

mindful, healing approach in art education we can greatly help others in this powerful quest.

As I said at the Awards Ceremony: "From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for this award and many other affirmations that have made me feel deeply supported, beloved, and strong."

With deepest gratitude,

Renee Sandell,
October 16, 1999

P.S. My dear Maryland Institute colleagues, Karen Carroll and Henry Jones videotaped my acceptance remarks for the June King McFee Award. As a result, I was able to share it at home with local friends before I left Washington, and most importantly, with Steve, upon my return to Boston. He was moved to tears and expressed his love and pride to me. The memory of this beautiful moment is etched in my heart forever because, shortly after, Steve's condition began to decline. His Graft vs. Host Disease increased, affecting his liver and lungs, and causing him to go on a respirator for 8 days. During this time, my sons and I, along with other relatives, were able to express our great love to him. Though no one expected Steve to die, he did on April 26, 1999.

In composing this letter, I've reflected not only on that evening, but also on all that has transpired in these past six months. This includes, with the help of my mother, my return to Bethesda, Steve's huge funeral and the mourning period supported by the presence of family and community. I have spent the summer healing in a variety of ways that include travel and artmaking and was happy to return to teaching in September. One special event bears sharing here: On September 30, 1999, Steve and his staff received the Social Security Commissioner's Team Award for

establishing two Retirement Research Centers at Boston College and the University of Michigan, each a part of a consortium with affiliated institutions linking academic and policy communities. I was proud and honored to attend the Award ceremony and receive it with his team. Furthermore, I was even more thrilled to learn about the recent establishment of annual Steven Sandell Doctoral Fellowships, provided by each of the Retirement Research Centers that he created. There is nothing more fitting to Steve's memory than this legacy that honors his deepest reverence for education and collaborative research.

*Laurie Hicks
Mary J. Rouse Award
Acceptance Speech
1999*

Good evening. I want to thank all of you for attending this award ceremony. Needless to say, I am very honored to receive the Mary J. Rouse Award and I am especially honored to be sharing this evening with Renee Sandell, Kathy Connor, and with the memory of Mary Lou Kuhn, two women who have truly made a difference in art education. They have been and continue to be wonderful role models for us all.

I would like to start off by thanking those who were directly involved in my receiving the Rouse Award. First, I would like to thank Kerry Freedman for taking the time and energy to nominate me for this award. My thanks are also due to Doug Blandy and the other members of the committee, Christine Morris, Lisa Abia-Smith, Mary Sheridan and Deborah Smith-Shank who had the responsibility of making what I am sure was a very difficult decision. Finally, I want to thank those who wrote letters of support for my nomination,

Kristin Congdon, Paul Bolin and Elizabeth Hoffman. I am honored to be working with such colleagues and am grateful for their support and belief in my work and me.

When my students found out that I was receiving this award and that I would be asked to give an acceptance speech, one of them was so concerned that he came to speak with me. His concern was not that I was receiving such an award—he thought that was "pretty cool"—his concern was that I might tell you the same bad jokes I tell in class. He said, "Whatever you do, don't tell any bad jokes." Regretfully, he had no "good" jokes to offer—that he was willing to repeat. But I promised him anyway, that if I told jokes, they would be good ones. His reply, "Yeah, right." Even though he has little faith, I will try to keep my promise.

It is customary at the Women's Caucus award ceremonies for the individuals receiving the Rouse and McFee awards to take a few minutes to say something about their personal and professional history and about how they have arrived at this particular point in their careers. I want you to know that this has not been an easy thing to do. There is something very humbling, and I must say dumbfounding, about having colleagues who you respect and admire, bestow on you such an honor. I found myself somewhat "speech-less", in more ways than one. In my effort to regain my voice, to have something to say that is more than a rehearsal of defining moments in my life, I found myself reminiscing not only about those moments, but about the people that have become the ingredients of the person and art educator you see standing before you. Therefore, pretending this is the Academy Awards, I want to start by naming a few of the people, some of whom are in this room, who have been important to me in my career and personal life. I want to thank June McFee,

Vincent Lanier, Grace Hampton and Rogena Degge for what they taught me about art education and for their willingness to support me as I struggled to define myself as an educator; Elizabeth Garber, Yvonne Gaudelius, Joanne Kurz-Guilfoil, Renee Sandell, and Georgia Collins not only for the strength of their scholarship but for what they have shown me about the power of grace and compassion; and Kerry Freedman, Sally McRorie and Karen Hamblen for their unbridled dedication to art education and for their continued ability to challenge me to think, and think again. I am truly honored to have friends and colleagues such as these.

