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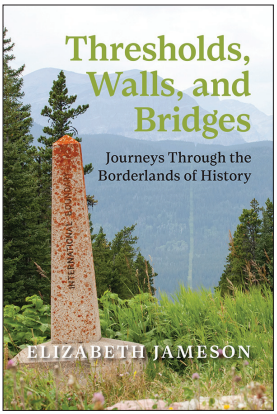

THRESHOLDS, WALLS, AND BRIDGES: JOURNEYS THROUGH THE BORDERLANDS OF HISTORY

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Torches Passed and Present

June 20, 2017

I retired from the University of Calgary July 1, 2017. My year as president of the Western History Association had seemed like a professional culmination; my presidential address, which I offered as my 2016 Chair's Lecture, wove together many threads of my research, much of it undertaken during my years in Calgary. My 2016 lecture felt like a summation. It seemed both egocentric and anticlimactic to deliver a final Chair's Lecture in 2017.

I had spent over forty years in higher education, eighteen of them at the University of Calgary as the Imperial Oil-Lincoln McKay Chair in American Studies. During those years, my greatest professional pleasures had included graduate teaching, my Chair's Lectures, and helping organize conferences that launched the field of western women's history and that promoted inclusive, comparative, and transnational histories. Combining these passions into a thank-you and farewell, I hosted a conference to celebrate and feature some of the graduate students with whom I had been privileged to work at the University of Calgary and the University of New Mexico.

I called the conference "Torches Passed and Present," taking the theme from a line in President John F. Kennedy's 1961 Inaugural Address: "the torch has been passed to a new generation. . . ." During my years of teaching, the torch-passing had felt less like a one-way hand-off and more like a continuous relay, in which students passed their ideas to me as much as I to them. Those exchanges and the ideas they sparked were part of what I loved about graduate teaching.

The talented speakers at the "Torches Passed" conference didn't really need me to pass any torches to them—they had already taken their own torches some distance down their own paths. The concept of a generation is problematic as well. The speakers had belonged to different academic cohorts, covered a wide age span, and one former student is older than I am.

Susan Armitage, my longtime friend and writing partner, simply announced that she was coming and wanted to speak. We had been friends since 1974, had worked together to organize the first conferences in western women's history, to edit two anthologies—*The Women's West* and *Writing the Range: Race, Class and History in the Women's West*—and to establish the Coalition for Western Women's History.[1] So multiple overlapping generations were represented on the conference program. I stuck with the "Torches Passed" theme because I'm a metaphor junkie, and it felt good to recognize that I was pulling back, and the next generations of historians were coming into professional maturity.

Part of my impetus to host "Torches Passed and Present" was my continuing mission to promote historians' cross-border exchanges. I wanted to introduce some of my former students to one another. Even people who had studied at the same university did not necessarily know one another, given the different times when they were enrolled. In my invitations to participants, I billed the conference as a family reunion for cousins who had never met.

Most of all, I wanted to showcase these colleagues, in all their diversity. Every student with whom I've worked brought personal interests, questions, goals, and career aspirations. The conference program reflected the range of subjects that engaged them and the uses to which they had put their graduate educations. Their multiple career paths offered an array of answers to the question "What can you do with a history degree?" I introduce them here in the approximate sequence of our association, basing these brief sketches on the biographies they submitted for the conference program.

Susan Armitage (PhD, London School of Economics) was, in 2017, an Emerita Professor of History and Women's Studies at Washington State University in Pullman, where she taught and wrote about women in the U.S. West for thirty years. In addition to our two co-edited volumes, she also co-edited *So Much to be Done* with Ruth Moynihan and Christiane Duchamps, and *Speaking History* with Laurie Mercier, and is the author of *Shaping the Public Good: Women Making History in the Pacific Northwest*.

Evelyn Schlatter (MA, University of Denver, PhD, University of New Mexico) was a senior analyst with the Intelligence Project at the Southern Poverty Law Center in 2017, where she specialized in anti-LGBTQ movements and White nationalist movements. Her expertise in right-wing political and social movements, gender, and sexuality could be traced, in part, to her UNM dissertation, "Aryan Cowboys: White Supremacist Ideology

and the Search for a New Frontier, 1960–1995."[2] Some of her dissertation research had terrified me, like the times she stuffed her short hair into a baseball cap and visited gun shows, passing as an adolescent boy. Since 2021 she has been a research consultant for progressive organizations.

