

children in directions she never herself arrived at. She only/ navigated and travelled the seven windows of the house, and the two/ doorways.” Brand is wise enough not to explain the paradox: the question of being anchored and poor and a woman, versus being unmoored and incoherent with possibilities. Both options have their problems and their benefits.

Fierce Departures functions as a showcase for Dionne Brand’s considerable gifts, and provides a delightful introduction to her range, her pre-occupations and her unforgettable sound. Read this collection if you would like to understand why she has won so many awards, and how well she has earned her position as Poet Laureate for Toronto.

*Galloway, Matt. Interview with Dionne Brand. *Here and Now*. CBCRadio One, Toronto, September 30, 2009.

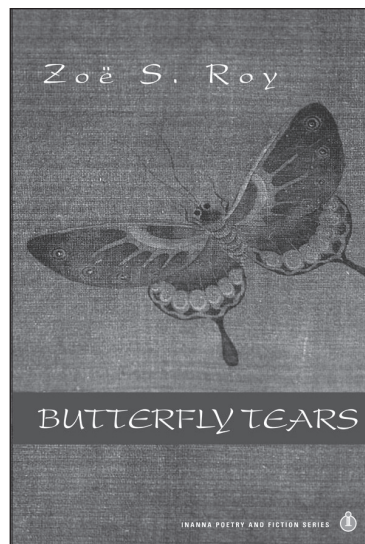
Elaine Jackson is a writer, yoga teacher, and juggler of part-time occupational therapy contracts who dreams of someday being as poetically talented as Dionne Brand. She lives north of Mount Albert, Ontario—pretty much in the middle of a swamp.

BUTTERFLY TEARS

Zoë S. Roy
Toronto: Inanna Publications and Education, Inc., 2009

REVIEWED BY MARLENE RITCHIE

The themes in Zoë S. Roy’s first collection of fifteen short stories, *Butterfly Tears*, are universal. They explore whether our lives are predestined and, if not, whether we are free and have the courage to better them. This exploration differs from the usual, because the life questions are explored through fictitious narratives depicting Chinese women



living in China, or as immigrants to the United States and Canada, and they relate to life between 1934 and 1996. All but one of Roy’s stories are told solely or in part by Chinese women with a particular focus on the status of these women as influenced by history, culture, and education. The plots are about relationships and are realistically set in the Chinese countryside and small apartments or in North American cities. Characters take on reality as they engage in daily life. The players could be Western women except for the fact that these women are bound by upbringing and memories to their homeland. We are persistently reminded of this tie in dreams and flashbacks. “Yearning,” “Twin Rivers,” “A Mandarin Duck,” “Gingko,” and “Life Insurance” explore the theme of women’s search and expectation that each woman will find the security of a “Mr. Right.” “A Woman in China,” and “Noodles” reflect on the teachings of Confucius prevalent in Chinese society, where the woman is to subjugate her wishes to those of her father and then to her husband. “Frog Fishing,” “Ten Yuan,” and “Balloons” are stories about patriotism and the lives of people during the Cultural Revolution, and about the realization by some people of their lack of freedom. Though uncovering family secrets often figures in the plots, this is the focus in “Fortune Telling” and

“Wild Onions.” In the latter story the woman comes to understand why her family members were labelled as “evil people.” In the tales “Herbs” and “Jing and the Caterpillar” women with unusual courage chart new paths. The first story, “Butterfly Tears,” sets the tender, reflective tone of the book. While the protagonist Sunni hears a familiar melody on the radio, “she sinks into the music’s sweetness as the memories it triggered played in her mind.” She sees herself as a child again, questioning her grandmother about love and life and pondering her present relationship with her husband. She is reminded of Grandmother’s story about Liang and Zhu: forbidden to be lovers, they soar together as butterflies in the afterlife. Nostalgia, tears, hope, and resolve come to the fore in Roy’s stories, and we are led to weigh the course of our own lives.

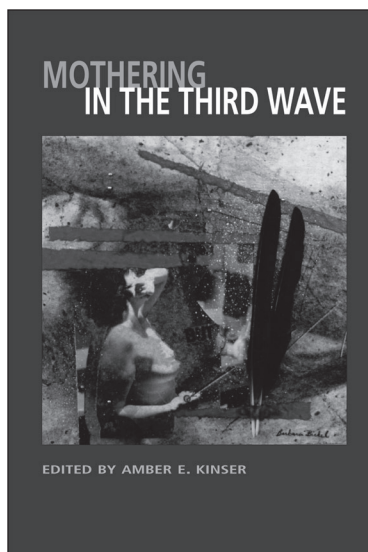
Marlene Ritchie is a Toronto freelance writer. Her essays and stories are inspired by her family experiences, nurses’ training, years of teaching in Japan and China and being a partner in the auction business. She is on the Advisory Board for Child Research Net, a journal dealing with issues involving children.

