

News from the Feminist Caucus, by Anne Burke

The Feminist Caucus Panel & Business Meeting will be on Sat. afternoon, May 30. Sonja Geckol is planning the Winnipeg panel on Women Poets & Their Female Mentors. We will launch *Cautionary Tales: Giving Voice to the Elders* from the 2014 panel. Lesley Strutt and Susan McMaster are working on vol. 3 of "Poems from the Feminist Caucus". This month, a call for reviewers for *Hypatia* on feminist philosophy; Welcome to Associate Member Angeline Schellenberg; Review of *The Book of Women's Mysteries and One Man's Confusion*, by Ronald Kurt, Rusti Lehay, Barbara Mitchell, Sandra Mooney-Ellerbeck, ky perraun, Dani Zyp; Review of *Homage to Happiness, Poems*, by Judith Krause Poet Laureate for Saskatchewan; News from Bernice Lever, a "Woman of Influence", and review of *Red Letter Day*, by Jennifer Footman

Hypatia is a forum for cutting edge work in feminist philosophy. Since its inception in the mid-1980s, *Hypatia* has been a catalyst for broadening and refining feminist philosophy as well as an invaluable resource for those who teach in this area. Feminist philosophy arises out of diverse traditions and methods within philosophy and is also richly interdisciplinary in orientation.

Hypatia's commitment to the development of feminist philosophy entails that, in all its policies and practices, *Hypatia* actively reflects and engages the diversity within feminism itself, the diverse experiences and situations of women, and the diverse forms that gender takes across the globe. Promoting diversity within feminist philosophy and philosophy in general is thus one of *Hypatia's* core objectives.

We are committed to publishing articles that are broadly accessible. *Hypatia* serves as a resource for the wider women's studies community, for philosophers generally, and for all those interested in philosophical issues raised by feminism.

See call for book reviewers below.

Hypatia: a journal of feminist philosophy is seeking book reviewers to review books that relate to the upcoming special issue "Feminist Love Studies in the 21st Century." For further details regarding the special issue: <http://hypatiaphilosophy.org/Editorial/cfps.html>. For details about *Hypatia's* book review policy, see: <http://hypatiaphilosophy.org/HRO>. Book reviews focus on single books and book review essays discuss two or more books. Deadline for completed reviews: January 2016. Please send inquiries to the co-editors, Ann Ferguson and Margaret Toye at: femlovestudies@gmail.com. If your proposal is approved, the book review will be commissioned by the *Hypatia* book review editor. We are open to receiving proposals for books to be reviewed and are also seeking proposals to review the specific books below:

Barriteau, Eudine. (ed) *Love and power : Caribbean discourses on gender*. Kingston,



Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2012.

De Vries, Roland. *Becoming Two in Love: Kierkegaard, Irigaray, and the Ethics of Sexual Difference*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013.

Gunnarsson Lena. *The Contradictions of Love: Towards a feminist-realist ontology of sociosexuality*. London: Routledge 2014.

Illouz, Eva. *Why love hurts: a sociological explanation*. Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity 2012.

Jónasdóttir, Anna G. and Ann Ferguson (eds). *Love: A Question for Feminism in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Routledge, 2014.

Joy, Morny. *Divine love: Luce Irigaray, women, gender and religion*. Manchester UP, 2014.

Kolozova, Katerina. *Cut of the real: subjectivity in poststructuralist philosophy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.

La Caze, Marguerite. *Wonder and Generosity: their role in ethics and politics*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2013.

Dr. Margaret E. Toye Guest Co-Editor, Special Issue, *Hypatia: Feminist Love Studies in the 21st Century*
Women and Gender Studies Program
Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
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Thanks to Magie Dominic for sharing this source with us.

[Interview on writing](#)

[STREET ANGEL](#)

www.magiedominic.blogspot.com

[Magie Dominic at Lincoln Center Archives](#)

[twitter @magiedominic](#)

Welcome to new Associate member Angeline Schellenberg, at:

agelineschellenbergwordpress.com. She is an extensive and ecstatic blogger online. I came across her posts about Kevin Spenst and Meira Cook.

