

Gender Inequality in Textbooks*The Under-Representation of Women Artists in the Leaving Certificate Art Syllabus*

There is nothing in the work of the State which is naturally a woman's work, hers because she is a woman, and nothing which is a man's because he is a man. The same gifts are distributed among them both and there are women and men naturally fitted for each sort of work.

Plato, 'The Republic'.

Equality in education is an aspiration which needs practical action if it is to become a reality. The lack of representation of the many achievements of women in school text books is a result of the exclusion of women from formal academic education which continued into this century.

Female students are denied positive role models, which often leads to low self-esteem; this can manifest itself in apathy, lack of motivation, and fear of risk-taking. In contrast, students with higher self-esteem are eager to learn and are confident in their abilities.

Gender equality in education would help students, male and female, achieve their full potential, leading to social and economic benefit to society. In order for a balanced view in textbooks to become a reality, the content and use of language needs to be examined for sex-stereotyping and sexism. The generic use of he, man, should be discontinued. The different conditions which operated for men and women in art education would lead to greater understanding of art production.

The Leaving Certificate Art Exam Papers influence what is in textbooks, and what is taught in the classroom. Women artists need to be named in questions, so that teachers will give class-time to them. Open questions would allow students to answer on women artists.

The Department of Education could be more pro-active in promoting gender equality. Gender issues should be emphasised in teacher-training and in-service training. At the moment, gender issues seem to be regarded as a minority issue.

Male and female students react favourably to the work of women artists. They are receptive to information about various methods of art production, which helps them demystify art.

While work is taking place on gender equality in primary schools, the second level sector still has to face the issue.

Very intell, committed p., enthusiastic + informed. but
Topic extremely imp. + topical.

N. McCann

Impressed

1. Syntax.

2. ~~Footnotes~~ ~~not necessary~~. ~~Section 2~~ ~~also~~;

3. Jumping around re topics — does not pursue topic to a conclusion

4. Empirical data re gender choice? in h.ed.

5. Ch. 11, use of Tables more impact.

6. Ch 11

7. Good kn. of theory: + hist.

8. Early class. weaker > later.

9. Did not examine (act. factors) mechanism; who decides texts? particular this?

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NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

GENDER INEQUALITY IN ART HISTORY
TEXT BOOKS

THE UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN ARTISTS IN THE
LEAVING CERTIFICATE ART SYLLABUS

A Dissertation submitted to Faculty of Education
in
Candidacy for the
Diploma for Art and Design Teachers

by

Niamh McCann

May 1998

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INTRODUCTION

It was generally accepted by the members that many of the inequalities between the sexes are rooted in the education system as at present structured in this country.....so that in due course textbooks in schools will reflect a properly balanced treatment of the respective roles of men and women in contemporary society.

The First Report for the Joint Committee on Women's Rights 1984

The aim of this dissertation is to examine whether there is gender equality in the Leaving Certificate Art History course. In Chapter I, the various recommendations of the Green Paper 1992; The Second Commission on the Status of Women 1993 and the White Paper 1995 have been examined. While there are good recommendations, the implementation of them are left to individual teachers. The examination of two of the popular text books shows that gender-fair policies have not been implemented at second level, in contrast to primary level, where changes in text books are being made.

A review of the exam papers reflects the male-dominated course syllabus.

In Chapter II, the position of women in western society is examined in relation to the philosophical influence of the Christian Church. The influence of the Church on women's education has had a detrimental effect on all women, including women artists.

x2
churches?

Chapter III explores ways in which art history can be taught in practical ways and explores the attitude of second level students to women artists.

The overall aim of this work is to promote the substantial body of work by western women artists. The second level female student needs to have her cultural legacy validated if we are to motivate and empower 52% of our population.

examine?

CHAPTER I

GENDER EQUALITY

It is the fundamental aim of the Irish education system that each person be enabled to achieve his/her potential as human beings. Principles of justice, freedom and democracy demand that no individuals should be handicapped by their sex, from the full participation in the countries social, cultural and economic life.

The Green Paper p67

The need to promote gender equality in education in Ireland has been recognised by the Department of Education. The Green Paper 1992 and the White Paper 1995, both have recommendations aspiring to eradicate sexism in the classroom and in textbooks.

The Green Paper credits much of the development of gender equality in Ireland to legislation from the European Community. The Green Paper highlights the positive economic benefits to be gained by increased involvement by female students in science and technological subjects. It is shown from an ERSI report, 'Schooling and Sex Roles' in 1983 that female students take more languages, Home Economics, Art and Music, while boys chose more science and technological subjects.

*underline or
italics*

Table 1: Leaving Certificate 1986

Total Number of Candidates Sitting Examination: 47,857

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
Maths (Higher Level)	12,570	7,943
Physics	16,086	5,078
Art	5,991	12,263
Music and Musicianship	534	2,980

Department of Education Statistical Report 1985/86:

Dublin Department of Education 1987

The energy in changing gender imbalance in schools seems to be aimed at encouraging more girls to take higher level maths, chemistry and physics for what may be economic reasons, rather than examining closely the content of other subjects which seem not to be economically important. However, the Green Paper states,

.....in this regard, schools are encouraged to examine the structures of what is often called the 'hidden curriculum' of the school.....by the content and illustrations of textbooks and other teaching materials...(1)

Progress in the examination and elimination of sexism and sex-stereotyping has been made in the National School system. However, to date, the National Council for Curriculum Assessment, which was asked to draw up lists of 'gender-fair' text books at second level, and to increase the representation of women in the various syllabus has no data available to the public.

* evidence?

/ groups?

Questionnaires were sent out to schools, but to date, April '98, no information or recommendations have been made. I hope to explore, that while Art may be perceived as a female subject, the text books studied, imply that the creation of

art is a male practice, and that the idea that Art is an accomplishment for girls in many ways still prevails.

italics or underline The Green Paper, Education for a Changing World, 1992 and the White Paper, Charting our Education Future, 1995, both make recommendations on the place of Art in the school curriculum and the need to promote gender equality. Many of their recommendations originate ⁱⁿ ~~from~~ the 'Second Commission on the Status of Women', 1993. The Commission believed that it was vital that sexism and sex-stereotyping in education should disappear as it serves as a handicap both to actual abilities and a reinforcement of self-limiting attitudes. It is also important that teaching materials do not reinforce out-dated and inequitable stereotypes of men and women.

The Commission on the Status of Women also recommends that the Department of Education should ensure that examination questions are free of sexism.

The Green Paper devotes four pages to recommendations and discussions on gender equality in Irish ^s Schools. Much of its proposals ^{require} need the schools and teachers to take responsibility for vetting the content of text books and of examining their own behaviour in the classroom towards male and female students. There is no funding available to carry out these proposals. The Green Paper also encourages new curriculum developments in the Enterprise and Technology section as these subjects will equip Ireland for ^{the} Economic and Industrial development. These subjects are seen as developing an enterprising

and dynamic business mind, in contrast Art and Music ^{are} seen as an expressive feeling subject, of no economic benefit.

✓
syntax.

.....it is desirable that students are exposed to subjects such as Art and Music, that would develop their expressive abilities. (2)

This statement shows a fundamental lack of understanding of the logical, skill-based decision making that Art and Music require. To limit these subjects to self-expression is to undermine these subjects and could lead to the reduction of class hours allocated to these subjects. ✓

The White Paper 1995 links the education of the nation with its economic well-being.

.....the development of the education and skills of people is as important a source of wealth as the accumulation of a more traditional forms of capital.....expenditure on education and training is an investment in economic growth and improved social cohesion. (3)

The White Paper regards the arts as a social gelling agent.

.....the provision of arts education is an issue of social equality, and there is an increasing recognition that cultural poverty is a significant part of the whole school curriculum.....These provide occasions where students, teachers and parents can work together in a mutually reinforcing way. (4)

These views tend to underplay the actual decision making skill developed in Art & Design classes. This view of art as a nice subject, an expressive feeling subject, an accomplishment, has made it attractive to female students.

They are ill-served in the textbooks I examined. The lack of representation of women artists in the Leaving Certificate programme can only reinforce the cultural poverty of the female student who is denied information about her own cultural heritage. The Green Paper in its introduction sets out its aims ensuring

Gender Equity; it states,

.....an equity problem of quite a different kind is that of equality between male and female in the education system, this takes three main forms :

1. Unequal distribution of the sexes at management levels in education.
2. Teaching materials and practices which reinforce outdated stereotypes of the roles of men and women including career roles.
3. Restricted availability of options at second level which force boys and girls toward particular course choice. (5)

It goes on to recommend, that

.....a systematic examination of all teaching materials take place regularly and action taken to withdraw or adopt unsuitable material. (6)

The White Paper is less direct in its proposals, it links gender issues to children with special needs, which is a minority issue, while female students are not a minority.

