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ABSTRACT

Current trends and forces that may deter the future of women art faculty in higher education were examined. Women have been acquiring the necessary credentials for employment and promotion in art departments, but they are balanced between a future of full participation in academe and a decline to tokenism. Women constitute over 50 percent of the undergraduate art majors, but the percentage of women in art faculties has been declining to a low of 19.5 percent in 1974, and the status of women in art administration is even lower. Hiring, promotion, tenure, and salary differentials have been discriminatory against women. Women are not fairly represented on art studies, art education, or art history faculties. Lack of visibility in exhibitions, publications, and on college faculties has made it difficult for women to present themselves as serious artists and teachers. The influence of the women's movement on attitudes and social change, laws which prohibit discrimination in education and employment, and affirmative action programs are discussed. (SW)

TOTTERING ON THE BRINK

The Future of Women Art Faculty in Higher Education

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This is a year of optimism for women. Nineteen hundred seventy-five was proclaimed by the United Nations as International Women's Year to focus on the efforts of women in achieving legal equality and integration into the economics of their countries.[1] Thus, it should be a year of significant progress toward equality and opportunity for women. It is most appropriate, therefore, that the National Council of Art Administrators selected this year to examine the current trends and forces which may determine the future of women art faculty in higher education.

What is the present status of women art faculty and what are the factors already at work determining their future? At first glance this future looks very bright. The new feminist movement which emerged in the 1960's caused a rise in women's self-image and their aspirations for achievement, as well as a rise in women's and men's consciousness of sex discrimination and inequality. In addition, since 1964, five federal laws and one executive order prohibiting sex discrimination in employment and education have come into being.[2]

Professional organizations, such as the Women's Caucus for Art and the National Art Education Association's Women's Caucus have been established to support and foster women in visual art professions. Women artists, historians and educators are gaining increased recognition in the mass media, professional journals and in colleges through women's studies courses, which helps to encourage young women to enter these fields. More opportunities for scholarships and grants exist today for women interested in higher education in art, and women artists are using slide registries, women's galleries, and protest activities to

increase their representation in art museums. Thus, women are finally amassing the necessary credentials for employment and promotion in art departments. Finally, more women are becoming heads of households in an inflated economy and out of necessity are demanding equal pay and advancement in their jobs. These significant changes along with present governmental concern should lead to more equal and open opportunities for women in every occupation, including academe.

Other, more negative factors, however, may counterbalance this progress. A depressed economy, rising unemployment and the end of the baby-boom era in education are resulting in smaller college enrollments decreasing the need for college faculty. In addition, we are beginning to see a renewed emphasis on the educational basics of reading, writing, arithmetic and science, and a corresponding de-emphasis on the arts and humanities. Colleges are frequently viewed as vocational finishing schools, rather than institutions for cultural and intellectual development. These trends shift the enrollment in college departments away from personal enrichment curriculums such as liberal arts and into business and other vocationally oriented fields. While enrollments in the visual arts have not yet been effected,[3] they could decrease if employment opportunities worsen. A potential for a male backlash to women's aggressive demands for jobs in academe and equality in the male art world also exists.

Both positive and negative forces will, therefore, effect the future of women art faculty in higher education. At present, women are tottering on the brink; balancing precariously between a future of full participation in academe or a decline to tokenism. This paper will examine these forces with the hope of painting a realistic picture of the future for women art faculty in higher education and of suggesting some ways to influence their future. It is also hoped that this report will motivate faculty and administrators to examine the status of women in their departments and to renew their efforts to close the gap between the ideology of equal rights and current practices.