May 29, 2010 by [angelineschellenberg](#)

"I just finished reading Dora Dueck's new novel *This Hidden Thing*. It is the story of a Mennonite girl, Maria Klassen, fresh from Russia, supporting her parents and siblings as a maid for a Winnipeg (*Englisch*) family; a life-altering experience...leads to life-long kept secrets."

May 1, 2010 by [angelineschellenberg](#)

"I have grandiose plans for my life. I want to change the world."

May 2, 2010 by [angelineschellenberg](#)

"When I read Annie Dillard's *For the Time Being*, it was freeing to realize that you could publish a whole book of snippets. I think in little snippets. Ask the Women's Accountability Group (my lifeline) that I've been part of for the past ten years, and they'll tell you I pray in very short snippets. And when the thought ends, I tell God 'goodnight' and that's that!"

March 9, 2012 by [angelineschellenberg](#)

"I participated in a Writers' Guild Masterclass this past Sunday with Montreal poet Erin Moure."

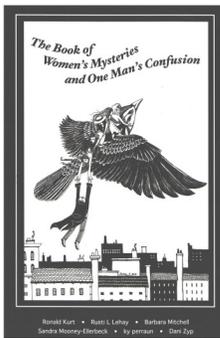
Angeline has *Zippered*, forthcoming from Brick Books, fall 2016 and *Roads of Stone*, Alfred Gustav Press, a chapbook forthcoming May, 2015 from Alfred Gustav Press. She has poems in anthologies, in Leaf Press's *Newborn Anthology and Cradle Song*, forthcoming 2015 and in Lipstick Press's *The Beautiful Women Anthology*, 2013. She has published in literary journals, such as *Contemporary Verse 2*, *Rhubarb*, *Prairie Fire*, *The New Quarterly*; with poems online, such as Wordgathering.com (a literary journal on disabilities), *Rhubarb*. For National Poetry Month she was featured as a new poet, April 2013, on [lcpnationalpoetrymonth2013.wordpress.com](#), and [Leafpress.ca](#), Centre for Creative Writing and Oral Culture website; "Thin Air's Say the Word Project" (youtube). In addition, she wrote reviews of books by Kerry Clare, Sarah Klassen, Kalyn Falk, Victor Enns, Dora Dueck, and Carrie Snyder. She contributed a chapter to an anthology, "Growing Up Unique: An Only Sibling of Fragile X-Affected Boys Discovers She's

Normal”, in *Stories: The Personal Side of fragile X-syndrome* (Flying Trout Press, Bellingham, Wa, 2006).

Angeline received various awards from Manitoba Writers' grants, contests such as *Rhubarb*, Evangelical Press Association, and Canadian Church Press. She has worked as a freelance writer since 2005, publishing award-winning personal essays, poems in literary journals, and hundreds of news stories, profiles, and reviews in academic journals, anthologies, and magazines.

She has worked as a copy editor and story writer, since 2010, for the *MB Herald*, Winnipeg MB; crafted news stories, reviews, and briefs on a monthly basis; edited obituaries and articles, vetted poems, and proofread copy. She was a “Health and Heart” Columnist 2006-2012 for *Christian Week Manitoba (Christian Current)* for which she wrote 500-word bi-monthly columns about individuals, churches, and non-profit organizations; fostering emotional, mental, spiritual, and recreational health in the community.

She was a Communications and Bible adjunct professor from 2007-2010 for Steinbach MB where she taught freshmen to write clear essays and reviews; gave students an appreciation for the lyricism and imagery of prophetic and apocalyptic literature. Her mentorships were with the Manitoba Writers Guild Sheldon Oberman Mentorship Program with Meira Cook (Jan.-May 2012) and Sage Hill Writing Experience Poetry Colloquium with Don McKay (May 2013).



Review of *The Book of Women's Mysteries and One Man's Confusion*, by Ronald Kurt, Rusti Leahy, Barbara Mitchell, Sandra Mooney-Ellerbeck, ky perraun, Dani Zyp (Edmonton: Right Heart Press, 2014) 76 pp. paper (Amazon.com)

Kurt calls for the necessary silence between a man and a woman, who “read one another like a holy book/always turning a page slowly/and carefully.” His informing metaphor is a city garden of Eden; she appears barefoot on sacred ground, amid paradise, but not without a solitary weed. Sex does not provide a willing soul mate. His turn of phrase is lilting, “A river of words”, or simply love, “to pour the wounds away”.

