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NICE GIRLS, LEFT-WING LADIES, AND MERRY BANDS:

A NEW GENERATION OF ART MUSEUM EDUCATORS

IN THE 1970s

A Dissertation in

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ABSTRACT

The field of art museum education underwent a significant transformation between the years of 1965 and 1980. What was initially considered a minor position in art museums quickly became a serious profession—with an historical, theoretical, and philosophical foundation—propelled by a new generation of young, educated, and progressive women. In this research, I explore how and why this phenomenon occurred by conveying the personal and professional stories of three female art museum educators who were active as young professionals in the late 1960s and 1970s and thereafter continued to work in the museum field. I utilized the methodology of oral history to learn how their work and their personal philosophies were shaped by larger social, political, and cultural discourses and identified common themes that emerged through their interviews. I argue that the three conditions, including the gendered contexts in which they grew up, their personal progressive philosophies, and the social relationships that each of them built with colleagues were deeply influential to their work, enabling them to impact the field in ways that were transformative and enduring.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures vii
Acknowledgements viii
Dedication x

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION 1

Chapter 2. INTRODUCTION TO ART MUSEUM EDUCATION 7
- Art Museum Educators 9
- Underlying Assumptions and Specific Limitations 13
  - Assumptions 13
  - Limitations 13
- Research Questions 14
- Significance 16
- Definition of Key Terms 17
  - Art Museum Education 17
  - Class 18
  - Feminism 18
  - Feminization 19
  - Gendering 20
  - Professionalization 20
- Research Methods 21
  - *Figure 1: Overview of Historical Research Processes* 21
  - Oral History 22
- Overview of Chapters 25

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS. 27
- Methodology 27
  - Feminist Research 27
  - Historical Research in Art Education 30
- Methods 33
  - Compilation of primary and secondary sources 33
  - Oral Histories 36
- Procedures 37
  - Identifying Candidates 37
  - The Interviews 37
  - The Narratives 38

Chapter 4. HISTORICAL CONTEXTS 41
- Art Museum Education 41
- Women as Practitioners of Art Museum Education 42
  - Scholars 46
- Art Museum Educators in the 1970s 48
  - Art Museums and the Postmodern Era 48
  - Civil Rights Movement 49

Economic Issues....50
State of the Field....51
Educational Activity in Art Museums....52

Chapter 5. VOICES....57
Interviewees as Subjects....58
Elaine Heumann Gurian....60
Background....61
The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston....62
The Boston Children's Museum....64
Figure 2: Elaine Heumann Gurian....67
Later Career....67
Carol B. Stapp....68
Background....68
Philadelphia Museum of Art....71
Figure 3: Carol Stapp....75
The George Washington University....77
Later Career....78
Linda Sweet....78
Background....79
Brooklyn Museum....80
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston....86
Later Career....87
Figure 4: Linda Sweet....89
Emerging Themes....90

Chapter 6. NICE GIRLS....91
Nice Girls Defined....91
Jewish Identity and the Construction of Post-WWII Womanhood....93
Nice Girls in Higher Education....98
Nice Girls as Art Museum Educators....101
Historical Precedents....101
Nice Girls in the Art Museum....102
Educational Work in the Service of the Young....103
Positionality in the Art Museum....105
Conclusions....110

Chapter 7. LEFT-WING LADIES....112
Left-Wing Ladies Defined....112
The Impact of Political and Social Action on the Art Museum World....113
Feminist Activism....115
Socio-economic and Racial Justice for Underserved Populations....123
The Vietnam War....126
The Impact of Left-Wing Ladies....127
Educational Philosophy and Practice....129
Conclusions....132

Chapter 8: MERRY BANDS 134
Merry Bands 134
Merry Bands Defined 135
Space for Institutional Change 137
Pedagogical Shift 142
Influential Literature 145
High-Ranking Supporters of Art Museum Education 150
Influencing the Broader Field of Art Museum Education 151
The Council on Museums and Education in the Visual Arts 153
Professional Associations 154
Emerging Literature 156
Early Professional Education 157
Conclusions 158

Chapter 9: LEGACIES 160
Art Museum Education after 1980 160
The End of an Era 161
Social and Political Changes 164
Professional Education and Training 172
Conclusions 174
Research Questions—And Answers 175
Future Research: Patterns in Practice 177
Significance and Implications 178
Implications for Practicing Art Museum Educators 180
Implications for Students and Future Art Museum Educators 181
Implications for the Broader Field 182

Appendix A: Letter to potential interviewees 184

Appendix B: Interview Questions 185

BIBLIOGRAPHY 187

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Overview of Historical Research Processes
by M.A. Stankiewicz 21
Figure 2. Elaine Heumann Gurian and Boston Children's Museum colleagues,
ca. 1976 67
Figure 3. Carol B. Stapp in the Philadelphia Museum of Art,
ca. 1976 75
Figure 4. Linda Sweet protesting in front of the MoMA,
ca. 1973 88

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DEDICATION

For

Paul & Ava

Women in academia have been fairly well studied, but the book on women as educators in art museums has yet to be written. (Downs, 1994, p. 92)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The roots of this research may be traced to questions that I began asking during my experiences as a new master's student in the art museum education program in Art Education at the University of Kansas in the mid-1990s. I began my studies when I was 21 years old, newly married, and a recent college graduate with bachelor's degrees in art history and English. The previous fall, I had made an appointment with Dr. Linda Stone-Ferrier, a scholar of 17th century Dutch and Flemish art and the head of the art history program at the University of Kansas, to discuss professional options for students such as myself. I knew I would need to go to graduate school in order to continue working in art history, which I had discovered a year into my undergraduate studies, but I didn't know what professional options were open to people with master's degrees. I also knew that Dr. Stone-Ferrier would understand my practical approach to my graduate studies, since I recalled a particularly poignant moment in one of her classes wherein she despaired of her young daughter proclaiming that she wanted to be a princess when she grew up. Though primarily concerned with the stereotypical, gendered options that her daughter felt were open to her as an adult, she revealed that she had become an art historian because she didn't think it was possible for women to become architects, which is what she had dreamed of being when she was young. Although she was a very successful art historian, her choice of profession was, at least at one time, a very practical one.

During our meeting, Dr. Stone-Ferrier told me about a rather new option in the art education graduate program that prepared students to work as educators in art museums and suggested that I contact the director of the program, Dr. Pat Villeneuve, who was also the Curator of Education at the university's Spencer Museum of Art. Dr. Stone-Ferrier knew that I had been a resident assistant for the past two years and that I enjoyed working with people and designing educational programs for student residents, which were good background experiences for someone who might become an art museum educator. After meeting with Pat (who doesn't permit her students to call her Dr. Villeneuve) and having discussions with two students currently enrolled in the program, I applied and was accepted. The very same weekend that I accepted a live-in position in the university's housing system that would allow my husband and me to live rent free and provide meals at a low cost. As someone who put myself through undergraduate school with little assistance, I was always very conscious of money and resources, and the live-in position coupled with a new academic adventure made me feel like everything was falling magically into place.

While I was taking classes, I thought it would be wise to gain some practical experience in art museums by volunteering as a docent, or volunteer educator, at the Spencer. The docents there were a wonderful group of people—energetic, humorous, and dedicated. I was immediately aware that they were almost unanimously other things as well: white, female, and upper-middle class. At times, I felt as if I was miles away from understanding their worldviews for reasons that had everything to do with class and status. I had never traveled outside of the Midwest, and while I adored hearing their stories about travels to places near and far, I couldn't fathom spending thousands of dollars to get somewhere and stay there for a few days, no matter how beautiful the place. I was lost in their conversations about wine, food, shopping, social gossip, and family, because I shopped for clothing, furniture, and everything else at Target or JCPenney, ate at the local cheap Vietnamese restaurant where a meal for two cost $15 including tip, and

I knew little to nothing about the social or academic elite of our university community. I had a difficult time listening to them talk about their children, not only because I couldn't relate to being a parent just yet, but because I couldn't fathom being able to afford down payments for children's houses or putting them through Ivy League schools when we were in the back yard of a perfectly wonderful state university. I felt awkward, inept, and overwhelmingly unqualified to talk about anything except the works of art in the museum.

When I attended my first National Art Education Association (NAEA) conference and convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, this feeling intensified. Although I had come to expect that volunteers in museums were mostly women and knew that the four other students in my small program were female, I was a bit taken aback at the number of women who attended sessions for art museum educators. They all seemed to be so well dressed and put together, in their mid-twenties to mid-thirties, and almost entirely white, at least from all outward appearances. I began to wonder about this situation: Had women always comprised the majority of art museum educators? If so, why? What was it about women—particularly young, educated, white women—or about this particular profession that caused this to be the norm?

While researching the literature review for my master's thesis, *Docent Training and Education in Mountain-Plains Art Museums* (Kletchka, 1998), I frequently came across references from the late 1960s and early 1970s as I wrote about docent volunteers and docent education, the growth of art museum education and docent programs, and the broader cultural and political contexts that positioned art museum education at the forefront of museum and art education journals of the time. I became keenly aware that this was a particularly rich period in the history of art museum education and that it might be worthy of future study. I was aware at the time that the 1970s were a particularly tumultuous period of time in United States history, but I hadn't yet considered the ways in which the political, social, and cultural events of the time might affect museums or the educators who worked in them.

As a doctoral student and an art museum educator, I continued to attend conferences and began to co-present and present sessions at NAEA. I became aware of and began to explore the intricate historical connections between women and art museums, particularly as they existed in the realm of education. I have often wondered why I feel so strongly about researching the history of art museum education. Of all of the aspects of the field that I could choose to explore—curriculum, pedagogy, educational theory and/or practice—I chose a topic that I initially perceived as perhaps the least practical. As an art museum education practitioner, I thought I should produce research that would inform the everyday gallery practices of my colleagues and peers, that would provide some answers to the myriad questions about teaching and learning in the museum context that appear to continually confound us. After all, the largest gatherings in the National Art Education Association's Museum Education Division have always included a number of "here's what I did and how you might adapt it" sessions. The history of art museum education did not strike me as information that would either be incredibly useful or terribly interesting to others. I now recognize that my focus on helping others by finding some of the answers for art museum education was both a product of my conditioning as a woman and a lack of understanding about the value of both personal experience and questioning traditional versions of history. I eventually came to the decision that perhaps one of the biggest stumbling blocks in understanding our profession is that there are very few resources that chronicle, in-depth, the stories of art museum education practitioners from years past, and that it would be worthwhile to explore how the events of one time period in particular have had long-lasting and far-reaching consequences that affect even contemporary art museum educators.

For many years, frustration was my response to the inequities that I perceived as inherent in my chosen profession. Because I was so ensconced in my professional life, it was impossible for me to de-personalize it enough to step back and view it through a critical lens. My doctoral courses offered new mechanisms for understanding my situation. As I learned to think more critically, I began to consider issues and events from multiple perspectives, inquire more deeply into long-held assumptions and beliefs, and explore the relationship between my own lived experiences and the larger world. In the case of my dissertation topic, I originally sought to understand the discourses that shaped art museum education into an occupation practiced primarily by women, but soon realized that the topic was broad and vague for a study that, by necessity, requires specificity and a clear focus. This led me to consider a period of time in which art museum education changed radically, as did the roles, positionality, and experiences of the women who were educators in art museums. In essence, I questioned how and why the field changed so dramatically, and how women were a part of that change.

My challenge and hope in this project are to share personal accounts of art museum educators who worked at time of great change in the field and to contextualize their work, which shaped art museum education as a field in the mid 1960s to around 1980. It is my hope that my dissertation, in some way, can offer current and future practitioners of art museum education a glimpse of our historical foundations, an understanding of our present conditions, and a sense of strength derived from a shared past.

CHAPTER TWO: INTRODUCTION TO ART MUSEUM EDUCATION

The history of art museum education as a practice in the United States arguably begins in about 1870 with the formation of publicly funded art museums, including the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1920) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City (Howe, 1913), which were two of the first museums to institute public programming. In every American museum's charter after that date, education was prescribed as a key function of each institution (Rawlins, 1978), though the definition of education itself was not made expressly clear. Although new museums focused primarily on acquiring objects and financial backing for their growing institutions, art museum education began to emerge as a moral imperative to educate the tastes of the masses (Low, 1948), and as a way of combating negative aspects of society such as crime and excessive drinking (Alexander, 1979). Many museums also felt obligated to display and promote examples of design and decorative arts in the hopes of improving American-made products and the tastes of consumers, due in no small part to the wealthily industrialists who contributed heavily to their endowments (Newsom & Silver, 1978). A glimpse into the types of programs instituted in young museums, mainly lectures and gallery talks, reveals a desire to instruct a broad audience about art and art appreciation—typical offerings included art-historical lectures, interpretations of works of art given by volunteers, gallery talks by employees, and free admission for students and their teachers (Nichols, Alexander, & Yellis, 1984; Ramsay, 1938).

Between 1900 and 1930, art museum educators introduced a number of public programs in large, urban art museums, which extended the scope of their educational efforts from an occasional gallery talk or art lecture to extensive programming for adults, children, and schools and other academic institutions. Volunteer docents or educational guides, a particularly important element of many contemporary educational programs, were introduced at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (now the MFA Boston) in 1907 and in 1908 the Metropolitan appointed a docent of its own. A phenomenal number of programs addressed the needs of children and youth in the museum, including art classes, storytelling, museum games and activity cards, and clubs. Increased availability of resources for teachers, such as lantern slides and activity cards, also signaled a commitment to young learners (Ramsay, 1938).

The differences in opinion about the nature of museums and education became a secondary concern in the 1930s, due to the Depression and its financial, social, and political repercussions. Financial circumstances initiated a critique of policy and practice from within museums, as staff members began to realize that unless they made their institutions relevant to the general public, they risked losing the support they so desperately needed in a time of dire finances and human suffering. Despite this period of reevaluation, programs remained essentially the same in nature but were extended in scope (Low, 1948).

After the depression and war era of the 1930s and 1940s, the economic recovery of the 1950s, and the demand and protests for civil rights in the 1950s through 1960s, art museums found themselves in a very different place educationally (and in many other ways) than they were at the beginning of their existence some 100 years beforehand (Cherry, 1992; Zeller, 1989). For myriad reasons (explained in more detail on pages 48–56 of this dissertation), education programs became the common practice rather than the odd effort. Although various forms of education were a generally accepted component of art museum culture after the 1940s, it was not until thirty years later that educational programming became a comprehensive effort on the part of most American art museums.

Art Museum Educators

> Once it became allowable for women to work in an intellectual arena, they naturally came to museums because, in American society, cultural work is traditionally women's work . . . in the United States, culture was often considered frivolous. And as something frivolous it was consigned largely to women. (Pachter, 1986, p. 87)

Although the history of American art museum educators has not been well researched, there are a few things about this group of people that we know: The majority of them have been women (Glaser & Zenetou, 1994; Low, 1948; Rice, 2003). They often worked under less-than-optimal conditions—low pay (as differentiated from docents, who were volunteer educators), little respect from institutional colleagues, and few if any professional or educational resources (Glaser & Zenetou, 1994). However, these conditions began to change drastically in the late 1960s and 1970s, when art museum educators and their field began to receive a great deal of attention from philanthropic organizations, government funding agencies, museum directors and colleagues, educational institutions, and grass-roots organizers.

This dissertation is, at least in part, about three women—Elaine Heumann Gurian, Carol B. Stapp, and Linda Sweet—who worked as art museum educators in prominent institutions during the late 1960s and early 1970s. I conducted interviews with these individuals because all three of them are still active, senior-level members of the museum field (though no longer educators), and I wanted to learn what it was like to work in art museums when the profession of art museum education was experiencing a tremendous amount of change and growth. Furthermore, this dissertation is also about the political, social, educational, and cultural events of the time, which shaped the experiences of these women in myriad ways, as is evident from their stories. Because all of them went on to impact the field so greatly, their narratives are crucial to formulating an understanding of the current state of the field. That is where the final, and in some ways most important, element of this dissertation comes into being. As a practicing art museum educator, I had unresolved questions about the conditions in which I worked at three different institutions. I believe that all dissertations are borne of a set of questions that are personally meaningful—I can best describe my questions as nagging and persistent—and that the process of research helps to contextualize and answer those questions. For me, conducting this research helped sort out several questions: why most art museum educators are (and historically have been) women; why our work seems to be undervalued, particularly when compared to curatorial responsibilities; and why there is so little information on or understandings of the history of our profession. This dissertation argues that large social, political, and cultural discourses profoundly affect art museum education as well as the personal philosophies of art museum education professionals, an argument that is particularly salient during from the mid 1960s to 1980, a period of great change in the United States.

In her foreword for the edited book *Gender Perspectives, Essays on Women in Museums* (1994), Claudine Brown provides a perspective on the gendered hierarchies that dominated art museum education in the 1970s by revealing her experience of American culture in the 1950s as she was growing up—she recalled seeing male principals overseeing female teachers; male church elders and ministers managing congregations that were supported by the fundraising and other efforts of women parishioners; and female nurses assisting male doctors. Because most of the authority figures in her life had been men, she didn't think to question that model of leadership when she began her first position as an art museum educator in 1976. She writes:

> I worked in an education department in which most of the educators were women and the Vice Director for Education was male, as were the other directors. Most of the art and history museum directors that I met outside my job were men. I often met women who directed children's museums and alternative art centers; however, very few directed the larger history, science, or art museums. Many fledgling cultural workers were not socially conditioned to question this situation for it was the prevailing model in most communities. (Glaser & Zenetou, 1994, p. xiv)

Brown, who eventually became the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Arts and Humanities at the Smithsonian Institution and later the Director of the Arts and Culture Program of the Nathan Cummings Foundation, provided a perspective that is echoed by the museum professionals interviewed for this research, both in their experiences with male colleagues or in their personal experiences as high-ranking members of children's museum staffs.

Although there is some professional writing by art museum educators during the late 1960s and 1970s, there was little written about who they were as individuals and practitioners—that is, their backgrounds, education, training and experience—until the publication of Terry Zeller's "Art Museum Educators: Who Are They?" in 1985.

Although his research provides brief profiles of three early 20th-century educators (Rossiter Howard, John Cotton Dana, and Henry Watson Kent), there remain a great number of art museum educators about whom very little is known—particularly women. However, we have a general idea of the larger context in which they worked. In a 2003 essay from the Art Institute of Chicago's journal, *Museum Studies*, long-time museum educator-turned-director Danielle Rice, formerly of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and now the Executive Director of the Delaware Art Museum, notes that between 1940 and the late 1970s, many art museum directors were supportive of the efforts of museum educators on their staffs, but then notes that their acceptance had caveats:

> Educators, however, had to know their place. Museum instructors, often women working in basement offices, occupied a position of low status, and had to tread lightly in the hallowed halls where art supposedly spoke for itself. Identified by curators and administrators with the non-specialist audiences they were committed to serving, and condemned for trying to trivialize sacred, intuitive encounters with art by explaining them away, museum educators often found themselves in conflict with the values of the very institutions they were hired to represent. (p. 14)

It is notable that Rice is so specific about the work that women did in her quote, for it was very common at the time to find women in the galleries and overseeing projects and tours that directly involved (largely student and/or young) audiences. A second notable aspect of Danielle Rice's quote is the period of time that she references in relationship to directors and educators: 1940 to the late 1970s. Clearly in her mind the situation for art museum educators changed after that time. My interest is finding out what changed and how it did so.

Underlying Assumptions and Specific Limitations

Assumptions

The primary assumptions underpinning this dissertation are:

1. Women are, and have since the beginning of the 20th century been, the primary facilitators of educational activities with the public in art museums, even though men were often supervisors of the education program or department.
2. Art museum education as a field has been devalued in part because it is perceived through a gendered lens and ascribed as women's work.
3. That the larger discourses of society shaped and molded the professional philosophy and activities of a generation of art museum educators in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Limitations

1. The three women interviewed for this research all resided in large cities in the Northeast region of the United States and worked in long-established museums in urban areas. Their experiences may therefore differ from educators who worked in other geographical regions of the United States, in suburban or rural communities, or in newer institutions.
2. I interviewed only three individuals, which limited my understandings of the broader contingent of museum educators practicing at that time.

3. All three of the women were of a similar age, socio-economic status, and racial/ethnic background, thereby creating a somewhat homogeneous group of interviewees.

Research Questions

I asked three questions in order to contextualize and understand the changes that occurred during these 15 years, including:

1) *What were the experiences of young professional women who worked in the field of art museum education in the* late *1960s and early 1970s, and how were they similar to or different than contemporary published accounts of art museum education?*

I hoped to find answers for these questions by interviewing three women—Elaine Heumann Gurian, Dr. Carol Stapp, and Linda Sweet—who started their careers in art museum education during this period of tremendous growth in the field. I hoped to learn more about their personal and academic backgrounds, their educational philosophies, their pedagogical strategies, and their experiences as women in a feminized field. I was curious to find out why and how they entered the field, what kinds of everyday challenges and problems they faced, and how they were treated in the museum, both as employees and as women. Because so many of my understandings of the field during this time period were from accounts of museum people who were *not* practicing art museum educators, I sought their personal versions and visions as well as their thoughts about and reactions to happenings in the broader field of museums. In short, I sought to understand the field through lived experiences and personal stories, rather than from the people who wrote about it from afar.

2) *How did cultural, social, and political contexts shape art museum education between 1965 and 1980?*

The broad political, social, economic, educational, and cultural shifts that characterized the mid 1960s to mid-1970s resulted in major changes throughout society. Art museums in particular—faced with growing public demand for relevance and accountability and endowed with monies from public and private sources—were forced to adjust, rethink, or expand their roles. In order to answer this question I sought to outline major issues that affected art museums and to contextualize the changes in art museum education as products of larger societal discourses. Additionally, I hoped to learn about how these shifts affected the philosophies and practices of art museum educators in relationship to their work.

3) *What are the legacies and impacts of these women and other art museum educators on the development of current art museum education practice, professional identity and status, and positionality in the museum?*

I came into this research with the understanding that the profession of art museum education in which I work is fundamentally different from the field that the Linda, Elaine, and Carol entered forty years ago. I benefit daily from the professional associations and development opportunities; journals, books, and other literature; and educational or academic opportunities that simply didn't exist for the interviewees. My role as the Curator of Education in a museum, which is at least semantically on par with my curatorial colleagues, is (as I see it) a direct result of the efforts of their generation of art museum educators. In this research, I sought to identify the legacies left behind by these women, who changed the field in ways that are, in retrospect, astonishingly significant.

Significance

This research explores the interconnections between social, political, economic, and cultural phenomena and how they effected change in the gendered field of art museum education between 1965 and 1980. One of primary premises that this study is founded upon is that art museum education is a feminized field, meaning that it was largely practiced by women who weren't typically afforded the same measure of respect as their curatorial counterparts. There are few scholarly citations for this assertion, aside from a mention here or there in books that examine art museums in a larger context or the recollections of museum workers in edited volumes. For example, Malcolm Arth, the former Director of Education at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, wrote:

> Museum education departments are places in which woman have had power and a special role. Education departments, which are often relegated to the basements of our institutions, have been and frequently still are staffed with volunteers, a largely female group that is often unpaid. It is important . . . to acknowledge that women have played an important role . . . and it is not an accident that education departments are low in the hierarchy of priorities within our institutions. (Arth, 1994, pp. 97-98)

The absence of this information in the historical record tells a great deal about how art museum educators were valued within an institutional context and very little about the day-to-day realities of their existence. While there is currently a great deal of interest in art museum education theory and practice, there is not nearly as much information about the every day experiences of art museum educators aside from short anecdotes and references (Glaser & Zenetou, 1994; Rice, 2003). My hope is that this research will bring the everyday realities of these three art museum educators to light so that we may consider the interrelated personal, social, and educational contexts that formed their professional philosophies, hear their stories, and also consider the ways in which their practices affect the field even today.

Definition of Key Terms

Art Museum Education

A wide-ranging set of practices, philosophies, and actions by art museum educators, both professional and volunteer, that in some way engages members of the public with objects in an art museum and facilitates learning and understanding within that context. Art museum education is simultaneously very specific in that it addresses the particular collections, exhibitions, audiences, and communities of an institution, but is very general in that certain broad program types tend to be utilized throughout the field. Common examples include docent-guided tours, gallery talks, classes, lectures, workshops, family and youth offerings, performances, and hands-on activities. This distinction is important to note, since many of these program types have been in use since the beginning of the 20th century, yet the actual programs vary significantly due to the educational philosophy, experiences, and knowledge of the educator planning the program and other, more broad considerations. For example, an hour-long tour for 6th graders in 1960 would likely be very different in 1975, even if it were held in the same institution.

Class

According to correspondents of the *New York Times* in their volume *Class Matters*, class is a somewhat nebulous concept. “At its most basic, class is one way societies sort themselves out” (Correspondents of the *New York Times*, 2005, p. 8). Four basic indicators of class in contemporary society include education, income, occupation, and wealth, and they are manifested in myriad ways in daily life and relationships with others. Paul Kingston, a Professor of Sociology at the University of Virginia, conceptualized these elements of class metaphorically as a “ladder with lots and lots of rungs” (Correspondents of the *New York Times*, 2005, p. 9). Class is an important concept to grapple with in this research for a number of reasons. Art museums have always been inextricably linked with class issues because they are beneficiaries of wealth and markers of status—from works of art to building endowments and other gifts to the upper-class volunteers who give freely of their time, art museums are literally shaped by those who have power, wealth, and influence to share. At the same time, they are committed to serving a public that includes visitors from a full spectrum of socio-economic backgrounds who have a wide range of class experiences.

Feminism

Pinning down a single definition of feminism is difficult, but for the purposes of this research, it may be defined as a movement comprised of people who believe that men and women should have access to equal opportunities and therefore fight the myriad patriarchal discourses that shape our world. In the case of interviewees in chapter four, it is a recognition of and response to treatment that limited their opportunities to motherhood and marriage and discouraged professional aspirations. These women cited the re-emerging feminist movement as an important influence on their personal and professional trajectories. They also enacted feminist movement, a term borrowed from author bell hooks (2000), who differentiated the term from “the” feminist movement. It describes more than a way of thinking or a viewpoint—feminist movement encompasses efforts made in the service of feminist ideology and suggests a momentum, or progression, that continues to this day.

Feminization

Feminization reflects the increase of women (and thus decrease of men) working in a specific field and their commensurately low status and salary. Richard Gordon, as quoted by Pen Dalton, describes feminized jobs as those that tend to mimic work traditionally carried out by women in patriarchal societies, including “cleaning, catering, nursing, entertainment, textile work, and so on” (Dalton, 2001, p. 112). These positions tend to be less secure in terms of permanence and are unlikely to come with benefits because they are part-time or seasonal and are, in any case, vulnerable to the forces of patriarchy. Men have authority and control over the things that make businesses powerful, including ownership, finances, management, and communication, and thereby maintain control over feminized workers (Dalton, 2001). Museum director Jean Weber suggests that feminization of museum professions reflects not only women’s issues, but exemplifies the values of culture as a whole:

> perceptions of museums as frivolous and of the profession as one of low esteem are directed well beyond what we call women’s issues. They reflect our attitudes, not just as or toward women but also as tax-paying Americans, toward our museums. (1995, p. 33)

Gendering

According to renowned feminist historian Joan Wallach Scott, the word gender suggests more than just biological differences between women and men. Gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power and it provides a way to decode meaning and to understand the complex connections among various forms of human interaction (1999). Scott's discussion of gender as a category of analysis suggests that there are specific ways in which power is signified, and proposes that people are constructed as masculine and feminine subjects within relationships. Gendering refers to that process of construction.

Professionalization

According to Harold Wilensky, organizational sociologist and Professor Emeritus of Political Science at UC Berkeley, the trajectory of professionalism for a field includes training, the creation of schools or academic programs, the formation of professional associations, and then a process of reflection that oftentimes leads to an attempt to separate capable practitioners from incompetent ones (Wilensky, 1964). One of the themes that emerges in this research that the field of art museum education underwent a process of professionalization between the years of 1965–1980, and became recognized by others in the museum field as a profession rather than just a position or a set of job duties. Andrew Abbott writes that the definition of professionalization, at its simplest, is that "professions are exclusive occupational groups applying somewhat abstract knowledge to particular cases" (1988, p. 8). More concretely, professionalization is signified in a profession by opportunities for professional development, a professional association for practitioners, research and publications that discuss various aspects of the field, and an expectation that practitioners will attain a certain level of education and that they will earn pay commensurate with that educational status.