The White Paper makes five recommendations on Gender Equality in Higher Level Education, which the Higher Education Authority will be responsible for monitoring. These include gender balance on all staff selection boards and

procedures for preventing the sexual harassment of students and employees. In

Chapter 3, Second Level Education it states,

.....Educational objectives at this level promote the right of each student to full and equal access, participation and benefit from educational provisions in accordance with his/her ability. (7)

While the Green Paper sets out recommendations on gender balance at second level the White Paper does not. One might think this was because all the issues raised in the Second Commission on the Status of Women and the Green Paper had been addressed. From my reading of the text books available for the Leaving Certificate History of Art course, it can be seen that gender issues have not been addressed. The Department of Education have published a variety of information packs on gender balance, but these depend on the interest of individual teachers and schools. They have little impact on the content of text books.

data on choice at 30 level?

It is hoped that the promoting of gender fair environments in schools will lead to female students following a wider career path from the traditional ones such as secretarial, nursing and teaching. Also all schools will need to provide a wider range of subjects, i.e., higher level maths, technical drawing and the sciences in girls' schools.

what is the position?

The Primary School sector has done much to examine and change in relation to sex stereotyping. The Government's Programme for Action in Education (1984-1987) stated,

italics or underline

.....texts for which admission to the approved lists for National Schools is sought, will be examined so as to ensure that they reflect a properly balanced treatment in the respective roles of women and men in contemporary society.
(8)

It may be useful to define some of the terms and concepts to which I refer. These definitions are found in the Report of the Working Group on the Elimination of Sexism and Sex-Stereotyping in Textbooks and Teaching Materials in National Schools.

Stereotype: 'A commonly held view of the characteristic of groups and institutions, often of simplified and rigid.' No allowance is made for individual differences.

Sex-Stereotyping: The process of stereotyping related to sexes, often concentrating on characteristics that are specific to biological sex differences. Most instances of sex-stereotyping appear to relate to the female sex, but the full and accurate meaning of the term includes stereotyping 'whereby males and females are arbitrarily assigned to roles determined and limited by their sex.'

Sexism: 'Discrimination against (another) sex', this is usually perceived as against the female sex, portraying too restrictive a view of their roles and rights. Sexism occurs by actions and a use of words and images which present a negative or inferior view of one sex. It is

expressed in language, attitudes, practices, images and structures which contribute to inequality between girls and boys, and men and women.

Textbooks:

These refer to graded readers (Irish and English), mathematics, history, geography and nature study books, and any other textbooks designed for study in primary schools and related workbooks, workcards and charts.

Section 2

Text Books

.....a text bears inscribed within it the marks of certain determinate absences which trust it significations into conflict and contradictions.....ideology is present in the text in the form of its eloquent silences. (1)

The textbooks used in schools ^{may} have an influence on what is taught, how it is taught and on the sequence of learning. Various researchers have shown the influence of textbooks in schools.

.....Textbooks are of particular importance.

.....The textbook is the defacto curriculum. (2)

.....A child will presume that attitudes contained within them carry official approval. (3)

.....what children are taught in schools represents the consensus view of what a society considers important. By a process of selection certain facts and images are put before the society's children. (4)

italics de facto

We must acknowledge the influence of the textbook and recognise ourselves that the information and values in them are not neutral. They have the power to reproduce social inequalities in the hearts and minds of the students or they can be used to promote social change. For example, school books can promote healthy eating attitudes. If we see a role in education for the educational advancement of male and female students, we must show in textbooks the possibilities open to men and women. It is deeply disturbing to me that even where women have played a role in the history of Western Art, they have been written out of history, as Dale Spender found had happened to women novelists.

The use of language also needs to be examined so that it is inclusive, for example, 'cave dweller' is preferable to 'cave man'. A boy in 3rd class in a primary school said, "There were no women in the Stone Age, men lived in caves with their sons". (5)

context?

terms such as
The use of generic man, Stone Age man, Neanderthal man, highlight the role of language in stereotyping. A male student who is used to reading words such as he, him, etc., in relation to himself, will find it easier to identify with the text. A female student will feel excluded from the text, it is separate from her. ←

The use of he, his, man, in the generic sense, excludes women.

Women are often trivialised in texts, where women are represented as wives of men, rather women in their own right.

I hope here to explore why it is important to reflect the existence of women artists in the Leaving Certificate text books. It is also not simply an exercise in adding a few women into the text, but it should include reasons for the exclusion of women in the first place and also examine the different social and educational experiences of women artists throughout herstory.

not derived from his - but from L. historia

which texts have been examined?

The lack of women in these texts can be seen by the student, male or female, as meaning that there have been no female artists, for why would they have been left out? The male student is not disturbed, his world view is one of achievement. He has a long line of male artists, tracing back to the cavemen in

France and Spain to act as role models. ✓ The female student is getting a different message, she is given no role model, no vision of the possibilities open to her. As Bourdeu put it, the boys have a from of 'cultural capita'. He argues that formal equality of opportunity to a curriculum may be offered to all students, but that there will be a differential uptake because students come from a variety of backgrounds. The student with a lot of books in the home will be at an advantage in school, while the student in a home without books may have negative feelings towards them, and be at an educational disadvantage.

In relation to the history of art, the male student is at an advantage, having an almost exclusively male line of artists to use as role models.

.....clearly the student teacher needs to review materials before they are used in order to spot any sexist language so that this issue can be tackled in the classroom. (6)

The omission of women artists in the texts denies female adolescence students the opportunity to develop a positive informed self-image as an artist, and prevents them from knowing the history and achievements of women artists.

As Ericson has shown it is at adolescence that people develop their ideas of who they are and who they want to be. Self-efficacy is the term used to describe this. Research has shown that infant girls are handled more often than boys, that girls are encouraged to be less independent, more caring and other orientated, while boys are encouraged to be independent and self-reliant.

evidence?

In the classroom, neatness and tidiness are expected from girls, but not from boys. Boys are praised for good work, girls for good behaviour. It has also been seen that teachers' attention in mixed classes is given to controlling the boys. Girls who are hardworking and well-behaved can find that they receive little or no attention from the teacher. All this added to subjects which ignore the achievements of women can limit the motivation of female students.

male or female?

.....sadly, at all ages, girls tend to show lower self-esteem than boys, and may even artificially depress their levels of performance in conformity with an outmoded social conception of the inferiority of the female role. (7)

More examples of the range of women's achievements in all areas of schools textbooks would help to address these problems, by providing positive role models for girls. I examined two books which are popular text books for the Leaving Certificate Art Course:

Art History and Appreciation, Henry Sharpe. Gill and Macmillan, 1976; and Sight, Insight, Excite, Lourda Shepard, Folens, 1986.

Art History and Appreciation was published in 1976, the year that the ground-breaking exhibition 'Women Painters: 1550-1950' opened in the Los Angeles County Museum. Sharpe names two women artists in the European section and two women artists in the Irish section.

On page 8, the Bayeux Tapestry is credited to Queen Mathilde, wife of William the Conqueror. No information is given on its production, nor the type of women who would have collaborated on a work such as this. It could also be

noted that women worked on embroidery and tapestry for churches and castles, but because of the nature of the media, much of this work has disintegrated.

He assumes that only men were working creatively at this time. Page 10 states:

Medieval men were not obsessed as we in the twentieth century are, with the authentically signed piece of work. (8)

As I will show in Chapter II, women were active in the craft guilds, and were as 'not obsessed' as the men about signing their work. If they had signed more of their work, we would have more information about them.

Page 20, again reinforces the image of men being the only artists.

The painters of the twelfth century and thirteenth century was almost indistinguishable from any other tradesmen in terms of wealth status and types of work likely to occupy him. He might decorate the accoutrements of war, saddles, shields, helmets and banners. He might design tapestries, paint the walls of churches and palaces or illuminate books. (9)

The language here is sexist, excluding women, who would have worked in all these areas, as craft people worked from home as a family. The whole family would be involved in the work. No mention is made of the many female genre painters of the Dutch school, or of the female students of David.

Neo-classical art, with its immaculate, unruffled surfaces, seems to take little or no account of the deep seated lessons of the age, as for instance, the art of Goya had. Goya was by no means alone, throughout Europe an increasing number of men and women of talent and sensibility turned their backs on the established and reviewed convention of the age. Greece and Rome were all very well,.....but there were other sources of inspiration other Gods to follow. There was Nature and Liberty. (12)

Here we can see that Sharpe will include women where he has found them. In a table of important dates he includes:

1818: Publication of Mary Shelly's 'Frankenstein';

1837: Queen Victoria crowned;

1977: Queen Victoria crowned Empress of India;

1912: Suffragettes riot in White Hall.

