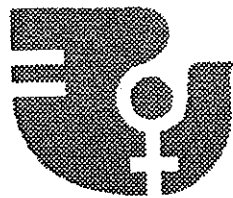


the women's caucus report



Winter 1996 / 1997
Issue Number 56

National Art Education Association Affiliate

The NAEA Women's Caucus Report wants to function as a reader's forum and welcomes articles, letters, book and exhibition reviews, news items, syllabi from courses involving women in art and education.

**Deadline for the next issue
is August 1, 1997.**

Please send your contributions to:

Jane E. Finnegan, *Report* Editor

The Florida State University

Department of Art Education

123 Carothers Hall

Tallahassee, FL 32306-3014



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Emery Clark to Speak at Women's Caucus Luncheon

The Women's Caucus Luncheon at the 1997 New Orleans NAEA Annual Convention will feature noted artist Emery Clark as the guest speaker. Clark's focus for much of her career has been on the relationship of art and the environment. One of her earlier known works was for the New Orleans Museum of Art's (NOMA) Wisner Wing. Using vivid color, Clark painted the approach to the Museum for the "Treasures of Tutankhamun" exhibit in 1978, and named it the "NOMA Nile." With the help of 22 volunteers and 400 gallons of donated paint, Clark created her own River Nile on the half-mile circular drive in front of the museum, using dazzling colors of ultramarine blue, lapis, turquoise, emerald, green, magenta and gold. After the show closed, asphalt was poured over the NOMA Nile, and it exists today as a memory. She has done many murals and paintings throughout New Orleans in an attempt to alter the environment for the better through art. Her contributions include work for the Contemporary Arts Center, Charity Hospital, the Plauche Building, Cohen Senior High School, and the Louisiana Center for Cerebral palsy and Developmental Disability at Touro Infirmary.

Emery Clark was educated at Newcomb College, the Boston University School of Fine Arts, Maine's Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. In 1981, she earned her M.F.A. from Tulane University. Her thesis exhibit involved having local artists participate in "Art Cars," a collaborative showing of small model cars as art objects. Nearly 50 artists contributed.

Clark's current work centers on her sense of place, although the location of expres-

sion is more personal or spiritual than site-specific. She creates vivid color drawings using mixed media, including pastels, charcoals, and colored pencils. In describing her work, she states:

"In the last few years, I have really become more aware of the environment of my childhood...I think that the best art you can have is something that's truly an expression of all your experiences. I think about my childhood experiences in Louisiana, New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. I went with my parents and grandparents to Barataria Bay, to the Northshore when it wasn't developed as it is now, and those were very much everyday experiences for me. I remember as a child seeing a lot of the things I'm dealing with now—the beautiful abstractions, light on the water. I remember spending a lot of time sitting under the fishing camp, looking at those patterns. This has been a part of my experience.

This wouldn't have developed if I were living somewhere else. I think I still go back to the source of inspiration, and I think it is very accessible here. Something very different would have evolved. I feel what has evolved is very personal, an expression. New Orleans is a very fertile place to work. It allows you to develop in a natural way, and I don't think there are the pressures there would be in another couple of places in the country. What develops is more uniquely yours."

We hope you'll take advantage of this opportunity to meet Emery Clark while you are in New Orleans and join us at the luncheon.



Letter from the Co-Presidents

By now, you should have received a letter from us that includes information about the upcoming conference: Women's Caucus sessions, annual caucus luncheon, McFee and Rouse Awards ceremony, slide sharing session, and annual business meeting. We are looking forward to seeing many of you in New Orleans!

Congratulations to this year's Women's Caucus Award recipients: Rogena Degge will receive the June King McFee Award for her years of leadership, research, teaching, and service to the field of art education and Doug Blandy will receive the Mary J. Rouse Award to honor his contributions to research, teaching, and service in art education. Both Rogena's work and Doug's work in art education embody the spirit of the Awards and of the great women in whose names the Awards were established.

Grand felicitations are also due to *The Report's* new editor, June Eyestone Finnegan, on the birth of her baby, Emma Elizabeth, on December 19. A special thanks to June for getting this edition of our newsletter out amongst the many demands of a two-month old.

If you won't be at the conference this year, we'll look to hear from you in other forms: email, snail mail, phones, or faxes. We are always looking for contributions to *The Report*: in the form of letters; short news articles about members, events, or issues pertaining to the Women's Caucus; book reviews; humor; or other items of interest to our membership.

There are many exciting things going on with the Caucus these days, and we welcome your input. As we noted on our letter, these include a new journal - The Journal of Gender Issues in Art and Education, revision of the by-laws, election of some of the Caucus officers, a brochure describing the Caucus, and, alas, the raising of Caucus dues by \$5 for each membership category. This last item was a hard decision for us, but was done to contribute to the costs of the journal.

Please let us know if you have any questions or comments.

