



PIETER DE HOOCH

A WOMAN PREPARING BREAD
AND BUTTER FOR A BOY

WAYNE FRANITS

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THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM □ LOS ANGELES

*This book is affectionately dedicated to Linnea and Aidan,
who prove the maxim that life can indeed imitate art.*

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Getty Publications
1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 500
Los Angeles, California 90049-1682
www.getty.edu

Mark Greenberg, *Editor in Chief*

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Lou Meluso, Charles Passela, Jack Ross, *Photographers*

Typography by Diane Franco
Printed and bound in China

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Franits, Wayne E.

Pieter de Hooch : A woman preparing bread and butter for a boy /

Wayne Franits.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-89236-844-0 (pbk.)

ISBN-10: 0-89236-844-6 (pbk.)

1. Hooch, Pieter de. Woman preparing bread and butter for a boy.
2. Hooch, Pieter de—Criticism and interpretation.
3. J. Paul Getty Museum. I. Hooch, Pieter de. II. Title.

ND653.H75A73 2006

759.9492—dc22

2006010091

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Cover: Pieter de Hooch (Dutch, 1629–1684), *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy*, circa 1661–63 (detail). Oil on canvas, 68.3 × 53 cm (26⁷/₈ × 20⁷/₈ in.). Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 84.PA.47.

Frontispiece: Detail of windows from *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy*.

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INTRODUCTION

IN THE HUSHED STILLNESS OF WHAT IS MOST LIKELY EARLY morning, a dutiful mother butters bread for her young son, who stands patiently and respectfully at her side [FIGURE 1]. The artist who painted this picture has captured a trivial moment in a daily routine and imbued it with an almost sacrosanct quality, thereby eternalizing it for posterity. This splendid scene makes the viewer feel as if he or she is encroaching upon a mother and son absorbed in their hallowed morning ritual, a feeling no doubt intensified by the truly immaculate interior that they occupy. Only one object tarnishes this otherwise unsullied space: a discarded toy top, lying on the floor to the left. This largely pristine chamber has been carefully and purposefully sequestered from the outside world. The latter is suggested by the brightly lit vestibule behind the room, which provides a glimpse of a building in the distance labeled *Schole* (school). Additionally, the indistinct silhouette of a man, most likely the pater familias, can be detected in the heavy shadows of the large window directly behind the foreground figures, a motif that further articulates the picture's spatial divisions. The painting exudes a resplendent air of domesticity, orderliness, and virtue.

A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy was executed by the Dutch painter Pieter de Hooch (1629–1684) sometime between 1661 and 1663, possibly during his sojourn in Delft but most likely while he resided in Amsterdam. Unfortunately, we do not know whether De Hooch painted this picture with a specific patron in mind or whether he intended it for sale on the open market. In fact, nothing is known about its early history. The very first reference to the painting was made only in 1750 in the catalogue to an auction in Amsterdam in April of that year, where it was enthusiastically described as being “very natural and artful.”¹

FIGURE 1
Pieter de Hooch (Dutch,
1629–1684), *A Woman Preparing
Bread and Butter for a Boy*,
circa 1661–63. Oil on canvas,
68.3 × 53 cm (26⁷/₈ × 20⁷/₈ in.).
Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty
Museum, 84.PA.47.

The Getty Museum's canvas is but one of many pictures by De Hooch that depict women and children engaged in a wide variety of meritorious activities. Collectively, De Hooch's work, along with a large number of related paintings by his colleagues, summons forth a halcyon world of comfort and privilege while yielding insights into seventeenth-century Dutch attitudes toward domestic life and the training of children.

The book before you attempts to provide answers to some of the questions that might be raised by modern-day viewers of De Hooch's canvas. Who was Pieter de Hooch? What do historians of Dutch art know about his life, and at what point during his career was this painting created? What insights into Dutch daily life during the so-called Golden Age can be gleaned by gazing upon it? What, for instance, does the picture tell us about women's lives during that period? And what can we deduce about contemporary child-rearing practices from it? Equally importantly, what associations did *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* evoke for seventeenth-century viewers? And how were paintings of this type marketed?

The first chapter of the book examines the Getty Museum's De Hooch in relation to the artist's life and work, exploring the artist's stylistic development and his at times complex relationship to other painters in the Dutch republic. Chapter two shifts our attention to the subject matter of the painting, placing it within the broader context of seventeenth-century Dutch concepts of domesticity and child rearing. As we shall see, contemporary Dutch authors were quite opinionated about these concepts and, consequently, their writings are particularly revealing as we seek to assess contemporary responses to paintings such as De Hooch's. The final chapter ties *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* and related domestic imagery to the wider framework of the market for such art in De Hooch's day. By examining how paintings of domestic subjects reflected changing tastes on the part of the artists' clientele, which in turn influenced their purchasing preferences, we can link these pictures directly to social and cultural developments in the Netherlands during the second half of the seventeenth century. This chapter will also explore in detail the question of the degree to which the painting provides an accurate reflection of life during that era.

In the end, though the various perspectives that will be introduced can amplify (and perhaps demystify) the significance of De Hooch's canvas within its original, seventeenth-century context, they cannot supplant—and indeed are not intended to supplant—what visitors to the Getty Museum most enjoy about the picture today: its enchanting beauty.



Detail of Figure 1.

PIETER DE HOOCH
HIS LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT
AS AN ARTIST

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IN 1984, THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM ACQUIRED A WOMAN *Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* [FIGURE 1] by Pieter de Hooch, a contemporary of Johannes Vermeer and one of the masters of the Golden Age of Dutch painting. This chapter proposes to place this work in the context of De Hooch's life and career and to situate the artist himself within the larger phenomenon of seventeenth-century genre painting.

BEGINNINGS

Only the most meager details about Pieter De Hooch's life are known today.² The painter was born in the city of Rotterdam in 1629, to a father who was a bricklayer by trade and a mother who worked as a midwife. His working-class parents must have recognized his incipient artistic talent and consequently arranged for him to undertake professional training. According to Arnold Houbraken (1660–1719), De Hooch's early-eighteenth-century biographer, the fledgling artist studied with Nicolaes Berchem (1620–1683), a renowned landscapist who worked in the city of Haarlem.³ This phase of his training presumably occurred sometime between Berchem's return from Italy in 1646 and 1652, when De Hooch is recorded as residing in Delft. There is no discernible trace of Berchem's style [FIGURE 2] in De Hooch's work, but this lack of similarity between the works of master and pupil is a phenomenon that occurs not infrequently in seventeenth-century Dutch painting.

An archival document dated August 5, 1652, reveals that De Hooch was present in Delft at the signing of a will on that date, together with Hendrick van der Burch (1627–after 1666), a fellow painter who eventually became his brother-in-law.

De Hooch is recorded as being employed by the Delft linen merchant Justus de la Grange the following May (1653), as “a servant [*dienaar*] who was also a painter.” The archival document in which we learn of this situation indicates that another servant had suddenly vanished from De la Grange’s service and had stolen some of his master’s possessions in the process.⁴ The belongings that this servant had left behind were subsequently auctioned, and a cloth coat that remained unsold was given to De Hooch. Although the document specifically describes De Hooch as a servant who was also a painter, the exact nature of his relationship with De la Grange remains unclear. It is possible that De Hooch worked as an indentured artist—handing over part or all of his paintings in exchange for room and board or some comparable benefit. De la Grange was an art collector and owned eleven paintings by the artist. However, it is also possible that De Hooch was employed as an actual servant, or perhaps even in some combination of both of these roles.⁵ Perhaps, as a relatively new resident of Delft, the young painter needed to support himself by pursuing another occupation, a not uncommon practice among artists in the Netherlands at this time.

Sometime after this document was written, De Hooch returned briefly to his native Rotterdam, only to relocate to Delft once again at the time of his marriage in early May 1654 to Jannetje van der Burch, a resident of the latter town. In September 1655, De Hooch enrolled in Delft’s Guild of St. Luke, the professional organization for artists. At this point, he must have been beset with financial problems because he was unable to pay the entire twelve-guilder admission fee required of painters born outside the city.

At the time of De Hooch’s arrival, Delft was already one of the oldest cities in the Netherlands, having been granted a charter in 1246 by the Count of Holland, William II. Delft’s economy profited greatly from its capacity as the capital of Delfland (a district extending roughly from The Hague to Rotterdam). During



FIGURE 2
Nicolaes Berchem (Dutch,
1620–1683), *Landscape with a
Nymph and Satyr*, 1647.
Oil on panel, 68.6 × 58.4 cm
(27 × 23 in.). Los Angeles,
J. Paul Getty Museum, 71.PB.33.

the late sixteenth century, in the early stages of the Dutch revolt against their Spanish overlords, the city had initially served as the seat of the fledgling national government, which gained it even greater prestige and prosperity.

However, by the early seventeenth century, the capital of the Dutch republic had been moved from Delft to The Hague. This event was a harbinger of the city's declining influence in other social and economic arenas during the course of the century. Delft's traditional industries of beer brewing and textile manufacture, for example, experienced severe contractions during this period because they were unable to compete with those of other towns such as Rotterdam, Haarlem, and Leiden.

Fortunately, the manufacture of faience offset the grave economic consequences that followed the decline of brewing and textile production in Delft. Ironically, what proved to be a boon for this business was the importation of Chinese porcelain by the famed Dutch East India Company (which had offices in Delft). Delft's artisans responded much more successfully to this commercial competition than did their colleagues in the beer-brewing and cloth trades by greatly refining the quality of their faience. During the latter part of the seventeenth century, the number of potteries in Delft doubled as this industry entered its most active phase of production, eventually employing a considerable percentage of the town's population. Delftware (as the product is called) remains famous today and is eagerly sought after by tourists traveling to the Netherlands.

The flourishing Delftware industry could not, however, completely offset the city's economic slump, which began during De Hooch's years there and accelerated greatly after 1680. Delft's modest size — its population peaked at twenty-five thousand inhabitants in 1665 — and the sheer topographical misfortune of lying close to the booming manufacturing towns of Leiden and Rotterdam slowly but surely sapped its vitality.

Before the city's economic decline began (that is, prior to 1650), a number of noteworthy artists were active in Delft. These included the renowned portraitist Michiel van Miereveld (1567–1641); the prolific Leonard Bramer (1596–1674), who had spent approximately twelve formative years in Italy; the important painter of architectural interiors Bartholomeus van Bassen (circa 1590–1652); the celebrated still-life specialist Balthasar van der Ast (1593/94–1657); and Christiaan van Couwenburgh (1604–1667), a master of biblical and mythological subjects who also

executed some fascinating scenes of daily life, or genre pictures. Speaking of the latter, genre painters Anthonie Palamedesz. (1601–1673) and Jacob van Velsen (circa 1597–1656) were also active in Delft at this time.

But the earlier presence of these masters in Delft does not entirely account for the seemingly sudden blossoming of painting there during the 1650s, when this economically sluggish city gave rise to one of the most important “schools” of painting in the Dutch republic.⁶ This decade witnessed the arrival in Delft of Carel Fabritius (1622–1654) and Pieter de Hooch as well as the first paintings by Vermeer. That Fabritius, De Hooch, and Vermeer, along with a host of other masters, could produce innovative and splendid art in a city well past its economic prime is something of a paradox. A contributing factor may have been that the city retained a core of wealthy citizens, many of whom stemmed from venerable families that had amassed great fortunes through prudent investments in the Dutch East India and West India Companies and other mercantile ventures, and who were accustomed to purchasing the finer things in life, including art. Years before the city’s fiscal circumstances truly worsened, however, many of the best painters had either died or left Delft. De Hooch departed Delft for Amsterdam around 1661.

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THE DELFT YEARS

De Hooch’s earliest paintings, none of which are dated, were apparently completed during the early 1650s. In the early years of his career, he made numerous pictures of soldiers, including *Two Soldiers and a Serving Woman with a Trumpeter* [FIGURE 3]. Here, two soldiers, identifiable by their clothing and equipage, are served by a smiling young hostess. One of the men toasts her with a large glass of beer in appreciation for his drink. Judging from his sly facial expression, he is taking this opportunity to ogle her. A more elegantly attired trumpeter blows his instrument at the entrance to the interior, while in the far right background still other soldiers are visible. The setting of this painting appears to be a barn, perhaps in combination with a country tavern; note the hay-filled loft and horse directly behind the serving woman. This ramshackle structure seems to be serving as the soldiers’ temporary barracks.

Pictures of this type, which ostensibly represent daily life, are today commonly called genre paintings.⁷ Seventeenth-century Dutch viewers, however, used



FIGURE 3
 Pieter de Hooch, *Two Soldiers and a Serving Woman with a Trumpeter*, circa 1650–55. Oil on panel, 76 × 66 cm (29⁷/₈ × 26 in.). Zurich, Kunsthhaus, Betty and David M. Koetser Foundation.

purely descriptive titles to categorize such representations. Therefore, De Hooch's painting would have been identified by contemporary beholders as a *kortegaard* ("guardroom piece"; the Dutch term is a bastardization of the French phrase *corps de garde*).

Dutch genre paintings present a wide variety of subject matter, but the scope of what was portrayed, compared to what could potentially have been portrayed, is



actually quite limited. The surprisingly restricted number of themes, along with the repetition of specific styles and motifs, used continually and often over several generations, attests to their highly conventional nature.

A brief examination of the pictorial sources that underlie *Two Soldiers and a Serving Woman with a Trumpeter* readily confirms the contrived nature of such genre works. De Hooch's panel owes much to the soldierly imagery that had been developed by an earlier generation of Dutch painters. Contemporary Europeans considered common military men (as opposed to officers) socially suspect and inherently unruly, and scenes of unscrupulous, rowdy troopers were frequently depicted in the late 1620s and 1630s by two artists from Amsterdam, Pieter Codde (1599–1678) and Willem Duyster (circa 1599–1635).⁸ Very often these two painters portrayed soldiers lustily engaging in the same type of disreputable activities that we see in De Hooch's painting, as in Codde's *Guardroom with Soldiers* [FIGURE 4]. Looking at these earlier works it seems clear that the younger artist's painting owes more to pictorial traditions than to any actual, personal observations of infantrymen at leisure, which would have been unlikely in any case: very few troops were billeted in the dense urban area of the western Netherlands where De Hooch worked.

More immediate thematic precedents for De Hooch's panel can be found in the work of the Delft genre painter Anthonie Palamedesz. [FIGURE 5] and especially in the art of Ludolf de Jongh, who was a native Rotterdamer like De Hooch, though thirteen years his senior. De Jongh's *Soldiers at Reveille* [FIGURE 6], likewise of the

FIGURE 4

Pieter Jacobsz. Codde (Dutch, 1599–1678), *A Guardroom with Soldiers*, circa 1628. Oil on panel, 48 × 78 cm (18 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.). Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, 1387. Photo: SLUB Dresden, Deutsche Fotothek, by Rudolph Kramer.

FIGURE 5

Anthonie Palamedesz. (Dutch, 1601–1673), *A Guardroom Interior*, circa 1650. Oil on panel, 29.8 × 37.8 cm (11 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.). New York, Otto Naumann, Ltd., and London, Johnny Van Haeften, Ltd.

FIGURE 6

Ludolf de Jongh (Dutch, 1616–1679), *Soldiers at Reveille*, 1655–58. Oil on panel, 47.6 × 64.8 cm (18¾ × 25½ in.). Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art, purchased with funds from the State of North Carolina, 52.9.46.



FIGURE 7

Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman with a Baby in Her Lap, and a Small Child*, 1658. Oil on panel, 60 × 47 cm (23⅞ × 18½ in.). Aurora Art Fund, courtesy Stiebel, Ltd., New York.

mid-1650s, represents a cast of characters similar to those of De Hooch's painting, including a hostess, uncouth soldiers, and even a trumpeter, barely visible through the door in the center-right background.⁹ De Jongh and De Hooch employ comparable barnlike settings, rendered in rather abrupt perspective, but De Hooch's interior displays a more sustained interest in the qualities of light and atmosphere.

Several paintings by De Jongh were once ascribed to De Hooch. The confusion concerning their work is understandable given their respective approaches, particularly the use of similar perspectival arrangements. Although De Hooch eventually proved much more talented at rendering perspective, De Jongh's influence upon his fellow townsman was profound. There is no formal record of such a relationship, but the older master may well have served as one of De Hooch's teachers.

As the 1650s progressed, De Hooch's production of military imagery was very gradually supplanted by that of other subjects, especially women, children, and domestic servants. At the same time, his palette and representation of space grew more sophisticated. We know of six paintings from his hand signed and dated 1658 (along with numerous others that can be dated to around that time), making this a seminal year in his Delft period. *A Woman with a Baby in Her Lap, and a Small*





FIGURE 8
 Petrus Christus (Flemish, circa 1410–1475/76), *The Virgin and Child in a Domestic Interior*, circa 1460–67. Oil on panel, 69.5 × 50.9 cm (27³/₈ × 20¹/₁₆ in.). Kansas City, Missouri, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Purchase: Nelson Trust, 56-51. Photo: Jamison Miller.

FIGURE 9
 Nicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1634–1693), *The Idle Servant*, 1655. Oil on panel, 70 × 53.3 cm (27¹/₂ × 21 in.). London, National Gallery of Art, NG207. Photo: © Board of Trustees.