Status of Women Art Faculty

The 20th century American Art world, including academe, has traditionally been a man's world. It has consisted primarily of male artists, critics, professors, journalists and historians creating, studying and writing about the male experience and male symbolism; and of male museum curators and gallery owners displaying male art to be purchased by male patrons. While women have participated in each of these areas, their contributions were rarely acknowledged or rewarded and often were devalued. As seen, for example, in these lines from an early review of Louise Nevelson's sculptures: "We learned the artist is a woman, in time to check our enthusiasm. Had it been otherwise we might have hailed these sculptural expressions as by surely a great figure among moderns."[4]

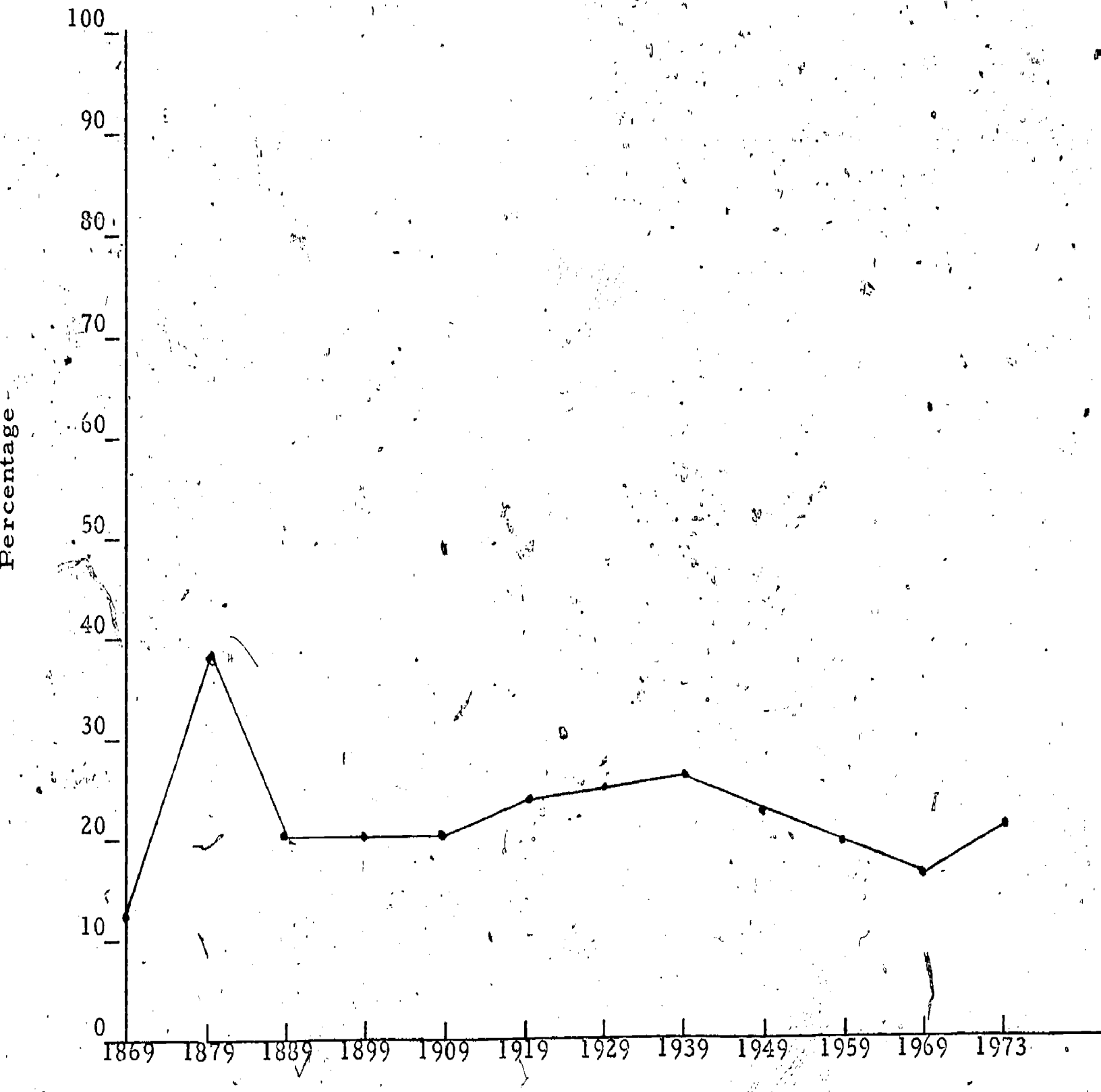
One would expect that women would finally be receiving equal status and opportunity in the art academe with all the publicity being given to the achievements of the new feminist movement, with the institution of federal laws prohibiting sex discrimination by federal contractors, and with the establishment of affirmative action offices on college campuses. The contrary is true, however. Women faculty in academe are barely holding ground and in art departments women have been decreasing in number since the 1930's. Table 1 shows the percentage of women of total higher education faculty from 1869 to 1973.[5,6,7,8]