Research Methods

I approached this research by compiling facts from both primary and secondary sources, conducting oral history interviews, and weaving them into a narrative based on themes that emerged from the interviews as well as information derived from the primary and secondary sources. This process was based on an overview of historical research processes written by art education historian Mary Ann Stankiewicz:

Overview of Historical Research Processes

I. Select a topic to research
   - A. Look for gaps and anomalies in written histories of art education
   - B. Choose a topic that is personally meaningful and significant to the field of art education

II. Compile facts from primary and secondary stories
   - A. Read written sources; listen to oral testimonies; look at pictures, ephemera, objects, and artifacts
   - B. Establish the authenticity and credibility of the sources
   - C. Prepare chronologies, i.e., charts showing what happened when

III. Write a narrative that interprets the facts through a meaningful story that will hold a reader's interest.

Figure 1. Originally published in *Research Methods and Methodologies for Art Education* (Stankiewicz, 1997, p. 59)

For my project, perhaps the two most salient portions of Stankiewicz's overview are derived from section II—reading written sources and listening to oral testimonies. I was familiar with a number of written sources through my previous graduate work as well as a personal interest in collecting journals and books related to the history of art museum education; however, the process of research helped me to contextualize them within a larger historical, social, and political framework. Conducting the oral history interviews was a critical component in this process of contextualization.

Another important element of the overview that influenced my work was section III, which suggests that the written portion of research should be approached as a narrative; carefully and artfully written so as to make it compelling and engaging for readers. She asserts that historians, like good teachers, must pay attention to language by utilizing powerful analogies, metaphors, and other figures of speech. In my case, I paid particular attention to the phrases and words that the interviewees used to describe themselves in relationship to their work, their families, and their world. I conceptualized these phrases similar to strands of *warp* yarn used in the process of weaving, considering them the strongest threads around which the rest of the writing, or *weft*, was woven. My goal was to make this particular narrative into a unified, harmonious pattern that would engage and educate the reader and enrich the historical record for the profession of art museum education.

Oral History

Art education professor Mary Stokrocki defines oral history as "the recording of primary source information by recording spoken words in the form of reminiscences by a narrator with first hand knowledge" (1997, p. 16), while historian Donald Ritchie offers the following: “simply put, oral history collects memories and personal commentaries of historical significance through recorded interviews” (2003, p. 19). Oral histories add a new dimension to traditional historical approaches in that they provide personal accounts of ordinary people to the histories of the past; thus troubling the notion of objectivity in top-down historical accounts of phenomena and adding authentic, first-hand voices to historical narratives (Stokrocki, 1997).

Ritchie also states that the practice of oral history involves human memory, or the process of collecting it through interviews conducted and recorded by a researcher. Oral history as a research methodology has a long but somewhat problematic past—while interviewing for the purposes of recording stories has been utilized for at least three thousand years, oral histories have only recently become accepted as legitimate sources of information for academic research. Skeptical historians and researchers have cited the subjectivity and fallibility of individual memory, interviewer bias, and lack of corroboration as negative aspects of oral history. However, the information that can be collected, especially when it is positioned within a broader and perhaps more conventional research context, may reveal important and unique aspects of history. Ultimately, interviews are no less reliable than forms of published or archival information, which may be “incomplete, inaccurate, and deceiving” (Ritchie, 2003, p. 26).

One oral historian has argued that the aspects of oral history that have been most critiqued—“orality, narrative form, subjectivity, the ‘different credibility’ of memory, and the relationship between interviewer and interviewee”—are in fact assets rather than liabilities (Portelli, 2009, p. 32). One of the most useful aspects of employing oral histories rather than traditional histories in a research context is that it is possible to learn more about events through the speaker's subjectivity. In other words, by finding out what those events meant for the people who lived them (Portelli, 2009).

According to Stokrocki (1997), there are three stages to the process of oral history as a qualitative study:

1. **Data collection**, which may be achieved through one or more of the following methods: "questionnaires, telephone interviews, and audio or videotapes" (Stokrocki, 1997, p. 17); to account for advances in technology I would also add audio and/or video chatting via applications available on the Internet.
2. **Content analysis**, or reading and reviewing individual interviews in a systematic way that is likely based on methods utilized by other scholars.
3. **Comparative analysis**, or the process of linking interviews to one another by identifying similarities and differences that emerge and then categorizing them.

This methodology represents the somewhat paradoxical nature of oral history; that is, even though the researcher has purposefully sought the voices of individuals who were previously unheard, he or she is also the person recording, analyzing, comparing, and forming a narrative and presenting it for academic consumption (Portelli, 2009). In my case, this was a particularly salient consideration since the interviewees were all women, whose voices were historically marginalized or omitted from dominant discourses. In order to be mindful of the particular nuances of working with the stories of women, I read about the feminist practice of conducting women's oral histories (Gluck & Patai, 1991). The authors critiqued oral history as a form of androcentric communication situated within social science research and cautioned that women are often not socialized to communicate in a way that is compatible with oral history interviews, since they typically offer "typical and affiliative issues that reflect *who they are*; men traditionally talk about task and power issues the reflect *what they do*" (Stewart, Cooper, & Friedley, 1986, p. 100). Gluck and Patai's most compelling advice for researchers is also common sense: they recommend listening to both the words spoken and hearing the messages in the undercurrents of the conversation during interviews. In order to key into those "muted channels of women's subjectivity" that may emerge during the oral interview, one "must inquire whose story the interview is asked to tell" (1991, p. 11). It was especially important for me keep in mind that the purpose of interviews is to learn from the experiences of the interviewees and not just attend to my own research agenda (Gluck & Patai, 1991).

Overview of Chapters

The introduction of this dissertation served to introduce the reader to how I became interested in the topic of art museum education as it existed in the 1970s and provides a perspective on why this research is personally meaningful. The second chapter presents an introduction to art museum education and art museum educators as well as laying a foundation for the dissertation by describing my basic research questions and their significance, defining key terms, suggesting possible assumptions and limitations, and offering an overview of the research. Chapter three introduces the reader to the broader theoretical underpinnings of this research as well as the methods and procedures that I employed to gather information. Chapter four provides an introduction to the historical and contemporary subjects that informed art museum education between 1965 and 1980, including philosophies; women as practitioners and scholars; and the state of museums in the Postmodern era. Chapter five contains narrative accounts of the three former art museum educators as they began their careers. Each account begins with an introduction of that individual and details her experiences as an early art museum educator in a somewhat chronological fashion, ending with her current professional activities. Chapters six, seven, and eight examine the broader discourses that shaped the work of these women, guided by three themes that emerged in their interviews. In chapter nine, I identify the enduring legacies of the interviewees on post-1980 art museum education in terms of professional associations, education, and development; practices, philosophies, and literature/research; then I offer concluding words by revisiting my research questions, reiterating how I answered them, and suggesting the ways in which this research might affect the broader field and my own future research agenda.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This research was informed by broad theoretical underpinnings as well as historical and feminist writings in art, art education, art museum education, and art history. In order to fully explain my perspectives and how this research was shaped by those writings, I am adapting an approach to this chapter cited by Collins and Sandell (1997) and originally elucidated by Stanley and Wise (1990) that defines methodology as "a very broad theoretically informed framework" (1997, p. 26) and methods as tools or research practices, such as interviews. I first discuss feminist research and locate my work within that realm of inquiry, then discuss historical research in art education and situate this research within the so-called new histories of art education.

Methodology

Feminist Research

One of the reasons that I was drawn to this research topic was the desire to make sense of the feminization of the field of art museum education and the relationship between the gender of most educators and their ongoing secondary status in most art museum contexts, which persists to this day despite a remarkable degree of professionalization of the field. According to Collins and Sandell, "Feminist research often seeks a fusion of the personal, the professional, and the political, of lived experience with academic theory" (1997, p. 196). My past experiences as a professional art museum educator are a critical component to this research, as these experiences and my struggle to understand them both personally and professionally drove me to pursuing this research trajectory. I hope that this research will be significant to art museum educators, who continue to face challenges similar to those of the interviewees in their daily work and struggle to make sense of them.

Because this project specifically focuses on the stories of women who engaged in work largely practiced by and ascribed to women, I employ a methodology influenced by feminist research principles; and because I seek to bring about change as a result of this research, my work is firmly situated within the realm of feminist inquiry. Specifically, two aspects of feminism are integral to this research: historical feminist movement, meaning the events and people who changed the world in the pursuit of equality between women and men; and feminist theory, which provides lenses through which we might consider and position those events and people.

The fact that this research is grounded in feminist theory is also a personal decision and commitment on my part as the author. Feminist theory provides an overarching theoretical framework for this study, positing that women are acted upon by patriarchal discourses in larger society and that they both subvert and resist the roles offered to them. Fundamental to this research is the notion that race, class, and gender are ultimately inseparable hegemonic discourses and that knowledge is a form of power.

The word *woman* is not as straightforward as it might seem, and constructs that trouble traditional notions of sex and gender, such as gender performativity and embodiment, are helpful to understand (J. Butler, 1999; Riley, 1988; Scott, 1999). Paechter suggests that there are four concepts to know and understand when interrogating notions of sex and gender in the process of research: *Sex*, or the biological distinction of gender that includes the physical construction of the body (i.e., anatomy); *Gender Assignment*, the gender that members of society assign to an individual based on external physical characteristics or other cues; *Gender Identity,* or the sex that an individual ascribes to him or herself, whether that is female, male, or some liminal space in between; and *Gender Role,* or "a set of behavioral prescriptions or proscriptions for individuals who have a particular assigned gender" (2001, p. 47). However, living bodies are not the only things that may be ascribed a gender: Types of thought, certain activities, and physical or conceptual spaces or locations may be viewed as either feminine or masculine. The ideas of historian Joan Wallach Scott are particularly useful to theorize the gendering of art museum education, that is, to discuss how relations of power in the art museum become gendered. According to Scott, the word gender suggests more than just biological differences between women and men—gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power (a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated). It provides a way to decode meaning and to understand the complex connections among various forms of human interaction (1999):

> If we treat the opposition between male and female as problematic rather than known, as something contextually defined, repeatedly constructed, then we must constantly ask not only what is at stake in proclamations or debates that invoke gender to explain or justify their positions but also how implicit understandings of gender are being invoked and reinscribed. (Scott, 1999, p. 49)

Scott's discussion of gender as a category of analysis suggests that there are specific ways in which power is signified, and proposes that people are constructed as masculine and feminine subjects within relationships. Further, Scott posits that gender is similar to race and class in that they are three intimately linked axes of power inequality. This notion has fundamentally influenced the way that poststructuralist scholars, particularly feminists, conduct inquiry—race, class, and gender, distinct yet inseparable, are the "Holy Trinity" of much current critical scholarship (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005, p. 314).

Historical Research in Art Education

I struggled with the decision of whether or not to locate my research under the umbrella of art education research, which must sound disingenuous coming from a graduate student who is earning a doctorate in art education. However, the story of art museum education has not always directly intersected with the field of art education in the way that it does now—in fact, I've found that it was historically aligned much more closely with art history, the main field of study for many art museum educators; the history and philosophy of public museums, which were expected to provide educational services as part of their mandates; and the history of teaching as a feminized profession occupied primarily by women. However, the relationship between art education and art museum education has been solidified over time as reflected in *Art Education* magazine's frequent inclusion of art museum education topics since the late 1960s; the National Art Education Association's inclusion of museum education sessions at their national conference and conventions (most especially after 1977); and the establishment of a Museum Education Division within the NAEA affiliate program in 1981 (Caston & Schneider, 2007). Additionally, my own experiences with art museum education began within the context of an art education master's degree program that featured a minor in art museum education and that is where my understandings of the field are most deeply rooted.

Like any other research endeavor, historical research in art education begins with questions of who, what, why, where, and how? According to art education historian Arthur Efland, historical research is predicated upon a *problem* that “may take many forms” (1995, p. 35). These myriad problems may include changes in teaching philosophies and/or methods, state or federal legislation, or social views toward art. They may include biographies of well-known art educators or the omission of certain cultures, peoples, or ideas. In any case, these problems generally arise from a “perceived anomaly” on the part of the researcher (p. 35). In my case, the so-called problem was understanding the vast changes in the field of art museum education in between the years of 1965 and 1980.

Once a significant topic is chosen, there begins the process of gathering facts from archival, primary, and secondary sources, with a mind toward interpreting those sources. Some interpretations, however, are more informed than others: Efland cautions that there are three distinct fallacies present in the interpretation of art education history:

Presentism, or the mistaken notion that events, texts, and other sources would have been interpreted in their original context in the same way that they are presently interpreted; *Isolationism*, or separating the history of art education from a larger historical context; and *Iconoclasm*, or the assumption that the “educational heroes” of the past possessed underlying motivations and were more concerned with personal success than their impact on others and the field (Efland, 1995, p. 68).

Art education historian Mary Ann Stankiewicz further problematizes the notion of interpretation in historical research by suggesting that two types of criticism, *external* and *internal*, may be applied to the interpretation of archival, primary, and secondary sources.

External criticism attempts to contextualize the sources in terms of their authenticity and the motivations of the author, while internal criticism examines the legitimacy of the source, the author, and the accounts contained within that source (Efland, 1995; Stankiewicz, 1997). Once these sources have been gathered and critiques taken place, the researcher may proceed to the process of historical inquiry, or the actual writing of history, which Stankiewicz defines as the "shaping of facts into a coherent, meaningful, and significant narrative through questioning" (1997, p. 67).

While the notions of historical research and inquiry may seem somewhat straightforward, art education historian Paul Bolin notes the changing definitions of historical research from a few dominant methodologies to the myriad approaches revealed by the emergence of "new history" and contemporary historiography (1995). In this research environment, several new ways of investigating art education history emerged, including: Exploring those practices, concepts, and people who have so far been ignored by historians of art education; researching women in the field; employing the methodology of oral history; and utilizing objects of material culture to create a historical narrative (Bolin, 1995).

These new histories of art education paved the way for contemporary researchers to legitimately utilize newer forms of research and inquiry in the service of art education. They also represent postmodern impulses to doing history, recognizing that

> an exact correspondence between narrative and the past is not possible. We can describe the "same" event in many different ways, our access to the event is always mediated, nothing is simply transparent, and there are always absences and gaps and biases to be dealt with. But narratives can still be more or less

adequate to the (interpreted) evidence, and new evidence can still overturn narratives. (C. Butler, 2002, p. 36)

Methods

I was initially resistant to the idea of conducting interviews as a way of gathering primary source information for my dissertation. Perhaps it was because as a master's student, I utilized questionnaires for my research and found that most responses lacked detail, specificity, and depth, and I thought that interviews were going to yield similar results with more leg work in terms of travel, transcriptions, and arranging times to meet. After giving it some thought and reading about interviews, oral histories, and ethnographies, it became clear that in order to tell any sort of authentic story, I needed to hear first-hand accounts from the people who had lived those stories while making it as easy for them as possible to convey them to me. But first, I had to conduct research in order to have a thorough understanding of the world of art museum education in which these women worked. I came to these understandings through the process of conducting documentary history.

Compilation of primary and secondary sources

I began preliminary research for this dissertation by conducting a documentary history of resources on art museum education from approximately 1965 to 1980, selecting books, edited volumes, articles, and book reviews that reflect contemporary issues, thoughts, and perspectives regarding the field as it emerged into the forefront of museum work. I began by examining contemporary articles in journals such as *Museum News* and *Art Education*; reading compendia such as the *Museum Education Anthology 1973–1983*, published by the Museum Education Roundtable; and seeking out sources that contained histories of or anecdotes about art museum education at the time, which I found in small, varied texts. Next, I very carefully studied *The Art Museum as Educator: A Collection of Studies as Guides to Practice and Policy*, published by the Cleveland Museum of Art acting for the Council on Museums and Education in the Visual Arts in 1978. Notable for its sheer size and scope, the book was the first text dedicated specifically to the rapidly expanding field of art museum education. It was the first publication that described the skills, practices, programs, theories, and understandings that constituted art museum education. For the purposes of my research, the book represents the dominant or master narrative of art museum education in the decade of the 1970s: Born of a committee that was sanctioned and overseen by charitable organizations and chaired by a long-time museum director, the contents of the book were written under the gaze and control of people in positions of power and influence. Though the case studies were clearly written with eagerness and a passion for conveying the essence of each program, they were also vetted through the organizations that they chronicled and were edited according to their instructions. The writers and editors were intelligent, motivated, and committed to furthering understandings about the field of art museum education. They were also in the rather precarious position of reporting to the same people that all museum staff must answer to: donors, funding agencies, directors, and other museums.

I analyzed and deconstructed portions of the text, noting what was said and what was left unsaid, searching for recurring themes and issues, and discovering how art museum educators were positioned and constructed within the book. Because the tome is 830 pages long, which prohibited extended in-depth analysis of every word of the text, I focused on the introductory essay for each chapter, which was typically three to six pages long and written by a staff member from the Council on Museums and Education in the Visual Arts. Each essay summarized all of the case studies contained within in the chapter while tying together themes and offering commentary. In my analysis of this book, I specifically noted the ways in which the incredible growth of art museum education programs was explained or discussed; any passages that addressed the particular conditions in which art museum educators carried out their responsibilities; how the notion of education was defined in each essay; and any mention of major ideas, theoretical issues, or prominent ideas emerging in the field.

A second source of information gathering was oral history interviews conducted with three women who began careers in art museum education in the late 1960s and early 1970s. I engaged in direct conversation with individuals, whose experiences served as a point of departure for the rest of the study. After securing the necessary research clearances, I contacted each potential interviewee via e-mail and arranged to meet with her in person, though I was ultimately only able to meet face to face with two out of the three women. I had the interviews transcribed by a professional medical transcriptionist and used them to create narratives for each of the three interviewees—any gaps or unanswered questions were answered either through follow up questions and subsequent materials provided by the interviewees, or by internet searches for readily available information (such as their current curriculum vitae). Additionally, I submitted each interviewee's narrative to her for a final check of accuracy and authenticity.

I also located these women and their work within a particular historical moment using more general sources about their museums and communities; publications that described the changes in American government, feminism, education, attitudes toward museums, art, and the Postmodern condition in general.

Oral Histories

My primary sources of information were oral histories provided by three women who worked as museum educators in the early 1970s and who continue to serve as professionals in the art museum field today. In their profiles, I have included personal and professional information gleaned from online resources as well as our interviews rather than just providing their professional experiences. In this way, I am acknowledging the totality of their life experiences and layers of personhood that influence the professional and personal decisions they made as art museum educators.

After interviewing each candidate and working with the transcriptionist to create a Word document of each session, I created a timeline for each person that included three different categories:

1. Personal events such as birth dates, dates of schooling and matriculation, marriages, birth dates of children, start and dates of professional appointments, publications, awards, and professional memberships.
2. Relevant events in the field of art museum education, including books and articles, acts and laws that were passed that directly affected the field, and formation of professional groups.
3. Larger political, social, economic, and cultural events such as the assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., court cases such as Brown v. Board of Education, the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment in the U.S. House and

Senate and subsequent lack of ratification by enough states to enact the amendment.

I used these timelines to create a narrative for each interviewee that included an introduction, background, stories from her first professional art museum education position, where she went after departing from that position, and later career. These narratives revealed themes that I later used in order to analyze the interviewees' experiences.

Procedures

Identifying Candidates

I identified possible interview candidates during a discussion with Dr. David Ebitz, an Associate Professor of Art Education at Penn State University with many years of experience working as an educator and a director in art museums and researching the field of art museum education. The criteria for eligibility were: 1) that the individual had to have worked as an art museum educator in the late 1960s or early 1970s, and 2) that he or she still had to be a prominent professional in the museum field, if not in the field of art museum education. He and I discussed the potential relevance of including a male interviewee and came up with only one possibility. After identifying perhaps five strong candidates, I contacted four possible interviewees and received positive responses from three of them: Elaine Heumann Gurian, Dr. Carol B. Stapp, and Linda Sweet.

The Interviews

After receiving IRB approval for my research, I sent each of the potential interviewees a cover letter describing my research and requesting an interview (APPENDIX A). In the course of arranging the interviews, I offered each interviewee the option of receiving the questions in advance, which all of them elected to do. Rather than relying on the telephone or video chatting technology, I found that each of the interviewees planned on attending the 2009 American Association of Museums Annual Meeting and would be willing to meet with me in person. Given the advice of Gluck and Patai, meeting in person was clearly to be the best way for me to carry on a responsive conversation as well as be able to watch their verbal cues during the interview.

Ultimately I was able to meet with two of the three interviewees (Elaine Heumann Gurian and Linda Sweet) in person, while Carol Stapp was forced to cancel because of a bout with the flu virus—we talked three months later via telephone in an interview that turned out to be wonderful in different ways than the other two. I recorded our conversations with a recorder that converted audio into mp3 files that could easily be submitted to a transcriptionist and that left my hands free to communicate, hold papers, and eat breakfast and drink coffee with two interviewees The questions asked of each interviewee are outlined in Appendix B.

The Narratives

I studied the transcribed interviews carefully and made a visual chart for each interviewee that represented intersections between three different kinds of significant information: 1) personal and professional events and experiences; 2) significant publications or events in the art/art education/museum world that shaped their experiences, and 3) social, political, and cultural events that occurred on a national level. I then wrote the narratives to include significant experiences, events, thoughts, and reactions to all three types of information. I arranged them more or less chronologically and subdivided the interviewee's experiences according to the institution where they worked at the time. After writing the narratives, I e-mailed a copy of the text to each interviewee and asked that she review the text for any factual errors and also to ensure that it was written in the spirit in which it was intended—because nuance is difficult to capture in written accounts, I wanted to be sure that funny anecdotes appeared appropriately humorous or that any struggles or difficulties were given the proper sense of gravity. I also wanted to be certain that each woman felt a sense of control over the way she was represented, particularly since the notion of agency is such an important element of the narratives. Additionally, the scarcity of personal accounts of art museum education at this time compelled me to represent their stories as accurately as possible—they provide a window into the development of the profession of art museum education just as the field was going through a period of great growth and development, and I wanted to portray their experiences as accurately as possible for future researchers.

After reading and reviewing the interviews a number of times, it became clear that a number of similar themes ran thought the interviews. These themes became the basis for chapters six, seven, and eight, which sought to reveal the myriad discourses that shaped their experiences as art museum educators, from the local political and economic situations affecting their communities and museums to the larger discourses of feminism and women's liberation and social justice that pervaded the national scene. I was particularly interested in the ways that the interviewees negotiated these contexts—what they chose to accept, what they chose to reject, and what they chose to fight—based on their experiences as expressed in the narratives.

The final chapter reveals the many changes in the field of art museum education since 1980, brought about in no small part by the efforts of the three particular women that I interviewed, in addition to many other like-minded individuals in the museum field. In hindsight, the selection of these three educators was extraordinarily fortunate, as they embody that kind of passionate, forward-thinking individual that changed a job in an art museum into a profession for educators of a new generation.

CHAPTER FOUR: HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

Art Museum Education

Contemporary art museum education may be broadly defined as a wide-ranging set of practices and programs that in one way or another engages members of the public with objects in an art museum and facilitates learning and understanding within that environment. While individual practices and responsibilities are contingent upon an educator's professional training as well as the organizational structure and mission of his or her particular institution, there are common threads have historically connected art museum educators and, for the purposes of this research, provide an outline for much of their work. According to art education professor Melanie Buffington (2007), six of these include experimenting and responding to society; educating to improve society; delivering appropriate content, meeting school curriculum guidelines and collaborating with teachers; improving practice with theory and research; and developing emerging technologies.

Art museum educators are currently the main facilitators of education in the museum context, a directive that encompasses a variety of practices. Their objectives include providing opportunities for the interpretation of art through written and spoken contextual information, offering a wide variety of on-site and outreach programs, and collaborating with community constituents, primarily school teachers or other educators. Although specific efforts vary due to the highly individualized nature of each museum according to its location, size, collection, etc., museum educators are generally responsible for creating opportunities for lifelong learning, from pre-school-age children to senior citizens. Qualifications of art museum educators vary—in the recent past, practitioners had a master's degree in art history (M. M. Mayer, 2005), but increasingly degrees in art education or museum studies are also considered acceptable (Ebitz, 2005).

Currently, there are no published statistics on the gender balance of art museum education practitioners, though professional conferences, e-mail lists, informal networks, and museum directories are filled with the names and faces of female practitioners, in addition to references contained in a small number of publications (Coleman, 1939; Danilov & Armitage, 2005; Glaser & Zenetou, 1994; Sherman & Holcomb, 1981). Women dominate the field of art museum education as practitioners and increasingly contribute to publications in the field. Since the late 1980s, a number of books, chapters, and articles about learning in museums have been published, providing a stronger theoretical basis for the work of art museum educators. Significantly, gendered patterns of authorship during the 1970s, wherein male writers in positions of power within the larger museum world wrote state-of-the field articles, book chapters, and even books on art museum education, are echoed in post-1980 publications. Though much of the more recent theoretical work was initially written by male American academics, women, international practitioners, and students are increasingly contributing to that body of knowledge, thereby disrupting the privileged voice of authority and diversifying the foundations of the field (J. Falk & Dierking, 1992; J. H. Falk & Dierking, 2002; Hein, 1998; M. M. Mayer, 2005; Roberts, 1997; Villeneuve, 2007; Xanthoudaki, Tickle, & Sekules, 2003).

Women as Practitioners of Art Museum Education

Public museums in the United States have had a long and complex relationship with women. Though they were established in the late 19th century under the auspices of wealthy white men with the goals of educating, inspiring, and uplifting the working masses, the standard hours of operation, admittance fees and guidelines, and dress codes of most museums would have precluded visits by all but wealthy (and mostly white) citizens. It is therefore curious that museums were also one of the first ostensibly public spaces open to women, despite the fact that women were expected to remain within socially defined domestic spaces. Tony Bennett, in *The Birth of the Museum*, argues that after the 17th and 18th centuries, periods of time in which women were restricted from public and political spheres, they began to emerge once again into quasi-public spaces that were deemed acceptable—those spaces included museums because they were considered to play a cultural role in "redressing social problems[,] identified as having their provenance in the conditions (housing, hygiene, morality, etc.) affecting family life" (1995, p. 29). Museums regulated and controlled the individuals that they let in the door and were therefore some of the few genteel public contexts in which women would not have to worry about appearing without a male chaperone.

Although women were still new to the world of higher education in the late 1800s, those few who were able to attend an institution of higher education frequently found courses in art history and art production readily available (Sherman & Holcomb, 1981). These courses provided the background that prepared their graduates to work in museums. In *Women as Interpreters of the Visual Arts*, Claire Sherman describes the process by which women, who in the late 1800s were granted access to art history and archaeology curricula at universities, became at least part-time employees at museums, settlement houses, and libraries (Sherman & Holcomb, 1981). Between 1908 and 1925, museum training courses were offered at four different colleges and universities (at

Wellesley, the School of Industrial Art of the Pennsylvania Museum, Harvard University, and the Newark Museum), all with open enrollment for women—at least, for women who had the financial resources to attend school. Alice Van Vechten Brown, a professor at Vassar, taught an art museum training course that trained young women to become assistants in museums and included art museum education as an area of study from 1911–1917 and again in the 1920s (Stankiewicz, 2001). Her graduates increased the number of women working in museums and specifically as art museum educators, as did the *Museum Work and Museum Problems* course at Harvard University, taught by Paul J. Sachs from 1921–1948 (Duncan, 2002). In 1939, Coleman noted "At present there are about 300 people—most of them young women—in this strict capacity, and many others who give part time to teaching" (p. 412). While female curators were a rarity between 1890 and 1945, women not only occupied positions as art museum educators but a few contributed to the growing field (Downs, 1994). [1]

Two books that shaped my thinking about women as art museum educators are *Women as Interpreters of the Visual Arts, 1820–1979* (Sherman & Holcomb, 1981), and *Gender Perspectives: Essays on Women in Museums* (Glaser & Zenetou, 1994). I bought the former title thinking it was going to be an historical treatise on art museum educators, and was surprised when I opened the book to find biographical and critical essays about

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[1] According to the article "Harvard's 'Museum Course' and the Making of American's Museum Profession" (Duncan, 2002), women enrolled in Paul J. Sachs' influential course despite the fact that Harvard did not officially offer joint instruction until 1943 and they could not officially matriculate from that institution until 1963 (Ulrich, 1999, para. 22). They may have enrolled and received credit through Radcliffe, Harvard's coordinate college for women, though I haven't found a definitive source for that information. A footnote in Duncan's article (p. 15) further compounds this confusion, as she notes that a number of students who attended the class and went on to prestigious museum careers were never officially enrolled.

early art historians, archaeologists, librarians, critics, professors, with only the briefest mention of art museum education. I learned a great deal about the historical discourses that made it possible for women to begin to study and write about art and also for them to begin working in museums in the early 20th century, but the omission of art museum educators puzzled me until I realized that the editors very likely did not (at the time of the book's publication, at least) consider the field to be a profession—much of their work referred to individuals who had been active in professional organizations such as College Art Association (CAA) or who had published books and articles, and at that time, the vast majority of art museum educators had done neither. The second book featured essays about women in all types of museums, but it contained a number of poignant reminiscences by and about art museum educators. The essayists provided some of the most critical questions for this research, as they frequently mentioned the normalcy of art museum educators existing as second-class citizens in their workplaces, stationed in basements, working on shoestring budgets, and relying on a cadre of volunteers to fulfill their educational mandates. The editors called for a thoughtful reconsideration of women's place(s) in art museums, particularly since education seemed to be a higher priority than ever before—and since women usually did that work, they were sure to be viewed with more professional esteem. This book also planted in my mind the notion of generations of women in museums, as the preface refers to a presentation by Jean Weber at the 1986 Smithsonian Institution conference, "The Changing Roles of Women in Museums," where she suggested that there have been three generations of women working in the museum: the first was comprised primarily of generalists who began working before the end of WWII and up to 1950; the second began working in museums between 1950 and 1970 when museums expanded at an accelerated rate; and the third generation, mostly educated professionals, who began working in museums post-1970 (Glaser & Zenetou, 1994).

