

Cynthia Colbert
June King McFee Award
Acceptance Speech
1998

EARLY INFLUENCES

Parents and Family

I was born and grew up in Columbus, Georgia in the 1950's. We lived in a community with good schools, many relatives, and in a neighborhood with many friends. Children were free to roam the woods and creeks in our neighborhood and the troubles we got into or caused were very minor. We grew up in each other's houses, eating and spending the night at a neighbor child's home at least once a week. Our neighbors felt more like family because we interacted with them every day.

My parents were an encouraging force in my artistic development. Our home was filled with whatever media I wanted. I had paints, good drawing pencils, brushes, crayons, lots of white drawing paper and my own creek bed filled with a vein of white clay. My father had a good eye for design and color. He made most of the decisions about interior design and works of art in our home. We had many 19th century art reproductions that were framed and hanging in group arrangements. My mother was encouraging. Much of my early work hangs in her home today. My brother and I were both art majors. My parents did not discourage either of us from choosing art as a career.

My father was an athlete in high school and college. He lettered in both tennis and basketball at Auburn University before being called home to run the family broom factory after all of his uncles left for war. His dreams of being a coach were not realized and he did not return to school after the war. Instead he married my mother and later became a car dealer. As the first child, I was taught many of the athletic skills one would expect a father to share with a son. My father taught me to play golf and tennis and played both with me. He knew how to "push my buttons," by claiming that women did not run hard enough in tennis to play well with a man. I, of course, ran harder than ever after hearing that. His teasing and testing prepared me to take the testing that comes from the predominately male colleagues directed towards any young woman who finds employment in higher education. In 1982 when I was reviewed for tenure, a colleague from the studio division said, "I just do not believe that she will keep working at this pace. I suspect that she is just a flash in the pan." I should not know this was said about me, but knowing it made me ever vigilant (as it did in a tennis game with my father) to make him reassess his beliefs about me.

My mother was a stay at home mom who was involved in many community activities. She served as room mother, chaired my elementary school's annual field day, volunteered in the schools and in the community. She was at home when we returned from school each day. We dreaded the days she played bridge, and she would come home knowing more about the trouble our friends, or we had been in at school than we did. She was a part of a tight network of mothers who shared information without hesitation. She cooked a big meal each night, usually meat and when possible, three fresh vegetables. I have not lived up to my mother's standards for housekeeping or cooking, but she does not expect me to. I am a member of a network of mothers who have children the age of my daughter. We share information, compare our children's teachers, advise each other on various matters and laugh a lot.

My grandparents were exhibitors of early artistic efforts. Similar to Tomie dePaola's experiences in his book, *The Art Lesson*, I drew and painted for everyone. My work was mailed to my mother's parents and taken to my father's. They were displayed in both houses and bragged about. I recall checking to be sure a certain piece was still hung at my grandparents' home in Alabama when I arrived for a visit. I was always reassured that my work was where I had last seen it. My maternal grandmother painted landscapes and flowers and refinished furniture. She was especially receptive to my work, writing notes to me filled with praise. She also bragged about my artistic abilities, or as she said, "talents," to friends and neighbors in my presence.

Teachers

I decided in the third grade to become an art teacher. As the "class artist" I was praised frequently by the classroom teacher and often allowed to leave the classroom to put up a bulletin board display or create a poster for the teacher.

In the mid 1950's we had an art teacher, Mrs. Thorton, who came in for an hour each week. I looked so forward to her arrival. I don't think I missed more than 1 or 2 art days in my 6 years of elementary school. I do recall explaining to my mother that I had to go to school on that day, even if I wasn't completely well because we had art.

In junior high school, Mrs. Carol Dorrough was my art teacher. We were allowed to take a whole year of art in both seventh and eighth grades. She was an outstanding teacher. She was a recent (around 1960) Auburn graduate. She had a well defined curriculum based mostly on drawing, painting and printmaking. We had to write about our work. Her classes were not easy, so they attracted a serious group of art students. She was a tough grader, and

that discouraged the students who were looking for an easy course to go elsewhere. Even in the seventh grade, I noticed that many of the smart people took art and were serious about their work.