Insert Table 1 here

Of significance is the fact that while in 1972, 46 percent of all undergraduates and 37 percent of graduate students were women, less than 30 percent of higher education faculty were women; and this includes Catholic women's colleges, black colleges and two-year colleges which have comparatively large proportions of women on their faculty.[9] Even more significant, however, is that from 1939 to 1973 women faculty were declining in their relative representation and status on college faculties, even during the 1960's when there was explosive growth in higher education.[10]

TABLE 1

Percentage of Total Faculty in Higher Education Who Are Women, 1869-1973



A similar pattern exists in the faculties of art departments (studio, art history and art education). Table 2 shows the percentage of women of total faculty in art departments from 1963 to 1974.[11,12,13] Of

Insert Table 2 here

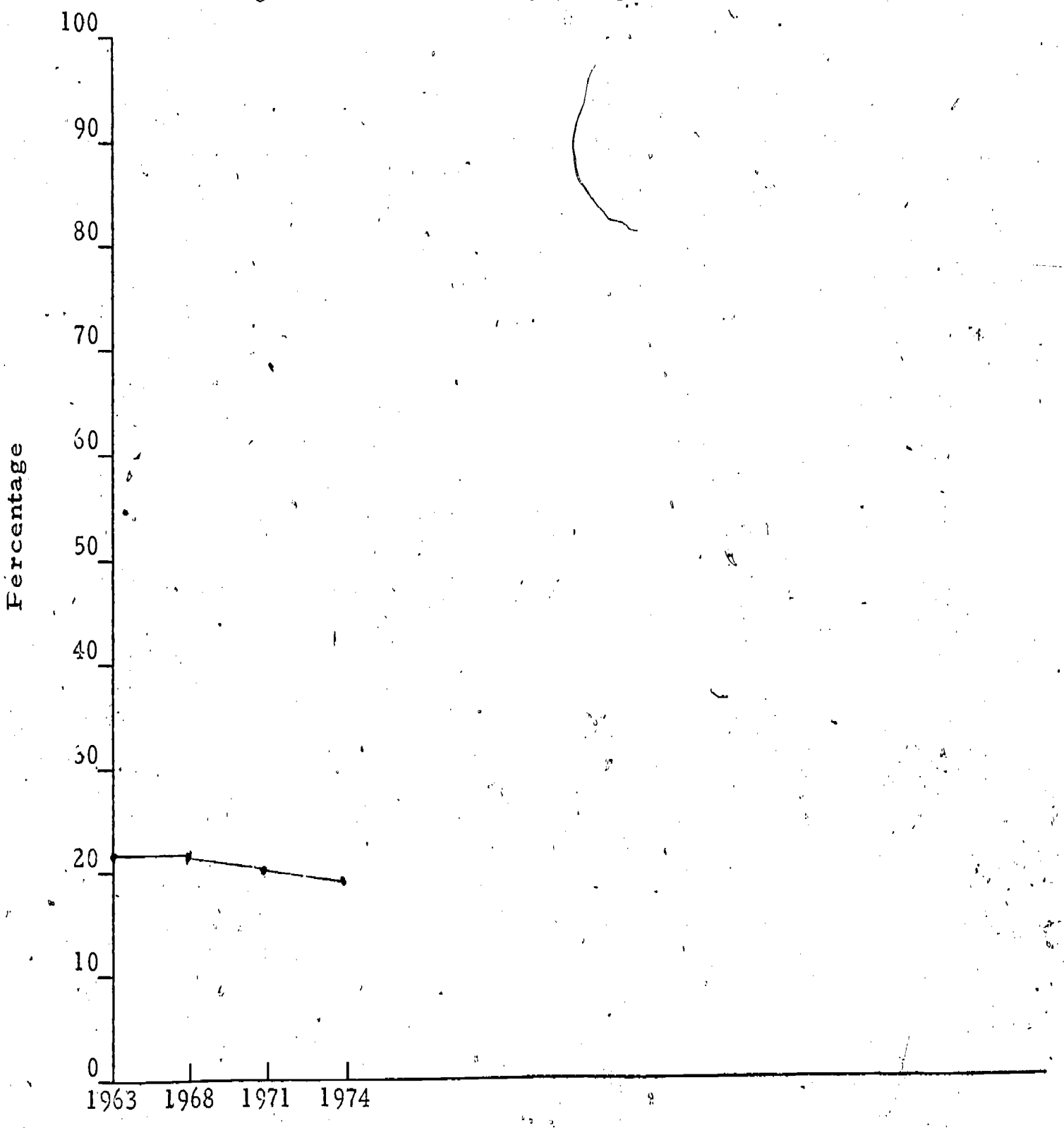
significance here is the fact that women constitute over 50 percent of the undergraduate art majors and almost 50 percent of the graduate art majors, yet the percentage of women in art faculties has been decreasing from 22 percent in 1963 to a low of 19.5 percent in 1974.[14] The status of women in art administration is even worse. In 1970 women were only 5 percent of the chairpersons of art departments and only one percent of chairpersons of art departments in schools with an enrollment of over 10,000.[15]