While there have been a few publications and conferences focusing on the roles of women in art museums (Commission on Museums for a New Century, 1984; Danilov & Armitage, 2005; Glaser & Zenetou, 1994; Sherman & Holcomb, 1981), there has been very little investigation into the ways in which women are positioned in art museum education. While women's history and status in the art world began to be explored as part of the second-wave feminist movement of the 1970s, these writings have focused primarily on women as subjects in art (Mulvey, 1975), as artists (Nochlin, 1971), as art educators (Acuff & Packard, 1974; Collins & Sandell, 1984; Hicks, 1974; Packard, 1974) and as art historians, professors, art museum curators and directors (Sherman & Holcomb, 1981). Art museum educators remain curiously but conspicuously absent from the literature.

Scholars

Significantly, there were two early women museum educators who wrote about art museum education, including Dr. Grace Fisher Ramsay, the Associate Curator of Education at the American Museum of Natural History, who wrote *Educational Work in Museums of the United States: Development, Methods, and Trends* (1938), and Molly Ohl Godwin, who wrote *The Museum Educates*, published in 1937 by the Toledo Museum of Art. Fisher's work was the first comprehensive study on the educational programs in all types of American museums when it was published. Written in large part as her doctoral dissertation for New York University, it lists and describes myriad in-gallery and outreach programs and their evaluation. She dedicates a very brief chapter (eight pages) to educational staff in museums, which notes a directorial imperative that focused on acquisitions rather than education. She mentions ideal qualifications for educational staff, including a college degree and some teaching experience, and notes that the person in charge of education at museums was, and often is, "a scholarly gentleman of versatile talents" as quoted by Edward S. Robinson (Ramsay, 1938, p. 209).

Molly Ohl Godwin's report on museum education at the Toledo Museum of Art is an altogether different sort of publication, though it does detail both the philosophical and practical approaches to programming at her institution in the 1930s. She describes the museum as "the first in the world to become child-centered" (Toledo Museum of Art, 1937, np) and explains their three-pronged approach to educational work conducted by an appreciation department, a music department, and a Museum School of Design that opened in 1919 (Toledo Museum of Art, 1937). While each department functioned separately to teach in the galleries, through music, and through art making, all three focused to develop and refine a sense of aesthetic taste in museum visitors, many of whom were children:

> the Museum['s] purpose [was] to make them aware that other greater art or music exists and to lead them to see and hear the work of artists far greater than these young people are likely to become. (Godwin, 1919; Toledo Museum of Art, 1937, np)

Curiously, there is no publication date printed in the book and Godwin never makes her exact relationship to the museum clear, though she did sign her name to the end of the written essay as it appears in the book. According to a *TIME* magazine article from 1937, Molly was the spouse of Blake-More Godwin, a curator at the museum from 1916 to 1927 and thereafter its director ("Art: Toledo Selection," 1937, September 27). He also had a great interest in education at the Toledo Museum of Art, as evidenced in an article on teaching art to children in the journal *Museum Work* (Godwin, 1919). Molly was clearly an art historian and scholar, as she wrote several other publications under the auspices of the Toledo Museum of Art, including a 1933 article on Medieval Cloister arcades new to the museum's collection for *Art Bulletin,* a 1943 catalogue of contemporary Chilean art, a 1953 catalogue of masterworks in the permanent collection, and a 1955 article in *Connoisseur* on post-World War II additions to the collection.

Art Museum Education in the 1970s

Art Museums and the Postmodern Era

According to Seybolt, quoted in Rawlins, in the year 1970, an astonishing 700 million people visited museums (1978), a vast increase in comparison to 1940, when 50 million people visited (Robbins, 1968). As people's leisure time increased, members of the general public visited art museums an average of 1.2 times per year in 1973; by 1975 that number rose to 1.7 visits annually (Newsom & Silver, 1978). While this expansion in both physical buildings and audience numbers occurred, the question of the public role of the museum, and the art museum in particular, became more and more significant. Art museum educators, who since the beginning of the 20th century served as intermediaries between museums and their publics, became indispensible workers in art museums as they sought to prove their educational mettle. Ultimately, fifty-one percent of museums in the United States increased their institutional educational programming between the years of 1966–1974 (Rawlins, 1978). Three measurable outcomes developed as a result of the social, political, and economic changes that occurred from 1969–1975: 1) Education staff and public programs grew exponentially in size and scope, funded by governmental programs to increase access to cultural events and activities and museums' financial need to tap into those resources; 2) art museum educators and funding agencies began to evaluate the quality and effect of existing programs while exploring new ones; 3) art museum educators began to fight for professional equality in a museum hierarchy that traditionally valued knowledge about objects over facilitating educational experiences.

Rather than viewing these events as simply a natural progression of the civil unrest of the 1960s, myriad challenges to traditional sources of power may in fact be regarded as evidence of a fundamental paradigmatic shift in American thought, from the grand narratives of Modernism to the plural and often contradictory voices of the Postmodern era. And while Postmodernism is, by its very nature, difficult to define, it may be generally "regarded as a rejection of many, if not most, of the cultural certainties on which life in the West has been structured over the last couple of centuries. It has called into question our commitment to cultural 'progress' . . . as well as the political systems that have underpinned this belief" (Sim, 2001, p. vii). In fact, educational theorist Ira Schor identified the "hinge of 1969" as a crucial juncture when discussing these events (Schor, 1986, p. 1).

Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed racial segregation in public places, banned racially-based discrimination in the workplace, and ended the practices of segregating educational institutions such as schools and public libraries, in effect invalidating the so-called Jim Crow laws that legalized racism and segregation under the guise of "separate but equal" treatment. Although the demise of the "separate but equal" doctrine was facilitated in the public school environment by the 1954 Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, the Civil Rights Act extended this more broadly by including women as one of the groups that had been denied equal treatment in the school and workplace.

Economic Issues

Between the years of 1950 and 1980, the population of the United States grew by 75 million people, ushering in changes in lifestyles, housing preferences, age and composition (Adams, 1987) while causing the population to swell in certain geographic areas. Historian Michael Schaller describes the economic downfall of the latter half of the 1970s as "a litany of growing federal deficits, accelerating inflation, slow economic growth, factory closings, gasoline shortages and price hikes, and rising rates of crime divorce, welfare, single parenting and drug use" (Schaller, 2007, p. V). He also noted that American people believed, for the first time since World War II, that their children would have a lower standard of living than they did. The writer of *Housing America in the 1980s* notes that the economy of the 1970s was "slow-growing" (p. 72) and that young workers had a difficult time moving into a labor market because few people were retiring, thus they had a hard time both getting jobs and increasing their incomes (Adams, 1987, p. 72). The utopian spirit of the 1960s was gone:

> Prosperity, a low rate of inflation and unemployment, cheap housing, low-cost books, etc., supported a happy-go-lucky student life from which a communal resistance flowed. Economic crises in the 1970s quickly burdened people with money woes and job hunts. Fierce competition for courses and programs,

> scholarships and loan money, seats in a dental school, jobs and apartments, all made students into each other's enemies rather than into a unified group fighting for "power to the people." (Schor, 1986, p. 27)

State of the Field

The late 1960s and early 1970s ushered in a wave of articles, chapters, and even books about a number of aspects of art museum education: the status of the field (Larrabee, 1968; Lee, 1975; Matthai, 1974); histories (Rawlins, 1978); teaching methods (Endter, 1975; Parker, 1971; Sewell, 1971; Taylor, 1971); working with volunteers (Bay, 1974; Jones, 1977; Reibel, 1971), funding (McGrath, 1970; Schmid, 1973; Sewell, 1971; Spencer, 1973), and what is perhaps the defining tome on the practices of art museum education in the early 1970s, *The Art Museum as Educator* (Newsom & Silver, 1978), a nearly 900-page book of essays and case studies. Clearly, art museum education became a subject worth talking about by the late 1960s.

In 1970, a group of educators charged with steering a conference on education sponsored by the American Association of Art Museum Directors went about determining exactly what the conference should address by gauging the current state of the field from their fellow art museum educators in major institutions. The resulting conference, partially sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), was the American Association of Art Museum Directors' *Education In the Art Museum,* held in November 1971 at the Cleveland Museum of Art. It was supported by three different AAMD presidents, "who recognized the growing need to strengthen museums' educational function, if only to justify their ongoing appeals for tax benefits" (Trippi, 1992, p. 32). The demands of new audiences—mainly those constituencies who had heretofore been under-recognized as visitors, such as women, people of color, and youths—provided the basis of investigation for the new education committee, which sought to answer a single question:

> Education departments are now faced with a broader and larger public than ever before—inside and outside the museum walls. Never have there been so many different and rapidly changing ideas about what art is. How do museum educators meet this challenge most effectively? (Trippi, 1992, p. 32)

Interestingly enough, the committee's preliminary research showed that art museum directors recognized that they did not communicate their vision of education or community relations well or consistently with their educators, and that they thought a different form of education should be instituted in response to "a small but vocal left wing [of educators] who see the museum as in instrument of social change" (Trippi, 1992, p. 33).

Educational Activity in Art Museums

The field was experiencing what might be defined as period of rupture, that is, it was undergoing a dramatic change. Even though 50% of museums had some form of active programming for adults and 70% offered it for children (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 31), museum staff members did not agree upon a philosophy of learning, a set of accepted professional practices, or predicted outcomes for their educational efforts. Though many museums opened their doors and provided free access to the collections and special exhibitions, most people would consider this the absolute minimum effort for an institution that benefits from tax dollars. However, the authors of *The Art Museum as Educator* point out that a tremendous amount of effort and expense goes into basic operations for museums—a great deal has to be done before anyone can even walk in the door (Newsom & Silver, 1978).

The most problematic aspect of museum education was perhaps the reason that an institution decided to begin providing or expanding their educational outreach. The educational moniker was indeed important for museums in terms of their tax benefits, exemptions, and eligibility for federal, state, and local grants, as was discussed in the last chapter. It is not unreasonable to assume that many museums offered public programs in order to be perceived as educational institutions by the public and by funding agencies.

Four primary sources of income for museums in the early 1970s included 1) endowments or investments; 2) gifts and grants from private sources; 3) tax-based revenue or grants; and 4) admission or exhibition fees (Shaver, 1973). Perhaps three of these four necessitated appearing as *primarily* an educational institution, which was further supported by with Congressional acts such as:

1. The National Museum Act of 1966. According to the Smithsonian Institution Archives from the Office of the Director (Record Unit 190, Box 47, Series 10), "The National Museum Act, approved by Congress October 5, 1966, charged the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and the Director of the United States National Museum to provide assistance to museums of the United States and abroad. Advice, information, research of museum and exhibit techniques and problems, publication of museum manuals, and the training of museum personnel were programs directed by the Act to be performed by the Smithsonian." (Elmore & Henson, 2003, para. 1)

Initial monies for this act, which totaled $600,000, were not appropriated until 1971. This program did not require museums to provide matching grant funds (Schmid, 1973).

2. The Tax Reform Act of 1969, which allowed the tax exemption of museums that had been in effect since the formation of the Federal tax code in 1913. It imposed a 4% tax on the net investment income of all private foundations, with the exception of religious and educational institutions, including most museums (McGrath, 1970). In addition, any gifts to educational and charitable organizations were given greater tax benefits than gifts to public foundations, thereby increasing the incentive for museums to be perceived as primarily educational in nature (Rawlins, 1978).
3. The National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, which received an extension in late 1969 and an allocation of an additional $40 million in funds that nearly doubled its budget and directly benefited both the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) (Steere, 1970). In 1973, the NEH established a Museum Program "designed specifically for programs to improve the interpretation and dissemination of museum collections for the public" (Mathis, 1973, p. 22). These funds were not available for traditional museum activities, such as curatorial scholarship, the renovation of buildings, or objects conservation, since "Strengthening the museum's role as educator [was] the rationale behind the community education program" (Mathis, 1973, p. 22).

4. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (P.L. 93–380), amended by Congress in 1974, which described museums as educational institutions and stated, "it is the sense of Congress that museums be considered educational institutions and that the cost of their services be more frequently borne by educational institutions and agencies benefiting from those services" (Breun, 1975, p. 38). The legislation urged museums to become formally accredited for the educational services offered to schools and to seek funding for such programs through those institutions.
5. The Institute of Museum Services (P. L. 94–462), was introduced in response to the findings of *America's Museums: The Belmont Report* (Burlingame, 2004). This 1976 amendment to the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965 was passed to "provide for the improvement of museum services, to establish a challenge grant program" (National Humanities Alliance, 2002, para. 7).

The financial incentives for educational institutions were great enough that museums made concerted efforts to gain and retain this classification (Svedlow & Troxell, 1997), while carefully noting the types of programs that were most likely to garner both public and governmental support. At least initially, a haphazard approach to cultivating such support was not uncommon, as evidenced by the executive director of New York State's Commission on Cultural Resources, who advocated the development of "a patchwork of museum projects that complements the overall social and educational responsibilities of the government; this approach would meet the costs for museums inclined to engage in 'social action' or 'classroom' educational roles" (Maurer, 1973, p.

31). This “patchwork” included concerted outreach efforts toward underserved audiences, including “programs and exhibitions targeted to special audiences: racial minorities, the economically disadvantaged, and the elderly. There was also a renewed interest in meeting the needs of the handicapped” (Zeller, 1989, p. 78).

CHAPTER FIVE: VOICES

In this chapter, I profile three art museum educators whose early careers in art museum education began in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Although there were a number of educators whom I might have interviewed, I selected Elaine Heumann Gurian, Senior Consultant of Elaine Heumann Gurian, LLC; Dr. Carol Stapp, Associate Professor and Director of the Museum Education Program at The George Washington University; and Linda Sweet, a partner in Management Consultants for the Arts. All three of the interviewees have published articles specifically about the field of art museum education in the *Journal of Museum Education* and have also produced other writings that impacted the larger direction of the field. Their careers were and are distinguished; they began as art museum educators and eventually moved into the work of advising museum staff and teaching educators at various levels. Although I was initially most interested in their work lives—the conditions in which they worked, the organizational structure of their departments, their relationships with colleagues, the physical locations of their offices—it soon became clear that other issues, such as intimate relationships, education, family, and friends, were just as much a part of their work as anything they did in the museum. As a feminist researcher, it was important for me to embrace the narratives that each of the interviewees wanted to share and not simply re-direct or re-phrase questions to get back to the story that I thought I wanted to tell. Therefore, in these narratives you will find anecdotes about children and friends, personal challenges and political viewpoints, fond recollections and even unpleasant memories that help to create a much richer, more complete understanding of their experiences and their work.

Interviewees as Subjects

As I wrote these narratives, I considered the ways in which these individuals were shaped as subjects— by their particular life experiences and viewpoints, the institutions in which they worked, their peers and colleagues, and the larger discourses of the society in which they lived (Foucault, 1977). Additionally, I noted the ways in which they contributed to their own construction as subjects (or *subjection*), particularly the ways in which they resisted and exchanged power in the workplace and in their broader personal politics. Despite extensive historical research on the field of art museum education, it was (and is) difficult for me to fully grasp the kind of treatment that professional women art educators, practicing as professors, art teachers, and art museum educators, endured as a matter of course in the late 1960s and early 1970s. An issues feature in *Art Education* magazine, which contained four small articles written by college professors, helped me to more fully conceptualize the challenges and roadblocks that each of the following interviewees surely faced. Bette Acuff and Sandra Packard, both assistant professors of art (Acuff was a professor of both art and education) wrote a statement featuring two primary concerns that arose during a discussion at the 1974 national NAEA meeting. Their first concern was the overwhelming effect of early socialization patterns on women and the behavior that it elicits, as well as conceptualizing a model of "women-persons" for young women to follow (Acuff & Packard, 1974). They noted the societal pervasiveness of valuing submission and gentleness in women to the extent that these characteristics became the expected expression of female gender identity. Their second concern was how these expectations affected women in professional situations, particularly in relationship to male colleagues:

> Our male colleagues have been socialized to hold certain expectations for women which sometimes make it difficult to accept female assertiveness on the one hand; female intuitive perceptions on the other. The expectations that women give precedence to family obligations over professional ones has led in the past to subtle forms of discrimination on job interviews, salaries, and job training. (Acuff & Packard, 1974, pp. 24-25)

They suggest sharing and open communication with male colleagues as a way to remedy the situation for both men and women in art education and in general and recommend investigating a number of questions and strategies under three large umbrellas: “Personal Career Education,” “Employment Practices,” and “Professional Advancement and Social Conditions in Academic Life” (Acuff & Packard, 1974, p. 25).

In the same issues feature, Margaret K. Hicks, then the chairperson of the Art Department at Navarro College in Texas, wrote a small article entitled “The Advancement of Women in our Profession” (Hicks, 1974, p. 26). This is of particular interest for three reasons: 1) The article is evidence of a burgeoning concern for women’s professional development by both male and female art education faculty; 2) Hicks elucidates ideas and topics that were formed at a meeting that followed a session titled “On Being an Artist and Being a Woman,” including calls for research papers, publicizing the names and locations of women’s galleries and studios, and suggesting topics for the 1975 NAEA convention; and 3) perhaps most important for this research, Hicks identified “Women in Museum Education” as a possible topic for a “section meeting” (which I am assuming is the equivalent to our present-day sessions) (Hicks, 1974, p. 26). Women as art museum educators were a small but recognized part of the systematic and ingrained inequity that pervaded society and the field of art education.

Elaine Heumann Gurian

I met with Elaine over breakfast in a Philadelphia hotel on a chilly, rainy spring morning. We were both attending the American Association of Museums annual meeting—me as a first-time attendee and presenter, and Elaine as seasoned presenter, national distinguished service award-winner, and member of several boards, councils, and committees. If Elaine noticed my nervousness when we first met, she didn't let on—instead, she acted as if answering my questions were as important and meaningful an endeavor as any other commitment. I felt less and less nervous as the interview progressed and as it concluded, we began to chat about things that we had in common—spouses, children, etc.—and she offered to mentor me should I find myself in need of direction or assistance. It was an incredible kindness coming from someone whom I knew to be very busy. After I returned to my hotel after the conference that evening, I found that Elaine had sent me three different documents via e-mail: A copy of her acceptance speech from her 1985 EdCOM award, an essay entitled *Continuous and Unexpected Joy and Fascinating if Arduous Work,* and another acceptance speech that she called *The 10 Most Often Asked Questions: A Pretentious Self-Interview.* All three of these documents shed light on her life, her work, and her legacy, and enriched my understandings of her immeasurably.

Background

Born in 1937 to German Jewish immigrants and raised in Queens, New York, Elaine married in 1956, earned a bachelor's degree in art history from Brandeis University in 1958, and an M. Ed. in elementary education and art education from State College at Boston in 1966, which she earned by taking evening classes while her three children were young and after deciding that she needed to have a paying profession—something that she could do if she "needed to protect [her] children" (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). Though initially a painter, she became a K-12 art teacher at a private school in Boston and then began volunteering for the City of Boston's Summerthing program in 1968, becoming the curriculum developer and co-chair of that project in 1969. Summerthing was an expansive program, initiated by Mayor Kevin White under the auspices of the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs and co-sponsored by corporations and even Harvard University, who offered the use of their stadium for a low-cost concert series (Galeota, 1970, June 29). Described by the mayor's office as "a program of the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs which brings recreational, educational and cultural opportunities to Bostonians of all ages" (East Boston Little City Hall, 1979, "Summerthing," para. 15), it offered ballet performances, concerts with major recording artists, and hands-on projects into neighborhoods rather than holding them in typical venues. According to Elaine, the impetus for Summerthing was the tragic shooting of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King in June 1968 and subsequent riots in the streets of Boston. Elaine and a close friend volunteered their time to the Craftsmobile, one of the programs under the umbrella of Summerthing, which was a mobile unit that traveled around from neighborhood to neighborhood offering residents the opportunity to make creative projects out of recycled materials. She cites a sense of social responsibility and her left-wing politics as two of the reasons she became involved with Summerthing (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009).

The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston

That fall, one of Elaine's three children suffered a seizure and subsequent brain damage, which affected her professional path in that she could no longer work a nine-to-five position that limited the flexibility she needed to care for her son and other children. She said, "he was catastrophically damaged and I couldn't remain home as a full-time suburban mom, which is what I was trained to be" (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). Shortly thereafter, in the fall of 1969, she began her career in art museum education when she was appointed the Director of Education at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, Massachusetts; her colleagues were individuals from Summerthing whom she also considered part of her social and political circles (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). Her new place of employment opened in 1936 as the Boston Museum of Modern Art and in 1948 became officially known as the Institute of Contemporary Art. It was always dedicated to showing (though not collecting) the work of contemporary and emerging artists, a mission it retains to this day (Institute of Contemporary Art, n.d.), and at the time Elaine began working there, it was in receivership and under the custody of the mayor. Elaine cites her relationships with the staff of Summerthing as the reason she was given the opportunity to work at the ICA: "So because these people had been in Summerthing and because they were friends, their parents were friends of people, the Mayor and the cultural kind of elite of Boston, gave them an institution . . . and I became director of education." Although she got on well with her colleagues, she also notes a sense of otherness that she felt in their presence, mostly due to differences in class status. "These people all grew up and went to Choate. They were all upper class Boston Brahmin types. They all knew each other, they had all gone to school together with each other" (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). The position offered her flexibility to care for family as well as the support of colleagues who were also her good friends.

Elaine stated two things about her career in art museum education, and, by extension, museums: 1) she never would have had a career in museums had her rather serendipitous situation with her son and her Summerthing colleagues not occurred, and 2) she did not work her way up to a senior-level director position in museums—she started at the top. She attributes her success in this position not only to her art and art education backgrounds, but also to the fact that there were no expectations on the part of her supervisors as to what an art educator did, and that in fact, they didn't really care what she did. When I asked her what her job responsibilities were at the ICA, she said, "whatever I wanted" (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). At first, she contacted people whom she thought could tell her more about what art museum educators did, then she began a program of education that placed people and issues, not art history and objects, at its heart. In her mind, education equaled access and equity for families and individuals who had not been a part of museum communities in the past. She saw her opportunity to enact a deliberately radical agenda at the ICA because it was, at the time, an experimental organization. Although Elaine started from scratch when it came to her responsibilities at the ICA, she clearly enjoyed a sense of camaraderie and shared purpose with her politically like-minded co-workers. In her interview, she referred to herself and her colleagues at the ICA as a "merry band who were enacting a radical agenda of 1969," including building playgrounds with community members, creating murals with community participation, holding art exhibitions in commercial warehouses that had been abandoned, sponsoring public art shows, and creating art with sick children in hospitals. In the museum itself, she started a program called *Recycle* and ran it in the building that ICA had been in prior to moving to a waterfront location (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). Against a backdrop of the Vietnam War, an emerging drug culture, a pervasive sense of distance between young people and their parents, and a newfound sense of political empowerment, Elaine and her friends/colleagues carried out programming that they felt epitomized their definition of education, which was "access and equity and availability and the breaking down of the elite and the support of family and the support of families who had never been part of the museum community" (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). She further explains that she and her colleagues felt empowered to enact their politics at the workplace because the ICA (and later the Boston Children's Museum) were misfits in the world of museums at the time even though they are highly respected today. "In 1969 they [the ICA and the Boston Children's Museum] were considered the bottom of the heap and cute, I mean of no consequence, which was one of the great opportunities for us" (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009).

The Boston Children's Museum

In 1972, Elaine left the profession of art museum education and became the Director of the Exhibit Center and later the Associate Director of the Boston Children's Museum (BCM) under the directorship of Michael Spock, a friend and the son of the famous pediatrician Benjamin Spock. In our conversation, she drew a clear line of demarcation between art museums and children's museums, and it was clear by her comments that she felt that the latter environment was a more comfortable home for her. She cited her development at the BCM as free from the influence of the museum world in terms of the decisions she made and the expectations thrust upon her. Although she didn't consider herself defiant toward the larger world of museums, she simply felt that there was a political philosophy that she and her co-workers espoused that wasn't acceptable in art museums at the time. For example, she mentioned that colleagues like hers in the BCM were the people who created the team approach to exhibitions as a way of guaranteeing input from museum educators (rather than the traditional model of one curator organizing an exhibition and the museum education staff supporting it through programming). She further explained that it was a visitor-centered institutional philosophy that made it possible for museum educators to play such an important role at children's museums, suggesting that art museums were ultimately less interested in audiences than any other kind of museum at the time and that made it difficult for them to work within a paradigm of contemporary museum philosophy, which includes a great deal of interactivity and collaboration.

Another philosophical belief that she shared with her colleagues was that of free-choice schooling, wherein children decide what they want to learn and educators assist them in finding out more about those subjects or topics. She referred to this as a "client-centered" approach that is shared unanimously by children's museum staff (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). This approach to serving the needs of people also extended to the staff members of the BCM, who were

> pro-family, so your children came during the holidays and we paid for babysitting and we slept in the museum when we did installations and if you were a new mother and you needed to bring the baby and nurse the baby, I mean I nursed even at meetings, I mean this is really a philosophic location so my father would have been completely put out by all this, and we weren't alone. (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009)

In 1976, she published "A Working Paper on Exhibits" in *Museum News,* co-authored with other members of the Boston Children's Museum Staff (Fig. 2), which sought to demystify the process of exhibition planning by discussing approaches to several different exhibitions. In 1985 she received the distinguished EdCOM Museum Educators Award for Excellence (Elaine Heumann Gurian, n.d.). In her acceptance speech, she spoke about the process of creating change and exclaimed that the act of gaining political clout within an institution is as simple as reaching out and taking it: "If you want something to happen, being a pain in the ass is not difficult" (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). It's a proclamation that she repeats over and over in her writings.

Figure 2: Elaine Heumann Gurian, second from the bottom right, with her colleagues at the Boston Children's Museum, co-authors of "A Working Paper on Exhibits," published in *Museum News*, 1976.

Later Career

From 1987 to 1991, she worked at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., first as the Assistant Secretary for Museums and then as Deputy Director for Public Program Planning for the National Museum of the American Indian. She then moved into the position of Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., a position that she held from 1991–1994. She became a consultant in 1994 and took an appointment as Acting Director of the Cranbrook Institute of Science until a permanent director was appointed in 1999. Since then, she has been a senior consultant & principal of her company, Elaine Heumann Gurian LLC, acting as an advisor to international museums that are building or re-organizing their institutions. Professional honors include *The Distinguished Service to Museums* Award in 2004 (Elaine Heumann Gurian, n.d.). In 2006, Routledge published a book of her essays entitled *Civilizing the Museum: The Collected Writings of Elaine Heumann Gurian*, which contains her post-1991 reflections of 35 years in the museum field.

Carol B. Stapp

Unlike the two other individuals that I interviewed for this research, I was unable to speak with Carol face-to-face. Although I initially thought this would be a drawback, the fact that we spoke on the phone while she was in her office turned out to be a great asset—she had easy access to her bookshelf, which proved to be useful when we discussed the resources that had influenced her educational philosophy and practices in the 1970s. During our interview, Carol spoke enthusiastically and matter-of-factly with a buoyant Southern accent and a clear passion for the field to which she has dedicated her professional life.

Background

Raised in Memphis, Tennessee, in a Jewish family, Carol has an undergraduate degree from Newcomb (now the H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College Institute at Tulane University), a Master's degree in art history, and a junior year spent in Paris at the École du Louvre. She attended the University of Philadelphia to pursue a Ph.D. in art history but "very quickly perceived that women were not welcome. All the faculty [were] male, they had all gone to Yale, which at that time was all male, and there was a very strong prejudice against women" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009). Of the eight students starting their degrees with Carol, six of them were women. Ultimately, although a fellow doctoral candidate threatened the university with legal action and all six women were invited to complete their degrees, only the two male students graduated with their Ph.D.s. Carole graduated with her Master of Arts from University of Pennsylvania in 1969 (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009).

