



# The Daughter's Way: Canadian Women's Paternal Elegies

*Tanis MacDonald*

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*The Daughter's Way* investigates negotiations of female subjectivity in twentieth-century Canadian women's elegies with a special emphasis on the father's death as a literary and political watershed. The book examines the work of Dorothy Livesay, P.K. Page, Jay Macpherson, Margaret Atwood, Kristjana Gunnars, Lola Lemire Tostevin, Anne Carson, and Erin Mouré as elegiac daughteronomies?literary artifacts of mourning that grow from the poets' investigation into the function and limitations of elegiac convention. Some poets treat the father as a metaphor for socio-political power, while others explore more personal iterations of loss, but all the poets in *The Daughter's Way* seek to redefine daughterly duty in a contemporary context by challenging elegiac tradition through questions of genre and gender.

Beginning with psychoanalytical theories of filiation, inheritance, and mourning as they are complicated by feminist challenges to theories of kinship and citizenship, *The Daughter's Way* debates the efficacy of the literary "work of mourning" in twentieth-century Canadian poetry. By investigating the way a daughter's filial piety performs and sometimes reconfigures such work, and situating melancholia as a creative force in women's elegies, the book considers how elegies inquire into the rhetoric of mourning as it is complicated by father-daughter kinship.



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