Child.
1842 *Address*: Not given.
166. Going to Market. *For sale*.
1848 *Address*: Not given.
226. The Stump Orator. *For sale*.
- BINGHAM, Luther (active 1838-1839)
1838 *Address*: 52½ Howard Street.
151. Miniature of James W. Wallack, Esq., Lessee of the National Theatre. *J. W. Wallack*.
- BININGER, W. B. (active 1840)
1840 *Address*: Granite Buildings, Corner of Chambers Street and Broadway.
81. Portrait of a Boy. *Sigr. Teraro*.
86. Small Half Length of a Gentleman. *W. B. Bininger*.
- BIRCH, Thomas (1779-1851)
Honorary Member, Professional, 1833-1851.
1832 *Address*: Philadelphia.
81. Sea Piece. *Mr. Clover*.
1833 *Address*: Philadelphia.
127. Marine View.
191. Sea Piece. *For sale*.
199. Sea Piece. *For sale*.

Fig. 3, Mary Bartlett Cowdrey, *National Academy of Design Exhibition Record, 1826–1860*, vol. 1. New York: New-York Historical Society, 1943: 33. Publication in the public domain; available from: <https://archive.org>. [return to text]

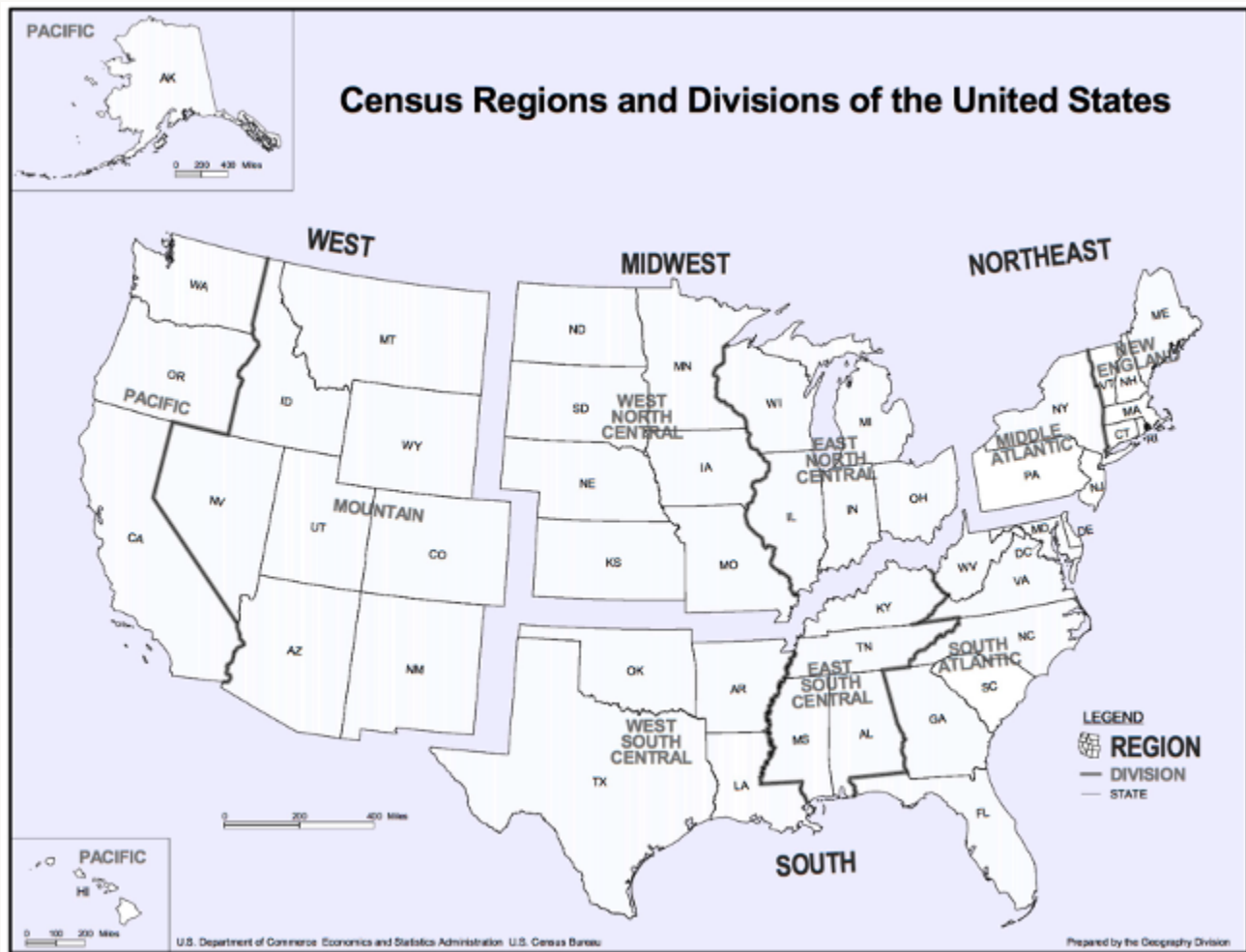


Fig. 4, United States Census Bureau, "Census Regions and Divisions of the United States," 2007. Map in the public domain; available from: <https://www2.census.gov>. [return to text]

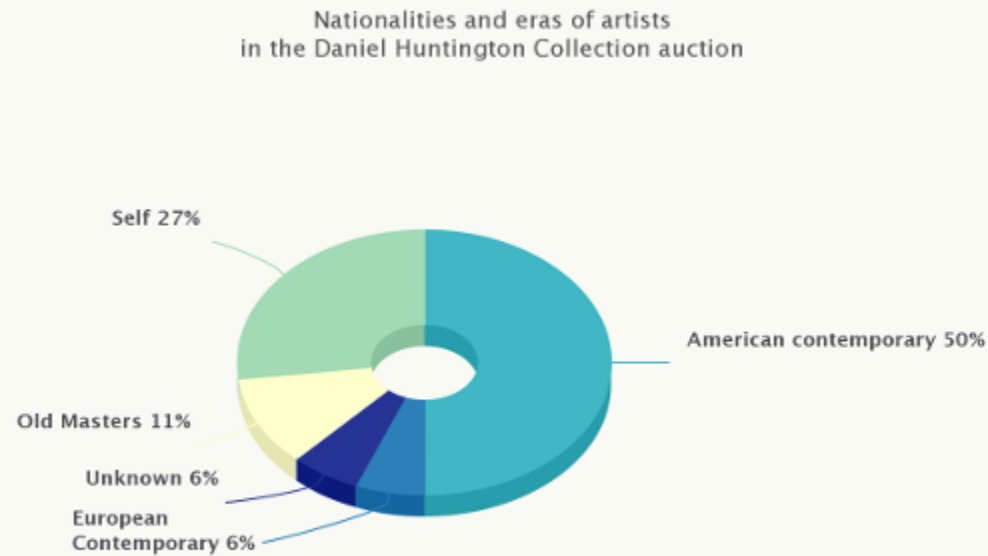


Fig. 5, Interactive pie chart of the Daniel Huntington Collection auction, January 27 and 28, 1916. Data transcribed from Keeler Art Galleries, *The Daniel Huntington Collection of Paintings*, auction cat. (New York: Alexander Press, 1916). [\[return to text\]](#)

