Inductee’s Name: Rose Cecil O’Neill

Nominee’s Occupation, Field of Achievement or Title: Artist, Humanities

Biographical Information

Birthplace and Death

June 25, 1874, Rose Cecil O’Neill was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

O’Neill died in Springfield, Missouri on April 6, 1944 and is interred in the Bonniebrook Homestead Cemetery, Walnut Shade, Missouri along with her family.

Marital Status

While married to Gray Latham, O’Neill signed her art O’Neill Latham. After divorcing Latham and marrying Harry Leon Wilson, she stated that she would never again attach someone else’s name to her art. Hence, O’Neill never used her second husband’s last name in her art. That marriage also ended in divorce. No children were born of either union.

Education/training

At an early age, O’Neill sporadically attended Sacred Heart Academy School in Omaha, Nebraska. Her family was living at the poverty level, so she and her siblings attended with free tuition. O’Neill did not graduate from high school and her last grade attended is unknown. The O’Neill family were poor which led to bullying of Rose and her siblings by neighborhood adults and children.

Born with a true artistic gift, O’Neill was originally self-taught in the fields of art and writing. At the age of 13, she won first place in a children’s art contest sponsored by the Omaha World Herald.

In 1893, O’Neill went to live with the Sisters of St. Regis in New York City where the nuns helped her with additional educational training that included French lessons. O’Neill spent much time in the New York City Library where she studied the illustration purchasing habits of many book and magazine publishers. She would then go prepared with her stack of illustrations and met with the art editors of the major publishing houses.

Professional/work history

O’Neill was encouraged by the publishing companies to only use her last name to disguise her gender. Many of those companies were concerned that if their subscribers knew she was a woman artist, they would cancel their subscriptions. O’Neill was only sixteen years old when her first published illustration appeared in Chicago Graphic in July 1890.

O’Neill is recognized as “America’s First Female Cartoonist” with her cartoon strip “The Old Subscriber Calls,” Truth Magazine, September 19, 1896.
In 1897, O'Neill was hired by *Puck Magazine* as the first woman cartoonist on its all-male staff and she remained the only woman staffer for six more years. Hundreds of her illustrations for *Puck* depicted women and minorities in strong leadership and intellectual roles. Her mistake was selling her art and the literary editors of *Puck* added the “funny gag lines.” Rose later admitted that she had lost control of her art with the men editors deciding what the “funny” comments under her illustrations would be.

O'Neill's cartoons, illustrations, short stories, and poems were purchased by over fifty national magazine publishing companies starting in the early 1890's and continuing until the late 1930's. O'Neill's illustrations appeared on sixty covers of national magazines.

From 1905-1933, O'Neill's art was used for product advertising for various companies including Edison Phonograph, Rock Island Railroad, Proctor & Gambel, Colgate Palmolive, and Genesee Pure Food Company.

From 1904-1930, O'Neill wrote and illustrated four novels and eight children's books that were published from 1910-1936. In 1922, O'Neill's one hundred-fifty illustrated poems were published in her book, *The Master Mistress*.

O'Neill's illustrations appeared in over forty books along with many short stories, written by other authors, from 1898-1940. Some of those were well-known and requested Rose to be the illustrator.

Rose O'Neill created the Kewpie character that appeared in her illustrated stories published by *Good Housekeeping, Ladies Home Journal, Delineator, and Woman's Home Companion* during the years 1909-1928. This character was “a good-will ambassador” spreading love, laughter, and philanthropy.


Comic authorities in *Nemo 12* (1985) proclaim Rose O'Neill to be “The First Great Female Cartoonist.” Rick Marschall, cartoon critic, discussed O'Neill's contribution to the world of cartoon art in this issue of *Nemo*. His comments included, “She was a woman in a man’s world – not only the business world, but in illustration and cartooning. Her work was also a bundle of widely varied styles and themes ranging from cute children’s conceits to steamy romance novels, illustrated by her. But mainly her prominence was due to her overwhelming talent and brilliant artwork.”

Shelley Armitage, *Kewpies and Beyond The World of Rose O'Neill* (1994), reveals her opinion concerning the impact of O'Neill's art, “O'Neill's art centered on the shifting roles of women, ethnic groups, and children, often using a member of one of these groups to undercut the pretentiousness of the polished, urban upper crust, or she treated humorously the in-group exchanges as a kind of private humor, rather than the standard put-down. Her children for example, are often savvy, Dickens-like characters, streetwise and resourceful, to whom the adult world is artificial or absurd-superficial, sentimental, and unrealistic. Class distinctions and implicit value judgments are hence inverted for an audience whose expectations were quite the opposite.”
Homes:

In 1893, O'Neill's mother, father, and siblings moved to the remote Missouri Ozarks. Rose visited in 1894 and named the homestead, Bonniebrook. Bonniebrook was the family home. With money from the sale of her art, she built a 14-room mansion at Bonniebrook that was completed in 1909. Over the years, she went back and forth from New York to Bonniebrook.