In the section on Twentieth Century Art, he includes Brigid Reilly. There is a photograph of 'The Fall' and in the text he writes on the visual impact of the work.

Indeed Brigid Reilly has had to bring one manufacturer to court for illegally reproducing one of her paintings on a dress.

There is a positive inclusion as Reilly was of the first artists to establish copyright over their work.

In the Irish section on page 204, he gives space to Evie Hone and Maine Jellet. There is text and a photograph of an example of each of their work. It is stated that in 1941 Maine Jellet set up the Irish Exhibition of Living Art, with Evie Hone and Louis le Brocey.

Folens published 'Sight Insight Excite' by Lourda Shepard in 1987. One may have expected a more gender-balanced book given the rise in research into women artists by art historians since the 1970's. however, while this book has colour reproductions unlike Sharpe's book, its use of language and omissions

of women's art are much more disturbing. The use of sexist language and content begins in Section (1): European Art, page 5.

Some hungry caveman, thinking of how he might get food, perhaps imagined a bump to resemble a buffalo and drew an outline around it with a burnt stick from the fire. From there he learned to draw without the bump. p. 5

There is no evidence to prove or disprove that men were the only people to draw on cave walls. Women and children were just as likely to have made symbols to interpret the world around them. Yet the possibility that those other than men could be capable of art production ^{is} not presented to the second level student. The image of the artist being male is being established.

.....we believe that these drawings were to help him in his hunting. The caveman believed that killing the animal in the drawing was a good omen and that he would be successful then in the real hunt. p. 12

Of course other interpretations are available, that women may have painted them, for religious purposes, or to help the hunt, or to pass the time, or simply that they were painted for many different reasons. 'There were other great inventions too, basket making, pottery and cloth weaving'. p 5, 6

These crafts are usually gender ^{specific} segregated in early societies, often these are the crafts of women. Here would be a good place to emphasise the work of women artists yet this opportunity is ignored. The involvement of women in this area is omitted. Again the word 'he' is used exclusively.

As in Henry Sharpe's book, the Bayeau Tapestry is included, but unlike Sharpe, Shepard does not attribute the work to Queen Mathilde. As the production of embroideries and tapestries was women's work, often produced collectively, it would be interesting to explore this method of working, in relation to the studio, factory production of paintings followed by artists such as Rubens and Warhol. Also the fact that women's work was often perishable due to the materials they used, means that research into their work is difficult, as well as the fact that most artists at this time did not sign their work. The signing of work developed during the Renaissance.

In the second chapter, 'Conquest of Reality, The Renaissance', no mention is made of the women artists of the time. I will explore them more fully in Chapter 2. Instead, Shepard develops the myth of the male artist.

In Florence at this time we see this attitude to the artist take hold very quickly and the emergence of two forms of artist that are still with us today - the polished and educated man of the world at ease in all society, and the solitary genius, withdrawn, moody and ready to quarrel with his patrons.
(13)

While these role models may be problematic for male students they provide a brick wall for female students, who cannot be expected to work beyond the exclusive use of 'man', 'he', 'his'. As we work through the book, through the section on Dutch art and French neo-classicism where women artists were present, we find no mention of them.

In the Impressionist section we find Edouard Manet described as 'the father of Impressionism' this again emphasising the maleness of art making.

Victorine Meurent who appears in many of Manet's paintings, 'Le Dejeuner sur l'Herbe', and 'l'Olympia' was a painter in her own right. Her identity could be explored in a Leaving Certificate text and her life experience used to explore the different realities of male and female artists of the time, i.e., how many nudes of male artists whose identities have been ignored, are we aware of? Berthe Morisot (1841-1898) is the first woman to be included in the book. There is a reproduction of 'Girl Before the Dance' as well as text. 'She was one of the few women artists at the time'.

There is no explanation for this statement, which could be explored to highlight the problems women had in relation to art education, and acceptance in the academy etc. It is written that she worked as a model of Manet, which seems to place her in a subservient role to him. The text tells us that she married Manet's brother in 1847. We are not given any information on the marital status of the male artists in the book. What may have been useful to point out is that her husband encouraged her to continue painting, where many women artists had to stop painting when they married, as their husbands did not approve of their creative work.

On page 159, Robert Delaunay (1885-1941) is included, but not his wife Sonia Delaunay-Terk, ^{whose} her work is extremely important in relation to 20th century textile and fashion design. It is surprising that if her husband is included in the

book that she would be excluded. On page 173, Victor Vasarely 'is the father of Optical Art'. Brigid Reilly has a reproduction of the Fall but no text, which is disappointing, since Sharpe has written about her and did not use sexist language when describing Vasarely.

On page 176, Shepard writes,

.....but we are all aware of the role we play. There is really no such thing as art, there are only artists, men and women, who are favoured with the gift and who possess the integrity of character, who never rest, content with half solutions. (14).

This is the first time Shepard mentions women as part of the body of art makers. It needs to be explained why they are now suddenly included, what conditions have changed? The change in patterns of Patronage? Change in women's education? Change in the legal position of women in society? In relation to their rights over their property and money? What effect did the First World War have on women artists? All these areas could be explored, which would put the production of art within a broader social and historical context.

In the Irish Art section, there is a marked increase in the number of women artists in the text.

On page 260, Mainne Jellet (1897-1941) gets ten lines of text plus one colour reproduction, Jellet went to study art in France and had a huge influence on art in Ireland. Norah McGuinness has eight lines, and one colour reproduction. Mary Swanzy gets three lines and Nano Reid has a colour reproduction but no text. Evie Hone, who revitalised stained glass in Ireland, has thirteen lines of

text and one colour reproduction. Again it could be asked, who were these women? Where did they come from, what led them to France? Where were the male artists at this time, were they not interested in the developments in Cubism in France? Had the women tried to get into the art colleges in Ireland and failed, or found the atmosphere hostile. All these areas could be explored to sensitise male and female second level students.

Finally the sculptures of Eilis O'Connel and Vivian Roche are included, O'Connel with twelve lines and one photo. Pauline Bewick and Deborah Brown are also included. Bewick with three lines of text, and Deborah Brown with a photograph of her fibre glass sculpture.

There is much room for improvement in these text books, yet the text books are written in response to the requirements of the Leaving Certificate exam. In an already over-crowded syllabus, is there room for women artists? As the stressed sixth year will say, 'Why study them if they don't come up in the exam?'

Section 3

Leaving Certificate History of Art Papers

In a review of the Leaving Certificate Exam Papers from 1994-1997, I found that the questions are predominantly about male artists, this applies equally to the higher and ordinary level.⁵

In the 1994 ordinary level paper in Section 1, 'Art in Ireland', three out of four questions are about Newgrange, the Ardagh Chalice and Georgian architecture. Question four is a question on four Irish Artists, W.J. Leech, Louis le Brocquy, Robert Ballagh and Martin Gael. None of these questions allow⁵ for the knowledge a student may have about Irish women artists. In Section 2, European Art, there are five questions, all on male artists, except Section B, Question 9: 'Write about any 20th century painter whose work you admire'.

The other questions are on Botticelli, Leonardo di Vinci, Palladio, Caravaggio, Rousseau, Monet, and Hockney.

We can see from the range of artists examined that the History of Art course is very wide, and that both teachers and students may be resistant to an enlarged course.

In the 1995 ordinary level paper, Section 1, 'Art in Ireland', Question 4, students are asked to write an account of the work of an artists chosen from a list, four

of whom are men and two women, Norah McGuinness and Gerda Fromel. The European section is exclusively on male artists.

The ordinary level paper 1996, Section 1, Art in Ireland has four questions, Question 4, Section B, has a list of four artists, one female, Mainie Jellet, the other three male, the European section is exclusively male in its questions. The ordinary level paper 1997, Section 1 has one question which includes Mainie Jellet. The European Section has eight questions, seven on male artists, two of which are more open questions. 'Choose your favourite Artist, Sculptor or Architect, discuss their work, or list the qualities of a Baroque painting.' This style of question lets the student focus on an area that interests them, but no women artist is ever named in the European section. The style and content of the questions in the higher level paper is the same as the ordinary level.

1994: Section 1, Art in Ireland:

Out of four questions, number four is an open question about contemporary Irish painters which could include a woman artist in Section 11, all the questions relate to male artists.

1995: Section 1, Art in Ireland:

Out of four questions, only one is an open question on contemporary Irish figurative paintingⁱⁿ which a woman artist could be included.

Section 11, European Art, has four questions, only one question is open enough to give the student the option of including a female artist. 'No. 7: Describe and

discuss any scene of everyday life painted by an artist of the 18th or 19th century.