The Caucus and its future belong to all of us.

*Cordially, Elizabeth Garber
and Yvonne Gaudelius
Co-Presidents*



Letter from the Editor

Thank you to Elizabeth Garber and Yvonne Gaudelius for inviting me to serve as the new editor for *The Women's Caucus Report*. It is indeed a privilege to be able to contribute to the Women's Caucus in this manner. This issue is my first task at combining professional duty with motherhood - quite a challenge, but very rewarding! I would like to thank also my husband, Jim, who designed the new look for the *The Report*.

In this issue, I have included an ad for our new journal, The Journal of Gender Issues in Art and Education. I hope that you will consider submitting your best work to make the first issue a particularly successful one. I hope as well, that you will send us materials, as Elizabeth and Yvonne have suggested, that will give *The Report* strength as a publication for communicating how we are evolving with actions & ideas. In this issue, I have included two such papers, "Images of Influences" by Carmen Armstrong, the 1996 June King McFee Award winner, and "Women/Aging/Art/Life!" by Pearl Greenberg, the 1994 June King McFee Award winner.

Congratulations to Rogena Degge who will be receiving the June King McFee Award and to Doug Blandy who will be receiving the Mary J. Rouse Award this year. I hope you will be able to attend the Awards Ceremony at the conference to honor Rogena and Doug and to represent the Women's Caucus throughout with commitment and energy. I hope to see you in New Orleans!

*June Finnegan
Editor, The Report*



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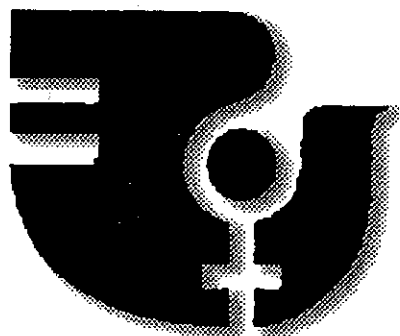
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The Journal of Gender Issues in Art and Education

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This past spring, the Women's Caucus approved the development of a new journal, The Journal of Gender Issues in Art and Education. Supported by the Women's Caucus membership and an annual grant from the Elizabeth Warren Graves Art Fund (Department of Art, University of Maine), The Journal of Gender Issues in Art and Education will be published annually to encourage and promote an understanding of how gender and gender-related situations affect art, art knowledge and the learning process. The journal will be distributed to all members of the Women's Caucus and will be available for purchase by libraries and others interested in issues of gender.

To be considered, manuscripts should be between 3,500-6,000 words in length (approximately 16-24 double-spaced, typed pages) and prepared according to the APA Style Manual (4th ed.). Authors must include a short abstract and a separate title page. The title page should include 1) the title of the manuscript being submitted; 2) each author's full name, institutional affiliation, address, phone number and e-mail address when possible; and 3) a running head. The first page of the manuscript should include the title, with successive pages indicating only page numbers and running head. As all manuscripts are blind reviewed, the author's name



should be included only on the title page. Submit four clear copies (single-sided) of each manuscript along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the return of all copies following the review process.

Submissions are reviewed by three members of the journal's review board.

Due to the time needed for this review process, final decisions on manuscripts may take from three to five months. Accepted manuscripts will be published as soon as possible following acceptance. Final submission of accepted manuscripts must include both printed (hard copy) and disk copies. Disk copies must be on a 3.5" high-density disk (Mac, DOS, or Windows).

The Journal of Gender Issues in Art and Education will consider for publication manuscripts which address gender issues in the context of visual arts education theory and practice.

Manuscripts should be sent to:

Laurie Hicks/Ashlee Basinger

The Journal of Gender Issues in Art and Education

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Questions concerning The Journal of Gender Issues in Art and Education should be addressed to
Laurie Hicks (207-581-3246/e-mail hicks@maine.maine.edu) or
Ashlee Basinger (207-581-3249/e-mail basinger@maine.maine.edu).

1997 Women's Caucus Award Winners

The June King McFee Award

The 1997 recipient of the June King McFee Award is **Rogena Degge**. The McFee Award is given annually to honor an individual who has made distinguished contributions to the profession of art education, one who has brought distinction to the field through an exceptional and continuous record of achievement in scholarly writing, research, professional, leadership, teaching or community service. Listed below are the previous recipients of this award.