Child [FIGURE 7] is an excellent example of this. This winsome scene depicts a woman supporting her infant in her lap while pointing to her smiling daughter, who clutches a puppy, perhaps in imitation of her mother's loving care of the baby.

Besides its charming appearance, this panel is striking for its skillful representation of an interior space. De Hooch's replication of the myriad effects of light filtering through the window in the back room is almost uncanny. Some of the individual windowpanes seem to shimmer due to the bright sunlight. Even the left side of the portrait of the man and the upper part of the boards composing the wooden door display a startling sheen that serves to dissolve their forms while revealing their constituent parts. A similarly intricate play of light can be observed in the bright glints on the edges of some of the floor tiles and the cream-colored walls behind the figures. Off to the right, a chair and a map affixed to the wall can scarcely be seen because they are engulfed in extremely heavy shadow. The picture's consummate luminosity is complemented and indeed enhanced by De Hooch's complex use of perspective.



FIGURE 10
Gonzales Coques (Flemish,
1614/18–1684), *The Young Scholar
and His Wife*, 1640. Oil on panel,
41 × 59.5 cm (16 1/8 × 23 3/8 in.).
Kassel, Staatliche Museen.

The artist's characteristic use of a view into another chamber reflects this. In the art-theoretical terminology of the seventeenth century, this was called a *doorsien*, which literally means a “see through.”¹⁰ The inclusion of a distant view into an ancillary space has a long history in Northern European art, as the fifteenth-century Netherlandish panel painting illustrated here demonstrates [FIGURE 8]. By De Hooch's day, such convincing renditions of space had become fairly commonplace. They were most frequently executed by artists working within a broad region of the Netherlands now called Zuid Holland (South Holland). Thus, De Hooch could have seen prototypes made by artists from such cities as Dordrecht [FIGURE 9], Leiden, and his native Rotterdam. Moreover, this regional perspective continued to be practiced by De Hooch's contemporaries in Flanders, especially by Gonzales Coques [FIGURE 10].¹¹ As the best artists always do, De Hooch did not just slavishly imitate these prototypes. Instead, he combined the South Holland approach to perspective and interior space construction with the forceful naturalism and emphasis on figures that was no doubt familiar to him from the work of such prominent



FIGURE 11
Gerard ter Borch (Dutch,
1617–1681), *The Music Lesson*,
circa 1668. Oil on canvas,
67.7 × 54.9 cm (26 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 21 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.).
Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty
Museum, 97.PA.47.

contemporary genre painters as Gerard ter Borch [FIGURE 11] and Gerrit Dou [see FIGURE 49]. Peter C. Sutton, the leading authority on De Hooch, has observed how the subjects of his paintings are skillfully wedded to the sophisticated perspectival configurations in which they appear.¹² De Hooch's orderly yet ostensibly natural spatial designs echo and even enhance the tranquil domestic scenes that take place within them. The extraordinarily lifelike appearance of the figures in *A Woman with a Baby in Her Lap* easily fools us into believing that it was painted in an actual interior as the artist directly observed a mother interacting with her children. But this image's apparent slice-of-life character belies its highly constructed, conventional



qualities. In fact, another picture by the artist, which was painted at about the same time, depicts a nearly identical interior with the very same view into an additional room [FIGURE 12].

Judging from the large percentage of domestic themes in De Hooch's oeuvre, and his frequent recycling of specific subjects and settings, he clearly sought to capitalize on the ready market for these types of paintings. In fact, it is these works that helped to secure his reputation in his own day and in ours as well. De Hooch is most often identified with depictions of courtyards, a type of image that the artist single-handedly developed and popularized in at least twelve different pictures produced

FIGURE 12
Pieter de Hooch, *Woman and Child in an Interior*, circa 1658.
Oil on canvas, 65 × 60.5 cm
(25⁷/₈ × 23⁷/₈ in.). Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum.



FIGURE 13
Emanuel de Witte (Dutch, circa
1617–1691/92), *A Sermon in the
Old Church, Delft*, circa 1651–52.
Oil on panel, 73.2 × 59.5 cm
(28⁷/₈ × 23³/₈ in.). Ottawa, National
Gallery of Canada.

FIGURE 14
Pieter de Hooch, *A Courtyard
in Delft at Evening: A Woman
Spinning*, circa 1657–60.
Oil on canvas, 69.2 × 54 cm
(27¹/₄ × 21¹/₄ in.). Windsor, Royal
Collection, © Her Majesty Queen
Elizabeth II.

during his relatively brief tenure in Delft and in some additional ones made after he relocated to Amsterdam.

Courtyards were an intrinsic feature of Dutch domestic architecture and were either constructed within the middle of a house or at its very back.¹³ Homes in Dutch cities were customarily built close together on long, narrow lots, and one function of courtyards was to provide light to their interiors. Despite De Hooch's habit of including instantly identifiable structures in the background, his pictures do not simply duplicate real courtyards in paint. Thus, the artist's representations of courtyards are, like his interior scenes, ultimately contrived, skillfully combining direct observation of his immediate surroundings with prevalent pictorial conventions.

In light of De Hooch's inclusion of real buildings in his backgrounds, it is worth noting that around 1650 Delft was emerging as an important center of architectural and cityscape painting [FIGURE 13]; it is logical to assume that such work to some extent inspired De Hooch's addition of well-known examples of architecture to his depictions of urban settings. Yet, thanks to De Hooch's consummate artistry, these background scenes, which appear so completely plausible, are, in truth, fictitious. In fact, the artist often rearranged the orientation of the edifices he depicted to suit his aesthetic vision, even going so far as to place structures in proximity to each other that actually were widely separated.

A Courtyard in Delft at Evening: A Woman Spinning [FIGURE 14] offers a particularly serene and masterful example of De Hooch's pictures of this sort. Two women perform domestic tasks within a brick courtyard illuminated by raking sunlight. As in his interior scenes, the painter has reproduced a myriad of textures along with the effects of light and shadow upon them. Consider, for example, the adroit rendition of the dried mud of the courtyard itself, the rough-hewn boards of the fence, the play of light upon the tiled roofs beyond it, and last, but certainly not least, the impressive rendering of bricks and mortar along the



FIGURE 15

Johannes Vermeer (Dutch, 1632–1675), *An Officer and a Laughing Girl*, between 1655 and 1660. Oil on canvas, 50.5 × 46 cm (19⁷/₈ × 18¹/₈ in.). New York, Frick Collection, 11.1.127.



lime-leached wall to the right. The prominent towers of Delft's New Church and Town Hall loom in the background, rendered with great accuracy and, in this case, in proper topographical alignment.

De Hooch applied the same sophisticated perspectival system found in his interior scenes to the construction of his courtyard pictures. This resulted in paintings with a pronounced architectonic quality, an aspect of De Hooch's overall work that he shares with many Delft painters. A sophisticated mastery of perspective was probably recognized by contemporaries as an outstanding feature of Delft art along with its exceptional craftsmanship and urbane subject matter, the latter often presented with decorous reserve.¹⁴

The most prominent artist working in Delft in the 1650s was Vermeer.¹⁵ Although there is no documentary evidence of any relationship between Vermeer and De Hooch, the two masters undoubtedly knew each other, as connections



FIGURE 16
Pieter de Hooch, *Soldiers Playing
Cards*, circa 1657–58. Oil on panel,
50.5 × 45.7 cm (19⁷/₈ × 18 in.).
Private collection.

between their respective work can readily be detected. It would be erroneous, however, to assume that all the influences originated with Vermeer, that it must have been the famous master painter who inspired the less renowned De Hooch. On the contrary, De Hooch was a slightly older artist who may be assumed to have, at least in some cases, motivated his younger colleague.

Vermeer's first pictures, dating to around 1655–56, were all history paintings, or depictions of biblical and mythological tales. It is entirely possible that Vermeer decided to change artistic directions and become a genre painter—his reputation today rests mainly on his genre paintings—under the impetus of De Hooch. Vermeer's first forays into genre painting, for example, his *Officer and a Laughing Girl* [FIGURE 15], can be linked to precedents by De Hooch [FIGURE 16]. The younger artist recast De Hooch's themes with less complicated light systems and simpler compositions with fewer figures, but ones whose physical (and emotional)

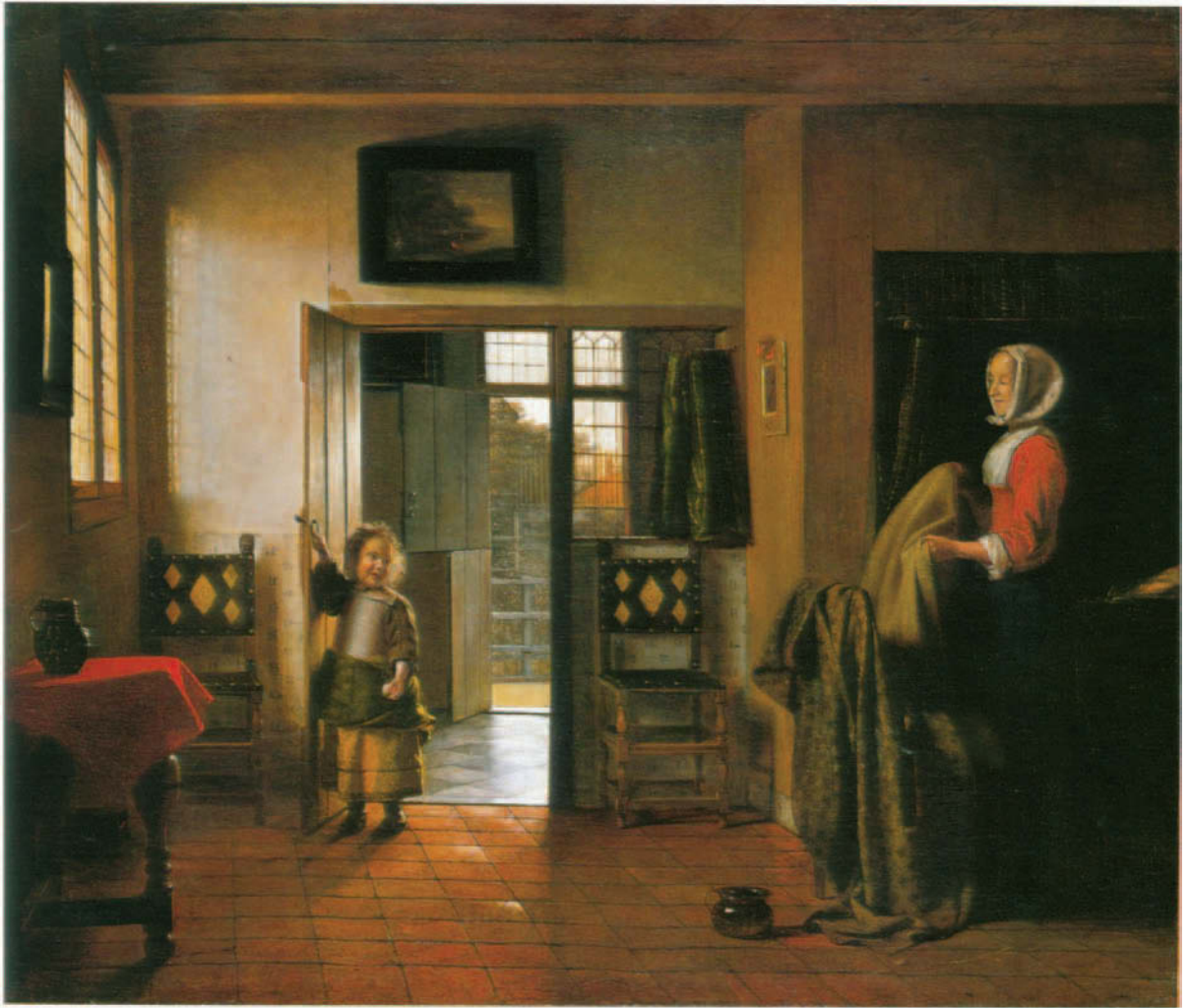


FIGURE 17
 Pieter de Hooch, *The Bedroom*,
 circa 1658–60. Oil on canvas,
 51 × 60 cm (20 × 23½ in.).
 Washington, D.C., National
 Gallery of Art, Widener Collection,
 no. 1942.9.33. Image: © Board of
 Trustees. Photo: Richard Carafelli.

presence within the pictures in question is much more visually arresting.¹⁶ In sum, De Hooch's interiors invariably present more complicated spatial and light effects than do Vermeer's. Moreover, the light in paintings by Vermeer possesses an almost magical sparkling quality, and this supremely talented master also developed an abstract technique for rendering figures and forms. The art of the two Delft masters thus evolved in different directions, although parallels between individual pictures by the two continue to be evident in works created after De Hooch's Delft period.

During De Hooch's very last years in Delft he produced some of his most engaging pictures. *The Bedroom* [FIGURE 17] belongs to this group.¹⁷ The title of the work is actually a misnomer because bedrooms, namely, separate, private chambers used for the exclusive purpose of sleeping, were only beginning to come into existence in Europe at this time, and then only in the wealthiest households.¹⁸ In this canvas, a woman is removing linens from a box bed, presumably to freshen them by airing them out. She is observed by a cherubic little figure holding a ball, who has just entered the immaculate room — the child still clutches the doorknob. Poised at the threshold, the child is flanked by sets of Delft tiles mounted to the wall; the artist has ingeniously used children's games for the scenes depicted on the tiles. *The Bedroom*, like many of De Hooch's last pictures in Delft, fully reveals his flair for elevating seemingly mundane scenes to the realm of grand art through the skillful use of perspective and light

Illumination streams into this canvas from two different directions: the windows on the left wall and the open entrance door of the dwelling. Richly nuanced, the light reverberates throughout the room, creating delicate highlights on an astonishing variety of surfaces, ranging from the terra-cotta floor in the bedroom and the smoother, marble floor in the entryway to the cream-colored wall adjacent to the windows at the left, upon whose surface can be seen an intricate and diffuse play of reflective patterns. Even the young ball player's silky hair seems to dissolve under saturating rays of light. These effects function hand in hand with De Hooch's matchless rendition of space, which once again includes his quintessential view into an additional chamber. The disposition of space in this picture is certainly contingent on the artist's application of linear perspective, but it is amplified by delicate and sophisticated gradations of light and shadow.

By the end of De Hooch's tenure in Delft, his art had risen to great heights. From his somewhat modest debut, centering on the theme of soldiers, he emerged as a talented painter of domestic subjects, whose extraordinary mastery of perspective and precise delineation (through a relatively tight application of paint) of light, textures, and stuffs appealed to sophisticated buyers. But a few years earlier, no doubt lured by potential commercial opportunities elsewhere, De Hooch had already decided to follow in the footsteps of a number of his colleagues who had departed Delft for greener pastures. He moved to Amsterdam with his wife and two young children in 1660 or perhaps early 1661; he is first documented in that city in April of the

latter year. In 1664, De Hooch registered with the local painter's guild in The Hague so he could sell his work there, and he must have had clients in other cities.

A MORE POLISHED STYLE

Compared to provincial Delft, Amsterdam was a metropolis of enormous wealth, prestige, and size. Its population, swelled by immigration, approached two hundred thousand during the 1660s, thus ranking it among Europe's largest urban centers.¹⁹ The city was also the Continental hub for international trade and finance, as confirmed by its monopolies over diverse, lucrative foreign markets, among them, French wine, Baltic grain, Brazilian sugar, and Swedish iron and copper. Amsterdam's bulging warehouses stored a seemingly infinite variety of goods, and its well-organized merchant fleets sailed from the city's spacious, secure harbor to the far reaches of the globe. During this period, the city also housed an exchange bank and a renowned stock exchange. Amsterdam's enviable commercial position was enhanced after the Dutch war of independence against Spain was formally concluded in 1648. As a result, trade with Spain, the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, the East Indies, and the Far East was greatly expanded. Amsterdam's local industries likewise prospered, among them, silk manufacturing, sugar refining, and the processing of tobacco and diamonds.

The tremendous influx of people forced Amsterdam to extend its borders well beyond their antiquated, late-medieval limits. Initial construction on Amsterdam's signature ring of three canals began in 1613; another construction campaign commenced in 1660, just around the time De Hooch arrived in the city. These extensions eventually imparted to the city's topography the distinctive, fanlike shape for which it is known today. Many of the new residential districts were intended for Amsterdam's most affluent citizens, a group whose number was increasing as a result of the booming economy. Amsterdam's unrivaled prosperity, its cosmopolitan character, and its status as a trendsetter in fashion and the arts obviously made it an appealing place for artists such as De Hooch to settle.

The interior spaces of De Hooch's Amsterdam-period pictures are often strikingly different from the more modest surroundings depicted during his Delft years. The preferences of his increasingly wealthy and sophisticated clients for artworks that captured their lavish lifestyles partly explain this extraordinary change,



as do De Hooch's own stylistic adjustments to meet these new demands. His painting *The Music Party (Family Portrait)* [FIGURE 18] provides ample evidence of this development. In this portrait—one of only four portraits by De Hooch known today—two children and their father play instruments, while their mother, holding an oblong music book in her lap, keeps time for the amateur ensemble. Music making, with its connotations of harmony, generally functions in Dutch art as a metaphor for concord among those represented, an entirely apt association within this familial context.²⁰ Yet the depiction of domestic harmony in this canvas is

FIGURE 18
Pieter de Hooch, *The Music Party (Family Portrait)*, 1663.
Oil on canvas, 98.7 × 116.7 cm
(38 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 46 in.). Cleveland
Museum of Art, Gift of the Hanna
Fund, 51.355.