Before moving on however, I need to add seven more names to this list. I have to say, right up front, that if it weren't for these seven individuals, I am not convinced I would be standing here tonight. First, I want to thank my husband, Roger King, for his unyielding support and contribution to both my personal and professional lives. I know of few people who are as lucky as I am to have a partner who shares so profoundly in both. Second and third, I want to thank my parents, Claud and Fredrica Hicks, who challenged me to think and were patient when I did. They gave me a love of knowledge and an understanding of the power and responsibility it brings with it. Fourth, I want to thank my friend Paul Bolin for never letting anyone know.... All through graduate school, I was convinced that I was a fraud, that someone would find out that I really didn't belong there, that I really had everyone fooled into thinking I had something important to say. I only shared this secret with one person. Paul always believed in me and he never told..... Fifth, I want to thank feminist philosopher and friend, Honi Haber, who, until she died of cancer in 1996, more than anyone I know, knew what it meant to walk on the wildside and

passionately embrace the wonder of her life.

And finally, I want to thank my friends and co-partners in crime Doug Blandy, aka "Buzz," and Kristin Congdon. Doug and Kristin have taught me much, including the skill of napkin writing and the wonders of traveling without a compass. Twelve years ago, Doug, Kristin and I first began our first professional collaboration right here in Washington D.C. Over Italian food, we scribbled idea after idea on a napkin that was almost illegible by the time we pushed back from the table. This napkin was eventually transcribed and the actions it described, put in motion. Many of these ideas and concerns have lead to NAEA presentations and publications. To this day, paper napkins in restaurants bring back the memories of that day and the deep friendship and respect I feel for these two individuals. In most matters, Doug and Kristin have always had a great sense of direction. As professionals, they've always known where the interesting questions and intriguing solutions might lie, and how to get there. As friends, they have always been where I needed them to be when my direction seemed unclear. However, I learned a long time ago that you don't trust either one of them to know how to get around in the real world. Once while traveling in France with Kristin—I was driving, she was reading the map—we came to a round-about. Unsure which route to take, I asked her for directions. Kristin, with great confidence, indicated that I should go around to the left. But I knew that in general, where we needed to go was 180 degrees in the opposite direction. I looked over and she was holding the map upside down. Now Doug on the other hand, gets you to within eye-sight of your location—in this case, the Kennedy Center here in Washington—builds your confidence, then leaves you standing with a six lane freeway

between you and your evening of theatrical bliss. And I won't even begin to tell you about our trip to Kansas looking for the World's Largest Ball of String....

Many of you see me as an iconoclast, someone who likes to rock the boat whenever possible. Doug Blandy once, during this very ceremony, referred to me as the most irreverent person he'd ever met. I took his comment as a true compliment and an honor. Doug, believe me, and I'm sure you do, you were not the first and will probably not be the last person in my life to describe me in this manner. You would have to get in line behind my parents and untold numbers of students, teachers and administrators. Interestingly enough, it is probably this irreverence that set the stage for my becoming an art educator—I just knew I could teach better than the people who taught me. Now don't misunderstand me, I grew up in a middle to upper middle class community in the suburbs of Portland, Oregon. My teachers were well trained and the education was considered of the highest quality. To this day, I still recall what I learned during those years about what and what not to do as a teacher. But remember, I am a child of the 60's. I grew up amid the turmoil and energy of the Civil Rights, Women's Rights, and Native Rights movements, and under the horror of the Vietnam War. As a result, I found fertile ground for my already existing tendency to question and be critical of the attitudes and habits of adults and the power of the establishment—and much to my chagrin, I seem to have become both an adult and a member of the establishment. A very scary thought. But at the age of 16, I wanted to find an alternative, one that acknowledged the fear we experienced every time one of our friends or siblings turned 18 and faced the Russian roulette of the draft lottery; one that acknowledged and sought to change the inherent inequities

that existed, and continue to exist, in our society; and one that acknowledged that I had something to say that was worth listening to. I am, to this day, still looking for the alternatives I sought as a young student. This search or quest has been evident throughout my life and is clearly reflected in the path I took to art education. What is that path?

