

love, of first person exploration without excluding the general. Wendy Robbins, who considers Livesay "one of Canada's most important social poets and a highly original love poet," states in her introduction of Dorothy Livesay, in *World Literature by Women, 1875-1975* (Longman, 1989, Marian Arkin and Barbara Shollar, eds.): "[her] central themes are freedom and connection, identity and intimacy, and the tension that exists between them" (458).

Livesay has divided her autobiography into 16 chapters, preceded by an introduction and followed by some "After Words." Each chapter speaks of events and people that have, in one way or another, determined her development as a teacher, a social worker, a humanist and a poet. Thus she does not follow a direct chronological order. The risk of her method is that it can lead to repetition. We are told several times which schools she attended, for instance. However, this does not take away any of the reader's pleasure. Livesay understood poetry as oral communication. *Journey with My Selves* also seems to engage the reader in an intimate conversation with the author. Besides, as we all know, we sometimes repeat ourselves when telling our personal story.

What struck me again and again while reading the book was how sensitive and, at the same time, how pragmatic Dorothy Livesay can be. Probably it is this pragmatism that made life possible for the poet, in her clearly very busy world. When she hears of her husband's unexpected death and is in a state of shock, the words "I'm free, I'm free" come to her mind. Not because she is callous, but because, as a fifty-year-old woman, she had been wondering how she could exploit her potential. For her, "La Vita Nuova," as she calls the following chapter, is about to begin. Work with UNESCO, teaching in Africa, further studies at U.B.C., poetry that boldly expresses herself, the passionate and aging woman: these were to be her achievements.

The book has deepened my admiration of Dorothy Livesay. Author of many books, mother of two, wife of many years, this woman has also studied, taught, and been an activist. Her life un-

folds in this book, revealing all its richness, all its truth. "What is truth?" asked JFB when he was writing his memoirs. "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant," wrote Emily Dickenson. Livesay concludes:

I am not ashamed to set down what seems to be the truth of my parents' lives nor what seems to be the truth of the lives of the men and women who have informed my consciousness since leaving the parental fold. These people who have demanded my love and attention have also become a part of me, and to set them down in these pages is not to relinquish them, but to remember. Always with longing, to remember. This is my truth. (15)

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Beyond the Moon Gate: A China Odyssey, 1938-1950. John Munro. *Vancouver & Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1990, Pp. 273, paperback.*

Beyond the Moon Gate is the story of Margaret Outerbridge's years in China. Her husband Ralph was a medical missionary who worked under the United Church of Canada, while Margaret, who married Ralph in 1938 just before they went to China, felt no personal call as a missionary. In her words, "[we] are Missionaries! But I am not. Ralph is. I am Ralph's wife. The love that takes me to China is not the love that impels my husband" (2). The love that took Margaret to China was her love for her husband Ralph.

Using diaries that Margaret had written to be shared with her family in North America, letters home written by both Margaret and Ralph, and numerous conversations with Ralph who was still living at the time of the book's publication (Margaret had died several years earlier), John Munro wrote Margaret Outerbridge's biography of the years that she and Ralph lived in China. Margaret's story, as John Munro interpreted it, is a war story, a medical case book, an exotic adventure, an exposure of missionary life and an account of a couple's life together.

Through Margaret's eyes, we learn much of Chinese culture during those years. For instance, of the Chinese market she wrote:

I love the street when it is thronged with farmers, vendors, tradesmen and servants buying for their respective households. Each farmer is allowed six square feet of sidewalk for his produce.... Meat is brought in live. (121)

For Margaret, life in China was a cultural exchange. "It worries me sometimes that I am no more 'Missionary' than I ever was" (103). Instead, she learned to appreciate the people in the country in which she chose to live. As readers we share in her close friendship with Banyang, the aristocratic wife of a local landlord. In 1942 she wrote, "this relationship is developing into the most precious experience for both Ralph and me in China" (112).

As readers we sense that, underlying her enthusiasm and ability to enjoy the adventures of life in a different culture, Margaret was a strong woman with great courage. Her diaries movingly relate the ways in which she and Ralph coped when their children developed potentially fatal illnesses. In a time of severe shortages, she wrote, "The simpler life becomes the better I like it. One bowl, one pair of chopsticks" (126).

Women's diaries have been published all too rarely; thus, publications like these are of great value to historians of women. Disclosing women's activities, their relationships, their thoughts and their feelings, such diaries make it possible to both recreate women's past and validate women's experiences in the present. What bothered me about this book, however, was the feeling that Margaret's perspective, as so many other women's, had been overshadowed by the men who edited her diary and letters. In Margaret's case, her biographers, John Munro and her husband, Ralph Outerbridge, rewrote her memoirs. As I read I often felt that Margaret's experiences may have been edited out in the process.