Dedra McDonald Birzer (MA, University of Wisconsin, PhD, University of New Mexico) worked as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio during 1998–1999, while completing her dissertation, "Negotiated Conquests: Domestic Servants and Gender in the Spanish and Mexican Borderlands, 1598–1860." From 2000–2020 she worked as a Lecturer in History and Rhetoric at Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, Michigan, while managing a six-child household and continuing to publish. In 2020 she was appointed director and editor-in-chief of the South Dakota Historical Society Press.

Benny Andrés, Jr. (MA, PhD, University of New Mexico) was an associate professor of history and Latin American Studies at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, where he taught Latino history, the history of the American West, the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, U.S. immigration history, U.S. food history, and a graduate seminar in modern U.S. history. His research and publications examine transmigration, labor, race relations, and environmental issues along the California borderlands during the twentieth century. In 2015, Dr. Andrés published *Power and Control in the Imperial Valley: Nature, Agribusiness, and Workers on the California Borderland, 1900–1940*, based on his award-winning dissertation. Choice selected it as an Outstanding Academic Title.

Susan Kwiatkowski (MA, University of Calgary) was a student in my first undergraduate class at the University of Calgary, History of Women in the U.S. West, fall semester, 1999. She combined her pursuit of academic education with a full-time job with Information Technologies at the University of Calgary, taking one class each semester. Having worked for the University of Calgary since 1981 and having completed a BA in English from Mount Allison University in 1996, she earned a BA in History at the University of Calgary in 2004. In 2009 she completed her MA, with a thesis, "Creating Young Citizens: Education in the Borderlands of Alberta and Montana, 1895–1914." I was at a bit of a loss after she completed her MA—she had been a constant in my life for a decade, and it was weird to face a semester without Sue. In 2017 she was a senior analyst with Change and Release Management in IT Governance and Administration at the University of Calgary. She has since joined me in the ranks of the happily retired.

Sean Marchetto (MA, University of Calgary) was the first MA student I supervised at the University of Calgary, beginning in the fall of 1999. His thesis, "Tune In, Turn On, Go Punk: American Punk Counterculture, 1968–1985," introduced me to a history I would never otherwise have explored, and it's fair to say he taught me at least as much as I taught him. In 2017 he was an elementary school principal and a former high school chemistry and philosophy teacher. He was also a writer, a sometimes journalist, a former late-night radio host, and occasional art auctioneer. He was once honored as the Calgary Exhibition & Stampede Parking Lot Attendant of the Year.

Cynthia Loch-Drake (MA, University of Calgary, PhD, York University) is a historian of gender and labor. She and Sean Marchetto were both enrolled in the first graduate seminar I taught at the University of Calgary, on U.S. social history. Sarah Carter and I jointly supervised her MA thesis, "Jailed Heroes and Kitchen Heroines: Class, Gender, and the Medalta Potteries Strike in Postwar Alberta." Since earning her doctorate in history at York University, Dr. Loch-Drake has worked as an adjunct professor in the Toronto area teaching courses in the history of women, work, economics, and business.

Michel Hogue (MA, University of Calgary, PhD, University of Wisconsin) was, in 2017, an associate professor in the department of history at Carleton University in Ottawa, with teaching specialties in Indigenous, Canadian, and U.S. histories. His research to that point had focused on the experiences of Métis and First Nations on the transborder Great Plains and their encounters with the agents of the Canadian and U.S. governments. That research began at the University of Calgary, where Sarah Carter and I supervised his MA thesis, "Crossing the Line: The Plains Cree in the Canada-United States Borderlands, 1870–1900." He is the author of *Metis and the Medicine Line Creating a Border and Dividing a People* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; Regina: University of Regina Press, 2015), which won the Stubbendieck Great Plains Distinguished Book Prize from the Centre for Great Plains Studies, University of Nebraska, and the Prairie Clio Award from the Canadian Historical Association.

Carol Archer (MA, PhD, University of Calgary) earned a BA in English and History at the University of Victoria. She later entered the Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary and received a Diploma in Curriculum and Instruction in the Library Program. After a career as a teacher-librarian and administrator with the Calgary Board of Education,

she returned to the University of Calgary where she completed her MA and PhD in History with an MA thesis, "Surviving the Transition: Women's Property Rights and Inheritance in New Mexico, 1848–1912," and her dissertation, "'El Amparo de la Ley': Hispanas' Use of Spanish Mexican and Anglo American Law in Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado, 1848–1912."

