A YORK UNIVERSITY PUBLICATION

MOTHERING IN THE ACADEMY

Fall/Winter 2003
Volume 5, Number 2 $15

Motherhood in the Academy

Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering

Mothering in the Academy

Fall/Winter 2003
Volume 5, Number 2

Association for Research on Mothering
Room 726, Atkinson College, York University
4700 Keele Street, Toronto, ON M3J 1P3
Tel: (416) 736-2100 ext. 60366 Email: arm@yorku.ca;
Website: www.yorku.ca/crm

The Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering
(ISSN 1488-0989) is published by
The Association for Research on Mothering (ARM)

The Association for Research on Mothering (ARM) is the first feminist organization devoted specifically to the topics of mothering and motherhood. ARM is an association of scholars, writers, activists, policy makers, educators, parents, and artists. ARM is housed at Atkinson College, York University, Toronto, Ontario. Our mandate is to provide a forum for the discussion and dissemination of feminist, academic, and community grassroots research, theory, and praxis on mothering and motherhood. We are committed in both membership and research to the inclusion of all mothers: First Nations, immigrant and refugee mothers, working-class mothers, lesbian mothers, mothers with disabilities, mothers of colour, and mothers of other marginalized communities. We welcome memberships to ARM and submissions to the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering,* our biannual publication, from all individuals.

Membership and Subscription Information

Full individual memberships are available for $65Cdn/US; institutional memberships are $85Cdn/US for 2004. A full membership includes membership to the association, a members directory, a biannual newsletter, participation on a listserve, pre-registration for annual conferences, and a subscription to the biannual *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering,* as well as regular information mailings with respect to upcoming events, lecture series, conferences, workshops, and fundraisers. Basic and student memberships are also available, as is a subscription solely to the journal. Please see the last page of this journal for detailed information and order forms.

Submission Guidelines

In order to submit articles, book reviews, or poetry to the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering,* contributors must be a member of ARM. The journal will only consider material which is not under consideration at any other journal or publication. Please contact us for a list of upcoming themes as well as a copy of our style sheet. Articles should be typed, double-spaced, no longer than 3750 words (or 15 pages), and accompanied by a diskette. Art or photographs may accompany your work. ARM reserves the right to edit manuscripts for length and conformity to our editorial guidelines and house style. We will not publish writing that is sexist, homophobic, racist, or in any way discriminatory. Submissions will be blind-reviewed by a guest editorial board. Articles printed in the journal do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, the staff of the journal, or of our funders.

Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering

Mothering in the Academy

Fall/Winter 2003
Volume 5, Number 2

Contents

Book Reviews

Front Cover

Suzanne Northcott, "Copper Moon," detail, mixed media on wood, 12" x 12".

Alice Fothergill and Kathryn Feltey

"I've Worked Very Hard and Slept Very Little"

Mothers on the Tenure Track in Academia

It has been well documented over the last several decades that juggling the responsibilities of paid work and home is difficult (Anderson, 2003). With the dramatic increase in the number of women who have entered the paid work force in the U.S. over the past 30 years (from just over 40 percent in 1970 to 60 percent in 2000) (U.S. Department of Labor, 2001) sociologists have sought to understand how this occupational shift affects families. Some research has shown that for families to balance the two spheres of paid work and home, women end up taking on a "second shift" or a "double day" of housework and childcare (Hochschild, 1989). In terms of which sphere is prioritized, working class women are more likely to put family first while professional women see work as more central in their lives (Burris, 1991). Regardless, one of the most common strategies in coping with the competing demands of paid work and family is for women to reduce their work hours or to limit their careers, especially after the birth of a child (Becker and Moen, 1999).

Despite a growing literature on the intersection of paid work and family and the ways that women balance the two (Hochschild, 1989), little research has been conducted on the experiences of mothers working in professional careers that offer a certain degree of flexibility and autonomy: faculty tenure track positions at a college or university. These positions, requiring years of schooling and preparation, offer—at least in theory—a large amount of flexibility in terms of where and when the work is performed. Unlike many other jobs, such as clerical work, law, or information technology, university faculty usually do not have to be in their offices standard working hours: Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. If they choose, they can do their work, such as grading papers and working on research projects, at their homes or in the field, and often they do not have teaching responsibilities in the summer.