FIGURE 19
 Gabriël Metsu (Dutch,
 1629–1669), *The Visit to the
 Nursery*, 1661. Oil on canvas,
 79 × 75 cm (31½ × 29½ in.).
 New York, Metropolitan Museum
 of Art, Gift of J. P. Morgan, 1917.

perhaps eclipsed by an emphasis upon familial prosperity. Indeed, the luxurious interior that this family inhabits typifies those seen in many of De Hooch's genre paintings from his Amsterdam period. Consider the elegant black-and-white marble floor (which continues in a red-and-white pattern in the room beyond the main one); the ornate mantelpiece with red stone Corinthian columns; the floor-to-ceiling tapestry behind the figures; the Anatolian prayer rug on the table before them; the elaborate brass chandelier; and the even more elaborate, exquisitely carved linen chest, which is crowned with expensive oriental ceramics.

Accompanying this shift toward more lavish settings were changes in De Hooch's style that served to enhance the luxurious air of these new works. During this period, De Hooch's paint application became even more precise, his tonalities cooler, his lighting effects more exaggerated, and his figures more substantial than the somewhat angular, awkward figures of his earlier Delft pictures. In all likelihood, this stylistic shift was the result of the artist's exposure to the work of a number of prominent contemporary genre painters from Amsterdam and other towns. For example, several features of De Hooch's Amsterdam-period style, along with several of his themes, can be linked to genre painting in the city of Leiden. Painters working in Leiden during the second half of the seventeenth century are generally known to scholars today as the *Leidse fijnschilders* (Leiden fine painters), a term that refers to their meticulously detailed (and in certain instances, astounding) application of paint to articulate forms, textures, and light and shadow [see Figures 21, 38, 49, and 51]. The *fijnschilders* commanded very high prices for their work, examples of which were eagerly sought after by wealthy Amsterdam collectors.

Among the more immediate sources of inspiration for De Hooch were pictures by his Amsterdam colleague Gabriel Metsu, and especially the art of the highly influential master Gerard ter Borch. Metsu was born in Leiden and spent his very early career there. By 1657, he had moved to Amsterdam, the city in which he



FIGURE 20
Pieter de Hooch, *The Messenger of Love*, circa 1670. Oil on canvas, laid down on wood, 53 × 57 cm (20⁷/₈ × 22¹/₂ in.). Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle, 184. Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/Art Resource, New York. Photo: Elke Walford.

resided for the remainder of his relatively short life. Genre paintings dominated his output in Amsterdam, revealing a protean artist who absorbed the styles and themes of the leading genre painters of his generation, particularly the work of his fellow Leiden fine painters, which he forged into something quite distinctive. Occasionally, De Hooch and Metsu adopted similar approaches to their subject matter, as can be seen in their representations of families in spacious interiors [FIGURES 18 and 19].

Ter Borch, on the other hand, was a celebrated artist whose techniques, compositions, and themes exerted a huge impact on the development of genre painting after midcentury. Ter Borch's paintings customarily present a rarefied world of comfort and privilege, where figures court, write letters, and engage in other leisurely activities typical of the well-to-do. His art is visually arresting because of his superlative rendition of textures and fabrics, particularly satin, and the highly evocative exchange of glances between figures, rich in psychological nuance. That De Hooch was aware of Ter Borch's manifold contributions to Dutch seventeenth-century genre painting is beyond dispute. Several of the themes and specific motifs of the younger master's Amsterdam pictures have demonstrable ties to Ter Borch's art, among them, meetings between young men and women in interiors (a theme recently treated in an innovation fashion by Ter Borch) [FIGURES 20 and 11].

Despite the generally striking changes in De Hooch's art after his relocation to Amsterdam, there are several pictures painted in the years either immediately



FIGURE 21
Frans van Mieris the Elder
(Dutch, 1635–1681), *The Lesson*,
circa 1650–55. Oil on panel,
34.3 × 40 cm (13 1/2 × 15 3/4 in.).
Washington, D.C., Corcoran
Gallery of Art, William A. Clark
Collection, 26.80. Image:
© Corcoran Gallery of Art.
Photo: Mark Gulezian/
QuickSilver.

preceding or following his arrival in the metropolis that are best termed transitional works because their comparatively simple decor is reminiscent of the artist's Delft-period work. Since the Getty painting was likely done between 1661 and 1663, it falls in this category. Although the modest appearance of this interior recalls those of his earlier paintings, this work nevertheless shares many stylistic features with De Hooch's elegant, Amsterdam-period pictures, including the same cooler palette, intensified light effects, relatively painstaking application of paint, and robust figures.

Moreover, the canvas was partly inspired by prototypes by Leiden artists. In particular, the subject of the Getty Museum's De Hooch, a respectful young boy waiting for a slice of bread, clearly recalls a panel by Frans van Mieris the Elder, probably painted about a decade earlier [FIGURE 21].²¹

Furthermore, De Hooch's work of this period continues to display the same impressive perspectival arrangements that he had perfected in Delft. *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* is certainly no exception. The foreground space is punctuated by several intriguing spatial motifs, including a door ajar (seen at the far left), a large window with the indistinct form of a man behind it, and an alcove



containing books above a door that opens onto a vestibule with a marble floor. Within this vestibule, we see the bottom steps of a staircase and, more prominently because of its brilliant illumination, a Dutch door whose upper half reveals the light-suffused street and buildings beyond.

Despite the existence during the seventeenth century of a number of treatises and practical guides to composing perspective, De Hooch, like his colleague Vermeer, took a surprisingly practical approach to the problem of spatial construction in his pictures. Close examination of the surfaces of several of De Hooch's paintings has revealed pinholes, indicating that he stuck a pin with a string tied to it into the canvas at the intended vanishing point.²² He then coated the string with chalk and snapped it (much like a carpenter would snap a chalk line today) on the prepared ground of the canvas to establish the perspectival orthogonals. Only after the architectonic setting had been painted were the figures finally added. In the Getty Museum's canvas, the presence of a pinhole situated just above the mother's head [FIGURE 22] was detected by Associate Conservator of Paintings Yvonne Szafran during cleaning, with the aid of X-radiographs.²³

De Hooch placed his newly wrought style at the service of diverse themes, including elegant gatherings of men and women (known as merry companies to his contemporaries), letter readers, and card players, all of which are generally imbued with a hitherto unparalleled degree of splendor and refinement. An especially

FIGURE 22

Detail of Figure 1 illustrating the location of the pinhole above the mother's head in *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy*.

FIGURE 23

Pieter de Hooch, *The Card Players*, circa 1663–65. Oil on canvas, 67 × 77 cm (26 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 30 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.). Paris, Musée du Louvre. Photo: © Erich Lessing/Art Resource, New York.



FIGURE 24
Gilt-Leather Wall Covering, circa
1660. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.



FIGURE 25
Pieter de Hooch, *A Musical
Party in a Hall*, circa 1663–65.
Oil on canvas, 81 × 68.3 cm
(31⁷/₈ × 26⁷/₈ in.). Leipzig,
Museum der bildenden Künste,
1031. Photo: Christoph Sandig/
ARTOTHEK.

beautiful example of De Hooch's work of this sort is his *Card Players* [FIGURE 23]. The artist had executed paintings of card players during his years in Delft, but none of those pictures can come close to matching the one under consideration here in overall splendor and opulence. Note the rich gilt-leather wall covering, a decorative accouterment that was trendy in houses of the elite during this period. Serendipitously, a rare surviving example of this type of wall covering is preserved in Amsterdam's renowned Rijksmuseum [FIGURE 24]. Its decorative pattern perfectly matches the one depicted by De Hooch!

The height of elegance (and fiction) in De Hooch's art is realized in a series of genre paintings that incorporate features of the then newly constructed Amsterdam Town Hall (today, the Royal Palace) as a principal component of the interior.²⁴ The Town Hall, an imposing structure of classical design, had been completed in 1662. One of the largest public buildings in seventeenth-century Europe, this grand edifice was considered the eighth wonder of the world at the time, a literal manifestation of Amsterdam's vast wealth and dominant position in national politics. De Hooch cleverly incorporated details of the Town Hall's interior archi-



tectural adornment into his *Musical Party in a Hall* [FIGURE 25] of around 1663–65 to create an utterly fantastic, palatial dwelling more suited for a king than the moneyed urbanites who occupy it. Correspondingly ambitious and fanciful is the inclusion, in the background lunette, of *The School of Athens*, a fresco painted in the Vatican some 150 years earlier by the famous Italian Renaissance master Raphael (1483–1520). De Hooch, who never traveled to Italy, undoubtedly knew this work from a reproductive engraving and included it here to enhance the luxurious effect.

So profound was the influence of De Hooch's new surroundings and the demands of his new patrons that the attendant shift in his style can be detected even in his characteristic courtyard scenes. The diamond-shaped marble tile paving in his *Woman and Maidservant in a Courtyard* [FIGURE 26], for instance, may reflect the artist's desire to enhance the appearance of the courtyard over those in comparable pictures from his Delft period, which frequently feature floors composed of simple red- or yellow-brick tile. At this time, De Hooch also introduced into his repertoire representations of well-heeled young people cavorting in the elegant surroundings of country-house gardens, such as *A Game of Ninepins* of circa 1665 [FIGURE 27].

FIGURE 26
Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman and Maidservant in a Courtyard*, circa 1661–63. Oil on canvas, 53 × 42 cm (20⁷/₈ × 16¹/₂ in.). St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, no. 943.

FIGURE 27
Pieter de Hooch, *A Game of Ninepins*, circa 1665. Oil on canvas, 69.8 × 62.2 cm (27¹/₂ × 24¹/₂ in.). Buckinghamshire, Waddesdon Manor, James A. Rothschild Collection (The National Trust), 2564. Photo: Eost & MacDonald.

FIGURE 28

Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman Weighing Gold*, circa 1664. Oil on canvas, 61 × 53 cm (24 × 20⁷/₈ in.). Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen. Photo: Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/Art Resource, NY.



FIGURE 29

Johannes Vermeer, *A Woman Holding a Balance*, circa 1664. Oil on canvas, 42.5 × 38 cm (16³/₄ × 15 in.). Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Widener Collection. Photo: © Board of Trustees.

The demonstrable shift in De Hooch's style during his initial years in cosmopolitan Amsterdam did not preclude continued contact with Vermeer, his erstwhile Delft colleague. In fact, in at least two intriguing instances, affinities between particular pictures suggest that they had direct contact with one another. De Hooch's *Woman Weighing Coins* [FIGURE 28] of circa 1664 bears a striking similarity to Vermeer's *Woman Holding a Balance* [FIGURE 29], possibly painted at approximately the same time.²⁵ In contrast to De Hooch's composition, Vermeer's generally avoids extraneous detail, thereby making his canvas more forceful and mysterious. Interestingly, radiographs of De Hooch's painting reveal the presence of a second figure seated where an empty chair now stands, across from the coin weigher. It is certainly possible that De Hooch was inspired by Vermeer's canvas and attempted to "improve" upon it by adding a second figure, then changed his mind and painted out the addition. But it is perhaps more probable that Vermeer's *Woman Holding a*





FIGURE 30
Pieter de Hooch, *A Couple with a Parrot*, 1668. Oil on canvas, 73 × 62 cm (28¾ × 24⅜ in.). Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, WRM 3218. Photo: © Rheinisches Bildarchiv.



FIGURE 31
Johannes Vermeer, *The Love Letter*, circa 1668–69. Oil on canvas, 44 × 38.5 cm (17⅝ × 15⅛ in.). Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

Balance was inspired by De Hooch's canvas in its final form, since De Hooch would not have originally included a second figure if had he been working directly from Vermeer's precedent.

Several years later, specifically in 1668, De Hooch produced his *Couple with a Parrot* [FIGURE 30].²⁶ This work contains the unusual compositional element of a darkened doorway, partially obscured by cleaning implements, which provides a frame through which we see a brightly lit room. A similarly darkened doorway (with a broom just outside) opening onto a brilliantly illuminated chamber appears in the foreground of Vermeer's *Love Letter* of circa 1668–69 [FIGURE 31]. These examples strongly suggest that De Hooch continued to interact with and, at times, even influence Vermeer.

Clearly, the decade of the 1660s was a fruitful one for De Hooch. During this time, he executed some of his most beautiful pictures, and, judging from the previously discussed portrait of an urbane family making music, he must have received some rewarding commissions. However, the question of just how successful De Hooch was in Amsterdam, a city in which he competed with many skilled painters,

is not easy to answer. What scant evidence we possess suggests that he did not become prosperous. We know the precise locations of two addresses at which De Hooch lived in 1663 and 1665, respectively. These were situated on the outskirts of Amsterdam, in areas inhabited by citizens of more modest means.²⁷ Furthermore, in a document dated November 22, 1668, the artist states that he has been living on the Konijnenstraat since May of that year.²⁸ This street lay in the middle of a large working-class neighborhood in Amsterdam known as the Jordaan, home to many artists at this time, including Rembrandt. As we shall see, during the last fourteen years of De Hooch's life his financial circumstances worsened, despite unparalleled levels of productivity on his part.

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HARD TIMES

Peter C. Sutton has observed that nearly 50 percent of De Hooch's overall production dates to his last decade and a half of activity. Sutton surmises that this increased output was intended to offset lower compensation, but, as he notes, we simply do not have sufficient information about the prices that De Hooch's pictures commanded to verify this. The disastrous invasion of the Netherlands by France and her allies in 1672 compounded De Hooch's problems and, indeed, affected most painters at this time. The tumultuous economic repercussions of this event caused the art market to collapse, ruining artists and art dealers alike. (As always in times of grave emergency, art had become a dispensable luxury item.) The financial difficulties in which many artists and art dealers suddenly found themselves were typified by the situation of Vermeer, as poignantly reported by his widow, Catharina Bolnes. In July 1677, about a year and a half after the illustrious painter's death, she was still saddled with onerous debts. In an effort to secure financial clemency from the Delft authorities, Bolnes testified that "during the long and ruinous war with France [her late husband] not only had been unable to sell any of his art but also, to his great detriment, was left sitting with the paintings of other masters that he was dealing in."²⁹ In De Hooch's particular case, we do know that by 1674 he was no longer paying taxes. Since in the seventeenth century being subject to taxation presupposed a certain level of income, we can infer that the artist had become destitute by that date.

Despite the detrimental effect upon the general quality of De Hooch's art of what we may presume to have been feverish activity meant to redress formidable



FIGURE 32
Pieter de Hooch, *A Lady and Child with a Serving Maid*,
circa 1674–76. Oil on canvas,
85.8 × 79 cm (33³/₄ × 31¹/₈ in.).
Philadelphia Museum of Art,
John G. Johnson Collection, 1917.

financial problems, the master did produce some excellent pictures during the 1670s. In many of these works, he continued to develop themes that he had originally represented in Delft and subsequently modified during his first years in Amsterdam. For example, his *Lady and Child with a Serving Maid* [FIGURE 32] of circa 1674–76 recalls his many earlier depictions of domestic virtue, while his *Musical Conversation* of 1674 [FIGURE 33] can be linked to his own earlier images of music makers [FIGURES 18 and 25] as well those by artists working much earlier in the seventeenth century.³⁰ In these pictures, the interior spaces have become quite expansive and the illumination somewhat darker. Moreover, *A Musical Conversation* and related representations of merry companies were executed on a comparatively large scale. The figures themselves have become somewhat attenuated in their proportions and over-refined in their demeanor.

These stylistic features of De Hooch's late works are ones that are shared with late-seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting in general. They should be construed not negatively, as a loss of artistic vigor and ambition, as has often been the case, but rather as a reflection of changing stylistic and thematic conventions (as well as changing tastes).³¹ Unfortunately, this is not true of the paintings dating to the last years of De Hooch's life. By the very late 1670s and early 1680s, a conspicuous decline in quality is observable in his work.³² Whether this can be attributed to his worsening financial circumstances or the fact that his mental health was deteriorating cannot be determined. He was eventually committed to the Amsterdam insane asylum, where he died on March 24, 1684.³³



FIGURE 33
Pieter de Hooch, *A Musical
Conversation*, 1674. Oil on canvas,
98 × 115 cm (38⁵/₈ × 45¹/₄ in.).
Honolulu Academy of Arts,
Purchase 1971, 3798.1.

PIETER DE HOOCH
AND THE REPRESENTATION OF
DOMESTICITY IN DUTCH ART

THE SUBJECT OF THE GETTY MUSEUM'S DE HOOCH—A MOTHER preparing her young son's breakfast—is an example of the wider theme of domestic virtue in Dutch art of the Golden Age. There are literally hundreds of surviving images of women engaged in a wide variety of wholesome activities, most of which pertain to the home and family. Domesticity was a beloved theme in art among the Dutch public, particularly during the second half of the seventeenth century. *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* [FIGURE 1] specifically celebrates the well-trained child—as do many other Dutch pictures of this period—and this “subset” of the theme of domestic virtue clearly reflects seventeenth-century notions of motherhood, childhood, and the related subject of contemporary child-rearing practices.³⁴

It is important to recognize that these pictures do not simply proffer casual, objective glimpses of seventeenth-century life, as if they were somehow the equivalent of photographs taken in our own era. Dutch genre paintings are not literal transcriptions of daily existence; instead, the artists who created them have ingeniously and seductively synthesized observed reality with a well-established, and highly conventional, repertoire of themes, motifs, and styles. Yet despite, or perhaps even because of, their deceptive appearance, genre paintings definitely had something to say to their original audiences and to us today if we are patient and, perhaps more importantly, cautious in examining them. They provide a wealth of information about Dutch culture: its predilections, its prejudices, and, indeed, its very mind-set.