1996: Section 1, Art in Ireland:

One question, number five, is female specific. The question is on Kathy Prendergast, who won a prize at the Venice Biennale. The inspectors' report showed that no students attempted to answer this question. Obviously the students are not exposed to her work. It is hoped that more exam questions will name women artists. This will lead teachers and students to take women artists more seriously.

In Section 11, out of five questions, one, number nine, is general enough to encompass women artists, but no women artists are named.

1997: Section 1, Art in Ireland:

In this year there are seven questions in the Irish section, in one of these, Pauline Bewick is included, with Felim Egan and Graham Knuttel.

In the European Section there are ten questions, no women artists are named, but one question is general enough for the student to include the work of a woman artist:

Describe and discuss, in as much detail as possible, one of the following. You should make reference to other works by your chosen artist.

- a) A painting, depicting or suggestive of movement;
- b) An etching, screen print or lithograph;
- c) A Nativity or Crucifixion;
- d) A painting which is created entirely, or almost entirely from the primary colours, or from the primary and secondary colours.

It can be seen from the exam papers that the section on Irish Art have more questions on women artists showing the important role Irish women have played in Modern Art in Ireland. In the European Section, the style of questioning would have to change, to encourage teachers to include the work of European women artists in their course work.

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2. Ibid., p96.
3. The White Paper on Education. Charting our Education Future. Department of Education, 1995 p5.
4. Ibid., p9.
5. The Green Paper, p9.
6. Ibid. p9.
7. The White Paper, p. 43.
8. Report of the Working Group on the Elimination of Sexism and Sex-Stereotyping in Textbooks and Teaching Materials in National Schools. Department of Education.

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3. Collins, Marie. Submission to the Department of Education. Sexism in National Schools, p. 3.

4. Walse, Lorcan. Images of Women in 19th Century Text Books. Irish Educational Studies, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1984, p. 73.
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7. Fontana, David. Psychology for Teachers, Macmillan 1995, p. 152.
8. Sharpe, Henry. Art History and Appreciation, Gill and Macmillan, 1976, p. 10.
9. Ibid., p. 20.
10. Ibid., 25.
11. Ibid., p. 130.
12. Shepard, Laura, Sight Insight Excite, Folens, 1986, p. 12.
13. Ibid., p 29.
14. Ibid., p. 176.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL POSITION OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

Girls ought to be active and diligent: nor is that all, they should also be early subjected to restraint. This misfortune, if it really be one, is inseparable from their sex: nor do they ever throw it off but to suffer more cruel evils. They must be subject all their lives to the most constant and severe restraint, which is that of decorum; it is therefore necessary to accustom them early to such confinement, that it may not afterwards cost them too dear; and to the suppression of their caprices, that they may more readily submit to the will of others.

Jean Jacques Rousseau, ^{Emile}Emile

*underline
or italics*

The position of women in western society has been influenced by the philosophies of the Christian Churches. The spread of Christianity in Europe was slow, but gained momentum as the mechanisms of the Church were used to strengthen the political power of various imperialist rulers in Europe. It was the Catholic Church that constructed the complex bureaucratic infrastructures that make up the blocks of the modern state.

The Church eventually came to run the civil courts and to be the law makers. ?

They set up schools and universities and were responsible for the developments of many cities and towns in Europe. The Cistercians went into many uninhabited forested areas and built monasteries. This led to greater communication between different peoples, roads were developed, travel and

trade became more popular, and as we can see in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, people went on pilgrimages.

Pre-Christian Europe was a vast area, sparsely inhabited, containing peoples of vastly different cultures and lifestyles. Christianity was to lead to a growing homogenisation in Europe. I hope to show how the belief system of the Catholic Church influenced the position of women in society.

The Christian Church and ^sState first became linked when the Roman Emperor Constantine adopted Christianity as the official state religion. In 318 AD, Constantine proclaimed that bishops of the Church could set aside judgements made by the civil courts anywhere in the Roman Empire. There was obviously some opposition to this as Constantine reinforced the powers of the bishops in 333 AD, when he order~~d~~^s the civil courts to carry out the judgements of the bishops. This in effect, meant that the civil courts became the law enforcement agents of the Church.

The Church became highly adept in the mechanisms of law. Much of our modern law has its roots in Canon Laws developed by the Church. When the civil courts were found to be inadequate in dealing with Church matters such as heresy, the Church was able to use their own internal courts. This happened during the Inquisition dealing with witchcraft, when people were tried by special Church courts. While old Roman law reflected patriarchal attitudes with regard to women, Canon Law changed the rights of women for the worse. In old Roman law, the punishment for adultery was confiscation of property

and banishment from Rome, this applied to both men and women. Under later Christian law, a husband could kill his wife on suspicion of adultery, but could only kill a man if he were a slave. Constantine used this new law himself and had his wife Fausta boiled alive on suspicion of adultery. The Church sanctioned much of the cruelty which was inflicted on women. The Abbe de Brantone was to write thirteen years after Constantine:

.....our Christian Lords and Princes murder their wives. To think that the pagans of old who did not know Christ, were so kind and gentle to their wives and the majority of our Lords be so cruel to them. (1)

There are many written testaments on the ever-increasing violence of husbands to their wives. This violence was not forbidden by the Church. A husband was encouraged to correct his wife. A woman was considered to be the property of the man, to be less intelligent and needing constant correction.

.....take up a stick and beat her soundly, for it is better to punish the body and correct the soul, than to damage the soul and spare the body. (Fig. 2.1)

Until the Middle Ages, marriage was a social bond, often treated quite casually. It was with the spread of the modern state and the power that the Church took on itself that marriage became the institution that it is today. Saint Paul wrote in his letter to the Ephesians 4.22.23:

.....and the woman must see to it that she pays her husband all respect. Wives be subject to your husbands as to the Lord; for man is the head of the woman.

The dislike of the feminine aspect of humanity is a characteristic shared by religions such as Islam and Judaism. It is when we examine the pre-Christian



Figure 2.1: Husband beating wife

religions found in Europe and find the many goddesses who were worshipped, that we begin to see that Christianity has very few positive female aspects.

It was only when older rituals and beliefs were incorporated into Christian dogma that the ordinary people began to warm to the Church. The image of Mary, the great mother, was primarily responsible for the popularity of the Church. It is no accident that most of the churches and cathedrals built during the Middle Ages are devoted to Notre Dame (Our Lady). Mary took over the role of the ancient mother goddesses, albeit in a sanitised, diluted form. With the spread of Christianity, two role models developed for women, Mary and Eve.

Eve caused the fall of mankind by disobeying God and accepting the Devil. God's punishment was to condemn all women to pain in childbirth and subjection to men. As Tertullian, 160-230 AD, wrote in his *De Cultu Feminarum*:

If our faith here below were on the scale of the wages awaiting in Heaven, not one of you, dear sisters, once she had come to know God and her own condition as a woman, would be hot after pleasure and finery. Rather she would wear rags and mourn, weep, and show Eve plunged in penance.....the disgrace of that crime and the shame of having brought ruin to humanity. In pain shall you bring forth children, women you shall turn to your husband and he shall rule over you. (2)

Tertullian identifies all women as Eve as he goes on to say:

You are the Devil's gateway, you are she who first violated the forbidden tree and broke the law.

Eve was regarded as the gateway of the Devil and in turn, women were regarded as being easily led astray. The transgressions of Eve were used to justify many curtailments of women's freedoms. Women were made to carry great guilt and feelings of self-loathing. Eve listens to the snake, who is the Devil, and is damned. This is a warning to women who may have memories of an earlier age, where female deities were numerous and where snakes symbolised wisdom and the power of healing. The symbol of the healing powers of snakes is still used today in the logo for pharmacists. Eve in her connection with the snake is linked to the snake goddess of Minoan Crete. Mary, who crushes the snake underfoot, is destroying her own power. Mary has accepted the idea of snake as evil, forgetting her own history in destroying the snake, destroys herself.

The wise women of Europe, like Eve, remembered old medical knowledge, they were the doctors in their communities. In the later Middle Ages when Christianity had spread all over Europe, a massive anti-women craze developed. This mania directed against independent women (Eve), was to last three hundred years, and cost millions of lives, most of them women's lives. It was not until the Church was highly organised and powerful that this could have taken place. The new Churches of Calvin and Luther would displace the position of Mary, ever lessening the position of women. In southern Germany there are statues of crucifixions in many fields and roadsides, while in Catholic countries such as Ireland, it is statues of Mary that are to be found as places of worship.