O'Neill leased two apartments in Washington Square starting in 1914. One was for her where she had a large art studio and the other for her sister, Callista who handled a lot of the business papers for Rose.

In 1921, O'Neill purchased a villa on the Isle of Capri, Italy.

O'Neill owned a home in Westport, Connecticut from 1922-1937.

By the year 1937, Rose had lost her other homes and retired full time to Bonniebrook. She always stated, "Bonniebrook is my favorite place on earth. Here I have done my best work."

Women's Activism:

As a successful artist, writer, businesswoman, and philanthropist, Rose boldly assisted with the activities of the woman suffrage movements coordinated by the National Woman’s Suffrage Association headquartered in New York City. From 1914-1918, O'Neill was well known as a "suffrage artist" during the suffrage campaigns in the United States. Her art was used for suffrage posters, flyers, and postcards that were circulated throughout the United States. The National Woman Suffrage Association selected women leaders to represent each of the various career fields for a Fourth of July celebration at the City College Stadium. O'Neill carried the "Illustrator" banner to represent women artists in their skit "Woman Suffrage Victory 1917 for New York State."

O'Neill’s fashion illustrations were first published in Art-in-Dress magazine in the early 1890’s. Years later, the March 1911 Good Housekeeping article featured fashion comments from "The Views of Distinguished Artists" to answer the question, "Are The Fashions Ugly?" O'Neill's illustrations and article referenced corsets, "When woman runs again on noble, flat feet, and bends like Atalanta stooping for the golden apples, she will be beautiful once more, as of old."

April 25, 1915, The New York Press article, “Leg Emancipation Women’s New Plea,” announced O'Neill’s participation as a judge on the Polymuriel Prize Fund Committee of New York. The article references her innovative fashion drawing depicting feminine, flowing, silky trousers that were covered with a tunic. O'Neill explained, "It is quite time that a decisive stroke was struck for the freedom of women, not only as regards to the suffrage question, and, of course, I am very keen on that, but on other matters. The first step is to free women from the yoke of modern fashions and modern dress. How can they hope to compete with men when they are boxed up tight in the clothes that are worn today?"

The New York Historical Society Nov 3, 2017-Mar 25, 2018 Hotbed exhibit included some of her participation in the suffrage movement. Her striking suffrage poster, Together for Home and Family, several of her suffrage postcards along with a photo of Rose marching in a suffrage parade and a photo of her in the Washington Square apartment were included in the exhibit.
Women's International Expositions:

In the 1920’s, O'Neill participated in a series of women's international business expositions in New York City. O'Neill's distinctive art, reflecting strong women themes, was used on the covers of several program booklets for these expositions.

Philanthropy

The Actors Fund of America utilized O'Neill's art on the front cover of their programs for the fundraising events during the years from 1910-1924. O'Neill also joined donors and organizers of the Fund in supporting young actors through financial resources for training and schooling in the performing arts.

O'Neill's involvement in the “1911 New York Child Welfare Exhibit” comes as no surprise since her art regularly focused on the plight of children in the streets along with those struggling in poverty. Her participation included donations of illustrations for a visual exhibit in the Law and Administration section of this exhibit. The purpose of the exhibit was described, “Let us try to arrange matters so that no child in New York shall miss his rightful chance to grow up through happy, well-balanced childhood into the useful, interesting work of adult life.”

“The Kewpies Health Book” published in 1929 was used by many schools across the U.S. in a national information program about tuberculosis. Large posters from the O'Neill illustrations in this booklet were also distributed by the Atlantic Visiting Nurse and Tuberculosis Assn.

The Artistic Development of the Kewpie Comic Character:

The creation of the Kewpie cartoon character and its symbolic message of good should be studied prior to one dismissing its importance in the art career of O'Neill. How she used the popularity of this world-wide known character, included in her art and stories, to deliver serious messages concerning war, suffrage, discrimination, women's rights, and the down-trodden should not be considered trivial only because it was later developed into a doll.