I attended the high school designed to prepare students for college. Our curriculum was college preparatory, with only typing, wood shop, and mechanical drawing as electives along with various musical instruments, choral music and art. Over ninety percent of my high school class attended college. In my high school I studied art with another Auburn graduate, Ms. Evelyn Finch. She was also an excellent teacher for the committed art students.

College

I went off to Auburn, making several mistakes. I roomed with two friends from high school and we got along badly. I chose an institution that had produced solid art teachers at a time when they lost their art educator and did not replace her. No one told me this when I applied for the program, nor when I spent several days on campus for summer orientation. It felt wrong to me to be advised by an English education professor. I transferred to Columbus State University—then Columbus College—during my sophomore year.

Back in Columbus I was surprised to find the professors so enthusiastic. This, you see, was a teaching college. I took a class with a wonderful painter, Will Hipps, who told us his area of expertise was painting, but that his real medium was teaching. Mr. Hipps was an encouraging teacher with very high standards. My course on color theory with him has enabled me to analyze and discriminate the content of color for more than 25 years. During my second course with Mr. Hipps, his wife gave birth to their first child. He was completely enamored with his new son and talked of him often. I found his excitement about his child charming. Other wonderful teachers at Columbus were Mr. McKee, who taught ceramics and did heavy editing of all student work he found lacking with a hammer. I left his class with two wonderful pieces I still own. I studied with George Stillman, who told me that no one would take me seriously as an artist with my long, pretty hair. I had my hair cut in a short style, about 2 inches long, just to see if I could be taken seriously. I cannot be sure that I was taken seriously by Mr. Stillman, but I had met his challenge and found that it gave me certain power over him. I was able to look at him straight in the eye for the first time and hold my own with him. I liked that feeling.

One of the characters on faculty was Harriett Wyman. I took two classes with her and admired her because she was the first older female I had studied with who was a complete free spirit. I

sensed that she was not well liked by the men in the department, partly because she was rather outrageous in her opinions and demeanor, and partly because she had such a wonderful exhibition record. I suspect they thought she was a dilettante. She seemed to enjoy herself to the fullest and was delighted with her new life as an artist. She had been married and raised a family and had been widowed before she returned to school to study art. She had many national and international exhibits of her fiber pieces during the time she taught me. I wanted to be more like Mrs. Wyman than many of the other female role models I knew. I found myself at age twenty looking forward to widowhood. It occurred to me that I need not marry the young man to whom I was engaged and wait out the years until his death. With the engagement broken, I set out to become more like Mrs. Wyman.

My teachers had very strong influences on my thinking about myself and my consideration of options for my future. The public school art teachers were very nurturing and pleased that I wanted to be an art teacher. My high school teacher suggested that I might also consider architecture. My undergraduate teachers were generous with their time and in sharing their expertise and opinions. I liked some much better than others. Mr. Hipps and Mrs. Wyman left lasting impressions and have some bearing on how I hope to relate to my university students. They were honest, caring, and discussed things other than the content of the course, such as books they had read and loved, or a recipe tried with success, or even the birth of a first child. They were personal without crossing the line and going outside of my comfort zone.

WORK/HOME CONNECT/DISCONNECT

I married badly for a short while, but found myself teaching art and living in Missouri. He took a position at the University of Missouri and I was unable to find work as an art teacher there, so I enrolled in graduate school. There was no grand plan. I enrolled in the MA program in studio art, being guaranteed a slot in the "soon to be established" MFA program. I was, frankly, disappointed with the studio instruction I received during my first semester there. I switched to art education by the end of my first semester, taking all of my second semester courses with Marilyn Zurmuehlen. Not unlike my earlier experiences with Mrs. Wyman, I decided I wanted to be like Marilyn and worked very hard in all of my classes, doing well in the masters program. I was invited to continue in the doctoral program at about the time I decided to divorce my first husband. Again, there was no great plan.

