Evelyn Cameron: a study in three parts of her photography, diary, and life in Montana
Van Genderen, Kate

URI: https://dspace.library.uvic.ca//handle/1828/8546
Date: 2017-09-05

Abstract:
Evelyn Jephson Cameron (1868-1928) was born to a wealthy merchant family outside London. At the age of twenty-five, she moved to Terry, Montana to raise horses and homestead with her husband, Ewen Cameron. Evelyn Cameron recorded their time in eastern Montana in her daily diary entries, which span over thirty-five years from 1893 to 1928. She became a self-taught professional photographer, and made thousands of photographs with large-format cameras of the people in the towns of Terry, Fallon, and Marsh. She photographed the landscape, birds, and other animals she kept as pets or encountered in the wild. She wrote in her private diary nearly every day, offering a first-person point of view of life for women in the late nineteenth-century in the American West. This thesis focuses on three particular aspects of Cameron’s life. The first chapter focuses on spaces or mediums that Cameron had access to that offered her autonomy and privacy, things which were often difficult for women to find at this time. These spaces and mediums include her photography, her diary, and her darkroom, all of which gave her different sorts of calm or control. The second chapter delves into Cameron’s photographic portraits of herself and other women, looking into how women portrayed themselves and others in the American West. Cameron depicted herself as a part of the natural world, and she also did so when capturing other women. The final chapter analyzes Cameron’s identity as a Montanan, from her conscious choice to move there to her refusal to return to Britain permanently. She gained American citizenship in 1918 and took living in Montana seriously. Her diary reveals a deep awareness of the natural world and records accomplishments and events that help to build and strengthen her relationship with her chosen home.

This item appears in the following Collection(s)
- Theses (History)
- ETD (Electronic Theses and Dissertations)

This collection contains theses and dissertations submitted in partial fulfillment of graduate degree programs at the University of Victoria.