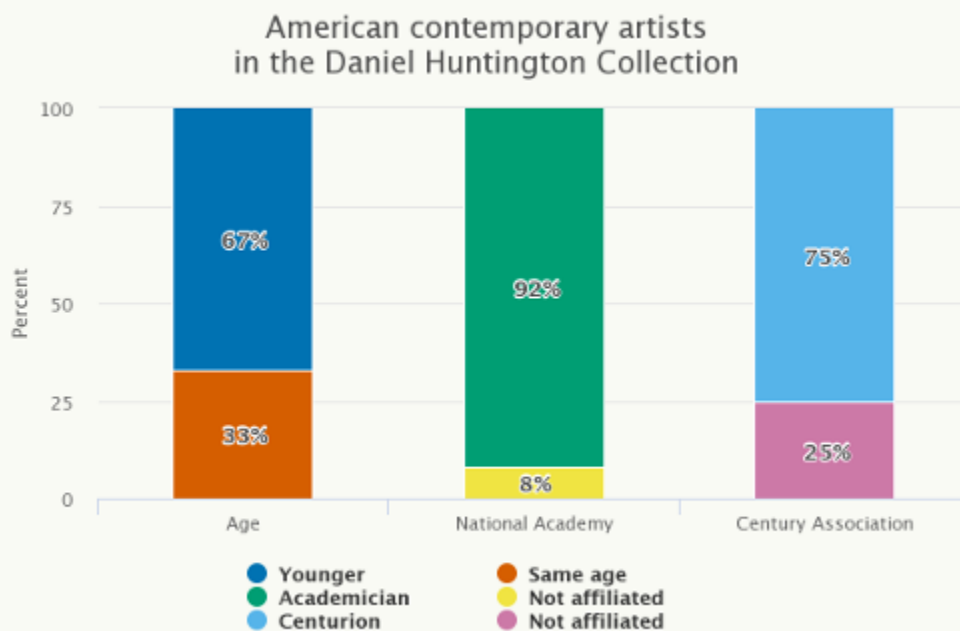


Fig. 5b, American contemporary artists in the Daniel Huntington Collection. [\[return to text\]](#)

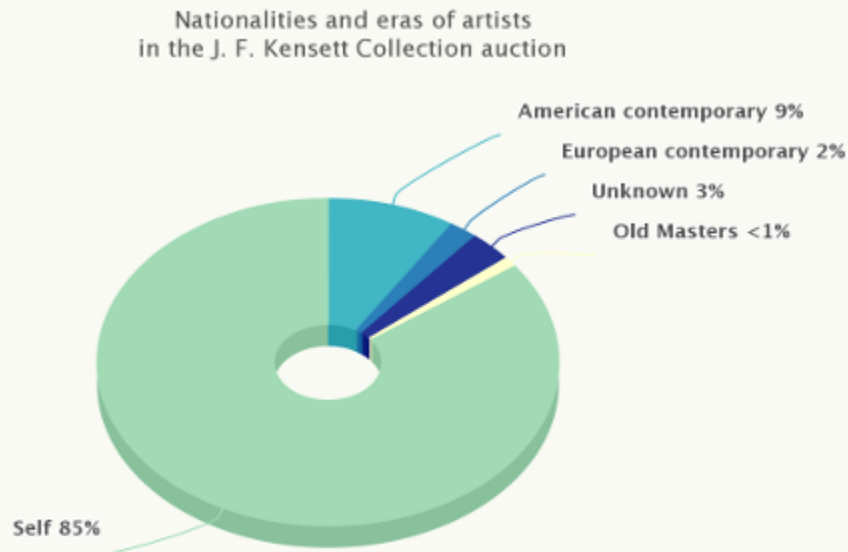


Fig. 6, Interactive pie chart of the J. F. Kensett Collection auction, March 24–29, 1873. Data transcribed from Robert Somerville, *The Collection of the Late John F. Kensett*, auction cat., no. 224 (New York: Association Hall, 1873). [\[return to text\]](#)

