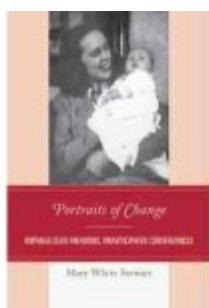


'Portraits of Change' – a disappointing read

By Kathryn Reed

I kept hoping "Portraits of Change: Unparalleled Freedoms, Unanticipated Consequences" would get better. This book had so much potential.

Mary White Stewart, who is a professor of sociology at UNR, published the book this year.



It's a look at four generations of her family – including herself, her daughters, her mom and her grandmothers. It delves into how the women's movement changed the expectation of women and the options for women.

But so often I kept putting the book down because I just didn't care what happened to her family. Unlike a good novel or autobiography, I never connected with her or her family. I never liked them or disliked them. I just didn't care.

I expected more analysis, especially based on her profession. What readers get is more like a laundry list of what happened in their lives. But there was no context to the rest of the world in order to judge if these women represent the "average" family.

There needed to be more than just her family to make the book relevant.

The last chapter on age begins to go below the superficial and starts to ask questions about why women, particularly in the United States, react the way they do to getting older. But it was too little, too late.

I'm still wondering why I bothered to read all 143 pages.