Although Carol did not set out to become an art museum educator, a combination of cultural circumstances and societal expectations shaped the professional trajectory that ultimately led her to the Philadelphia Museum of Art and then to The George Washington University. In our interview, she was very careful to describe how much of a departure her work was from the circumstances in which she grew up—and just how much of a concerted effort it was to resist the expectations set upon her as a young Jewish girl:

> It was very, very clear that women were not really supposed to be professionals and I deliberately went to a women's college because I wanted to try my best to get out of that box. I grew up in Memphis and in Memphis, you, really there wasn't anything you could do if you were 'a nice girl,' become a teacher or a nurse . . . because I'm a Jew, both of those were out of the question, but basically [my option] was get married. (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009)

She went on to say that, "one of the reasons I got out of Memphis was because I really couldn't stand the box there. It was a really, tight, little, narrow about the size of the box you get a wedding ring in, an engagement ring."

While her gender was a central consideration in terms of societal expectations under which she lived, Carol used the metaphor of Russian nesting dolls (also known as *Matroyshka* or Babushka dolls) to describe the barriers that discouraged her from having a career. They weren't simply cultural and societal; they were also exacerbated by her geographic location—she cites multiple forms of discrimination that existed in Memphis, not only against Jewish people but also as divisions between white and black individuals as well as Christians and Jews. Even deeper divisions existed within the local Jewish community, with striations that separated individuals and families by social class, Orthodox or reform dogma, and of course, men and women and/or girls and boys.

After Carol went to college, there were still restrictions on what she could do—some self-imposed, some societal, and others institutional. Although she went to New Orleans for her undergraduate degree and spent a year in Paris, which she said made her a bit more worldly than she had been growing up, she served on a judiciary council at Newcomb that meted out disciplinary measures for female students who broke the 10:00 p.m. curfew. She felt that as a Scholar and a Fellow she had to help enforce the appearance of a modicum of decency for her institution, an impulse shared by other female students who protested when the university suggested eradicating the curfew regulations. Female students who had actually broken curfew seemed to be some of the fiercest opponents to the possibility because it would be unseemly if they went to a school without a curfew. Carol maintains that her life, in most ways, was very conservative compared other people in the mid- to late-1960s—drugs had not overrun the South to the degree that they were present in other areas of the country and she avoided them completely. She wanted to go to Berkeley for graduate school, but she knew that was considered shocking for a young woman of her status and background. While she wasn't conservative politically, there was a limit to the risks she was willing to take, and doing "crazy things" was not part of her personality (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009). That said, her experiences at that time and her reactions to them were harbingers of the way she would react to limitations and restrictions and during her professional career:

> I came into this [her professional life] with very much the idea, you know, there were these terrible constraints but I recognized that there would need to be a tremendous amount of change. . . . I was still very fired up by the discrimination against women, but so just who I am, I had to kind of work within the system as opposed to just blowing it all out. (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009)

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Carol's career in art museum education began in 1969 when she became a gallery teacher (to the best of her recollection, her title was Staff Lecturer) at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a position that she held until 1976 while her husband concurrently earned a graduate degree. Her entry into this position was somewhat accidental—a classmate had a part-time position at the Philadelphia Museum of Art giving tours as needed and then got a full-time position somewhere else. Carol interviewed for her friend's position and got the job.

The training that Carol went through to prepare for her new teaching responsibilities was primarily on-the-job. Although she received materials about the lessons offered by the museum, she learned how to give tours by watching other staff lecturers. She notes that eventually the staff lecturers conducted their own training sessions, fashioned from experiences learned after conducting 3–4 tours a day with students who ranged in grade level from Kindergarten to college. Two art education teachers were employed by the Philadelphia public schools to give tours to students enrolled in their system, so Carol and her closest colleagues were responsible for conducting tours for school groups outside of the Philadelphia public school system, including private and Catholic schools. She noted that her new peers—including Patterson (Patty) Williams (long-time and now former Dean of Education at the Denver Art Museum) and Tara Robinson (former Executive Director of Exhibitions at the Detroit Institute of Arts and current Curator of Contemporary Ceramics at Pewabic Pottery) had a very different approach to education in the galleries than what she had learned in art history classrooms and she considered them pioneers in the field. She reveled in their object-oriented approach in contrast to the stifled method of art history research that she had been taught to use—for example, looking up provenance "and all this other nonsense" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009).

During the course of our interview, Carol described in detail her positionality as a Staff Lecturer in relationship to her colleagues, supervisors, and the docent volunteers at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Her supervisors included a director of education and a deputy director of education, both of whom were male and neither of whom necessarily had an expertise in art history, in contrast to the staff lecturers, the majority of whom had master's degrees in art history. She recalls that both supervisors left her and the other Staff Lecturers to their own devices, in part because the Lead Staff Lecturer, who served as a supervisor of sorts for about 15 years, had recently left her position due to major health issues. She notes that ultimately, she and her fellow Staff Lecturers had "no real boss" and "that was a good thing, not a bad thing, because anytime [the director of education] ever tried to do anything, he or [the assistant director of education] tried to do anything, we didn't want to do what they were saying" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009). Eventually, the director of education left and his replacement, a young man named David Katzive, spent a great deal of time initiating and managing a series of commissions for major installations of new works by contemporary artists like Christo and Sam Gilliam. While he was officially in charge of education and the Staff Lecturers, David's primary interests were community organizing and using contemporary art to facilitate interaction among different Philadelphia communities, so he also adopted a hands-off approach to working with the Staff Lecturers. However, he differed from his predecessors in that his staff felt that he approved of their work and trusted them. Perhaps even more significantly, Carol and her colleagues felt that they learned from David's approach to art and community and that his thinking about art was close enough to theirs that they didn't "need to be quite so underground about what [they] were doing" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009). As a result, the Staff Lecturer group flourished.

In the meantime, the Staff Lecturers decided as a group that Patty Williams would lead their group (at which point they gave themselves new titles, though Carol didn't remember specifically what those titles were, and chose a new designation for themselves: Museum Educators) and that they would each be in charge of an area of specialization, for instance, areas of the collection or a particular segment of public audiences. Under this democratic structural re-configuration, Carol was responsible for high school audiences and organized a program called *The Truth About Art*, which was a multiple visit program that she piloted with a Catholic preparatory school. She described one component of the program as a lesson on body language that featured sculptures of Romanesque and Gothic Madonnas, in addition to representations of other time periods. She also mentioned that she still had photos of high school students modeling postures such as contrapposto (Fig. 3) and even though she described the activity as “crazy stuff,” she also asserted that the high school students “were so into it that they were not at all self-conscious” (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009). This example of gallery activity is representative of museum theatre, a larger interpretive movement in art museum education that flourished in the 1970s (Endter, 1975; S. M. Mayer, 1974; Newsom & Silver, 1978; Sewell, 1971). In addition to new kinds of programs, Carol mentioned that she and her colleagues created full-scale exhibitions in the newly built Wintersteen Student Center, though they had to be vetted by Evan Turner, the director of the museum. They created interactive exhibitions, thematic exhibitions (*1492* discussed that pivotal year as experienced in seven cities by seven different global cultures), and exhibitions based on information generated from front-end evaluation (wherein the staff asked people on Philadelphia’s Mall what they might like to see in a exhibition about American history).

Figure 3. Carol Stapp (far left) with high school students enacting a *contrapposto* posture in the galleries of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, circa 1975.
Carol is pregnant with her daughter Rosie in this photograph.
Photo courtesy of Carol B. Stapp

Carol cites a number of sources that were meaningful for her in terms of informing her understandings of gallery teaching, including art museum-based publications such as Sherman E. Lee's *On Understanding Art Museums* (Robert Cole's chapter in particular); *Learning to Look: A Handbook for the Visual Arts* by Joshua Taylor (a Professor Art at the University of Chicago who in 1970 became the director of the Smithsonian Museum of American Art) published in 1957; and *To See is to Think: Looking at American Art*, also by Joshua Taylor and published in 1975. She also cites a number of other sources that helped her and her colleagues "create a very living discovery kind of experiences for visitors," including contemporary literature on adult learning, *Freedom to Learn* by educational psychologist Carl Rogers (1969), *Kinesics and Context [Essays on Body Motion Communication]* by Ray Birdwhistell (1970), and *Breakthroughs to Better Teaching* published by the Harvard Educational Review (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009).

A final insight into the ways in which Carol and her colleagues were positioned in the museum context may be found in the other women who worked (paid or otherwise) at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The Women's Committee coordinated the use of docent volunteers who gave general tours to the public and adults. The Staff Lecturers considered themselves different from the docents in that they saw themselves as special teachers rather than as tour guides. Another difference, according to Carol, was their status in the museum hierarchy—while the Staff Lecturers were professional educators, they were also relegated to a lower level of significance due to the fact that they were paid and somewhat expendable. "It wasn't so much that we were professionals, because that makes it sound like we had some kind of status, but we were the paid help, so we had lower status than the volunteers" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009). She characterized the docent volunteers as fairly typical for the time period, meaning that they were wealthy women who were past the stage of childbearing and childrearing, did not have to earn an income, and therefore had the time and means to volunteer. Carol went on to describe them as "Main Line ladies," (so named for the upper- and upper-middle class Philadelphia suburb) and "ladies who lunch," and suggested that they donated time and resources to the Philadelphia Museum of Art because it was a socially desirable place to volunteer for women of their economic standing. Because they donated money and time to the museum, they were valued by the administration more than the paid educators (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009).

At the time that Carol worked at the museum, there was only one female curator, in contrast to the fleet of women who worked in the education department. Anne d'Harnoncourt was the Curator of 20th century art starting in 1972 and later became the much beloved director and chief executive of the museum, a capacity she served from 1982–2008 (Grimes, 2008, June 3). She was also the daughter of Rene d'Harnoncourt, the former director of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), her uncle was the conductor Sir Nicholas d'Harnoncourt, and she was the spouse of Joseph Rishel, an associate curator of European painting at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Carol explained that 20th century art was perhaps the least valued area of the collection in terms of institutional priorities (therefore it was not too much of a stretch for a woman to be in charge of that area of the collection), but also suggested that Anne's life experiences as a privileged young woman helped her to navigate the political waters of a museum profession and ensured greater odds of success in obtaining a curatorial position at the museum.

The George Washington University

In 1976, Carol left her job at the Philadelphia Museum of Art when she gave birth to her daughter, Rosie, and then moved to Washington, D.C., when her spouse took a position as the first curator of photographs at the Smithsonian Institution's National Portrait Gallery. In 1977, she became the Assistant Director for the Museum Education Program at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and became the Director of the program in 1983. Significantly, that program was the first professional course of study for individuals who wanted to become museum educators in all types of museums (George Washington University, 2003; C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009). Carol suggested that one of the reasons this program started was in response to a prevalent attitude toward educators that questioned the legitimacy of their expertise because it was gained in the galleries rather than in an academic context, "it got to the point of, well, you know, what do you guys know because you're not trained in the fields" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009).

Later Career

In 1989, Carol earned a Ph.D. in American Civilization at The George Washington University with a dissertation entitled *Afro-Americans in Antebellum Boston: An Analysis of Probate Records*, which was published as a book in 1993. In addition to teaching in the Graduate School of Education and Development, and supervising the Masters of Arts in Teaching degree, she currently serves on the editorial board of *Curator: The Museum Journal*, on the Museum Advisory Council of the National Postal Museum, and on the Educational Advisory Committee of the National Law Enforcement Museum. She is a member of the International Council on Museums (ICOM), the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the Museum Education Roundtable (MER), National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP), American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) National Association for Interpretation (NAI), and Very Special Arts (VSA) as well as the Phi Beta Kappa Society, Woodrow Wilson Fellows, and Phi Delta Kappa (Marquis Who's Who LLC, 2010.; C. Stapp, personal communication, March 10, 2010).

Linda Sweet

Linda Sweet and I met over breakfast in a busy hotel restaurant in Philadelphia during the 2009 annual meeting of the American Association of Museums. Linda's calm demeanor and confident manner stood out in stark contrast to the chatter, clinking dishes, and general hustle and bustle of the breakfast hour. Our conversation was interrupted a few times by coffee or food requests and a phone call from the executive director of

AAMD (which Linda, to my surprise, declined to answer and subsequently turned off her phone). I got the sense with Linda, as I had with the other speakers, that she was taking time out of a very busy professional schedule, and again I was thankful that a former art museum educator had made time to talk with a current one.

Background

Linda graduated with an undergraduate degree in art history from Barnard College of Columbia University in Manhattan, a liberal arts college for women, then began a master's degree program in art history at the University of Pennsylvania. After two semesters, she moved to New York City and started working in art galleries, but quickly realized that while she liked talking about art, she did not want to sell it for a living. After four years, Linda attended and taught classes at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) of the State University of New York. Once she started working at the Brooklyn Museum as an instructor in the education department, she transferred from the art history program at New York University into the art education department and received her Master's degree in 1974. While at NYU, she took classes taught by Victor d'Amico, the well-known director of education at the Museum of Modern Art from 1937 to 1969 (McGill, 1987, April 3). He left quite an impression on her, in terms of his energy and creativity as well as his writings on teaching with objects in classroom and museum contexts. Later, Linda earned a certificate from Columbia University's Graduate School of Business Administration's Not-for-Profit Management (Management Consultants for the Arts, n.d.).

Brooklyn Museum

Linda Sweet began her career in art museum education in 1970 as an instructor in the education department at the Brooklyn Museum and later became the Coordinator of School Services and then the acting head of the education department. She had long been interested in the Brooklyn Museum from a personal perspective, having visited as a child in order to attend their children's story hour with Toby Rose, the long-time head of the education department. While still a student at NYU in 1970, Linda expressed her interest in working at the Brooklyn Museum after graduation to a classmate, who responded that she should apply immediately as she had heard about an opening. She met with Ms. Rose, who hired her based on her training in art history and her teaching experience—despite the fact that Linda accidentally referred to the museum as the Brooklyn Children's Museum throughout her interview. Incidentally, the person on staff whom she replaced was Nina Jensen, the current head of the Museum Education Program at Bank Street College of Education in New York City. Her only training for the position, aside from her prior knowledge of art history, was to observe Nina giving a few tours (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 3, 2009).

Linda described her time at the Brooklyn Museum with a great deal of fondness and noted that it remains a special place for her. Still, there were several potential pitfalls when she worked there, including the fact that there was a good deal of movement in and out of the director's office—during her six years of service to the museum, there were three different executive directors and several acting directors as well as a number of heads of the education department. She attributed the high number of education directors to the fact that "there was a tendency to hire people who weren't really interested in education" (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 3, 2009). The lack of stability in leadership and the economic realities of the early 1970s affected employees in many ways—for example, Linda's salary at the museum was paid by the city, even though the museum was an independent 501(c)(3) institution, and she was also a member of a union as a worker for the city. However, this was not true of all of the employees. The curators were paid privately and didn't receive the same benefits and salary as the educators. There was a struggle to give them economic parity while also juggling a number of other full and part-time employees when budget cuts took effect. Ultimately, though, the uneven leadership and supervision on a number of levels created an opportunity for Linda and her colleagues to create programs that emphasized looking at art and contextualizing it historically rather than teaching art history. She describes the education program as "really just a small group of people who were left alone" (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 3, 2009).

The uneven economic support that the museum experienced permeated the everyday realities of the museum in many ways. Although the museum was well established and had a fine collection, the fact that it was in Brooklyn was problematic—the local population did not, for the most part, have the time or inclination to support the museum through donations or time, and those who had the ability to volunteer usually chose to do so at one of the many museums in Manhattan. What had been a beautiful neighborhood full of grand apartment buildings and the Brooklyn Botanic Garden was becoming depressed and unsafe, leading many city dwellers to relocate to safer suburbs and many potential museum visitors to stay away. Additionally, New York City experienced a budget crisis around 1974 that limited the resources of the museum, which still very much needed assistance with its educational efforts. Since there were few potential volunteers, Linda and her colleagues started an unpaid internship program that offered on-the-job experience and turned out to be so successful that Linda to this day has individuals approach her to let her know that he or she was one of her interns. It seems to be another instance of the lack of supervision allowing the educators to respond creatively to an adverse situation and prevail in their attempts to improve the education program. The demographic changes also led the staff to learn how to work with non-traditional audiences and to commit to reaching out to them.

Linda initially inherited a number of programs at the museum that she elected to change because she, her colleagues, and some members of the audience (including teachers) were dissatisfied with them. One example was a program titled *America and Americans Through the Eyes of Her Artists*, a social studies-based slide program offered for large groups of children in the museum's auditorium. As Linda taught the class, she noticed a teacher and his students withdraw their attention from the program and she approached him afterward, at which time he told her that neither he nor his class thought very highly of the program. And though there were other teachers at the same program who came up to her to tell her how much they liked it, Linda trusted her instincts and those of the teacher and changed it. Significantly, changes in the museum's programs were largely based on internal decisions and reflection with little heed of what was being published in museum periodicals of the time, such as *Museum News*. Linda noted that while journals had no impact on their work, there certainly was a process that her staff used to enact change in educational programs:

> What we did as a staff was, we wrote down everything we did, our reason for doing it, the steps involved, the art project involved and what the responses were and how we might change it and we shared that among the staff so that we began to develop our own body of material that we could use depending on the class we were doing. (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 3, 2009)

The resulting programs were developed to bring school classes back to the museum for repeat visits, generally four to six times. The education program also expanded, eventually absorbing responsibility for a pre-existing after-school and weekend program called the Junior Museum.

Conversely, there were a number of positive aspects to the position from the start—Linda mentioned several times her dynamic education colleagues, including Vishakha Desai, a classical Indian dancer who had immigrated to the United States. She both danced in the galleries and worked as an educator before leaving the institution to earn a Ph.D. in art history. Linda also mentioned other colleagues: one who was an artist who did graduate-level work at the Art Institute of Chicago; another who was earning her Ph.D. in classical Greek archaeology, and Tom Cahill, an artist who currently runs a program called Studio in a School based in New York City.

Besides her immediate colleagues, Linda noted four other sources of supportive colleagues: 1) curators at the Brooklyn museum, who not only encouraged educators but welcomed their collaboration in the exhibition process; 2) museum leaders who were in sympathy with educators, including Harry Parker from the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Michael Spock, director of the Boston Children's Museum; and another (unnamed) man who was the head of education at the American Museum of Natural History; and 3) artists that the museum brought in to work through the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, also known as CETA, or public law 93-203, which was enacted in 1973; and 4) museum education colleagues from other museums across the United States. Designed to augment the incomes of unemployed or unemployed individuals, CETA provided block grants to state and local governmental bodies (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, 2007). Ultimately, these four groups created a dynamic environment that empowered Linda and her colleagues to change and improve the educational programs at the Brooklyn Museum:

> We didn't know what we were doing. We didn't have any pedagogy behind us but we had anecdotal experience and I still believe that you can find out whether or not something works or not by going into the galleries and watching. So it was a very wonderful time with wonderful people and we all fed off each other. (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 3, 2009)

One consistent undercurrent that I noticed throughout the interview with Linda was her progressive politics: she was committed to civil rights, feminism, and anti-war activity. Very early on she noted that she was a "product of the 60s" (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 3, 2009) and said that was one of the reasons she chose to go to the Brooklyn museum, which was well known for a long-standing commitment to public education. She recalled an episode in which she recruited Brooklyn Museum colleagues to go to an anti-Vietnam War rally, and was called into the director's office and asked about her intentions and whether or not she was organizing as a representative of the museum. She was fairly certain that they shared her sentiments, yet she had to assure them that she was simply asking other colleagues if they were interested in going with her. She also recalls protesting in front of the Museum of Modern Art in support of their professional employees union, PASTA-MoMA (fig. 4), and also protesting in front of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, though she doesn't recall exactly why. There is no question that she and her colleagues were a different generation of educators than the one before them—Linda's anecdote of a conversation with her initial supervisor, Ms. Rose, made that clear. She described Toby as:

> genteel, always wore gloves, always wore her nylon stockings and even reading the *New York Times* on the subway which at that time, the ink came off on your hands and with her white gloves, she went off to England which she did every year and she came back and we were, the women were all wearing pants, and I remember her saying to me, "Well that's okay Linda because it's a pant suit not just—forget about it—jeans. (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 3, 2009)

Linda describes the "sea of change" that she and her colleagues enacted at the museum as subversive, but with a healthy respect for the way things have been run in the past and as so incremental that by the time the change had occurred, it was not seen as dangerous and was even being legitimized through publications such *The Art Museum As Educator* (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 3, 2009).

Linda's impact on the field hardly stopped at the door of the Brooklyn Museum or any other New York institution. She worked at a state level with other like-minded museum colleagues in New York City, establishing the Museum Education Forum in New York City in 1972 (Nichols, et al., 1984). Her involvement in a group called the Museums Collaborative lead to formation of The New York City Museum Educators Roundtable, a group that she founded and that still offers networking and professional development for museum educators in the tri-state region (NYC Museum Educators Roundtable, 2010) and still exists to this day (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 1, 2009). According to their Web site, the NYCMER:

> provides a forum for museum education professionals to address meaningful issues relevant to our work and to exchange and disseminate current information. We collaboratively develop professional development opportunities for our members and guests such as workshops, roundtable discussions, seminars, symposia, peer groups and conferences. NYCMER was founded in 1979 and continues to grow with 300 members from the tri-state area, that represent a variety of disciplines, work settings, roles and career stages. (NYC Museum Educators Roundtable, 2010)

Perhaps her most notable legacy to the world of art museum education is her instigation of the formation of EdCOM, the professional group for educators that exists within AAM. In 1973, she was asked to speak at the AAM annual meeting by a colleague at the National Endowment for the Humanities. Her prior experience with protesting and with the Art Workers Coalition (who had, the year before, forcibly taken the microphone away from Joseph Noble, the head of AAM at the time) influenced her to use the platform to call for a significant change in AAM, which she described as a small organization run primarily by and for museum directors. She spoke of the work that she and her education colleagues were doing and the fact that they deserved more status within AAM, and demanded a professional organization within the structure of the organization. And she got it, with the support of other high-ranking colleagues, such as Michael Spock, who spoke on behalf of the need for professional committees even though AAM had previously not had them. Thirty-seven years later, EdCOM is still an important professional standing committee, committed to serving educators from all types of museums.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

In 1976, Linda became the Dean of the Department of Public Education at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. She was hired because of the innovative work that she and her colleagues did at the Brooklyn Museum but soon found out that the environment and volunteers at the MFA Boston did not allow her to continue that type of work. Ironically, the docents were major obstacles in implementing new approaches to teaching in the galleries. Whereas the lack of volunteers had been problematic at Brooklyn, their presence at the MFA Boston made it difficult to do the job she thought she was hired to do. In her estimation,

> they had 80 docents, very well trained, connoisseurs, excellent art historians who were not at all interested in learning to be wonderful teachers and who resented working with the school population. They were all suburban women. Their children had all gone to private schools but they were working with inner city kids. So there was a disconnect, and I did try to change it. (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 3, 2009)

Although she tried to assuage them with offerings such as a more professional-sounding name change and the opportunity to work with adult groups, the docents simply weren't willing to follow her leadership. Additionally, though the objects curators were all quite happy to work with Linda, museum administration was undergoing change, about to undertake the first-ever capital campaign. Suddenly museum education, new audiences and innovative programs were no longer important. It made for an ultimately untenable situation and she left after only three years. She is, however, proud of the staff she hired and the changes in program that took place, including a program for disabled visitors that won an award from the AAM many years later (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 3, 2009).

Later Career

In 1979 she became the Director of the Museum and Visual Arts Program for Opportunity Resources for the Arts in New York City (Nichols, et al., 1984, p. 12). She was a founder of the Standing Education Committee of the American Association of Museums and was its Vice Chairperson for two years, from 1978–1980. In 1984, she joined Management Consultants for the Arts as a partner (Management Consultants for the Arts, n.d.) and published the article “An Educator Prepares” in the *Museum Education Anthology* published by The Museum Education Roundtable (Nichols, et al., 1984). Linda is still a partner with MCA and assists museums nationwide with searches intended to find key staff members.

Figure 4. Linda Sweet (at left, holding sign) protesting in support of the MoMA's employee union in 1973, from the article "Museum Manifesto" in *Museum News*, p. 51, published in 1984.

Emerging Themes

One of the most significant aspects of conducting oral histories for this research is that the interviewees had the opportunity to describe themselves and their colleagues using their own words. Three terms that were offered in the course of these interviews seemed particularly important for understanding they ways in which these women contextualized their experiences: *Nice Girls*, *Left-Wing Ladies*, and *Merry Bands*. In the following chapters, I will define the terms nice girls, left-wing ladies, and merry bands, discuss how these three educators embodied these concepts, and discuss their experiences within the context of published literature.

CHAPTER SIX: NICE GIRLS

One theme that emerged from the interviews was a keen awareness on the part of each interviewee of the pervasive societal expectations of their work as women, specifically in terms of the adult roles they were presented as young children, the ways in which they were educated, and their positionality once they began working at a museum. In this chapter, I define and problematize the term "nice girls" as it formed in the interviews, discuss the educational and life experiences of the interviewees as they relate to the concept of nice girls, and explain the positionality of nice girls in the museum, both historically and at the time Carol, Linda, and Elaine entered the field. I end the chapter by describing how the interviewees both reified and resisted their characterization as nice girls in the museum context.

Nice Girls Defined

The term "nice girls" came from Carol's interview, when she used it to describe women who adhered to a societally constructed version of socially acceptable behavior for the generation of women who were born around the same time as she was (1946), most particularly those who shared her Jewish religious identity, middle- to upper middle-class status, and Southern geographical location. She noted that the biggest expectation placed upon adult nice girls was that they get married, and that any sort of job or paid work was secondary to finding a man to marry and raising children. Carol did note that in some instances, nice girls could become teachers or nurses—she had friends in other areas of the country who did just that—but that especially in Memphis, "you just weren't allowed, the system didn't let you" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009). When I told Carol that I found it interesting that both Elaine and Linda had made comments to me indicating that they also are Jewish, she further contextualized her comment in light of her understandings of their shared religious background:

> We grew up in situations where it was very clear the men were supposed to become the professionals and we were very much the next generation. Our parents were business people . . . they themselves were first generation born here and I don't know that that was true for some of the other women, although I guess it is for Elaine, and I think, you know, there was a certain idea that the men were going to become doctors or lawyers and the women were going to be nice and get married. (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009)

Elaine's comments on being a nice girl were much briefer, though they did confirm her status as a first-generation Jewish girl in the United States. They touched less on the basic expectations of how she would spend her adulthood and more on how the concept extended to her role as a parent and the way in which she obtained her first professional position in an art museum. For example, her teaching career was initiated by a desire to care for her children, as any nice girl would be expected to do, but she also felt called to provide for them financially if necessary. Her youngest child's illness, rather than preventing her from working, was the catalyst for her to accept a professional position where she was in control of her time, in charge of her responsibilities, and in mutually supportive relationships with colleagues.

Of the three interviewees, Linda was the only one who did not elaborate on issues that I have suggested are related to being a nice girl. At one point in our initial interview, she mentioned that her sister is a docent at the Jewish Museum in New York, which is the only reason I surmised that she had this particular religious affiliation. In a later e-mail exchange where I mentioned that I thought this shared aspect of the interviewees might be worth examining, Linda replied that, “I'm not sure it's relevant in the same way it is for Elaine and Carol” (L. Sweet, personal communication, March 16, 2010).

Jewish Identity and the Construction of Post-WWII Womanhood

While I wish to honor Linda’s desire to keep her thoughts about that aspect of her life private, the fact that all three of the women that I interviewed were Jewish (a fact that did not figure into my initial selection criteria; I hadn’t yet considered the ways in which religious status or upbringing might be relevant to this research) is nonetheless important to examine. After all, Elaine and Carol both mentioned that they were expected to become good wives and mothers, which, according to Elaine, meant becoming “a full-time suburban mom” (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009).

There were two major challenges that I as a researcher had with examining this aspect of the interviewees. The first is that I am not Jewish, and it is not religion/culture that I had much experience with as a youth growing up in the suburbs of northeast Kansas, although a close family member married a Jewish woman around the time I entered college. The second difficulty centered on the inherent slipperiness of the concept of culture. For if I argue that being a young woman within the context of Jewish culture impacted the actions and beliefs of the interviewees, I must also offer a fairly cogent explanation of Jewish culture (or at least culture in general). I found a helpful discussion of the complexity of culture as well as a helpful definition in the work of philosopher and professor Diana Tietjens Meyers, in her chapter of the book *Jewish Identity*:

> Cultural markers are sometimes definite and obvious, but they are commonly subtle and distinguished by degrees . . . . Characteristic comportment may be

> codified in rules that are taught to children, but children also assimilate certain cultural properties unconsciously as they grow up. Furthermore, these countless elements, some overt and others submerged, do not stand alone, but rather mesh to form complex, evolving patterns.
>
> The subtlety, mutability, and diversity of cultural traditions and cultural groups explain why the mechanisms and institutions of cultural affiliation resist schematization into a few paradigmatic modes. The concept of a culture [en]compasses both the idea of a group of interconnected individuals and the idea of a heritage that unites them. (Meyers, 1993, p. 16)

If culture is comprised of interconnected individuals who share a particular heritage, it is possible to identify common cultural connections that played a role in the interviewees' development and construction as Jewish women, and to examine the implications of being Jewish and female in the post-World War II United States. A foundation for those understandings starts with the generation of men and women who became their parents.