The situation for promotion and tenure has also been discriminatory against women in academe. In general, women are concentrated in the lower, non-tenured positions (26.7 percent of women are tenured, 57 percent of men are tenured[16]) with many women in part-time positions which lack the fringe benefits of full time employment. While the proportion of women faculty members has changed little in the past ten years, there has been a sharp rise in the proportion of women with the rank of instructor, meaning a sharp decrease in women in upper level ranks.[17] White and White found that in the art departments that have Ph.D.'s on their faculties, women hold 25 percent more doctorates.[18] Thus, although women are concentrated at the lower ranks in art faculties, they are more highly educated on the average than their male colleagues.

A study of academic rank by Astin and Bayer found that even after control of the predictor variables accounting for over 60 percent of the variance in academic rank, there was a significant difference between the sexes; i.e., much of the differential could still be attributed solely to sex. They concluded that even: "When a woman attains the doctorate from a prestigious institution and demonstrates great scholarly

TABLE 2

Percentage of Total Art Faculty in Higher Education Who Are Women, 1963-1974



productivity, she still usually cannot expect promotion to a high rank as quickly as her male counterpart."[19]

The situation for women faculty is the same in art departments as in academe in general. A survey of 164 art departments in American colleges and universities by the Women's Caucus of the College Art Association found that of the 2,465 full time positions surveyed, 14.8 percent of the tenured faculty were women and 25.8 percent of the non-tenured faculty were women. According to rank, women were 30.2 percent of the instructors, 22.5 percent of the assistant professors, 17.9 percent of the associate professors and 12 percent of the full professors.[20] "The higher, the fewer" relationship prevails.