Gretchen Albers (MA University of Nebraska, PhD, University of Calgary) came to Canada in 2005 to pursue doctoral work. Her dissertation, "Boundaries of the Heart: White Women, Indigenous People, and the Christian Missions to the Dakotas, 1862–1910," focused on missionaries on the upper U.S. Plains and Manitoba. In 2017 she worked as a freelance editor of academic books and journals, and as a historical consultant, mainly in the area of First Nations land claims and treaty rights.

Amy McKinney (MA, Montana State University, PhD, University of Calgary) completed her doctorate in 2011. Her dissertation, "'How I Cook, Keep House, Help with Farm Work Too': Rural Women in Post-World War II Montana," examined how and to what degree the 1950s suburban housewife ideal translated to rural areas. In 2017 she was an associate professor of history at Northwest College in Powell, Wyoming, had published articles on rural women, and was researching Harriette Cushman, the first woman poultry specialist for the U.S. Extension Service, and her role as a professional woman in agriculture.

Andrew Varsanyi (MA, University of Calgary) was a student in my class, "Wild West/Mild West?: Comparative History of the Canadian and U.S. Wests" in 2007. He earned undergraduate degrees in History, Political Science, and Education at the University of Calgary, and taught before returning to graduate school to complete his MA in history in 2015. His thesis, "Principle vs. Pragmatism: Henry Loucks and South Dakota Populism 1884–1900," focused on Henry Langford Loucks, the South Dakota Populist leader who emigrated to South Dakota from Canada. In 2017 Andrew was the Director of Business Development at Critical Control Energy Services, a Calgary-based oil and gas software and service company. He was also the co-founder of Evolved Metrics, a software company. He has since continued his graduate studies as a doctoral student at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

These diverse academic interests and career paths represent only a sample of the twenty-two graduate students I supervised or co-supervised, whose work spanned two universities in two countries, two North American borderlands and some five centuries.

The conference presentations reflected the speakers' diverse academic interests and career paths. Susan Kwiatkowski, Carol Archer, and Andrew Varsanyi presented personal reflections in a session titled "Lifelong Learning." Benny Andrés and Michel Hogue presented research on two North American Borderlands, speaking on "Border Jumpers: A Forgotten Story of Americans Illegally Entering the U.S. from Mexico, 1924–1933," (Andrés) and "Wild West/Mild West: Writing Histories Across the Forty-Ninth Parallel" (Hogue). Susan Armitage spoke about "Collaborations," an incisive talk from a stellar collaborator and writing partner. Three speakers presented their recent research in women's histories. Dedra McDonald Birzer spoke on "'Militant Generosity': Dorothy Thompson's and Rose Wilder Lane's Practical Activism during the Great Depression and World War II." Cynthia Loch-Drake presented "'Standing up for ourselves': Connecting Women and Production and Reproduction in Edmonton's Postwar Packing Industry." Amy McKinney spoke on "Harriette Cushman: Building a Place for Poultry in Montana." The final session explored three distinct careers. Evelyn Schlatter's title demonstrated her characteristic way with words: "The Accidental Expert: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Qualm." Sean Marchetto traced his career "From Punk to Principal." And Gretchen Albers spoke as a public historian on "Historic Research in the Context of Land Development: Paskapoo Slopes and Indigenous Story-Telling." The program abundantly showcased the wide range of history graduate students' interests, talents, and achievements.

In the days leading up to the conference I had been packing up my university office. Like most historians, I'm a pack rat. I sorted decades of research notes, lecture notes, articles, class lists, and student's folders that evoked memories of research trips, conferences, and all the students at all stages of their educations. As I sorted, packed, and discarded mounds of documents, what I thought about most and what I treasure most are the relationships. I could continue to research and write after retirement if I wished; I could continue to visit with colleagues at conferences. My teaching would continue for a few years with the graduate students I was still supervising or on whose committees I served, but eventually it became the part of my work that ended.

As I prepared to celebrate the people I had once supervised, I thought about teaching relationships, and especially about the teachers who had inspired me and whose teaching I had tried to emulate. I was fortunate to learn from some extraordinary teachers. Mrs. Charlotte Matthews,

my grade eight and nine English teacher, turned me into something of a grammar fanatic. My high school English teacher, Dr. William H. Hall, met each of his students where we were and pushed us. He made me cut everything I wrote in half. Three women I discussed in my 2012 lecture—Hannah Goldberg at Antioch College, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Marilyn Blatt Young at the University of Michigan—encouraged me and inspired me with their intellects and with their abilities to manage whole lives that included families and careers.