It would appear that these might represent the ideal conditions for mothers who are attempting to raise children and pursue a professional career. Of course, it has only been in recent years that women have been visibly present in the tenure track; while women constitute 43 percent of all college and university professors, they are half of the instructors and only 20 percent of the full professors (*The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2001*). More telling is the fact that the percentage of all female faculty in tenure track positions *declined* from 46 percent in 1977 to 32 percent in 1995, while the percentage of female non-tenure track full-time faculty and part-time faculty increased from 16 to 18 percent and 38 to 48 percent respectively (Benjamin, 2003). In one survey, 59 percent of married women with children were considering leaving academia (Mason and Goulden, 2002). The experience of balancing career and family on the tenure track needs to be explored.

To fill this knowledge gap, we conducted a survey of women who combined having and raising children with a career in the "Ivory Tower" in the United States. We examined their experiences developing a post-Ph.D. career while raising children, paying particular attention to the challenges they faced and the survival strategies they used both at home and at work. As mothers of young children and professors who study gender and family, we are interested in this topic from professional and personal standpoints. In this paper we present the results from our survey of 24 women who are full-time tenure track university faculty members in the United States and from follow-up, in-depth interviews with two of these women. We begin by discussing the extant literature on mothers and the academy, followed by our findings organized around three themes that emerged from the data: (1) productivity, (2) perceptions, and (3) paradox. Finally, we conclude with some thoughts on what the data mean for women in this profession, and the directions we might take for future research.

Literature review

Surprisingly, the inclusion of women in academia as subjects of research on work and family/parenting has occurred only recently—and only in a limited way. The increase of women in tenure track positions, particularly in disciplines formerly dominated by men, has brought this research question home to academia. The results of these recent studies show some sobering patterns.

Consistent with literature on other types of careers, the career paths of female academics appear to be hampered by family responsibilities. Wilson (2001a) reported that women in academia faced conflicts between the demands of home and the need for concentrated work time, especially for research and writing. Mason and Goulden (2002) argued that one of the reasons that there are fewer female than male professors (in addition to discrimination), is that the workplace follows a male career model. This model, which includes 60-hour work weeks, required travel, and relocation, prohibits participation by women with family responsibilities.

Mason and Goulden (2002) examined work and family conflicts of women and men in academia. Ultimately, they found that "babies matter" in the lives of academics. Notably, they found that women who have "early babies" (a baby who joins the household prior to five years after his or her parent earns a Ph.D.) are much less successful than men in earning tenure. This finding was consistent across disciplines and types of institutions. Men who have early babies achieve tenure at a slightly higher rate than people who do not have early babies. Thus, interestingly, early babies are actually helping new fathers but challenging new mothers in academia. Overall, their study found that women who attain tenure across disciplines are unlikely to have children at home.

University settings have been found to be so hostile to women that the "Ivory Tower" has been called the "Toxic Tower" by some in academia (University of Akron Status of Women Committee, 1997). For example, most universities have no set policy on maternity leave. Often the leave for childbirth is considered "sick leave" or "short term disability" and clearly not designed for women having children. Very few universities give paid maternal and parental leave. Technically, the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) applies to higher education faculty in the academic workplace (Euben and Thornton, 2002), so many are eligible for *unpaid* leave. However, taking a maternity leave may carry some risks. Joan Williams (2002) reported on a federal court case in which an assistant professor was denied tenure after she took two maternity leaves while on the tenure track. She was criticized by the provost for not teaching classes and making conference presentations while on maternity leave. The case was settled when the University agreed to pay $495,000 to the plaintiff.

In addition, even if faculty are relieved of teaching duties during unpaid leave, they are still expected to publish, and universities vary in their willingness to establish, advertise, and encourage the policy to "stop the tenure clock" for parents. Essentially, this policy is intended to allow parents to take a break from research so they have the time to focus on their children (it can be used while teaching or not) for a semester, year, or longer, and it is not supposed to negatively affect them in terms of tenure. Unfortunately, many faculty members feel that universities actually expect more of them if they come up for tenure later (for example, more articles published in peer-reviewed journals), a situation faced by some female tenure-track professors recently (Wilson, 2001a). Clearly, increased research demands defeats the purpose of "stopping the tenure clock" in the first place.

In addition to challenges with administrative policies, female professors also must deal with students and their perceptions of pregnancy and childrearing. Phyllis Baker and Martha Copp (1997) conducted a study of undergraduate student course evaluations in an effort to understand the changing expectations of students toward a female professor throughout the course of her pregnancy. They found that students attributed negative reactions and a general decline in their professor's effectiveness to the debilitating effects of her pregnancy, even

though the professor standardized her behavior throughout the courses. Graduate students also do not find it "sexy" for professors to be weighed down with the demands of young children at home (Walden, 2002).