Author Shelley Armitage once described Kewpies, “The Kewpies are free-thinking intellectuals who analyze and evaluate the impact of American culture on the rich and poor, native born and immigrant, adult and child. Unrestricted by clothing and other symbols of the culture they criticize, they denounce social conventions responsible for widespread misery.”

The San Francisco Chronicle, November 25, 1917 article promoted the beginning of the Kewpie Korners in the newspaper, “Rose O'Neill is the highest-paid woman artist in the world. This is not so much because of the obvious perfections of her art, as because of the great, clear human note she strikes what time she puts her pen to paper. Just to look at a Kewpie is to smile. To read a Kewpie verse is to play sunshine upon a dark spot. They radiate happiness, do these winsome, mischievous little tads. Rose O'Neill took them, in the first place, right out of her own fine heart and for six years now, a multitude of folks have been the happier because she did it.”

The Kewpies created a worldwide sensation. It is said to be the first such phenomenon that began from magazine stories and verse. Factories in Germany were the first to make an unending list of products that
were decorated with O'Neill's Kewpie art. Those products included dolls, dishes, car hood ornaments, lamps, salt and pepper shakers, figurines, cameras, tea sets, and handkerchiefs.

**Honors and Awards Received**

*A short list of some O'Neill honors, awards, and exclusive art exhibits are as follows:*

At thirteen, O'Neill entered a children's art contest sponsored by the *Omaha World Herald*. She won first prize in the contest with her mature drawing “Temptation Leading Down into an Abyss.”

O'Neill is believed to be among the first American women to be elected a member of the prestigious Société des Beaux-Arts and thus was invited to exhibit her art in Paris Salons as early as 1906 and 1912.

The 1906 issue of *Revue Internationale de Sociologie* addressed the importance of O'Neill's art, “The section for pastels, watercolors and drawings is very bright this year, there’s many notable feminine talents, among which there must be a place apart as Miss Rose Cecil O'Neill outlines a series of sketches of spiritual eloquence, a fun and bold imagination. This young artist, from overseas, owns a decision, and boldness in the pencil that more than one designer may envy.”

In 1911, O'Neill's art was selected to be exhibited in Rome, Italy and was included in “The Collection of Pictures and Sculpture in the Pavilion of the United States of America” at the Roman Art Exposition.

O'Neill exhibited three works in the 1913 October-November “The Society of Illustrators Fourth Special Exhibition” at the Galleries of the National Arts Club in New York City.

Rose became the first woman elected as a Fellow of the New York Society of Illustrators in 1916. Prior to that date, four women had been named “Associates.”

In 1921, O'Neill displayed one hundred and seven drawings and four sculptures at the *Exposition d'Oeuvres de Rose O'Neill* at the Galerie Devembez. This art was not for sale but after insistence from the Luxembourg and the Petit Palais, O'Neill re-drew two pieces of the art and donated them to the museums.

A solo exhibit of over one hundred O'Neill drawings took place at the Wildenstein Galleries in New York City in 1922. This exhibit introduced her serious drawings and “Sweet Monsters” to America. This art was not for sale. Art critic Talbot Hamlin stated, “There has always been a groping around for a synthesis; several American artists have nearly discovered the secret. But never has the perfect synthesis of form as decoration and form as expression been achieved so powerfully and so directly as in the finest work of Rose O'Neill.”

In 1967, the International Rose O'Neill Club was founded to preserve and perpetuate the memory and works of O'Neill, to promote the cultural arts, and to hold an annual celebration in Branson, Missouri. The Club continues to provide scholarships to aid needy talented students in the area of the arts.

1974 The U.S. Post Office honored the 100th anniversary of the birth of O'Neill with a 1974 First Day cover.

In 1975, Bonniebrook Historical Society, Inc. (BHS), a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, was organized to collect, preserve, and make available for educational and historical purposes artifacts, documents, personal items, and any works or items directly relating to the history and life of Rose O'Neill. BHS
maintains the Bonniebrook Homestead property that includes the O'Neill cemetery. The BHS tour home, museum, fine art gallery, gift shop and research library are staffed with volunteers. O’Neill is honored every single day at Bonniebrook!

In 1985, the Society of Illustrators Museum of American Illustration, located in New York, hosted the exposition America’s Great Women Illustrators 1850-1950 which included six pieces of O’Neill art.

The Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania held an exhibit honoring O’Neill’s art in 1989. The Art of Rose O’Neill by Helen Goodman was published as a result of this exhibit.

In 1997, O’Neill was included in the U.S. Post Office in the “Classic American Dolls” set of stamps.

The Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame in New York City inducted O’Neill in 1999.

