mentionne jamais les conséquences de la Charte des droits et libertés de 1982 et on s'explique mal cet oubli. La bibliographie qui accompagne l'article ne contient que trois ouvrages. De plus, il y a des absences notables telles que David Rayside et Miriam Smith. Après la lecture de cet article, qui traite d'un sujet avec lequel je suis le plus familier, je me demande si d'autres articles simplifient également les réalités sociales et historiques décrites.

Malgré ces limites, le *Dictionnaire* couvre une variété de sujets. Presque tous les pays du monde sont inclus ainsi que des personnages provenant de plusieurs pays et périodes historiques. L'ouvrage se concentre surtout sur le monde francophone, mais les auteurs ne négligent pas les autres endroits où se manifeste l'homophobie. Ce dictionnaire sera donc très utile pour ceux et celles qui s'intéressent aux divers aspects de l'homophobie. Il sera aussi un ouvrage de référence indispensable pour les historiens de la sexualité, des mouvements sociaux et de la haine. Je félicite les directeurs du projet pour leur travail puisqu'il aide à mieux comprendre l'histoire des communautés gaies et lesbiennes, ainsi que les obstacles qui restent encore à surmonter.

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Errol Lincoln Uys — *Riding the Rails: Teenagers on the Move during the Great Depression*. New York: Routledge, 2003. Pp. 303.

During the Great Depression about a quarter-million people under the age of 21 struck out on their own to spend months, and even years, as "hoboes", cris-crossing North America on box cars, scraping by as day labourers or beggars as they waited for hard times to soften. Errol Lincoln Uys's *Riding the Rails* recounts the experiences of those youths who left home to relieve their parents of the burden of "another mouth to feed" or to escape family relations embittered by economic exigency. Some had been abandoned or abused; others were orphaned; but most came to a kind of reckoning with their parents that they were taking more than they were able to return and so quietly slipped away, leaving only a note on the kitchen table. Such departures betokened the plain, unspoken understanding that, when there was not enough food to go around, an older child must fend for him or herself.

Uys has written an unadorned, yet moving, melancholy history of youths whose personal train wrecks forced them to "catch out" on whatever freight happened to roll through their towns during the 1930s. He is a writer who knows how to get out of the way of his story-tellers. He has splendid material to draw on, and, rather than composing a more conventional history of a social phenomenon elucidated against the backdrop of long-term social and economic change, he has chosen to knit together the hundreds of extraordinary first-person accounts he collected during the mid-1990s. The book, in fact, is a by-product of narratives gathered as background research for the creation of a prize-winning documentary film on the same subject by Uys's son Michael Uys and daughter-in-law Lexy Lovell.

Uys estimates that four-fifths of the young people who hit the rails during this period did so out of desperation. A minority "tramped" for the adventure of it, continuing a North American tradition extending back to the earliest frontiersmen and etched into the popular imagination in the character of Huck Finn and later by the stories of Jack London. Uys does not linger on the difference between tramps and hoboes, but historians ordinarily distinguish between the two. "Tramps" were migratory non-workers, hardened by the vicissitudes of capitalism, who made a career of wandering the countryside and living off the "fat of the land". The 1870s were notable not only because they initiated a series of rapid economic cycles between the Civil War and the Great Depression that greatly increased the frequency of joblessness and transiency, but because they comprised a decade in which itinerant workers and the chronically unemployed could travel great distances at no expense. With the establishment of vast networks of rail extending to every part of the continent, a previously mobile population of transients moved about North America with unprecedented fluidity.

In part, the rising visibility of tramps marked the closing of the western United States to exploration and settlement. As the United States government removed its indigenous populations — by force or treaty — to limited, remote regions of the West, the tramp eclipsed the Indian as the most marginal and vaguely ominous of figures in American life. "Hoboes", by contrast, were migratory workers, typically fruit pickers or wheat, cotton, and hops harvesters, mostly men, in search of work that would last anywhere from a day to a few months. Since the boxcar boys and girls interviewed by Uys knew only unemployment and poverty by the time they left home, they were hoboes by default: too young to have chosen not to work, they followed the harvests in search of labour and a few days' pay to send home to their parents or to feed themselves for awhile.

A majority of the youths who rode the boxcars were boys, but there were girls, too. Estimates of females under 21 in this "army of children on the loose" ranged up to 10 per cent at mid-decade (p. 29). Among the hardships they faced, hunger was the most persistent. The search for food was a daily challenge, causing constant anxiety and for some developing into a life-long obsession. Boarding the trains ("catching out") was the most hazardous part of any journey, and each initiate was soon indoctrinated by older hands in the tricks of catching out, as well as where to ride, when to get off, whom to avoid, and how to find food once they "hit the stem" (went into town to work or beg for food).

They met every cruelty and kindness. Subject to the abuses of sexual predators and petty criminals, they were also cared for by avuncular characters who taught them the secrets of survival on the run and how to turn to their own advantage others' inclination to pity homeless children. The most dependable threats to any hobo were the train-yard "bulls", railroad detectives who patrolled the switching yards and terminals to see that no one rode their trains without paying. If caught, hoboes could be beaten savagely, stripped of their possessions, jailed for several days, or hijacked to work with a crew of cotton pickers for a week or more without pay. Their youth was no deterrent to the mercilessness and brutality of men who pursued railroad freeloaders without discrimination.

