



## **Haven't Any News: Ruby's Letters from the Fifties (Life Writing)**

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“Ruby wrote letters home almost every week....She wrote anything that came into her head: about her children and Fred, her housekeeping, food, clothes, her friends, activities, schemes for making money, her dreams for the future....Her letters, naive, intimate and lively, were always optimistic or poignant. We'd read them to each other on the phone or pass them around. Often we saved them.”

So writes Edna Staebler in her introduction to this edited collection of her sister Ruby's letters from the fifties. In 1957 when Edna first began to collect and edit these letters she did so simply because she was sure that others would enjoy reading them as much as her own family did. Over fifty years later, the letters remain a joy to read and reclaim the ordinary voice of a housewife. Remarkably, these letters echo themes academics want to isolate in order to analyze women's roles in the modern world ? *drifting* (“life just happened to me”) and *contingency* (“women's lives depend on relationships”), for example, as well as the balance between family and work. As a fine example of women's life writing they also illustrate the literary patterns of overt and covert stories and of textual and subtextual meaning.

*Haven't Any News: Ruby's Letters from the Fifties* includes an Afterword by Marlene Kadar, Associate Professor of Humanities at York University and a leading expert on women's life writing. All those concerned with women's studies and with the social history of twentieth-century Canada will find this book of enormous interest and it will delight Edna Staebler fans everywhere.

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