O’Neill was honored by the United States Post Office American Illustrators Series of 2001 stamps.

The Westport Connecticut Historical Society “Yesterday’s Toyland” exhibit October 9, 2005-January 15, 2006 included O’Neill information, “Rose O’Neill, a prominent member of our town’s early art colony, and her 1909 brainchild-the Kewpie Doll – are featured in Yesterday’s Toyland. The popularity of her Kewpie was international - one of the greatest successes in the history of doll making.”

The National Women’s History Project honored O’Neill during their 2008 theme, Women’s Art: Women’s Vision.

The Missouri Women’s Council inducted O’Neill into their “Outstanding Women of Missouri Hall of Fame” in June 2011.

In 2012, Drury University, Springfield, Missouri, restored the home where O’Neill died and now utilizes the “Rose O’Neill House” as the office of their Women’s Studies Program and Art Department special exhibits that highlight O’Neill’s accomplishments.

April 14-August 5, 2018, the Springfield Art Museum, Springfield, Missouri hosted the exhibit, Frolic of the Mind: The Illustrious Life of Rose O’Neill. The exhibit traced O’Neill’s work in all media and featured 150 works from public and private collections. The exhibit announcement from the Springfield Art Museum provided an important introduction to the works of O’Neill, “This exhibit takes as it’s underlying theme the unification of all of O’Neill’s creative pursuits and examines how they each were related, one to the other, from her hundreds of illustrations for the major periodicals of the day to her more secretive “Sweet Monster” drawings. Each of these are rooted in the singular mind of Rose O’Neill- a woman who created a life on her own terms with sheer will, determination and creative talent. The ability to pursue all of her interests, in spite of the strict social rules placed upon women at the turn of the century, is perhaps the most fascinating story of them all. Rose O’Neill, the twice-divorced suffragist lived a life unbound, an iconoclast, and a rebel among reformers – yet she was beloved by nearly all who knew her.”

Published Quotes About Rose O’Neill

Trina Robbins, author of Pretty in Ink: North American Women Cartoonists 1896-2013, shares in her study that female cartoonists for the 21st century are perhaps “currently at their highest profile.” Robbins wrote, “With the 1896 publication of Rose O’Neill’s comic strip The Old Subscriber Calls, in Truth Magazine, American women entered the field of comics, and they never left it”. Robbins refers to O’Neill as “The Queen” of women cartoonists. As “America’s First Female Cartoonist,” the career path for women artists
in America was first cleared by O'Neill. O'Neill proved to be extremely competitive with male artists which led to new opportunities for other American women artists who had previously been excluded, purely based on gender, from certain art commissions with publishing houses.

Shelley Armitage author of *Kewpies and Beyond: The World of Rose O'Neill* describes O'Neill’s artistic genius, “She was exceptional for her times and for ours as well. Virtually all her work argues feminist themes and the vital role of the woman artist. Repeatedly identifying the arts as the “sister arts,” O'Neill promoted a sisterhood of woman-created work, thereby supporting social feminist causes. The consummate accomplishment of O'Neill's imagery was to create a “new” American mythology, which was a result of her personal quest for a creative identity and reflected her inclusive view of ethnicity and class, women and the family, and meaning.”

After four years of publishing O'Neill illustrations, the *Puck* magazine editors announced, “Among American illustrators one would be hard to find who has been more widely discussed than O'Neill. The odd signature, perhaps, has something to do with it, for time and again has the question been asked “is O'Neill a man or a woman?” But the real reason was in the drawings themselves, the intensely human, living, breathing, almost speaking people were portrayed. No modern work in black and white ever sprang so quickly and surely into popularity as she. “She” because O'Neill is a woman.” Her characters from the start were novel; and they were novel because they were real as they are in the O'Neill method of picturing people.”

September,1916 *Bookman* article “Some American Illustrators of To-day” provides an eighteen-page in-depth study of illustrators “whose sincerity, high purpose and commanding gifts of delineation set them apart as masters of their craft.” This art critic, William Trowbridge Larned, placed O'Neill among these masters. Of the twenty artists discussed, only three are women. Of the three women, O'Neill’s art history was given extensive introduction and a piece of her art was shown. The other two women artists were mentioned in one sentence each and no image of their art was included. Larned stated about O'Neill, “He who only knows the Kewpies has barely made Miss O'Neill's acquaintance. If you have chanced upon her serious work – say an illustration of Moore's *Melodies* – you will begin to see that she is a poet.”