In the meantime, I found a job teaching in an elementary school, as I needed more teaching experience prior to the doctorate. Marilyn left Missouri to take the job at Iowa and I began to work with Dr. Larry Kanter, who was on faculty at the University of Missouri, but with whom I had not studied. For the next three years I spent every Thursday evening with Larry Kanter, Larry Peeno, Margaret Peeno, Connie Newton, Susan Doerr, Katy Bear, Cherry Dowd and Diane Gregory. This was the evening of what we referred to as "graduate seminar." We developed a supportive camaraderie under Larry Kanter's guidance. Larry Kanter was such a wonderful influence. He was open, honest, spent as much time with us as we needed and most importantly—he let us find our own way. Larry Kanter is a kind and generous person who sees that students are well-trained, that they take credit for their own successes and that he is available to us. I have known Larry Kanter for 23 years and he is still available to me for discussions of ideas, collaborating on a paper or project, venting frustrations, or just a good chat. I cannot come up with a negative aspect of studying with Larry except that I left Missouri believing that everyone in higher education would be as kind as he was to me. They were not and are not. Today I use many of Larry's teaching methods and even his responses to students. For example, when a student asks me questions that are uncomfortably personal, I answer as Larry did some 23 years ago by saying, "I think that's why they call that your personal life."

I married my husband, Lee Siple, in the summer of 1978 just before receiving my doctorate. Lee is a graphic designer who came from many years of working in graphic design and publications design to university teaching. Lee left his position to accompany me to the University of Illinois for my first job in higher education. We bought an old house there and he planned to renovate it during my two-year appointment. A faculty member in graphic design at Illinois took an emergency leave of absence and Lee taught for a year and a half of my two year contract. The house was barely ready to sell on our departure. We found jobs for both of us at the University of South Carolina. Lee began a two-year appointment, but was subsequently hired as an associate professor. It is difficult for married couples to work in the same department. Many of the faculty there were uncomfortable with hiring a married couple. They feared that we would create block votes, or cause friction in some way between divisions in our department. We worked within different divisions and used offices and classrooms in different buildings. Our colleagues suspected that we went home and discussed the business within our divisions with each other. We did not. We soon learned that we needed to keep the business of the art department

outside of our home life as much as possible. There were exceptions, but we did well in not letting the discussion of departmental politics consume our private lives. We were careful to sit separately in full faculty meetings, to lunch with others, to help avoid being thought of as a package. Sometimes we shared students who often did not know that we were married. I gained some insight from Lee on what students thought of my strong negative opinions on the use of coloring books. They thought I was eccentric, at best and anti-mom and apple pie and all things American, at worst. Knowing what some of my students said about me helped me change the way I approached several issues in my class. I strengthened my courses from this "inside" knowledge.

The move from the University of Illinois to the University of South Carolina was a move that involved more than geographic location. The journey was back to the region of my childhood and a place where my husband had only visited. I found the university ran very slowly compared to the well-oiled running of the University in Illinois. It seemed that the time needed to get paperwork through the system was inordinately slow, yet the system was far more open to change and to incorporating new ideas from young, untenured faculty than any place I had been. These contrasts were vexing for me and I found myself not knowing if I wanted to stay in this place. Artist Anne Truitt has written about her first trip to Columbia, South Carolina where I live and work. I find similarities in her perceptions of this place and memories of my own first impressions.