Lehay blends script, muse, ink, a keyboard; resistant to “visible thought” (“26 stingy gods”). Atheism, baptism, holy, blessed, for eternity (“chasing scent of sky”). There are prairie colours, cracks, an inner fire, incendiary devices (“spontaneous combustion”). In “beyond the frame”, a longer poem, which bares comparison with “wearing earth”, an encomium model, the breath pause lends solemnity to “skyhopping” and “sea-breeze choices”. A woman's spa with “astrological day timer” invokes one of “heaven's tours” (“i have seen the wind”). A mock heroic in “contrast” dovetails with “telekinesis” (“watched moon never moves”).

Mitchell evokes aging, with weary, lethargic, and atrophied images (“make me believe”) but not before a gesture of courtly love (“water girl”). She deftly balances “i am the bird in the story” with “i am the story in the bird”, an incremental refrain. Alliteration of “countenance”, “calm”, “corner” all contributes to the examination of “avoiding collision”. There is a binary pattern of sorts in “if”/ “than”, “let”/ “let”, “and”/ “and”, “but”/ “from” (“direction”). The primal and primordial mingle (“fire dance”). A breeze and blowing are omnipresent (“always there”). Perhaps, the peak in quiet power is “longest poem”, in which a comparison is made between the beloved as “you are my longest poem/the long slow/gentle one that goes on forever” and the poet. Together, they embody “an undying language”. Doves and a cobra are emblems for some dark mysteries which bloom into verse (“never the pretty one”).

Mooney-Ellerbeck struggles with “In and Out of Sync”, a syncopation of city and calm. Magic, fairies, garden are “rooted in wonder” (“Escape”). Whether “less depressive” or “less manic”, a mother requires resuscitation (“Dramas”). Sprung rhythm and onomatopoeia are elements (“Word Combos”). Dehydration is the constant (“Another Year of Thirst”) but “call on me as if my hands are spring rain.” What matters is: “know they will always thirst” (“Imprints”) an exercise in memory patterns. The syllables of stories”, “sings”, “supernatural” modify the single rose, an indwelling of the spirit (“Signs”).

perraun explores the hazards, “our pens and pains”, of an art which depends on psyche, an archeology (“Hazards of the Art”). The figure of a pilgrim cum tourist depicts “the magic of a prairie lake in July”, but not before imbibing Main Street; “Forgive me, father” [for I have sinned] an opening phrase from a Catholic act of contrition in the confessional (“Prairie Lake”). The scene lacks miracles but does include “a mock baptism”. Aging morphs into “I call it a curse, and worse”, which reveals “a sutured virginity”, apex of rage, menstruation, “love’s ride in the hearse” (“The Atmosphere”). The poet-lover acts as editor (“Renewed Life”). The prehistoric is associated with both rose and damp vegetable (“Poor Rhubarb”). Some lyrics are intended for music, a ballad (“The Distance of Time”) while Krakow as source accompanies pen, pigment, pure, and poignant (“Cypress Hills”). An ode to poet Roo Borson enjoins poetry and poverty (“Used Book”).

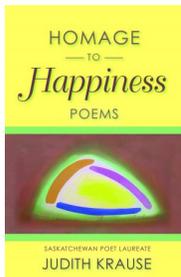
Zyp offers “Eagle’s Flight”, a woman held aloft. She puns on poetry day, world water day, clean air day, harbour day, and “today” (“Liberate the Children”). The impossible is transformed into “Mission Possible”. She reinvents the abstractions (“Universal Love Is...”) bringing visceral into “People” being “Raped and pillaged/Broken bones of love/Cancer ravaged”. In “Stop Rape Now”, she uses community drumming to send a message, sourced in the Justice Institute of British Columbia, for 2014 Rape Support Network. For “Women’s Day”, she writes, “Women. My favourite people”. The absence of her grandmother is replaced by memory (“Tulips *Eten*”).

The Table of Contents represents an arrangement of poem titles in such a manner that the texts compose other poems on their own and with others on the page. All of the poets here have been widely published and it is a genuine pleasure to have their work in a

single anthology, such as the present one. They speak of blessings, friendship being only one of them.