According to Seymour Martin Lipset, who was an American political sociologist and Hazel Professor of Public Policy at George Mason University, the single most significant aspect of the American Jewish experience, after an influx of immigration in the late 1800s and before the Great Depression, was how greatly their general circumstances improved. The children of Eastern European Jews who arrived between 1899 and 1914 became, "first, the best educated; then, the most middle-class; and, ultimately, the most affluent ethnoreligious group in the country; other than their coreligionists of German origin" (Lipset, 1990, p. 14). Lipset goes on to describe the large numbers of Jewish students at Eastern private colleges and schools starting in the 1920s (until caps were placed on their enrollment once it became apparent just how many Jewish students were enrolling) and then public universities and community colleges later on. By the 1930s, despite a certain amount of anti-Semitism that limited their opportunities, Jewish students were becoming doctors, dentists, pharmacists, lawyers, businessmen, accountants, teachers, and civil servants, depending on the academic programs that they were able to access (Lipset, 1990). And though Lipset used the generic term "Jews" to describe the individuals earning these degrees, it is clear that he is referring to Jewish males, particularly when he cites another scholar who discusses the ways in which Judaism emphasizes particular expectations for business*men* and intellectuals.

Riv-Ellen Prell, currently a Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Minnesota, described the messages that young Jewish women would have been surrounded by in the 1920s, at the same time that their Jewish brothers pursued higher education and careers. Articles, novels, and magazines intended for a young Jewish female audience were filled with depictions of ideal middle-class womanhood that included adept management of house and home; the education, health, and moral well-being of children and families; and prescriptions for appropriate, polite behavior. "They were arbiters of what was proper, far better suited to these tasks than men, especially immigrant men, who financed the family's ascent to the middle class but had no idea how to occupy it, caught up as they were in the world of work" (Prell, 1996, p. 102). Clearly, higher education in the pursuit of intellectual and economic success was clearly established as a fundamental part of Jewish culture for immigrants who arrived in the

United States in the late-19th and early-20th centuries, though men were positioned as learners and earners and women were encouraged to manage the economic, familial, and social assets that were intertwined with their work.

Prell also provides a personal and somewhat conflicted account of Jewish womanhood as she saw it from the perspective of an adolescent in the 1960s. Based on her age, her mother and aunts would have been part of the generation that Lipset describes and Prell herself is approximately the same age as the interviewees in this study. She describes a childhood surrounded by generous, affectionate women who cooked and cared for her and seemingly filled a very traditional domestic role; however, she also notes that the notion of traditional Jewish gender roles is highly problematic—while it is assumed that women occupied the kitchen and "left the work of the Jewish religion—study, public prayer, and Torah—to men" (Prell, 1996, p. 98) their existences were far more complicated:

> European-Jewish women ran businesses, hired domestics, deferred to patriarchy, and at the same time often controlled money and power of ordinary, nonreligious life. This division of labor differed if a person were wealthy or poor, secular, socialist, or religious. Poor women always worked; wealthy women were not as likely to be in business. Socialists wanted equality; the religious Jews insisted on the divine origins of separate spheres for the sexes. Women did not study sacred knowledge, but some were educated. What is certain is that the trip across the Atlantic changed everything, and beginning in the 1900s affluent Jewish women modeled themselves on the "womanly" virtues of the American-Protestant elite. (Prell, 1996, p. 99)

The gender-based expectations that were placed upon Carol, Linda, and Elaine descended from these complex and somewhat contradictory traditions. While at least Elaine and Carol (and possibly Linda) clearly understood the expectation that they would be nice girls, they also saw their mothers, aunts, and other female members of their religious and cultural tradition moving in and out of gendered roles as the occasion or circumstances called for them to do.

Another significant marker of Jewish identity that surely had an effect on their construction as nice girls—and, I would argue, on their career paths— is the liberal political and religious tradition of American Jews. Journalist Irving Kristol, a member of the New York Intellectuals[2] who eventually espoused a Neo-Conservative philosophy (Riverside Productions, 1999), traces this tradition back to ideas of the French Revolution, calling it a "special compound of Jewish political and religious history . . . . So powerful is this meaning that it has become for many Jews an integral aspect of their self-definition" (Kristol, 1990, p. 109). He argued that the ideals that propelled the French Revolution, including economic parity, communal liberty, and a government elected to serve the popular will, liberated Jewish ghetto dwellers in Central and Eastern Europe, and that they brought these ideals with them to the United States, where they became a political ideology. These ideals are even today typically manifested as a stated

[2] The New York Intellectuals were a group of radical journalists and literary critics who sought "to forge a liberal Jewish cultural movement under the aegis of 'cultural pluralism' in the 1920s, they found themselves propelled first toward Communism and then toward Trotskyism during the 1930s" (Wald, 1987, pp. 11-12). By the 1950s, the members of this group, who had at one time advocated socialist revolution, were liberal advocates of American capitalism. Kristol was the only member to turn away entirely from his liberal roots—he eventually served the Republican administrations of Richard M. Nixon and Ronald Reagan; supported the principles of the free market and the actions of the religious right, and spoke out against liberalism (Margolick, 1998, January 3).

commitment to social justice and reform and are associated most generally with the efforts of the United States Democratic political party (Kristol, 1990).

This cultural and individual commitment to social justice was evident in the interviews, as Carol, Linda, and Elaine were all very forthcoming about their concern for disenfranchised and underrepresented members of the American populace and their profound desire to work toward equality. Their work in the realm of culture and education as well as their volunteerism embodied this democratic impulse as it was formed through their experiences as young Jewish women. Thus the cultural emphasis on higher education, economic success, family stability, and social justice shaped the development of all of the interviewees as they grew into womanhood in post-World War II America.

Nice Girls in Higher Education

During the course of my research, I found other women who described, to a greater or lesser extent, their experiences of being a nice girl in the world of higher/art education. Most notable among these was June King McFee, a legendary art education professor who served as Head of the Art Education Department at the University of Oregon for 18 years. In a presentation at the National Art Education Association convention in 1975, Dr. McFee offered a personal perspective of her journey in academia that included a discussion of the roles offered to women of a certain social status, including her. She recalled:

> None of the women among my family's friends worked. My mother assumed I would never work. Be an artist—yes—but never enter the working world . . . . Women were symbols of status—not beings with independent ambitions. Talents

> were to be used for worthy causes where one could contribute her efforts in things that added status, but one got status mainly from what the man in the family did. (McFee, 1975, p. 6)

The concept of nice girls was pervasive in the lives of many women who became young professionals in the 1970s. And although they broke through educational and social barriers, the expectations that had been placed upon them continued to affect their lives in multiple ways.

Despite the expectation that nice girls of this generation would ultimately forego careers for marriage and motherhood, many of them attended and graduated from college. The women that I interviewed not only went to college, they matriculated to prestigious, private liberal arts colleges: Linda went to Columbia's Barnard College, a women's college in New York city that was founded in 1889 and known for intellectual rigor and encouraging critical thinking (Barnard College, 2002); Carol attended Newcomb, also known as the Sophie H. Newcomb College, which was founded under the auspices of Tulane University in 1886 as (arguably) the first college in the United States to grant degrees to women (Coyle & Tucker, n.d.); and Elaine went to Brandeis, a private, co-educational research university with a focus in liberal arts and social justice (Brandeis University, 2010b) in Boston. Although it is a secular institution, the university uses an architectural metaphor to suggest how the Jewish faith is part of its foundation. In 1995, Brandeis President Jehuda Reinharz describes the "four pillars" on which the university is built as 1) dedication to academic excellence, 2) nonsectarianism, 3) a commitment to social action, and 4) continuous sponsorship by the Jewish community (Brandeis University, 2010a, para. 5). It is worth noting that Barnard and Newcomb are both women's colleges that were established under the umbrella of well-known men's colleges, which were considered more socially acceptable for women to attend. Newcomb was founded in the late 1800s, a time when many women's colleges were established in the United States, primarily as a way to offer education to women while to separating male and female students. Initially, these schools were accepted as long as they did not interfere with the more important business of educating male students. "New Orleans would accept the education of women at Tulane only if the girls and women did not intrude upon the studies of boys and men" (Coyle & Tucker, n.d., para. 5).

Carol explained that even though she went to school and considered New Orleans and Paris (where she spent her junior year) as "cosmopolitan," compared to her hometown (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009), she still felt like she was living within the parameters of the nice girl definition because she served on a college judiciary committee that meted out punishments for minor disciplinary infringements, shied away from drinking or using drugs, and refrained from "running amok" unlike more typical college students of the era (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 11, 2009).

While all three of the interviewees defied convention by earning graduate degrees after college, they also studied fine arts curricula—painting in the case of Elaine and art history for Carol and Linda—which have a long and established history of being acceptable subjects for women to study at a college level (Sherman & Holcomb, 1981). I initially interpreted their decisions to study fine art curricula as indicative of their status as nice girls—after all, art history degrees were jokingly referred to as Mrs. degrees even when I was in school in the early to mid 1990s—the fact that they went to prestigious colleges that enrolled only women clearly suggests that they resisted and rejected the association between their chosen areas of study and the pursuit of marriage.

Nice Girls as Art Museum Educators

Historical Precedents

In her 1938 book *Educational Work in Museums of the United States: Development, Methods and Trends,* Grace Fisher Ramsay elucidated the necessary qualifications for educational staff in museums, which included academic training (a bachelor's degree in an unspecified subject), teaching experience, and "the right type of personality" (Ramsay, 1938, p. 210). As a matter of fact, the personality of an educator outweighed his or her academic training. The criteria for such a personality was exhaustive:

> Museum instructors must not only be persons of real culture and good training, but they must have broad vision and an unusual amount of initiative. They must be able to think clearly and express themselves with accuracy in an entertaining and inspiring manner. They must be dynamic enough to arouse both interest and thought on the part of those instructed so that each person will become an active participant in the work. They must be creative workers and act as pioneers in continually thinking out and presenting new methods. They must have an understanding of psychology and know how to meet the average man and woman as well as groups from the schools . . . . Considerable initiative is required to work out different methods of presentation so each group may receive the best type of instruction. (Ramsay, 1938, p. 210)

It is notable that these qualifications, in addition to being things that cannot be taught or measured, positioned educators in contradistinction to curators, who were expected to have solid academic training, with little regard to how they related to audiences.

Nice Girls in the Art Museum

Robert Ott, a Professor of Art Education at Penn State and museum education researcher, also positioned teachers in the art museum context as empathetic creators of aesthetic learning, when he urged them to "know what facilities for this type of learning are within each student so that besides the actual making and appreciating of art objects, descriptions and embodied values of art works can be brought to the consciousness of each student" (Ott, 1975, p. 63). While these practitioners sought to develop and refine their teaching practices in order to create authentic educational experiences, Ott situated their work as emotionally sensitive and nurturing, evoking a domestic context that cast museum educators as nice girls. Thus, the role of the museum educator became more of a facilitator of experience rather than a transmitter of art historical information:

> The key factor in an efficient education department is the amplification of a visitor's feeling rather than his [sic] knowledge. To lead toward experience rather than knowledge alone, the education staff must sense the subtle relationship between knowledge and feeling. The link between information and experience must be revealed; information must be translated into feeling. (Murphey, 1970, p. 16)

Although Murphey did not indicate how educators were supposed to intuitively recognize the understandings and emotional state of each member of the groups that they worked with in the galleries, his statement does bring to light a powerful and longstanding expectation of women as educators that goes back to the late 19th century, when women began to gradually replace male teachers in grammar schools. Although there were many reasons for this change, one of the most significant was that women were perceived as biologically predisposed to be nurturing and responsive to children. Art in particular was perceived as an appropriate subject for women to teach children, since it was both culturally significant and was thought to express moral truths (Boas, 1935). The return of influential Progressive philosophies of education in the 1970s, with their focus on learning by doing, stimulating the interest understanding of the learner, and social justice and responsibility must have been particularly resonant for the interviewees who were raised as nice girls. They were at once positioned as valuable teachers for children and also shared a philosophical orientation that was very much in sympathy with Progressive educational ideals.

Educational Work in the Service of the Young

It is important to note here that children, particularly those visiting within the context of a K-12 school situation, were the intended recipients for most of the tours and programs devised by Carol, Linda, and Elaine, at least in their early careers. Programs for children grew slowly but steadily in museums after 1900 and tours in particular were more common after 1920 (Ramsay, 1938). By the time that the women in this study began their careers, 90 percent of museums offered some sort of programming for school classes (Newsom & Silver, 1978) At the same time, children were perhaps the least valued audience in a traditional museum hierarchy.

The process of revamping old programs and creating new ones for this population in the early 1970s caused the education staff at many museums to question the validity of long-standing programs. For example *The Art Museum as Educator* devotes an entire section (pp. 259 to 470) to the following questions:

1) What is the art museum trying to do in its education programs for the young?
2) Should young people come to the museum; if so, why and at what age?
3) In dealing with schools, what realities do museums face?
4) How can museums best focus their energies in helping young people use and understand their collections? (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 259).

Though these questions are fairly straightforward, they reveal some inherent museum-based perspectives on the part of the writer. For example, question number two seems to be somewhat of a moot point—students were already coming to museums and had been as part of a long-standing tradition, especially in larger museums. The language of number three suggests a great deal of museum-centeredness in what is otherwise presumably a school-centered effort. Rather than investigating the best ways to collaborate with schools or making it a goal to work with schools, the museum faces certain realities in "dealing" with them? And lastly but perhaps most tellingly, the question of how to help young people understand the collections is brought up, positioning the object as the primary concern for visits, rather than students themselves.

The answers to these questions given by museum workers tell a different story. *The Art Museum as Educator* lists three ways in which the majority of museum staff who were interviewed for the project described their programs:

1) Helping young people feel at home in an art museum and to understand its value;
2) Introducing them to visual experiences that will sharpen their perceptions;
3) Giving children richer opportunities to make art, important for self and for understanding and enjoying the art of others (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 259).

Art museum educators also connected with audiences through outreach that occurred outside the museum galleries. Recall Elaine's account of starting her museum career in 1968 by volunteering for the Boston Craftsmobile, or "a mobile unit using recycled materials with kids that would pull up in neighborhoods and make things" (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 1, 2009). While at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, Elaine continued outreach by organizing the building of playgrounds and teaching hospital workers to work with children. Carol also mentions going out to playgrounds during the summer for her work at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and taking exhibitions such as the *Mobile Eye* out to children.

Positionality in the Art Museum

Like the early days of art museum education, powerful male voices fueled the dominant conversation about what art museum education could and should be in the 1970s. According to art education doctoral student Kipi Rawlins, two well-known museum directors in the early 1970s exemplified opposite ends of the philosophical spectrum as far as the ways in which they conceptualized art museum education, recalling the age-old debate between Benjamin Ives Gilman and John Cotton Dana. She posits Sherman E. Lee of the Cleveland Museum of art as a "classic museum director manning the intellectual barricades against the onslaught of mass taste" (Rawlins, 1978, p. 10), protecting the integrity of the museum by remaining steadfastly committed to idea of the museum as a temple of aesthetic experience and as a preserver of history (exactly whose history is being preserved was not specified by either the author or Lee). On the other side of the spectrum, she aligns Thomas Hoving of the Metropolitan Museum of Art with a movement that worked on making art accessible to a mass audience and responding to the social and political climate by making the collection more relevant to the public. Both extremes were problematic: Lee felt that showing the fine examples of aesthetic production benefitted society by showing them something that they did not see every day, thus creating a sense of alienation on the part of the masses. In fact, he argued that museums were victims of the demand for education by said masses, saying:

> Merely by existing—by preserving and exhibiting works of art—it [the museum] is educational in the broadest and best sense, though it never utters a sound or prints a word. Until such an approach is accepted within our social structure, art museums will continue to be second-class citizens in [an] "educational" country. (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 21)

At the same time, Lee was heavily involved with projects and publications that suggested a genuine concern for successful educational programs—he was the chairman for the Council on Museums and Education in the Visual Arts, which produced the book *The Art Museum as Educator* and he also edited the influential book *On Understanding Art Museums* (Lee, 1975), which included a meaningful and enduring chapter by psychologist Robert Coles that was cited by two of the interviewees as an important reading. In fact, I read that chapter as an assigned reading when I was in graduate school in the mid-1990s.

Hoving, on the other hand, hired staff to interpret cultures to museum audiences even though they were not members of those cultural groups—one very famous example being the controversial *Harlem on My Mind* exhibition, which featured photographic images of African American culture from 1900–1968 but did not contain a single work of art created by a black artist (Kimmelman, 1995, November 19). This was very upsetting to many members of the African American community, the very group of people that Hoving was trying to attract to the museum in the first place.

While the published literature of the time reflects the attitudes and ideas of well-known directors toward art museum education, there seems to have been little written by practicing art museum educators, either supervisors or practitioners. Linda, Carol, and Elaine developed their own understandings of art museum education through personal experience. They did so, however, under the constraints of their working environments, which were largely run and supervised by male authority figures. Carol Stapp noted that "that was a movement within the museum world, even at that stage, toward education, even though it was education that was very 'schooled' . . . that was happening in general, albeit at a very snail-like pace, and it had to be very approved by the power structure" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009).

According to a 1971 survey sponsored by AAMD, men in their early 40s were directors of education departments in of most of the 91 museums that responded (Trippi, 1992). Although the majority of education practitioners were women, they apparently did not hold leadership positions within departments of education (at least in major American art museums) and are not mentioned in this particular context at all, even though the committee was trying to understand the current state of the profession. Two of the individuals interviewed for this research noted the problematic relationship between male supervisors and their largely female employees. For example, Carol Stapp notes that the male director of education at her institution had no subject matter expertise in art history (unlike all of the female educators working under his direction, who all had masters degrees in art history); furthermore, he seemed to take little heed of the goings-on of his department and provided almost no feedback for his employees, even though the female education employee that had previously supervised the gallery teachers had recently suffered a stroke and was no longer able to lead the group. His hands-off approach was not necessarily a bad thing in the eyes of his employees. “There was no real boss, I guess I would say, and that was a good thing, not a bad thing, because anytime he ever tried to do anything, he or Bill [the deputy director of education], we didn’t want to do what they were saying" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009). She noted that the next education director was much more philosophically aligned with the educators and there wasn’t a need to be subversive about changes that they were implemented, because even though he didn’t pay close attention to what they were doing, they felt that he trusted them to do the jobs they were supposed to do. And while they were working in the galleries, he was acting as a community organizer of sorts, inviting contemporary artists to the museum and having them work with different community groups and schools on installations and oral history projects. Even Linda Sweet, who had a remarkably collegial relationship with curatorial staff at her institution, noted that education directors—in her museum and in other museums as well—tended to stay a very short time in their positions because they “really weren’t interested in education” (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 2, 2009). Sweet didn’t mention whether or not her immediate supervisor was male, but she did say that the people who were heads of education at the Brooklyn museum tended to leave not only the department but also the field, perhaps indicating a lack of connection with their employees or other colleagues, a desire to move up beyond middle management in the museum field, or both. She also noted that the Brooklyn museum hired a male director after she left to become the Dean of the Department of Public Education at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston in 1976 (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 2, 1999).

The exception to the male director of education/female practitioner binary described in this section is Elaine, whose first paid position in an art museum education was as Director of Education at the ICA. However, she characterizes obtaining that position as “serendipity,” saying, “this is all by accident,” and “I was a lucky duck, so it happened people, I was in the right place at the right time, I said yes, and that was that” (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 1, 1999), which downplays the fact that she was, indeed, qualified for that position. An undergraduate degree in painting, a master’s degree in art education with a certification in teaching, and experience teaching in a school as well as a volunteer program would be solid credentials for obtaining a position as an art museum educator even today. While Elaine may not have experienced the same exact situation as Linda and Carol, I would argue that her conditioned response to success—that is, downplaying it and demurring her qualifications—were in fact the responses offered by a nice girl, who was at once modest and grateful to be in the company of wonderful colleagues and an influential boss.

One lingering question for me was a curiosity as to why these talented women entered the field at all. I wondered why they saw art museum education as a viable expression of their academic and other talents, even when they were so clearly in an uncertain professional space. The answer, I believe, was expressed by Carol, as part of a response to my queries about her entry into the PMA education department. She said, “you have to really recognize since that the drift of where we're going on this as it was very, very clear that women were not really supposed to become professionals” (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009). The educative function of their positions made them more acceptable to pursue, since nice girls were permitted to become teachers and work with children, which was a large part of all of the interviewees’ daily work. Furthermore, at the time that Carol, Linda, and Elaine started their positions, the position of art museum educator was not conceptualized or construed, as of yet, as a profession—unlike the work of curators or directors. While they entered a space that was professionally uncertain, they also saw possibilities for change and opportunities to perform work that was personally meaningful.

Conclusions

The lives and careers of Linda, Carol, and Elaine were shaped by two larger discourses that directly relate to the concept of nice girls—that of post World War II Jewish womanhood and also that of the emerging feminist movement. The first one offered a complex vision of adulthood that valued women for their motherly and domestic achievements while heralding higher education, economic stability, and social justice as ideal achievements. The other consciously examined the positionality and power of women in a patriarchal society and encouraged women to break free of the expectations and restrictions placed upon them. The first discourse prepared the three interviewees, as educated young women, to work within the context of male-dominated cultural institutions, while the second gave them tools to resist the narrow roles offered to them in society and in the workplace. Their roles as educators in a cultural space, working primarily with children, may have made them initially appear as non-threatening nice girls to their supervisors and others; however, they treated their positions with intellectual rigor and professional commitment that befitted their chosen work. Slowly but surely, they empowered themselves to make significant changes in their institutions and their field, thus troubling the notion of nice girls and making it uniquely their own.

CHAPTER SEVEN: LEFT-WING LADIES

A second theme that became evident as I conducted and reviewed the interviews was a commitment to feminist movement and social justice on the part of each interviewee. All three women cited the social, political, economic, and racial discourses of the time as significant influences on both the museum world and their personal worldviews. They recognized that they were in the midst of great changes in society as well as within the context of art museums, and all three of them participated in this change in ways that were public as well as personal. In this chapter, I define the term "left wing ladies" and discuss the ways in which Linda, Elaine, and Carol embodied this term both within their personal philosophies and their museum work; contextualize their experiences by revealing the ways in which radical political action shaped art museums in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and demonstrate ways in which art museums and art museum education changed in response to issues of social justice.

Left-Wing Ladies Defined

The term "Left-wing ladies" came primarily from Elaine Heumann Gurian's comments about her personal political orientation as well as the overarching political tenor that existed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but I also drew from Carol Stapp's discussion of enacting radical change without visibly rocking the proverbial museum boat and Linda Sweet's cautious but firm approach to protesting inequality in collaboration with her colleagues.

When I asked Elaine how she began her career in art museums, she immediately mentioned her commitment to left-wing politics, which for her was inseparable from her philosophical approach to her work in the museum. Both Linda and Carol were also very clear that they harbored deep concerns for the plight of women in the arts and society, which they also shared with a number of colleagues, but they also felt that their political action could be kept under the radar so that it didn't cause a disruption with their immediate and high-level supervisors. However, their actions were in fact noticed by the larger world of museums, as evidenced in a history of AAMD that noted "a small but vocal left wing [of educators] who see the museum as in instrument of social change" (Trippi, 1992, p. 33). The women that I interviewed, I believe, are part of that small but vocal left wing. The particular themes of social justice that emerged most prominently in their interviews were feminism, or advocating on behalf of women in museums, the art world, and beyond; and economic and racial justice, which tended to manifest as commitment to accessibility for minority and underprivileged audiences. Linda and Elaine also openly voiced their opposition to the Vietnam War.

The Impact of Political and Social Action on the Art Museum World

The culture of protest and social action affected not only the role of art museums within the social fabric of the United States, it deeply affected the staff at those institutions. For example, when I asked Elaine Heumann Gurian about significant events that affected the museum world in the late 1960s and early 1970s, her first words of response were,

> The politics of the time. The notion that maybe in the flow of power there really could be an overturning in new justice . . . that people could, by their very nature of community agitation, change the course of the political world. We thought "holy moley," we can remake the world. (E.H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009)

The larger world of museums and museum administrations in particular recognized these changes, even though they may not have fully understood how to respond to them. For example, in 1970, *Museum News* published an issue containing "reflections on educational experiences possible in museums, and descriptions of some actual, innovative programs now underway" (American Association of Museums, 1970, p. 14). One article, "What You Can Do With Your Education Department," demonstrated the sense of uncertainty that permeated the late 1960s and early 1970s—despite the fact that American museums had been offering educational programs on a smaller scale for 70-plus years, there finally existed an impetus for critically examining such efforts. Geared perhaps toward administrations that were starting museum education programs in their museums, the author encouraged museum staff to be mindful about their audiences, objectives, and educational rationales, lest the programs they developed be viewed as meaningless engagement or educational fluff. The author demonstrated just how much the thinking about education had changed when he said, "The primary concern of a museum is not really with objects themselves, but with the experience they cause in us" (Murphey, 1970, p. 14). In 1970, Joseph Veach Noble of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (later the director of the American Association of Museums) published a Museum Manifesto in which he declared, "museums are living organisms, and the environment in which they have lived has changed . . . . Those that do not adapt themselves, that do not become useful and meaningful in their new environment and to their new audience will ultimately die" (Noble, 1970, p. 18). Noble's words signaled the end of an era in museums, one in which the value of museums as institutions went largely unquestioned by public audiences, to the relief of many museum workers and to the consternation of others. Barbara Newsom, co-editor of *The Art Museum as Educator*, cites the 1954 Supreme Court ruling on desegregation and the Civil Rights Act as two major events that affected minority populations and later led to government support, via the National Endowment for the Arts, for their community-based arts institutions (Newsom & Silver, 1978). As early as 1963, museums openly called upon the federal government to consider museums vital institutions in American education and thus eligible for both taxpayer support and the same benefits and deductions as schools and libraries (Ahlander, 1963). Indeed, museum staffs began to examine their educational offerings (or their lack thereof) in the same critical way that public school educators looked at their curricula the decade before (Newsom & Silver, 1978).

Feminist Activism

The 1960s ushered in a new era in feminist movement that was primarily concerned not with equality of the sexes, but with disrupting the systems and structures of inequality that positioned women as unequal to men in the first place. This second wave of feminism was a mass movement that ensued after women who had participated in the New Left politics of the 1960s realized that little had changed in their own lives in terms of male-dominated power relations with their political allies—they were still relegated to serving as cooks, cleaners, clerical workers, and sexual companions, even while laboring within radical organizations (Whelehan, 1995). Other sources cite the impetus of the movement as stemming from working women who began to lobby federal and state government to end the discrimination they experienced in the workplace as well as housewives who felt unfulfilled working solely in their homes (Nicholson, 1997). To that end, women began to explore and re-envision conceptions and representations of femininity, hold events and protests in order to raise other women's awareness of deep structures of male domination, and in higher education contexts, to conduct research and publish on "the political nature of a woman's condition" (Gornick & Moran, 1971, p. ix).

As part of a broader societal movement of examining the nature of power and the construction of knowledge, the second wave of feminism asked women (and men) to commit to both personal and societal change, succinctly encapsulated in the popular phrase "the personal is political" (Shaw & Lee, 2001, p. 3). Indeed, for some art museum educators of the time, the personal was political and that fact was directly related to both their career choices and the ways in which they approached their professional positions. According to Linda Downs, a former museum educator who is now the Executive Director of the College Art Association (CAA), the women's movement was not nearly as visible in art museums during the 1960s and 1970s as it was in other fields, such as academia. Her own awareness of feminist movement and activism did not occur until she attended a conference on women in the arts in 1972 and encountered second-wave artists Miriam Schapiro and Judy Chicago. She does note that shortly thereafter the Women's Caucus for the Arts (now the Women's Caucus for Art) was founded in association with the CAA, and in 1973 the Education Committee of the American Association of Museums was formed (Downs, 1994). EdCOM will be discussed in the next chapter.