Year	Recipient
1975*	June King McFee (OR)
1976	Mary J. Rouse (IN)
1977	Eugenia Oole (MN)
1978	Laura Chapman (OH)
1979	Ruth Freyberger (IL)
1980	Helen Patton (NC)
1981	Marylou Kuhn (FL)
1982	Hilda Present Lewis (CA)
1983	Jessie Lovano-Kerr (FL)
1984	Arthur Efland (OH)
1985	Jean Rush (AZ)
1986	Sandra Packard (TN)
1987	Diana Korzenik (MA)
1988	Frances Anderson (IL)
1989	John A. Michael (OH)
1990	Marilyn Zurmuehlen (IA)
1991	Georgia Collins (GA)
1992	Not given
1993	Alice Schwartz (PA) and Enid Zimmerman (IN)
1994	Pearl Greenberg (NY)
1995	Karen Hamblen (LA)
1996	Carmen Armstrong (IL)

*Year Initiated

The Mary J. Rouse Award

The 1997 recipient of the Mary J. Rouse Award is **Doug Blandy**. The Rouse Award is given annually to recognize the contributions of an early professional who has evidenced potential to make significant contributions in the field of art education, given in honor of Mary J. Rouse whose untimely death in 1976 deeply affected the art education profession. Listed below are the previous recipients of this award.

Year	Recipient
1979*	Marianne Scruggs (NC)
1980	Marion Jefferson (FL)
1981	Phillip C. Dunn (SC)
1982	Beverly J. Jones (OR)
1983	George Geahigan (IN)
1985	Enid Zimmerman (IN)
1986	Judith Koroscik (OH)
1987	Karen Hamblen (LA)
1989	Kristin Congdon (FL)
1990	Linda Ettinger (OR)
1991	Sally Hagaman (IN)
1992	Mary Stokrocki (AZ)
1993	Elizabeth Garber (PA)
1994	Renee Sandell (MD)
1995	Christine Thompson (IA)
1996	not given

*Year initiated



IMAGES of INFLUENCES

Carmen L. Armstrong
June King McFee Award
Acceptance Speech
1996

The Women's Caucus has been a part of my NAEA art education experience since it was first organized and for all of my years in higher education. Originally, McFee award nominations were made at the annual business meeting for the following year's award. When I was designated as the person to notify the awardee and introduce her at the awards ceremony, I was privileged to introduce Laura Chapman and Eugenia Oole. As with the other awardees, their achievements were impressive. Later, I was nominated two different times by two different persons, and was not the selected awardee. The third time someone nominated me and I didn't receive the award, I was tempted to feel like "always the bridesmaid, but never the bride"; but it was an honor to be suggested and very worthy individuals received the award. The point is that there are many high achieving women. From submission of paintings to shows and blind reviews of journal articles, I became able to grow from success and from rejection. One is not productive to win recognition, but is so out of sincere commitment and professional concern. That makes such recognition as the McFee award surprising and appreciated.

In anticipating some acceptance words, an initial image summarized much of my thoughts. I visualized a solid vertical board fence whose cracks permitted a ray of light to fall on a seed ready to grow. The light is critical, but the seed must seek the light with persistence. In addition, a seed must be nourished by fertile ground. I have many images of personal and professional influences which provided fertile ground to nourish my development as an art educator. The influences, now recalled as fleeting images, provided motivation and models as much as instructions.

Images from family life

Personal notes at a time like this are not only a humble recognition of those close to me, but notes that may suggest the little things that each of us can do for others, that may have unpredictable, but

meaningful consequences for family, students, or friends.

I'll never forget my father playfully playing the violin, or carrying an extended arm full of dishes off the supper table with a jovial show-off grin. I'll never forget his supportive words "Do whatever you want to do, but do what you want to do." He modeled such venturesomeness as he fearlessly originated a dealer-owned wholesale hardware business in the 1940's that now can be recognized from coast to coast by the Do It Center signs at independent hardware and lumber stores. As an eleven year old, I helped organize pages in the first Hardware Wholesalers, Inc. (HWI) catalog. In a turn-around, years later, Dad reviewed my prototype model for the Planning Art Curriculum (PAC) resource (1979) with insightful suggestions for how teachers could more easily access specific information. His suggestion was something between the concepts of key sorting, barcodes, and hypercard ...in the early 1970's!

Thinking was valued in our family life. Evening dinners were lively discussions or verbal sparring...at least between the three oldest of the five children. In balance of this intellectual competitiveness, the drama and playfulness of music surrounded our family life. I listened to opera on the wind-up Victrola, and sang classic chorales with the church school children's choir. Milton Cross' Metropolitan opera presentations were a regular Saturday event as I did my dusting chores. Dad's sense of rhythm in dancing and Mother's ability to follow his whimsical inventions of steps delighted me. Gatherings around the piano with my older brother at the keyboard, Dad innovatively playing the violin, and Mother's melodious singing, inspired the rest of us to join in enthusiastically.

Mother was a quietly strong woman. She carried the major responsibility for raising the children during the years that Dad was traveling to start HWI. At home she was the capable manager...firm, but fair and trusting. She was a definite influence on my interest in art. In the 1920's she handpainted a complete set of china in a tasteful Art Deco-type pattern that I treasure. I was aware at an early age that it had value and had won awards. Mother was also a member of the Women's Club Art group,

and occasionally tried to sketch a face or a tree.