Kurt has published in over thirty literary magazines. Leahay published print poetry as well as a spoken word collection *Tupperware Sandpiper*. She is a long-term member of the Stroll of Poets, producing *Eyeing the Magpie*, in 2007, with Anna Mioduchowska, Nancy Mackenzie, Julie Robinson, and Myrna Garanis. Her limited edition chapbook *i'm not sure* (1999) sold out. Mitchell produces multi-media poetry/photo presentations, as well as paintings showcased in many exhibitions and art shows. Her websites are: www.dancinginapoetofpaint.com and www.poetrycafe.ca. She was published in *Room* magazine. She also facilitates poetry/writing workshops. Mooney-Ellerbeck published *What Can Be Held Onto* a 2012 chapbook, *Bliss* a 2010 broadsheet, and has a full-length collection *Overlapping*, forthcoming. She published in *CV2* and the *Edmonton Journal*, with a poem became a Barrio Art Poster. perraun has published in various literary journals, in the anthology *Standing Together*, in the chapbook *Prayers and Graffiti* (Greensleeves Publishing, 1990), and also performs her poems. Zyp teaches workshops in self-publishing; this is her second contribution to an anthology, and she self-published her own three books.

Layout, design, and artwork are by Izabela Ciechanowska, a freelance illustrator living in Edmonton, Alberta, who has contributed illustrations to previous Right Heart Press publications, and has also been published in *Notebook* magazine. The cover displays "The Lark's Flight towards Truth", ink on paper. An accompanying note states: "The lark in mythology and literature is a symbol of daybreak and the messenger between heaven and earth. This piece represents the spiritual and physical escape and our exploration towards light and answers."



Review of *Homage to Happiness, Poems*, by Judith Krause (Regina: Hagios Press, 2014) 112 pp. paper

In the opening poem "Everything", the poet draws on Ruth Stone, in *Male Gorillas* to expose "that vast/confused library, the female mind". Egyptian omens, Greek signs and symptoms, the Romans, Christians are traditional sources of inspiration. However, a digital archive, an Amazon librarian, and a doomed text book are precursors to "the final weeding out". "Hen House" is a longer poem composed of images. In "i", "Old hens now.../used up all we had". A legacy from a mother's death, in "ii", pertains to "A mess of papers everywhere". The ironies in "iii" spell out maternal instinct in chickens, although "any chicken" will devour an egg, "including her own". In "iv" snapshots are sorted, amid photo albums. In "v", the remains of a life are missing, some gone forever, except for a handwritten notebook. A prose poem encapsulates ("Footnote to the Headlines"). The loss of speech is poignant ("You Would Say"). Anxiety is compared with how a cow plods, without any insight ("Up at Night"). A diminishing disease "is galloping" ("Wild Horses"). A mapping exercise demonstrates the significance of four locations. The voice is modulated as oral history. A house declared as heritage remains private property. The

poet contemplates “English/row housing in this flat prairie city.” A store was destroyed, probably by an arsonist (“Cathedral Village”).

Some of the poem are informed by lust, whether a kiss, “the laws of attraction” (“Everything”), sex (“The Sounds of Happiness”), “his dark/eyes, untamed” of a lover (“Wild Horses”), and physiological effects (“Rules for Falling in Love”). Comparisons are made with a man alone, the poet alone, if and until another arrives. An ode to painting (“The Coat is a River”) prefaces a longer poem (“Homage to Happiness”). In “Painting”, we are told: “This is what I was born to do”, in relation to “Lines” of the prairie, of poetry, and visual imagery. “After all, //we were always meant/to be verbs.” Her personal best is achieved on canvas, despite a medical diagnosis. The “greats in modern art” remain unnamed. Self-reliance is required, “all immigrants struggle”. Design and inspiration are “my door/to the universe”. A yard sale indicates the art market. She rejects the commonplace. Her self-portrait is revealing. Thus, “in and out./I paint”. She embodies “rectangles” more than “squares”, she prefers "geometry but will tolerate algebra", nature contains complex calculations, “they were songs/the grass is singing.”

A “death kit” is laid out for a cantankerous, old man (“Purple Pitcher Plants”). Agriculture involves a relationship with animals (“Watching the Horses on Old Orchard Road”). Evolutionary elements of earth are almost imperceptible (“Changes”). Time ran out (“I Wanted to See the World”). There are stoics and statuary (“Estrangement”). Even stars and clouds possess “good grace and manners” (“You Would Say”). Cows are “bawling/all night for their young/just sent to market” (“Everywhere the News”).