You have to know, first of all, that art education was not my first major...or even my second, third, fourth or fifth major! I was one of those college students who was interested in too many things to settle down to only one area of study. I was always finding something else that sparked my imagination or drew me in a different direction. Those of you who know me will probably see that I haven't changed all that much since then. Sitting still is not my strong suite! In any case, I started my post high-school academic life majoring in psychology (I actually majored in psychology twice, but I only count the first time), then to art and on to Anthropology and Archeology, then on to pre-architecture and sociology, before ending up, two universities and four years later, in the Art Education program at the University of Oregon.

All these majors actually reflect significant and on-going interests in my life and have contributed not only to my sense of myself as an individual, but also to my understanding of art education and my role as an art educator. Let me reflect a little further on how these areas of inquiry came into my life.

Psychology was my fall-back major—in those days, wasn't everyone a psychology major at some point? Of course I was interested in why people did what they did, but more importantly, I was intrigued with how human thought and emotion finds material form in our behavior and expression. Even as a young child, I remember having the realization that there was a relationship between how people

felt and how they acted. I also learned that, for me, pictures were better expressions of my emotions and thoughts than words. My parents and brothers all like to embarrass me by describing the various "pictures" or works of art, I created when I was adolescently-challenged. Their particular favorite is the large, probably 24"x24" piece of plywood upon which I created a collage of images and phrases that communicated my pubescent struggles. Of particular note is a piece of lined notebook paper, turned sideways, upon which I wrote, "if they give you lined paper, write the other way." Certainly a good representation of my approach to much in life.

But at some point and without a great deal of fanfare, I grew tired of wondering about the cognitive aspects of what makes us human and turned my attention to the creating and understanding of cultural objects. First I went back to my art. As a high school student, when I wasn't skipping classes to throw rocks at the National Guard, play bingo with the "bums" on Portland's skid row, or attend an anti-war demonstration, I was hiding in the darkroom. I like to say that I came by my interest in photographic images naturally, as my father was, for a short time, a professional photographer. He once sold his camera to buy my mother a new dress and, years later, worked overtime to buy me my first camera. As a result, for much of my adolescent and undergraduate years, I saw the world, not through rose colored glasses, but through the lens of a camera. I would take it to parties, shooting photos of my friends as they engaged in a whole array of party activities. There are several photos that would probably make pretty good blackmail material today. But somewhere along the line, I lost interest. Then came anthropology.

Even as a little girl, I was interested in objects and artifacts. I would find things in the dirt and

make up stories about their origins and meaning. As a four-year old I told a friend of my mother's, who assumed I would want to be a "mommy" when I grew up, that I was going to be an archeologist instead. I'm not sure I knew what an archeologist did; I think I was just impressed with my ability to use such a big word. *National Geographic*, James Mitchner's *The Source* and a brief conversation I once had with Margaret Mead, only added to my interest in the lives and objects of people different from myself. Anthropology and archeology were, therefore, a natural place for me to turn. This was reinforced by growing up in the Pacific Northwest where I had many opportunities to study the material cultures of Northwest coast Indian peoples. I became particularly interested in the beauty and mystery of the masks created by many of the Northwest cultural groups. The idea of a false identity, of a false face, focused my research interests not on a single cultural group but on the masks' rich aesthetic forms and on the truths they embody for their makers. Then one day I came across an essay by Loren Eiseley in which he described opening the grave of a young girl and finding the remains of a small doll placed between what had been the child's fingers. He goes on to describe the paralyzing nature of this experience. What right did he have to trespass on something so sacred, something placed there for eternity? So, six credits short of a degree in anthropology, I turned to pre-architecture, sociology and then art education. To me, art education was a final gathering point for all these interests. The choice to study art education seemed to emerge organically out of my life and academic interests and experiences.

