

Teaching with *Kate Barnard* by Sandra Van Zandt



This printer-friendly document is designed to help teachers present, discuss, and teach about Oklahoma history and art literacy through the use of this work of art. The information and exercises here will aid in understanding and learning from this artwork.

Contents:

- First Analysis and Criticism
- Overview of the Artwork
- About the Artist
- Details
- Suggested Reading and Further Resources
- Final Analysis
- PASS Objectives

First Analysis and Criticism

The steps below may be used for group discussion or individual written work.

Before beginning the steps, take two minutes to study the artwork. Look at all the details and subject matter. After studying the artwork in silence, follow these steps:

Describe:

Be specific and descriptive. List only the facts about the objects in the painting or sculpture.

- What things are in the artwork?
- What is happening?
- List what you see (people, animals, clothing, environment, objects, etc.).

Analyze:

- How are the elements of art – line, shape, form, texture, space, and value used?
- How are the principles of design – unity, pattern, rhythm, variety, balance, emphasis, and proportion used?

Interpretation:

Make initial, reasonable inferences.

- What do you think is happening in the artwork?
- Who is doing what?
- What do you think the artist is trying to say to the viewer?

Evaluate:

Express your opinion.

- What do you think about the artwork?
- Is it important?
- How does it help you understand the past?
- Do you like it? Why or why not?

Overview of the Artwork

Kate Barnard was the first woman in American history elected to state office as well as Oklahoma's first commissioner of charities and corrections. Though she could not vote for herself in the 1907 election, she overwhelmingly received more votes than the first governor of Oklahoma, Charles Haskell. Clearly the catalyst in the evolution of women's involvement in politics, Barnard was the only woman permitted to address the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention resulting in legislation regarding child labor and mine safety. Lovingly known as Miss Kate, Barnard was deeply concerned with the welfare of prisoners, and her investigation of Oklahoma prisoners held in Kansas yielded appropriations for the first state penitentiary in McAlester. Her efforts were often focused on under-privileged children and Native American orphans.

Sandra Van Zandt's bronze sculpture of Miss Kate sits on a bronze bench in the East Gallery of the State Capitol. She solidly sits in turn of the century attire with neatly pinned hair and a warm welcoming slight smile. In her lap rests the treatise of her efforts, the *Third Report of the Commissions of Charities and Correction*. The sculpture is a favorite of children and adults alike, who can be seen taking photographs next to Oklahoma's angel of mercy.

About the Artist

Kate Barnard sculpture with artist Sandra Van Zandt A native of Claremore, Oklahoma, Sandra Van Zandt knew she was destined to become an artist at a young age. As a girl she spent her time creating various works in needlepoint, stained glass, macrame, knitting, and pottery; she was constantly expressing herself with art. A graduate of Claremore High School, Van Zandt left Oklahoma to pursue an arts degree at Cottey College in Nevada, Missouri. Here she took classes in architectural design, painting, drawing, ceramics, and pottery to satisfy her appetite for artistic expression. Unable to work in bronze sculpting, Van Zandt learned to sculpt by carving on wood and salt blocks. After graduation she moved to Dallas to pursue employment as an international flight attendant.

While recovering from surgery in 1983, Van Zandt decided to start sculpting again. She began by sculpting various animals, including her pet dog. Soon Van Zandt presented her work to a local gallery, and at their encouragement she decided to enter the art world full-time. Moving back to Oklahoma in 1985, Van Zandt continued sculpting animals, namely dogs and birds. Her eagle sculptures quickly became popular with museums and collectors, and many are on exhibit today at major institutions across the country. Van Zandt then crept into the realm of figure sculpture completing her first major piece for the Museum of Naval Aviation. Sandra Van Zandt currently works in her studio in Talala, Oklahoma.