Doris Fleischman, “Woman’s the Virtues, Man’s the Stupidity, Is the Division the Gentle Inventor of Kewpies Makes” 1915 *New York Tribune* article reveals examples of O'Neill suffrage art capturing her interpretation of the “present state of slavery of women and points to the beginnings of humanity as the fatal cause of the ignorant present. One picture especially striking was that of a woman who, explained the artist was just emerging from the animal state. She is weeping. “That,” said Miss O'Neill, “is the first thing which the newly created woman does. It represents the admiration of womanhood of humanity.” Fleischman ended with “And then I asked her about woman and her destiny in the world of art. She wrote a little message and pressed it in my hand: “I have a thrilling hope that women are going to do something glorious in the arts. It is my passionate conviction. I am always indignant when women are denied creative power in art—that it has not widely shown itself proves nothing. It is stupid to expect free things from a race of slaves.”

An article in *Moon City Review* 2009 summarizes the significant achievement of O'Neill, “Rose Cecil O'Neill’s artwork charted the changing cultural landscape of “modern” American women and did so from the viewpoint of a woman artist who not only lived through those changes but helped bring them about. As a woman representing women in the then “man's world” of publishing, O'Neill had a built-in viewpoint that male illustrators of the time lacked. The women in her artwork not only had inner lives that jumped off the page, they had a modern sensibility that was at times predictive of how American popular culture would develop. But while her women may take on modern attitudes or pursuits, they do not reject their feminine eros. Clearly, she was complex, in both character and emotions. She did not so much flout societal
conventions as reshape them to fit her needs, much as her art foreshadowed changes in American womanhood."

Edythe Browne, Arts and Decoration, April 1922, reviewed the Wildenstein, New York exclusive art exhibit of O'Neill, "This deep seriousness, that at once removes the work of Rose O'Neill from so much contemporary art which is merely charming, is the second, and perhaps the more noteworthy of the two factors that give importance to her art. The typical artist of the present, largely through no fault of his own, has recently tended to become too much a sort of high plane vaudeville amuser. To one surfeited with that, Rose O'Neill comes as a refreshing reminder that art is deeper and finer and higher and more worthwhile than the mere sheen of silks or soft texture of fur. Not only are they magnificently conceived and powerfully executed; they are besides an achievement peculiarly American, as Walt Whitman is purely American; and it may well be, like his work in poetry, also a landmark in our artistic history increasingly important as the years pass."

The New York Times article, “Women Who Lead the Way” (1921), discusses O'Neill, “No story about successful women would be complete without mention of Rose O'Neill, the originator of the Kewpie. Miss O'Neill is an author and a painter. Her income from the (Kewpie) venture was enough to give her a place as a captain of industry."

“Love Around the Kitchen Table” is the company logo for Kewpie Corporation, a multi-billion-dollar international food products company with subsidiaries and affiliates located in the United States, Japan, China, Thailand, Mayasia, and Vietnam. This company uses O'Neill's Kewpie character image and theme idea as their company logo and trademark and is therefore, the height of examples of O'Neill's continuing global impact of her artistic achievements. Their logo was developed from O'Neill's Kewpie comic character philosophy of doing good deeds while spreading love and laughter. This corporation was established in 1919 and continues worldwide today. They are very interested in preserving the art history of O'Neill and are currently utilizing some of her original comic drawings in the development of style guides for licensee products.

In April 2013, Japan introduced the history of O'Neill in a High School English Communications textbook. The O'Neill chapter ended with this summary, “Like her Kewpies, Rose was always thinking about others. She wanted to change society. There were a lot of social problems in those times. For example, there was severe racial discrimination. She wrote about this problem in some of her Kewpie stories. Also, women didn’t have the right to vote. Rose took part in demonstrations for women’s rights. The next time you see some Kewpies, think about Rose’s dream. Are we living in the world Rose hoped for?”

During the 2012 100th anniversary of the Kewpie celebration, The Mayor of Ohrdruf, Germany, Marion Hopf, describes the global importance of Rose O'Neill's accomplishments, "We owe her – Rose O'Neill – much. She created a little wonder for us, our souls and hearts. The Kewpie dolls hearty and warm character and their whimsical smile fascinates people over the whole world for more than 100 years. They are an alliance between the continents and certainly they bring hope for peace and freedom to the world.” O'Neill art, Man in the Hand of Nature, is available for viewing on the Museum of Modern Art in Paris website. This art was used for the front cover of O'Neill’s 1921 Paris exhibit. O'Neill's successful art exhibition was welcomed as reported in International Studio 1922, “The Parisians have likened the drawings to Poe-Poe in all his gruesome and weird phantasms. But the association springs from the esteem in which the American Poe is held in France. For the French he is the great master of imagery.”