THE INFLUENCE OF LITERATURE

Within the male-dominated social order of the Netherlands at that time, the principal occupations for females were narrowly defined. Common wisdom held that women were foreordained to fulfill the all-important roles of housewife and mother. Thus, in our effort to comprehend more fully the subject matter of *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy*, we must become acquainted with seventeenth-century familial ideals. Since these ideals were largely fostered by and reflected in contemporary literature, books pertaining to women and the family are especially enlightening. As we shall see, paintings by De Hooch and his colleagues and treatises on domesticity both present an idealized, yet theoretically imitable, female, an individual skilled at administering the household and caring for her children.

The importance of one particular contemporary domestic treatise, Jacob Cats's *Houwelyck* (Marriage), first published in 1625, for seventeenth-century Dutch art has long been noted [FIGURE 34].³⁵ Anyone who doubts the relevance of this celebrated tome need only look at the *Portrait of a Family* by an unknown artist who probably worked within the circle of the Amsterdam portraitist Thomas de Keyser

FIGURE 34

Frontispiece from Jacob Cats, *Houwelyck* (Middelburg, 1625). Universiteits-Bibliotheek Amsterdam.

FIGURE 35

Circle of Thomas de Keyser (Dutch, circa 1596/97–1667), *Portrait of a Family*, circa 1645–55. Oil on canvas, 85.5 × 107.5 cm (33⁵/₈ × 42³/₈ in.). Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts, 3928.



FIGURE 36
Detail of Figure 35.

[FIGURE 35]. Rarely are the links between art and this sort of literature more decisively demonstrated than in this portrait, where the mother holds a copy of the first edition of *Houwelyck* opened to page seventy-two of the chapter entitled “Vrouwe” (Housewife) [FIGURE 36]. Cats (1577–1660) may not have been the most gifted writer of his day, but to cite the perceptive observation by the eminent Dutch scholar Eddy de Jongh, “if there were a muse of the history of morals, she would never be without a copy of his complete works.”³⁶ One might add that if this muse were permitted to have just one of Cats’s many books, it would be *Houwelyck*, a comprehensive treatise on marriage and family life, complete with an alphabetical index for easy reference. Although this treatise was, arguably, among the most popular of its kind at the time, it was far from unique, as many equally exhaustive works were published in the Netherlands and in England.³⁷ However, what distinguishes *Houwelyck* from other texts of this type is that it is well illustrated and written almost entirely in verse. Most significantly, Cats addressed his work primarily not to men but to women.

The original 1625 edition was richly furnished with fine engravings after designs by a prominent artist of the day, Adriaen van de Venne (1589–1662). The rather sumptuous appearance of *Houwelyck* indicates that the book was originally intended for an upper-class audience. But in an effort to make it affordable for less affluent readers, later editions — twenty-one in all appeared during the seventeenth century — were published in a smaller format and substituted crude woodcuts for the rather lavish engravings. In 1655, an Amsterdam publisher surmised that there were at least fifty thousand copies of *Houwelyck* in circulation. If this is accurate, it is a truly astonishing number for this period, all the more so because of the generally high rates of illiteracy.³⁸ Cats’s text is divided into six chapters or sections, each corresponding to a specific stage in the life of a woman: “Maeght” (Maiden), “Vrijster” (Sweetheart), “Bruyt” (Bride), “Vrouwe” (Housewife), “Moeder” (Mother), and “Weduwe” (Widow).

Given the large number of domestic conduct books by Cats and other moralists in circulation, it seems plausible that at least some readers must have followed, to varying degrees, their minutely detailed advice. Yet we must keep in mind that these books presented an ideal vision of marriage and family life and its attendant obligations and responsibilities, one that could not possibly reflect the intricate realities and actual practice of daily life during the seventeenth century. In any case, the parallels between written expositions of ideal domesticity and the portrayal of those very same ideals in contemporary paintings are quite striking.

If we wish to understand how seventeenth-century viewers perceived Dutch paintings of mothers and their offspring we must also familiarize ourselves with contemporary concepts of childhood, as evidenced in the educational theories and advice dispensed in family literature. Cats addresses motherhood and childhood in the fifth chapter of *Houwelyck*. In this chapter, his advice for prospective mothers begins with the marriage bed, where, he cautions, relations must be conducted chastely and moderately to ensure healthy offspring.

Cats's beliefs about procreation, typical for Europeans of his day, are at their strangest for modern readers when he warns his audience about the potential perils of pregnancy. In one memorable passage, he solemnly counsels women to avoid imagining monsters—he uses the term “misshapen creatures”—during pregnancy because the effects upon the unborn child could potentially be disastrous. Likewise, they were to be careful not to be frightened by animals. Underlying the thinking of Cats as well as that of some of the leading medical experts of the day was the belief that sudden frights or an expectant mother's vivid imagination could actually cause physical abnormalities in her offspring. Thus, a one-handed child born to a woman from The Hague in the 1660s was said to be the result of her having been scared during her pregnancy by a brazen beggar who thrust the stump of his mutilated arm directly into her face.³⁹

Questions about the potential hazards of pregnancy aside, even a casual reading of Cats's *Houwelyck* as well as the writings of like-minded moralists, pastors, and doctors reveals that contemporary Europeans generally believed that children were gifts from the Almighty.⁴⁰ Whether that meant they were innately sinful or innocent depended on one's religious affiliation, but all commentators considered them highly impressionable, capable of retaining permanently whatever they were first taught, be it good or evil.⁴¹ Hence, training was earnestly advocated as a means to



FIGURE 37
Hendrick Bary (Dutch, 1632–
1707), *A Woman Nursing a
Child*. Engraving. Amsterdam,
Rijksprentenkabinett.

mold good behavior. The theory of education's efficacy over natural instinct in fostering proper behavior in children was perhaps expressed most succinctly by Cats: "Believe it! In delicate minds [i.e., in those of children], nurture can overcome nature."⁴²

Ideal places in which to train children included the church and the school; however, this all-important charge was to be carried out principally in the home. Protestants, who wrote exhaustively on this subject, followed classical and humanist thought in considering the home to be the foundation upon which society rests—a true microcosm of the state as a whole—and hence the most effective agent in accomplishing its moral and spiritual transformation. Consequently, they appealed to parents to fashion their families into what the Dutch called *kleyne kercken* (little churches), oriented to ethical values based on scripture, characterized by service to its individual members and God, and, most importantly, dedicated to raising pious offspring.⁴³

The concept of child rearing set forth in contemporary literature is unmistakably idealistic. It is impossible to determine the extent to which these ideals actually affected domestic life during the seventeenth century. Pedagogical practices likely varied between regions, social groups, and even individual families. The degree to which parents adhered to the counsel of moralists and ministers must have been directly proportional to their own level of religious commitment and devotion. But it does seem likely that at least some children were raised in strict accordance with the principles established by Cats and others.

The earliest stage of the mother-child relationship discussed in contemporary family literature and represented by Dutch artists is that of women breast-feeding their infants. Oddly enough in an era in which wet nurses often suckled children, doctors and moralists alike advocated maternal nursing for its specific physical and psychological advantages for both mother and child. Breast milk was thought to be blood that had whitened in the breast; in other words, it was the same indispensable liquid



FIGURE 38
Gerrit Dou (Dutch, 1613–1675),
The Young Mother, circa 1655–60.
Oil on panel, 49.2 × 37.4 cm
(19³/₈ × 14³/₄ in.). Berlin,
Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche
Museen. Bildarchiv Preussischer
Kulturbesitz/Art Resource, NY.
Photo: Jörg P. Anders.

that had hitherto nourished the infant in utero.⁴⁴ The inscription on Hendrick Bary's engraving of a nursing mother [FIGURE 37] reflects this belief. It states that although the act of breast-feeding is onerous to the mother, the child's ardent desire for her blood consoles her.

Paintings representing the theme of breast-feeding, like others of women and their children, are visually analogous to specific seventeenth-century prescriptions concerning maternal duties. Hendrick Bary's aforementioned print of the breast-feeding mother actually reproduces a now-lost picture, whose style suggests that it may have been painted by Quiringh van Brekelenkam. Van Brekelenkam worked in nearby Leiden, where a number of artists, among them Gerrit Dou, likewise executed paintings of nursing mothers [FIGURE 38]. Perhaps working under the impetus of these Leiden artists, De Hooch began to represent this theme in the 1650s during his sojourn in Delft. His endearing *Woman with Children in an Interior* [FIGURE 39], for example, has been called "one of De Hooch's purest celebrations of the beauty

FIGURE 39
 Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman with Children in an Interior*, circa 1658–60. Oil on canvas, 67.6 × 55.6 cm (26¾ × 21⅞ in.). Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Palace of the Legion of Honor, Gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, 61.44.37.



of motherhood and domesticity.”⁴⁵ In this tranquil interior, a mother tenderly nourishes her infant. Her solicitous care and rectitude are charmingly imitated by the older child to her right, who feeds the family dog from a dinner pot.

De Hooch continued to represent the theme of nursing mothers after he moved to Amsterdam around 1661. Surely one of his most intriguing and unusual depictions from that period is *Interior with a Mother and a Baby* [FIGURE 40]. In this canvas, the motif of the nursing mother has been placed in the right background, behind a maid who is diligently sweeping the floor. Mother and infant are bathed in radiant light, streaming in from the window to the right. A picture representing the Deposition of Christ hangs on the wall directly above them. Even though the broom-wielding maid should be the principal motif in the painting by virtue of her prominence within the overall composition, our eyes are quickly drawn to the resplendent



FIGURE 40

Pieter de Hooch, *Interior with a Mother and a Baby*, circa 1665–68.

Oil on canvas, 65 × 80 cm

(25⁵/₈ × 31¹/₂ in.). London,

Wernher Collection. Image ©

Wernher Foundation, courtesy the English Heritage Photo Library.

Photo: Jonathan Bailey.

scene of motherhood. The inclusion of a painting of Christ's descent from the cross, which traditionally includes the figure of the grieving Virgin Mary, was no doubt intended both to point out that all mothers are lovingly solicitous of their children and to contribute to the sacrosanct air of the canvas as a whole.

The fact that the maid in the foreground is sweeping an already immaculate wooden floor rouses suspicions that her actions might be symbolically intended. Seventeenth-century writers frequently associated the broom, a utensil used for cleaning, with spiritual and moral cleanliness. For example, in the frontispiece to Petrus Wittewrongel's voluminous domestic conduct book *Oeconomia Christiana* (Christian Economy), a maid can be seen sweeping the floor—a purely symbolic activity since she is vigilantly sweeping away objects of vice, in this instance playing cards, that could undermine the spiritual and moral well-being of the family to her



FIGURE 41
Frontispiece from Petrus
Wittewrongel, *Oeconomia
Christiana ofte Christelicke
huys-houdinghe* (Amsterdam,
1661). Universiteits-Bibliotheek
Amsterdam.

right [FIGURE 41]. A passage from a book by one of Wittewrongel's pastoral colleagues, Simon Oomius, provides a literary parallel to this scene. According to Oomius, discipline in the home, that is, spiritual and moral diligence, is the broom that cleans it, preparing it to receive God's presence.⁴⁶ It is possible that De Hooch's painting evoked similar associations for contemporary viewers.⁴⁷

CHILD-REARING PRACTICES

Humanists, pedagogues, and moralists all believed that children were exceptionally malleable, permanently retaining whatever they were first taught. Thus training or education, commencing at the earliest age possible, was essential for fashioning proper behavior. Nearly all authors writing about the family advocated teaching children moral and spiritual precepts, but, curiously, they remained silent about the practical aspects of this instruction. They advised parents to take children to church, an undisputed place of spiritual training, and to accustom them to daily catechism and scripture readings. But the only routine secular activity mentioned as an excellent forum for instruction was the family meal. It is hardly surprising that so much attention was devoted to child rearing during mealtimes: it provided a structured setting in which children could be trained on a regular basis.⁴⁸

Sixteenth-century German prints, which rank among the earliest depictions of the family around a table, attest to the emphasis placed upon child rearing during meals. Often accompanied by long inscriptions, these prints focus upon the importance of good manners in children at the dinner table; hence, their popular name, *Tischzucht* (table discipline). The *Tischzucht* by Georg Pencz, with an accompanying poem by Hans Sachs, is one of the best-known examples of this type [FIGURE 42]. Sachs's poem exhorts children to be paradigms of good behavior. Moreover, they are not to "commence eating until a blessing is said."⁴⁹ In the print, the boy at the far right with his hands folded in prayer

observes this precept. This boy is a pictorial ancestor of the children who inhabit seventeenth-century genre paintings such as the Getty Museum's *Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* [FIGURE 1]. Sachs's prescriptions for good behavior are strikingly similar to those expounded in contemporary books on etiquette written for children. These texts, which were so influential for later Dutch authors such as Cats, were penned by a number of sixteenth-century thinkers, among them the renowned humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469–1536).⁵⁰

The highly structured setting of family meals not only was well suited to the training of children but also lent itself rather easily to artistic representation, which likely explains the veritable explosion of depictions of this theme in seventeenth-century Dutch art. Scenes of the family at the table occur in portraiture as well as in genre painting. A large portrait of his own family by an obscure artist from the city of Utrecht, Andries van Bochoven, provides an illuminating example of the former [FIGURE 43]. Van Bochoven arranged his parents and siblings in three rows: the artist and his brother above, followed in descending order by his older sisters, his father and mother, and the younger children. The respectful gestures of the children and the religious books held by Van Bochoven's father and two sisters are accorded special emphasis and are undoubtedly meant to demonstrate the family's godliness and the children's obedience, reflective, of course, of their proper upbringing.

Children likewise pray before their meals in a sizeable number of genre paintings. Many of these were created in the 1660s, the very same decade in which De Hooch executed the Getty Museum's canvas, in which the mother's action of buttering bread for her obediently waiting child is an allusion to the boy's good training. In a lovely painting by Jan Steen, for example, both parents prepare to serve food to their children [FIGURE 44]. The little girl, her hands folded in prayer, stares straight ahead. Her brother has respectfully removed his hat and has probably folded



FIGURE 42
Georg Pencz (German, 1500–1550), *Table Manners (Tischzucht)*, circa 1640. Text by Hans Sachs. Woodcut. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen. Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/Art Resource, New York. Photo: Jörg P. Anders.

FIGURE 43

Andries van Bochoven (Dutch, 1609–1634), *Portrait of the Painter's Family at the Table*, 1629. Oil on canvas, 130.5 × 186.5 cm (51 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 73 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.). Utrecht, Centraal Museum.



his hands beneath it. The children's pious gestures reveal their proper training. In the foreground of the picture, a dog licks a dinner pot. The presence of this gluttonous canine seems to violate the sanctity of the moment, thereby providing a clue that the artist had an ulterior motive for its inclusion.

Several contemporary engravings illustrating discussions of the positive and negative effects of training on behavior juxtapose the motif of a dog licking a pot with that of one chasing a rabbit [FIGURE 45].⁵¹ All these discussions derive from the ancient Greek philosopher Plutarch, specifically, a parable from his treatise on education. This work, like many other texts from antiquity, was well known throughout Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁵² Plutarch recounts the story of Lycurgus, the lawgiver of the Spartans, who raised two puppies from the same litter in different ways. One was trained to be a diligent hunter, while his sibling was allowed to be lazy and gluttonous. At a time when the Spartans were all assembled, Lycurgus told them that proper rearing, discipline, and habit were very important for the cultivation of virtue in men. To prove this statement, he brought together the two dogs and placed a pot of meat and a rabbit between them. The well-trained dog chased after the rabbit, while the other began to gobble the food in the pot. When



the crowd could not grasp the significance of this incident, Lycurgus explained that the dogs' upbringing had influenced their conduct, even though both belonged to the same litter.⁵³ Plutarch's parable thus demonstrated the power of training to mold behavior, regardless of inborn character traits.

The consistency and enthusiasm with which the authors of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century family literature embraced Plutarch's theories was remarkable. This attests not only to the popularity of his treatise but, more importantly, to the widespread conviction that children needed comprehensive moral and spiritual training. Contemporary moralists invariably quoted the parable of Lycurgus in order to support their contention that education improves behavior. For example, the Dutchman Bartholomew Batty offered the following advice to parents:

I wish that parents would well weigh, and deeply consider this example of Lycurgus, touching education in contrarie maner: wherof also Plato writeth: That a childe well and virtuously nurtured, is like to prove a

FIGURE 44
Jan Steen (Dutch, 1626–1679),
A Peasant Family at Mealtime
(*Grace before Meat*), circa 1665.
Oil on canvas, 44.8 × 37.5 cm
(17³/₈ × 14³/₄ in.). London,
National Gallery of Art, NG2558.
Photo: © Board of Trustees.