Unfortunately, timing is an issue in the academic career. The first five to seven years of a tenure-track job are considered the most demanding. It is similar, perhaps, to a career in law, in the years working toward "partner" status. Moreover, for many women in academia, they have spent a good portion of their 20s in graduate school, so the demanding pre-tenure years will fall during many of their childbearing/childrearing years of their life course. This timing issue presents challenges in many ways, and many female academics struggle with the decision of if and when to have or adopt a child. There seem to be problems associated with having children in graduate school, while job hunting, or (once a position is secured) in pre-tenure jobs. Gale Walden (2002) found that academic job interviews were problematic for women who have children or want to have them in the future. She decided on one interview to "hide the baby," as she said, and on another she was more open, showing baby pictures and asking about daycare facilities. She was offered a job at the first, but not on the second, although it remains unclear if the baby played a role.

In addition to teaching and research, untenured professors are expected to present papers at major academic conferences. Again, female professors with young children face unique challenges. Robin Wilson (2002) discusses how female professors who bring their young children to conferences must contend with nursing their babies, networking and socializing with limited or no time, and arranging daycare at the conference site. At the Anthropology annual meetings, Wilson notes that the majority of the professors who brought children were women. Unfortunately, only the largest academic organizations offer on-site daycare at their meetings, so female academics in other fields must figure something out on their own—no easy task in a city far from home. Moreover, the women who bring children to the meetings worry that others will perceive them to be less professional and less committed to the profession—which ultimately could hurt their careers.

It is not surprising, therefore, that these pre-tenure years are filled with a fair amount of anxiety and pressure. Mary Deane Sorcinelli (1992) reports that while new and junior faculty have high levels of satisfaction with their careers, they also find their work to be stressful. Not surprising to those in the field, untenured faculty report higher levels of stress than tenured faculty. One of the reasons for their stress—along with not having enough time, inadequate feedback, and unrealistic expectations—is the problem of balancing home and work. Sorceinelli argues that there is evidence that more female junior faculty are now choosing *not* to forgo or deter having children, in contrast to the stereotype of the female professor who is unmarried and childless. She found that junior faculty had more "negative spillover" (their work lives negatively "spilled over" into their personal lives) than tenured faculty, and some of this was due to the time and energy needed for taking care of children. Encourag-

ingly, she reports that by year four most junior faculty members have taken concrete steps to reduce negative spillover into their home lives—yet, unfortunately, at the same time most junior faculty are still unhappy with their work-family balance.

Finally, it may seem safe to assume that women in academia may find some balance in their lives after achieving tenure. Yet, some disappointing observations show that this may not be the case. Once tenured, academics face more pressures on their time and continuing demands for publishing. Wilson (2001b) notes that the responsibilities of home make it difficult for women to find the time to do the amount of writing and research necessary to come up for full professor. Wilson points out that faculty are judged by their research, teaching, and service, and they use most of their time on campus to do the first and second, leaving research for evenings and weekends. Mothers need that time, however, for childrearing duties. Joan Williams (quoted in Wilson 2001b) posits that academic jobs are "oversized" and were designed for men who had wives taking care of the children and all household jobs—ultimately, she argues, this adds up to a type of discrimination against women.

Methods

The current study was designed to explore the issues related to work and family in the lives of academic women on the tenure track. Beginning with our own experiences, we talked together about the ways we juggle competing demands and how departmental structure and culture can shape and change outcomes for faculty. The second author, an associate professor with tenure, recalled her early pre-tenure career when the department chair announced publicly that the department was not a daycare center and children were not welcome. Fast-forward 13 years and the first author's experience in that same department as a pre-tenure assistant professor stands in stark contrast: she brought her newborn baby to the office with her for a period of six months with the full support of faculty and staff.

Out of these conversations we developed a survey with questions on the work and home life of mothers in full-time tenure track academic positions. The survey was administered at a mid-size university in the Midwestern United States to two colleges, one with disciplines traditionally dominated by men, the other with disciplines traditionally dominated by women. The surveys were sent through campus email; twenty-four surveys were returned. Respondents were encouraged to write comments on their surveys and many did. The majority of the respondents had tenure (62.5 percent), the mean number of years on faculty was 8.5, the majority of the women (54 percent) have two children (one-third have one child and 17 percent have three), and their children range in age from 1 to 35. One-third of the women indicated that they delayed starting a family due to their career, while another third delayed beginning their academic career in order to start a family.

