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UNH Professor of Education Receives National Award for Book on Growing Up in the 1950s

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Susan Franzosa, professor of education at the University of New Hampshire, was recently awarded the American Educational Studies Association Critic's Choice Award for her book, "Ordinary Lessons: Girlhoods of the 1950s."

This is the second time Franzosa has won the award. In 1989, she received it for "Civic Education: Its Limits and Conditions." The American Educational Studies Association was established in 1968 as an international society for students, teachers, research scholars and administrators who are interested in the foundations of education.

"Ordinary Lessons: Girlhoods of the 1950s" is a book that grew out of a collective memoir writing project. Published in December of 1999, it is the stories of 12 girls who grew up in the 1950s. They all looked middle class, Franzosa says, even though they might not have been.

"Bringing together these 12 women to share their stories and then collecting them gives us a closer understanding of what it was like for girls who were often stereotyped," says Franzosa, who is one of the 12 women to tell her story. "I was trying to paint a more complex picture of the 1950s. Instead of finding that their lives were ordinary, the writers found that each life was extraordinary in its own way."

Franzosa is currently writing a biography of Kate Douglas Wiggin, an activist for early childhood education in the 1870s and the author of "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm."

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