I thought particularly about Robert S. Fogarty, my mentor at Antioch College, who unknowingly drew me into the profession because I thought everyone would be as smart and kind as he was. Antioch had a work-study program; every other quarter for five years we left campus to work somewhere. Bob found me my last job, organizing the archive of the Western Federation of Miners, at the Western History Collections at the University of Colorado. That job led to my BA thesis, and ultimately to my dissertation and subsequent book, *All That Glitters*. He also hired me as his teaching assistant and gave me my first course to teach on my own, the summer after I graduated. Bob Fogarty taught me two essentials about history and about teaching. First, history matters because people matter. And second, teaching is an act of faith.

In the first class I assisted for him, a young woman who was really caught up in historic preservation went on at some length about a building she had worked to save. Bob listened respectfully, commented on the significance of the structure, and complimented her on her work to save it. Then he said something like, "You know, we must always remember that the buildings are not what is most important; it's the people who lived and worked in them. The buildings are important because that's where people lived, worked, and made history." That simple statement clicked for me. History matters because it is about people. Bob introduced me to social history, and opened historical territory far removed from what my classmate Bob Berard called "battles, dates, and kings." That simple shift later helped me think about histories of work, family, and households.

Maybe the most important thing Bob told me about teaching was that it is an act of faith—that often the things you teach cannot connect for students until much later when they have the experience to connect with the history. You offer what you can and hope it is useful when it clicks with their experience. That insight was helpful when I discovered, as we all do, how quickly I no longer shared my students' frames of reference. Before I got my first full-time job in 1976, a student reminded me that for him

Vietnam was junior high, not a personally life-altering chapter in national history. And by the early 1980s I faced students in women's history classes who thought they were learning the ancient history of a movement that was no longer necessary, a movement that had, by then, occupied a lot of my life. It worried me that they might not be prepared for some of the realities they faced after they graduated, for which their experience had not yet prepared them. On the last day of class, which is an invitation to try to say something inspirational, I began to conclude by saying something like this:

> I hope that everything you learned this semester represents chapters in women's histories that remain in the past. I hope you never encounter the kinds of inequities that prompted women in the past to organize for change. I hope that you achieve everything you hope for, that you can reach what you want personally and professionally without regard to gender or race or any other socially constructed category of difference. I hope that you exceed all your professional goals. I hope that you find relationships that sustain you. But I also hope that if, someday, you are unjustly passed up for a promotion, or if Prince Charming hits you, or other things happen that I hope you never face—if that happens, I hope you know you are not to blame, you are not alone, you are not crazy, and you have resources.

I could only pitch it out there, hope they never needed to remember my words, but that the history I'd tried to teach might inform them as citizens and that it would be there when it mattered.

History matters because people matter. Teaching is an act of faith. It is also, in my experience, a relationship, a two-way exchange. Graduate teaching pushed me intellectually; students often gave me the sparks of ideas at just the right moment. "Torches Passed" was about those relationships, with the friends and colleagues who attended that day, and those with whom I have shared teaching relationships. It was a day, selfishly, to celebrate the folks who helped make my working years most rewarding.

History, too, has been a relationship for me—it connects my present with the past and future. More personally, it has been a relationship with the people who made the history I studied and taught. I got to know some of those people and their families personally, as I recorded their

oral histories. I remain deeply grateful and honored by their trust. I got to "know" other historical actors in the archives, and in my colleagues' books, and tried to introduce them to students in my classes and to my readers. I have sought to tell their stories respectfully, clearly, and accessibly.

While I wanted "Torches Passed" to be about my former students, retirement was inescapably a time to reflect on what I valued in my career, the changes I'd seen in some four decades in higher education, and what I most valued. I concluded the "Torches Passed and Present" conference with a few reflections on the academic worlds in which I had worked, and those the next generations would inherit.