Ultimately, World War II ended the era of the boxcar boys and girls, as jobs and the call to arms offered a way out. Before the advent of war, New Deal programmes such as the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration also supplied relief for some — an opportunity to work, stability, and self-respect. Others were radicalized by their years of homelessness and devoted the rest of their lives to the labour movement, but many more solemnly declared Franklin Roosevelt their hero. While all remembered their experiences with pain, not a few of them also harboured a longing to return to their days of rail riding, feeling the engine's terrible rumble and boxcar's comforting "clack-clack" as they lay under summer stars on the mighty back of a Great Northern or Union Pacific train winding its way across the lonely expanse of the American continent.

A dozen books have been written about the history of homelessness, tramps, and hoboes in North America since the late 1970s. None, however, has addressed exclusively the plight of young people who roamed the land in search of work and temporary shelter, as Uys has done here. While the Great Depression was a period in which the volume of young people on the run rose to unusual proportions, the "teenager" in the book's subtitle is an anachronism, for the teenager was an invention of the post-World-War-II era. An artifact of the collapsed youth job market precipitated by the Depression, the teenager could only emerge as a social category once the majority of young people had entered high school, which occurred only decisively over the course of the 1930s in response to youth unemployment rates in reach of 60 per cent.

The grace and simplicity of this book add greatly to the force of the tales told by people who spent their formative years wandering the North American countryside. What makes their stories so compelling, of course, is that they endured times of privation and uncertainty at such tender ages. While this is not lost on Uys, his subjects' youthfulness is not contextualized historically, and the significance of age as a historically meaningful organizer of social experience passes almost without comment. Clearly the idea of childhood as a protected stage of life, or the expectation of "having the life of a teenager" and all that implies today, retrospectively shaped his subjects' recollections of their years on the road. For many, leaving home was an act of orphaning themselves. It terminated childhood, pre-empted an "adolescence" they would never experience, and so amplified their sense of deprivation and loss as they reflected back on their individual paths to survival.

The absence of these experiences, of course, reflected a more profound absence of parents and particularly of fathers. The Great Depression was a "fatherless decade". Whether one had a father or not, the central figure of middle- and working-class homes was often a wraith in an era in which one in every three adult males was out of work. Studies of family life during the decade, such as E. Wight Bakke's *Citizens Without Work*, document the sorry unravelling of families whose "breadwinner" had lost the ability to put bread on the family table. As a result, jobless fathers often incurred the resentment and even wrath of wives and children who felt betrayed by the growing gap between the cultural authority of the patriarch and his sudden impotence as a reliable source of sustenance. The lives of these "teenagers on the move" can be understood, then, as more than simply a reaction to the eco-

nomic cataclysm that was the Great Depression and the desperate measures they enacted in response. A proper frame for comprehending their circumstances is rather a mixture of what they encountered and what they believe themselves to have lost as a consequence.

By the 1930s the idea that every child should have a "childhood" and that adulthood should be preceded by "adolescence" was only just becoming a part of growing up for the majority of young people in North America. Uys's subjects were denied both. Thus a period in their lives that might have been a time of reduced responsibilities and the contemplation of personal possibilities goes unacknowledged as an emerging norm over the first half of the twentieth century. One can see it in the testimony of his story-tellers, but it is inert in Uys's analysis of the uniqueness of their passage, symbolically and physically, into premature adulthood. Still, Uys has written a book so much in the spirit of the men and women whose lives on the road are detailed between its covers that any criticism seems somehow misplaced. While, for the most part, context — the historical frame — is key to comprehending the past, *Riding the Rails* offers its reader the chance to catch out on this journey into the past in a way that may transcend even the broader implications of historical understanding.

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Yunxiang Yan — *Private Life Under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949–1999*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003. Pp. 289.

Cette monographie est consacrée à l'étude de l'évolution de l'institution familiale en Chine et particulièrement à celle des relations interpersonnelles au sein de la famille paysanne durant la deuxième moitié du XX^{e} siècle, période historique pleine de bouleversement social, économique et culturel. Elle porte sur Xiajia, un village de la Mandchourie arriéré et pauvre, qui compte environ 400 familles et 1 500 habitants. L'auteur a choisi ce village parce qu'il y a vécu pendant sept ans durant la Révolution culturelle. Il a dû faire partie de cette génération de « jeunes instruits » qui a été envoyée à la campagne afin de « se faire rééduquer par les paysans ». Les expériences vécues, parmi les villageois, lui ont profité considérablement puisque l'auteur est retourné à Xiajia pour y mener, cette fois, des recherches anthropologiques, entre 1989 et 1999. L'affinité entre l'auteur et les villageois a favorisé la cueillette de renseignements et parfois des confidences qu'un chercheur « étranger » aurait probablement eu de la difficulté à obtenir, notamment sur les sujets de la vie sentimentale, de l'amour et de la sexualité. Son statut de jeune instruit dans les années 1970, puis celui de chercheur universitaire dans les années 1990, lui ont permis de porter deux regards différents, à la fois interne et externe, et de recueillir des données d'une façon relativement facile.

La lecture de cet ouvrage académique est intéressante parce que le récit est ponctué de multiples anecdotes et histoires. Ces faits sont utilisés afin d'illustrer des