FIGURE 45
Emblem from Otto van Veen,
Quinti Horatii Flacci emblemata,
2nd ed. (Antwerp, 1612).
Universiteits-Bibliotheek
Amsterdam.



FIGURE 46
 Conrad Meyer (Swiss, 1618–1689),
Age Ten, from the series *The Ten
 Ages of Man*, 1675. Engraving.
 Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.

divine creature: but contrarily, if it be unhappily taught, and suffered to run at libertie, then is hee like to prove a moste wicked and cruell beast.⁵⁴

For later writers, Plutarch's poorly trained dog did not always require the presence of his rabbit-chasing counterpart to make the same point. In his book *Spiegel vanden ouden ende nieuwen tijdt* (Mirror of Ancient and Modern Times), Cats includes a proverb demonstrating that the gluttonous dog functioned quite well by himself as a metaphor for bad training: "Accustom a greyhound to the pot / A hunting dog becomes a kitchen fool."⁵⁵

The story of Lycurgus, so popular with moralists and pedagogues alike, probably underlies Cats's proverb as well as the motif of the dog licking the pot in Steen's painting. Steen's dog is a German beagle, a breed that was used for hunting. The presence in the painting of a beagle licking a pot is likely meant as a metaphor of poor training to be contrasted with the pious, well-bred children saying grace. A similar symbolic contrast between poorly trained dogs and well-trained children appears in other contemporary depictions of families giving thanks at mealtime, among them, an engraving by the Swiss printmaker Conrad Meyer [FIGURE 46]. Meyer shows a mother teaching her children to pray before they eat, while other motifs in the composition, particularly the pictures on the wall behind the figures, refer to the importance of child rearing in general. The picture on the right represents Lycurgus with the two dogs; the intractable, gluttonous pot licker is in the foreground. According to the print's inscription, this dog symbolizes poor training, just as the beagle does in Steen's painting. The only difference is that Steen has portrayed a different breed and transformed it into a living creature, without any obvious connection to the Lycurgus story. Steen has also depicted several toys strewn about the floor, apparently discarded



FIGURE 47
Jan Saenredam (Dutch,
1565–1607) after Hendrick
Goltzius (Dutch, 1558–1617),
Morning, from the series *The
Four Times of Day*. Engraving.
Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinett.

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by the children in favor of more serious matters, that is, their moral and spiritual upbringing.⁵⁶

Dutch artists sometimes paired well-trained, obedient dogs with praying children, as can be seen, for example, in a late-sixteenth-century engraving entitled *Morning* [FIGURE 47], from the series *The Four Times of Day* by Jan Saenredam (after Hendrick Goltzius). In this print, the little girl prays for her food, while her brother doffs his hat after having received his. Like the boy in the print by Meyer, the

FIGURE 48

Ludolf de Jongh, *Portrait of a Young Boy*, 1661. Oil on canvas, 97.8 × 71.8 cm (38½ × 28¼ in.). Richmond, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund, 63.54. Photo: Katherine Wetzel.



children both carry hornbooks (an early type of primer, used to teach reading) and seem ready to leave for school. On the floor beside them, a little dog squats patiently on its hind legs, hoping for a morsel of food. Like his undisciplined, pot-licking counterpart, this well-behaved little creature, alluding to the docility of the children, ultimately owes its pictorial existence to Plutarch's story of Lycurgus. Contemporary portraits of children with dogs performing tricks probably evoked similar associations [FIGURE 48]—parents who commissioned the portraits recognized the well-trained dog as echoing, in a clever way, their virtuously reared children.

That the theme of *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* was a conventional one in Dutch art is further affirmed by the existence of Gerrit Dou's



FIGURE 49
Gerrit Dou, *A Maidervant in a Niche*, circa 1657–60. Oil on panel, 38 × 28 cm (15 × 11 in.). Rotterdam, Collection Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Willem van der Vorm Foundation, 21.

depiction of a mother cutting bread for a child [FIGURE 49], executed just a few years before De Hooch's canvas.⁵⁷ Dou placed this charming scene in the background of a panel, the principal subject of which is a maid standing in an architectural enclosure, who pours liquid out of a large jug. At first glance, the foreground and background scenarios seem unrelated. However, the maid's activity can also be understood in pedagogical terms. According to a well-known educational metaphor of that day, which was actually devised by the ancient writer Horace, a vessel always retains the smell of the first liquid that it contained. The authors of domestic conduct books were familiar with this metaphor and related it to the idea that children will remember permanently their first instruction. The English Puritan William



FIGURE 50

Jan Albertsz. Rotius (Dutch, 1624–1666), *Portrait of a Young Girl with Carnations*, 1663.

Oil on canvas, 118.1 × 96.5 cm (46½ × 38 in.). Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario, Gift of Miss L. Aileen Larkin, 1945, 2804.

Gouge, for example, argued that what is learned in childhood is retained longest, just as “a vessel longest keepeth the savour with which it was first seasoned.”⁵⁸ In Conrad Meyer’s engraving [FIGURE 46], this Horatian maxim is illustrated on the wall directly above the praying children in the main scene, where two men are depicted pouring liquid into large casks. In Dou’s painting, the maid merely empties a jug rather than pouring liquid from one container into another, but the result is the same: this large vessel will retain the smell of the liquid being drained from it.

Dou’s work contains yet another allusion to education. To the left of the servant girl is a potted plant, possibly a Chinese lantern (*physalis alkekengi*), that is ripe with fruit. In the seventeenth century, the instruction of children was often likened to preparing the ground for planting or seeding so that it would yield fruit. Properly trained children were thus associated with well-cultivated, fecund growth, while their undisciplined counterparts were regarded as unpruned plants or even as weeds or thistles.⁵⁹ This period produced several portraits of children touching or pointing to thriving flora or fauna, or even holding fruit [FIGURE 50], an unmistakable allusion to their virtuous upbringing.⁶⁰

In the engraving by Saenredam, in the Getty Museum’s De Hooch, and in the painting by Steen, the boys have removed their hats. In today’s casual culture, the significance of this action may not be recognized. Yet to viewers of De Hooch’s era, who were so attuned to polite acts and upstanding behavior, it instantly signaled respect toward adults and, by implication, proper training. Insights into the importance of this gesture can be gleaned from a letter written in 1685 by a Dutch father to his son. Apparently, an acquaintance of the father had observed that the young man was slow in taking off his hat upon being greeted by someone. In the letter, the father expresses outrage at his child’s behavior, commenting, “You never learned that in my house, and I cannot understand how it is possible that you are so impolite and rude that my friends feel it necessary to inform me.”⁶¹



FIGURE 51
Gerrit Dou, *The Night School*,
circa 1662–65. Oil on panel,
53 × 40.3 cm (20⁷/₈ × 15⁷/₈ in.).
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

Unlike the children in Saenredam's engraving, the youngster in *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* does not carry a hornbook, an unambiguous reference to school and the academic and moral discipline that this institution ideally instills. Nevertheless, De Hooch cleverly introduces several references to education, among them the word *Schole* (school), on the facade of the building partially visible in the left background, just beyond the front door of the house. Moreover, a small pile of books and a candlestick, partly obscured in heavy shadow, lie on a shelf above the inner doorway. The juxtaposition of a candle, a source of illumination, and the books themselves is most probably not purely coincidental. In contemporary Dutch art and literature, light emanating from candles or lanterns was often associated—like light bulbs appearing over the heads of characters in children's comic books today—with inner illumination, that is, the enlightenment of an idea or, more specifically within the context of the painting, the enlightenment of education. Other Dutch pictures of the period feature children in schoolrooms studying by the light of candles or lanterns [FIGURE 51]; light in those images certainly possesses a

metaphorical dimension. Lastly, in the Getty Museum's De Hooch, the idle top lying on the floor in front of the chamber's doorway is idle because the boy has abandoned his petty playthings in pursuit of more serious matters, namely, his schooling.



A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy is richly informative as a mirror of seventeenth-century Dutch ideals concerning domesticity.⁶² At the same time, the canvas sheds light on early modern European attitudes toward children and their proper training. The history of childhood has been well studied during the past fifty-odd years. Scholars once argued that during the Middle Ages and much of the early modern era (circa 1450 to circa 1750), there was no awareness of childhood as a distinct stage in life separate from adulthood. According to this school of thought, it was only gradually, during the course of the seventeenth century, that adults began to realize that children were different. But the increased attention paid to children supposedly led to their cruel treatment, as evidenced by the harsh discipline imposed upon them. Only in the mid-eighteenth century did a truly modern, enlightened view of childhood supposedly emerge, characterized by heightened parental concern for children, who now occupied a central place in family life. This rather grim view of children's lives in earlier centuries has been rightly questioned, but revisionist ideas appraising childhood during this very same early modern period as an entirely idyllic life stage are likely just as exaggerated as earlier theories. Historical realities probably lie somewhere in between these two opposing perspectives. After all, the manner in which seventeenth-century parents experienced their children and in which they expressed their emotions was filtered through societal and cultural norms and values fundamentally different from our own. Dutch genre paintings of children such as *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* and related art and literature confirm that childhood as a distinct phase of life was recognized and cherished in early modern Europe, though probably in a manner somewhat different than it is today.

PIETER DE HOOCH
AND THE MARKETING OF DOMESTIC
IMAGERY IN THE DUTCH REPUBLIC

A WOMAN PREPARING BREAD AND BUTTER FOR A BOY [FIGURE 1] was one of seemingly countless numbers of other Dutch genre paintings representing virtuous domesticity that only began to be executed in significant numbers after 1650. This fact gives lie to the view that seventeenth-century Dutch genre paintings proffer candid glimpses of daily existence at that time. If indeed De Hooch's canvas and others like it provided a faithful mirror of seventeenth-century life, we would have to conclude that during the second half of the century children all at once began behaving well—in contrast to earlier decades, when a huge proportion of Dutch paintings depicted children as mischievous imps, susceptible to a startling variety of adult vices [FIGURE 52].

Similarly, given the scarcity of pre-1650 paintings depicting domesticity and, conversely, the large number depicting females as prostitutes [FIGURE 53], the inescapable inference would be that the concept of domesticity was suddenly invented around midcentury and that with equal immediacy women began to act commendably. The very implausibility of these hypotheses confirms what specialists have long known, that Dutch seventeenth-century genre paintings in general weave clever fictions, ingeniously synthesizing observed fact with a well-established repertoire of motifs and styles to create highly contrived, thoroughly conventional images.

As noted in the preceding chapter, the concept of domesticity itself was not abruptly formulated around 1650. Many of the then-current familial notions had actually originated during the sixteenth century and, in some cases, even earlier.⁶³ Literature focusing upon the topics of marriage and the family was already in print by the early 1520s, often in the form of published sermons. However, what began initially as a small trickle of publications would culminate in the flood of exhaustively



FIGURE 52
Dirck Hals (Dutch, 1591–1656),
Children Playing Cards, 1631.
Oil on panel, 32.6 × 27.7 cm
(12¹³/₁₆ × 10⁷/₈ in.). Williamstown,
Massachusetts, Sterling and
Francine Clark Art Institute, 757.



FIGURE 53
Dirck van Baburen (Dutch,
1590/95–1624), *The Procuress*, 1622.
Oil on canvas, 101.6 × 107.6 cm
(40 × 42³/₈ in.). Boston, Museum
of Fine Arts, M. Theresa B.
Hopkins Fund, 50.2721.

detailed domestic conduct books, such as Jacob Cats’s *Houwelyck*, that appeared toward the end of the sixteenth century and well into the seventeenth.⁶⁴ As the decades progressed, the concept of domesticity must have become widespread, pervading all strata of the population. That this occurred is confirmed by the existence of literally hundreds of Dutch paintings of domestic themes, although the majority of these postdate 1650.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ART MARKET

How do we account for this intriguing surge in family-oriented subject matter in Dutch art during the second half of the seventeenth century, as exemplified by the Getty Museum’s *De Hooch*? To understand the roots of this phenomenon, we must turn first to the question of “the market.” Whether artists were working for specific patrons or on speculation for undetermined buyers, they needed to remain cognizant of the potential tastes and expectations of prospective purchasers.

There is much evidence that seventeenth-century artists and art theorists were indeed conscious of these considerations. For instance, in his short art-theory book

Lof der schilder-konst (Praise of Painting) of 1642, Philips Angel (circa 1618–after 1664), a minor painter from the city of Leiden, definitely had buyers in mind when he exhorted his colleagues to impart a “decorative richness” to their works in order to facilitate sales:

How necessary it is for a painter to pay good heed to this can be detected from the stimulating affections it awakens in the breasts of art lovers. One sees this daily in those who enrich their paintings and works with it, drawing the delighted eye of art-lovers eagerly to their works, with the result that paintings sell more readily.⁶⁵

The recent research of art historians and economic historians corroborates Angel’s centuries-old recommendations. In their fascinating study of the art trade between Antwerp and Paris in the mid-seventeenth century, Neil de Marchi and Hans van Miegroet investigated how art dealers in Antwerp stimulated interest in Flemish pictures in the French capital through their Parisian agents, despite the predominant French taste for Italian art.⁶⁶ Even though the painters supplying the pictures in Antwerp were working on speculation for buyers whom they had never met, they modified their work at the request of the dealers to make it more appealing and, hence, marketable.

De Marchi and Van Miegroet discuss one memorable order for pictures submitted in March 1663 by the Antwerp-born but Paris-based art dealer Jean-Michel Picart to his Antwerp supplier, Matthijs Musson. Picart requested two major adjustments, both stylistic and thematic, to paintings that would eventually be shipped to him. First, these pictures were to be “cleanly painted” with a high degree of finish.⁶⁷ More interestingly for our purposes, Picart’s second stipulation concerned subject matter and its representation. He specifically requested that no pictures be sent to him that were potentially frightening or offensive because they were vulgar or crude. Thus, his order for twelve animal pictures by the renowned Flemish still-life painter Jan van Kessel II (1626–1679) dictated that bats, crocodiles, and similar creatures be omitted in favor of more pleasing birds and fish. Moreover, Picart specified that Abraham Willemsen (active 1627–1672) adjust the faces of figures in his religious paintings to make them less plump—otherwise they would be too peasant-like and coarse.⁶⁸

De Marchi and Van Miegroet's analysis, though concerned primarily with art dealers as go-betweens in the market, nevertheless affords insights into just how prospective buyers exerted an impact upon the production of art. Clearly, a similar dynamic was at work between artists and audiences in the Netherlands, regardless of whether those audiences were anonymous or composed of specifically identifiable patrons. What sorts of persons made up these audiences? In terms of the types of pictures discussed in this book, namely, moderately expensive to tremendously costly, the patrons mostly (though not exclusively) belonged to the social and cultural elite; in other words, they were members of the upper-middle and upper classes.⁶⁹

These affluent citizens grew even more wealthy in the years following the Treaty of Münster of 1648, which officially ended the Netherlands' decades-long war of independence against the Spanish.⁷⁰ Times of peace invariably beget times of prosperity, and in this regard, the peace treaty of 1648 was no exception. The cessation of hostilities between Spain and the Netherlands provided the latter with many new commercial opportunities while simultaneously lowering the cost of doing business. As a result, the nation experienced extraordinary economic growth and, in fact, reached the peak of its mercantile might within a few short years of the treaty.

Needless to say, in this booming economic atmosphere, those persons who were already wealthy grew even wealthier, while the disparities between them and poorer folk deepened. Some citizens, usually those who were already extremely affluent, accumulated such spectacular fortunes during this period that they were actually able to adopt the luxurious lifestyles earlier associated almost exclusively with the country's tiny aristocratic class. For example, Pieter Claesz. van Ruijven (1624–1674), the distinguished patron of De Hooch's Delft colleague Vermeer, paid sixteen thousand guilders, an absolutely astronomical sum by seventeenth-century standards, to acquire a noble title and domain in 1669. Van Ruijven's extravagant acquisition is a noteworthy instance of "social rising." This phenomenon was actually already under way by the end of the sixteenth century but reached its height during the economically heady decades following the Treaty of Münster.⁷¹

Pivotal to the economic developments and social rising just outlined was the "civilizing process," a cultural development brilliantly outlined years ago by the German scholar Norbert Elias.⁷² Elias actually coined the term to describe how the upper classes during the early modern period (circa 1450 to circa 1750) gradually adopted evolving codes dealing with sophisticated manners, gestures, dress, posture,



FIGURE 54
 Attributed to Cornelis de Man
 (Dutch, 1621–1706), *A Family
 Group at the Dinner Table*,
 circa 1660. Oil on canvas,
 57.5 × 72.1 cm (22⁵/₈ × 28³/₈ in.).
 Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty
 Museum, 70.PA.20.

and the like, thereby shaping in society at large a conscious self-image. All European societies at this time possessed distinct social hierarchies in which one's station, whether peasant or nobleman, was relatively sharply defined. Thus, in the Netherlands, as in other countries, elite members of society employed civilizing behaviors to emphasize their refined conduct, namely, their lofty "standards" versus those of supposedly simpler, socially inferior people. Well-to-do people flaunted their alleged social supremacy by exhibiting ever-increasing self-control over many aspects of public life, including general comportment and even table manners.⁷³

Another painting in the collection of the Getty Museum, attributed to Cornelis de Man, offers additional insights into this discussion of evolving civility in the Netherlands. The painting in question, a portrait dated about 1660, depicts a family at a dinner table [FIGURE 54].⁷⁴ The eldest son is shown dabbing his mouth with

a large napkin, a commonplace act in our culture today but of sufficient novelty in the seventeenth century that the portraitist was presumably asked to include it. Undoubtedly, this motif served as a marker of the young man's good breeding and sophistication: many people — particularly those of lower social castes — continued to wipe their mouths uncouthly with their fingers or sleeves.⁷⁵

The refinement of public aspects of behavior, as seen in this remarkable portrait, led to the transfer of many overtly offensive acts, for instance, care for the body and its functions, to the hitherto scarcely extant private sphere.⁷⁶ In the seventeenth century, the concept of privacy, something which we take for granted today, was only just emerging.⁷⁷ As a result of the emphasis on civility in the public sphere, the private realm in all of its manifestations also became the subject of dramatic changes. Fundamental to these changes was the concept of domesticity, which focused on behaviors that were both appropriate and desirable in the private sphere of the home. All these concepts were undergoing a complicated and dynamic process of evolution, and it is therefore difficult to disconnect contemporary notions of domesticity from those of civility and privacy.