Although Linda doesn't recall a strong feminist presence in the art museum world, it is clear that by the time Linda, Carol, and Elaine became educators, protests by feminist and other activist groups were already starting to change the world of museums. In 1969, protestors disrupted sessions at the Convention of the American Association of Museum Directors, demanding "reformist measures against racism, sexism, repression, and the Vietnam War" (Rawlins, 1978, p. 10). The same year, the group WAR (Women Artists in Revolution) formed out of the membership of the Art Worker's Coalition (AWC). Although the AWC was committed to combating the racially exclusionary practices of major art museums, they apparently didn't apply the same standards on the basis of sex. WAR demanded the inclusion of women in New York City museum exhibitions (at least 50% of total artists) lobbied for women's art exhibitions, formed a women's art advisory board, and partnered with Feminists in the Arts to create a city-funded Women's Interart Center (Nemser, 1975). Another feminist group that lobbied for change in museums was formed in the fall of 1970. The Women's Ad Hoc Committee, formed in part by critic Lucy Lippard, protested the low number of women artists represented in the Whitney Museum's prestigious annual exhibition and demanded that women comprise no less than 50% of the total artists in the 1970 exhibition. Because the museum refused to cooperate, the group staged covert protests, discreetly littering the floor with eggs and tampons. On the night of the opening, they forged invitations and staged a highly visible protest by donning red armbands and sitting in the middle of the exhibition. Although the Whitney never conceded that the Women's Ad Hoc Committee affected their curatorial or exhibition practices, they included more women than ever before in that and future exhibitions. WAR and the Women's Ad Hoc Committee preceded what was perhaps one of the most successful campaigns on the part of women's artist groups. A number of existing groups banded together to ask the administration at the Brooklyn Museum for a show of contemporary women's art, a request that was declined by the museum. Although the group did not get the response they wanted, there was a positive outcome: the Open Hearing at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, held on

December 12, 1971. Organized by artist Faith Ringgold and art historian Patricia Mainardi, the event featured 29 people who read pre-prepared responses to the question "Are Museums Relevant to Women?" (Allara, 1998; Nemser, 1975). Incidentally, one of the women to read a statement was artist Alice Neel, who later had a one-woman show at the Whitney in early 1974, which was criticized for the rather perfunctory manner in which it was arranged and hung by their curators (Allara, 1998).

A year later on the west coast, the Los Angeles Council of Women Artists (LACWA) made demands on the Los Angeles County Museum, in response to an art and technology exhibition wherein no women were represented. They had less impact than the Women's Ad Hoc Committee due to an unwillingness on the part of group members to organize their membership according to hierarchical (and thus male/patriarchal) principles. It floundered without effective leadership, but the administration and curatorial staff at LACMA seemed hear their message—they included four women in the exhibition the following year, and proposed a retrospective survey of women's art through the ages (Nemser, 1975).

A variety of women involved in the art world were part of radical feminist action toward museums. For example, the Open Hearing featured "curators, critics, artists, teachers, art historians, and one museum director" (Mainardi, 1974, p. 6). A majority of the participants felt that not only were museums not relevant to women, they questioned the relevance of museums in general, calling them "obsolete" and "crumbling" (Mainardi, 1974, p. 6). Educators seem to have been caught in the middle of two very powerful impulses: One, to improve the status of women both in society and also as artists, museum workers, and patrons; and two, to make the museum and its contents relevant to a new generation. For example, Carol Stapp detailed specific actions that she and her fellow museum workers took in order to organize and spread consciousness about the positionality of women in the art world, which in her case included organizing city-wide programs and an exhibition for contemporary women artists:

> We organized this huge event, *Philadelphia Focuses on Women*, and it was part of this time, you know becoming part of the women's movement, but doing it in a very structured way. This went on for months. I was the program chair and I can remember having to organize all these different programs all over the city and not only that but we put together an exhibit of women's art in what was the old Philadelphia Convention Center . . . and Ann d'Harnoncourt [former curator and longtime director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art] curated it along with Tara Robinson [educator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and later the Executive Director of Exhibitions at the Detroit Institute of the Arts] . . . . So this was part of how we were trying to institute change, but it was in this very structured as, I guess you would say it's more like civil disobedience, rather than . . . directly trying to, you know, overthrow the constraints of society sort of thing. (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009)

Although Carol considered her activism to be within certain parameters of acceptability, her boss did not necessarily feel the same way. Evan Turner, the director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art at the time, reprimanded her, though she did not say exactly what he said or specifically what he found problematic. Significantly, after Carol recounted this story, she said, "there was very much a sense of we were not, women were not getting their voices heard anywhere" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009), but noted that those feelings began to change when Evan Turner and a curator worked with a donor (who also happened to be the curator's sister) to provide the money to build the Wintersteen Student Center in what was the basement area of the museum. Carol and other educators used the gallery in the center as an educational exhibition space, imagining topics and borrowing objects in order to achieve specific educational goals rather then to teach art history. Although the exhibition topics had to be approved by Evan Turner in advance, the Carol and her colleagues seemed to have free reign over the organization and content. They started out with an exhibition of African Art (which, according to Carol, was "ahead of the curve" of the impending educational emphasis on diversity) and moved on to a *Mobile Eye* exhibition that focused on perception and artists. [Note: according to *The Art Museum as Educator*, the title for the second exhibition was "*The Mind's Eye*" (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 97).] In any case, Carol and her colleagues felt that their activism on behalf of women in the museum resulted in a measurable outcome in their own workplace: A space that they controlled, guided by the educational principles that they espoused.

Linda's stated commitment to feminism and women's rights played out more directly in her workplace and had broader ramifications for the field of art museum education. In addition to protesting on behalf of anti-war efforts, she also recalls participating in a protest in support of the Museum of Modern Art's staff attempt to unionize. In the photo (Figure 4, p. 88), Linda stands behind a blockade with a sign leaning against it. The sign reads: "The Museum of Modern Art professional and administrative staff: 1/3 earns less than $7000; ½ earns less than $8500 per year." While the photo does not directly link these salaries to specific positions within the museum, I feel confident in surmising that she was motivated by concern for underpaid women on the staff, particularly since her recollection of the event occurred while we were discussing her protests on behalf of anti-war, civil rights, and feminist causes. She also followed up her mention of this particular event by contrasting her activities in a "hotbed of new ideas" with Toby Rose, her supervisor, whom she suggested represented an older, more traditional generation of art museum educators (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 1, 2009).

Perhaps Linda's most enduring legacy to art museum education was born from a moment of protest. According to Linda Downs, "educators Bonnie Pitman, Elaine Gurian, Adrianne Horn, and other women" formed the American Association of Museums' Education Committee (EdCOM) in 1973 (Downs, 1994, p. 94). Although this is factual information, the formation of the committee is neither as straightforward nor as painless as this simple sentence might suggest. According to Elaine, who was friendly with the art museum education community but by that time had moved on to her new position at the Boston Children's Museum, the process was both radical and political. "I was friends with all the museum educators because museum educators were a small band, and [they] had taken the mic, radicalized, which I was not part of . . . they demanded the mic at the general meeting, it was a big hullaballoo" (E.H. Gurian, personal communication, May 1, 2009). In fact, Linda initiated the formation of EdCOM in 1973 after being asked to speak about museum education at an AAM meeting in Milwaukee:

> My talk was about there is wonderful work going on, we need to share what it is we are doing, we need to fight for what it is we are doing, we need to have more status within the American Association of Museums, and right then and there at

> that meeting. I don't think that anyone expected that that was what I would talk about, but I did, and right then and there we started the museum education committee, which still exists. (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 1, 2009)

Sweet had been casually asked to talk by a former colleague who worked at the National Institute of Humanities and who was responsible for scheduling the speaker that year. She said that at the time, AAM was a much different organization that it is now—it was much smaller, and the annual conference was generally attended by directors and not museum staff. Initial reaction to EdCOM was not favorable on the part of museum directors. According to Sweet's recollection, EdCOM was the first professional standing committee (there are currently 13) and directors felt that standing committees were simply not necessary. She very literally stopped short of saying that the museum directors were not willing to share power: "They didn't believe that anyone other than directors should have any—they didn't believe they needed committees" (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 1, 2009). Sweet cites the Art Workers Coalition—an organization of artists, writers, and other cultural workers that formed in 1969 after a protest at the Museum of Modern Art (Nemser, 1975; Primary Information, 2009)—as inspiration for her somewhat spontaneous call for change at the AAM conference. Another recollection of the start of EdCOM comes from Bonnie Pitman, a former educator and the current director of the Dallas Museum of Art:

> During one session at the Milwaukee meeting, Linda Sweet . . . articulated a frustration common to museum educators. She observed that educators were often treated like second-class citizens within their museums, and that AAM annual meetings did not include programs of interest to the professionals and volunteers

> who worked with the public. Sweet urged those interested in addressing the issue to stay after the session. More than half the delegates did so, and a lively discussion and strategy session followed. (Pitman, 1999, pp. 9-10)

Socio-economic and Racial Justice for Underserved Populations

It was a common perception that American museums were not doing a great deal to respond to lingering problems from Civil Rights-era upheavals and economic concerns in the late 1960s and early 1970s, even though the educators that I interviewed stated that these issues were pressing and important concerns in their work and their lives. *Museums USA*, a National Endowment for the Arts publication that surveyed aspects of public museums in fiscal year 1971–1972, suggested that museums weren't making substantial efforts to draw in underserved populations—"no more than one-third of all museums had made special efforts to attract any one of five given groups: senior citizens, Blacks, Spanish Americans, other minority groups, or the disadvantaged" (National Endowment for the Arts, 1974, p. 59). The study noted that museums with the highest endowments were most likely to offer some sort of outreach to these groups, which typically consisted of "special exhibitions or programs, contacts with group organizations, and other activities including free or reduced admission . . . and bilingual information materials such as brochures or labels for Spanish Americans" (National Endowment for the Arts, 1974, p. 59). Despite these demographic changes and the relative proximity of new residents to major museums, *The Art Museum As Educator* noted that a number of visitor surveys, including two from large urban institutions (the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts), indicated that typical visitors are educated, wealthy, white, and under 40 (no data for gender was recorded) (Newsom & Silver, 1978). If these statistics are accurate representations of the populations that visited museums, there continued a vast disconnect between the people who visited museums and those who lived with them in their neighborhoods.

Despite the apparent discrepancy between the audiences that museums were trying to attract and the audiences that they actually were attracting, another push for increased educational programming came from a shift in the audiences surrounding many urban museums. Whereas their downtown locations served wealthy white city-dwellers prior to the 1960s and 1970s, members of this population relocated to the suburbs and people of color from poor socioeconomic backgrounds moved in (Newsom & Silver, 1978). One dramatic example came from New York City, in which 20 million middle-class white residents were replaced with "nonwhites, most of whom were poor" (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 122). Linda Sweet said of the neighborhood while she was at the Brooklyn Museum of Art (1970–1976):

> Brooklyn went through a lot of changes while we were there and became quite depressed. The area around the Brooklyn Museum includes the Botanical Garden [Brooklyn Botanic Garden] but also gorgeous, gorgeous old apartment buildings with huge, beautiful apartments and the neighborhood changed and the people who had lived there moved to the suburbs and it became, actually, a dangerous neighborhood. (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 2, 2009)

According to some sources, these demographic changes and the government reforms instituted as a result of the Civil Rights movement caused museums to re-evaluate the size and scope of educational programming as well as begin to take note of comments and suggestions made by organizers representing burgeoning minority populations (Newsom & Silver, 1978), thus enabling art museum educators such as Linda, Elaine, and Carol to act on their personal commitments to social justice, at least to a certain extent.

Staff members at other art museums also went out to communities and engaged with underserved groups such as Native Americans, prisoners, African Americans, and the growing Hispanic population (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 120). For example, the director of the Everson Museum in Syracuse, New York, not only went out into the community, he held exhibitions and sent objects from the collection out into the public sphere and used video communication to converse with the public, saying he was "more interested in establishing roots for the American attitude toward art" (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 120). And while the push for acknowledging and serving minority and low-income audiences was positive in some ways, there were realities in the museum that were difficult to overcome. It was clear that Linda Sweet cared a great deal about underserved audiences—in fact, when I asked her about her philosophy on museum education, she mentioned being influenced by international scholars who were developing the notion of the Open Classroom, a student-centered philosophy of teaching, and applying that to museum audiences: "we were learning that it was not a homogeneous constituency, we were learning about what different races, different ethnicities, different economic groups brought to the museum. We were incorporating that in our work (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 2, 2009). At the same time, the reality of working in her museum was that even though it was surrounded by working-class residents, they were not the people who visited the galleries—suburban populations did, "and those were the people that the museum cared about. They started a big capital campaign and at that point the volunteers who could contribute were the ones who were in charge" (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 2, 2009).

The phenomenon of financial supporters of the museum making pronouncements about educational practices was not new, but in an era of renewed interest in education, they addressed the new expectations placed upon museums, including their mandate to serve a broader and more diverse audience. Consider that in a 1972 issue of *Museum News*, Philadelphia Museum of Art trustee Meyer P. Potamkin, a former social worker, noted the changes in urban populations, which were "bringing about a socio-economic malaise for which a solution must be found" (Potamkin, 1972, p. 25). He questioned the outreach practices designed to bring underserved groups into the museum—after all, museums don't employ social workers to deal with such populations—and suggested instead that museums partner with appropriate social agencies in order to conduct educational programming in the underserved community proper, thereby freeing up valuable spaces to educate museum patrons.

The Vietnam War

The Vietnam War was as much of an issue for socially progressive individuals as were civil, economic, and women's rights. When I asked Elaine her opinion about the events that most affected the museum world in the early 1970s, she immediately mentioned the war, placing it a broader context of political activism and the widespread feeling that it might be possible to change the "flow of power" and "the course of the political world," then drew a parallel with the young people of my generation and the election of President Barack Obama, who was elected in 2009 with a great deal of work and effort by his supporters (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 1, 2009). She described her colleagues at the ICA as active protestors against the war together: “I mean we were all ahistoric and we were all on the streets. We were protesting the war and we were making it up” (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 1, 2009). Linda told an interesting anecdote about her opposition to the Vietnam War that represents the impossibility of separating the personal and political even in the workplace. She remembers discussing an upcoming anti-war rally in Washington, D.C., with her museum colleagues and being called into the director’s office, where the deputy director was also present:

> I have no idea how they heard about it, asking me what I had in mind, and you know, I was organizing the staff and I showed them we weren’t going down as representatives of the Brooklyn Museum, but I was just wanting to get a group of colleagues [together], so they were relieved. (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 2, 2009)

The Impact of Left-Wing Ladies

While Linda, Elaine, and Carol’s liberal social politics informed their pedagogical strategies, they were also informed by some of the most significant progressive educational movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1970, Charles Silberman published *Crisis in the Classroom: The Remaking of American Education*, a text that questioned the role of education in society and criticized the practices of competency-based education that had been popular in American classrooms since the 1950s (Silberman, 1970). He argued against classroom management techniques that were based on behavioral psychology and recommended the implementation of the open classroom, which “emphasized active learning and student choice” (Spring, 2001, p. 427). The concept of the open classroom was derived from the psychological theories of Jean Piaget, who identified stages of cognitive development in children and advocated pedagogical strategies that fostered personalized learning. Characteristics of the open, or informal, classroom included a large, open learning space; stations with activities related to different subjects that students could move through at their own learning pace; and an absence of the rows of desks that stifled movement and constrained student bodies (Spring, 2001) .

That same year, Paolo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was published in English. An early text in the field that is known today as critical pedagogy, it elucidated a theory of economic and social oppression and critiqued the role of public schooling, claiming that traditional teaching methods perpetuated oppression by reinforcing power binaries (Freire, 1970). In other words, Freire

> investigated the relationship between power and culture, arguing that culture transmitted by the school is related to various cultures that make up the wider society, in that it confirms and sustains the culture of dominant groups while marginalizing and silencing the cultures of subordinate groups of students. (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 49)

He proposed a new approach to pedagogy that positioned students as equals in the student/teacher relationship, advocated educating through dialogue rather than lecturing, and promoted the importance of student-generated themes as subjects worthy of study (Freire, 1970).

These two texts are part of a larger educational critique that moved students and learners to the center of pedagogical practices. There is no doubt that they affected both practitioners and practices in the field of art museum education.

Educational Philosophy and Practice

Educational practices and techniques that emerged in the art museum during the 1970s appear to have been influenced by Progressive ideals, the writings of educational theorist John Dewey, and aesthetic education practices, wherein the work of art became secondary to the emotional and aesthetic experiences of the visitor, and were primarily geared toward school and community programs (Newsom, 1980; Newsom & Silver, 1978). There is more direct evidence of the influence of Progressive educational philosophies on art museum education. In TAME, the authors note that the writings of John Dewey suggested the power of experiential learning, specifically sketching and drama in museum galleries (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 267). The effect of Dewey's work seems to have not only encouraged different approaches to teaching in the gallery, but also a re-examination of the gold standard of art museum education experiences, the group tour:

> Dissatisfaction with the traditional group tour, in which docents herd children through the museum, lecturing all the way, is not new, but increasing numbers of art museum educators have begun to despair of it. To many museum educators . . . the traditional tour often seems to impose a passive learning situation on children, to give them irrelevant information, and, even in the hands of the most sympathetic and stimulating lecturer or docent, to be antithetical to the idea that children

> learn best through participation, discovery, and the stimulation of their natural curiosity. Yet the group tour remains the backbone of most museum education programs. Partly because changing the status quo requires more energy than preserving it, but more important, because there is no guarantee that current substitutions for the traditional one-time lecture tour will be more effective. (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 267)

Both the delivery and content of educational experiences were affected by this change. Rather than teaching art history, educators and docents began to teach visual awareness or visual perception, focusing on "sensory education," which encouraged children to look at art and respond, as well as "draw pleasure and instruction" from a work of art (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 269).

Art museum educators were likely influenced by a book by drama instructor Viola Spolin, titled *Improvisation for the Theater: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques* (1963), which recommended games that "encourage the student to be a participant; to learn though nonverbal means; and to grasp a concept intuitively" (Endter, 1975, p. 34). In 1968, a curator of education at the National Collection of Fine Arts in Washington, D.C., was inspired after observing an improvisation workshop and began to develop techniques to utilize in the galleries with the ultimate goal of creating dialogue about art. Spolin's goal embraced the seemingly universal acknowledgment of the lecture tour as a mediocre technique at a time when "Thoughtful, perceptive educators and curators [were] trying to revive the interest and involvement of museum visitors" in order to "re-affirm the importance of the museum's audience" (Endter, 1975, p. 34). In any case, the inclusion of performing and dramatic arts (now commonly referred to as museum theatre) began to permeate interpretive practices throughout field of art museum education (S. M. Mayer, 1974). Creative drama, storytelling, and other dialogic practices transformed the typical walk-and-talk, art-history-based tour into an improvisational performative experience, wherein students spontaneously enacted possible narratives for characters or subjects in paintings; posed their arms, legs, and torsos to mimic the poses of sculptures; and pretended to enter into the whatever environment was depicted on canvas, answering questions about what they saw, tasted, smelled, etc. (Endter, 1975; Newsom & Silver, 1978; Sewell, 1971). Darell Sewell, who was the associate curator of education at the National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, described the department's use of what he called "improvisational theater" as a method to introduce children to works of art in the collection. "This Improvisational Tour uses not only the objects of art in the collection but also the materials, the spaces, and the light and shade of the building to emphasize the correlation between physical and imaginative experience that makes looking a creative act" (1971, p. 22). This approach appeared to be used primarily with school children rather than adults across the art museum spectrum. As Sewell noted, "although it [the improvisational tour] has been used successfully with high school students and older adults who have been prepared for it beforehand, we did not expect that we could plunge unsuspecting students or casual visitors into it with general success" (1971, p. 22). However, even those individuals who advocated improvisational techniques ultimately questioned their effectiveness:

> The actual results of improvisation tours art not always so positive. Yet it is difficult to criticize an educational style that so consistently seems to produce smiles and laughter. The child or adult in a museum always learns something, but

whether or not that something is what the museum has set out to teach is more difficult to evaluate. (Endter, 1975, p. 35)

One museum director who had also been a professor of art history and humanities for many years cast a critical eye toward improvisational techniques and suggested that museums owe it to their visitors to "establish a new relationship between the mind and the eye" (Taylor, 1971, p. 22). Although he doesn't give exact suggestions on how to achieve this goal, he stresses that there needs to be a separation between "this kind of therapeutic creativity of bouncy things" and activities that focus on invoking an "insight through art" (Taylor, 1971, p. 22).

While these practices may have fit in with the educational tenor of the time, they ignored the museum's *raison d'être* as it was perceived by much of the rest of the staff. For these reasons, art museum educators were viewed with less esteem and than their curatorial counterparts, whose work with researching and creating exhibitions was viewed as more serious and significant to the museum's mission and their adult audiences.

Conclusions

From the interviews, I gather that there tended to be three types of educators in museums during the late 1960s and early 1970. The first type usually occupied supervisory capacities, but did not want to be educators and were employed in museums until a better alternative came along. The second were long-time educators in large museums who supervised up-and-coming educators that had radically different ideas about education and connecting with audiences. And the third was a new generation of art museum educators: young, usually female, intelligent, idealistic, committed in politics and social issues, and most of all deeply committed to creating meaningful connections between art and audiences by disregarding outdated programs and methods and creating new approaches. On the institutional level, they were viewed as necessary to save public face and serve as proof of the educational function that the public demanded. Curatorial colleagues had mixed reactions to their work—the supportive ones seem to have been swept up in the social reform of the time and interested in how they could participate in the process of making their exhibitions more accessible; the unsupportive ones simply wished that the educators would stick to teaching the kids or drop off the museum radar altogether so that they could use institutional monies toward exhibitions and collections. Perhaps most importantly, the new generation of art museum educators saw themselves as part of a movement for social justice, both personally and professionally. Pursuing their interest in art and passion for education, they forged an important path for future professionals, and created a network of supportive colleagues who advanced the field through reflective practice, research, and establishing university programs in art museum education.

CHAPTER EIGHT: MERRY BANDS

Merry Bands

A third theme that permeated the interviews was a sense of collegiality and shared purpose that each of the interviewees felt with her colleagues. In this chapter, I define the concept of merry bands and discuss how Linda, Elaine, and Carol engendered institutional change by creating a space for a broad pedagogical shift, influenced by educational literature and supported by high-ranking members of the museum field. I also suggest that they influenced the broader field of art museum education through participating in an overarching process of professionalization, including the formation of professional organizations and associations, contributing to a growing body of professional literature, and leading to the earliest academic efforts for the professional education of future museum educators.

When I initially began to recognize and identify the emerging theme of close relationships between each of the interviewees and their colleagues, it didn't seem unusual for a group of people who worked together to find strength in each other's company. However, a 1975 editorial in *Art Education* magazine by Betty Acuff, then an Assistant Professor of Art and Education at Teachers College in New York, shed light on particular conflicts that professional women in art education seemed to have in common, and I realized how significant these relationships would have been to the women that I interviewed. Acuff edited an issue of *Art Education* devoted to "women artists and educators" (Acuff, 1975, p. 4), and recalled that after she began teaching at the university level, she learned that she and many of her female colleagues shared similar feelings and pressures associated with being a highly-educated professional woman. She noted that assertiveness workshops for professional women seemed to be cropping up all over the country in an effort to remedy the effects of the prevalent nice girl training described in chapter six—workshops where she heard women who were frustrated that they couldn't come to a decision about what they truly wanted professionally (because they had been taught all their lives to respond to the wants and needs of others); who felt terribly uncomfortable once they figured out what they aspired to professionally because they weren't sure they had the right to pursue that goal; and they were concerned that they weren't smart or savvy enough to become whatever it is that they dreamed of becoming (Acuff, 1975). She described the attendees of these workshops this way:

> Surprisingly enough, many of these women are college-trained, are above average in intelligence, and are in the process of advancing themselves professionally. Some of them have achieved high level positions in their respective fields, but they are still haunted by lack of assurance and assertiveness as they attempt to deal with co-workers in accomplishing tasks. (Acuff, 1975, p. 4)

Elaine, Linda, and Carol's professional friendships combated the difficulties described by Acuff and the women with whom she identified. They, too, were highly educated nice girls, but they found strength in other women who were in similar positions rather than wavering or withering in an unsupportive environment.

Merry Bands Defined

Elaine used the term merry band to describe herself and her colleagues at the ICA in Boston as we discussed the fact that they occupied high-level positions at an institution with a distinguished reputation even though none of them had the kind of professional experience or resumes that one might expect. Although they were taking responsibility for a distinguished institution, they approached their work very differently than their predecessors. “Well, we were kind of a merry band. We gave each other titles, then we proceeded to do a kind of radical agenda of 1969, so building playgrounds with communities, doing murals in the community, doing art shows in empty warehouses….” (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 1, 2009). Although her colleagues were largely children of the kind of people who would have been quite typically the heads of an institution such as the ICA, their approach was altogether different—progressive, radical, and community-oriented. Carol noted the same sense of camaraderie when talking about her education colleagues at the Philadelphia Museum of Art; furthermore, she suggested that they felt they were part of something much larger and more enduring than their daily work in their institutions: “You had a group, you had a sense of shared interest and support and that sort of thing . . . it was very positive” (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009).

All three educators noted a sense of community and kinship with co-workers that gave them a sense of empowerment and enabled them to push traditional or perceived boundaries. They seemed to recognize that the changes they were instituting—some little by little and others in bold strokes—had the potential to impact more than just their institution. Carol went so far as to describe herself and other gallery teachers at the museum, including the now well-known Patterson Williams and Tara Robinson, as a “new generation” of museum educators who “saw ourselves as pioneers who…had these shared values and also because we would support each other so you weren’t like a loner out there trying to change the system” (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009), while Elaine described her colleagues at both the ICA and later the Boston

Children's Museum as not only her friends, but also her family: "There was no separation in our life, period. We raised our children together, if we got sick we took care of each other" (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 1, 2009). Therefore, the term merry bands had both professional and personal connotations—the members of these groups counted on each other for support in their work environments and, to a certain extent, in their private lives. At the time, these particular members of merry bands could not have foreseen the influence that they would eventually have on the professionalization and growth of the field of art museum education

Space for Institutional Change

In order to set the stage for our merry bands, it is important to provide some context as to how it was that groups of educators, for the first time, were numerous and powerful enough to enact changes. They were at the center of several concurrent phenomena, including the fact that there were still many questions and very little consensus about the philosophy and practice of art museum education; there were public and foundation monies available to support museums that offered public activities; and there was a demand on the part of the public for museums to be more inclusive and responsive to their myriad constituents.

For example, questions about the specificities of the relationship between museums and formal education had become important enough in the museum world that in 1966, the venerable Smithsonian Institution (sponsored by a grant from the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare) held a conference to try and answer them. Held from August 21 to August 26, 1966, at the University of Vermont, the *Conference on Museums and Education* had a threefold purpose: "1) Survey the present relations between museums and education; 2) explore possible methods of involving museums more directly and more fruitfully in the educational process at all levels; and 3) formulate proposals for research and development activities relating to museums and education" (Blitzer, 1968, p. v). The published proceedings clearly demonstrate that the conference was a preliminary effort to assess the state of museum education in all sorts of museums, made especially evident by titles of the seven sections: 1) Dimension and approach; 2) The existing situation; 3) Reasons for concern; 4) Methods of presentation and analysis; 5) Kinds of museums: youth, art, history, science; 6) A look at the future; and 7) Discussion and documentation (Larrabee, 1968). This conference exemplifies the overall state of museum education at the time—there seemed to have been more questions than answers, and even fundamentally basic questions were debated and left unresolved. For example, Larrabee notes, in his summary of proceedings, that two of the first questions that arose were "What is a Museum? What is Education?" (1968, p. 205). Even though the presenters were highly respected museum directors, curators, university faculty, representatives of charitable foundations and government offices, and public school art coordinators (curiously, no practicing museum educators delivered papers), answers to these two seemingly straightforward questions could not be agreed upon. In fact, Larrabee noted a deep sense of frustration on the part of many conference attendees, who as practicing educators felt animosity toward speakers who were still contemplating such rudimentary questions.

In the field of art museum education, a process of generally defining the field started in 1971, when a group of educators who were steering the AAMD conference *Education in the Art Museum* went about determining exactly what the conference should address by gauging the current state of the field from their fellow art museum educators. That same year, they interviewed and questioned 91 of their colleagues and gathered the following information about art museum education departments: 1) They didn't communicate with other art museum education departments on any regular basis and "therefore did not comprise a profession" (Trippi, 1992, p. 32); 2) They were headed largely by men in their early 40s who seemed to have little input or control over other areas of the museum; 3) they were supported by 13% of their institution's overall budget; almost none received funding from outside sources; 4) they conducted the art education work of schools because it either wasn't getting done or it was done poorly; 5) they offered unexciting single-visit tours to sixth-grade students during the week but were not open on the weekend when those students might have the opportunity to return to the museum; and 6) they hoped to be responsive to new publics and neighborhoods, including urban audiences and those potential visitors with time to pursue interests in museums (Trippi, 1992).