Retained images of incidents, ordinary as they might be at the time, somehow created a climate of acceptance of art as a career. I can remember having no reservations for taking liberties with coloring book pictures where I extended the lines to the edge of the page in order to color more. But probably the most vivid memory is the moment in our kitchen when I casually said that, as runner up, I was awarded the Saturday School Junior High school scholarship to the Ft. Wayne Art Institute from our school because a classmate who won didn't want the scholarship. I was surprised and appreciative of Mother's warm approval of the award (which was based on charcoal drawings copied from our drawing book..art instruction in a parochial school in 1945-1947).

Dad's organization of nuts and bolts and the HWI catalog, reinforced by my mother's organization in the kitchen— her personal collection of kitchen tools, the budget, and weekly tasks—set the stage for efficiency in activities as diverse as organizing my painting palette and intellectual tasks such as teaching, researching, or developing resources to aid teaching and curriculum planning in art.

With that background, I met Nolan, my husband of over forty years! He was one of eight sons. There were no sisters on whom to place expectations for doing dishes and cleaning house. The Navy supported that self-sufficiency. Nolan never questioned my interest in art, nor objected as we visited five art museums on our honeymoon! He has consistently been supportive and our basic values soon led him out of marketing and into economic education, sociology, and psychology of learning. His intellectual capacity and memory continue to impress me and I've often referred to him as my walking encyclopedia...which really spoils me...but it's so convenient! Nolan is my first editor and critic, someone who gives unconditional encouragement, and is totally unselfish.

The compatibility of Nolan and myself extended to raising our two daughters, Becky and Karen, and from a very biased point of view, they turned out great! But since my intent is on how they helped my achievement, let me focus only on a few

images. Our daughters were my guinea pigs in many respects. They were preschoolers when I first went back to graduate school. I tested ideas out at home first: like having an art closet so they could get art materials at will for self-directed activities (McFee, 1961) with a Saturday Children's Art School in the basement of our home in Crawfordsville, Indiana, with looking walks to see the colors of stars, and as my experiential base (along with my past public and private teaching) for testing out all the theory and research I was encountering in graduate school. Karen still remembers walking the path to the garden plot for Indiana University graduate student families, but the image that was influential on me was the time she dove for a curled up leaf along the side of the path exclaiming "Look, Mommy, space!" Space was a concept that had been developed in the related arts class at the lab school. To me it said that transfer can occur because the research showed how difficult it was to demonstrate what we always assumed.

Some influences were negative. I had to tell a kindergarten teacher that my girls used art materials in expressive ways at home and not in order to stay within the lines of tiny workbook images. Her reply was that they needed to do that in first grade. In first grade the teacher argued that someday they would be need to be neat as secretaries. Another image that shaped my resolve to attempt to change the world of art education! came from an art teacher the girls had. On a visit to school, I saw the showcase full of fifth grade crayon drawings of trees covered with multi-colored pastel blossoms. The trees were almost identical. Karen brought her tree home later and asked, "Do you suppose that I got one star instead of two because I put the doll in the crook of the tree?"

Images from professional life

Professional images that created lasting influence were of two kinds: a) shaping and mentoring as a graduate student, and b) reinforcement and support as a professional art educator.

Graduate student images

Mary Rouse and Guy Hubbard were new faculty members at Indiana University when I returned in 1963 to finish my master's. They must receive this award with me. Mary's prompting in critical reviews of research and Guy's chiding me about my problem with words, shaped my direction and exposed

me to research and ideas that broadened the horizons of art education, setting the stage for my future.

Art teachers that achieve must have an undaunting spirits. In 1964, Mary Rouse undertook a 17-hour drive from Bloomington, Indiana to Minneapolis, Minnesota to see that she and three graduate students attended the Western Regional Art Education Association conference. We arrived at 7am only to find our department chair, among the hotel lobby crowd, all in their night clothes. A fire had routed them from their sleep. We graduate students slept on cots in a conference room that reeked of smoke for the duration of the conference; but there I became aware of an encouraging balance in art educators. The highly esteemed professors seriously interacted in sessions with their peers but also relaxed as they partied. I have, from some conference, a memorable image of how serious discussions overlap with the relaxation from seeing Mary Rouse and Elliot Eisner sitting on a bench outside a party room, nose to nose intensely, but respectfully, defending differing positions on some issue. I thought "Yes! This is an exciting atmosphere in which art education can thrive!"

Sometimes, one's negative reaction to comments can influence a decision. When I asked one art educator if he was going to put his recommendation into action, he replied that he was an idea person...that someone else could try to make it work. As a recent art teacher in the public schools, I was slightly angered and, as a result, challenged to assist busy art teachers in putting theory into practice. I felt that too much of a gap existed between general admonitions and recommendations in texts and the daily business of teaching art.