As I headed south to visit and lecture at the University of South Carolina, the fields were a welcome in themselves, as were the tender light, the unassuming whitewashed clapboard houses, the leaves under lacy aureoles, the easy sweep of land like slow water. Grace dwells modestly in the Southern landscape. A tree is let alone to stand in a plowed field, though surely a vexation to cultivate around. Farm outbuildings, not themselves anything but functional, are placed in a natural proportion. (Truitt, 1982, p. 104)

Truitt continues her description of her time spent as a visiting lecturer at my university by saying,

I was startled when the audience laughed spontaneously because a dog wandered into the room just as I was saying something banal about an artist "working like a dog." Not having noticed the dog, I was baffled by the laughter. But what interested me was that I felt a wave of warmth curling towards me breaking over my head. I was given to understand that these people, invisible in the dim cavern isolated for me by the lectern's reading bulb, were with me. (Truitt, 1982, p. 105)

I, too, have felt the warmth of that community of art teachers and arts administrators as a wave curling towards and breaking over me. I am fortunate to live in a place where we have art teachers in every school and arts education is championed by administrators, parents, superintendents of education, and legislators. I have felt that the art educators here are, as Truitt said, *with me*. And so we stayed at the University of South Carolina, adjusting our rhythms to its slower ones making it our home.

In 1985, Lee and I were delighted to have our first and only child, Gillian. We named her for a lovely baby of a former art education graduate student from the University of Illinois. We had no plan for how we would handle two careers and a baby. We played it by ear. I had never studied with a female professor who was also a mother. (You may recall that Mrs. Wyman was the mother of grown children, but they did not figure into my relationship with her.) I had no role models for how to balance the life of a professor with the demands of motherhood.

Gillian has been one of the most positive influences in my life and certainly on my teaching and my research. I am much more understanding of family illnesses and other conflicts my students might have that I would not have been sympathetic to before. Also, with Gillian, I am able to see schools and schooling through the eyes of a child. I have gained so much insight through her and continue to marvel at the skills and abilities she develops. Now 13, Gillian is a straight A student who has taken the SAT as part of the Duke Talent Search, scoring more on the math section than I did as a high school senior. I can't wait to see how she turns out.

I have many concerns and much guilt about balancing my professional life with my life as a parent. I have read a lot of what children of highly regarded professionals have said about their childhoods and find no comfort there. Mary Catherine Bateson, daughter of Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead writes, "The departure of both my parents for long periods of war work when I was very little must have made me question my value and importance—their work came first" (Bateson, 1989, p. 140). Bateson goes on to explain that she somehow merged her experiences of being without parents with cultural attitudes about the inferiority of women, often slighting her own value.

When I compare my own childhood with a stay at home mother who was psychologically available to me almost every school day, both afternoons and evenings, with my daughter's experience of my teaching in the evenings, leaving home for various consulting jobs and conferences and often being unavailable when I am at

home, I wonder what attitudes about herself and about the worth of women and their work she will take from her experiences. Mary Catherine Bateson's statement that "their work came first" is not an impression I want to leave with my daughter.

Another child of an achieving parent, May Sarton writes that although she and her mother were very close, she was "not able to get over the wall to George Sarton himself" (Sarton, 1989, p. 192). Sarton goes on to say that as she has aged, she sees much of her father in herself. She says that her dedication to her work and the resentment of anything that interrupts her routine that makes her work possible comes from him. Sarton goes on to say,

From the time I was a small child I learned the sacredness of work. I had to be very quiet because when we first came to Cambridge as refugees from Belgium during World War I, we lived in a three-room apartment and the living room was his study. I spent a lot of time lying on the floor surrounded by newspapers and a bowl of water, soaking stamps off letters (they came from all over the world) for my collection, but I had to be absolutely silent—how silent is made clear by the fact that when my mother gave me a goldfish in a bowl that stood on a cupboard in that studious room, my father said that after a day or so they must be removed. He could not stand the noise that they made! That "noise" was the faint bubbly sound when they came up for air. Before I was eight I had absorbed that if you worked very hard it justified a great deal. I had conviction bred in my bones. (Sarton, 1989, p. 192-193)

I wonder what convictions I am breeding into my daughter's bones. What ideas, beliefs, or reactions will she come away with?