Museums and educational institutions all over the world understand the historic importance of O'Neill's accomplishments and include her works in their permanent collections. For example, the Huntington Library, California, holds a huge collection of over 120 pieces of original O'Neill art.
Helen Goodman, writer for the Fashion Institute of Technology and author of *The Art of Rose O’Neill* (1989), described the importance of O’Neill’s achievements, “Rose O’Neill was an American original—as important to the history of illustration, popular culture, and American art as Charles Dana Gibson, Norman Rockwell, or J.C. Leyendecker. Her amazing productivity, her wide popularity, and her acceptance as a cartoonist—a career which at the time was a predominantly male preserve—was virtually unprecedented. By nearly any measure, Rose O’Neill ranks among the most talented and versatile women of her era. She was one of the most popular illustrators of America’s Golden Age of Illustration.”

The Library of Congress cartoon exhibition, “Monstrous Craws & Character Flaws: Masterpieces of Cartoon and Caricature at the Library of Congress” was held in the Swann Gallery of Caricature and Cartoon at the Library of Congress, February 25 - July 6, 1998. This exhibit featured fifteen original works by featured artists. O’Neill is one of the two women included and was the one, of the two, to be specifically noted in the exhibit introduction, “In the effort to express themselves and engage their audience, these artists have produced original works of extraordinary historical and artistic value, shedding vivid light on their times, and, in retrospect, our own. At the turn of the twentieth century in America, Rose O’Neill did the unthinkable for a woman, carving out a successful career as a cartoonist while exhibiting more sophisticated work in the Paris salons.” The exhibit write-up on O’Neill included, “Rose Cecil O’Neill was one of the few women to achieve extraordinary financial success and professional independence in early twentieth-century American cartooning. This drawing, which makes gently wicked fun of the largely male readership of Puck magazine, is representative of her distinctively bold, yet fluid, Art Nouveau-inspired style.”

Author Harry Katz published the 2006 book documenting the Library of Congress exhibit. *Cartoon America: Comic Art in the Library of Congress* is an authoritative survey of 250 years of American cartooning and recognizes O’Neill as the “first American woman comic-strip artist.” In the collection of 36,000 original cartoon drawings, 102 were selected for an exhibit. Those selected were considered to be “stellar examples from this remarkable collection that reflect the vitality of an innovative and evolving art form. O’Neill’s art and history were selected to be included in this exhibition along with being included in the exhibit catalogue. On the Library of Congress website, they again narrowed down the best examples of “Imaginary Worlds: Illustration” to fifteen artists and O’Neill is among them. Their caption reveals, “A pioneering woman illustrator, O’Neill produced hundreds of illustrations for Puck.”

The Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Renwick Gallery online collection include images of O’Neill art. The most notable is her portrait of Kahlil Gibran, a friend of O’Neill, who is best known for his poetic essays in the book *The Prophet*. Gibran, the third bestselling poet of all time, once said of O’Neill, “She sits like a whole race with all its kings, prophets and warriors.”

Colleen Doran, a respected comic artist, critic, writer, and ongoing activist for improved recognition and opportunities for women in the field of comic illustration, has written several recent articles about O’Neill’s success as a woman comic artist. Doran’s latest article is included in “Womanthology: Heroic.” In the section “Women of the Past,” Doran refers to O’Neill as “Her Royal Highness of Cartoonists.”

In October 2012, Rose O’Neill art was included in an online research project “Documenting the Gilded Age: New York City Exhibitions at the Turn of the 20th Century.” Within that project, O’Neill was selected, along with four other artists, to be showcased in “1922: One Year in the Galleries of New York City.” This collaborative digitization grant was awarded in the fall of 2011 to the New York Art Resources Consortium (NYARC) partners with the Frick Art Reference Library and the Brooklyn Museum Libraries and Archives from a grant provided by the Metropolitan New York Library Council (METRO).

O’Neill’s art was included in the “Scribner’s Magazine: The Early Years in Illustration” exhibit at Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania in 2012, The Brandywine announcement for the exhibit
included, “Scribner's art editors hired the best artists and illustrators, and the exhibition will feature the works of many of these artists, among them Robert Blum, Charles Dana Gibson, Thornton Oakley, Rose O'Neill, Maxfield Parrish, Howard Pyle, Frank Schoonover, John Twachtman and N.C. Wyeth.”