A painting instructor at IU also popped a bubble for me when he insisted that nothing was creative. He meant that if we traced our influences, what we did was merely to synthesize bits already explored by others...a sobering thought for a new, inspired art teacher about to embark on a mission to contribute to a new art education! The major contributions that I have made to art education are just that...syntheses of many ideas from others, yet new in form and intended to be more directly applicable.

I was fortunate to be a grad assistant to many leaders in art education as I worked on my doctorate, including June King McFee, Harlan Hoffa, Charles

Dorn, Fred Mills, and Mary Rouse. Brought up under the influence of Lowenfeld, I had found McFee's 1961 explanation of child art in the Perception-Delineation theory, logical and comprehensive. As her graduate assistant during an intercession at IU, she created an image of the art educator as an approachable human with a warm, but task-oriented and systematic approach to teaching. McFee emphasized the role of perception in conceptualization (1961). I saw her enable student success in solving visual art problems by their involvement with concept-building activities. I mimicked this teaching approach that contributed, along with Woodruff's (1967) task analysis and concept formation model, to description of my own model of an art teacher questioning strategy based on behaviors that characterize the art production process (1986). Later (1993), I tested the effectiveness of that model by coding teacher questions and student responses influenced by Flanders' (1960) interaction analysis, Parson's (1968) structure for analysis of inquiry-facilitating teacher questions, and Jere Brophy's (1976) criterion-referenced observational measurement in the classroom.

Mentors Guy Hubbard and Mary Rouse expected their students to make contributions at NAEA. In addition, they introduced me to two groups, the then invitational, Seminar for Research in Art Education and the MaFia (translated as students and grand students of McFee). These associations were stimulating. I was exposed to the cutting edge of so many important ideas and efforts to improve art education! I felt duty bound and eager to also contribute in some way.

Post-graduate images

The influences of graduate school experiences were lasting and were reinforced by many. After Mary Rouse's untimely death, Guy Hubbard continued to be supportive. He understood my attempts to help put theory into practice. He recommended putting my Planning Art Curriculum (PAC) resource on Hypercard, but by then I was on the way to another "mission"...facilitating students' inductive reasoning in forming concepts needed in their art production as part of work on the stages of inquiry in art production. I had gone to an NAEA session on questioning by Karen Hamblen. Impressed, I stayed to make a comment to her.

Images ...Continued on pg 8

She turned, read my name tag, and exclaimed "Oh! You are Armstrong and Armstrong. I referenced you." I really didn't know if anyone read the article that my husband and I wrote in 1977, but finding that recognition did great things for me. I have a clear image of that first and subsequent meetings with Karen.

As Dean of the Visual and Performing Arts college at NIU, Stanley Madeja was instrumental in my exposure to what became a series of influential experiences with the Getty Center for Education in the Arts. Out of a conference for university personnel came a grant to NIU for the Improvement of Pre-Service Discipline-Based Art Education, a follow-up grant to publish a book describing the development of An Aesthetics Resource (1990), further training as an IVAE consultant, and most of all, motivation to modify my own teaching. The change was something I'd groped for based on research, theory, my public school teaching, and a deep-seated feeling that students should know why their involvement in art was important. I gave up some favorite time-consuming projects and deliberately substituted exciting art criticism experiences, aesthetics dialogues, and art historical inquiry activities related to the art production experiences. These changes revealed how I had been short-changing the thinking capacities of my students previously.

About the same time, I was teaching a graduate course in Evaluation in Art Education that leaned heavily on research methodology and my experience in coding live classroom verbal interaction. I had also used Mary Rouse's Descriptive Scale for Art Products (1968) which formalized the sorting of art work by criteria that I had done in grading K-6 art. The Getty Center training clarified an expanded content to teach and assess that brought all this experience into focus. A grant from Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to a Naperville, Illinois school district to develop non-traditional instruments in the arts led to a recommendation from a former student in the evaluation class for my involvement. That led to another Illinois Art Education/ISBE project, and I knew that I had better begin to write up some of the work I was developing. Tom Hatfield and the NAEA Board gave me the opportunity and now *Designing Assessment in Art* (1994) is available.

But another kind of influence came out of the Getty experience. I have an image embedded forever of a group of nine art educators, all women, who came to California to be trained as IVAE consultants. The evening of our arrival, we got acquainted over a glass of wine. This small group represented lives that varied so much from each other and from mine! I had just begun my term as president of the Women's Caucus, but had never personally felt the difficulties of which I heard which aroused my focused concern in behalf of women. Our group jelled so well that Harry Broudy named us the "naughty nine" for asking so many probing questions. I thank all of the naughty nine, and the Women's Caucus members I have had the good fortune of meeting, for broadening my view of art education and those who are responsible for it.