Twins embrace their differences (“Six Degrees of Separation”). The poet as a shapeshifter retells a drowning story (“Dipstick”). No regrets (“Sixty”). Numerology looms (“2013”). There are several functions performed from invention (“Hourglass”). A skunk has a deft defence (“Apology”). An astrological baseline occurs at birth (“Star Clock”). Astronomy pertains to family secrets (“Boundaries”). Boasts about self-importance (“Valentines”). Humour (“A Poet Walks into the Bar”). A Christ-like Irving Layton appears in Regina. Still, poets come in last (“Contact Me”). An appetite for details inspires “the first plump Saskatoon berry” (“Ode to Discard”). At home science projects are what a family has in common (“The Rites of Spring”). Birth and rebirth are embodied (“Sunshower Flowering Tea”). Giving birth (“Little Buddha Man”), children’s literature lives on. In Germany, there are “the constant shudder” and a stench (“Village Laundry”).

In “Gender Reveal”, the occasion of “coming out” is compared poorly with prenatal identification. What matters are “my mother’s//your mother’s” timeless recipe for avoiding “the witch’s house” (“Gingerbread”). “Red Swan or Dragons’ Tongue” are paired with “Mad Dog Inferno”, “Scorned Woman”, and “Ring of Fire” (“Chili Tomatoes”). A “bucket list” includes homebrew, a prairie summer, Saskatoon berries, all “unspoiled pleasure” (“Things to Eat Before You Die”). Force-feeding is not recommended (“Mitterand’s Last Meal”). A women was raped and beaten, forced “to swallow their rage and her shame”; she was the former food-taster for Hitler who reveals her role (“The Woman Who Swallowed History”). Ashes are sent into space to complete

a cosmic journey (“Payload”). Mount Etna a distant view, “You liar, you cheat”. (“My Sicily”). The Cold War renders a broken city “the testicle of the West” (“Our Berlin”). The perfect foil appears in a photo (“Your London”). She is just a tourist with a wretched diagnosis (“Her Paris”). The reward has expired (“Dead or Alive”). Ghost dogs are genetically endowed and “cruelly assured” (“Black Dog Syndrome”). There is Biblical scripture commingled (“The Snake Handler’s Word of God”). The coming night is associated with dream, late, last, no, now, and “the heart of everything in this world”. The act of blessing performs another miracle for St. Laurence (“The Heist”). A child directs our way forward (“How You Reach the Sea”).



Krause has four previous books of poetry, among them *Mongrel Love* (Hagios Press, 2008), a collaborative chapbook *blue transport/the insistence of green* (JackPine Press, 2007). She won the City of Regina Writing Award twice, the Ralph Gustafson Poetry Award (2006), and completed an MFA in Creative Writing at Warren Wilson College in North Carolina. She is a founding member of The Poets Combine. They

are Bruce Rice, Paul Wilson, Jim MacLean, and Robert Currie, with their *Cathedral Chronicles* (with photos by Gord Hunter.) She is the Poet Laureate of Saskatchewan.

See also:

<http://www.hagiospress.com/blog/articles/2013/12/12/hagios-author-selected-as-saskatchewan-poet-laureate>

Anne Burke



□ □ □ □ □ Hi, Anne

"Woman of Influence": this event was on Pandora's Collective news and FEBRUARY posters of events. With the celebration cake is Bonnie Nish and good contact for anyone coming west to get one of their weekly events--to read! Behind Bonnie is my large sheet that had continuous 100 random pictures of me since I was 4 years OLD--- mainly--of lit. life in Ontario. Very funny contrasts - me today and Women's year -- '75-- me in Prison Arts T-shirt. For example, at a League AGM this could be used when we have a speaker praising one writer at our banquet! This would show interesting pictures of the times: Dorothy Livesay, Margaret Laurence, so many in Peace Protest Parades!

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Press Release

Pandora's Collective Presents

Twisted Poets -----((2 nights each month they have a series called this at this location.))

A Night of Celebration: Bernice Lever

The Cottage Bistro

Location: Cottage Bistro, 4468 Main St, Vancouver, BC

Time: 7-9:30 pm

Hosts: Dennie E. Bolen and Lilija Valis-- a poet, with Open Mic for those who would like to say a few brief words about Bernice.