It is noteworthy that the tremendous demand for paintings of domesticity during the second half of the seventeenth century coincided with changing patterns of house construction, as architects, builders, and their affluent patrons began to differentiate between the individual rooms that composed a domicile.⁷⁸ In earlier eras, houses contained largely communal spaces that served a variety of needs. For example, it was not uncommon to find kitchens that functioned simultaneously as bedrooms — truly separate bedrooms of the type that are routinely found in our homes today and, for that matter, dining rooms, studies, and the like, were scarcely known. But as the seventeenth century unfolded, rooms designated for specific purposes gradually came into use, thus providing ample evidence of a growing desire among wealthy homeowners to separate public rooms, that is, those used for entertaining guests, from those private spaces reserved exclusively for family members.

It is fascinating that at a time in which notions of privacy were still actively in flux, paintings by De Hooch and other artists frequently feature figures cloistered in intimate spaces. Pictures such as *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* are reflective of — and perhaps even helped to shape — these emerging requirements for space and privacy.⁷⁹ The complex interiors of De Hooch's domestic subjects, with their characteristic view into another chamber, are inhabited almost exclusively

by adult females (accompanied by young children of both sexes). In the Getty Museum's De Hooch, the foreground figures are limited to the mother and her son. Somewhat unusually, a male, perhaps the father of the family, appears in the middle ground. But De Hooch depicts him seated in another room behind a curtained window, a clever device that simultaneously includes him yet excludes him by sequestering him deliberately from the principal figures. *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy*, like so many other domestic pictures by De Hooch and his colleagues, thus presents a peaceful, gendered space that accommodates a female and a child, seemingly captured in a private moment, secluded from the hustle and bustle of the world, which is only implied by views through the window, open door, and vestibule.⁸⁰ And, as we have seen in chapter two, that view of the wider world was one that signified the domain of men, a domain from which women were theoretically excluded.

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THE ARTISTS' RESPONSE

As growing wealth and emerging notions of civility, privacy, and domesticity shaped the upper classes' discrimination in matters artistic, painters in turn responded to these changing tastes by making stylistic adjustments to their work and by introducing new themes into the repertoire of genre painting. They also altered existing themes to render them appealing to an increasingly urbane and moneyed clientele. Several studies have confirmed that by 1650 this clientele, composed principally (though not exclusively) of elite members of society, had assumed a leading role in the acquisition of expensive paintings and in the development of significant art collections.⁸¹ Although members of the middle class did continue to purchase art, it was primarily of a caliber distinctly below what was collected by the affluent. Thus, it is safe to assume that the taste and collecting habits of the elite ensured a ready market for the new types of pictures being produced after 1650, as they responded enthusiastically to the stylistic and thematic changes introduced (largely on their behalf) into Dutch genre painting.

These stylistic changes are readily detectable in *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* and the work of other contemporary masters whose pictures are illustrated in this book. They involved a hitherto unseen level of refinement in the renderings of textures and fabrics and the introduction of subtle yet sophisticated



evocations of light and shadow on figures and objects in carefully constructed spaces, which are often vertical in format [FIGURES 11 and 38]. Concurrent with these stylistic developments was a veritable explosion of paintings of domestic themes and, conversely, a gradual decline in vulgar imagery (though this would never disappear completely). Paintings of domestic scenes provided a thematic if not a moral antithesis to the types of subject matter that had been prevalent in Dutch painting during the first half of the seventeenth century.

Images of prostitution were especially popular earlier in the century.⁸² Early-seventeenth-century depictions of prostitution often display a surprising, if not shocking, level of vulgarity, even by modern standards. It is not uncommon to encounter buxom whores, sometimes bare-chested, who are shown interacting with or even being fondled by their licentious clients [FIGURE 53]. Similar subjects were also depicted in genre painting during the second half of the seventeenth century, but with less frequency than they had been during the first half. Artists active during this latter period also helped to popularize more innocuous renditions of prostitution.

Although he was primarily a painter of domestic themes, De Hooch likely played at least a minor role in these modifications to conventional subject matter. A *Young Woman Drinking* typifies the artist's approach to such imagery [FIGURE 55]. The presence in this canvas of a young lady with two men and an elderly woman recalls earlier paintings of prostitution that frequently feature such a cast of characters, especially the old women who function as procuresses [FIGURE 53]. The little picture of Christ and the Adulteress over the mantelpiece alludes to the actual subject of De Hooch's work, as does the somewhat comical motif of the drowsy dog, whose listless pose echoes the indecorously relaxed posture of his slightly inebriated mistress. Any strong sexual overtones have been largely sublimated. The result is a painting that is decidedly less coarse and raucous than its pictorial antecedents.⁸³ De Hooch's less offensive rendering of prostitution is to some degree symptomatic of his responsiveness to contemporary changes in taste.

Judging from the large percentage of domestic themes that comprise De Hooch's work and his frequent repetition of specific subjects and settings, he clearly sought to capitalize on the demand for these new types of paintings. In fact, it was such pictures that helped to secure his reputation. What probably made De Hooch's art so appealing was the engaging range of his domestic subjects. Equally attractive must have been his paintings' compelling perspectives and spatial complexity as well

FIGURE 55
Pieter de Hooch, *A Young Woman Drinking*, 1658. Oil on canvas, 68.6 × 60 cm (27 × 23³/₈ in.). Paris, Musée du Louvre. Photo: © Erich Lessing / Art Resource, New York.



as their impressive daylight effects and sympathetic figures. A *Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* offers a superb example of De Hooch's skills in this regard. The complex view through the main chamber and vestibule out into the street and showing the buildings beyond is compounded by references to two ancillary chambers, implied by the presence of a door and a staircase. The mother, cutting the bread with heightened concentration, and the boy, waiting patiently beside her, rank among the most sensitively drawn figures in De Hooch's work.

As we have seen, De Hooch's domestic imagery dating from the late 1650s, that is, painted during his residency in Delft, was particularly innovative, often involving imaginative portrayals of servants performing domestic chores or housewives supervising maids both in interiors and in courtyards. It will be recalled that De Hooch developed and popularized the latter motif nearly single-handedly during his relatively brief tenure in Delft [FIGURE 56].

As previously noted, courtyards were an intrinsic feature of Dutch domestic architecture that provided light and additional, transitional spaces for homes built on narrow urban lots.⁸⁴ De Hooch was certainly familiar with courtyards from personal experience, but as is true of Dutch genre paintings in general, his scenes are not literal transcriptions of reality. Rather, they are ultimately contrived, presenting a skillful amalgam of direct observation, artistry, invention, and convention. A *Woman and Her Maid in a Courtyard* [FIGURE 57], probably painted near the end of De Hooch's Delft period, is a characteristic example. In this courtyard, a maid is about to place a fish into a cooking pot, presumably after having cleaned it in the wash basin to her left. She is being supervised by a housewife, identifiable by her clothing, which is finer than her employee's relatively plain garb. The surrounding courtyard features one of De Hooch's distinctive perspectival configurations, which in this instance is quite sophisticated, extending

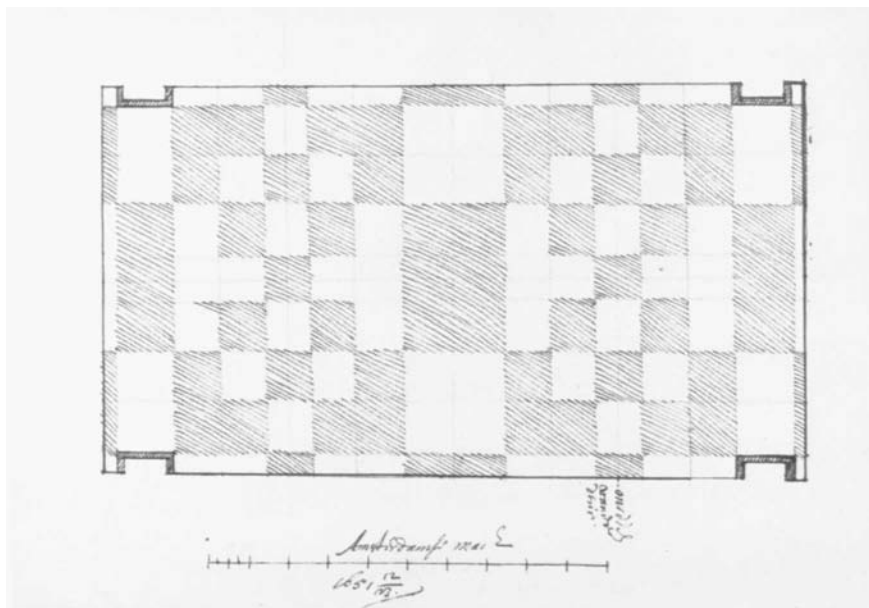


FIGURE 56
Pieter de Hooch, *The Courtyard of a House in Delft*, 1658.
Oil on canvas, 73.5 × 60 cm
(28¹⁵/₁₆ × 23³/₈ in.). London,
National Gallery of Art, NG835.
Photo: National Gallery Picture
Library.

FIGURE 57
Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman and Her Maid in a Courtyard*,
1660–61/63. Oil on canvas,
73.7 × 62.6 cm (29 × 24³/₈ in.).
London, National Gallery, NG794.
Photo: © Board of Trustees.

FIGURE 58

Pieter Post (Dutch, 1608–1669),
Marble Floor Design for the
Entrance Hall of the Alewijn
House, Herengracht 182,
Amsterdam, dated December 23,
1651. Pen and ink on paper,
17.5 × 23 cm (6 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 9 in.).
Zeist, Rijksdienst voor de
Monumentenzorg, Netherlands
Department for Conservation,
TH-423/65.



to yet another courtyard and including a lengthy walking path to the left that passes through an archway.

De Hooch's choice of innovative subject matter and use of intricate systems of perspective appear to be strategies on his part to increase the marketability of his paintings. The changes wrought in De Hooch's pictures after his relocation to Amsterdam around 1661 confirm his sensitivity to prospective buyers' tastes.⁸⁵ After a brief transitional period to which the Getty Museum's canvas belongs, De Hooch responded more fully to the commercial opportunities in this fashionable metropolis, introducing a hitherto unparalleled degree of splendor and refinement into his paintings. *Card Players* [FIGURE 23], painted a few years after the artist settled in Amsterdam, presents young people cavorting within a well-appointed interior, adorned with a large marble floor, an ornate mantelpiece, and exquisite gilt-leather wall coverings—an opulent interior that provides a striking contrast to the more modest environs depicted in works made during his Delft years. Once again, subject and style are inextricably bound together: the execution of this opulent interior is much finer, and its surface more reflective with cooler tonalities, than in his pictures composed in Delft.

The presence of marble floors—see the marble-paved entrance in the Getty Museum’s canvas—ornate fireplaces, and other luxurious decorative embellishments in pictures by De Hooch and a host of other genre painters active after 1650 can be tied directly to the surge of prosperity in the Dutch republic in the seventeenth century.⁸⁶ However, we now know that the presence of such lavish accouterments in the homes depicted in genre paintings is largely fantasy.⁸⁷ Marble floors, for example, were uncommon in houses of this period, although they were more frequently present in public buildings (such as the Amsterdam Town Hall; see Chapter 1). As archival data confirm, in those unusual instances in which marble floors graced the dwellings of the well-to-do, they were often limited to the vestibule, because wealthy homeowners preferred wooden flooring for their actual living spaces [FIGURE 58]. Likewise, brass chandeliers, seemingly omnipresent in paintings of interiors [see FIGURE 18], were in reality extremely expensive articles primarily intended for churches.

Surely, artists did not include marble floors, chandeliers, ornate mantelpieces, and similarly costly adornments in their pictures merely to demonstrate their ability to render objects and materials with astonishing fidelity, as has been proposed.⁸⁸ Such objects were also depicted because they connoted status and savoir faire to prospective buyers. The presence of these attractive and costly accouterments was part of an ongoing effort among painters to make their work as attractive as possible to their potential clientele, largely wealthy art collectors who expected to see such presentations of lavish decor in their purchases. On a certain level, these genre paintings served to fulfill the decorative desires, not to say the fantasies, of affluent buyers, and the paintings themselves probably possessed the same luxury-commodity status as the other decorative articles on display in the collectors’ houses.⁸⁹ The seventeenth century in the Netherlands gave rise to a prosperous atmosphere that was receptive to visually sophisticated, inherently civilized paintings. In this situation, genre paintings not only reflected contemporary taste but simultaneously helped to shape it.

De Hooch’s genre paintings usually commanded more modest prices than those fetched by his most successful colleagues. Gerrit Dou, who also produced domestic imagery [FIGURE 38] while working in nearby Leiden, regularly earned roughly six hundred to a thousand guilders per picture.⁹⁰ The latter sum was nearly twice the amount of the average, annual middle-class salary in the Dutch republic and was sufficient to purchase a modest house at that time. (How many people today

could afford to buy an artwork that cost approximately the same as a house?) Although it is certain that De Hooch did not enjoy immense earnings, the question of the social status of his patrons cannot be easily resolved.⁹¹ The database of the Getty Research Institute's Project for the Study of Collecting and Provenance lists several seventeenth-century Dutch inventories in which paintings by De Hooch appear, and in which their estimated values range from a low of fifteen guilders to a high of seventy-five guilders. The latter sum would have taken the average middle-class laborer in De Hooch's day nearly two months to earn. Surely few persons of the middle class could afford to spend that much on art during the seventeenth century.

Even if De Hooch's paintings did not command the same prices as those by Dou or, for that matter, his Delft colleague Vermeer, his art expresses the same wholesome, civilized values as vastly more expensive pictures destined for the most eminent clientele. Undoubtedly, the less-moneyed buyers of De Hooch's pictures desired art filled with the very same associations, centered around refinement and civility, as their wealthier counterparts. There is a simple explanation for this phenomenon: in general, the ideals of the leading members of any given culture in any given time period inevitably have a "trickle-down effect" as persons in the lower social echelons aspire to the lifestyles and values of their superiors.⁹²

Dutch genre paintings, both those of uncompromisingly high quality as well as less costly and less polished pictures, speak volumes about contemporary taste, elite taste to be specific, for it was these trend-setting collectors who dominated the art market after 1650. The late French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu explored the concept of taste in his book entitled *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*.⁹³ According to Bourdieu, taste, particularly as it relates to things we buy, is a phenomenon essentially used to affirm and legitimize differences between the various social classes. The upper classes naturally determine the dominant taste and utilize it strategically to distinguish themselves from their perceived inferiors. Persons of lower status may attempt to imitate the refined penchants of their superiors, but by necessity they must do so mostly through products of lesser cost and comparatively lower quality. A good example of this phenomenon today can be seen in the purchase of automobiles. It is quite unlikely that a factory worker will purchase the same type and make of car as an extremely wealthy person, but he or she might buy a vehicle that in certain respects imitates specific features of much more expensive

ones. Although Bourdieu's exhaustive analyses focused upon post-World War II France, many of his observations are applicable to early modern societies such as the Dutch republic, where social hierarchies were much more conspicuous than those of any modern-day country.

If the distinctive styles, themes, and even motifs of Dutch genre painting can be understood as expressions of taste employed in the service of affirming social status, then the act of purchasing and displaying paintings should also be linked to the concept of civility, all the more so when the paintings in question represent domestic subjects. As we have seen, taste and civility were bound up together as the elite members of society sought to project a sense of their cultural preeminence and rank by displaying superior conduct and making cultivated choices in art (as well as in literature and the theater).⁹⁴ Artists therefore painted certain themes in specific styles simultaneously to gratify the desires and convey the values of society's leading members, values that centered around discrimination, sophistication, and refinement.



Although it is important to understand how Dutch genre paintings relate to the concept of taste and the role played by the market, the painter's primary role in introducing new subjects and styles should not be underestimated. In all periods, it is the most creative artists who introduce the most intriguing changes into their work, as witnessed by the rise of domestic imagery in Dutch genre painting after 1650 in general and in the work of De Hooch in particular.