One of the naughty nine, Connie Newton, deserves special thanks for supporting my nomination for the McFee award. I appreciate others already mentioned who wrote such complimentary remarks—Tom Hatfield and Guy Hubbard. Debbie Smith-Shank, my friend and colleague at NIU initiated my nomination and former graduate students, Pat Herrman, Sally Hazelton, Kathy Hillyer, Robin Russell, and Marilyn Schnake who wrote or spoke to support my nomination. These former graduate students represent many others whom I must thank for their grit in accepting the challenge to test out theory with their real live students. It takes understanding, courage and dedication for an experienced teacher to leave his/her comfort zone of successful teaching to try something new.

The field of art education needs leadership in the political arena; it needs the researchers and theory builders. Having a positive image of what in the wholesale hardware business is called the "middleman", I chose to not only try to conduct research and build pragmatic theory, but to be that middle person, translating research and theory into forms that are a step closer to the classroom for art teachers. In the end, however, art teachers in the field are the ones that can make art education come to life.

They are the ones who can effect change. May their images, and those who help create them, lead us on to the best world of art education possible!

Thank you.



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WOMEN / AGING / ART / LIFE!

Some Attitudes & Thoughts Through the Ages & Today

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I know I'm not alone in looking for bargains, so you can imagine my joy at finding a remaindered copy of HISTORY OF OLD AGE From Antiquity to the Renaissance, by George Minois, originally published in French, in 1987. I'll start by paraphrasing a few informative sections, especially where comments were made about women and aging in his time period, and go on from there.

In one of his rare references to art, Minois informs us that during the early middle ages, when most were preoccupied with massacre and pillage, art was limited to fabricating spears, belts and jewels. (After all, one must look elegant as a warrior!)

(He makes no mention of the fact that as this era closed, incredible tapestries were made that enhanced the lives of those who could afford such magnificent objects, giving meaningful work to men and women of all ages dyeing and spinning yarns, creating designs, making looms, and finally weaving. And, of course, we know there were women painters, but few had works shown or even mentioned in any publications of those times.)

DURING WARS YOUNG MEN WERE MURDERED OR CAPTURED AS PRISONERS, BUT A PREGNANT WOMAN AND/OR THE MOTHER OF A FAMILY WAS WORTH 3X THE PRICE OF A MAN, ... UNTIL MENOPAUSE, BUT NOT WORTH MUCH AFTER THAT.

Attitudes toward aging were quite negative. Those elders who were not murdered or captured as prisoners were considered prey to every form of misery. This starts to sound much like what happens in some of our present day nursing homes, peopled at least 85% by "discarded" (imprisoned?) women. (By the way, the Aged were those 50 and over.)

As the Middle Ages went on folks lived longer, and among the publications was one called ON WEARINESS AND OLD AGE. In spite of being so weary, elders were to thank God for having given them so much time for repentance, so that they could concentrate on saving their souls in the time left. (Those over 50, start repenting now!). Men were to avoid marrying young girls who would probably run off with younger men at any chance they had. (No comments as to what older women might do in this regard; most had died during childbirth!).

During the 11th to 13th centuries many held that ALL old women were evil witches; effigies of them were burnt to drive old age away. Books appeared on THE CURE OF OLD AGE AND ON THE PRESERVATION OF YOUTH. Roger Bacon (who lived to over 80) is supposed to have noted that as the population grows older, it creates more pollution and endangers the environment! Don't let Washington, D.C. hear this!

By the 16th Century, during the Renaissance, rage felt by men against old women showed up especially in their paintings, where we were shown as old hags with flesh hanging out.. or as seductive agents of the devil. Often "ugly" was part of the title, i.e.: THE UGLY SORCERESS (Niclaus Manuel Deutsch) and THE UGLY DUCHESS (Quentin Metsys) (p. 254). The literary assessment of old age in the sixteenth century was entirely negative (p. 286).

In fact, it was suggested that those over 50 should commit suicide.. the best solution for everyone (p. 279). Or, if not this, "To keep their silence" (p. 280) to avoid committing the slightest indiscretion. (How surprised they would be to realize that these days 50 is considered the youth of old age!)

Shakespeare didn't help things much, ending ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

with such commentary on old age as: "SANS TEETH, SANS EYES, SANS TASTE, SANS EVERYTHING!" (p. 282).

What might bring a smile to our faces as we read this material is that IN SOME SOCIETIES, (MALE) ELDERLY WERE BURDENED WITH THE ROLE OF UNFAILING WISDOM — THE NEED TO BE SAINTS, CONDEMNED TO VENERATION, NEEDING TO AVOID THE URGINGS OF THE FLESH, NEEDING TO BE "PERFECT." It's wonderful to know that we (both men and women) are free of such constraints. "Unfailing Wisdom" is hard to come by at any age!