I entered graduate school as the social movements of the 1950s and 1960s inspired new approaches to history. Nothing in the textbook histories that focused on nation states, wars, and public politics could explain or illuminate the African American Civil Rights Movement, the Anti-Vietnam-War Movement, the Women's Liberation Movement, or any other grass-roots social movements that had made change. Struggles for racial justice, women's rights, workers' rights, and peace movements did not begin in the 20th century, but they had not gotten much attention in K–12 classrooms or university survey courses. Nor had histories of work, gender, or race relations that could explain why and how people had organized public movements for change. Those histories were never divorced from political and economic histories, from the histories of battles, dates, and elections. Many women were admitted to graduate and professional schools during World War II, like my mother who entered medical school in 1945, the last medical school class before returning soldiers took women's industrial jobs and used their veterans' benefits to enter higher education and professional schools. Many of those returning veterans became the first members of their families to attend universities, increasing the numbers of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities with post-secondary degrees. The confluence of post-World War II social movements just as increasing numbers of women, people of color, and ethnic minorities entered the university ultimately nourished the questions that led to the new social history, women's history, African American, Mexican American/Chicanx/Latinx, Indigenous, working-class, and LGBTQ2S+ histories. These in turn nourished the new western histories that sought to incorporate their topics into the regional narrative and that interrogated the triumphal national projects that celebrated European settlement of the U.S. and Canadian Wests.

I became part of a fortunate generation that got to develop women's history and women studies and establish women studies programs. The histories of previously silenced or marginalized people of color and "ordinary" working people informed my approaches to women's and labor histories. I tried always to be conscious of how race, class, and gender intersected in people's lives, shaping the challenges they faced, and the changes they sought.

There are now more women in our classrooms, curricula, and tenure streams than when I started. When I began teaching, I thought that women's presence would change academic culture, the knowledge we produced, and the ways we framed our inquiries. That process moves slowly, unevenly, and incrementally. The academic fields in which women have had the greatest impact have often also lost status within the university and in public perceptions. In my 2012 lecture (chapter 10) I told a story about the eminent historian and former president of the American Historical Association, Louise Tilly, who counseled me not to worry about the pressures I felt as a department chair with a demanding teaching load and a toddler. She told me I was measuring myself against a professional model based on a male work-cycle. "Men do their best work in their 30s and 40s," she told me. "We do our best work in our 50s and 60s." It is easier for many parents to be productive after our children are grown, or at least after the intense years of parenting infants and toddlers are past. Many professional expectations are projected from a now largely outdated normative male breadwinner career path rooted in gender, sexual, racial, and class privilege, with a female helpmate at home to do the primary childcare, cooking, cleaning, and laundry, freeing the scholar to focus on research and teaching. That model never applied to most people and no longer applies to most academics, including many male colleagues who share household and parental responsibilities.

The differences are starker in the U.S. than in Canada, which has a more flexible tenure clock. In the United States, one must come up for tenure by the sixth year after entering a tenure-stream position. For many women, this has meant that the pressures to publish and apply for tenure coincides with their last good childbearing years. Our professional expectations and timelines still do not adequately address how gender affects the ways we can combine career and family. As I compiled the presenters' biographies for this essay, I noticed that family commitments had affected the career options and choices of every partnered woman. Each of them

had made choices to delay their educations, or to work or study in a specific locality, based on the needs of partners or children.

Those intertwined commitments still adversely affect women's pay and promotions. It is difficult to combine careers when both partners are academics, and particularly when both are in the same field. Finding two academic jobs in the same community is not easy. This has often led to the privileging of a man's career over a woman's, with women doing more sessional/adjunct teaching so they can live in the same community with their fully employed partners.[3] Women earn less in part because sessional/adjunct teaching doesn't pay well, and because if they are hired into a permanent position, their part-time teaching experience and previous publications rarely influence their starting pay or count toward promotion or tenure.

I discussed many of the obstacles to valuing women's academic work in chapter 10: the devaluing of work about women and gender, the assumption that women address "second rate" subjects and publish in "second rate" journals, and that we do too much service work.[4] We have not significantly expanded professional expectations of what constitutes valuable scholarship, or the multiple ways to contribute to scholarship and education. Historians still value monographs over articles, and single-authored work over collaboration. Those expectations made me think of Margaret Fuller, the subject of my first published article, an American transcendentalist and feminist, one of the leading U.S. intellectuals of the 19th century.[5] Fuller judged her own intellect as inferior to many of her male contemporaries, like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. She thought she had "a second-rate mind" because, she said, "Conversation is my natural element. I need to be called out, and never think alone, without imagining a companion."[6] The insistence on the isolated intellectual and lone author undervalues the importance and richness of collaborative work, of conversations and relationships, of multiple perspectives on a collective and connected past.