To begin with, the title *Beyond the Moon Gate* gives readers no clue that this is a woman's diary. While readers are given details of Margaret's cul-

tural experience in China, personal reflections are rare. Margaret wrote ten years after their marriage "...do not get between a missionary and his God—if he has to make a choice, it may break his heart, but he cannot choose you!" (170). Again, Margaret wrote in 1942:

[of having become] depressed with our isolated life. The Mission men have their work which is always challenging, but their wives either crack up or go to seed unless they too have a profession to pursue or a deep commitment to our work here. (132)

Comments like these aroused my curiosity and I would like to have known more.

I would also like to have known more about Margaret's work. In 1940, shortly after the birth of their first child, Margaret wrote that she worked in a well-baby clinic and:

the rest of the time I look after our darling and enjoy my home. I would be exceedingly happy ... if I didn't have to worry about someone to carry water from distant wells, someone to start a morning fire, someone to dump the toilets. (78)

In the book one learns a great deal about the domestic details of Margaret's life, while her work in the well-baby clinic is only mentioned in passing.

Rather, as one might expect given Ralph's vital part in the writing process, case histories and anecdotes taken from his medical work form a major part of the book. As one might also anticipate from a book edited by a writer whose previous biographies had been of political leaders John Diefenbaker and Lester Pearson, the book also tells us far more about the events of World War II and political happenings in China than one might suppose in the diary of a missionary's wife.

In sum, this adaptation of Margaret's diary and letters is the story of a couple's life in China during turbulent years. It is an excellent resource for anyone interested in life in China during the years spanning from the Japanese occupation to China's

adoption of Communism. Those interested in medical history will also be enthralled by anecdotes of Chinese medical practices; however, those hoping to understand the role of the missionary wife will be tantalized, but not fully satisfied. Readers will be impressed with Margaret's courage, but will yearn to know more about what Margaret herself did in China and how she coped with her choice to become a missionary wife.

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The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men, and Change in Two Industrial Towns, 1880-1950. Joy Parr. *University of Toronto Press, 1990, Pp. 314 hardcover.*

Joy Parr has made a remarkable contribution to feminist debates about the impact of class and gender on people's historical experience. She rejects "an ahistorical hierarchy of oppressions" (8) and, through a close examination of "the relationships among industry, domesticity, and community" (6) in two Ontario towns, argues persuasively that class and gender are made and experienced simultaneously. *The Gender of Breadwinners*, winner of the Canadian Historical Society's prestigious Macdonald Prize, and reviewed in the *Canadian Historical Review* as the "most important monograph" on Canadian history in many years, will have a significant impact on the writing of Canadian history for many years to come. Parr's work provides an interpretative framework for the reconsideration of Canada's industrial revolution.

Like all good history, *The Gender of Breadwinners* is rooted firmly in time and place. Parr explores the historical experience of women and men between 1880 and 1950 in the two Ontario industrial towns of Paris and Hanover, chosen to represent a "women's" town and a "men's" town. Paris was a knitwear town. Penman's, its major employer, deliberately recruited and maintained a largely female skilled workforce. The company's reliance on these skilled women workers had a significant impact on industrial and domestic relationships and

created a community in which all-female and female-led households were common. In Hanover, the major industrial employer was the furniture industry, an industry which relied on skilled male labour. The domestic, community and industrial life of Hanover conforms much more closely to our notions of what is normal in a patriarchal society. The periodization of the book follows the industrial development of the towns from the implementation of the protective tariffs on Canadian manufactures of the National Policy to the end of the second world war when the industries in both towns were "moving from hesitant maturity into decline" (4).

In addition to her fine historical sensitivity to the specifics of historical context and experience, Parr employs sophisticated methodological and theoretical approaches to tease out, strand by strand, the knotty problems of the relationships between skill, gender and power. Her meticulous attention to detail is both demanding and rewarding for her readers. The questions she has addressed are complex and difficult ones that required the blending of traditional historical sources (such as business and government records and newspapers) with oral interviews and the application of a variety of theoretical approaches. These approaches include a careful attention to language and the use of the life course as an analytical device.

The result of her effort is a rich and complex work. Parr's descriptions and analysis of the daily lives of her subjects at home, at work and in the community permit us to glimpse the historical processes that create gendered and class identities. Chapter Three, "When Is Knitting Women's Work," is a brilliant discussion of the relationship between gender and skill. Through a detailed examination of the labour process and technological change, Parr offers convincing evidence that skill is not an absolute, but a socially constructed and constantly negotiated quality which has ramifications for all of us. Again, in Chapter Four, "Womanly Militance, Neighbourly Wrath," Parr offers important insights through meticulous attention to tensions generated by the conditions of a strike. She argues that respectability, "the touchstone of womanly authority" (104), was created in domesticity, not in the work-