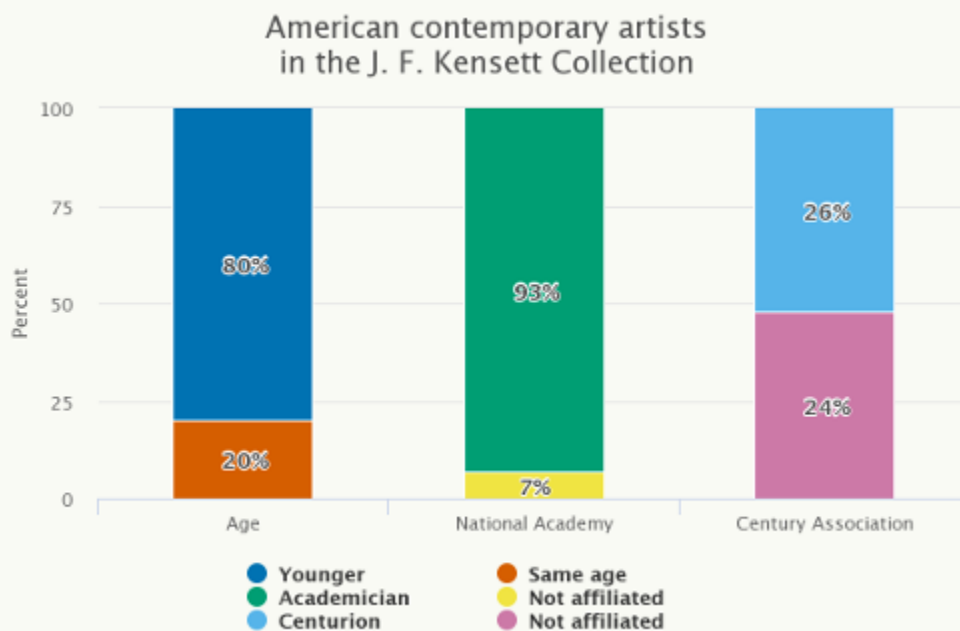


Fig. 6b, American contemporary artists in the J. F. Kensett Collection. [\[return to text\]](#)

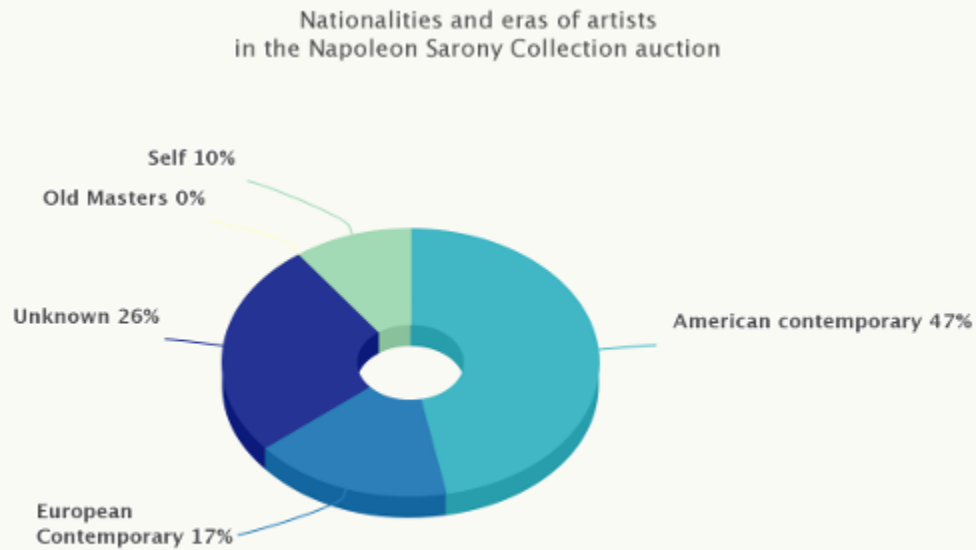


Fig. 7, Interactive pie chart of the Napoleon Sarony Collection auction, March 31 and April 1, 1896. Data transcribed from American Art Galleries, *Catalogue of Oil Paintings, Original Drawings, Arms and Armor, Antiquities, Indian Relics, Curios, Etc., Etc. property of Napoleon Sarony*, auction cat. (New York: American Art Galleries, 1896). [\[return to text\]](#)