Loyalty, Friendship, and Collaborative Spirit

Paula Dillard, my childhood neighbor and close friend, was more like a cousin to me because of the intertwining of our families. Her parents built their home just after mine did. Her mother had a baby boy within several months of the birth of my younger brother. The Dillard family still lives next door to my mother and neighbors on one side and across the street are the same as during my childhood. Only one corner of our property touches the Dillard's property. When my family fenced in our yard after my brother was born, my parents had to call the fencing company and have them return to our property to create a gate at the Dillard's corner of our backyard. Otherwise, we were walking halfway around the block many times each day to get to their house. There is still a well-worn path between my mother's back door and theirs.

Paula and I collaborated on many things. We had plays where neighbors had to come and pay money to see bad acting and drink Kool Aid and eat packaged cookies. We performed a series of Aesop's Fables found in my mother's childhood reading texts, and several other folk or fairy tales as two or three act plays. Often Paula's older brother or a pet had to play a part in our productions. We moved on to puppet shows, creating hundreds of paper puppets that were manipulated by Popsicle sticks from behind a long leather covered bench belonging to Paula's mother. (We ate the Popsicles.) We soon learned that we could provide a service of repairing the dolls of younger girls in the neighborhood, so we made a large sign advertising a Doll Hospital that was held on my family's front porch. We moved from doll hospitals to possibly our worst plan yet, the deadly Frog Hospital. We caught frogs and placed them in baby food jars with soap and water, shook them up and let them out. We saw ourselves performing a great service, but soon noticed that many dead frogs littered Paula's yard. Rather than feeling shame for our actions, we were somewhat upset that those thankless frogs chose to die. Luckily for the frogs of our neighborhood, we moved on to making pinestraw forts, drawing with slime dipped on long sticks from our own "Girl's Creek," and painting symbols onto trees to mark our territory with tubes of liquid plastic meant for blowing bubbles. Our parents left us alone to create our own worlds. They fed us and encouraged us to "go outside and play." Paula and I are still close.

As we grew up, the one year age difference deterred some activities, but perhaps enhanced the long-term friendship. I collaborated with others during junior high school, and later in high school and in undergraduate school. But these collaborations were done more in a spirit of "us vs. them." "We" usually represented my clique or a school or a social club and the spirit of the collaboration often pitted us against another group either from our school in our community. Typical of the teenage collaborations were political campaigns for student government positions, pep rallies, and even pranks and some vandalism aimed towards rivals.

Mature Collaborations

The adult collaborations are more reminiscent of those of early childhood. They seem to me to be more pure and honest. These collaborations have resulted in my/our best work. The process of working is enriched by collaboration with another. When collaborating with another woman, the fusion that bonds you often includes personal as well as professional issues. Some might judge women's collaborations as "messy." I prefer to see them as "rich," with a layering of

personal and professional histories and issues that create a strong bond.

My first art education collaborators were my fellow graduate students from the university of Missouri who served as judges for the data I collected for my dissertation. Katy Bear, Diane Gregory, Susan Doerr, and Cherry Dowd were judges. Connie Newton had left Missouri, but we collaborated on sharing articles and information for our dissertations. I found a wonderful collaborator in Ann Townley, an undergraduate student in art who helped in collecting data and who later studied for her doctorate with Larry Kanter.

My first job from graduate school was at the University of Illinois. George Hardiman was chair of the Art Education Division and Ted Zernich was editing Visual Arts Research and heading the international programs for the School of Art. My colleagues included James Marshall and Kenneth Lansing. Jim Marshall and I shared an office in my second year there, so we had spatial collaboration as well as a close friendship. He tolerated my eclectic collection of materials with kindness. He was used to having a large office to himself and kept things excruciatingly neat (by my standards). Kenneth Lansing was very generous to me. He read every manuscript I wrote in the two years I spent at Illinois. He marked them and discussed them with me at length. He was a kind and gentle critic, but his recommendations for improving my work had substance and merit.