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NOTES

- 1 See Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus of naamlyst van schilderyen, met derzelver pryzen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1752–70), vol. 2, p. 288.
- 2 For further details on De Hooch's life and artistic career, see Peter C. Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1980); and Peter C. Sutton, ed., *Pieter de Hooch, 1629–1684*, exh. cat. (Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum, 1998–99).
- 3 Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753), vol. 2, pp. 34–35.
- 4 The document in question is summarized in Sutton 1980 (note 2), p. 145, doc. no. 15.
- 5 The idea that De Hooch may have been an actual servant is articulated more fully in Wayne Franits, "The Depiction of Servants in Some Paintings by Pieter de Hooch," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 52 (1989), pp. 559–66. See also the objections to this hypothesis in Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), pp. 85–86, n. 14; and Walter Liedtke, *A View of Delft: Vermeer and His Contemporaries* (Zwolle, 2000), p. 279, n. 31. The latter's reference to Eddy de Jongh, "Review of Peter C. Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch*," *Simiolus* 11 (1980), p. 182, fails to clarify matters because the term *dienaar* in seventeenth-century Dutch did not refer exclusively to indentured persons. See, for example, Leonard J. Slatkes, *Vermeer and His Contemporaries* (New York, 1981), p. 124. Sutton 1980 (note 2), p. 9, states that there is no proof that De Hooch ever resided with De la Grange and that their relationship appears to have been short-lived.
- 6 See Michiel C. C. Kersten and Daniëlle H. A. C. Lokin, eds., *Delft Masters: Vermeer's Contemporaries*, exh. cat. (Delft, Stedelijk Museum Het Prinsenhof, 1996); Liedtke (note 5); and Walter Liedtke, ed., *Vermeer and the Delft School*, exh. cat. (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001).
- 7 For more comprehensive surveys of seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting, see Christopher Brown, *Images of a Golden Past: Dutch Genre Painting of the 17th Century* (New York, 1984); Peter C. Sutton, ed., *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting*, exh. cat. (Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1984); and, most recently, Wayne Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (London and New Haven, 2004).
- 8 The roots of this imagery can ultimately be traced to sixteenth-century German prints. For Codde and Duyster, see Caroline Bigler Playter, "Willem Duyster and Pieter Codde: The 'Duystere Werelt' of Dutch Genre Painting, c. 1625–1635," Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1972; and Franits (note 7), pp. 57–64.
- 9 For De Hooch and De Jongh, see Roland E. Fleischer, "Ludolf de Jongh and the Early Work of Pieter de Hooch," *Oud Holland* 92 (1978), pp. 49–67; Sutton 1980 (note 2), pp. 12–13, passim; Roland E. Fleischer, *Ludolf de Jongh (1616–1679): Painter of Rotterdam* (Doornspijk, 1989), pp. 71–77, passim; and Liedtke (note 5), pp. 160–62.
- 10 For the *doorsien* in seventeenth-century Dutch art, see Martha Hollander, *An Entrance for the Eyes: Space and Meaning in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Berkeley, 2002).
- 11 See Liedtke (note 5), pp. 145–68.

- 12 Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), p. 30.
- 13 See Hollander (note 10), pp. 150–51.
- 14 Walter Liedtke, “Delft and the Delft School: An Introduction,” in Liedtke (note 6), p. 15, *passim*, identifies these general stylistic characteristics of Delft painting.
- 15 The literature on Vermeer is voluminous. Recommended among the many monographic studies of his art are Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., *Jan Vermeer* (New York, 1981); Albert Blankert, John Michael Montias, and Gilles Aillaud, *Vermeer* (New York, 1988); Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., *Vermeer and the Art of Painting* (London and New Haven, 1995); and Wayne Franits, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Vermeer* (Cambridge and New York, 2001). See also Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., et al., eds., *Johannes Vermeer*, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 1995–96); and Liedtke (note 6).
- 16 See the discussion in Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), p. 38.
- 17 There are two versions of this picture; see Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), cat. no. 21. Moreover, a strikingly similar setting was employed for De Hooch’s *Mother and Child with Its Head in Her Lap* (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum); see Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), cat. no. 22.
- 18 This was first pointed out by Ben Broos, *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, exh. cat. (The Hague, Mauritshuis, 1990–91), p. 304. For interior decor in the Dutch Republic, see Mariët Westermann, ed., *Art and Home: Dutch Interiors in the Age of Rembrandt*, exh. cat. (Newark Museum, 2001–2).
- 19 This discussion of Amsterdam draws upon Deric Reglin, *Traders, Artists, Burghers: A Cultural History of Amsterdam in the 17th Century* (Assen, 1976); Renee Kistemaker and Roelof van Gelder, *Amsterdam: The Golden Age 1275–1795*, trans. Paul Foulkes (New York, 1983); and Peter Burke, *Venice and Amsterdam: A Study of Seventeenth-Century Elites*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1994).
- 20 For musical themes in seventeenth-century Dutch art and their rich symbolism, see Edwin Buijsen and Louis Peter Grijp, eds., *Music and Painting in the Golden Age*, exh. cat. (The Hague, Hoogsteder & Hoogsteder, 1994).
- 21 For the painting by Van Mieris, see Otto Naumann, “The Lesson (Reattributed),” in *The William A. Clark Collection*, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C., Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1978), pp. 68–71.
- 22 For De Hooch’s use of perspective and working methods, see Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), pp. 40–42.
- 23 In De Hooch’s *Woman with a Baby in Her Lap, and a Small Child* (fig. 7), a pinhole can actually be seen with the naked eye; it is located on the edge of the door, just above the mother’s right shoulder. A detailed photograph of this pinhole can be found in Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), p. 41, fig. 33b. A pinhole is also visible in *The Courtyard of a House in Delft* (fig. 56) in the shadow of the door beside the woman in the vestibule. Similar pinholes are present in Vermeer’s work; see Jorgen Wadum, “Vermeer in Perspective,” in Wheelock et al. (note 15), pp. 67–69, fig. 4.
- 24 The elaborate mantelpiece in *The Music Party (Family Portrait)* (fig. 18) also incorporates details from one found in the Town Hall; see Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), p. 142. The Town Hall itself appears in the background of De Hooch’s *Musical Party on a Terrace* of circa 1667; see Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), p. 57, fig. 57. For the Town Hall, see Katherine Fremantle, *The Baroque Town Hall of Amsterdam* (Utrecht, 1959); and Jan Peeters et al., *The Royal Palace of Amsterdam in Paintings of the Golden Age*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam, Royal Palace, 1997).
- 25 See Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), p. 54, fig. 55. See also Wheelock et al. (note 15), pp. 141–42; and Liedtke (note 6), p. 386, n. 13. Liedtke considers implausible the argument that De Hooch’s painting dates slightly earlier than Vermeer’s.
- 26 For the disputed date of De Hooch’s canvas, see Wheelock et al. (note 15), p. 180; Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), p. 178; Liedtke (note 6), p. 293, n. 221.
- 27 See Sutton 1980 (note 2), p. 147, doc. nos. 40, 43.
- 28 Sutton 1980 (note 2), p. 147, doc. no. 45.
- 29 This translation is taken from John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton, 1989), p. 212. Bolnes’s testimony was probably exaggerated slightly in order to elicit sympathy. Marie Christine van der Sman, “The Year of Disaster: 1672,” in Donald Haks and Marie Christine van der Sman, eds., *Dutch Society in the Age of Vermeer*

- (Zwolle, 1996), p. 136, quotes the journal of Vermeer's contemporary L. van der Saan: "Before the war, when trade and business was flourishing, people in Holland who did not know very well what to do with their money, and how they could best invest it to their enjoyment, would pay something between 500 and 600 and up to 1,000 guilders for a painting . . . But from the year 1672 until 1694, so long as the grievous wars continued many no longer desired to buy paintings . . . Then many scarcely earned in one year what in former times they had recklessly spent in one hour."
- 30 Paintings by the Amsterdam artists Pieter Codde and Willem Duyster come to mind here; for these two artists, see the literature cited in note 8 above.
- 31 For a discussion of late-seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting, see Franits (note 7), pp. 217–57.
- 32 See Sutton 1980 (note 2), p. 40; and Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), p. 61.
- 33 The record of De Hooch's burial refers to him as having come from Amsterdam's *Dolhuys* (madhouse); see Sutton 1980 (note 2), p. 147, doc. no. 50.
- 34 For the concept of domestic virtue in seventeenth-century Dutch art, see Wayne E. Franits, *Paragons of Virtue: Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Cambridge and New York, 1993).
- 35 Jacob Cats, *Houwelyck. Dat is de gansche gelegentheydt des echten staets*, 6 pts. (Middelburg, 1625).
- 36 Eddy de Jongh, "Grape Symbolism in Painting of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Simiolus* 7 (1974), p. 174. For Cats's life and illustrious literary career, see Domien ten Berge, *De hooggeleerde en zoetvloeiende dichter Jacob Cats* (The Hague, 1979).
- 37 For more on such books, see Suzanne W. Hull, *Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for Women 1475–1640* (San Marino, Calif., 1982); and L. F. Groenendijk, *De nadere reformatie van het gezin: De visie van Petrus Wittewrongel op de Christelijke huishouding* (Dordrecht, 1984). Many of these English domestic treatises were known among the Dutch, some through translations, others in the original.
- 38 De Jongh (note 36), p. 173: "The Amsterdam publisher Ian Jacobszoon Schipper, who brought Cats's collected works out no fewer than four times between 1655 and 1665, estimated in midcentury that the number of copies of *Houwelyck* in circulation could not be less than 50,000."
- 39 For this story and related superstitions concerning pregnancy, see the article by Herman Roodenburg, "The Maternal Imagination: The Fears of Pregnant Women in Seventeenth-Century Holland," *Journal of Social History* 21 (1988), pp. 701–16.
- 40 See, for example, the Protestant writers John Dod and Robert Cleaver, *A Godly Forme of Household Government*, 5th ed. (London, 1612), fol. r2; Petrus Wittewrongel, *Oeconomia Christiana ofte Christelicke huys-houdinghe*, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1661), vol. 1, p. 197; and Bernhardum Wallenkamp, *Inleydinghe in Zions-schole* (Utrecht, 1661), pp. 94–95. Catholics also viewed children as divine gifts; see, for example, Cornelis Hazart, *Het gheluckich ende deughdelyck houwelyck* (Antwerp, 1678), p. 204. For two comparatively recent studies on the history of childhood in the Netherlands, see Benjamin Roberts, *Through the Keyhole: Dutch Child-Rearing Practices in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century: Three Urban Elite Families* (Hilversum, 1998); and Rudolf Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography in Holland from the Golden Age to Romanticism* (New York, 2000).
- 41 In some Protestant circles, especially those of the Puritans and Pietists, it was believed that Adam's original sin had imputed to all of his descendants inherently corrupt natures, which could be subdued only through discipline and intense indoctrination in religion and ethics, beginning at the earliest possible age. Thus, the parental commission to rear children properly had eternal consequences. See, for example, William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties* (London, 1622), pp. 536–47; Wittewrongel (note 40), vol. 1, pp. 182–98, vol. 2, pp. 741–59; and Wallenkamp (note 40), pp. 93–138. See also Groenendijk (note 37), pp. 146–56.
- 42 "Geloof het, dat in teere sinnen / d'Op-voeding kan den aert verwinnen." This saying appears in an appendix of proverbs entitled "Kinder-op-voedinghe" (Children's Education) that appears following part 1 of Jacob Cats, *Spiegel vanden ouden ende nieuwen tijdt*, 3 pts. (The Hague, 1632). See also Dod and Cleaver (note 40), fol. s3v; and Bartholomew Batty, *The Christian Man's Closet*, trans. W. Lowth (London, 1581), fols. 18v–19.

- 43 For the family as a microcosm of the state, see Wittewrongel (note 40), vol. 1, pp. 1–5; and Simon Oomius, *Ecclesiola, dat is kleyne kercke* (Amsterdam, 1661), pp. 4, 5, 266–67. See also Groenendijk (note 37), p. 105.
- 44 Prevailing medical opinion held that behavioral traits were conveyed to children through breast milk; a child was believed to imbibe the personality of the woman who nursed it. Mothers were therefore strongly advised not to hire wet nurses to feed their children. Still, the practice of hiring wet nurses must have been common, given the notoriously unsanitary conditions, poor care, and frequently difficult deliveries that characterized seventeenth-century obstetrics. Most interestingly, in comparison to the practices of our own culture today, mothers who allowed their offspring to be nourished with animal milk were vigorously condemned, as medical experts believed that these children would develop the behavioral traits of the animals from whom they had received milk. See, for example, a popular book that dispensed practical medical advice by one of the most famous doctors of the day, Johan van Beverwijck, “Schat der gesontheydt,” in *Alle de wercken, zo in de medicyne als chirurgie van de heer Joan van Beverwyck* (Amsterdam, 1656). On p. 167, Van Beverwijck relates that a child breast-fed by a dog routinely woke up at night and barked! Franits (note 34), pp. 114–19, contains a lengthy discussion of breast-feeding in Dutch art.
- 45 Sutton 1998–99 (note 2), p. 120.
- 46 Oomius (note 43), pp. 211–13.
- 47 The depiction of brooms and other utensils for cleaning in Dutch art is also discussed by Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York, 1987), pp. 375–97, passim, who interprets them from an anthropological perspective that emphasizes cleanliness as an affirmation of such values as separateness, vigilance, and patriotism. See also Eddy de Jongh, “The Broom as Signifier: An Iconological Hunch,” in de Jongh, *Questions of Meaning: Theme and Motif in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Painting*, ed. and trans. Michael Hoyle (Leiden, 2000), pp. 193–214.
- 48 See Wayne Franits, “The Family at Grace: A Theme in Dutch Art of the Seventeenth Century,” *Simiolus* 16 (1986), pp. 36–49; and Franits (note 34), pp. 141–57.
- 49 Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1983), p. 143, provides a complete translation of the inscription.
- 50 Erasmus, *Züchtiger Sitten zierlichen Wandels und höfflicher Geberden der Jugent* (Strasbourg, 1531). Erasmus’s text was published in Dutch only in 1678, but Cats and his colleagues were familiar with it through earlier editions in Latin.
- 51 See Otto van Veen, *Quinti Horatii Flacci emblemata*, 2nd ed. (Antwerp, 1612), pp. 56–57; and *Versameling van uytgeleesene sinne-beelden* (Leiden, 1696), pp. 24–25, no. 12. Jan Baptist Bedaux has made the first important contribution to our understanding of dogs as educational metaphors in Dutch seventeenth-century painting, based in part on his study of the texts cited here. See “Discipline for Innocence: Metaphors for Education in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting,” in Bedaux, *The Reality of Symbols: Studies in the Iconology of Netherlandish Art 1400–1800* (The Hague and Maarssen, 1990), pp. 109–69.
- 52 There are several seventeenth-century Dutch editions of Plutarch’s treatise (a work that first appeared in his *Moralia*), for example, Plutarchus, *Tractaet vande op-voedinghe der kinderen*, trans. S. de Swaef (Middelburg, 1619); and R. T., *Eenighe morale of zedige wercken van Plutarchus* (Amsterdam, 1634).
- 53 Plutarch, *The Education or Bringing Up of Children*, trans. T. Eliot (London, n. d. [circa 1535]), fols. B1v–B2.
- 54 Batty (note 42), fol. 19v.
- 55 “Gewent een winde tot den pot / Een lagt hont wort een keucken-sot,” from Cats (note 42), appendix of proverbs following part 1.
- 56 For toys as symbols of foolishness and frivolity in Dutch paintings, see Eddy de Jongh et al., eds., *Tot lering en vermaak: Betekenissen van Hollandse genrevoorstellingen uit de zeventiende eeuw*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, 1976), p. 99; and Mary Frances Durantini, *The Child in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1983), pp. 206–56.
- 57 See also the painting by Dou’s star student, the Leiden master Frans van Mieris the Elder (fig. 21).