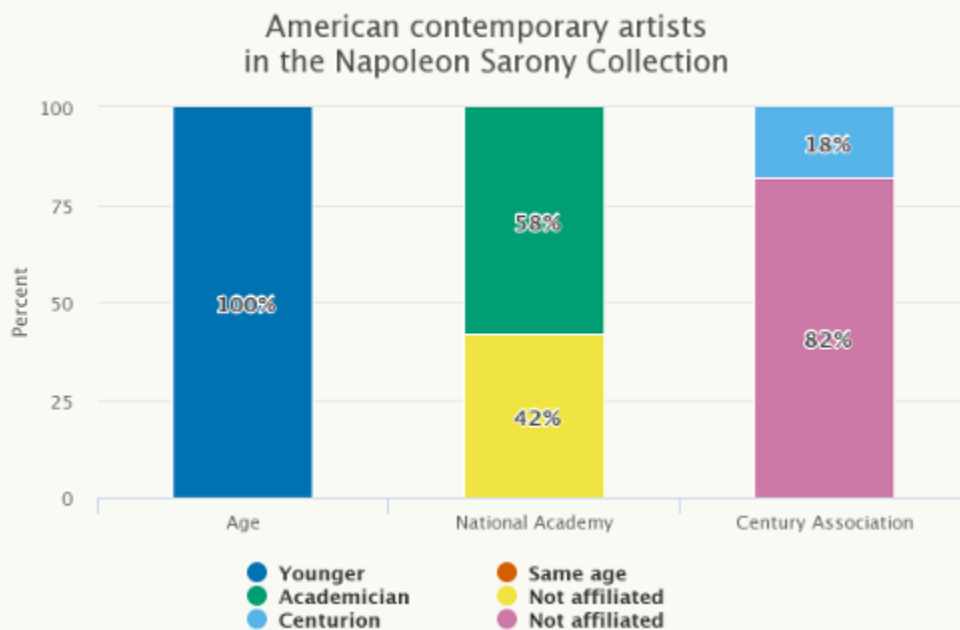


Fig. 7b, American contemporary artists in the Napoleon Sarony Collection. [\[return to text\]](#)

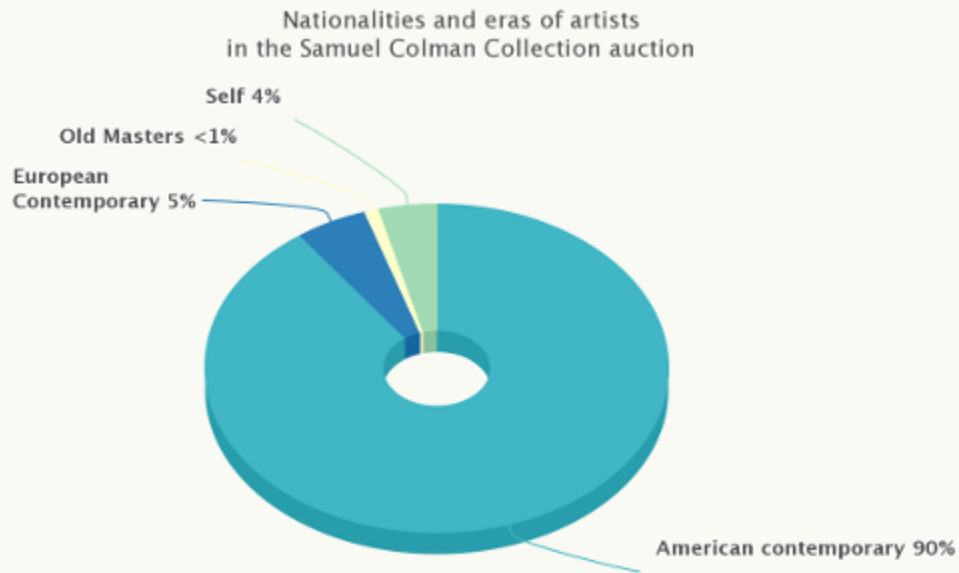


Fig. 8, Interactive pie chart of the Samuel Colman Collection auction, April 19 and 20, 1927. Data transcribed from Anderson Galleries, *The Art Collections of the Late Samuel Colman, N.A.*, auction cat. (New York: Anderson Galleries, 1927). [\[return to text\]](#)