The participants were asked for an interview in addition to completing a

survey. To date seven respondents have agreed to participate in an interview. The findings reported here are based on two completed in-depth interviews: one with a pre-tenure assistant professor with two young children at home (Elizabeth), the other with a full professor with tenure with three adult children (Joann). Both interviews, designed to explore the experiences of tenure track mothers in more detail and depth, lasted approximately one hour.

Results

Preliminary analysis of the survey data revealed three themes consistent with the literature review: productivity in career; concern with perceptions of colleagues; and the paradox of academic work as stressful and demanding at the same time that it provides flexibility and autonomy.

Productivity

Most of the women (71 percent) agreed that they have had (or are having) a less productive career than if they did not have children. One survey respondent, who started her academic career late after raising her children, wrote that her lower productivity is a direct result of this choice "unless I work to (age) 90." For some, lower productivity is seen as a choice, as another survey respondent wrote, "That's ok because it was my choice and it was the right one." Elizabeth, who has two children under the age of five, explains this choice as a strategy:

> *The only other thing [I do] to maintain my sanity is to just say: "It's okay if you only publish one or two articles a year and it's okay if you can only go to one conference a year"... I consciously decided not to live up to the high academic standards that I think I could.... I don't know if I'm making excuses for myself but I think I am just relieving myself of that pressure.*

Another professor wrote that she knew her child would make her less productive in her career, so she decided to stop her tenure clock:

> *I did not want the undue stress of working on research and worrying about the pipeline while I was home with the baby. With my productivity falling during this period it was best for me to stop the tenure clock.*

It should be noted, however, that even though the majority of the women described a career that was *less* productive because they had children, this does not mean that they were or are unproductive faculty members. Indeed, there is evidence that they were successful in their work, produced a lot (based on measures such as publication), and were committed to their students, teaching, service, and research. The children may have slowed them down, but it certainly did not stop them. Elizabeth, for example, described taking her newborn to an academic conference:

> *There have been years that I have gone to three and four conferences with young children. I have taken Chloe at six weeks [of age]. She was in the newsletter as the youngest participant at the conference. She is this little blob on my shoulder.*

The women in the study also seem aware that they are lowering their expectations and experiencing decreased productivity because of their own choices about family, not because they could not handle the demands of the work. As one mother wrote, "I know I'm intelligent enough to be in the big leagues. However, I don't work as long as I should to do so because of family responsibilities."

Perceptions

Perceptions of colleagues and other professionals are important to many of the mothers surveyed. This issue came up at various points in the survey and interviews. Joann's experience of teaching an early morning class with a long commute (thereby not seeing her children during the school year except in the evenings) is instructive. When asked if she had requested a different teaching schedule to accommodate her family schedule, she replied, "One should not ask for special accommodations, one should do their best regardless." She described ways that she managed to keep her "conflicting needs and interests" out of the picture in the department. It may be for this reason that we found in our study that the majority of the women did *not* ask for a reduced teaching load (87.5 percent), parental leave (87.5 percent), or to stop the tenure clock (91.7 percent) when they started their families.

Others echoed Joann's sentiments, feeling that their children should not be too visible in their workplace. For example, Elizabeth discussed how she and another female colleague with young children try to be careful not to discuss their children too much at work. Indeed, they have developed a "high sign" to give to one another in department meetings to remind themselves to avoid the topic of children. Elizabeth stated that it is preferable to simply say that you can not make a certain meeting time and leave it at that, instead of explaining the reason if it involves caregiving responsibilities. Many times she has heard through the grapevine that co-workers in the department are tired of hearing about children. As a result, she is careful to only talk about her children when someone else brings them up first. As she noted, "I just try...to separate (work and children) even though I consider myself in a child family friendly department on a relative scale compared to what I hear with some other departments. I still try to keep family issues out of my professional life and encounters with my colleagues." Indeed, strategies like Elizabeth's may be necessary. Williams (2002) found in her research that female professors felt like valued colleagues until they had children and then they felt that the other faculty members' perceptions of their competence dropped.