The late Middle Ages saw many women excluded from full membership of Guilds, where formally they were accepted; this was to have a negative effect on the many craftworkers who were women. The sins of Eve were used to justify many injustices against women. As laws developed, women lost rights to property as is illustrated here, in the laws of Italian cities:

City of Pesaro:	No wife can make a contract without the consent of her husband.
Florence 1415:	A married women with children cannot draw up a last will and testament in her own right, nor dispose of her dowry among the living to the detriment of her husband and children.
Lucca:	No married woman can sell or give away anything unless she has the agreement of her husband or nearest male relative. (3)

In France in 1316, Jeane de Burgandy was excluded from the throne by Salic Law. This ended the right of female succession in France. Women's spheres of existence were gradually restricted, within the workplace, within the law, and in education. All these negative influences can only have had a negative influence on women's self-image and creativity.

While education for boys developed, according to their place in society, girls were restricted in what they could learn. Latin was kept from them, they were not taught how to make rational deductions or to use rhetoric. When women did try to discuss topics seriously, they were often ridiculed as they did not follow educated male conventions.

Margaret Cavendish, the Duchess of Newcastle (1624-1674) was an ambitious woman, who looked on writing as her full-time employment. She did not try to protect her reputation. She endured a lot of hostility. She was called 'Mad Madge' and was publicly mocked and ridiculed. This reflects the attitude of the society which could not allow women access to knowledge. Women were meant to stay in the private sphere, they could write, but letters were the genre they were allowed. It was believed that you could not be a true woman and an intellectual.

As for learning, that I am not versed in it, nobody, I hope, will blame me for it, since it is sufficiently known that our Sex is not brought up to it, as not being suffered to be instructed in Schools and Universities. I will not say but many of our Sex may have as much Wit, and be capable of learning as well as Men; but since they want instructions, it is not possible they should attain to it: for learning is Artificial, but Wit is natural.
(4)

As Dale Spender shows in 'Mothers of the Novel', many women writers were written out of literary history, the same fate applied to women painters. They also had to endure the hostilities of the time fuelled by attitudes developed from St Paul, letter to Timothy.

Let your women hold their tongues in congregations nor be allowed to speak, but to be subject as the law biddeth. Let a woman in silence with subjection. But I give no licence to a woman to be a teacher, nor to have authority over the man, but to be in silence.

By the end of the 17th century women such as Mary Astell, 1668-1731, began to propose a form of education for women. Astell wrote her 'Serious Proposals to the Ladies' in 1694. At first, as many women did, it was published

anonymously. She argued that one could not have a good society with one half of it in ignorance. She said that women had become silly and vain and sinful and that education would make them more pious, virtuous. This would lead them to be better wives and mothers, for the betterment of society.

Mary Wollstonecraft, 1759-97, was to write in the same vein in her 'Vindication of the Rights of Women', 1792:

.....and do not men of science continually lament that an immoderate fondness for dress and dissipation carries the mother of a family ever away from home? Their hearts have not been debauched by knowledge, or their minds led away by scientific pursuits, yet they do not fulfil their peculiar duties which as women they are called upon to fulfil. (5)

Wollstonecraft, like Mary Cavendish before her, met with the insults of her contemporaries. Wollstonecraft was called a 'shameless wanton' and a 'hyena in petticoats':

For Mary verily would wear the breeches, God help poor silly men from such usurping bitches.
(*'Anti-Jacobian Review and Magazine'* 1801, IX, p. 518)

in Ireland? → Women's education grew slowly, women worked as governess when few other occupations were open to them. Primary education for all was introduced in England in 1873. Teaching offered a career for unmarried, educated women from the 17th century on. Many set up their own schools. The Brontë sisters had dreamt of setting up their own school, to provide themselves with a living. Women were barred from university education until recently. Trinity College Dublin, provided special examinations for women in 1870 and in 1896, women could sit the same exams as men. The census for 1871 had no women listed as

1901.

students of university colleges; that of 1901 listed ninety-one female students. Marie Montessori had to struggle for admittance, but in 1896 was the first woman to graduate from the University of Rome Medical School.

Given the hostility to women's education, the progress made by women in the last hundred years, is stunning. The paucity of women in textbooks is a result of the historical exclusion of women from education. The textbooks, or the providers of textbooks have not caught up with the social changes in society. This adds up to providing a negative aspect to women's education. Only when female and male students are informed on the contributions of women to western civilisation can we lay any claims to gender equality in education.



Figure 2.2: Boccaccio De Casibus Virorum Illustrium



Section 2

Women Artists

On December 21st, 1976, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art opened an exhibition, 'Women Artists 1550-1950'. The exhibition was curated by Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin. The catalogue produced for this exhibition has provided the groundwork for much of the subsequent research on women artists. When we consider the position of women in society, their lack of education, and the hostility to their self-expression it is surprising that there have been so many women artists.

There were great pressures on women not to step outside the narrow roles available to them, they could be subject to personal abuse, ridicule and their good name could be tarnished. Women were barred from art schools and when they did eventually gain admittance, were forbidden to draw or paint the nude model.

Before the 20th century, the route to becoming an artist was to become an apprentice in an artist's workshop. Many women artists trained this way, they were daughters of male artists. History paintings were the most prestigious paintings of the time. They depicted scenes from the Bible and classical myths. Because women were denied the education needed to carry out these works, they concentrated on less prestigious areas of art, such as portraits and flower paintings.

In the mid-19th century, art academies began to admit women. In 1860, the Royal Academy in Britain admitted a woman by mistake. Her initials on her portfolio led the Academy in Britain to assume that she was male. She was finally accepted, but was barred from life-drawing class. Another route for a male artist was to learn a craft and then to carry on to fine art. Hogarth started his training as a silver engraver. Women were not allowed to take up apprenticeships, so this route was closed to them. It was rare for a woman to take this path, but one who did was Rosalba Carriera, who I used as an example of a woman artist in my work in the classroom.

Carriera (1675-1757), was born in Venice and popularised a new type of media, the use of pastels in portraiture. Women often worked in new media, or took lesser genres, elevated them to new heights. Like her mother, Carriera worked as a lace designer, then she painted miniature portraits on snuff boxes. By 1703, she was working in the Rococo style. Carriera was highly regarded in Italy and France. In Italy she was elected to the French Acadmie, despite the 1706 ruling that no more women could join. It is from these records that we can establish facts about artists' lives and careers. It is often difficult to research women artists and their work. Their names may have changed due to marriage; for example, Lady Elizabeth Butler is sometimes discussed under her maiden name, Elizabeth Thompson. Often a woman's work will be attributed to her father or brother with the same surname producing work from the same workshop.



Figure 2.3: Rosalba Self Portrait 1715

The Leaving Certificate History of Art course could explore more how artists were trained and how they worked. This would demystify the production of art, which often took place in workshops with groups of people working on large commissions. Apprentices would be trained in various skills, the painting sky, fabrics etc. Eventually a few would become celebrated masters in their own rights.

The course at the moment concentrates on individual artists, which gives the impression that great paintings are produced by natural genius working in isolation.

There were women artists in Ancient Greece and Rome who were documented by Pliny and Elder. They include Timarete, Eirene, Aristarete and Iaia. Women worked in craft areas such as ceramics and textiles. During the Middle Ages women in convents worked in scriptoriums producing illuminated manuscripts. In 1405 Christian de Pisane praised a woman named Anastaise as the best manuscript painter in Paris. It is not until the mid-16th century that the first women artists of note emerge in Italy.

In 1528 Castiglione published 'The Courtier'. This volume proposed that all aristocrats, male and female, should have training in the social arts. Women should know how to write poetry, sing, dance, make witty conversation and to draw and paint. These skills were to make them entertaining companions to aristocratic Renaissance men. From this time, drawing and painting became hobbies of women of the leisured classes. Traditionally, this work has not been

highly regarded but modern researchers are working to place this non-professional work in context; especially in the role these women played in the development of landscape painting.

The Renaissance changed the role of the artist in society. The Guild of St Luke becomes the Academie of St Luke. The artists were no longer just craftworkers, they were cultured, creative, educated individuals. Women were not free to travel then, they did not learn maths or science, important in the development of pictorial perspective, and were thus hampered in attempts to produce major work. The women artists who are known today from this time were relatives of male artists who gave them access to training and materials. These women concentrated on portraits and still lives. These conditions held true for many women until the 20th century.

Another obstacle to women artists was the attitude of their husbands to their work. Many women gave up painting on the orders of their husbands. An example of this is Marie Guillemine Benoist, 1768-1826, a student of David. Again, the birth of children often distracted women from their creative work.