This has continued to be true over the years as I have developed particular areas of research and inquiry. Those of you who know me and my work will

quickly identify the research issues that have interested me over the past decade or so. For those of you who are less familiar with my work, I thought I would say something about those topics and a little more about how I came to them. There are perhaps three key topic areas: gender issues and social transformation, the environment, and the aesthetics of the body. As research concerns, each of these topic areas has grabbed me in part because of its inherent scholarly interest, but also partly because they resonate with some aspect of my non-academic life and experience. Reflecting on these interests for the purpose of this award ceremony has reminded me of how much my lived experience continues to inform my professional life.

My interests in gender issues and social transformation began at a very early age. I would say that I inherited a sort of intuitive feminism from my mother, father and grandmothers. At age seventy-four, my mother is the oldest member of her women's group. My mother worked for years as a volunteer in a hospice program, but she had wanted to be a doctor when she was younger. For many reasons, including the nature of the times and her life in a small rural community, my mother chose not to pursue that aspiration. Nonetheless, both she and my father insisted that I could do and become whatever I put my mind to. From her own experience, my mother was keenly aware of the difficulties facing young girls who aspire to professional lives. But I was encouraged to see these difficulties as challenges I should overcome, not as obstacles to be afraid of. My parents became angry and frustrated when a math teacher told me that even though I was good at math, it really wasn't for girls. And they applauded as my chemistry teacher encouraged the young women in her classes to work even harder. My grandmothers both

provided me with images of independence and adventure. My father's mother played the piano for the silent movies, rode horses into the hills looking for and photographing pictographs on the walls of caves surrounding her southern Oregon home, and while raising my father worked with my grandfather in a logging camp. In my family, women are not raised to be passive.

The atmosphere of my family upbringing has played an important part in motivating my scholarly work on gender in art and education. Having been empowered by the inherently feminist context of much of my upbringing, I continue to look critically at educational contexts which do not seek to empower their students equally. In my scholarly work, I have tried to come to terms with the knowledge that my own lived experience is not typical, especially in our educational system. I have tried to understand how teaching about art may itself be a transformative moment, a moment in which our students are empowered through an acknowledgment of their own needs rather than having those needs and interests marginalized. As you know, the art curriculum is one of the rare places in our educational system where we can directly address our students as members of the specific communities within which their gender identities are constructed and acted out. How we deal with these transformative opportunities will, in part, determine the degree to which our students find empowerment in their educational experiences.

While issues of gender are at the core of my work, I have also had a long-standing interest in the environment, though this interest has not always had a direct relationship to art. My father was a major influence here. Having spent his boyhood in a logging camp in southern Oregon, my father developed a close affinity to the forests and rivers of the Pacific Northwest. All

through my childhood, we went camping, hiking, and fishing. The last I knew, I was still the youngest person, at age six, ever to climb to the summit of Mount Thielson—something my father is profoundly proud of. But I must be honest and tell you, I am also the youngest person to slide down the mountain on my butt, bouncing from pumice stone to pumice stone, flying by the seat of my pants, so to speak. So, being in the outdoors is, in a sense, second nature to me.

These experiences with the environment fed my budding artistic interests as well as my academic pursuits. Early on I started making pictures of the places I visited, combining a life outdoors with visual reflection on it. In university, I developed this interest partly through my studies in psychology which led me to thinking about the design of the built environment and how it affects us as users of humanly-constructed spaces. I was, and continue to be, particularly interested in the concept of home and how it is reflected in the design of both public and private spaces. This is true in my life as a teacher as well as in my personal life. Even now, I find some escape from the burdens of being Chair of my Department by sketching designs of possible summer cottages, a rich tradition in Maine. Now if I would just win the lottery so I could afford to build such a cottage.