Not all the study participants were as concerned with their colleagues'

perceptions and felt that they should not have to hide or downplay their children. One mother wrote on her survey that she often brought her child to work with her since she "cared more about my child than my colleagues' opinions of me." Another professor wrote that she did bring her children to the office occasionally because: "It is not like ... my co-workers don't know I have kids." Yet, it is because the co-workers know the women have children that they have concerns about how they are perceived. For example, the first author, when explaining that she would be working at home on a certain day, has found that many colleagues do not seem to believe she is really working on those days. In this particular case, the reaction is not hostile, but almost co-conspiratorial in nature: "Yeah, right," they often say with a smile. Their perception, of course, is based on the knowledge of children at home, and the assumption is that work is done at the office and caregiving is performed at home. Williams (2002) reported this same phenomenon: if a female faculty member with children worked at home for a day, her colleagues assumed she spent the day playing with her child. Williams argued that this is much less likely to happen with a male faculty member who works outside the office.

Paradox

The paradox of academia is the structure of the position relative to the requirements of the department and profession. As Kathryn Feltey (1997) wrote about the benefits of job autonomy and flexibility for a single parent in academia, "I love having some measure of control over my schedule and having the ability to take my work home. On the other hand, without structured divisions, work becomes the organizing principle in our lives and it becomes a challenge to ever really be free of work" (7). In our survey, half of the mothers said that it is very true that there are positive aspects of being a mother and a tenure track professor; another third said that was somewhat true for them. Two thirds (67 percent) responded that being a mother and having a tenure track job is a stressful combination. These statistics reflect the paradox of academia for mothers.

For those women in the study who found positive features to developing careers in academia while also raising children, the reasons usually centered around the notion of flexibility. One woman in our study described her views:

> *I think that being an academic and a mother is a wonderful combination. I have many friends and family members who have careers outside of academia and as mothers they are completely exhausted with the lack of flexibility in their working conditions. I feel fortunate.*

Indeed, our survey showed that the majority of the women (79 percent) felt that it was acceptable in their departments to take care of family needs during working hours. For example, a woman in our study made these observations regarding the job flexibility:

> *Work hours are self-imposed, self-designated to some degree. I grade late into the night and work on Sunday mornings at the office, so I can pick up my kids after school. There is some useful flexibility here.*

The paradox, however, means that the flexibility can also feel, as one mother put it, like "a constant juggling act." Managing work and home when work can be done at home in "off hours" creates its own kind of stress. One mother wrote: "I feel like everyday needs to be carefully orchestrated and negotiated. I am constantly in danger of a double commitment and sacrifice my own time to avoid disappointing kids and or not carrying my weight at work." This sacrifice showed up for some mothers with school-age children when they tried to maximize the time spent with their children, particularly in the after-school hours, and also maintain their level of scholarship. One mother indicated that her children had fared well with her academic career: "Because I've worked very hard and slept very little to make sure they got what they needed." Another mother echoed the problem of sleep deprivation:

> *I leave work by 3:00pm to pick up my sons from school and daycare. Since I lose out on time during the day (so that their evenings are as normal as possible), I sit down to work on my research at about 10 pm and go to bed around 2 am; I am up at 6:30am to get them ready for school. While I do get burnt on both ends, keeping this schedule makes me feel less guilty about sending a kindergartner who has been in school from 8:30 to 3:30 off to after-school care, and an almost 2-year-old from spending more than 8 hours there. So I get all of my teaching commitments taken care of in my office and do my research work at night.*

Some also noted that one aspect of flexibility—"summers off"—is an illusion. As Elizabeth stated: "I certainly was delusional in the idea that you get your summers off.... We are not elementary school teachers." Summers for many faculty members, especially pre-tenure ones, may be a time of teaching for extra money, conducting research, or writing grants and papers. Indeed, summers can be so hectic and consumed with work that the first author was actually told by another pre-tenure colleague: "I can't wait for Fall."

Discussion and conclusion

It has been written that the university setting is a "chilly climate" for women in general (Hall and Sandler, 1984). Is it more or less "chilly" for women who are also mothers? Our data reveal a complex picture. Clearly, the job responsibilities are often experienced as stressful, but mothers in academia are often able to take advantage of the unique structure of the jobs to organize their home and work lives in more fluid ways. Ultimately, many

of the women expressed a desire to spend more time with their children and at times the flexibility of the job has made this possible. As one mother said, she is able to reduce the "hours in my office on campus and try to do work at home amid the chaos." However, as noted above, this can contribute to a situation where academic mothers are "burnt on both ends." Similarly, Anita Garey (1995) found that night shift nurses who were mothers chose to work at night so they could be engaged in their children's lives during the day. While this strategy allowed these mothers to be full-time in both worlds, there was clear evidence of the mental and physical health costs of interrupted and minimal sleep.