Footnotes: Chapter II

1. Davis, Gould, Elizabeth. The First Sex, JM Dent and Sons Ltd., London 1971, p. 236.
2. Faolain, Martines. Not in God's Image, Fontana, 1974, p. 144.
3. Ibid., p. 170.
4. Spender, Dale. Mothers of the Novel, Pandora 1986, p. 38.
5. Wollstonecraft, Mary. Vindication on the Rights of Women, Penguin Classics, first published 1792, p. 292.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

One method of teaching the history of art is to link it with a practical class. This will use the three levels of learning as Bruner defines them. These methods of processing information are developed in sequence, beginning in childhood. Bruner, Goodnow and Austin (1965) labelled these methods as, the inactive, the iconic, and the symbolic. ✓

24
3
The inactive mode uses no words or imagery. It is learning by doing and is concerned with motor skills.

The iconic mode uses imagery but does not use language. A young child will have visual and aural images of many things, but may not have the words to describe them. An adult may know how something works, but be unable to put their knowledge into words.

The symbolic mode uses language to represent reality and concepts. Symbols can be used instead of words, for example, numbers in mathematics, or symbolic iconography in art.

Using the history of art as an element of a sequence of work, will help the teacher take the anxiety out of learning. Students may feel that they cannot remember facts or dates and that they may not be able to reproduce their information in a written examination. By combining a variety of learning modes in a supportive environment, the students will absorb the information without having to resort to rote learning. By questioning throughout the project, the teacher can reinforce what the students knows and learns in class. This will build individual self-esteem and produce a positive classroom environment for everyone.

The group I chose for my research is a group of 5th year mixed ability students in Newpark Comprehensive School, Blackrock. This class is co-educational and multi-racial. There are ten students, seven boys and three girls.

I chose this group due to its size and their group personality. They seemed very motivated, but were lacking in a structured framework. I felt that they would react well to the practical and knowledge-based nature of the project. My aims were to introduce them to a variety of artists, male and female, who worked in portraiture. The students would produce a series of self-portraits, exploring colour theory, culminating in a self-portrait influenced by an artist they had studied in class. The aims were that the students would have an understanding of a range of areas. These aims were outlined by Bloom in 1956. ?

1. Knowledge: simple knowledge of facts, terms and theories;
2. Comprehension: an understanding of the meaning of this knowledge;
3. Application: the ability to apply this knowledge and comprehension in new and concrete situations.
4. Analysis: the ability to break material down into its constituent parts and to see the relationships between them.
5. Synthesis: the ability to assemble these parts into a new and meaningful relationship, thus forming a new whole.
6. Evaluation: the ability to judge the value of material using explicit and coherent criteria, either of one's own devising or derived from the work of others.

Given that this was a mixed ability group, nearly all the students fulfilled all these stages during the course of the project. The first stage was to measure the students' general art knowledge. This was done by using a questionnaire, combined with slides. Each question corresponded to a slide, and they answered the questions as they looked at the image. The questions were based on name, subject, style and date recognition. It was surprising how little information these middle-class students had. I chose ten slides of paintings with which I thought they would be familiar.

List of Slides

Name of Artist

1. Jan Van Eyck.....'The Arnolfini Wedding' 1434
Northern Renaissance
2. Botticelli.....'Birth of Venus' 1485
Italian Renaissance
3. Leonardo da Vinci.....'Mona Lisa' 1503
Italian Renaissance
4. Albrecht Durer.....'Self Portrait' 1498
Northern Renaissance
5. Rembrandt.....'Self Portrait' 1659
Northern Baroque
6. Vermeer.....'Portrait Girl with Pearl' 1656
Northern Baroque
7. Gainsborough.....'Mr and Mrs Andrews' 1749
English Rococo
8. Van Gogh.....'Self Portrait' 1888
Post Impressionism
9. Picasso.....'Weeping Women' 1937
Expressionism
10. Andy Warhol.....'Monroe' 1960's
Pop Art.

This all-male selection, of well-known painters and familiar examples of their work, posed problems for the students:

- 100% failed to identify slides 1-7;
- 40% identified Van Gogh;
- 30% identified Picasso;
- 30% identified Warhol
- 100% failed to offer any information on dates or styles.

The students in discussion were able to give good verbal descriptions of the work.

I asked them if they noticed that all of the artists were men. They were unable to name any women artists but however, their knowledge of male artists was also meagre. Throughout the project the students showed openness and enthusiasm to the work of artists studied in class. They made no distinction between the work of male and female artists.

We looked at photographs of Eve Arnold and compared them with paintings of Rembrandt, Vermeer and Durer. This was to familiarise them with new art mediums such as photography, where many women work, and to explore the relationship between photography and painting. We discussed the use of light and colour in examples (Figures 3.1, 3.2, 3.3). Also examined are the similarities in subject matter and the universality of themes such as youth and old age. Through this, the students were gaining fact based knowledge such as names of artists and were gaining confidence in their own abilities to discuss art works.

The practical element of the project was for the students to complete a series of self-portraits using elements of colour theory, i.e., one self-portrait was to be in black and white, exploring tones using greys. Another portrait was to use colour complementaries and the range of colours made when these are mixed. The final piece of work was to combine these skills and for the student to complete a self-portrait in the style of a chosen artist. Again, using the medium

of photography, we looked at the work of Dorethy Lainge when exploring the development of tone using black and white. The students were receptive to the work of women photographers and very interested in the photograph of the migrant worker and her children (Figure 3.4). We discussed the time-based nature of photography and its use in propaganda and story-telling.

In subsequent classes we looked at the work of:

- Roman Tomb Portraits;
- Maggie Hembling;
- Van Gogh;
- Stephen Spender;
- Lavina Fontana;
- Elizabeth Vegée-le Brun;
- Rosalba Carriera;
- Egon Shile;
- Sandra Mendelsohn Rubin;
- Hockney;
- Mary Casset.