Environmental issues seem to me to be as central to Art Education as gender. Our well-being as individuals and as a society depends not only on the political values of equality, democracy, and justice, but on the health and integrity of the environments in which we all live. Just as art can give us insights into our cultural and gendered identities, it can also give us ways of understanding our place in nature. In the past, art works have had tremendous impact on cultural attitudes toward nature. The Hudson River school, for example, helped to

teach Americans to see the sublime in wilderness at a time when the wilderness was already severely depleted. Contemporary environmental artists help to articulate the environmental costs of our industrialized culture and to suggest ways of restoring health and beauty to the landscapes around us. As a contextualist, I like to situate art work within its social and political as well as environmental context. I believe this helps students to see the connections between their own lives and the art they create, study and ultimately teach. When I discuss art and the environment in my writings and in the classes I teach, my goal is to motivate critical thinking about how art functions both aesthetically and as a means of articulating possible solutions to the environmental problems we face.

The problem of context is, I think, one of the great challenges for Art Education. How can we teach awareness of context, whether it is the context of gender, race, age, physical need, class or environment? How can we encourage both students and teachers of art to understand the broader contexts within which their work and their interpretations will be received? One of the goals of my research work is to explore different approaches to meeting this challenge.

This continues to be true in my current research interest, namely, the aesthetics of the body. This too emerges from my own life experiences. I have always been athletic and physical. As a young girl, I was often referred to as a "tom-boy." I swam competitively, served a mean game of volleyball and would take on anyone in the basketball game of HORSE (something I got from my mother, who to this day reads the sports section first and has a basketball hoop in their garage). I also spent many hours "on point" as a dancer. In fact, I chose dance lessons over

kindergarten. As my older cousins had already taught me to read, it made sense to my parents. Today, I hike, climb mountains, sail, canoe, run, bicycle and lift weights. And as my husband likes to point out, I like fast cars. Obviously, I have always taken my body and its physical presence in the world seriously, and this physical engagement with my surroundings continues to influence my intellectual activities.

As I turned to more academic pursuits, my interest in the body surfaced first as I studied Anthropology. I was specifically interested in how the body is marked and adorned as a social and aesthetic object. I continue to work in this area, using it as a foundation for my aesthetic and political interest in muscled women, specifically in women bodybuilders.

The practice of transforming the physical body, in this case through the creation of muscle, create the body as a cultural and aesthetic, not merely a biological, artifact. As a cultural artifact, the physical body is frequently the site where various social and political struggles may be played out. In a patriarchal society, we can expect that the subjugation of women will be reflected not only in social and political norms and expectations, but also in the very aesthetic construction of women's bodies. At the same time, we should expect that efforts by women to free themselves from the constraints of such a society will equally play themselves out in practices of bodily transformation.

Bodybuilding, therefore, represents a particularly interesting example of bodily transformation as an act of aesthetic liberation. The philosopher, Michel Foucault, has noted that power, politics, and aesthetics are frequently bound together in mutually supporting ways. In my current research, I am using the filter of Foucault's insight as a path for

exploring the ways in which women may build and sculpt the physical body as a form of liberating social practice that breaks with mainstream norms of femininity and beauty. Such research will help to demonstrate not only how gender differences are constructed through the body, but how class, caste, or religious differences also find expression in the aesthetic altering of the human body. A clearer understanding of how social and political, as well as aesthetic, expectations are inscribed on human bodies will enable me to understand further how art and aesthetic practice can have social and political impact. In my mind, this is an essential goal for art education.

I have said enough about my research interests. So what has been the impact of all this on my teaching? Remember, I'm the one who was sure that I could teach better than I was taught. I guess I'll never know whether its true or not. But I do think there is a connection between my teaching and the life experiences and research interests I have been describing. We are all aware of the old saying that people teach the way they have been taught. Even though I like to hope that this is not a necessary truth, it is one of the greatest challenges I face in the classroom today. I continue to see first hand the power of my students' early educational experiences to form their understanding and approaches to art and education. Through the audible silences of their own elementary and secondary education, they have been taught, as I was, to minimize or ignore altogether the contexts of what and how we teach, to focus only on a very narrowly defined notion of what constitutes art and therefore, what constitutes art education. I continue to struggle with how I break down the walls of these experiences. Interestingly enough, it is an extension of this very notion that has provided me with