This lack of clarity about the role and practice of education in museums was part of a larger crisis of identity and purpose in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Museums struggled to identify the type of educational institution they were most like—universities, schools, or libraries—as well as what audiences they should *primarily* serve, and whether or not they should receive government financial assistance for doing so (Newsom & Silver, 1978). Several factors made this crisis more pronounced: The National Endowment for the Arts and other agencies began to offer challenge grants to expand audiences in the 1960s, with an eye toward expanding services toward underserved groups, including black audiences, Native Americans, prison populations, older adults, and people with disabilities or a low level of income. Museum staff and boards who received funding then had to make choices about the publics that they could serve based on their individual and highly unique demographic situations and geographic locations, which was a new (but required) experience for many of them. And oftentimes, they struggled to define appropriate forms of outreach to these unfamiliar and "culturally deprived" populations (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 121), with an end result that appeared to be patronizing toward these communities rather than educational (Coles, 1975; Newsom & Silver, 1978). For the societal pressures that forced museums to play a more active role in their communities had profound if unanticipated effects on education departments.

On one hand, it was a very difficult time to be a traditional museum director or director of education and to deal with a cultural shift that brought with it a new set of public expectations, thus creating a situation where they burned out very quickly; on the other, their lack of influence on the education department created a space for educators to enact their positions in ways that may or may not have had approval from museum administration. Carol, Elaine, and Linda each spoke of a lack of oversight by their museum or departmental supervisors, who clearly saw the museum's political need to offer educational programming but at the same time did not have the experience, expertise, or interest to be an active part of developing or carrying out those offerings. For example, Linda describes the state of leadership at the Brooklyn Museum during her tenure:

> There was great fluidity. You could essentially develop your own program and your own title and your own position and there was also a lot of turmoil . . . in the

> directorship. During the six years I was there, they had three directors and several acting directors, so they essentially left the education department alone, on its own, and that was great. (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 2, 2009)

Carol's situation sounded somewhat similar, though she explained more thoroughly the separation in the education staff by elucidating the background and qualifications of her co-workers and supervisors. She noted that she and her immediate colleagues had formal and extended art history training, whereas Mr. Graham (she couldn't recall his first name), the Director of Education, had a background in schools. The Deputy Director of Education, Bill Miller, may have had some art history training, but he and Mr. Graham both left supervision of the Staff Lecturers to the Lead Staff Lecturer, a woman named Pauline who was largely absent from their day-to-day existence, particularly after she had a stroke. Carol also described a physical barrier between the highest-ranking educational staff and the rest of the group: their offices, or lack thereof. Apparently Mr. Graham and Bill Miller had private office spaces in which to work, but none of the other education staff had so much as a drawer in which to store office supplies. "Patty, Tara, and I were the three main people; we had no desk, no chair, no office space. There was no place . . . . Well, we could go into the library, but that was it" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009).

Elaine's experience is notably different because she started out as part of an administrative staff; however, there are still parallels with Linda and Carol in that the person who hired her, the mayor of Boston, was not necessarily concerned with exactly what educational opportunities she was offering as long as there was some visible contribution to the community by the ICA on behalf of the city of Boston. Elaine noted that she “started at the top without [a] plan, without design,” (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 1, 2009). Although Elaine did not have to struggle to enact her vision of education, she benefitted from the freedom that a lack of strict oversight or supervision offered.

Pedagogical Shift

Carol, Elaine, and Linda were not alone in viewing the practices of education in the museum differently than their predecessors; however, they went about developing and refining their craft in much the same way: through on-the-job training. An article in the journal *Museology* titled “Then and Now: Reflections of Three Pioneers” profiled three museum education pioneers from science, children’s, and history museums that were active in the field in the 1920s through the 1940s, when there was little training for museum educators in any discipline (Ott & Greenhill, 1983). All three of them noted that although they had academic experience in either art education or art history, they didn’t have any particular models to follow when constructing pedagogical experiences in the galleries.

Elaine Heumann Gurian’s experience as a new director of education may have been less typical than most educators of the time, but it did capture a sense of the excitement and possibility of a new, experimental era in the profession:

> They made me [an] art educator because a) they thought they should, but they had no idea what the program should be and they didn’t care . . . so in the beginning I called people up and tried to figure out what art educators in museums do. (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009)

Although some art museum educators in the early 1970s started new educational programs and practices, particularly at institutions where education programs had previously not existed, others inherited programs that had been present in their institutions already, sometimes for generations. Very few art museum educators have written accounts of their experiences in the galleries—who they served, how they interacted with them and other educators, how they prepared for their tour and gallery talks, and how they evaluated their successes. The educators who were interviewed for this research provided a glimpse of their experiences with museum audiences, who tended to be young (school-aged) and situated within a school or community context. Their methods de-emphasized traditional art history and the primacy of the object in favor of fostering personal connections with works of art. *The Art Museum As Educator,* in a chapter titled "Programs for Schoolchildren in Museums," explained that the rethinking that most art museum educators were doing about their programs in the museum was parallel to evaluation and reform that was happening in the public school system and was borne from a desire to supplement what was by that time perceived as a less-than-adequate education in the fine arts for the vast majority of public school students (Newsom & Silver, 1978). The standard walk-and-talk tour, the once-a-year gold standard for most school visitors, became increasingly unpopular amongst art museum educators, who viewed them as passive and irrelevant experiences. However, art museum educators had to deal with the reality that there was no tried and true option that guaranteed a successful educational experience, and they also had to deal with other staff, volunteers, and teachers who perceived new methods as "faddish" or distracting (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 267) and the fact that their time with students was limited.

The result of this broad and ongoing re-evaluation by art museum educators was a shift in the philosophy and rationale for tours rather than their elimination. Two educational objectives that emerged for touring were visual awareness and/or perception and "sensory education," or teaching children to see and respond and "draw pleasure and instruction from a work of art" (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 269). This resulted in new approaches to touring, including thematic approaches, a concentration on the elements and principles of art, utilizing touchable objects, incorporating creative writing, including drama and role-playing, and offering supplementary hands-on art experiences at the conclusion of the gallery portion of the tour (Newsom & Silver, 1978). Carol ventured into utilizing creative drama as a teaching tool as evidenced in her anecdote from chapter five about teaching high school students about body language by having them stand in the posture of Madonna sculptures from different art-historical eras. But her use of this methodology differed from published accounts about the technique in that it was used with a clear purpose and had been piloted to ensure that it brought about results that were in synch with the lesson's objective.

In addition to changing existing programs and creating new ones, art museum educators also began to curate educational exhibitions in spaces that were separate from the rest of the permanent collection. Carol described an exhibition of African art (the museum had no African objects on display at that time) that she and her education colleagues at the Philadelphia Museum of Art curated in such a space. A separate space seemed to remove the traditional constraints of curatorial work—another exhibition, titled *1492*, was built around the happenings in seven cities from seven different civilizations in that year. Based on ideas or themes rather than solely on objects or art history, they also invited participation on the part of the public.

> We did a show, a connection with '76 on the American home, the American family something…we didn't know it at the time, but we did front-end evaluation. We went down to the mall at Independence Hall and we asked people, 'If you were going to go to see an exhibition or learn something more about America, and the past, what would you want to know about?' and that's how we came up with our topic. (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009)

Influential Literature

Although much of the inspiration for these pedagogical changes was inspired by experiences in the galleries, two of the three of the interviewees cited educational literature outside of her field as fundamentally important. When I asked each of them what publications had informed or inspired their teaching at the early stages of their careers, all three of them said that nothing geared toward museum staff specifically was influential—not *Museum News*, not *Art Education* or *Studies in Art Education*, and not the journal *Curator*, all of which at least occasionally published articles that might have been relevant to their work. It is worth recalling at this point that two of the interviewees—Linda and Elaine—had graduate degrees in art education, while Carol had a master's degree in art history, which was significant in that they surely would have encountered very different texts and approaches to the study of art in their graduate work.

Carol offered the richest answer to my question about influential literature—journal articles, books, curriculum, and the like—most likely because she was in close proximity to the bookshelf in her office as I conducted the interview and could easily access and confirm the titles of particular sources. She noted that these sources of information were not included in her or her colleagues' formal education, but were instead things that they discovered post-graduation and shared with their co-workers. Because she and the other members of her merry band had all been art history—rather than studio or art education—graduate students, they had "very little engagement with . . . the object in the way we are thinking about it now, or learning and learning in the larger sense as opposed to, you know classroom learning, but the whole notion of how you interact with the world . . .we pretty much did it on our own" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009). She explained that her group of colleagues knew that they didn't want to use an art-historical approach to education but were at the same time unsure how to proceed until they discovered a number of sources, including the Annenberg School of Communication and the work of Malcolm Knowles, a central figure in the field of adult education during the second half of the twentieth century. Knowles developed a pedagogical approach to adult education, or *andragogy,* that emphasized self-directed learning, particularly as it occurred in informal, club-like environments, such as community centers, YMCA and YWCAs, and churches, etc. He emphasized group work and democratic process in order to facilitate self-understanding, empathy and acceptance, a dynamic attitude toward life, a respect for the values that bind humans together, and develop skills that help direct social change (M. K. Smith, 2002). His work cemented the importance of individual autonomy in the process of learning for Carol and her colleagues, who would read different resources and then come together to discuss them and how they might be implemented in their gallery teaching. She said they would "do something frontwards, backwards, sideways, we would observe each other and we would come back and report and gradually kind of move forward in trying anything we saw that might be useful" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009).

The first specific source that Carol mentioned as useful was psychologist Carl Rogers' classic text *Freedom to Learn*, which was considered radical when it was published in 1969. The book offers a vision of education that focuses on the relationship between the learner and the facilitator, a relationship that includes empathy, trust, and an absence of fear (M. K. Smith, 2004). She related the names of a few sections and chapters in the book to give me a sense of its content, including, "Freedom, Where the Action Is," Creating a Climate of Freedom," and "The Interpersonal Relationship in the Facilitation of Learning." It is not difficult to gauge the major impact that the book had on Carol and her teaching—she viewed it as "a plan for self-directed change in an educational system" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009). She also mentioned Lawrence Kohlberg's influential Theory of Moral Development, first elucidated in his 1958 doctoral dissertation and later revised and published in edited volumes (Kohlberg, 1958; Lickona, 1976), notable not only for suggesting different stages of moral development, but also for its focus on male research subjects and the conclusion that boys reached higher levels of moral development. Just as influential to Carol was the critical response by Kohlberg's research assistant, the feminist psychologist Carol Gilligan. In her article "In a Different Voice, Women's Conceptions of Self and Morality" (1977), (which subsequently became a book) she argued that women were socialized to include an ethic of care in their moral development and that it was unfair to proclaim a universal theory when women/girls were not included in the study from which the theory was derived.

Another book that Carol mentioned by name that were important to her experience as an art museum educator included *On Understanding Art Museums*, especially the chapter by Robert Coles, “The Art Museum and the Pressures of Society,” which related the author’s experience visiting art museums with a thirteen-year-old black male client while he was a resident in child psychiatry at the Children’s Hospital in Boston. Coles’ article is a rather personal account the relevance (or irrelevance, as the case may be) and meaning of art museums to minority and underprivileged populations and calls for greater accessibility in order to

> give sanction to the thoughtful reveries of many millions of people, who may know nothing about ‘art’ or ‘the humanities’ or ‘museums,’ but who, in their own manner, struggle for coherence, vision, a sense of what obtains in the world, and very important, what ought to be or might be, as well as what is—the artist’s quite traditional task. (Coles, 1975, p. 202)

Two other sources that Carol cited as being useful to her work and worth sharing with colleagues were by Joshua Taylor, an art history professor art the University of Chicago who in 1970 became the director of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American Art (now the Smithsonian American Art Museum) (Sorensen, n.d.). The first text, *Learning to Look: A Handbook for the Visual Arts* was published in 1957 and became a popular textbook for students of art history, art appreciation, and other art-related humanities courses. The author advocated analyzing art based on formal analysis and included descriptions of several different types of media and processes in the text. The second text, *To See is to Think: Looking at American Art*, published in 1975, included short discussions of works of art in what was then the National Collection of

Fine Arts in Washington D.C. (yet another moniker for what is now the Smithsonian American Art Museum).

Linda, who earned a graduate degree in art education at NYU after nearly completing a masters' in art history, recalls three authors who influenced her teaching in the galleries, including Robert Coles, the same psychologist who so influenced Carol. Others were her professor, Victor D'Amico, and a book that he had written about classroom teaching (perhaps *Creative Teaching in Art*?). It is worth noting that Victor D'Amico was the director of education at the Museum of Modern Art from 1937 to 1969 (McGill, 1987, April 3), though Sweet did not mention that in her recollection of him. Significantly, D'Amico believed that "art was a universal and humanizing force that was primary to our lived experience" and he "developed a philosophy and practices based on the individual, aesthetic experience, and a belief in the primary role art plays in bettering our lives and society" (Woon, 2010, June 25).

It is important to note that Linda did not consider these as sources that were written specifically to influence or guide people who taught in art museum galleries, as she specifically noted that "There was nothing about museums that I recall...certainly not about museum education" (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 1, 2009).

Our conversations about influential literature yielded several important points, including 1) that resources for classroom art teachers weren't necessarily considered all that helpful or relevant for gallery practices; 2) education, for these particular educators, was as much about social responsibility, individual freedom, and personal growth as it was about art objects; and 3) some of the authors whom they quoted were, in fact, high-ranking members of the art museum world who happened to be supporters of art museum education.

High-Ranking Supporters of Art Museum Education

The support and care that the merry bands gave one another had some perhaps unexpected and extended support in the upper echelons of the male-dominated world of museum administration, which was something that I had been completely unaware of until conducting these research interviews, even though I had read some of the sources that the interviewees quoted. For example, although I had initially read *On Understanding Art Museums* as an art museum director's elitist lament about the misunderstood but undeniable importance of art museums to society, Carol insisted that Sherman E. Lee was "one of the most progressive people going" in terms of making museums relevant to their communities and supporting the efforts of a new generation of art museum educators. She also noted that Joshua Taylor supported "the little museum educators," and perhaps even positively influenced Evan Turner, the director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, while she worked there (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009). Linda echoed the sentiment that there were high-ranking individuals who espoused pro museum education philosophies, including Harry Parker, the vice-director of education at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (she clarified that although Parker was the head of education, he was not, in fact, an educator); Michael Spock, the director of the Boston Children's Museum from 1962–1985; and Helmuth Naumer, the director of the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History from 1962–1976 (L. Sweet, personal communication, May 1, 2009; Williams, 2008). Elaine also named Michael Spock as a high-ranking ally (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). And while the support of a small number of influential people may seem minor, Carol explained that it provided inspiration for her and her colleagues to organize and improve the field, saying, "We [saw] a little door opening because of people like Joshua Taylor and so forth, so quick let's get through that door, then we can open the next doors" (C. Stapp, personal communication, August 12, 2009).

Influencing the Broader Field of Art Museum Education

The relationship that each of the interviewees enjoyed with her colleagues provided a stabilizing and supportive foundation for enacting change on institutional, state, and even national levels, thereby adding to the professionalization and growth of the field. For each interviewee, their merry bands co-existed with a sense of freedom made possible by lack of oversight—by city government (in the case of Elaine) or museum administration (as was true for Carol and Linda) and the lack of parameters and specific expectations ultimately helped to create a space of resistance wherein educators could try new ideas and reinvent them time and again with feedback from colleagues and visitors. As a result, each of the interviewees felt empowered to institute pedagogical changes in her educational programs, seek and share professional development resources outside of the literature of art history and art education, and shape the direction of the field by publishing articles, creating professional development groups, and educating future professionals at a university level. In fact, all three of them went on to become highly regarded members of the museum field, thus propelling the field of museum education into the forefront of the larger world of museums.

The activities of the merry bands represent an important step in the trajectory from field to profession for art museum education. Recall Wilensky's (1964) criteria for emerging professions, which require the development of specialized training, schools and/or academic programs, and professional associations. Carol, Linda, and Elaine were instrumental not only in enacting change their respective workplaces, but also forming broader initiatives on the national and state level. Each one of them, at some level, created or served professional organizations, wrote articles for emerging or existing professional journals, or participated in higher education opportunities for future museum educators.

Despite the fact that there were no across-the board standards for art museum education, no common educational foundations, and no academic programs or credentials specifically geared toward their profession, educators began to create a professional status to colleagues, government agencies, and granting foundations as a way of resisting their professional marginalization. Still occupying the lower tiers of the art museum hierarchy under the curatorial and directorial ranks, art museum educators responded to the call to

> take steps to define themselves more as educators who work in museums than as an inferior species of curator, and . . . in order to make their practices more professional, take steps to learn more about what the educational "establishment" has to offer in terms of teaching techniques, curriculum development, and research on how children learn. (Matthai, 1974, p. 10)

It is not a surprise that Elaine, Carol, Linda, and their cohorts viewed organizing, supporting, and sharing information with colleagues as a key to becoming "more than just an inferior species of curator," as the notion of professionalization was beginning to permeate the field of museums in general. In 1970, the American Association of

Museums began to offer museum accreditation (Taylor, 1975) to institutions that met at least a minimum basic definition: "a museum is defined as an organized and permanent, non-profit institution, essentially aesthetic in purpose, with professional staff, which owns and utilizes tangible objects, cares for them, and exhibits them to the public on some regular schedule" (Hicks, 1972, p. 14). Created largely because of the need to establish standards of excellence for funding sources and as a response to a larger cultural critique, accreditation signaled a level of competence and professionalism on the part of museum staff and was intended to "engender respect for and confidence in the museum profession, thus equalizing museums' competition with universities, colleges, libraries and hospitals for tax and funding support" (Hicks, 1972, p. 19). Though education departments were deemed instrumental enough to be reviewed as part of the accreditation process, the AAM guidelines offered no clear and consistent measurement of quality in terms of educational programming (Cherry, 1992).

The Council on Museums and Education in the Visual Arts

The very next year, 1971, brought about a significant event for museum education. In November, the New York-based Council on Museum Education met for the first time in its short, 14–month existence (Newsom, 1975). This group begat the Council on Museums and Education in the Visual Arts (CMEVA), the sponsor of the most comprehensive view of art museum education practices, *The Art Museum As Educator: A Collection of Studies as Guides to Practice and Policy* (Newsom & Silver, 1978). It demonstrates a continuation of the types of educational programs first initiated in the early history of museums while revealing a new consciousness towards the visiting public as well as a critical view of practice with an aim towards understanding and improving educational efforts. According to Carol, members of the CMEVA staff, including project director Barbara Newsom, deputy project director Adele Silver, and Barbara Fertig and Sue Robinson Hoth (now Sue Ann Robinson) of the reporting staff were also personally committed to organizing and professionalizing the field of art museum education. Robinson, Fertig, and another educator and administrator named Mary Alexander supported one of the first professional groups for museum educators, the Museum Education Roundtable (MER), by writing for and serving as editors for *Roundtable Reports* (Nichols, et al., 1984). Formed in 1971, MER began publishing *Roundtable Reports* in *Museum News* (the professional journal of the American Association of Museums) in a section of the magazine devoted to educational interests (Zeller, 1985). These were later published in 1984 as *Museum Education Anthology: Perspectives on Informal Learning, a Decade of Roundtable Reports,* a collection of the most influential Roundtable Reports first published by *Museum News* starting in 1973. The importance of the *Roundtable Reports* cannot be underestimated, as they are some of the first efforts at professional information sharing for art museum educators from all types of museums.

Professional Associations

The two primary professional groups for art museum educators within larger professional associations were officially created about eight years apart. The 1973 formation of EdCOM within AAM was discussed briefly within the context of Linda's involvement, but Bonnie Pitman, who was present at the session that initiated the formation of EdCOM, shed more light on the process. In her recollection, about half of the individuals who were present at Linda's session stayed to form an ad-hoc education committee, which endeavored to find support from individuals in various types of museums and all six national regions. They worked together to write a set of recommendations to be given to AAM, including: 1) that educators, both professional and volunteer, should be represented on the extant AAM Executive Council; 2) that the ad-hoc committee be recognized by AAM; 3) that museum education be “regularly represented in program planning, publications, [and] regional and national meetings” (Pitman, 1999, p. 10); and 4) that AAM create a staff position to work with the new ad-hoc committee. Though there was a great deal of debate, the first three items of the resolution passed, and the committee subsequently became the President’s Education Committee. Early on, EdCOM focused on art museum educators within the field and served as a resource and legitimizing tool for those individuals; later its members committed to providing sessions at conferences and serving in the AAM council (Pitman, 1999). It has since grown enough to establish professional standards, disseminate awards for excellence in practice, sponsor professional development sessions, and serve as an advocate for museum educators and audiences with the organization of AAM (American Association of Museums, 2000).

Representatives from both universities and museums eventually facilitated the formation of a National Art Education Association museum education affiliate group in 1981 (Berry & Mayer, 1989), though the foundation for the group was laid in 1976 at the NAEA National Convention in St. Louis (Caston & Schneider, 2007). Incidentally, the author of NAEA’s 50th anniversary book pinpoints the 1977 convention in Philadelphia as the starting point (Michael, 1997). At a second meeting at the 1978 conference in Houston, discussions at a series of meetings made this foundation stronger and resulted a meeting at the NAEA headquarters later that summer, where participants from museums and universities drafted goals for a potential affiliate group. Their proposed purposes were:

> To develop and promote a knowledge and understanding of museum education as it relates to the total field of art education; to develop a communication network to collect and disseminate information to all NAEA members; to provide a focus for special interests in museum education; and to share information between the NAEA and other professional museum groups. (Michael, 1997, p. 117)

After a set of proposed bylaws and a Museum Affiliate Group Membership Survey were published in *NAEA News* it became clear exactly how much interest there was among the NAEA membership for a museum education affiliate group, and as a result the group was formally established in 1979. NAEA President Kent Anderson officially announced in April of 1981 that the affiliate group would be known as the Division of Museum Education beginning on September 1, 1981. Teresa Grana of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, was not only instrumental in creating the group, she served as its chair from 1979 to 1981 and represented the group on NAEA's Board of Directors in that capacity (Caston & Schneider, 2007)

Both EdCOM and NAEA's Museum Education Division are significant developments in the professionalization of the field, as they provided an opportunity to network with practicing educators in other museums, share resources, and lobby for advancement within two large and respected professional organizations.

Emerging Literature

The first anthology written for and by museum educators included ten years of collected essays from the Museum Education Roundtable's *Roundtable Reports*.

Museum Education Anthology: 1973–1983 (Nichols, et al., 1984) includes short essays that were "selected for their range of topics and good writing and for the overall picture they present of a decade" (Nichols, et al., 1984, p. 8). This overall picture includes chapters titled "Priming the Muse," "A Distinctive Brand of Education," "Audiences as Clients," "Teaching Objects," "Toward Building a Profession," and "First Questions," followed by a very helpful index of all of the reports published between 1973 and 1983. It is perhaps not surprising that two of the three interviewees (Linda and Elaine) for this dissertation were also contributors to this volume. The selected articles are a mixture of personal musings and thoughts on relevant issues, discussions of specific programs, exhibition reviews, and reports on research and evaluation in the field. Notably, several entries are responses to previous reports, giving the reader a sense that the museum education conversation was both continually evolving and welcoming of diverse voices and dissent.

Early Professional Education

Perhaps the ultimate mark of a profession is when the body of knowledge required to perform the responsibilities is legitimized through a university degree or specialized training program. Although there were a handful of academic programs for future museum workers or administrators in the early part of the 20th century, no programs in the mid-1960s were geared specifically toward preparing future museum educators. Although museum studies or museology courses existed, they generally focused on museums as institutions and offered areas of specialization based on museum type (science, history, art, etc.), rather than building programs around educational philosophies, theories, and practices.

In 1974, The George Washington University enrolled the first group of graduate student in the pilot course of their Master of Arts in Teaching in Museum Education program, which consisted of 33 hours of coursework and fieldwork (Newsom & Silver, 1978), thereby becoming first graduate-level program to focus on preparing future educators. The program's curriculum was based on a core discipline related to students' undergraduate majors; the study of audiences, including learning the museum, communications, and publicity; and hands-on experience in museums. According to Marcella Brenner and Sue Hoth (formerly of the CMEVA staff), two of the goals of the new program were to "integrate three areas of study—the collection, the audience, and the techniques of museum education" and to "identify the literature, people, and programs that already were a part of or could form a common body of knowledge for museum educators" (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 617). Carol Stapp has been part of the effort to educate new museum educators since 1977, when she became the Assistant Director for this program. In 1983, she became the director, a position she holds to this day.

Conclusions

Though I initially conceptualized the notion of merry bands as system of support and encouragement for individual museum educators, it ultimately played a much larger role, for it provided a foundation for individuals to contribute to the growing professionalization of the field of art museum education. The generation of professionals that that made up the merry bands separated themselves from the larger museum world by seeking out an alternative vision of art museum education based on group experience and understandings, knowledge outside of the fields of museums or art education and art history, and demanding that their voices be heard. At the same time, they integrated their work into the museum world by seeking out and implementing the kinds of activities and structures that signify professionalism, thereby countering years of criticism and confusion over whether or not art museum education was worthy of professional status.

CHAPTER NINE: LEGACIES

In this final chapter, I'll address the legacies of Carol, Linda, and Elaine in two separate ways: First, by offering a post-script of significant events that occurred after the three of them left the field of art museum education proper; and secondly, by summarizing what I learned from them through the process of writing this study. I'll conclude with thoughts about possibilities for future research, which I also consider a legacy of these three women.

Art Museum Education After 1980

In 1985, one art museum educator reflected, "More change has occurred in this field in the past two decades than in any other area of museum work. Starting as an extension of college art history classroom, museum education has expanded to encompass much more than the history of art" (Mühlberger, 1985, p. 93). My purpose in this research has been to unpack and sort out these changes by considering the interrelated personal, social, and educational contexts that shaped the field and its practitioners between approximately 1965 and 1980 through the lived experiences of three educators in the field. However, the story is incomplete without some discussion of the end of this era, when the future of the field became much more uncertain despite the progress that had been made.

In this section, I'll provide a social and political context for the cooling of the educational ardor that had so permeated the field of art museum education during the previous decade and discuss several developments post-1980 that signify an ongoing professionalization of the field, including the development of professional associations and literature documenting and exploring the new positionality of art museum education within the museum world. Elaine suggested during her interview that the advances made in the field during her generation ultimately culminated in *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums,* a major report by AAM that proclaimed education as an integral and essential part of every museum's mission, a notion that Bonnie Pitman echoed in her *Presence of Mind: Museums and the Spirit of Learning* (Pitman, 1999). With that in mind, I'll limit my discussion to the years of 1980 to 1992, the year that *Excellence and Equity* was published.

The End of an Era

Forward movement in the field of art museum education, fueled by funding, public expectations, and a re-evaluation of education, was slowing by the end of the 1970s. A 1978 article by Susan M. Mayer, a lecturer of art education and coordinator of museum education at the University of Texas at Austin who also had considerable experience as an art museum educator, confirms that there was a sense in the field that changes were once again afoot, even though it was not known where they would lead. Mayer questions whether or not the field had really advanced in the recent past, or if it was simply experiencing another rotation in a rather cyclical lifecycle. She questioned: "Is museum education coming of age, or is it in a second childhood of games and gimmicks? Firmly convinced that this field has yet to yield it rich educational potential, we at the Art Museum [the Michener Galleries at the University of Texas] have watched the recent trends with increasing interest" (S. M. Mayer, 1978, p. 18). Mayer and her colleagues were not alone— art museum educators, museum administrators, funding agencies, and higher education professionals were asking these types of questions.

The ramifications of less government support and public interest were profound on the field of art museum education, evident by a pervasive lack of discussion about education and programming in the same journals that had been swimming in articles just a few years prior. One co-author of *The Art Museum As Educator* later questioned whether or not there would even be a place for art museum educators in the decade of the 1980s. Even though most museum educators themselves felt that the events of the 1970s helped them to "get their act [*sic*] together" (Newsom, 1980, p. 46), they also viewed the future "with a mixture of insecurity, cynicism and despair" because even though they felt there were many opportunities for growth and collaboration, "the realities—of administrative support, curatorial cooperation, and institutional priorities—[were] something else, again" (Newsom, 1980, p. 46). In this author's view, the multitude of programs devised by museums in order to serve the broadest possible audiences served instead to devalue the work of educators and cast them in a professionally unflattering light. She quotes Marcella Brunner, the head of the graduate program in museum education at The George Washington University, as saying their work *en masse* could only be "corrected by curators and educators who will work together 'responsibly'" (Newsom, 1980, p. 50).