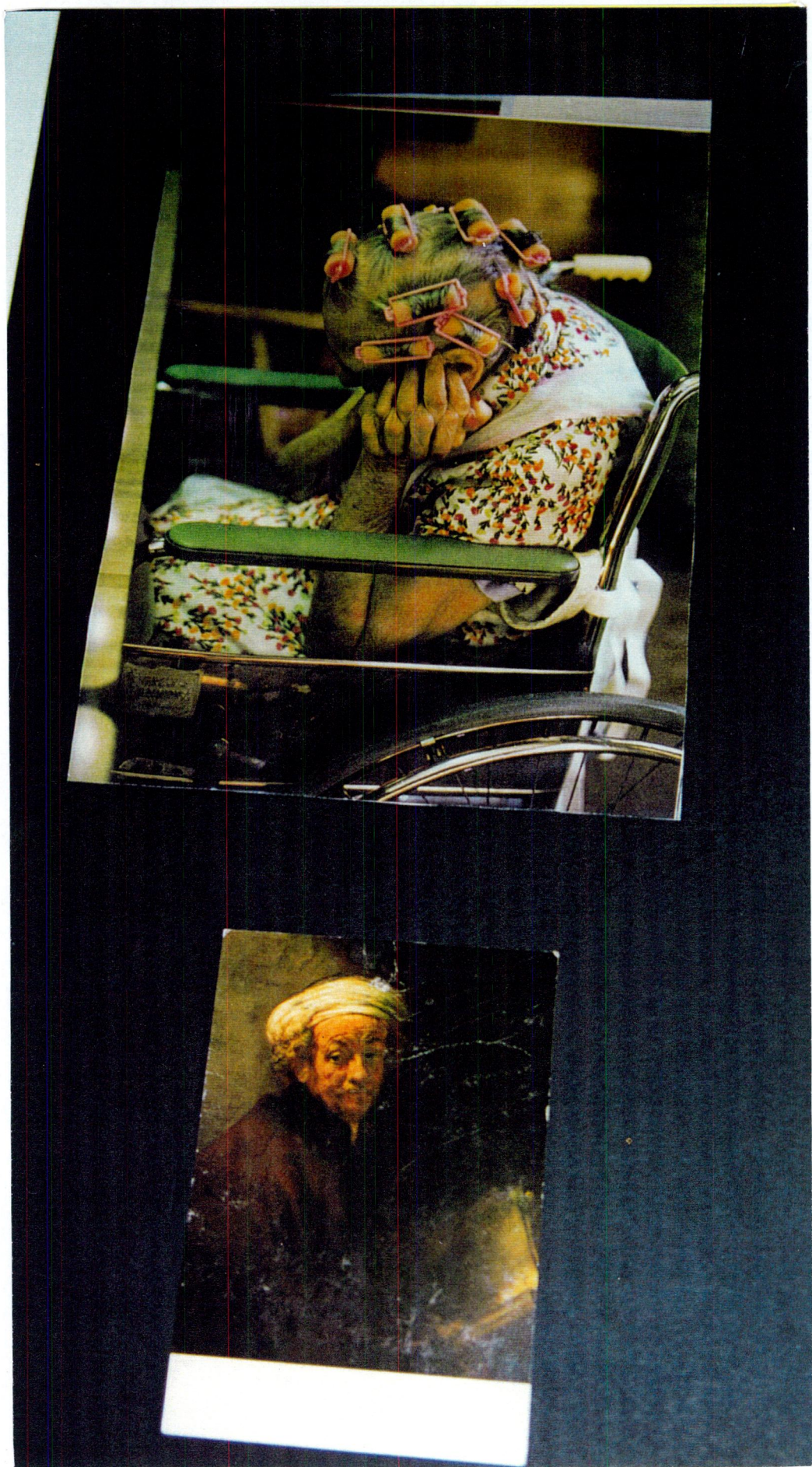


Figure 3.1: Eve Arnold and Rembrandt



Figure 3.2: Eve Arnold and Durer



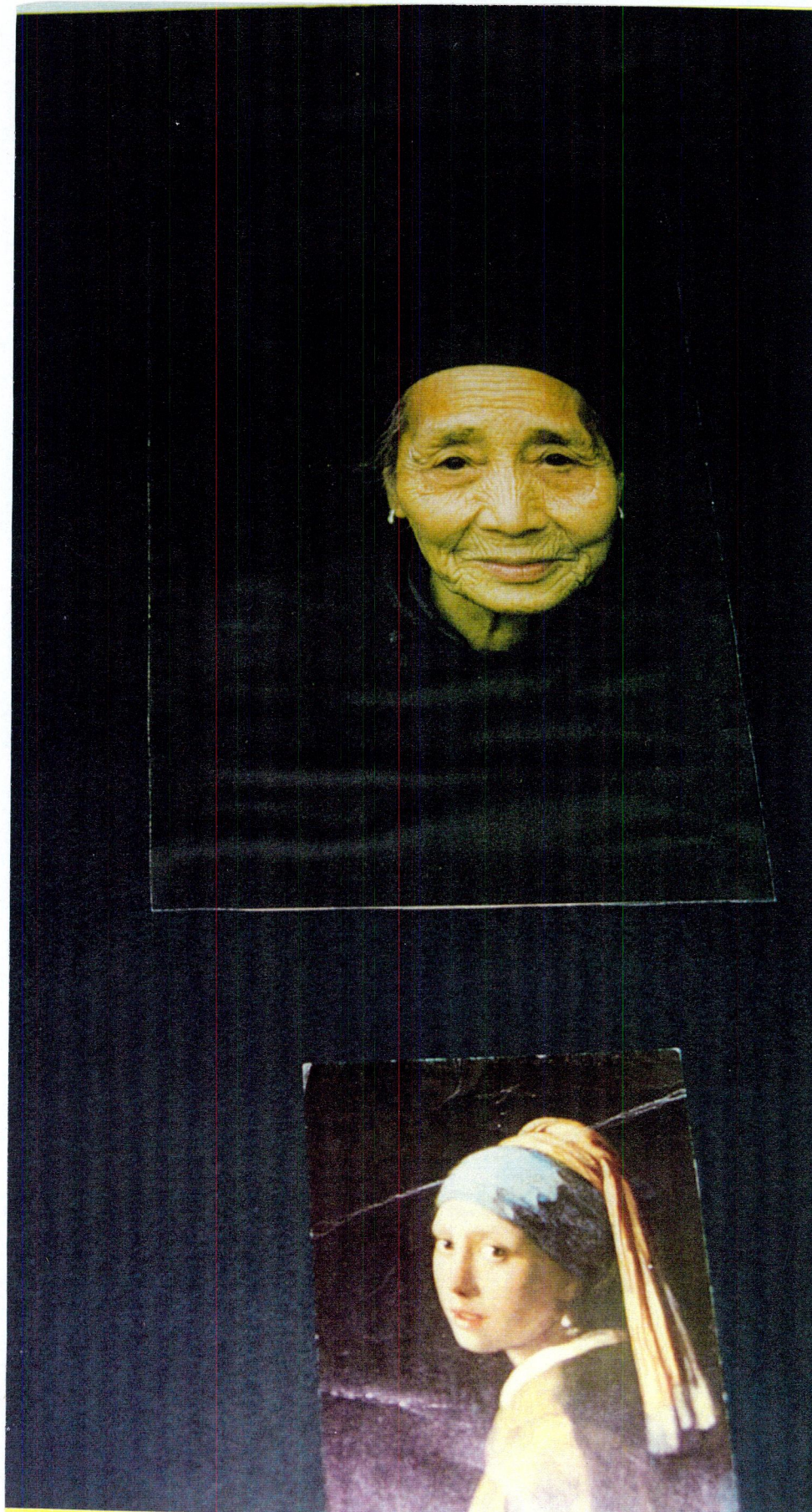


Figure 3.3: Eve Arnold and Vermeer

These artists have all worked in portraiture. Sandra Mendelsohn Rubin works in a photorealist style. Her work appealed to the students who admired presentation skills. Her portrait used in this project has a postcard of a Rembrandt self-portrait in the background. This reinforced for the students, the value of knowing about the history of art and that this knowledge can be personalised in their work. The more information has a personal meaning, the easier it is to remember and reproduce it. The students' portrait based on this is shown in Figure 3.6.

The primary aim of the project was to increase the students' drawing and painting skills. The student drew a self-portrait using a mirror in each class and then incorporated various colours and painting applications. The final stage was for the student to choose an artist's work who had been studied and to paint themselves in the style of that artist. The boys had no hesitation in adapting the work of women. There were no jokes or comments. From this I can see that second level students are receptive to the work of women artists and that they are hampered in accessing information by the content of the text books and the style of the history of art examination.

This project worked in the practical elements. The standard of drawing, painting and understanding of colour improved progressively. Students who were weak and who had little confidence made great progress. The most notable of these was a female student. Her work at first was hesitant and cartoon-like. As the project went on, her drawing and painting improved dramatically. I would like to hope that this, in part, was the incorporation of

women's art in the support studies. She completed a self-portrait based on the work of Rosalba Carriera, Figure 3.7.

Other students chose the work of Lavina Fontana, Elizabeth Vegée-le Brun, Figure 3.7, Mary Casset, Figure 3.8, and Roman Tomb painting, Figure 3.8. The student who chose the Roman Tomb painting is Afro-Irish. The issue of representation for students with other ethnic origins is another issue which will need to be examined as Ireland becomes a more multi-racial society.

All areas of the history of art on the course can be used in practical classes. This will lessen the load of the art teacher who may feel that they are force-feeding reluctant students book-based information which they may be hostile to.

If the history of art is introduced through support studies and practical work from first year on, the students will have a greater understanding of why and what they are doing.

The response of the fifth year students in Newpark Comprehensive, Blackrock, to the work of the male and female artists I introduced was positive. At the end of the project they could name and recognise the work of the artists studied. They all made practical progress and in the final stage, painted excellent self-portraits based on the studied artist's work. This gave the students a sense of achievement and self-confidence.

