

Muses and Longevity

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There are common opinion that at least 65-70% of rate of aging and longevity of humans determined by social and economic conditions and life style [1,2] whereas genetic factors have an important but significantly smaller impact on aging [3]. Some professions (lorry drivers, miners, seamen, Cherbobyl's liquidators, etc.) have a features of accelerated aging and increased risk of premature death [2]. At the same time, persons which received signs of their success or excellence from a state or from professional societies (Nobel prize winners, Oscar or popular competitions winners, members of national academies, etc) live longer than ordinary citizens [4-6]. Intriguing finding is a persistence of cognitive capacities in musicians performed classic music [7], whereas jazzmen live shorter [8].

The data on mean age of death of 49064 representatives of various creative professions: visual artists (painters, sculptors, architects, n=8458), musicians (composers, conductors, singers, pianists, violinists, etc., n=7883), writers and poets (n=11488), scholars (n=21235) have been analyzed [9]. The mean age of death among writers and poets was significantly less than that in visual artists, musicians and scholars whereas scholars lives longer than representatives of other categories. Women lived longer than men in any studied categories. The first five places of long-livers among men belong to Nobel prize winners (78.8 yrs.), academicians (72.7 yrs.) and corresponding members of the Russian Academy of Sciences (71.7 yrs.), conductors (71.1 yrs.) and scholars (71.0 yrs.). Rock-musicians, author's song singer and poets lived less other categories (43.6; 53.6 and 61.6 yrs. respectively). Among women leading long-livers were conductors (83.2 yrs.), harp-players (80.9 yrs.), academicians of the RAS (80.3 yrs.), clavinists (79.1 yrs.) and violinists (78.2 yrs.). Among women, less than other lived rock-musicians (37,6 yrs.), author's songs singers (51.4), horns and woodwinds instruments players (59.0 yrs.). Relative number of nonagenarians (90+) was much higher among women as compared to men. The values were as 43.8% of harp-players, 33.3% of conductors, 29.27% of architects, 20% of violinists and viola-players and 19.0% sculptors for women, and 16.7% of Nobel prize winners, 12.1% of conductors, 7.5% of academicians, 7.4% of violinists and 7.0% of scholars survived 90+ years among men. Centenarians were 8.33% of academicians and architects, 6.3% of harp-players and 4.2% of writers-poets among women, and only 0.7% of pianists, 0.5% of scholars and 0.4% of violinists were centenarians among men. Our data are in agreement with the opinion that high intellect and education directly correlate with longer life span and longevity [10,11]. It is possible to suggest that persons who prefer to listen to classic music have more chance to live longer. The reasons of the differences in the life span of persons involved in various creative professions needs to be studied (Figure 1).

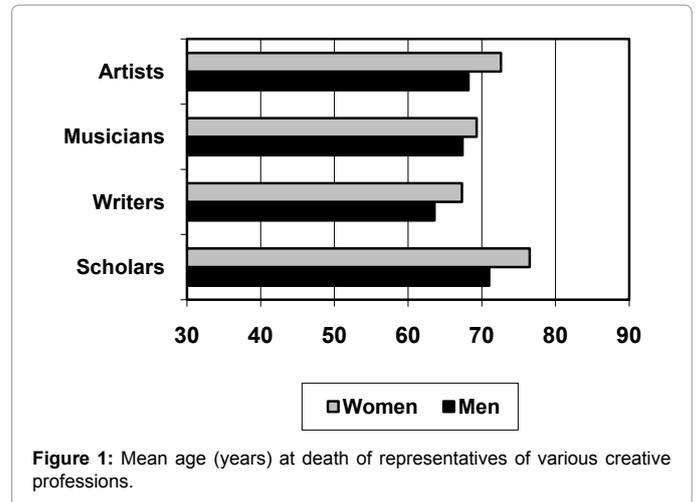


Figure 1: Mean age (years) at death of representatives of various creative professions.

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