

draw and paint.

However, this is not a book about the frustrations of 'Diapers and Drawings.' In fact, the power of the book lies in its lack of conflict and in its lack of pretence. It is about a woman artist who did not need to define what 'artist' meant. She was what she was, someone who pursued a "simple life, home happiness and beauty." She worked her painting into her life whenever it was possible, but with a gentle urgency to express herself rather than a desperate one to prove a point. It is a life of joys and sadness, like most lives.

What makes this life memorable as well as her talent as an artist, is her exquisite spirituality. To read some of the things she has said makes one realize that the paintings reproduced in the book have the same simplicity and directness of someone standing in an open field, speaking directly to God. The palette is limited, the horizon is low and the sky is vast. The viewer's eye is directed upwards to the light and to God.

These however are not all pretty paintings. They can scream as much as they rejoice. They are not done for decoration, but for communication. There is too much respect for the world around her to treat it as decoration: "Trees are so mysterious they awaken a feeling of awe in me. They live so much longer than I. Their heads and branches are lifted up to the light. They are peaceful enough for birds to rest in their branches without fear."

To grow up on the Prairies, to live amidst all that vastness, gives most Prairie people an inherent loneliness that they live with all their lives. This is so apparent in Mary Klassen's paintings. It is there even in the most lighthearted works. It is in the poignant way she uses her lights and darks, and in the way her shapes seem to gather together to comfort each other. You must spend some time with each painting; if you do not, its richness escapes you. Its subtleties are its power.

There is something quite moving about a son gathering together his mother's work and presenting it to the world. In this way the book breaks new ground. John Unrau, as a scholar, has also analyzed the work and where he felt it necessary has given us his interpretations. Perhaps he feels that the analytical segments make it a more valid art book, though they make the reading less flowing.

Through all of this it is impossible to ignore one basic fact—and why should

we?—that his book is a son's tribute to his mother. Her paintings and her words speak for themselves, and it is indeed a life to be applauded. The book is a beautiful gift to the rest of us.

*Helen Lucas is a painter, born and raised in Saskatchewan, who lives outside Toronto.*

## LIVING THE CHANGES

Joan Turner, ed. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1990.

*By Lisa Schmidt*

Essentially a book by and about Canadian women, *Living the Changes* is a feminist anthology that aims to help "bridge the gap between academia and the public" by providing a forum for writers, social workers, street kids, academics and artists ranging in age from nine to 73 to explore issues relevant to women living in Canada today.

Among others, topics covered include: sexual harassment, new reproductive technologies, addiction to heroin, body image, giving birth, sheltering battered women and being an older lesbian.

That writings on a wide variety of contemporary issues have been assembled between two covers is a refreshing change from the usual form that many anthologies take, where one topic is discussed to the exclusion of all others. Adding to the

distinctiveness of this approach is the use of a variety of literary forms, ranging from poetry to personal memoirs to academic studies, through which these issues are addressed. For instance, Uma Parameswaran explores the immigration experience to Canada in her poem "Mangoes to Maples," whereas Sari Lubitsch Tudiver recounts her mother's addiction to prescription pills as a backdrop for her critique of the pharmaceutical industry.

A number of contributors have established reputations in the worlds of politics, the arts and literature: the names of Evelyn Lau, Mary Meigs, Rosemary Brown and Di Brandt will be familiar to many readers. Others have academic credentials, including editor Joan Turner who wrote the introductory and closing chapters.

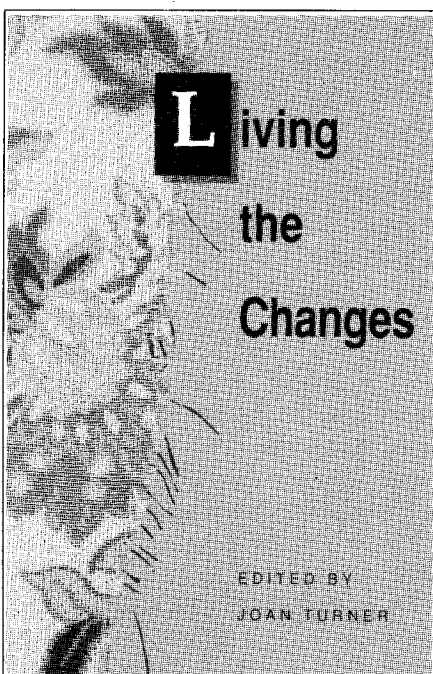
British writer and anthology editor Amanda Sebestyen once commented: "Every book is haunted by ghosts of perfect books it may have been." *Living the Changes* is no exception.

In her introduction, Turner emphasizes at least twice that this book represents authors of different races, cultures, religions, sexual orientations and ages—a "tapestry" of Canadian women. In spite of the fact that most of the contributors reside in Manitoba, Turner has in fact managed to create such a tapestry. But as evidenced in her wide-ranging statement about women's work in Canada "where most of us now work on computers in our homes and offices..." and the absence of contributors from the ranks of working class and unemployed women, Turner neglects to join the skein of class difference into her tapestry. The result is an uneven weave.