During the fall of my first year at the University of Illinois, I attended the IAEA Conference which was held jointly with Missouri and Iowa. There I was introduced by Jim Marshall to a favorite former student of his who became my lifelong collaborator. Martha Taunton and I had much in common. She was on the faculty at Iowa, working with Marilyn Zurmuehlen whom I had studied with for my masters degree at the University of Missouri. I was on the faculty at the University of Illinois, where Martha had studied. We knew a lot about the circumstances of the other's positions. I won our initial conversation where we compared negative aspects of our jobs. We saw each other again that spring at NAEA in San Francisco (1979), where we presented our separate research on the same panel. Next year is the 20th year of our collaboration. In San Francisco, Martha and I spent some time together, again, partially arranged by Jim Marshall, and we made some tentative plans to collaborate on our research. During my two years at Illinois, Martha and I traveled to each other's homes and worked together on several research projects. I met with Dr. Laura Chapman at Martha's home in Iowa City when she served as a visiting professor at Iowa during Martha's sabbatical. Laura had been supportive of our work and

professionally generous to us during our careers. It was Laura Chapman who recommended our work to Davis Publications when they wanted to develop a kindergarten program. Laura helped us along the way with *Discover Art: Kindergarten*, editing, suggesting, cajoling, and counseling. I must add that Laura Chapman is the first person who edited my first article for *Studies in Art Education* without leading me to believe there was no hope for me as a scholar.

Martha and I continue to collaborate. We are more than collaborators, we have undergone the important step of fusion. Martha and I have just completed a chapter for a new AREA text on classroom research. We hope to have a book proposal under consideration and we discuss important ideas, hopes, and dreams, and just nonsense on the telephone regularly. We wrote *Discover Art: Kindergarten* together, working on manuscripts during the day and talking long distance after eleven o'clock four to five evenings per week to save money. Martha is my collaborator and a close family friend, important to my husband and my daughter. This is how women work.

Another collaborator is Tom Brewer, with whom I taught ceramic hand building techniques in a middle school and conducted a study on the effects of instructional strategies on students' ceramic vessels. Tom and I ate a lot of Korean and Vietnamese food as we plotted our research. The day we trained our judges for the study is the day the Gulf War began. I remember thinking that our study would turn out badly, as our judges were distracted by rumors of war. Tom and I developed a wonderful working relationship. He (the driven one) carrying me (the often-reluctant one) along more rapidly than I am accustomed to working with. The work was done well, quickly, and published before I knew it. I like to chew on ideas and sentences for a while, but Tom races ahead getting things done.

Rebecca Brooks, of the University of Texas, and I collaborated on a new elementary textbook series for Davis Publications. We did not meet until we attended a meeting at Davis arranged for people who might be interested in contributing to an interdisciplinary art text. We like each other immediately. After parting company with several of the other potential contributors at the Cincinnati airport, we had a drink and charted what we wanted to see in the text before boarding the plane. We work well together—notice that this is the present tense, as we are still working on this project (now in its fourth year). Our collaborative effort has taken many directions, but it is beginning to resemble the sketches we drew in the airport bar. The end is near and I have met someone whom I admire and with whom I hope to work again.

Sense of Self/Sense of Balance

Sometimes I feel that I have lost my sense of balance. When I am far behind on work promised to others I find that I cannot sleep. It is then that I work through the night until almost dawn, sleeping for several hours and rising to take my daughter to school or to teach my classes at the university or at a magnet school where I work two mornings a week. I strive for more balance in my life. To be completely caught up, with a clean, well-ordered study is one of my dreams. The reality of combining the various roles we create for ourselves is difficult.

Once when conducting research in eight elementary art classrooms to try to discover why these particular art teachers were so successful, I found that they each had a high tolerance for ambiguity. They were able to live with half-completed work littering their classrooms, knowing that it would be completed in time. When interviewed, some of the teachers did not see themselves as I saw them. They felt, as one said "like the class hamster running on the exercise wheel, but going nowhere." Many of these teachers believed that they never caught up at work or did much of substance and that they spend most of their time correcting behavior or dispensing materials and cleaning up. I saw them differently. They were natural teachers, good with children and nurturing of children as people and as artists. They were comfortable in their own skins. They offered lessons with real substance and with a sense of verve or moxie that made them unique and memorable. They taught with an apparent ease, drawing on years of experience and accumulated knowledge. They dared to be silly with their students, wore costumes, hats, sang (often badly) and told stories about themselves and their former students.