MOTHERING IN THE THIRD WAVE

Amber E. Kinser, Ed.
Toronto: Demeter Press, 2008

REVIEWED BY KATELAN DUNN

Analyses of mothering tend to generate diverse reactions and elicit powerful responses. Despite the burgeoning literature that exists on motherhood and mothering, the same debates surrounding the value of motherhood, the nurturance of family, and the possibility of mothering as a form of activism which promotes, deliv-



ers, and fosters the empowerment of women and the children they raise, continue to date.

Kinser's book *Mothering in the Third Wave* is a refreshing and startlingly accurate anthology of the struggle and complexity of mothering in a third wave feminist era. In an effort to eliminate oppressive stereotypes of maternity that have often dominated feminist and mainstream discourse, Kinser and her contributors call for an examination of both the idealized maternal experience versus the real one, the accepted stereotypes of the good mother and the bad mother, and the meaning of the diversity in maternal behaviour, since the process of mothering is complex, and is situated in social, psychological, and political realities. Kinser does not present the experience of motherhood through rose-coloured glasses; rather, she is aware of the complexities and ambiguity involved in being a mother in the twentieth century.

As highlighted by the contributors of this anthology, and by Kinser herself, there exists a kind of social limitation produced by a traditional understanding of gender identity and motherhood which dictates only one way to be a mother and to experience motherhood. This complicates the multiplicity of experiences of mothering and experiences that differ from the uniform social construct of motherhood, which is depicted as

“ideal”. The greatest success of this book is its emphasis on women's subjective, lived experiences, which cut across lines of race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality, and are placed at the centre of Kinser's analysis. The essays include the experience of motherhood from the perspective of lesbian mothers in a heterosexist culture, minority mothers seeking to reconcile their mothering practices with their struggles against patriarchy, and mothers attempting to negotiate their maternity with their feminist beliefs, to name but a few.

The only weakness of *Mothering in the Third Wave* is that the majority of the contributors to the anthology are mothers in the academy. Narratives of working-class mothers forced to negotiate the challenges of motherhood and the labour force, or Third world women who have left their own families to raise the children of Western men and women in an attempt to gain citizenship would have enhanced the collection.

Kinser combines the academic with the narrative, making *Mothering in the Third Wave* accessible to a broad audience and of interest to students, scholars, and those mothering in the 21st century, whether or not they identify as feminist mothers. Ultimately, *Mothering in the Third Wave* provides a space from which to explore what (feminist) mothers are currently struggling with, allowing women to reflect on their own mothering practices. It helps us to imagine mothering as not only a practice with the ability to empower the women who engage in it, but also as a socially and politically relevant endeavour that has yet to be valued, supported, and appreciated as important and significant, and recognized as work that is transformative, and socially, as well as culturally, sustaining.

Katelan Dunn is currently a Ph.D. student in the department of Sociology at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Her research interests include social inequality, gender, sexuality, immigration, and queer theory.

AFRICAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS: CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPES

Aili Mari Tripp, Isabel Casimiro, Joy Kwesiga, Alice Mungwa
New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009

REVIEWED BY GRACE ADENIYI OGUNYANKIN

African Women's Movements, a collaborative work by four scholar-activists, provides a comprehensive analysis of African women's movements in the 1990s and the consequent impacts on national politics and the entrenchment of women's rights in sub-Saharan Africa. Backed by primary fieldwork, analysis of media reports, and secondary literature review, the authors explore the factors behind women's visibility in politics and unprecedented role in effecting policy changes, and also examine why some countries have advanced women's rights while others have not. Though the authors provide adequate and comparative evidence from major countries in Africa, they particularly focus on comparative case studies of Cameroon, Mozambique, and Uganda due to similarities in Gross Domestic Product and high prevalence of women's movements and different colonial histories.

The authors first highlight the influences of African women's pre-colonial traditions and strategies as well as involvement in anti-colonial and national liberation struggles on African women's movements in the 1990s. They next examine the ineffectiveness of women's postcolonial organizations in addressing women's rights. Prior to the 1990s, women's organizations were not autonomous and were subsumed under umbrella women's organizations, often tied to and funded by the ruling party. However, in the 1990s, new autonomous women's movements emerged with