Mothers in academia, particularly those in the tenure track line, have entered a career where the workload and evaluation criteria assume an open-ended commitment of time, energy, and personal resources. The accommodation of family life to work life happens in the individual choices and compromises that are made about home and family. Some women in our study indicated that they did less at home than they might otherwise, for example lowering their housekeeping standards, or limiting the number of out-of-school activities for their children. Some found that having a "mother substitute" was the only way to have a full-time academic career. Joann, for example, hired a woman who cared for her home and children from early morning into early evening everyday for 20 years; her children viewed her as their second mother. Other women employed the strategy of producing less at work and lowering their own expectations of their careers.

Ultimately, each individual woman makes the compromises in the particular context of her department and discipline. The challenge she faces is to participate (perform) successfully as an academic and be a mother, too. The contradiction and tension lies in the structure of both realms, which requires intensive, fully-focused commitment from the individual. As Sharon Hays (1996) so clearly demonstrated, the cultural contradictions of motherhood are such that to be a good mother you must give yourself completely to the task of child rearing. For academic mothers, the flexibility of their positions may provide the opportunity to actually attempt to be "good mothers" in a culture of intensive mothering ideology (Hays 1996). Thus, women often use the flexibility of the jobs to leave in the afternoon to be with children in the after-school hours—in an effort to meet the cultural expectations that "good mothers" are home with their children.

On the other hand, the institutional pressure to meet faculty performance criteria (publishing, grants, teaching evaluations, participation in the profession) and to appear as unencumbered as possible in terms of commitment to the academic role is a recipe for failure, or feelings of failure and guilt for mothers. As a newly tenured and promoted associate professor, the second author told a colleague she could not make a meeting (in the evening) due to her son's piano recital. The response from her colleague, a woman who had never had children: "You are living proof that one can not be a good mother

and a good academic." And herein lies the dilemma for mothers in academia—we want to excel in both realms but there is no structural support for those goals. Perhaps this is why, as we stated in our introduction, the number of women in tenure-track jobs in academia has been declining instead of increasing. More women are earning their doctorates, but the structure of tenure-track jobs has not changed in any real way to accommodate them. There have been some token concessions such as on-campus daycare centers and policies to stop the tenure clock—although there is not much evidence that the clock is often stopped. Overall, the standard is still childless, or at least the invisibility of home life. Ultimately, this adds up to a chilly climate for mothers in academia, with no sign of change in sight. According to Williams (2002), the chilly climate for women at universities illustrates that stereotypes about women, and mothers in particular, prevail in many settings.

To begin to remedy this situation, we believe universities need family friendly policies and that the "tone" of these policies should be visible at the administrative level (and not just as platitudes) and be backed up by action. For example, the Ohio State University proactively recruits academic couples, indicating their support of two-career families, and they offer state-of-the-art childcare with flexible schedules. These types of policies are crucial for women in academia. In addition, academia needs to focus on the attitudes within departments and administrations that make women reluctant to take advantage of policies such as maternal leave and stopping the tenure clock. What other policy and attitude changes could help women in academia who are mothers? These are questions that university administrators need to be asking and addressing.

Finally, we believe there are many directions for future research on this important topic. There are two in particular that deserve attention. First, research needs to be conducted on women in non-tenure track positions in academia. The percentage of women in both full-time and part-time non-tenure track faculty positions at universities has increased, while the numbers of women in tenure track jobs has decreased. We believe that the demands of tenure and the chilly climate for mothers have both contributed to this situation. Surveys and interviews with mothers in these positions would provide valuable insight into the choices they faced and the decisions they made about their academic careers. Second, we recommend that future research on balancing parenting and academic careers examine the lives of fathers. In decades past, the university model assumed that male professors had stay-at-home wives, but this is not always the case. In addition, there is evidence that the role of fathers is changing and many men have become more involved in caring for their children. As a result, many fathers in tenure track positions may be dealing with the same dilemmas as those faced by the mothers in our study: issues of productivity, concern about others' perceptions, and the paradox of academia.

The authors would like to thank Cheryl Smith for her assistance on this project, and Professor Bob Drago, for sharing resources from his "Mapping Project" on family work balance.