The "Torches Passed" conference theme connoted legacies and inheritance. Although those metaphors were overly simple, they expressed my faith in those who continue this work after I retired, and I regretted that they would not inherit an easier academic world. It has seemed to me that teaching, history, and professors have all been increasingly devalued throughout North America during my years in higher education. When I started teaching at the University of Calgary, the faculty was featured prominently on the university web page as part of what made ours a great

university. Over the years, the typeface about the faculty got smaller, and then moved to the bottom of the page, and then disappeared. When I started teaching, faculty determined the university mission and curriculum. Administrators would not attend a meeting of the Faculty Senate without an invitation but would focus on raising money and generating support for the programs the faculty generated and approved. In recent years I've become a little dizzy keeping up with the newest iterations of our mission as determined by an increasingly large body of administrators.

When I was an undergraduate, and when I started teaching, we had distribution requirements that ensured that students had some exposure to the social sciences, humanities, and sciences. In the United States, education majors had to take a U.S. history course. When I taught at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, all social work students were required to take a women's studies or African American studies course. The broad liberal arts base is no longer required in many universities.

Contrary to some popular concepts of a university education, we don't educate people for jobs—or not solely for jobs—but for the capacity to learn, to think critically, to change and adapt to changing circumstances. We know, if we are honest, that the specific jobs for which we can train students today will change radically or become obsolete during their working years. We educate not just for the job market, but also for democratic citizenship. We need look no further than south of the border to see how important it is that our citizens and our leaders know our core governing documents, the values they inscribe, and our history.

As I write this, the histories I have worked to recover and to include in history texts are under attack in the United States. The achievements of the social movements that inspired those histories are also under attack. The connection is not a coincidence. Much of what I have written can not be taught today in Florida classrooms, the result of a right-wing political agenda to erase the histories of race, women, LGBTQ2S+ persons, and social inequalities and to silence histories of resistance and dissent. Transgender children have become political targets, compounding the difficulty of already vulnerable young lives and using them as another way to attack public education. The history of slavery cannot be taught in some U.S. classrooms because it might make White children "feel bad." The result of all this will be another generation of children ill-prepared for the world they will inherit. The attacks on inclusive histories and "DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) hires" reflect the challenge those histories

pose to unearned power and privilege. They underscore how powerfully history informs citizenship.

Which brings me back to Bob Fogarty's basic maxim: History matters because it's about people, and people matter.

As I've noted, my move to the University of Calgary prompted me to change my teaching mission from making U.S. students' own histories accessible to making humanity visible across borders—social, economic, and national. Part of that re-visioning process was about me as well. Over time I stopped being startled by Canadian flags over schools and government buildings. I gradually stopped feeling I needed to apologize for being an American and began discerning what about my very American character I valued.

My new position gained me invitations to serve community institutions ranging from the Glenbow Museum and Archives Acquisitions Committee to the Mustard Seed Ministry's Storefront 101 Program that introduced college education to unhoused Calgarians. My community service helped integrate me into my new community. As I gradually felt more and more at home in Calgary, I began to view Canada, Canadian culture, and Canadian politics more fondly and with greater complexity. And I gradually developed different but equally strong loyalties to two nations.

My border-crossing experience is mine alone. I would guess that the process differs individually and is impacted by the age at which one emigrates, and the reasons that propel or draw each immigrant. I was not fleeing a pogrom, genocide, or similar upheaval, but was drawn by an opportunity. I didn't have to learn a new language, though I still wish I spoke French. I could still practice my profession. It was a relatively easy transplantation process—far easier for me than for my ill-fated irises. The move to Canada has been enormously enriching, not just for what I've learned about Canada, and borders and borderlands, but also for what I've learned about myself.

The hardest enduring change, as for many immigrants, remains distance from my family. I have developed even more respect for my grandmother, who left her parents and twelve siblings to emigrate to North America, and who returned to her native London only once before she died. I still miss living in the same city with my brother and sister-in-law, but except during the COVID-19 pandemic I traveled regularly to the United States. Since the COVID-19 pandemic introduced us all to Zoom, I enjoy regular Zoom visits with family and friends.

While I found ways to remain connected to family and friends in the United States, I gradually developed new close friendships and an adoptive family in Calgary. Some of those friends are other transplanted Americans with whom I still celebrate American Thanksgiving, though we have Thanksgiving dinner in the evening because people work, and American Thanksgiving is not a Canadian holiday. This was problematic for my Thanksgiving preparations because the monthly history department meetings were scheduled for noon the fourth Thursday of the month and American Thanksgiving is the fourth Thursday in November. For years, during the November department meeting my colleagues endured my anxiety about the turkey I had left to cook slowly, unbasted, in my oven. Finally, our department administrator, Marion McSheffrey, got tired of watching me squirm and look at my watch, and began scheduling the November department meeting for the third Thursday. The adaptations have sometimes been a two-way street, or maybe a two-way bridge, like the re-scheduled department meetings that became a place to accommodate American Thanksgiving.

