

FOREWORD

I first met Dixie Lee Harris as a student in a course in critical thinking I was teaching at the Center for Inquiry Transnational in Amherst, New York. It was an interesting class comprised of students from college undergraduates to octogenarians, with even a classics professor and a Nobel Prize nominee tossed in. Dixie Lee impressed me by her contrast with the more garrulous members of the class: She was quiet, attentive, and watchful, but did not speak up much.

I saw her at several other Center events, most recently a year ago in Toronto, Canada. There I made so bold as to speak with her, and she gradually opened up about herself. I had just successfully proposed this series, Lived Values, Valued Lives (LVVL), to the Value Inquiry Books Series editors and was looking for titles. Dixie Lee mentioned that she had a manuscript about her travels around the world, and I said I thought it might fit into my new series.

I found Dixie Lee Harris's adventures to be fascinating in a variety of ways. She demonstrates that extensive travel is possible without incurring great expense is instructive. Her experiences have been much closer to the lives of the common folk of the countries she has visited than the typical tourist fare. Her encounters are eye opening even to one who has traveled a fair amount.

The Lived Values, Valued Lives Series is comprised of biographies, loosely defined, that express and explore how values appear in, and shape, human lives. We intend to provoke readers to engage in reflective exploration of values expressed in the decisions, actions, and thoughts of philosophically reflective individuals. From one another's narratives we can learn much and come to consider possibilities that might otherwise never occur to us.

Dixie Lee Harris does not have formal training as a philosopher. Her comments about values such as honesty, integrity, or happiness do not appear in a theoretical framework. Yet, in her own way, she characterizes the dilemma we all have with ideals: holding to them as a matter of principle versus compromising them as a matter of practicality. She discussed how compromising our values can hurt us, but that hurt is sometimes valuable.

LVVL is a series intended for young readers of all ages looking for inspiration not only for course papers but also for their lives. The value of thoughtful reflection, not conversion, is the aim.

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