Today, life can be a trial for the 5% unable to be independent, (mostly women in nursing homes) and to some degree for the 5% who might be able, yet homebound for different reasons. But for them and for the well elderly - 90% of those over 65, CAN WE EACH HAVE A SENSE OF PURPOSE? And, what ought we to do to develop such a sense, if we've lost it?

How much "in charge" of our lives can we remain? Gilbert Brim, in Psychology Today (9/88), wrote on LOSING AND WINNING, about how we manage the ups and downs in life. What comes out clearly is "the shock of recognition of one's own mortality.. the confrontation with one's certain death, the shift of our frame of reference for time from "years since birth" to "years left to live," the "day of reckoning" when we realize a particular dream will never be realized.

I know I'm not alone in having experienced shock during adolescence realizing that one day I would die! In "Overselling Depression to the Old Folks," (Atlantic Monthly, April, 1995) Stanley Jacobson notes that it is "remarkable that most older people learn how to contain their oldness, and they are NOT Women / Aging...Continued on pg 10

depressed." But women seem more able to cope than do men. The New York Times (1/2/96) reported a recent study showing the suicide rate among elderly Americans was up 9% from 1980-1992, and 8% of such suicides were males while the percentage among females went down. The elderly make up 13% of the population, but 20% of suicides. Could it be that many were unable to accept the changing tide of what age meant in their lives.. their sense of purpose had been lost?

In her most recent book, MOVING BEYOND WORDS, (Simon & Schuster, 1994) (which I also bought remaindered!) Gloria Steinem informs us that by 2030, 1 in 4 of the population will be women over 65. I found "DOING SIXTY" to be the most interesting chapter. More and more, she writes, "I'm beginning to see that life after fifty or sixty is itself another country, as different as adolescence is from childhood, or the central years of life are from adolescence.. and just as adventurous (p. 251).

I believe that, try as one may, it IS difficult to grasp being part of any given age cohort until one is immersed in it. In fact, Jacobson notes that many in the so-called helping field tend to feel uncomfortable with the "AWESOME INCUR-ABILITY OF OLDNESS!" "Boomers" are having a difficult time even being considered "middle aged." Imagine being OLD?

As we age we might lower our aspirations a bit, change some goals, find new approaches or ways of doing certain things. With the right attitude we can do this without a loss of well-being, as we work our way through and beyond the mid-life passage, a fantastic and not always smooth and easy challenge.

A SENSE OF PURPOSE MEANS MANY DIFFERENT THINGS. Some think about contributing to society, by volunteering to "do good," some work part-time in an area of expertise, others decide to enjoy the fruits of their labor by traveling, going to concerts, museums, galleries, doing their own art, listening to or watching others who create art, dance, music, theater. Some take part-time jobs very different from their original

profession. Some start teaching in the non-school setting where many elders congregate. Here's where the trouble begins..

What we find is mostly of low quality. Those of us in the arts can continue doing our own work not necessarily needing to join classes. However, I am on a crusade to speak out against the junk that is presented as art in many non-school settings, to older adults, many of whom haven't been exposed to enough quality to know the difference. This is true in many aspects of our lives, and it's time to stop. **WHY ARE OLDER PEOPLE SUPPOSED TO SWALLOW SOME OF THIS TRASH? AND WHY DO THEY?** When are we going to care enough to stop looking the other way, when people are being kept "busy" with junk. Those exposed to such horrible "art" opportunities are women, (once again!) who make up the majority who attend senior citizen programs.

Even when artists take on the challenge of teaching in such non-school settings as those where elders might gather, we face hostile attitudes about which we may not even be aware. In a conversation quoted in the 1989 book, JACKSON POLLOCK, Pollock and Franz Kline, during a difficult period in their artistic lives, consider that if all else fails they can start teaching watercolor painting to the old ladies of America, about whom they thought very little. In this same book (by Steven Naifeh & Gregory White-Smith), the authors mention in passing, an exhibition in 1946 at Peggy Guggenheim's ART OF THIS CENTURY GALLERY by Janet Sobel, "a 52 year old grandmother." No place else in a book of over 800 pages which mentions hundreds of artists, mostly male, is there ever any mention about a "grandfather" who was showing.. and there had to be many!

ONE POSSIBLE SOLUTION IS TO MAKE SURE MEN START TO LIVE LONGER, BECAUSE IF WE HAD A 50-50 POPULATION, especially in nursing homes and senior centers, ATTENTION MIGHT BE PAID! I know it would change.. who cares about a bunch of really old women? Usually only their often frustrated daughters.. the "sandwich" generation, caught between the care of adolescent children and elderly mothers!

We know that authentic opportunities for working in the visual arts results in giving people of all ages a sense of success (albeit at many different levels) which cannot be matched by anything else they may be experiencing. Unfilled leisure hours for those of any age lead to a lack of challenge and productivity.. the problems experienced by many elders Minois reported on from the Middle Ages.. and by Betty Frieden, who noted (in THE FOUNTAIN OF AGE) how seldom the arts get attention at Gerontology conferences, and when available are often presented in out of the way areas at odd hours.. compared to "sessions on new developments in Alzheimer's disease or nursing home management" (p. 123).