What I learned from these remarkable women is that we are very hard on ourselves and often do not view ourselves as others do. We do not give ourselves the same breaks we generously give to others. These women were happy in their work, but worried that they did not do enough or do it well enough. I felt that they did their work extremely well. They argued that they could do more and do this or that much better with more time or more effort.

When I was told that I had been chosen as the recipient of this prestigious award, I felt that I had not done enough, nor well enough to deserve this honor, nor your praise. I remember thinking, "I'm not finished with my work yet. I have not done enough. I have so much more to do. I'd better do something really good now." Like my respected colleagues in the elementary art classrooms, I know that I could do more and that I could do better if I just had some time and energy.

For now, I will take the time to feel grateful to you for honoring me with this award. I will bask in this moment. I am working on balance in my life.

Author's note:

I want to thank Renee Sandell for asking the audience during the 1997 WCA awards presentation to envision a person to nominate for this year. Kathleen Desmond envisioned me and I am forever indebted to her for following through with her nomination of me. My gratitude goes also to Martha Taunton, Larry Kanter, Rebecca Brooks, Sam Compton, and Jessie Lovano-Kerr who wrote letters on my behalf to the nominations committee and to Carmen Armstrong and her committee for selecting me as the 1998 recipient of the June King McFee Award. I am proud to receive this award and honored that it carries the name of June King McFee.

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Karen L. Carroll
Mary J. Rouse Award
Acceptance Speech
1998

I am immensely honored to receive this award from the Women's Caucus. I am most grateful to Renee Sandell who envisioned this and who I envision here with me tonight. She has a front row seat in my mind. I am also humbled by the kind words Georgia Collins, Christy Parks, and Jan Olson offered on my behalf. It is indeed humbling to look over my shoulder at the awardees who have preceded me and I see before me an audience of potential nominees.

I found Doug Blandy's acceptance speech from last year's award a good model and I would like to follow his example by sharing some of the beliefs and values that have shaped my journey in art education. Along the way, I would like to mention those who have contributed to my evolution as a person and as a professional. The three values I would like to talk about are: Community, Transformation, and Seeing the Forest for the Trees.

Community

I came across a notion in sociology when I was trying to argue the formation of special programs for the gifted in art. Simply put, the idea was that we come to know who we are within the context of community. Certainly, the profession of teaching art, national and state organizations, the Women's Caucus, and our own places of teaching provides us with "communities" in which we come to know ourselves and each other better. Perhaps like many of you, I held some intuitive notions about what I liked when I was young but who I have become has been shaped in large part by others, what they saw in me that

I could not see, what they let me try my hand at, and how they supported me in the process.

Part of my artist identity was formed in the community found in the art room and the yearbook office in my high school in Cheektowaga, New York and I owe a great deal to three art teachers who redirected my life from a path into nursing to a path into teaching art. Still others have contributed to my artist identity: I carry fond memories of being mentored by photographer Oscar Bailey and printmaker Frank Eckmier at Buffalo State. All helped me discover the value art-making has as a process for coming to know more about what I think and feel.

Another part of my identity, having to do with counseling and personnel, was shaped in undergraduate and graduate school, especially by a number of women who trusted me and gave me responsibilities under the Dean of Women's Staff at Penn State. Here I learned some useful lessons like how to throw football players out of the dorm lobby at midnight and, more so, about the need students have to process their journeys in search for identity. I am indebted to Dorothy Harris, Dean of Women, and several others from her staff who nurtured and guided development in student personnel, a career path I almost pursued.

My decision to stay in art education is due in part to Ed Mattill, who opened the art education door to me at Penn State, and to the wonderful supportive mentoring of Alice Schwartz. Today, I am still using the lessons she taught me about doing research in the classroom, and of course, she got me interested in television and since then I have been using video as a tool for teaching and reflection.

I also benefited from a powerful experience working in a small