When I arrived in 1999, I didn't know whether I would eventually return to the United States. By the time he was in university, my son Daniel told me he was staying in Canada. "What did you expect?" he said. "You brought me here when I was thirteen." I was surprised and gratified when he returned to Calgary after his university years in Ontario. Eventually our family grew, as Daniel blessed me with my treasured Calgary native daughter-in-law Barbara, and then with two grandsons, Stanley and Spencer. Now if someone asks me if I am going to return to the States, I smile and tell them "I have two anchor babies." Here, too, I think of my grandmother. When I was born, she retired from her long social work career in Newark and moved to Galveston. She took care of me while my mother went to medical school, and she shared treasured family stories and her often irreverent and salty humour. She also told me that when she retired at age sixty-nine, she was replaced by a man at three times her salary. She told me never to learn to type well, or if I did not to let my boss know, or I would only ever get to type. I forgot that advice until I was in graduate school and then realized she had taken her own leap of faith, sharing stories with which I couldn't connect personally until experience triggered my memories.

My cross-border journey progressed through stages of feeling uprooted to establishing new work relationships, friendships, and finally watching

my family grow in now-familiar soil. My Siberian irises are thriving in my Calgary garden.

My younger colleagues will each continue to find their own paths, their own missions, guided by their own highest ethics and intentions. I do not prescribe my own values, ethics, and intentions for anyone else, but I do think it is important consciously to ground our work in our highest values and to be transparent about our place in our own work. And then we commit to that act of faith. The freedom to do that, trusting our students and our readers to take what they need and leave the rest, lies at the heart of academic freedom, the heart of what I most value about higher education.

In the years before I retired, it seemed to me that teaching began to be subject to something that resembled a factory speed-up. The value of our work was increasingly measured by how many people we could process through the university faster, training them for jobs we know will be obsolete sometime in the future. It's like substituting mass production for fine craftsmanship. I resisted these pressures in the interests of good teaching. Students are neither consumers nor products constructed on assembly lines. The best teaching does not happen in huge classes, and people learn in different ways at different speeds. The humanities, social sciences, and arts remain central for an educated citizenry. I fear that these values are threatened and that the universities that have upheld them are becoming history. Those of us who have security in the academy need to use it to protect those who don't, and to advocate for what we value in a university education.

These cautions and curmudgeonly complaints notwithstanding, I would not choose a different career. I treasure my years in higher education, and I've seen much positive change in those years. My cautions are about safeguarding the gains made in more accurate and inclusive histories and more representative faculty. Our classrooms can be places to build bridges over old divides, to see and value humanity across the boundaries of time, space, social inequality, and national borders. They can become thresholds to not-yet-imagined possibilities. That faith has for centuries maintained oral traditions and long-silenced histories.

When I was growing up in Galveston, each summer I noticed a large gathering of African Americans in Menard Park, on the Seawall along the Gulf of Mexico, down the block from the house at 2823 Ave. Q1/2 where I lived until I was four. It looked to me like a celebration and perhaps a ceremony—a barbecue with speeches, and sometimes with folks

simply looking solemnly across the Seawall into the Gulf. It wasn't until I had been teaching U.S. history for some years that a colleague mentioned an African American holiday called Juneteenth. I began to learn its history and to realize that those annual gatherings might have been Juneteenth commemorations recognizing the events of June 19, 1865, when Major General Gordon Granger announced to the enslaved people of Galveston that they were free and ordered the final enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation in Texas following the end of the Civil War. Although President Lincoln had signed the Proclamation freeing all slaves on September 22, 1862, the slaves of Galveston did not receive the news until General Granger's proclamation. African Americans celebrated Juneteenth in multiple ways over the years, and it became a practice for some African Americans to make a pilgrimage to Galveston on Juneteenth to celebrate African American independence from slavery. Juneteenth finally became a federal holiday in 2021.

I knew none of this growing up on Galveston Island, but my African American neighbors did. They preserved that history through oral tradition, and I suspect that African America teachers taught African American history as best they could in their segregated K–12 classes, just as local memory keepers built precious archives for the future. Teaching inclusive history has often been a private and subversive act. It may need to be yet again. But the histories we have worked so hard to write into our textbooks can never be entirely erased or forgotten.