From these sessions, she notes, "I learned that late-life creativity is considered strongly suspect among gerontologists, controversial and certainly not biologically programmed or universal" (p. 123). She reports research by Simonton which showed that in creative areas there was a gradual rise into our 50's, with only a minimal if not entirely absent drop-off thereafter (p. 599).

I no longer present papers or do workshops at Gerontology conferences, having found that most emphasize sickness and disease, followed by food, shelter, clothing, and literary needs.. all important, but few go beyond these essential basics, to consider ways of improving our quality of life! On the other hand, perhaps it's time for many of us to infiltrate.. to start sending in papers on the arts to Gerontology conventions to overwhelm them with our concerns that quality of life goes beyond the topics taking most of their attention. **AND: We invite you to start attending and speaking at the Lifelong Learning sessions during our annual NAEA conventions! It's time that we infiltrated right here, and shared our knowledge and concerns.**

Without the right opportunities, the ability to learn can become impaired; folks become less and less willing to do anything. If we developed quality programs to attract those who range from one end of this continuum to the other they **MIGHT** come.. **WHO KNOWS?** Of course, those already in the arts can continue functioning as always; we know that what is so wonderful about being involved in any of the arts is that if one chooses, one need never retire!

Dr. Ruth Harriet Jacobs who ran a workshop at an Omega Institute Conference, reported on in "THE ART OF GROWING OLDER FORCEFULLY" in the New York Times, November 3, 1994, suggested the acronym RASP: REMARKABLE AGING SMART PERSON! At her session, titled, "Be An Outrageous Older Woman," she suggested, "There is so much ageist sexist prejudice against older women that we might as well enjoy life without worrying about others' opinion of us." In a way, artists (female AND male) have to do this all their professional lives, going about their work as artists doing what they believe is right, so we already have a start being RASPs!

By now we have moved beyond the prejudice against older people as reported by Minois. However, we know we still have miles to go. Women, more than men (as usual) have the bigger push to move beyond the beauty business; notice how few older women are TV anchors, as compared to the number of older men. But, as artists, we can continue to make waves, and eventually others will come in to fill our shoes and add to the numbers.

The changing of attitudes toward those in the 65-75 age range is now in progress. And, as we move beyond that age range we'll continue to push the good fight! Our goal has to be to do away with the image of OLD MEANING POOR AND SICK AND FEMALE. In reality talent and ability are ours as long as we hold onto it, as long as we remain part of society.. that is, remaining integrated in general, not separating ourselves from the general population, and as we stand up for our rights rather than allow ourselves to feel (or to be) pushed aside. We MUST work at changing the

attitudes of many younger folks.. including the children who (as one example) often draw pictures of older people as though ALL are bent over and withered, using canes or crutches. Of course some DO experience limited mobility but can STILL be productive!

Minois closes his book noting, "Each civilization has its model older person, and judges all its old accordingly. The more this model is idealized, the more demanding and cruel the society is, and so long as this trend is not reversed, old people will not be truly integrated within the group."

We HAVE made small steps toward important changes in attitude, starting with how WE feel about ourselves as we age. Women continue to suffer great indignities, but if we stop allowing this to happen, if we find ways to function as REMARKABLE AGING SMART PEOPLE (RASPs), we'll have generated positive attitudes among ourselves and in the society at large. There were 3.3 million people over 85 at the close of 1995. When we observe how well the majority of elders function, then perhaps Martha Coolidge, a film director now turning 50, is right when she says BEING OLD IS YOUNGER THAN IT USED TO BE!

I guess we need to bolster each other in our goals to avoid seeing "old" as being outside of it all. Steinem, on turning 60, decided that TIME IS PASSING, so it's time to LEARN TO LIVE IN THE PRESENT.. and, on further thinking, she's decided that the motto should be "there's no second like this one!" (p. 283). For those of any age who have not yet moved in this direction, come join the crowd.. LET'S START NOW!



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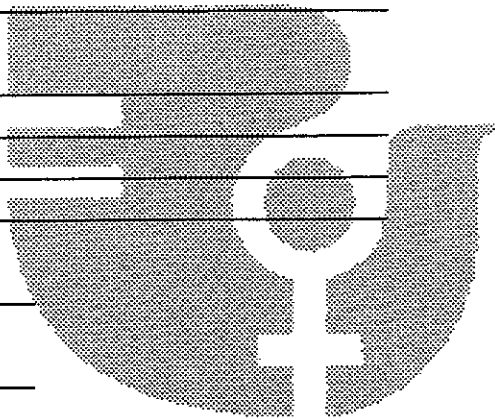
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