The same patterns of bias also exist in salary differentials. Women in academe receive less salary than men of the same rank, years of employment, degree, productivity and work activities.[21] In 1974, women's salaries were 83.2 percent of men's salaries.[22] That is approximately a $2000 to $2500 differential.[23] In a well controlled study, Astin and Bayer found that sex is a better independent predictor of salary in academia than such other factors as number of years of professional employment, whether one holds a doctorate and number of books published.[24]

These figures are highly suggestive of discriminatory practices in hiring and promotion in all areas of academe. What is most alarming about these figures, however, is that while there appears to be a trend toward the employment of more women in faculty positions, in general, there is a continued decrease in the proportion and status of women on art faculties.

To what can this decrease be attributed? While it is doubtful that art departments make deliberate decisions against hiring and promoting women, the methods used to make these decisions tend to favor men. The common explanation that qualified women can't be found, or that marriage hinders job performance just doesn't hold water. Simon, Clark and Galway found that married women Ph.D.'s published more in

the field of art history than single women or married men.[25] Ferber and Loeb found that male and female faculty members are similarly productive, though not similarly rewarded.[26] In addition, Austin found that ten years after receiving their degrees, 91 percent of women Ph.D.'s were working in their field, 81 percent full time and 75 percent had worked continuously.[27] Considering the problems of job discrimination, nepotism rules, family responsibilities and social pressures, these figures indicate a high degree of professional commitment by women Ph.D.'s. What, then, is the explanation for so few women on art faculties?

Competition for college teaching positions has become increasingly stiffer over the years and the credentials necessary for these jobs are difficult for women to obtain. Art departments place little emphasis on the degrees held by candidates, as evidenced by the fact that while women received almost half of the doctorates in art history, more than half of the master's in art history and almost 40 percent of the doctorates in "fine and applied arts" in 1971, they are only 19.5 percent of art faculties today.[28] In studio departments emphasis is placed, instead, on good exhibition records, visibility as an artist, and past college teaching experience, all of which are difficult for women to obtain. Whitesel points out that: "If a woman has not succeeded in exhibiting her work or cannot convince a faculty or selection committee that she will exhibit, the chances of finding or keeping a teaching position are limited."[29]

Nevertheless, opportunity for participation in museum exhibitions has been very limited for women. Lippard reported that of 713 artists represented in group shows at the Los Angeles County Museum from 1959 to 1971, only twenty-nine were women.[30] Baker found that from 1965 to 1970, only eighty-two of a total of 919 artists exhibiting in group exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York were women.[31] And Cochran reported that at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, from 1930 to 1973, only five of 1,000 one-artist

shows were by women.[32] Finally, Tucker found that the Guggenheim Museum of New York has had no major women's exhibit, the Museum of Modern Art has had only four between 1942 and 1969, and of ten leading New York galleries, 96.4 percent of their artists are male.[33]

Visibility and recognition through art reviews has been equally limited for women. A study of the reviews of work recently exhibited by living American artists in five art journals, four newspapers and two national news magazines for the one year period from June, 1970 to June, 1971 revealed significantly fewer reviews of women's art than of men's art.[34] It was found that Time had a ratio of 9 to 1; Newsweek, 27 to 1; Art in America, 12 to 1; Art Forum, 7 to 1; Arts Magazine, 5 to 1; Art News, 4 to 1; and Crafts Horizons, 1.3 to 1. The male-female ratios for the number of art reproductions shown with the reviews were even more discriminatory towards women artists. While part of the variability in these statistics can be explained by the disproportionate number of women's as compared to men's art included in exhibits, the large difference between Newsweek's coverage of women's art and Time's, or between Art in America's and Art News' indicates discrimination is occurring. Women artists who aspire to college teaching are not as able to acquire as distinguished credentials as their male peers and are therefore less employable, regardless of their skills as artists and teachers.