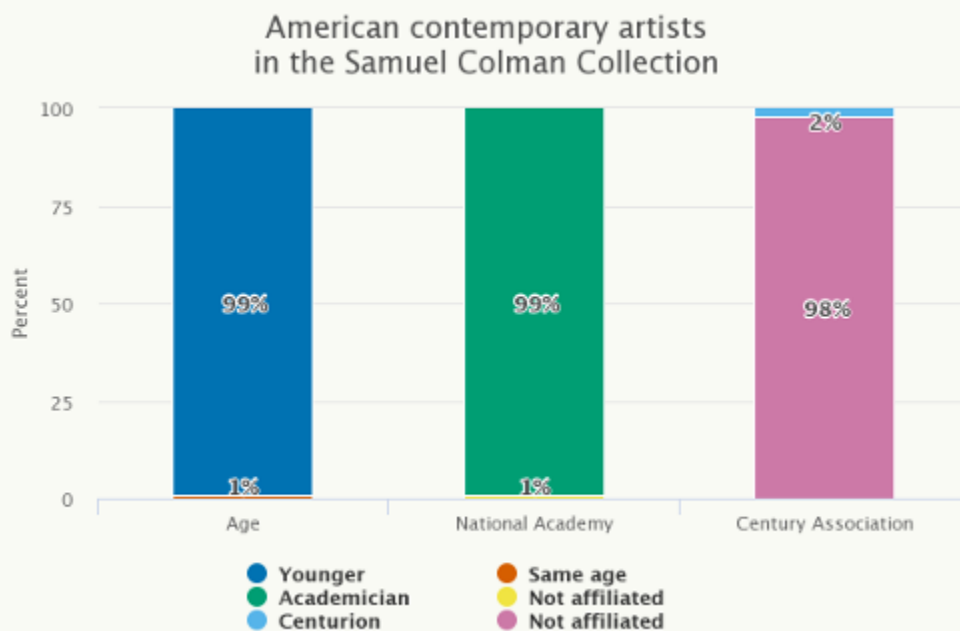


Fig. 8b, American contemporary artists in the Samuel Colman Collection. [\[return to text\]](#)