On Wednesday February 4th, please join us in a celebration of Bernice Lever. This evening will look back at Bernice's writings, life, accomplishments and friendships which she has formed over the years. We come together to acknowledge someone who has been a pillar in the writing community, a mentor to many and a dear friend to most. Let's fill the room with the love she so deserves. There will be cake!!!

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MY bio. is on www.ABCBookworld.com. March itinerary follows:

Tomorrow--- Feb. 28, -- I read in Bellingham, WA with International Peace Poets Festival at Mount Baker Theatre, get an award-- "Teaching and Learning Peace Award". (5 Canadians will read in a big group as then we get the 1st anthology from this group with 42 poets in it.)

March 13--15, I am presenter & will write the theme poem which will be in the program for "Words on Water Writers Festival " in Campbell River in more north end of Van. Island

March 28, at Writers International Network (WIN) 2015 at Richmond Community Centre, BC - I will be given A Lifetime Achievement Award.

Bernice

**Red Letter Day. Bernice Lever. Black Moss Press. Published 2014.
ISBN 978-0-88753-540-6 Cover image Marty Gervais Distributed in Canada and US
by Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 195 AllState Parkway Markham, Ontario L3R 4T8.
\$10 Reviewed by Jennifer Footman**

Black Moss Press published a series of short fiction and poetry at \$10; these consist of books of 64 pages and the intention of Black Moss was to provide good writing that is affordable and accessible.

I have often flicked through poems, deliberately not looking at the title or the author, attempting to assess whether the author is male or female. I would say that Bernice Lever's work falls into that great tradition that includes Stevie Smith, Lorna Crozier, and Adrienne Rich.

They are deceptive poems. At first they look simple, totally accessible, easy; they observe every-day, ordinary happenings. Nothing much serious, nothing earth shattering, nothing that comes from the front page of the *Sun*, *The National Post*, or the *Globe and Mail*.

Underneath this easy first read, on second or third reading, is a level of metaphor that leads the reader deep, deep almost into a spiritual truth.

For example, the very first poem, "Red Letter Day" starts:

"One that shows only black
numerals balancing my bank,

no black ants munching
my pinkwhite ham sandwich,

no black fuzz crowding my vision,
pin-pointing mini-green scenes.

....."

And so on, quite a superficial list of items that make this a red letter day. This list of small items, negative images in a negative context, makes a deeper statement: when these things don't happen the day is great. On some level the poem states that life is crap, but if we really consider the small things, the things of the moment, the simple items in our lives, then we have to be thankful for breath, for laughter, for light, for sight, for enough cash, for enough food; we see that it is the small things that make our lives Red Letter Lives.

Bernice Lever is a supremely skilled wordsmith. Technically, she uses her skill in all the poetic tools to create work so that it seems unsophisticated, is easy reading, something that the reader can flick through on the commute, but underneath that easy surface is a deep spiritual core of compassion.

In another poem "Ghosts are Airborne", she examines the lives of ghosts:

"Ghosts are airborne.
stepping from one molecule to another,
ghosts are local earthly castoffs, part of space.
Debris, junk store specials, unclaimed,
maybe even unwanted spirits."

The poem finishes:

"You only experience your own ghosts,
the main unknown component of air."

This poem reads like an analysis of ghosts, but when one goes deeper, she is saying that ghosts are around us all the time; that they are the people we know, that they are the people who created us; they are family, they are our friends, our dogs, our cats; they are all the people who touched us and who have left our lives, they are people whose lives we

have left. We breathe the same air as all those who have floated through us, round us, and in us. We give them life as they give us life. We are their ghosts and they are our ghosts..

Bernice Lever is from Smithers BC. She edited *Waves*. This is the 12th book of poetry. She has also written a teaching CD, *Colour of Words*. For many years she was in Seneca College's English Department in Toronto. She now lives in her paradise on Bowen Island. Bernice Lever gets high on many things: words, friends, beauty, the deer across a path, lively conversations, beautiful poetry, helping people, and just being Bernice Lever.