Credential requirements for employment in art education departments have been more varied and flexible than for studio departments, thus allowing for easier entrance for women. With the present tightening job market, however, the doctorate, a potential for national leadership and/or publications have become the required job credentials. Again, women are at a disadvantage. Family responsibilities, social pressure and discrimination in financial support for graduate study keep many qualified women from obtaining a doctorate. Heiss has presented evidence of bias against women in general admissions and financial aid policies in doctoral programs and there is no reason to expect the

situation to be different for art education.[35] Holmstrom and Holmstrom found several factors operating in doctoral programs which adversely affect women's success including: lack of support and availability of faculty to women students, and negative attitudes toward women by faculty. Recognition of these faculty attitudes by women doctoral students significantly decreased their commitment to stay in graduate school.[36]

National leadership is also difficult to achieve. While many women have contributed to the field of art education, only a very small percentage are recognized for their contributions either in the literature or in national organization leadership. Of thirteen presidents of the National Art Education Association, only three have been women.[37] Publications are also more difficult for women to get. Studies in Art Education, art education's only research journal, has had two women as senior editors, but only 20 percent of the articles published have been by women.[38]

Credential requirements for employment in art history departments are difficult to identify, though they are often stated to be the doctorate and publication productivity. Women seeking a Ph.D. in art history probably encounter the same pressures as women seeking other higher degrees, yet they received 43.7 percent of the Ph.D.'s in art history in 1971 and 68.8 percent of the master's degrees.[39] Women art historians have significantly higher rates of publications than their 23 percent representation in art history departments, except at the rank of instructor.[40] Thus, the discrepancy between the number of qualified women available and the number of women hired for art history faculty positions indicates that sexual credentials are more important than the Ph.D. degree or publications for employment in art history departments.

It is evident, therefore, that obtaining the necessary professional credentials for entrance into the art academe has been very difficult for women, nor has it ensured employment when obtained. Lack of visibility in exhibitions, publications and on college faculties has made it difficult for women to present themselves as serious artists and teachers.

It has also denied women students the role models needed to project college art teaching as an appropriate career choice, thus discouraging even more women from entering the field.

Women are not fairly represented on art studio, art education or art history faculties, nor do they receive equal pay or promotion. With the current trend toward fewer women art faculty and lower faculty rank, women who do aspire to college teaching can expect to work harder than their male counterparts, acquire fewer credentials, receive fewer job offers and once employed, receive less pay and take longer to rise in rank. A very tiny percentage of women can realistically hope to become art administrators.

Changes: The New Feminist Movement vs. the Male Art World

> "The second most fundamental revolution in the affairs of mankind on earth is now occurring. The first came when man settled down from hunting, fishing, herding and gathering to sedentary agriculture and village life. The second is now occurring as women, no longer so concentrated on and sheltered for their child-bearing and child-rearing functions, are demanding equality of treatment in all aspects of life, are demanding a new sense of purpose."[41]
>
> Anon.

Historically, the visual arts have had a clear delineation between male and female roles. The making of art, in our country, was traditionally a female activity. Most men occupied themselves with financial and political matters, leaving craft making and the pursuit of culture to women. Upper class young women of the 18th and 19th centuries were taught to paint on china, embroider and appreciate great (meaning European) art. Kate Millett points out that this was for both social and political reasons:

> "In keeping with the inferior sphere of culture to which women in patriarchy have always been restricted, the present encouragement of their 'artistic' interests through study of the humanities is hardly more than an extension of the 'accomplishments' they once cultivated in preparation for the marriage market. Achievement in the arts and humanities is reserved, now, as it has been historically, for males."[42]

Lower class women, by necessity, had to learn quilting, weaving, dressmaking, candlemaking and other crafts. As a result, craftmaking was regarded as "woman's work".