- 58 Gouge (note 41), p. 545. See also Wittewrongel (note 40), vol. 1, p. 187. The pedagogical significance of Dou's painting was first discussed by Durantini (note 56), pp. 47–49. See also Hollander (note 10), pp. 61–64.
- 59 See, for example, Cats (note 35), pt. 5, p. 58; Wittewrongel (note 40), vol. 1, p. 187; vol. 2, pp. 749–50; Dod and Cleaver (note 40), fol. R3v; and Plutarch (note 53), fols. B1–B1v. See also Bedaux (note 51), pp. 127–32.
- 60 Related to this horticultural metaphor is that of the young sapling, which is easier to bend than an older tree with a thick trunk. The third image on the wall behind the praying children in Meyer's engraving (fig. 46) depicts this metaphor. See Cats (note 42), pt. 1, pp. 1–7; Wittewrongel (note 40), vol. 1, p. 187; and Bedaux (note 51), p. 122.
- 61 The quoted passage is taken from a letter from Johan Huijdecoper, Jr., to his son Balthasar, dated May 25, 1685. This letter is cited and discussed by Roberts (note 40), pp. 181–82.
- 62 For more on domesticity, see Roberts (note 40) and Dekker (note 40), both with many references to additional scholarly literature on this complicated subject.
- 63 For example, Protestant reformers and humanists of the early sixteenth century wrote important tracts and books about domestic life, advocating specific roles and responsibilities for individual family members, particularly women. For the writings of Luther, Erasmus, and others on this topic, see Ozment (note 49), pp. 50–72, 132–54. There were also several works concerning marriage and the family published before the Reformation, for example, A. von Eyb, *Ehebüchlein* (Nuremberg, 1472).
- 64 For domestic conduct books, see Hull (note 37); and Groenendijk (note 37).
- 65 Philips Angel, *Lof der schilderkonst* (Leiden, 1642), p. 39. Angel's short treatise is based on a speech that he gave in Leiden on October 18, St. Luke's Day—St. Luke is the patron saint of painters—in 1641. My quotation is taken from Michael Hoyle and Hessel Miedema, "Philips Angel, *Praise of Painting*," *Simiolus* 24 (1996), pp. 243–44.
- 66 Neil de Marchi and Hans J. van Miegroet, "Novelty and Fashion Circuits in the Mid-Seventeenth-Century Antwerp–Paris Art Trade," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 28 (1998), pp. 201–46.
- 67 De Marchi and Van Miegroet (note 66), pp. 223–25, 235–36.
- 68 De Marchi and Van Miegroet (note 66), pp. 223, 225.
- 69 Though principally concerned with Dutch art collectors of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Marten Jan Bok, "Vraag en aanbod op de Nederlandse kunstmarkt, 1580–1700," Ph.D. diss., Rijksuniversiteit te Utrecht, 1994, pp. 53–96, nevertheless contains many valuable insights into elite collecting and patronizing tendencies that are relevant in this context. Middle-class participation in the market for the finest genre paintings, never really substantial to begin with, decreased significantly as the century progressed.
- 70 For more on the economic situation in the Netherlands at this time, see Jonathan I. Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade 1585–1740* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 197–291; and Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477–1806* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 610–19.
- 71 The classic studies of this phenomenon, which scholars have termed "aristocratization," are by D. J. Roorda; see, for example, D. J. Roorda, *Partij en factie: De oproeren van 1672 in de steden van Holland en Zeeland . . .* (Groningen, 1961); and D. J. Roorda, "The Ruling Classes in Holland in the Seventeenth Century," in J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossmann, eds., *Britain and The Netherlands* (Groningen, 1964), pp. 109–32. However, recent research has modified our understanding of aristocratization; see, among others, Pieter Spierenburg, *Elites and Etiquette: Mentality and Social Structure in the Early Modern Northern Netherlands* (Rotterdam, 1981), pp. 19–31; and L. Kooijmans, "Patriciaat en aristocratisering in Holland tijdens de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw," in J. Aalbers and M. Prak, eds., *De bloem der natie; adel en patriciaat in de Noordelijke Nederlanden* (Meppel and Amsterdam, 1987), pp. 100–101.
- 72 Norbert Elias, *The History of Manners*, vol. 1, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York, 1978); and Norbert Elias, *Power and Civility*, vol. 2, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York, 1982). Elias's seminal study first appeared in German in 1939.

- 73 For the linking of these aspects of public life with civility, see Spierenburg (note 71), pp. 5–13; Elias 1978 (note 72), pp. 60–160; and Herman Roodenburg, “How to Sit, Stand, and Walk: Toward a Historical Anthropology of Dutch Paintings and Prints,” in Wayne Franits, ed., *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art: Realism Reconsidered* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 175–85.
- 74 For this portrait, wrongly attributed in my opinion to Cornelis de Man, see Westermann (note 18), cat. no. 82.
- 75 Related to the use of napkins is the evolution of the use of utensils such as forks; see Elias 1978 (note 72), pp. 104–5, 122–29. See also the mid-seventeenth-century portable knife and fork set with case illustrated and discussed in Westermann (note 18), p. 168, cat. no. 28.
- 76 For civility and hygiene, see Johan Goudsblom, “Civilisatie, besmettingsangst en hygiëne: Beschouwingen over een aspect van het Europese civilisatieproces,” *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* 4 (1977–78), pp. 271–300; and Georges Vigarello, *Concepts of Cleanliness: Changing Attitudes in France since the Middle Ages*, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge, 1988).
- 77 Among the many scholarly studies concerning the development of concepts of public and private are Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York, 1977), pp. 16–19, 89–106; Nicole Castan, “The Public and the Private,” in Roger Chartier, ed., *Passions of the Renaissance*, vol. 3, *A History of Private Life*, trans. Anton Goldhammer (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), pp. 403–45; Dena Goodman, “Public Sphere and Private Life: Toward a Synthesis of Current Historiographical Approaches to the Old Regime,” *History and Theory* 31 (1992), pp. 1–20; and Martine Segalen, “The House between Private and Public: A Socio-Historic Overview,” in Anton Schuurman and Pieter Spierenburg, eds., *Private Domain, Public Inquiry: Families and Life-Styles in the Netherlands and Europe, 1550 to the Present* (Hilversum, 1996), pp. 240–53. For the public versus the private in seventeenth-century Dutch literature, see Mieke B. Smits-Veldt, “Images of Private Life in Some Early-Seventeenth-Century Dutch Ego-Documents,” in Arthur Wheelock, Jr., and Adele Seeff, eds., *The Public and Private in Dutch Culture of the Golden Age* (Newark, Del., 2000), pp. 164–77. For the art-historical perspective on privacy, see David Smith, “Privacy, Realism, and the Novelistic in 17th-Century Dutch Painting,” in *Acts of the 27th International Congress of the History of Art (1989)* (Strasbourg, 1992), sec. 3, pp. 35–52; Nanette Salomon, “Early Netherlandish *bordeeltjes* and the Construction of Social ‘Realities,’” in Wheelock and Seeff (see above), pp. 141–63, esp. 144–45; and Hollander (note 10), pp. 177–84, *passim*.
- 78 See, for example, John Loughman and John Michael Montias, *Public and Private Spaces: Works of Art in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Houses* (Zwolle, 2000), pp. 22–30; and Mariët Westermann, “‘Costly and Curious, Full of Pleasure and Home Contentment’: Making a Home in the Dutch Republic,” in Westermann (note 18), pp. 15–81.
- 79 See Hollander (note 10), pp. 161–76.
- 80 See Martha Hollander, “Public and Private Life in the Art of Pieter de Hooch,” in Mariët Westermann et al., eds., *Wooncultuur in de Nederlanden 1500–1800 (Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek 51)* (Zwolle, 2001), pp. 273–93. Hollander (note 10), pp. 179, 199, takes a slightly different view, arguing that the omnipresence of the outside world in De Hooch’s work, suggested by windows, courtyards, and so forth, literally illustrates the instability of the concepts of public and private at this time. For other important studies that examine how domestic spaces are gendered, namely how they become identified almost exclusively with females, see Elizabeth Alice Honig, “The Space of Gender in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting,” in Franits (note 73), pp. 149–53; Nanette Salomon, *Shifting Priorities: Gender and Genre in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting* (Stanford, 2004), pp. 84–86, *passim*.
- 81 See, for example, Thera Wijsenbeek-Olthuis and Leo Noordegraaf, “Painting for a Living: The Economic Context of Judith Leyster’s Career,” in James A. Welu et al., eds., *Judith Leyster: A Dutch Master and Her World*, exh. cat. (Worcester Art Museum, 1993), pp. 39–54. See also Franits (note 7).
- 82 For the depiction of prostitution in seventeenth-century Dutch art, a topic which remains understudied, see Lotte C. van de Pol, “Beeld en werkelijkheid van de prostitutie in de zeventiende eeuw,” in G. Hekma and H. Roodenburg, eds., *Soete minne en helsche boosheit: Seksuele voorstellingen in Nederland 1300–1850* (Nijmegen, 1988), pp. 109–44; and Wayne

- Frants, "Emerging from the Shadows: Genre Painting by the Utrecht Caravaggisti and Its Contemporary Reception," in Joneath Spicer and Lynn Federle Orr, eds., *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht during the Golden Age*, exh. cat. (Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, 1997–98), pp. 114–20.
- 83 Other artists, among them Jan Steen and Frans van Mieris the Elder, continued the tradition of representing ribald prostitution scenes. However, such imagery was depicted less frequently than it had been earlier in the seventeenth century.
- 84 See Hollander (note 10), pp. 150–51.
- 85 In another indication of his commercial savvy, De Hooch registered in 1664 with the Confrerie, the painters' professional organization in The Hague, no doubt motivated by potential sales prospects. The Hague, the capital of the Netherlands, was situated about ninety minutes by foot or horse-drawn barge from Delft. Although it was relatively small, The Hague ranked among the wealthiest cities in the country. It was a flourishing center for painting but by 1660 had a conspicuous lack of genre painters, a situation of which De Hooch surely was aware.
- 86 Julie B. Hochstrasser, "Imag(in)ing Prosperity: Painting and Material Culture in the 17th-Century Dutch Household," in Westermann et al. (note 80), p. 224, *passim*, makes a similar point about the development of increasingly lavish Dutch still-life paintings during the second half of the seventeenth century.
- 87 C. Willemijn Fock, "Semblance or Reality? The Domestic Interior in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting," in Westermann (note 18), pp. 83–101.
- 88 Fock (note 87), pp. 91, 96.
- 89 Bok (note 69), p. 204, points out that wealthy buyers not only purchased pictures for decorative or investment purposes but also for reasons of status. Hochstrasser (note 86), p. 205, quotes a well-known passage from the diaries of the seventeenth-century English connoisseur John Evelyn in which he terms Dutch paintings "commodities."
- 90 For the economic aspects of the art of Dou and his fellow *fijnschilders*, see J. M. Montias, "Cost and Value in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art," *Art History* 10 (1987), p. 462. See also E. J. Sluijter, "Schilders van 'cleyne, subtile ende curieuse dingen': Leidse 'fijnschilders' in contemporaine bronnen," in *Leidse fijnschilders: Van Gerrit Dou tot Frans van Mieris de Jonge 1630–1760*, exh. cat. (Leiden, Stedelijk Museum de Lakenhal, 1988), pp. 24–28.
- 91 Peter Sutton (Sutton 1998–99 [note 2], p. 15; and Sutton 1980 [note 2], p. 54) has argued that De Hooch's clientele consisted of largely middle- and upper-middle-class patrons. However, an important source upon which Sutton based his hypothesis is probably unreliable. In an inventory of the possessions of De Hooch's former employer, Justus de la Grange, composed in 1655, the notary appraised eleven pictures by the artist at between six and twenty guilders. The fact that a painting by Dou was likewise valued at the ridiculously low amount of six guilders in this inventory should raise our suspicions about the accuracy of its compiler's assessments. According to Marten Jan Bok, "Pricing the Unpriced: How Dutch Seventeenth-Century Painters Determined the Selling Price of Their Work," in Michael North and David Ormrod, eds., *Art Markets in Europe, 1400–1800* (Aldershot, 1998), p. 104, this is not an isolated instance as notaries (and auctioneers) routinely underestimated the worth of paintings, objects that they often regarded as simply secondhand goods.
- 92 C. Willemijn Fock, "Werkelijkheid of schijn. Het beeld van het Hollandse interieur in de zeventiende-eeuwse genreschilderkunst," *Oud Holland* 112 (1998), p. 240, n. 158, quotes a fascinating archival document of 1645, which details how the Amsterdam merchant Nicolaes Spiljeurs rented an expensive Turkish carpet for several weeks so that it could be included in a portrait of himself that was currently being painted. Although Fock does not say so, surely Spiljeurs wanted to include the carpet in his portrait for the associations of status that it evoked. The Leiden genre painter Quirijn van Brekelenkam, whose subject matter relates to that of De Hooch, provides yet another example of this trickle-down effect. Although his pictures were, judging from their prices, intended for clients of more modest financial means, many still incorporate motifs reflective of elite values. For Van Brekelenkam, see Frants (note 7), pp. 130–34.
- 93 Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. R. Nice (Cambridge, Mass., 1984).

- 94 The possession of taste, like other aspects of civility, provided a means by which the elites — or those who aspired to be part of the elite — could distance themselves from the masses. Naturally, the masses were identified with popular taste, which was considered coarse because it was unlearned and sense oriented; see Michael Moriarity, *Taste and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century France* (Cambridge, 1988).

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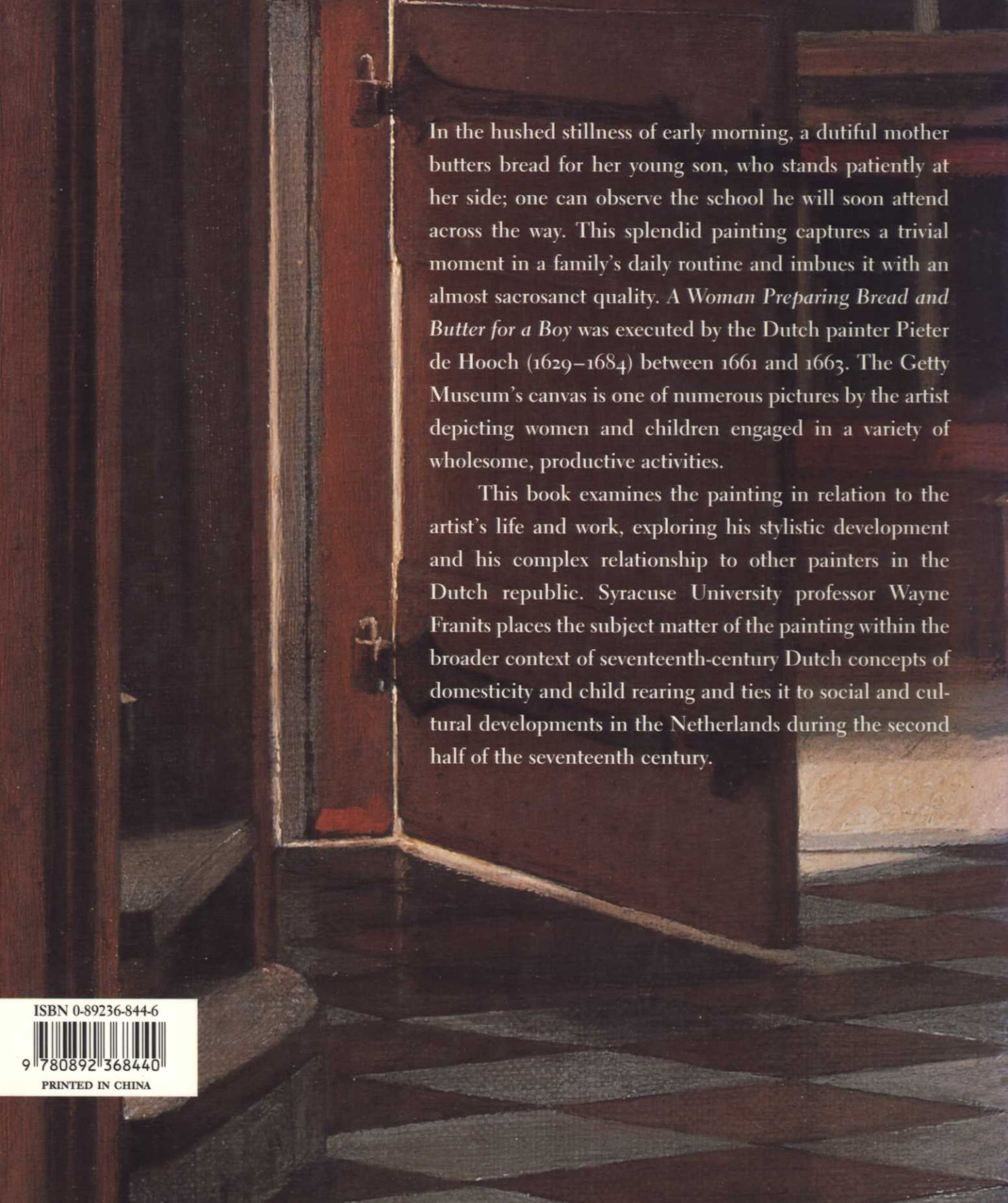
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The pleasure of writing this book for the Getty Museum Studies on Art series was made all the greater by my collaboration with the staffs of the J. Paul Getty Museum and of Getty Publications. In particular, my thanks are owed to Mark Greenberg, Editor in Chief, who first expressed an interest in the project, as well as to Scott Schaefer, Curator of Paintings, and Dawson Carr, former Associate Curator of Paintings, who approved the concept of the book. Mollie Holtman served as editor for it. I would also like to thank the anonymous reader and Anne Woollett, Associate Curator of Paintings, who likewise read the manuscript for the book and offered constructive criticism. I am also grateful to Anne for having spent time with me in front of De Hooch's painting during my recent visit to the Getty Museum at the Getty Center. Senior Designer Catherine Lorenz created a lovely design that complements the text, and ReBecca Bogner and Stacy Miyagawa were the volume's Production Coordinators. Last, but never least, my thanks and love to Linnea and Aidan.



In the hushed stillness of early morning, a dutiful mother butters bread for her young son, who stands patiently at her side; one can observe the school he will soon attend across the way. This splendid painting captures a trivial moment in a family's daily routine and imbues it with an almost sacrosanct quality. *A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* was executed by the Dutch painter Pieter de Hooch (1629–1684) between 1661 and 1663. The Getty Museum's canvas is one of numerous pictures by the artist depicting women and children engaged in a variety of wholesome, productive activities.

This book examines the painting in relation to the artist's life and work, exploring his stylistic development and his complex relationship to other painters in the Dutch republic. Syracuse University professor Wayne Franits places the subject matter of the painting within the broader context of seventeenth-century Dutch concepts of domesticity and child rearing and ties it to social and cultural developments in the Netherlands during the second half of the seventeenth century.

ISBN 0-89236-844-6



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PRINTED IN CHINA