She must be a person who has the ability to organise her time. She writes prolifically, is involved with the Canadian Authors Association, the League of Canadian Poets, Federation of BC writers, and many other local groups. She is truly a community leader in poetry. She donates her time to help other writers.

In one of the poems near the end of the book, she pretty well sums up herself as a poet.

"Other Lives":

"Other lives seemed more daring than mine,
youngest of 4 sisters, years before baby
brother arrived to snare our Dad.
....."

It ends,

"I wasn't always stuck between book pages."

Indeed, Lever writes as a poet who has lived. None of the navel-studying for her. None of the self-indulgent whining for her. She is clear, she is to the point, and transforms incidents and images into poems that satisfy something.

Jennifer Footman

Originally from India, I spent most of my life in Edinburgh and am a graduate of that university, coming to Canada in '79. My poetry and fiction have been in most Canadian literary magazines and many US and UK ones. I have four collections of poetry; have won several competitions including the Canadian Authors Okanagan Award, the Envoi poetry award, the LNN short fiction award and the Alumnus\Scotia McLeod Award. I have several novels and a collection of short fiction hunting a publisher. I live in the wilds of Caledon deep in the trees.

The site below provides extensive reference information for books and authors pertaining to British Columbia, including an on-line archive of *BC BookWorld*, Canada's largest-circulation independent publication about books.

http://www.abcbookworld.com/view_author.php?id=3154 Alan Twigg



Author Tags: **Poetry**

Bernice Lever, born in Smithers, BC, has received four Lifetime Achievement awards, including the CAA's Sangster Award. From 1963 to 2000, she lived in a Toronto suburb except for three-and-a-half years in Cheshire, England, and eighteen months in the United States. A child of two Alberta pioneer farm families, she became the mother of three children, and has two grandchildren and two great-granddaughters.

Active in B.C. as an organizer of literary events on Bowen Island, where she also teaches ESL students, and also active within the B.C. chapter of the Canadian Authors Association, Bernice Lever came back to her home province after 15 years as an English Professor at Seneca College in Toronto.

Lever has long been an active supporter of writers within the Canadian Authors Association, the League of Canadian Poets and other associations. In 1998-1999, she was Writer-in-Residence for CAA in Toronto and she founded the literary journal WAVES that she edited from 1972 to 1987. Since 2008, she continues to be Writer-in-Residence for Canadian Authors -Vancouver branch, providing professional on manuscripts and marketing advice to members and non-members. She continues to serve as a freelance editor, literary contest judge and workshop leader.

Lever has an M.A. in English from York University, as well as teaching certificates from B.C. and Ontario. She has published over 200 prose pieces including literary, scholarly, and local newspaper journalism.

Bernice Lever's engagement in the B.C. writing scene can be traced back to a Black Mountain Summer workshop at U.B.C. in 1963 for English 410. As a self-described "naive gal from little Rossland," she kept notes and a daily journal that were later copied for the Charles Olson "museum" in U.S.. She still has the original notes. That summer she made a life-long contact with Margaret Avison and soon got to meet Allen Ginsberg, Robert Duncan, Robert Creeley, Charles Olson, & Denise Levertov. She left for England, hoping to meet Sylvia Plath.

Years later she talked with Margaret Laurence about how Plath's death affected them as young women with two children each, wanting to be writers. Laurence told her of her difficulties being both a wife and a novelist. Whereas Laurence veered increasingly towards the novelist role, Lever chose the motherhood route in those days. "I do not regret my choice," she says. Her writing life is now regaining its momentum. One of her

poems in *Imagining Lives* is addressed to Plath, "a 20th Century Poetic Comet, recalling the summer of 1983: "we were just young mothers / struggling to find words / for the poems raging inside / of us."

When Pandora's Collective hosted an evening in her honour on February 4, 2015, Alan Twigg of B.C. BookWorld sent the following message: "I'm delighted you are honouring a positive force such as Bernice. If only everyone could be so public-spirited and supportive of others. It is people such as Bernice who encourage the rest of us to veer towards a path of service from time to time, to see a bigger picture beyond ourselves. Her story about choosing family over literature at a critical juncture in her life, back in the days when she was friendly with Margaret Laurence, perhaps accounts for why she remains so vivacious as a writer to this day. She has saved the best for last. I find her poetry both sophisticated and moving. Someone like Bernice can never retire. Because there will always be other people to help, more work to do, more poems to write. Bernice has amazing grace and she is a stalwart presence. In an era when emerging writers expect to be celebrated after just a few years in writing school, they expect to have agents, they expect to have their writing taken serious after only one or two books, Bernice is a reminder of a different era in which one didn't make oneself into a product; instead one steadfastly assumed that slow and steady could win the race, even if you were born in Smithers. In my books, Bernice has won the race. She has dedicated her life in equal parts to family and writing. That takes courage, stamina and helluva lot of dignity. I salute her."