Though only male artists received public recognition and prestige they also received an effeminate stigma. Partially because they were involved in "women's work" and partially because their work too closely resembled the activities of an old world aristocracy regarded as effeminate. In defensive reaction, perhaps, the professional world of art and academe denied and excluded women's participation, thus, making a clear difference between men's work and women's "crafts and play". Several writers have pointed out the exclusion in college art classes of female artists and the female experience as expressed in women's art. Kassman-Rickert points out that not one woman artist is included in Jansen's History of Art, one of the most frequently used art history texts.[43] Snyder-Ott poignantly describes the effects of this male ethos on the female student:

> "As a woman art student I had always had great confidence in what was 'male'. I sought male approval for my work. As a woman I really believed that being told that I painted 'like a man' or 'thought like a man' was the ultimate compliment and goal. Even semantics became important to me concerning my exhibitions. My exhibits were carefully listed as 'one man'. There was always the possibility that someone wouldn't take my work seriously if the prefix 'woman' were attached to my name."[44]

With the emergence of the new feminist movement, the male ethos in art began to break down, as did most of society's rigid concepts of masculine and feminine behavior. This relaxation of traditional male and female roles in art should hopefully encourage and ease the access of women into the art academe.

The women's movement has also caused women to see themselves and set their goals in new ways. Many women no longer feel they must be less intelligent and less aggressive than men. They are rejecting the psycho-social-cultural context that required them to be passive homemakers, and are seeing themselves as capable of professional achievement and "artists to be reckoned with".[45] They are willing to persevere in career pursuit at the delay or expense of marriage and family. Epstein describes this change as a "revolution of rising expectations—the struggle for the right to a chance to succeed . . . ."[46] However, while rising expectations will increase the number of women seeking careers in the art academe, they will also lead to a more militant concern by women for equal treatment once employed. This, in fact, has already started to occur. While popular rhetoric states that equality of opportunity is a fundamental goal of our democratic society and higher education is a crucial way to achieve that equality, there is a growing consciousness by women that they have been treated badly by higher education and by the professional art world. As a result, women have joined together and are utilizing political action to end discrimination. Pressure tactics such as defensive lawsuits against universities and picketing and sit-ins on galleries that have excluded women have been used. Slide registries have been formed to make examples of women's art available to museums, galleries, collectors and schools.[47] Women art centers and cooperative art galleries are springing up around the country and women's art magazines are being published; such as Women in Art,[48] The Feminist Art Journal,[49] and Aphra.[50]

Professional organizations have been formed to support the causes

of women artists and teachers in their professional endeavors. The largest and most powerful of these is the Women's Caucus for Art (W. C. A.) which was formed in 1972 as part of the College Art Association. Now independent, it has over 850 members. To fulfill its objective "to advance the concerns of women artists, art historians, and museum professionals . . . to improve hiring prospects for women . . . and fight . . . discrimination in employment . . ." the W. C. A. supports research on the status of women, maintains a placement service, publishes a newsletter, runs conferences, etc.[51] A similar organization, the Women's Caucus of the National Art Education Association was formed in 1974 to support the causes of women art educators and to end sex discrimination in school art programs.[52] Both organization's success and popularity indicate women's increasing willingness to act against discriminatory practices in their professions.

Other trends in society will also affect the future of women in the art academe. The oral contraceptive pill, concern for overpopulation, more acceptance of child care centers and an increased life span are resulting in fewer children to be cared for over a shorter percentage of a woman's life. Thus, women have many more years to use productively now that they are spending fewer years in childbearing and child rearing. To valuably utilize these years more women are getting higher education and considering careers. In the home, men are beginning to share house and child care responsibilities as women share the economic responsibilities, resulting in more free time for women to pursue careers.

The full emergence of women into academe is yet to happen, but as women's roles, obligations, and aspirations change they will enter in increasing numbers, and their new assertiveness in demanding employment equality should be attended to by higher education. As women become more politically astute and organized they will voice their demands for equal treatment more persistently and militantly. Mary Garrard, President of the Women's Caucus for Art, writes of future

objectives, ". . . we intend to press harder for equality in hiring and for equal treatment of women in university art departments and in museums."[53]

Outside Forces For and Against Equality

Five federal laws and one executive order prohibit discrimination in education and employment; four of these protect the rights of women faculty in higher education.[54] Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination in employment by institutions with fifteen or more employees. Executive Order 11246 as amended by Order 11375 prohibits discrimination by institutions with federal contracts of over $10,000. Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination in education programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Finally, the Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination in salaries and most fringe benefits on the basis of sex. This latter act has been used extensively by women faculty to remedy discrimination in higher education institutions and will probably be used with increasing frequency as more women become aware of their predicaments and their rights.