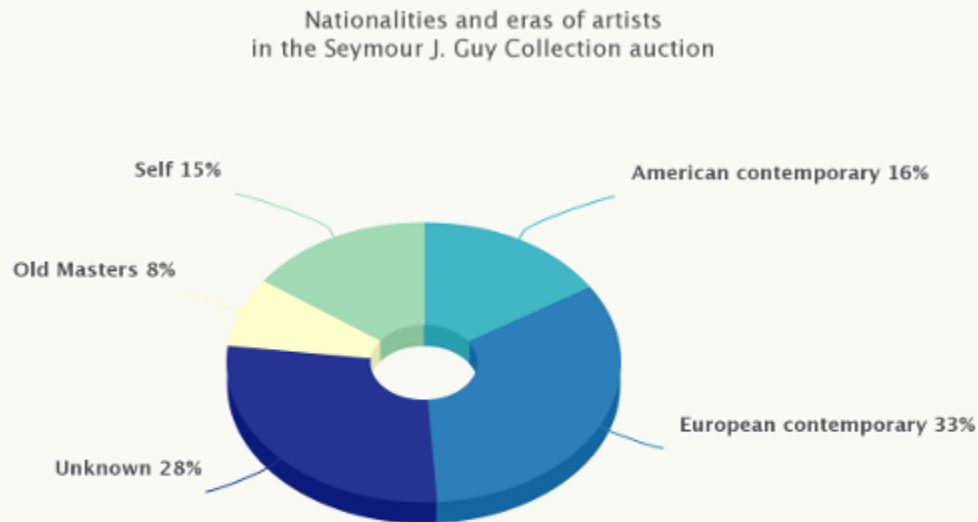


Fig. 9, Interactive pie chart of the Seymour J. Guy Collection auction, March 13 and 14, 1913. Data transcribed from Fifth Avenue Art Galleries, *Seymour J. Guy Collection*, auction cat. (New York: Fifth Avenue Galleries, 1913). [\[return to text\]](#)

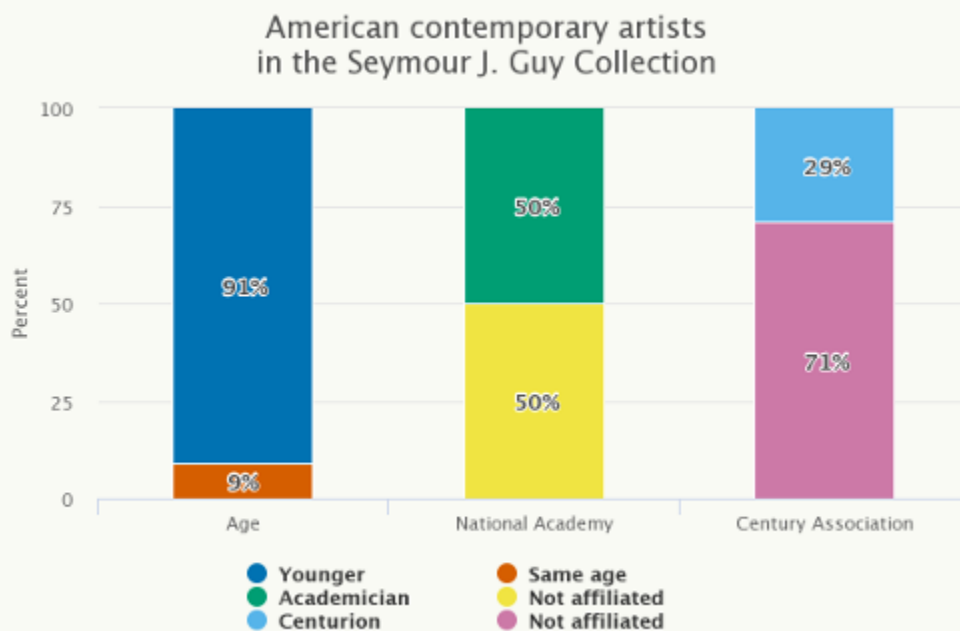


Fig. 9b, American contemporary artists in the Seymour J. Guy Collection. [\[return to text\]](#)

