

much that others (including me) have missed. She features, for example, Lange's coverage of "stump farms" in the Pacific Northwest, the products of lumbering with no reseeded and of real estate firms that dishonestly sold this land to migrants who had not seen it and did not grasp the huge expense of getting the stumps removed. (Lange, ever the social scientist, even calculated the cost per acre.) But Spirn was caught between contradictory purposes here — examining Lange's take on the environment, providing a representative sample of her work, and presenting just one year's photography. Acknowledging this, the book's title does not mention the environmental theme. Spirn's introduction offers a paragraph on a Lange photoessay ("Death of a Valley") — not from 1939 — concerning the environmental cost of a California dam but, surprisingly, does not discuss the historical and ecological argument of Lange and Taylor's masterful photo-textual book *American Exodus*, published in 1939.

Still, *Daring to Look* makes two major contributions — foregrounding Lange's captions and publishing, for the first time, a selection of her photography in the Pacific Northwest. Hap-

pily, an exhibit of Lange's Oregon photography will be mounted at Portland State University in the fall of 2009.

LINDA GORDON
New York University

WITH GRIT AND BY GRACE: BREAKING TRAILS IN POLITICS AND LAW, A MEMOIR

by Betty Roberts
with Gail Wells

Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, 2008.
Photographs, index. 288 pages. \$24.95 paper.

Betty Roberts, a former teacher and professor, state senator, candidate for governor and U.S. Senate, state judge, and state supreme court justice — an extraordinary woman by any standard — has written (with Gail Wells) a memoir that resembles a gold mine; readers must dig into the work to find valuable veins that are not always obvious. But they are there. The book will be a good source for those who seek to

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understand mid-century Oregon politics, but even more for those who want a personal in-the-trenches memoir of the era when modern feminism emerged.

Roberts's memoir begins with recollections of a childhood in Texas that turned from comfortable to very difficult during the Great Depression. She describes how Depression-era privations produced personal determination, an important asset later. Despite some passing notes, however, there are fewer connections to larger forces at work in American society and politics, particularly the New Deal, than readers might hope.

The story becomes more pointed as it shifts to the Second World War, when Roberts married at nineteen, and the postwar period when she moved with her new husband to Oregon, a distant and exotic place for her. A few years later, the future Justice Roberts decided to return to college against the wishes of her husband and social expectations in the conformist 1950s. She evokes the McCarthy era, vividly recounting a clash with John Birch Society extremists. She could have contextualized her experience more fully, but it is clear her feminism and determination to succeed in higher education asserted themselves, eventually leading her to law school.

The pace of the book picks up as Roberts, then in the Portland area, ran for and won positions in the early to mid 1960s on her local school board, in the state House, and a few years later, the state Senate. Once elected, she confronted a variety of powerful restrictions on women, some formally written in the law (such as the ban on legal abortion), but many more that were informal and strongly enforced by the dominant culture. In an amusing anecdote, for example, she describes pressuring the *Oregonian* to refer to her as "Senator Roberts," rather than by her married name.

Roberts does well evoking the upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s, in which she was sometimes an unwilling participant, particularly the war in Vietnam — where her son served

in the military. Closer to home, Roberts carefully describes the struggle to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in Oregon. She also reminds us of practical struggles by women for equal treatment, sometimes in circumstances that, serious as they were, seem almost comical now, such as demonstrations in Portland by women seeking to join the City Club.

Chapters follow on two races in 1974: the Democratic primary for governor and, in the general election, the U.S. Senate race. Roberts lost both times but became a statewide political figure. Two years later, she was appointed to the state Court of Appeals and, in 1981, became the first woman on the state Supreme Court. She retired from the Court in 1986.

The memoir by Roberts reflects her personality — engaged, tough but fair, and sympathetic, particularly for those who are not in positions of influence. There are weaknesses — she sometimes does not provide readers with as much context for developments as she could, so there are questions left unanswered. Nonetheless, her book will certainly be of interest to students of Pacific Northwest and Oregon political history, but perhaps even more for those trying to understand the struggles required for women to achieve more equal status than they had when Roberts began her notable career.

WILLIAM LUNCH
Corvallis, Oregon

CHAINING OREGON: SURVEYING THE PUBLIC LANDS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST, 1851–1855

by Kay Atwood

The McDonald & Woodward Publishing Company,
Granville, Ohio, 2008. Illustrations, photographs, maps,
notes, bibliography, index. 279 pages. \$27.95 paper.

When the U.S. Congress first declared that the fertile lands of the Oregon Territory would be surveyed and donated to settlers with valid