In addition, under Revised Order No. 4 of December, 1971, institutions with federal contracts totaling $50,000 or more and having fifty or more employees are required to have Affirmative Action Plans, including numerical goals and timetables.[55] Many are departments are implementing affirmative action programs, but the continued decline in the percentage of women on art faculties would indicate that these efforts are merely superficial attempts to comply with federal regulations.

Unfortunately, this situation is not unique to art departments. A recent assessment of the effectiveness of affirmative action programs in colleges and universities found no substantial change in hiring, promotion or tenure granting patterns for women faculty and tokenism was seen to account for the limited advancement of women in administrative positions.[56]

A decrease of 9.5 percent in the differential between male and female salaries for the period between 1969 and 1973 was reported, however, another study found an increase of 5.7 percent in the salary differential from 1955 to 1968.[57] Thus, from 1955 to 1973 women closed the salary gap by only 3.2 percent, not much of a gain.

In sum, while affirmative action programs and federal legislation appear to have the potential to eliminate discrimination in hiring, salary and promotion in higher education, their actual effectiveness is still highly questionable.

Affirmative action programs cannot be successful, however, if there are few new positions to be filled. Two factors are occurring concurrently in our country which will result in smaller college enrollments causing a decreased need for college faculty; a long term general recession, and a drop in the national birth rate. Clark Kerr, chairman of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, estimates a reduction in the number of students on college campuses in the 1970's and 1980's, with 5 to 10 percent fewer students in 1990 than in 1980.[58] Stephen Dresh, Director of Research in the Economics of Higher Education at Yale University makes a more pessimistic prediction of a 46 percent decline in enrollments between 1980 and 1990.[59] Thus, a decreased need for faculty, male and female, will occur at a time when there will be an overabundant supply of qualified males due to present high enrollments. Given the current negative attitude toward women artists and discrimination towards women art faculty, there is no reason to expect women would not be most hurt by the coming job squeeze.

Several authors do feel the Creative Arts will buck the trend of shrinking enrollments. Kerr believes an educated public seeks out culture, as evidenced by the increased interest in the arts we see today.[60] Morrison, author of The Rise of Arts on the American Campus, predicts, "... that the rate of growth in the arts in higher education will exceed normal growth in higher education as a whole."[61] If both authors are correct, this may keep the arts at a stationary level

when other departments shrink. As the recession continues and the job market for art graduates tightens, however, it is unlikely that the arts will not become part of the already occurring shift of student enrollment away from cultural enrichment programs and into vocational and business programs. At a time when women's aspirations are rising, opportunities are decreasing. The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education warns that: "Women and members of minority groups have greatly increased their hopes for faculty positions at a time when the rate of new hires is declining rapidly."[62]

The future for women art faculty does not look overly hopeful. Present discrimination, a shrinking job market and a time of financial entrenchment in institutions of higher education will probably mean smaller salary gains and fewer jobs for everyone, particularly women. The current statistics on the status of women art faculty and the ineffectiveness of affirmative action programs so far also give no indication for future improvements in salary, rank, or tenure of women. While it cannot be denied that male attitudes are becoming more accepting of women artists and teachers, this new openness is not reflected in concrete opportunities for women. The one positive factor lies in the women themselves; in their increasing ability and willingness to utilize legislative action, group power and personal fortitude to achieve their equal share of the pie. "The hand that rocked the cradle has learned to rock the boat."[63]

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