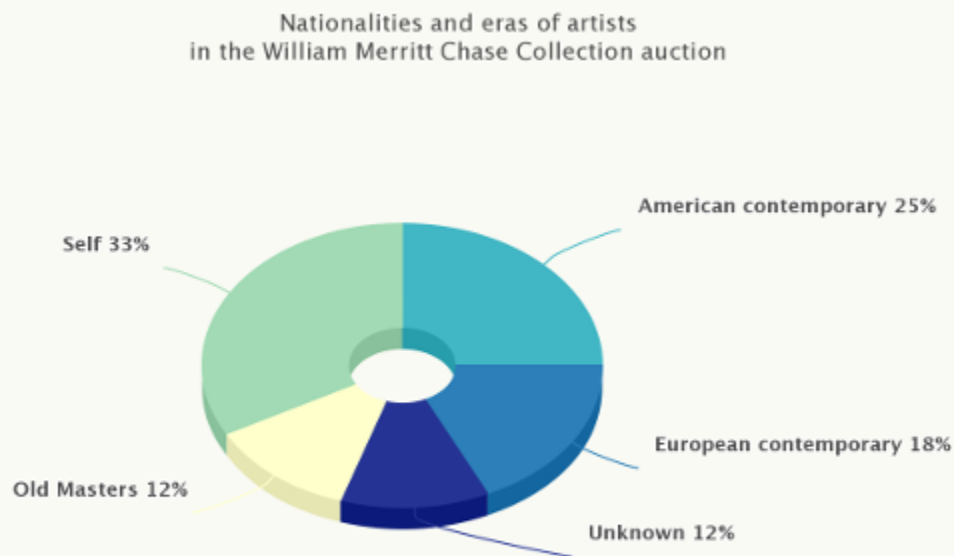


Fig. 10, Interactive pie chart of the William Merritt Chase Collection auction, May 14–17, 1917. Data transcribed from American Art Galleries, *The Paintings and Other Artistic Property Left by the Late William Merritt Chase, N.A.*, auction cat. (New York: American Art Galleries, 1917). [\[return to text\]](#)

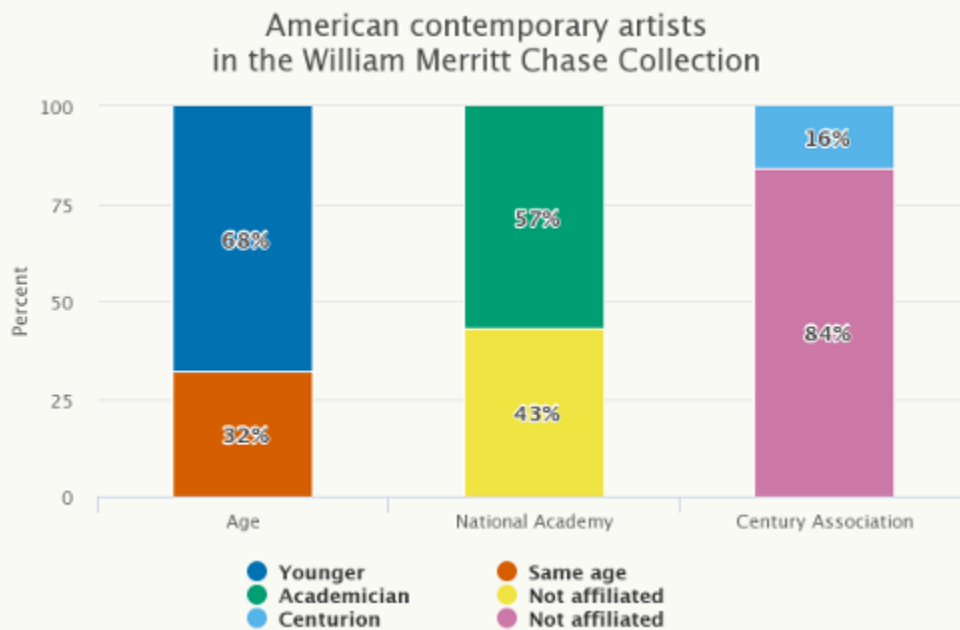


Fig. 10b, American contemporary artists in the William Merritt Chase Collection. [\[return to text\]](#)



Fig. 11, Edmund Vincent Gillon, *The Century Association*, 7 West 43rd Street, ca. 1977. Polyester negative. Museum of the City of New York, New York. Image courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York.

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Fig. 12, Unknown photographer, *Daniel Huntington*, ca. 1860. Albumen silver print. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Image courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.

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Fig. 13, Daniel Huntington, *Mercy's Dream*, 1841. Oil on canvas. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia. Image courtesy of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. [\[return to text\]](#)



Fig. 14, Daniel Huntington, *Coast Scene, Storm Passing Off*, ca. 1850. Oil on canvas. Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, Maine. Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art. [\[return to text\]](#)



Fig. 15, Daniel Huntington, *The Atlantic Cable Projectors*, 1895. Oil on canvas. New York State Museum, Albany. Image courtesy of the New York State Museum, Albany. [\[return to text\]](#)