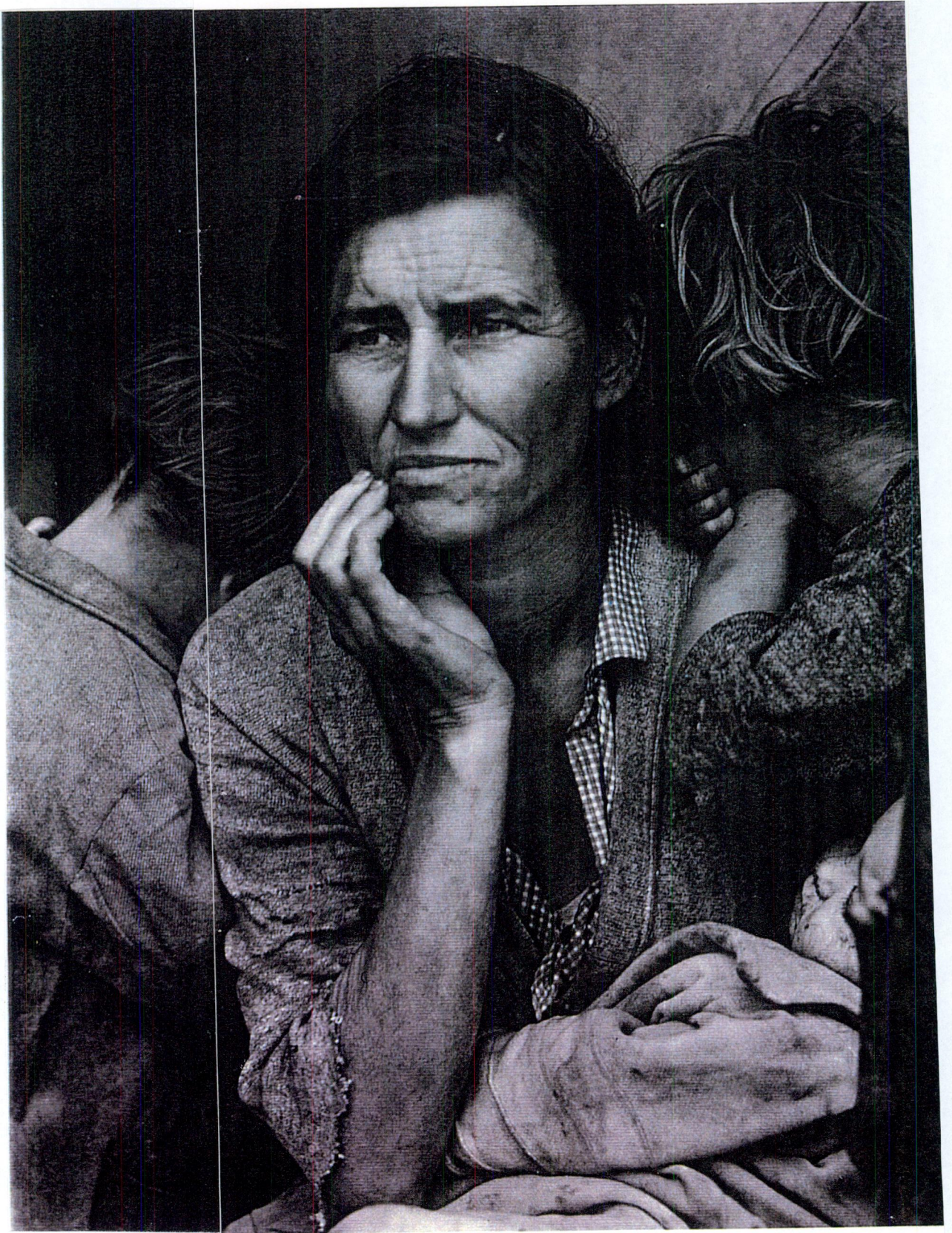


Figure 3.4: Dorethy Lainge Migrant Worker 1930's



Figure 3.5: Student interpretation Sandra Mendelsohn Rubin



Figure 3.6: Student interpretation of Rosalba Carreria





Figure 3.7: Student interpretation of Elizabeth Vegée-le Brun



6. *Lady at the Tea Table*. 1881. Oil on canvas, 29 x 24".
©The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of the artist, 1923

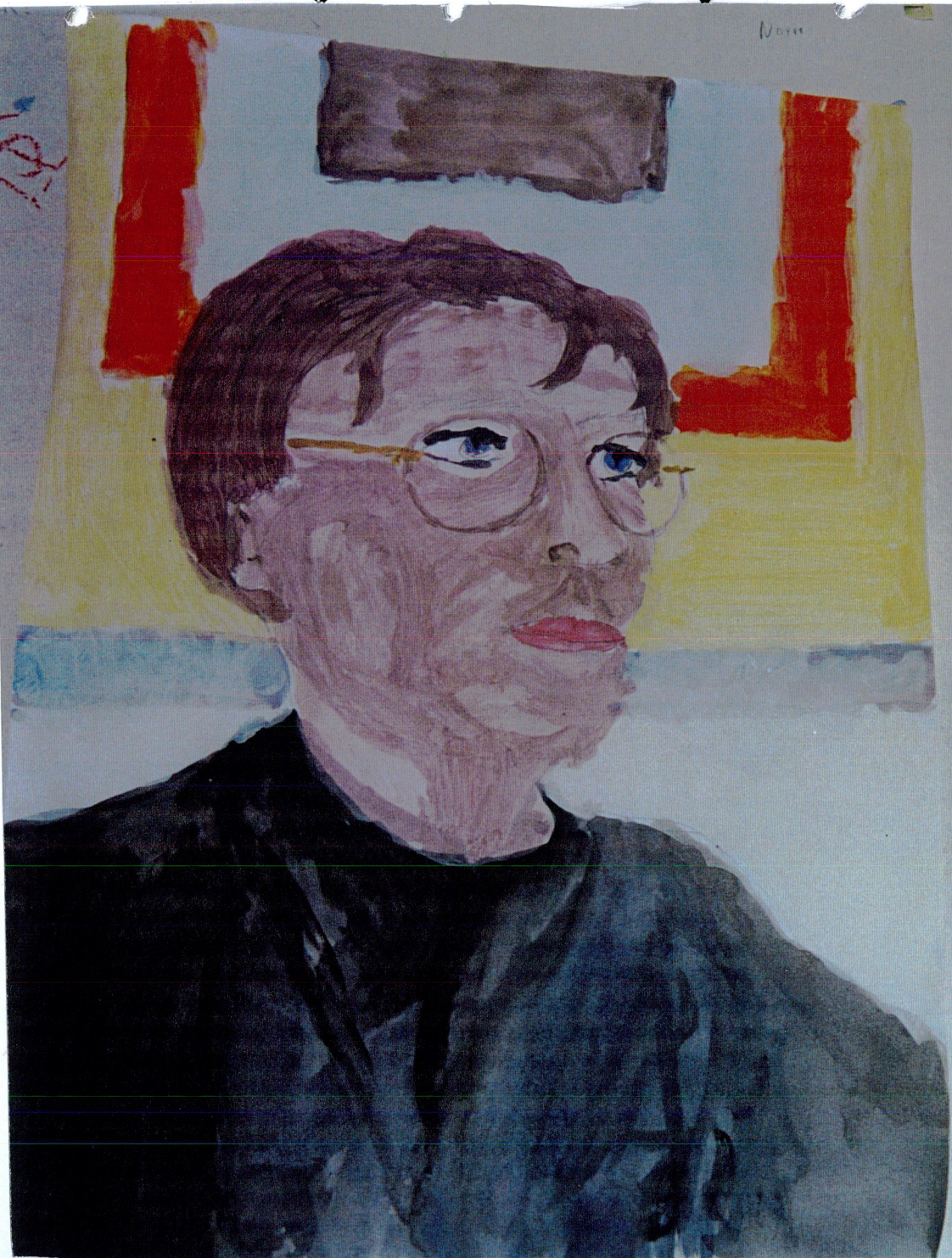


Figure 3.8: Student interpretation of Mary Cassatt



Figure 3.9: Student interpretation of Roman Tomb Portraits

Conclusions

It is twenty-two years since the Los Angeles County Museum opened the 'Women Painters 1550-1950' exhibition. Since then, many books on women artists have been published. Artists such as Mary Cassatt, Frida Kahlo, Georgia O'Keeffe and Artemisia Gentileschi have had popular arts books published about them. Last year, the four finalists the Turner Art Prize were all women. The work of women artists is becoming more main-stream. It can no longer be ignored or marginalised.

While government recommendations on gender equality and gender fair treatment textbooks have been made, very little has been done to implement them. The individual teacher is responsible for vetting their own sexist behaviour, and to spot sexism in textbooks. This implies that gender equality is a side-issue to be implemented at the discretion of the teacher.

The examination questions in the Leaving Certificate History of Art section need to be changed so that more women artists ^{are} could be named especially in the European Section. More open questions would also allow students to answer questions on artists who they may have researched.

The changes in examination questions would trigger action in the classroom. The position of women and the lack of women's representation in all textbooks, is as a result of the position of women in society.

The lack of positive role models for female students is as important as the lack of sciences or technical drawing in girls' schools. The second class citizenship of women is still validated and upheld in schools.

The second level student is enthusiastic and receptive to the work of women artists. They are interested in the social conditions that artists work within, and how these conditions have changed. Third level art colleges do not, in general, promote the work of female artists in their history of art lectures. It is still seen as a minority issue.

As more students from primary schools where gender fair policies are implemented, pass through the second and third levels of education, their voices may be heard asking, 'Where are the women?', 'We have books about Bertha Morisot at home, Mary Casset is on our calendar, who is Kathé Kollwitz, I saw a book about her in the library, why are they not in the textbooks?'

The names of these women echo in their exclusion, Artemisia Gentileschi, Lavina Fontana, Clara Peters, Judith Leysler, Rachel Ruysch, Angelica Kaufmann, Elizabeth Thompson, Rosa Bonhour, Elizabeth Vegée-le Brun, Cecilia Beaux, Suzanne Valadon, Gwen John, Margareta Haverman, Marie-Guillemine Benoist, Paula Moderson-Becher, Sonia Delauney, Sophie Taebur-Arp.....

Footnotes: Chapter III

1. Fontana, David Psychology for Teachers, Macmillan Press, London 1981, p. 146.
2. Ibid., p. 158. ✓

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