BOOKS:

Red Letter Day, Black Moss Press, 2014 \$10 9780887535406
Encompass 1, 6 poets, The Ontario Poetry Society, 2013, 987-1-897497-73-9
Imagining Lives, Black Moss Press, 2012, 978-0-88753-500-0
Generation, Black Moss Press, 2009, 978-0-88753-465-2
Never a Straight Line, Black Moss Press, Palm Poet Series, 2007. 978-0-88753-438-6
Six Voices, ISBN 1-894553-26-8, Hidden Brook Press, 2002
Blessings, ISBN 0-88753-350-7, Black Moss, 2000
Uncivilizing, ISBN 1-895837-17-0, Insomniac Press, 1997
Mix Six, ISBN 10896367-06-2, Mekler & Deahl, 1996
Things Unsaid, ISBN 0-88753-, Black Moss, 1996
The Waiting Room, ISBN 0-88954-375-5, Highway Book Shop, 1993
The Colour of Words, ISBN 0-9698394-2-1, self, 1990
Sometimes the Distance, ISBN 0-88962-307-4, Mosaic, 1986
Yet, Woman I Am, ISBN 0-88954-199-x, Highway Book Shop, 1979
Excuses, for all occasions, ISBN 0-88954-188-4, Highway Book Shop, 1979

AWARDS:

Town of Richmond Hill Outstanding Citizen Award, 1994.
Awards Celebration for the Arts by Town of Richmond Hill, 1995.
Her literary journal, WAVES, 1972-1987, won 3 national awards for short stories.
Accorded Honorary Life Membership in Canadian Poetry Association, 2000

The Allan Sangster Award for outstanding dedication and service to the Canadian Authors Association, 2004.

Special Achievement Award from the Surrey Board of Trade on Oct. 19, 2007 at the Surrey International Writers Conference.

Lifetime Achievement Award, World Poetry Society, Vancouver, Feb. 29, 2008.

Accorded Lifetime Membership in Ontario Poetry Society, 2009

[Photo by Una and Juergen Bruhns]

CITY/TOWN: Bowen Island, BC

DATE OF BIRTH: March 19, 1936

PLACE OF BIRTH: Smithers, BC

ANCESTRAL BACKGROUND: Father, Alta. of Swiss parents, Mother born in Sweden

EMPLOYMENT OTHER THAN WRITING: Teaching school-all grades to College English; plus book publishing

[BCBW 2015] "Poetry"

World Poetry Reading Series Award Press Release (2008)

The World Poetry Reading Series is honoured to present a World Poetry Life Time Achievement Award 2008 to Bernice Lever, Wise woman, Poet and Author of eight Poetry books. "Bernice Lever, born in Smithers, B.C., has been writing and publishing since her poems were in the Rossland High School annual. Bernice is a mother of 3 talented, creative children; 2 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild, and counting. She has worked for Canadian publishers and taught part or fulltime college English classes for over 30 years in the Toronto, Ontario. All the while missing B.C. Mountains, Bernice edited, *WAVES*, a prize wining literary journal for 15 years, from 1972 on. She has written over a dozen books of poetry and prose which are displayed on her website. Her composition textbook is the *Colour of Words*. She has read her poems on 5 continents. She was awarded the 1st Honorary Lifetime Membership in the Canadian Poetry Association, the Allan Sangster Award for her work with the Canadian Authors Association, a city of Richmond Hill Arts Award for her 25 years of literary community events, and in 2007, the Special Achievement Award for literacy and literature support by the Surrey Board of Trade. Bernice was a V.P. and Treasurer for the League of Canadian Poets and is now an active V.P. with the Canadian Authors Association. She is also

involved with BC Federation of Writers, North Shore Writers, as well as our beloved World Poets."