In fact, educators began to institute evaluative measures in order to ascertain the outcomes and implications of their programmatic offerings, both to satisfy their own mandate and to provide data to report to granting agencies. Unfortunately, the grants that seemed to offer so much promise in the early 1970s typically lasted only one to two years, hardly a long enough cycle for art museum educators to effect or realize any significant change in their institutions. Additionally, because evaluation techniques were in their infancy, they did not provide accurate measures of learning in the museum context. Even if art museum educators had the funding to offer a long-term program, the results of that offering were not easily ascertained (Rawlins, 1978). Some art museum educators ultimately succumbed to the temptation of offering entertainment instead of substantive programming, because in the absence of a better measure, the number of visitors in attendance became the most utilized gauge of success. “In order to attract a wider audience and promote their educational image, museums have emphasized entertainment as well as social relevance during the past decade” (Rawlins, 1978, p. 11). The end of perhaps the most incredible decade in the history of art museum education brought about a great deal of change in practices, theory, and philosophy of art museum education on the part of those educators who worked with most closely with audiences, but the larger art museum world did not seem to have taken the same amount of stock in their work. Although the rhetoric of inclusion and diversity promoted in the Civil Rights movement struck a very deep chord in education practitioners, once the funding for their work ran out, they were not given the economic support to continue their efforts to nearly the same extent. The long-term impact seems to be an enduring recognition on the part of museum administration of the importance of providing educational activities; however, the challenges art museum educators presented to the dominant cultural narratives of art museums were once again muted.

Though the financial woes of the mid-to late 1970s caused many museums to at least consider returning to a curatorial-based staffing situation—sacrificing education staff in the service of maintaining and expanding collections—there was no arguing that the impact of the events that occurred between ca.1969–1978 made a permanent impression on the art museum world. Outreach and education were no longer considered fringe benefits offered by museums; however, the need to carefully evaluate audience needs and construct quality educational experiences was evident. The social, cultural, artistic, academic, and philosophical changes that brought rupture to art museum education in the mid 1960s also brought it to an end in the late 1970s.

Social and Political Changes

Just as the postmodern era ushered in vast changes for art museums in the 1970s, its effects were perhaps even deeply more felt, for museums at least, in the following decade. While sources of political, social, academic, and cultural power had been questioned in the 1970s, the early 1980s began to provide some answers to those questions, guided by conservative political leadership. Though some wrote that "turmoil has subsided in the more conservative seventies" (Newsom & Silver, 1978, p. 32), it seems that the turmoil merely changed forms, making way for a politically, socially, and culturally conservative era under the administration of President Ronald Reagan, who took office in 1981. He "forged a conservative governing coalition that changed the course of American politics" noted historian David Woodard. "His political vision elevated conservative values as an expression of the national will and defended traditional cultural values against postmodern critics" (2006, p. xi).

During Jimmy Carter's presidency, and particularly after 1976, a socially and culturally conservative political movement emerged in part as a response to the myriad efforts made toward equal civil rights (Wilentz, 2008). This group identified strongly with evangelical religious conservatism and denounced "the United Nations, Communism, liberal educators, federal regulators, and government bureaucrats for threatening the nation's moral core" (Schaller, 2007, p. 11), largely because these bodies were perceived to usurp power from the Christian authoritarian strongholds of God, family, and church (Schaller, 2007). Former actor Ronald Reagan's presidency ushered in a new era of conservatism, so-called "trickle-down" economic policies (including the single largest tax cut in history), and enacted a political agenda in concert with an ultra-conservative wing of the American Christian movement. In 1981, he began issuing attacks on federal spending for the arts and it became clear that there was ultimately no established national cultural policy (Burlingame, 2004). Reagan inherited a nation that was desperate for change. The Utopian spirit of the 1960s was gone:

> Prosperity, a low rate of inflation and unemployment, cheap housing, low-cost books, etc., supported a happy-go-lucky student life from which a communal resistance flowed. Economic crises in the 1970s quickly burdened people with money woes and job hunts. Fierce competition for courses and programs, scholarships and loan money, seats in a dental school, jobs and apartments, all made students into each other's enemies rather than into a unified group fighting for "power to the people" (Schor, 1986, p. 27).

Domestic troubles were further emphasized by failures in foreign affairs—Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese; American Embassy workers were taken hostage in Iran by Iranian students who wanted their former shah to be returned to face charges stemming from his leadership of a brutal government (the hostages were later transferred to the Ayatollah Khomeni and an American rescue attempt failed miserably); and the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan while the United States discovered 2,000 Soviet troops stationed on the island of Cuba (Woodard, 2006).

Federal, state, and local governments engaged in the process of reviewing budgets and bringing them in line with economic realities, which drastically reduced the funding available for museums (Force, 1980, p. 11), while the public began to experience a technological revolution that offered personalized experiences to its users, in essence making learning and entertainment possible in the palm of one's hand. User-centered technology, such as computers, compact disc players, and cordless telephones, began to expand at an incredible rate and offer citizens who could afford them access to vast amounts of information and connectivity (Robertson & McDaniel, 2010). Though this technology was viewed by some as a possible panacea for the dwindling opportunities for museum outreach, others correctly noted that visual arts programs were not successfully utilizing these technologies to their advantage (Newsom, 1980, p. 48) and thereby not attracting the segment of the population that tended to use them. The popularity of these high-tech electronics led a new generation into a consumer market much unlike the previous "protest culture" which had embraced an anti-business philosophy of "environmentalism, cooperatism, affirmative action, occupational health and safety, and anti-consumerism" (Schor, 1986, p. 14).

In 1984, the Commission on Museums for a New Century published a report that detailed the potentialities of museums as educational institutions. The commission, established in 1982 by the president of the American Association of Museums, was "established to study and clarify the role of museums in American society, their obligations to preserve and interpret our cultural and natural heritage, and their responsibilities to an ever-broadening audience" (Commission on Museums for a New Century, 1984, p. 11). Funded and/or supported by the Pew Memorial Trust, Philip

Morris Incorporated, the Charles Ulrick and Josephine Bay Foundation, the J. Paul Getty Trust, and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, as well as a number of other museums, companies, and foundations, the text is ostensibly one-of-a-kind, as the committee noted only one precedent for their study: *America's Museums: The Belmont Report*. However, the two differ dramatically. *Museums for a New Century A Report of the Commission on Museums for a New Century* (Nichols, et al., 1984) focused almost exclusively on museums and their roles and impacts on society, with a heavy focus on their educational responsibilities. The outreach and educational efforts made possible by funding in the late 1960s and 1970s were not easily undone when the money ran out—the public continued to be interested in and visit museums (Commission on Museums for a New Century, 1984). Despite the public interest, educators were still not able to express or define museum learning in formulaic terms, having just gone through a period of time of learning the "nuts-and-bolts" of programming—although it was widely acknowledged that museums were educational institutions, the fact was that there was "no accepted philosophical framework" for museum learning (Commission on Museums for a New Century, 1984, p. 57).

The year that *Museums for A New Century* was published, the Getty Center for Education in the Arts embraced art museum education as a cause "in order to stimulate dialogue among museum professionals about how the appreciation of works of art can be intensified" (Eisner & Dobbs, 1986, np). To this end, the Center sponsored a 1984 issue of the *Journal of Aesthetic Education* devoted to the subject and at the same time commissioned the study that was ultimately published as *The Uncertain Profession: Observations on the State of Museum Education in Twenty American Art Museums*

(Eisner & Dobbs, 1986). Elliot Eisner, then a Professor of Education and Art at Stanford University who supported the idea of a Museum Education Division as president of NAEA in 1977–1979 (Caston & Schneider, 2007), and Stephen Dobbs, on leave from his position as Professor of Creative Arts at San Francisco State University, interviewed 38 directors and educators at a total of twenty medium sized museums around the country and prepared a three-part report: The first part introduced the study and explained the methodology; the second part, Generalizations and Discussion, contained six sections with statements and commentary that represent the results of the study; and the third part contained recommendations. There are also two appendices; one that served as a response to *Museums for a New Century* and the second was a list of professionals and institutions that were interviewed for the study. The topics of discussion, including The Mission of Museum Education, The Status and Role of Museum Educators, Professional Preparation for Museum Education, Program Resources for Museum Education, Research and Evaluation in Museum Education, and Museum Education and the Community (Eisner & Dobbs, 1986), were indicative that the Getty Center considered art museum education a field with the potential to become a profession, with a body of knowledge, a theoretical foundation, a set of necessary skills for practitioners, and a need for continuing education, even as they called it a "stepchild discipline" (Eisner & Dobbs, 1986, p. 20). Their work is in some ways a continuation of the foundations and philanthropic groups that sought to understand the role of art museums in American society in the 1960s; however, they focused their efforts solely on education, perhaps hoping to add legitimacy to the field by setting up the appearance of a professional association with the Getty, who was at that time also interested in reforming K-12 art education (Greer, 1984).

The authors followed up that report with a clarification of their intents and purposes in publishing the report since it was poorly received by art museum educators who viewed it as negative and deeply problematic (Getty Center for Education in the Arts, 1986), most especially since it was written by two individuals from outside the art museum field. In fact, the publication of the report spurred a gathering of museum education professionals, sponsored by the Museum Education Roundtable, to discuss the report, evaluate its impact, and offer a response. Eventually the discussion turned to the professional preparation of museum educators, with little agreement on what the ideal background might be—some suggested a background in liberal arts, others advocated for interdisciplinary Ph.D.s, while others maintained that in art museums, art history degrees were the natural foundation for art museum education work (Museum Education Roundtable, 1992).

Museum Education: History, Theory, Practice, published in 1989, was a response to calls by AAM, the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, and the National Art Education Association for literature to guide the field of art museum education. The editors, Nancy Berry and Susan Mayer, noted the efforts of practitioners to bring a sense of cohesiveness and definition to the field since the mid-1960s despite a dearth of professional time available for reflection and writing. They were careful to explain that this publication differed from the anthology that was its predecessor, *The Art Museum as Educator,* in that it focused on philosophical and theoretical concerns in art museum education rather than concentrating on case studies or explications of specific programs. Authors of the chapters included academics (Terry Zeller, Robert Ott), practicing art museum educators (Anne El-Omami, Sue McCoy, Susan Sternberg, Kathleen Walsh-

Piper, and William Walsh Howze), and authors who had one foot firmly in both realms (Ellie Bourdon Caston, Michel V. Cheff). Significantly, the editors also included a chapter by Randi Korn, a program evaluation consultant (Berry & Mayer, 1989). The backgrounds of the editors and contributors, the topics of their essays, and even the carefully thought-out format of the book signified a new level of maturity and professionalism in the field—the wealth of experience and expertise in one slim volume was unprecedented, as was the assertion that the field had theoretical and philosophical foundations, best practices for professionals and volunteers based on research, and that educational work could be evaluated in a meaningful and substantive way.

The second of three *Museum Education Roundtable* anthologies was published in 1992 with some assistance from the Institute of Museum Services Professional Services Program (Museum Education Roundtable, 1992). *Patterns in Practice: Selections from the Journal of Museum Education* is similar to its predecessor in that it includes published essays; however, these essays are from MER's professional journal rather than reports published in *Museum News.* They are just as engaging as before, yet they also reflect an unmistakable maturation, growth, and self-reflection. In the preface, Susan K. Nichols complemented the authors, which include Carol and Elaine, saying, "With passion and insight, the authors encourage us to rethink our philosophies and take a fresh look at the important work we do in our museums. The liveliness of the pieces in this volume mirror the vitality of our field and the energy of our colleagues" (Museum Education Roundtable, 1992, p. xi). The chapters, including "Coming of Age," "Reflecting on Things and Theory," "Considering the Museum Experience," "Putting Plans Into Practice," and "Thinking About Ourselves and our Field," tackle the significant issues of the day, including multiculturalism and diversity, responses to literature in the field (such as *Museums for a New Century* and the controversial study *The Uncertain Profession: Observations on the State of Museum Education in Twenty American Art Museums*), evolving thoughts on teaching and pedagogy, and professional development.

The publication of *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums* (American Association of Museums, 1992) is notable for many reasons, not the least of which was that it positioned education as central to the work of every museum; furthermore, it conceptualized educational work as the purview and responsibility of the entire staff, from directors and administrators to security guards. The report also emphasized the growing diversity of the American public and called for museums to foster

> an understanding of and a respect for all peoples; a spirit of inquiry and an openness to new ideas and approaches; an ability to address issues and problems through the rigorous application of creative and critical thinking skills; an ability to become involved in one's surroundings on visual, verbal, and auditory levels; and an understanding of history, science, the natural world, artistic expression, and humankind, along with the conviction that this understanding is essential for a fulfilling and responsible life. (American Association of Museums, 1992, pp. 10-11)

If this sounds eerily similar to the philosophical orientation espoused by the three women that I interviewed for this research, there is good reason: Bonnie Pitman, the chair of the AAM Task Force on Museum Education that spent two-and-a-half years producing the report, was a member of their generation and a supportive colleague—Elaine called her "the great bridge," noting that even though she was not still an art museum educator, she became an administrator who radicalized her institution (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009). Additionally, Elaine noted with some surprise that the museum world somehow became very interested in the work that she and her idealistic colleagues did in the 1960s and 1970s after they had spent some time in the field (E. H. Gurian, 1999, 2006).

Professional Education and Training

A study by Terry Zeller, published in 1985, suggested that very few art museum educators were prepared specifically for a career in the field through museum studies programs. Data gathered from 1981 through 1983 showed that nearly 35 percent of study participants, nearly all of whom had at least a bachelor's degree, had undergraduate degrees in art history and around 8% had a degree in art education. The statistics for those educators who had graduate degrees (64% of the total sample) were nearly identical, with 35.4% holding advanced degrees in art history, 8.3% in art education, and 9.9% in museology. Other majors at both the undergraduate and graduate level included behavioral science, fine arts, history/humanities, language arts, social science, science, education, and history/humanities (Zeller, 1985).

Other research and articles concerning the professional training of art museum educators appeared in the mid-1980s as well, likely in response to the call for an expanded educational role in museums in *Museums for a New Century* (Commission on Museums for a New Century, 1984). In 1985, representatives from the only two graduate-level museum education programs in the country at The George Washington University

(Washington, DC) and Bank Street College (New York City) held a colloquium at the AAM annual meeting in order to discuss training for future educators, asking:

> What are the elements of the changing role and expectations for museum educators?
>
> Given the emerging focus on learning—as opposed to teaching—in museums, what are the implications for the museum education field?
>
> What are the desirable characteristics for the next generation of museum educators? (Jensen & Munley, 1985, p. 12)

The group discussed responses to *Museums for a New Century*, voiced concerns about the discrepancy between what art museum educators *do* know and what they *should* know about learning and communication theory, and suggested the creation of a bibliography about audiences and museum learning as well as a clearinghouse for the dissemination of research. They also debated the nature of training for museum education and whether or not it should be an academic discipline or a training program, with no final resolution to the question (Jensen & Munley, 1985).

Ann El-Omami, then the Director of Education at the Cincinnati Museum of Art, outlined a rationale and program for a master's degree specifically geared to future art museum educators in 1989's *Museum Education: History, Theory, and Practice*. She suggested that there was, in fact, a set of areas that could be considered a basis for such a degree:

> Art museum education methodologies now involve differing research, teaching, and evaluation roles as well as new strategies for planning museum education programming. These changes suggest three major headings under which the

> education of the art museum educator can be discussed: 1) art history; 2) art education; and 3) research to include writing, development and implementation of art relate programming and materials. (El-Omami, 1989, p. 128)

According to El-Omami, this foundation would enable art museum educators to develop proficiency in the three areas listed in her headings. She offered a model for a degree program in art museum education that was essentially a dual master's in art history and education with a specialization in art education, plus a one-year museum internship and a written thesis, thus preparing new educators to interpret curatorial research and disseminate art-historical information; participate in exhibition planning and installation and curatorial meetings; create educational programming and sustain a positive working relationship with other colleagues by demonstrating expertise in education.

Despite a number of challenges, the field of art museum education continued to develop and in many ways flourish during the decade of the 1980s and the early 1990s. The struggles and leadership of the new generation of art museum education in the 1970s are evident throughout much of the progress made in the 1980s, as they actively worked to professionalize the field thorough publications, professional associations, and degree programs in higher education.

Conclusions

The last section may be characterized as the fruitful consequences of the work done by Carol, Linda, and Elaine and other members of their generation of art museum educators—a sort of broad post-script to their individual narratives. In this section, I revisit the questions that prompted this research, discuss what I learned, then posit possibilities for future research.

Research Questions—And Answers

1) *What were the experiences of young professional women who worked in the field of art museum education in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and how were they similar to or different than contemporary published accounts of art museum education?*

Basing this research on the stories of Elaine Heumann Gurian, Dr. Carol B. Stapp, and Linda Sweet not only helped to fill part of the void left in the historical record of art museum education, it also provided a solid foundation for exploring how and why the field changed so significantly. I now have examples of concrete pedagogical practice, anecdotes about colleagues, and stories about the interviewees' professional journeys from which to draw understandings. When I contemplated this particular research question, I had envisioned hearing about experiences in the museum directly related to the interviewees' work lives and how they were constructed by outside forces, such as politics, funding, colleagues or volunteers, and their educational experiences. Everything that I had read up to that point positioned art museum educators as somewhat passive recipients of their circumstances rather than recognizing the agency that they had in shaping their professional lives. What I did not anticipate that the common themes that emerged would be so centered on personal histories, politics, and worldviews, or that their shared experiences would paint such a holistic picture of their lives. The interviewees shared intimate details of their families, their childhoods, their friendships, and their marriages—all of which became crucial when answering questions related to their professional identities and decisions.

How did cultural, social, and political contexts shape art museum education between 1965 and 1980?

The decade of the 1970s heralded enormous social, cultural, artistic, academic, and philosophical changes in the United States. Ushered in by a waning contentious war in Vietnam; a general mistrust of government authority due to threats of impeachment and the subsequent resignation of President Richard Nixon; a growing concern for the negative impact of human activity on the natural environment; a burgeoning movement for equal rights and reproductive freedom for women; and a growing concern for the rights of people with physical and mental disabilities, the 1970s was a decade filled with social unrest, political protest, and changing social values. The larger movements and events that shaped art museum education in the late 1960s to late 1970s include civil and equal rights (court cases, government funding, reforms in both general education and art education); feminism (scholarship, art, workplace presence); and economic challenges for the middle class in a growing and changing American society.

Art museums were certainly among the many public institutions shaped and affected by vastly changing expectations of formerly revered and unchallenged repositories of knowledge (such as universities). Positioned at the intersection of art, culture, and society, their role(s), audiences, relevance, and traditional narratives were questioned, explored, and challenged. Because art museum educators were the staff members with the most direct interactions with the public, they were affected by and participated in these social, political, and cultural discourses and at the same time, their actions and decisions helped to shape museum education to a degree that they never had before.

2) *What are the legacies and impacts of these women and other art museum educators on the development of current art museum education practice, professional identity and status, and positionality in the museum?*

The professional realities of an art museum educator after 1980 would have been unimaginable for someone working in the same field just 15 years earlier. After 1980, a new museum educator would have had access to resources that simply did not exist for her predecessors, including a body of literature exploring the nature and purpose of art museums and art museum education, a number of professional resources and research on varying aspects of the field, access to professional development and representation by associations specifically for art museum educators, and academic degrees. As a contemporary art museum educator, my professional life would not be the same if the individuals that I interviewed and others like them had not changed the field from a fledgling discipline into a profession, in essence charting a new course for art museum education.

Future Research: Patterns in Practice

Thanks to an astute observation by my adviser, I came to the realization that the themes that emerged in the narratives—Nice Girls, Left-Wing Ladies, and Merry Bands—are similar to patterns that I explored in earlier research, wherein I contextualized the work of art museum educators in the early- to mid- 20^{th} century by exploring the social forces that shaped the realms of education, domesticity, and art for women (Kletchka, 2007). In both time periods, women were granted unprecedented access to education and particular forms of cultural work based on a rhetoric of benevolence and social justice. In both time periods, women began to speak for themselves as they were learning how to speak on behalf of others.

This lead me to a somewhat urgent sense that the stories of other art museum educators from Linda, Elaine, and Carol's generation should be collected, researched, and told, including people like Bonnie Pitman, Nina Jensen, Patterson B. Williams, Ellie Bourdon Caston, Sue Ann Robinson, Philip Yenawine, and others. One of the limitations of this research is that I only interviewed three people, so a broader sample of educators from various geographical, educational, and socio-political backgrounds would make the current findings that much richer and more complete.

I also began to contemplate what additional research might look like if I explored contemporary art museum education using similar theoretical underpinnings. I have been working in museums for 15 years (13 of those in university museums), and it is clear that art museum education is still dominated by women—practitioners, volunteers, and even professors who research the field. The current positionality of art museum educators, while improved, is still quite commonly lower than those staff members who occupy curatorial ranks, even though most art museum educators are required to have at least a Masters' degree. Interestingly, though, art history and art education programs in graduate schools and the world of museums are increasingly populated by women, which begs the question of how art museum education, as a feminized field, will change when the dynamics of sex and gender change in the upper echelons of the museum world.

Significance and Implications

In this final section, I'll locate my research within an historical tradition of art education in general and as an emerging concern in art museum education literature in particular. I will then address the implications, or the "so what?" of my dissertation research, by examining its relevance for individual practitioners, for students of art museum education, and for the field of art museums more broadly.

A cursory look at the art education section of an academic library reveals the depth to which historical inquiry has shaped and affected the field. Since the 1980s, there have been three major conferences on the history of art education and their resulting publications at the Pennsylvania State University (Amburgy, Soucy, Stankiewicz, Wilson, & Wilson, 1992; Anderson, 1997; Wilson, 1985); as well as critical collected essays by art education historians (Soucy & Stankiewicz, 1990), in addition to resources on how to write and research historical material in the field of art education (LaPierre & Zimmerman, 1997; P. Smith, 1995). Moreover, there has been a particularly strong and enduring interest in identifying and exploring the experiences of women in the field of art education (Congdon & Zimmerman, 1993; Grauer, Irwin, & Zimmerman, 2003; Saccá & Zimmerman, 1998; Zimmerman & Stankiewicz, 1982, 1985).

While I locate my research most generally under the umbrella of art education, art museum education is a much smaller (but growing) subset of that field, as reflected in the recently published book of essays *From Periphery to Center: Art Museum Education in the 21st Century.* Pat Villeneuve, the editor, described the book as containing, "theory, which is an essential base for informed practice, as well as information on museum programs and models for practice" (Villeneuve, 2007, p. 1). Historical research is represented by perhaps three of the twenty-nine essays, one of which is specifically about art museum educators (Kletchka, 2007) rather than the state of the field.

Implications for Practicing Art Museum Educators

Peter Smith, in his introduction to *Art Education Historical Methodology: An Insider's Guide to Doing and Using*, responded to the question of the uses of art education history by saying,

> What profession can be called a profession without a sense of its own role in the world, how it grew to be what it is? . . . history helps give a sense of professional identity. Where has my profession sprung from? What have its achievements been? What were its triumphs, tragedies, and farces? (P. Smith, 1995, p. v)

Smith's words rang true for me as an art museum educator who sought to understand some of the persistent and ongoing obstacles and frustrations that I hear from colleagues in the field. As I listed to the women that I interviewed, it made me keenly aware (and, I hope, will also do the same for readers of my research), that many of the same issues that I deal with—lack of parity with curators, misunderstandings about the nature of my work, and difficulty instituting real change in my museum—are the very same issues with which museum educators have historically grappled. Knowing that some of these issues are part and parcel of being an educator, and that my professional foremothers developed strategies to successfully deal with them, has given me a sense of belonging to something larger and more dynamic. In a field where geographic separation between practitioners is the norm and yearly conferences or other gatherings may or may not be in the budget, a sense of shared history lessens the sense of isolation that has frustrated so many of us—and perhaps cut our museum careers shorter than they would otherwise have been.

In addition to being important for professional identity, history may also serve as a relational way of understanding museum education and one's identity within it. The stories in this dissertation offer examples of the very personal experiences that shaped not only the lives but also the work of Carol, Elaine, and Linda, and reminds practicing educators that many of the decisions they make daily are affected in large part by the ways in which they experience life outside of work—every aspect of one's identity, from sex and/or gender, political leanings, race, religion, parental and relationship status, and many others—shapes their professional decisions. Furthermore, the stories in this dissertation where shaped just as strongly by the larger social, political, and economic conditions of the time, as these discourses tend to affect the function and expectations of public institutions, including museums. Understanding that art museum education is subject not only to historical but personal and social situatedness helps practitioners put their experiences into a broader perspective and offers additional ways to understand their professional role(s).

Implications for Students and Future Art Museum Educators

While I have just stated that historical understanding helps to develop a professional identity for practicing art museum educators, it is also important as a foundation for those potential and emerging educators who are just beginning to form their identities as students and future practitioners. One of the most poignant memories that I have about starting graduate school was when, after a semester, I engaged in a conversation with an art history graduate student who asked me what I wanted to do when I got out of graduate school. When I responded that I would like to work as an educator in a museum, her sincere—if stinging—response, "I didn't realize anybody actually wanted to be an educator, I just thought that's what curators did if they couldn't get a real curatorial job" might not have thrown me for such a loop. At the time, I couldn't respond about the length of time the field had been in existence, the fact that museums absolutely relied on bright, committed educational staff to meet their goals and missions, and that marked and measurable change had occurred in museums as a result of the work done by educators in the not-too-distant past. In other words, I wouldn't have been, as Elaine Heumann Gurian said about the work of herself and her colleagues, "ahistoric . . . making it up" (E. H. Gurian, personal communication, May 2, 2009).

It is my hope that this research will also inspire other students of art and art museum education to undertake historical research, with topics that are compelling and personally meaningful to them. Researching and writing this dissertation has instilled in me a profound sense of respect for my profession, helped me to speak eloquently about my work and the contexts from which it emerged, and engage in meaningful dialogue with scholars in other fields, thereby setting the stage for an ongoing and committed course of research and leadership in the field of art museum education. In a field where there are relatively few academic researchers, an expanded body of historical knowledge by committed scholars would be beneficial for increasing understandings of the work that we do.

Implications for the Broader Field

One significant aspect of this research is that it demonstrates the possibilities for expanding one's role as an art museum educator, either by taking on tasks that are not typically considered the purview of the educator, or by reconceptualizing the work itself. For example, these educators changed their relationship with objects by curating exhibitions in spaces both within and outside of their institutions, work that was previously done by curators almost exclusively. Additionally, they started writing and publishing articles about art museum education philosophy and practice, thereby elevating that subject matter to a topic worthy of publication, discussion, and reflection. At the same time, they opened the door for more typical tasks done by educators to be re-thought and re-envisioned in ways that were previously not possible. For example, Linda and Carol both spoke of changing the educational experiences offered by their institutions, guided by their understandings and intuition, knowledge from other fields, and feedback from learners and colleagues. They re-envisioned what was possible with learners in the museum by refining their pedagogical strategies, but also by redefining their relationships with both visitors and colleagues by focusing on learning and pedagogy as much as art objects. Contemporary museum staff members may look back at these actions as initial efforts to reconsider the ways in which many educators' responsibilities, from teaching to curriculum writing to pedagogy, are defined and enacted.

The art museum educators that I interviewed and many of the colleagues with whom they worked now occupy prominent roles in the museum field, including prestigious positions as directors and assistant directors, professors and directors of academic programs, and museum consultants. Their influence, informed by their understandings as educators, is felt in the halls and galleries of both academia and museums, and still continues to change the field in ways large and small.

APPENDIX A: Letter to potential interviewees

Dear X:

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Dana Carlisle Kletchka, a doctoral candidate in art education at Penn State. The purpose of this research is to examine art museum education in the early 1970s as part of a larger investigation on how the field became and remains feminized profession.

Your participation will involve answering a series of 16 pre-determined questions and you will also be asked if you have any additional comments for the researcher. The interview will be conducted in person. If we are unable to meet face to face, it may be conducted via Skype, a free software program that allows individuals to conduct and record telephone calls and videoconferences via the Internet.

The amount of time required for your participation will be approximately one hour.

You have the option of refusing to answer any question or to stop answering a question once you have started. I will keep recordings of the interviews on my personal laptop until the year 2014 and will delete the files after that time.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study. I am the only person who will have access to the recordings.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

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APPENDIX B: Interview Questions

Introductory

1. What is your current professional position?
2. When did you begin your career in art museums?

Art Museum Education Experience—Early 1970s (1969–1974)

1. What was your professional position in the field of art museum education during the early 1970s?
2. Specifically, what were your job responsibilities?
3. To whom did you report in terms of the organizational structure of the museum?
4. Where were your offices located?
5. What resources did you refer to when you had job-related questions?
6. What guidelines were you given in terms of planning events or programs?
7. What was the gender make-up of the education department at your museum? The curatorial department? The director and senior staff?
8. What was your professional definition of "education" as it occurred in art museums?

Political/Social/Cultural Climate & Events

1. In your opinion, what were the most significant events that affected the museum world in the early 1970s?
2. What political and social trends affected art museums in general during that time period? Did any of them affect your particular institution? If so, how?
3. Did your museum have any educational outreach programs during the late 1960s or early 1970s?

4. How was educational outreach defined?

5. What sorts of programs were offered?

6. How did your museum fund educational outreach?

Additional Thoughts/Open Question

1. Is there any thing that you would like to say about your early experiences as an educator in an art museum?

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