the greatest success. If teaching is an expression of our previous learning experiences then it must also be an expression of our experiences in an even broader sense. It is not just reflective of how we were taught, but also of how we have lived our lives—experiences which are inevitably unique to each of us. In my case, I was not an art educator first, but rather a person with particular interests, strengths, weaknesses, and experiences, living in a particular time and place. I use these various aspects of who I am every day in the classroom. As part of this process, I have gained a certain reflective distance on how those experiences influence what I have done and what I continue to do and value as a teacher. This same process of critical reflection has become for me an important tool in my efforts to move students beyond the safety and comfort of their previous learning experiences and into a position where they may also see how their own lived experiences affect their pedagogy. This is not an easy task for any of us, but one that I feel helps teaching become an organic and therefore integral, part of our lives.

I have spent the last few minutes painting a somewhat minimalist image of my path from the four year old archeologist to the forty-five year old art educator. It's a good thing my mother and father aren't here, because they would have told stories that would make your hair curl—some of which would even be true! The fact of the matter is that the process of looking back and reflecting on how particular events, people and places have led me to this point in my life has been an extremely difficult, yet rewarding, task. What do I say? What do I not say? As I tell my students, history is a process of interpretation and that process is not made easier when it is your own history that you are trying to uncover. Paradoxically, this award—and therefore this story

of my life—comes at a particularly interesting time in my career. I am at a moment of transition. I will soon complete my second term as chair of the Department of Art at the University of Maine. After six years of putting my position as department chair ahead of almost everything else in my life, I am looking forward with a great deal of relief to spending more time on my research and artistic pursuits, and to returning to the classroom on a full-time basis—my students are terrified. At the same time, I look forward with anticipation to finding myself once again and to remembering who I am when my colleagues no longer call me "Boss."

The historical narrative I have just related to you presents a particular portrait—and a pretty plausible one it seems to me from this transitional moment in my life. But the shape of our life's narrative depends not just on what happened in the past; it also depends on what happens next. How will I tell the story of my life in another 20 years? How will that story connect with this one? I am looking forward to hearing that version with great curiosity.

In the meantime, let me conclude by once again thanking you for this award. It represents the spirit of Mary Rouse and the contributions of all those who have received it before me. I am truly honored. Thank you!

*Kathy Connors
Kathy Connors Award
Acceptance Speech
1999*

Hello to all of my friends who are assembled to share meaning. First, I must say that long ago Amy Brooks Snider and I had a conversation in which she said she thought that there should be some sort of a way to recognize art educators other than the by the criteria delineated in

the McFee and Rouse awards. Is it overstating the obvious that I am glad that her wish has come true?!

Secondly, I think it is important to note that Dave Burton told me that he makes a point of coming to the Women's Caucus Award Ceremony because he finds it to be a space and time in the national convention where he hears human stories that have universal meaning. I agree with him. And so, I will share some of my stories that have meaning to me with the hope they bring smiles of recognition to your whole being, through the voice and spirit of my friend Christy Park.

The first eight years of my life were happily spent in Erie, Pennsylvania. When I let my mind wander back to my childhood there, I find very vivid memories as well as a prolog to a career in teaching and the arts. One of my most vivid memories is of me sitting on the floor of the front porch (front porches back then were very important gathering places) of one of my friends or my own front porch with our favorite coloring books spread out in front of us. I would color away and augment the pictures in the book with my own backgrounds. My friends would see what I was doing and ask how to "color that good." I would give them instructions in crayon technique and add that it was even more fun to do your own drawings in the background. I remember them being especially impressed when I showed them how to solve the problem of coloring the Lone Ranger's white horse. They had thought that leaving it uncolored was the only solution until they saw what I had done in my coloring book. I had used light blues and yellows to make it look "real." Now, remember there was no color TV back then, so, I can't tell you how I thought of coloring Silver in that way. Perhaps it was from observing shorthaired white dogs? And then there was the ragman's horse that was part