Whatever I had learned in the seventy years before my retirement, much of it from talented students and colleagues, it has sometimes seemed that I am voicing variations on themes that have engaged me for decades. I made my first public speech in 1964. I was a senior in high school and was invited to speak at my old junior high, at the induction of new members into the Stephen F. Austin Junior High School Honor Society. I ended "Torches Passed and Present" as I ended that first public speech, with words from Carl Sandburg, a wish for those who carry their own torches and forge their own paths.

For You
By Carl Sandburg

The peace of great doors be for you.
Wait at the knobs, at the panel oblongs.
Wait for the great hinges.
. . .
The peace of great books be for you,
Stains of pressed clover leaves on pages,
Bleach of the light of years held in leather.
. . .
The peace of great hearts be for you,
Valves of the blood of the sun,
Pumps of the strongest wants we cry.

The peace of great silhouettes be for you,
Shadow dancers alive in your blood now,
Alive and crying, "Let us out, let us out."

The peace of great changes be for you.
Whisper, Oh beginners in the hills.
Tumble, Oh cubs—to-morrow belongs to you.

NOTES

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1 Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, eds., *The Women's West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987); Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage, eds. *Writing the Range: Race, Class and Culture in the Women's West* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

2 The participants' theses and dissertations: Evelyn Schlatter, "Aryan Cowboys: White Supremacist Ideology and the Search for a New Frontier, 1960–1995" (PhD diss., University of New Mexico, 2000); Dedra McDonald Birzer, "Negotiated Conquests: Domestic Servants and Gender in the Spanish and Mexican Borderlands, 1598–1860" (PhD diss., University of New Mexico, 2000); Benny Andrés, Jr., "Power and Control in Imperial Valley, California: Nature, Agribusiness, Labor, and Race Relations, 1900–1940" (PhD diss., University of New Mexico, 2003); Amy McKinney, "'How I Cook, Keep House, Help with Farm Work Too': Rural Women in Post-World War II Montana" (PhD diss., University of Calgary, 2011); Gretchen Albers, "Boundaries of the Heart: White Women, Indigenous People, and the Christian Missions to the Dakotas, 1862–1910" (PhD diss., University of Calgary, 2011); Carol Archer, "Surviving the Transition: Women's Property Rights and Inheritance in New Mexico, 1848–1912" (master's thesis, University of Calgary, 2006) and "'El Amparo de la Ley': Hispanas' Use of Spanish Mexican and Anglo American Law in Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado, 1848–1912" (PhD diss., University of Calgary, 2015); Sean Marchetto, "Tune in, Turn on, Go Punk: American Punk Counterculture, 1968–1985" (master's thesis, University of Calgary, 2001); Cynthia Loch-Drake, "Jailed Heroes and Kitchen Heroines: Class, Gender, and the Medalta Potteries Strike in Postwar Alberta" (master's thesis, University of Calgary 2001); Michel Hogue, "Crossing the Line: The Plains Cree in the Canada-United States Borderlands, 1870–1900" (master's thesis, University of Calgary, 2002); Susan Kwiatkowski, "Creating Young Citizens: Education in the Borderlands of Alberta and Montana, 1895–1914" (master's thesis, University of Calgary, 2009); and Andrew Varsanyi, "Principle vs. Pragmatism: Henry Loucks and South Dakota Populism 1884–1900" (master's thesis, University of Calgary, 2015).

3 The terms "sessional" and "adjunct" refer to part-time university teaching, in which teachers are hired by the course. The work is generally temporary, insecure, and massively underpaid.

4 I cannot think about these "second rate" categories without also remembering a course that Bob Fogarty taught and I assisted called "Second Rate Literature." He advertised it as a class taught by a second-rate professor with a second-rate assistant in which we would study second-rate novels. The novels mostly responded to social issues and violated the standards for "first rate" literature that required a single protagonist who matured or progressed. We interrogated those standards for "first rate" literature and voted at the end of the course to see if we considered any of our readings first rate. It was a great introduction to how standards are established to maintain power and authority in a field.

5 Elizabeth Jameson, "To Be All Human: Sex Role and Transcendence in Margaret Fuller's Life and Thought," *University of Michigan Papers in Women's Studies* 1:1 (February 1974): 91–126.

6 Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Henry Channing, and James Freeman Clarke, eds. *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli, Volume 1* (New York: The Tribune Association, 1869), 107.