

would make a wonderful present for anyone interested in women's lives in the North.

Lydia Campbell wrote her "Sketches" at the instigation of Rev. Waghorne when she was 75 years old. Later it came into the hands of a descendent, Elizabeth (Blake) Goudie, who allowed *Them Days* (then edited by Flora (Blake) Baikie) to copy the writings and publish them in 1980. Lydia opens her account by saying "You must please excuse my writing and spelling for I have never been to school, neither had I a spelling book in my young days, me, a native of this country, Labrador's Hamilton's Inlet, Eskimaux Bay." But she had a natural gift for lively, clear and evocative prose, and her description of her life at that time presents us with a unique picture of both her own indomitable character and the sturdy characters who lived around her.

Here she is revelling in her sister Hannah's independence. "We are all scattered today, my husband, Dan Campbell, is not home yet from Labacatto, he went there to see our brother-in-law, mersai Michelin, a Canadian about seventy years old, not able to work now, but his wife, Hannah, my older sister, she is over eighty years old, yet she takes her gun and axe and game bag and shoots a white partridge or two now and then. I have known the old woman fighting with a wolverine, a strong animal the size of a good size dog, she had neither gun nor axe, but a stout little stick, yet she killed it after a long battle" (9).

Apart from the text, the book presents us with the artistic creations of contemporary Labrador artists, and there is something very moving about looking at the pictures of such elegant and sophisticated work, and realising something of the context in which they were created. Killick has done a great job in re-creating this work, and packaging it in such an attractive and significant way.

I have a few gripes. For the many readers who will not be familiar with Labrador, a map would be useful. While the scattered and complex family relationships are clear to Lydia and her descendents, the rest of us would find a family tree extremely useful. The old black and white photographs add enormously to the atmosphere of the book - but not all of them are dated, and that, again, would be useful. While it is not intended to

be an "academic" book, a few more explanations would be helpful - about "tea dolls" for example, and about the aboriginal people Lydia talks about. There are too many typos for a book of this standard, e.g. Ambros for Ambrose (42).

But I cavill. It is a lovely book and it has some profound messages for us. In a Special Issue on Women and Development, it is particularly appropriate for us to consider just how women create their own lives, as well as those of their families and their communities in diverse situations. Lydia could have survived anywhere, and the values she relied on to ensure that survival are the same values we find women holding to in difficult situations the world over.

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***Getting By in Hard Times. Gendered Labour at Home and on the Job.*** Meg Luxton and June Corman. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001; xi + 326 pages; ISBN 0-8020-7147-3; \$27.95.

Meg Luxton and June Corman's book, *Getting By in Hard Times*, serves as a reminder of the reason for my early and enduring loyalties to a feminist political economy approach. At a time when many academic scholars have abandoned analyses of working people's lives in capitalist economies, Luxton and Corman have put the struggles of working women and men at the centre of their study. Based on research conducted through surveys and in-depth interviews with Stelco workers and their families in Hamilton, Ontario, *Getting By in Hard Times* explores the impact of the 1980s and 1990s economic restructuring on paid labour, unpaid domestic labour, community experiences, and workers' politics. Luxton and Corman highlight major changes in the ways in which men and women cope with hard times. Specifically, they point to the increased participation of women in the labour force, the loss of secure core employment for many men, and the challenge of combining paid employment and unpaid domestic labour.

One of the merits of this book is that its authors attempt to uncover the impact that these economic and political shifts have had on the politics and relations of class, gender, and race. Luxton and Corman argue that heightened economic insecurities have undermined our earlier understanding of class politics, and have intensified existing tensions based on gender and race. What adds to the analysis of gender and race, moreover, is their effort to explore the significance of *whiteness*. While the vast majority of Stelco workers and their families were of Anglo-Celtic descent, Luxton and Corman see no excuse for dismissing or quickly abandoning a discussion of race. Though not the focus of their study, they take the *whiteness* of these Hamilton working people as problematic. While working people face particular experiences as wage earners, we also are reminded that they are by no means a homogeneous group.

The other major contribution of this book is its human dimension. Luxton and Corman offer a careful and informed account of the various ways in which one segment of Canadian society has been touched by structural trends. They comment sensitively on the efforts of people to get by, as individuals and as family members, as workers in the home and in the plant, as citizens and trade unionists. Luxton and Corman are both skilled at bringing to the page the rich data drawn from their interviews. The result is that *Getting By in Hard Times*, allows us to share the experiences of Hamilton working people and gain some important understanding of their attempts to sort through the inequalities that touch their lives.

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***Reading Birth and Death: A History of Obstetric Thinking.*** Jo Murphy-Lawless. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1998; 343 pages; ISBN 0-253-21258-8; \$19.95 US .

***Common Science? Women, Science, and Knowledge.*** Jean Barr and Lynda Birke. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University

Press, 1998; 166 pages; ISBN 0-253-21181-6; \$14.95 US.

How are women involved in the construction of scientific knowledge? How do women understand, appreciate, and perceive science? How do women use science and scientific knowledge? For anyone who is interested in the relationship between women and science, both *Reading Birth and Death* and *Common Science?* will be thought provoking.

In *Reading Birth and Death*, feminist sociologist Murphy-Lawless investigates how obstetrics became theory-bound science and how perceptions of birth changed during that transformation. Based on painstaking reading of historical birth documents, primarily from Ireland, Murphy-Lawless shows us many layers of the transformation of obstetrics between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries: power struggles between female and male midwifery whose approaches were antagonistic; the gradual building of the perception of pregnant women as weak entities who should surrender to professional help and control; and the introduction of the scientific concepts of "normal" and "risk" to obstetric thinking. The book is not an easy read - it presumes basic obstetric knowledge and general understanding of feminist critiques of science - but it provides a rich basis from which analysis of obstetric thinking outside of Ireland can also be of benefit and the inquiry into the relationship between women and science in general explored.

In this sophisticated academic analysis of obstetric thinking, one might wonder, however, where are the thoughts and feelings of women? Granted the author's frustration at the lack of such historical documents, the silence of women's perspectives is still considerable. How did women's perceptions of birth change as those of obstetricians did? Interestingly, albeit with a very different focus, methodology, and scope, *Common Science?* is a good accompanying read in this regard.

In *Common Science?* feminist science educators Barr and Birke examine what is involved in the production of scientific knowledge through investigating how non-academic women perceive natural science. In efforts to promote women's access to science, the authors argue, the