Details



1. Miss Kate's clothing and neatly pinned hair tells the viewer what time period she lived. In 1907, most women's dress was highly influenced by the advancing of the feminist cause. Tailored suits allowed women to be beautiful and independent at the same time as they entered the male-dominated workforce.
2. Kate's warm smile is evidence of her compassionate nature. As Commissioner of Charities and Corrections, Kate strove for inmates to become good citizens contributing to society upon their release.
3. In her lap, Kate is holding the *Third Report of the Commissions of Charities and Correction* which she authored during her two terms. The book is a symbol of her many accomplishments while in office. From 1907 to 1914, Kate was responsible for 30 statutory laws being passed through Oklahoma Legislature. Each of those laws dealt with the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Corrections.
4. The statue is made of bronze. Bronze is the most popular material for metal sculptures because of its durability and ease to work.
5. The bench upon which Kate sits is also made of bronze and is part of the artwork. Many of Kate's efforts were focused on under-privileged children and Native American orphans. The bench for the stature now allows children and visitors to sit down with her. Her posture is open and inviting to visitors.

Suggested Reading

Further reading and research to complement your understanding of the artwork:

Oklahoma Adventure, Centennial Edition 2006 by Oklahoma History Press

Chapter 17: Early Government, **page 156**

Oklahoma Stories: Oklahoma Women with the Pioneer Spirit, **pages 382-384**

Oklahoma: Land of Contrasts by Clairmont Press

Chapter 14: Growing Pains, **page 351**

Further Resources

The Kennedy Center's ARTSEEDGE resources offer a helpful unit on gender issues here:

Tolerance: Gender Issues

Breaking Professional Barriers

http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-6-8/Tolerance_Gender_Issues.aspx

The **Feminist Art Project** offers a comprehensive reading list about feminism and the advances of women here:

<http://feministartproject.rutgers.edu/resources/book-lists/>

Final Analysis

After completing the readings and activities, go back and look at the artwork again. Now that the students are more familiar with the subject matter, ask them to write a few paragraphs about their interpretation of the artwork. In their own words, the writing should address the following:

- Description of the artwork and who/what is in it
- How the elements of art and principles of design are used within the artwork
- What feelings, emotions, or information the artwork depicts
- Their opinion of the artwork

Pass Objectives

Grade 4- Social Studies

Standard 5. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the unique features which contributed to the settlement of the state of Oklahoma.

1. Identify major historical individuals, entrepreneurs, and groups, and describe their major contributions (e.g., Sequoyah, the Boomers and the Sooners, and Frank Phillips).
4. Identify state and local governing bodies (e.g., the state legislature and city councils) and officials (e.g., governor and mayors) that make laws and carry out laws, with an emphasis on civic participation (e.g., the importance of studying the issues and voting).

Grade 4- The Arts

Standard 2: Visual Art History and Culture - The student will recognize the development of visual art from an historical and cultural perspective.

1. Describe and place a variety of specific significant art objects by artist, style and historical and cultural context.
2. Identify themes and purposes of works of art and artifacts in history and culture.
3. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of several fields of art such as painting, sculpture, drawing, computer graphics, printmaking, architecture, and fiber arts.
4. Identify how visual art is used in today's world including the popular media of advertising, television, and film.

High School- Oklahoma History

Standard 1. The student will demonstrate process skills in social studies.

1. Identify, analyze, and interpret primary and secondary sources (e.g., artifacts, diaries, letters, art, music, literature, photographs, documents, newspapers, and contemporary media).

Standard 8. The student will examine factors that contributed to the political, economic, and social history of Oklahoma during the twentieth century.

1. Identify significant individuals and their contributions (e.g., Jerome Tiger, Frank Phillips, Kate Barnard, Angie Debo, Ada Lois Sipuel, Clara Luper, George Lynn Cross, Ralph Ellison, Robert S. Kerr, Henry Bellmon, and Reba McEntire).

High School- The Arts

Standard 1: Language of Visual Art - The student will identify visual art terms (e.g., content, engraving, foreshortening, mosaic, perspective)

3. Describe exhibitions of original works of art seen in the school or community.
4. Differentiate between art criticism and art reviews, recognizing that criticism is positive as well as negative in its evaluation of a work of art.

Standard 2: Visual Art History and Culture - The student will recognize the development of visual art from an historical and cultural perspective.

5. PROFICIENT: Identify major regional, national, and international collections of art.

Standard 4: Visual Art Appreciation - The student will appreciate visual art as a vehicle of human expression.

2. Demonstrate respect for their work and the work of others.