To be fair, one of the more powerful pieces in this anthology is a poem contributed by 'Candy,' a pseudonym chosen by a young woman who has experienced life on the streets. She writes:

*She stands in the shadow peeking out of the door./ Innocence corrupted, a 14-year old whore./ Innocence rejected, purity defiled./ Who will come forward with love for this child?*

This is writing straight from Candy's life, from her pain—not a feminist thesis on childhood prostitution, but a living picture of what life is like for thousands of young women who live on the streets of Canadian cities. It belongs in this book.



But I found it difficult to accept Turner's idea that the writing brought together for this anthology represents an authentic mosaic of Canadian women today. Many of the essays are not written from the perspective of women who are living the changes themselves but from that of women who are observing, recording and analyzing these changes. For instance, in a piece on battered women's shelters, battered women's voices are absent. The same gap exists in Rosella Melanson's piece on women's work as it relates to the Canadian economy: where are the names and stories of women who get up at five in the morning to go to the factories, who clean other people's houses, or care for other people's children?

"Too little about women has been documented in the annals of history," writes Turner. Unfortunately for poor women, this continues to be the case.

### **OSTEOPOROSIS: THE LONG ROAD BACK: ONE WOMAN'S STORY**

Pamela Horner. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1989.

*By Debbie Howe*

After reading Pamela Horner's book, *Osteoporosis: The Long Road Back*, it certainly is clear that it is a long road back to recovery and the resumption of a nearly normal lifestyle after being diagnosed as an osteoporotic. Osteoporosis is a disease where normal bone becomes brittle and porous resulting in fractures of the rib, hip, wrist or vertebrae.

In her book, Horner documents her progress to rehabilitate herself so that she can carry on a reasonable quality of life. For a newly diagnosed patient, this book gives a good overview of all aspects of the disease. She illustrates that a good measure of recovery is possible with medication, but also with a lot of motivation and persistent effort in areas of diet and exercise. Pamela even recovered enough to go back to work even if just for a few hours each week. Partial rehabilitation from a chronic illness, incorporating a new set of coping skills, is essential for physical as well as mental and emotional well-being. The resultant sense of self-worth as well as self-esteem is the key to continued rehabilitation.

She describes the disease itself, as well as discussing the risk factors for developing osteoporosis and the symptoms of osteoporosis. She gives a good personal account of her physical problems and progress during the early days of her osteoporosis, but she does not discuss in great length the emotional or mental feelings that are common in such a debilitating condition.

There is a very helpful section on coping strategies for the problems facing disabled persons on a daily basis. She discusses aspects of lying, sleeping, standing and walking, and sitting as well as safety measures to prevent further fractures.

Another section is devoted to prevention and treatment. The prevention could be more in-depth but there is a good description of various testing techniques for both diagnostic purposes and assessing progress. There are several interesting pages on the drugs used to control the disease.

There is good nutritional information presented with the help of lists of the calcium and protein content of common foods, and many calcium enriched meal plans. Good, well balanced nutrition is very important to the health of osteoporotics and almost equally important is regular exercise. Exercise is a key factor in recovering from the effects of osteoporosis and maintaining good muscle tone as well as increasing bone density. The exercise chapter is very informative and through both illustrations and

words, the topic is covered very well.

The final chapter is devoted to support organizations. Her source of inspiration was Lindy Fraser of Ottawa. This woman had osteoporosis for decades, but the doctors did not know what was wrong with her, until at the age of 79 she got her diagnosis. She went from being confined to her bed to being able to walk and function on her own. At age 87, she began the first support group for osteoporotics in Canada called Ostop located in Ottawa. Since then other groups have sprung up in the large cities in Canada. These groups provide their members with factual information on osteoporosis as well as giving moral support which is so vital to deal with the psychological aspects of osteoporosis.

In conclusion, *Osteoporosis: The Long Road Back* gives an easy to read account of osteoporosis with both accurate medical information and a patient's personal perspective of the problem. It is a great introduction to osteoporosis for the newly diagnosed, someone who is borderline or who has a friend with the problem, or someone just interested in the subject. A more detailed, more medically exhaustive book is Wendy Cooper's *Understanding Osteoporosis*.

Osteoporosis is and will continue to be a major health problem for women and sometimes men. It is more common than stroke, diabetes, heart attack and breast cancer in women over age 50, yet it receives much less attention.

The physical limitations are a risk of fractures, which usually heal but can still be painful especially if they are in the spine. A hip fracture in a person over 70 years old can mean major surgery with possible complications of pneumonia or blood clots and the risk that 20% of patients with hip fractures are chronically immobilized. Spinal fractures can cause a great deal of pain, a deformity in the upper spine which could lead to breathing and digestive problems, not to mention appearance problems (clothes don't fit properly) and the feeling of being "a little old lady." Rib and wrist fractures do heal but can still give problems.

The mental and emotional problems of osteoporosis are another big issue. The loss of ability to care for oneself on a daily basis is nearly too much for some newly diagnosed osteoporotics to bear, so depression sets in. Not for a day or two, but for weeks or maybe months. Every pa-