References

Anderson, Margaret. 2003. *Thinking About Women: Sociological Perspectives on Sex and Gender.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Baker, Phyllis and Martha Copp. 1997. "Gender Matters Most: The Interaction of Gendered Expectations, Feminist Course Content, and Pregnancy in Student Course Evaluations." *Teaching Sociology* 25: 29-43.

Becker, Penny Edgell and Phyllis Moen. 1999. "Scaling Back: Dual-Earner Couples' Work-Family Strategies." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 61: 995-1007.

Burris, Beverly H. 1991. "Employed Mothers: The Impact of Class and Marital Status on the Prioritizing of Family and Work." *Social Science Quarterly* 72: 50-66.

Chronicle of Higher Education. 2001. "Number of Full-Time Faculty Members by Sex, Rank, and Racial and Ethnic Group, Fall 1997." *The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac* 48: 28.

Euben, Donna and Saranna Thornton. 2002. "The Family and Medical Leave Act: Questions and Answers for Faculty." *Academe* (September-October). Online: www.aaup.org/publications/Academe/02so/02sodeu.htm.

Feltey, Kathryn M. 1997. "Private Identities, Academic Realities: Strategies for Survival." Paper presented at the Toxic Towers Conference, University of Akron, Akron, Ohio, August 15-16.

Garey, Anita. 1995. "Constructing Motherhood on the Night Shift: 'Working Mothers' as 'Stay-at-Home Moms'." *Qualitative Sociology* 18: 415-437.

Hall, Roberta and Bernice R. Sandler. 1984. "Out of the Classroom: A Chilly Campus Climate for Women?" Washington, D.C.: Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American Colleges.

Hays, Sharon. 1996. *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Hochschild, Arlie. 1989. *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home.* NY: Viking.

Mason, Mary Ann and Marc Goulden. 2002. "Do Babies Matter? The Effect of Family Formation on the Lifelong Careers of Academic Men and Women." *Academe.* Pp. 21-27.

Sorcinelli, Mary Deane. 1992. "New and Junior Faculty Stress: Research and Responses." *Developing New and Junior Faculty.* M. D. Sorcinelli and A.E. Austin, eds. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 27-37.

U.S. Department of Labor. 2001. *Employment and Earnings.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

University of Akron Status of Women Committee. 1997. *Toxic Towers: The*

Impact of Higher Education on Women. August 1997.

Walden, Gale. 2002. "Hiding the Baby." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. (January 31). Online: http://chronicle.com/jobs/2002/01/2002013101c.htm.

Williams, Joan. 2002. "How Academe Treats Mothers." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. (June 17). Online: http://chronicle.com/jobs/2002/06/2002061701c.htm.

Wilson, Robyn. 2001a. "A Push to Help New Parents Prepare for Tenure Reviews." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. (November 9): A10-13.

Wilson, Robyn. 2001b. "For Women with Tenure and Families, Moving Up the Ranks is Challenging." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. (November 9): A10-12.

Wilson, Robyn. 2002. "Papers and Pampers." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. (December 13): A8-11.

Ruth Nemzoff

Mothering in Academia

My one-year-old peed on the floor
My seven-year-old threw-up in the car
My nine-year-old has chicken pox
    And I wonder
"Why can't I write my thesis?"

Joanne S. Frye

Making a Living, Making a Life

During term, in my early years as both English professor and single mother, I would sit in my chair in the living room—furniture purchased from someone's basement—reading, thinking, preparing classes, grading papers on my clipboard. Or I would claim the occasional morning lounge in bed, accompanied by coffee, books, and papers. In subsequent years, immersed in a major project, I would stake out long-term residency at the dining room table—adopted from a friend's attic—with books and note cards and xeroxed pages stacked up or strewn around in front of me. But that came later and usually happened only when my daughters were with their father. In the early years, I didn't even have a dining room table or the capacity to take on major projects. Most times, when my daughters were home, with me, I would work in not so clearly defined areas of our mutual living space. I would be in my chair—with them and, sometimes, not really with them—but always in the midst of their lives.

Adriane, age four, would sidle up to me: "Do you still love me when you're doing that work?" Or, more confrontationally, at age seven: "Which do you love more—me or your work?" I've been told that I was seriously remiss in my answer to the latter. But I had made a pledge of honesty to my daughters from the very beginning. And so I would say, "You can't make me choose. I have to do my work, not just for money but for me. But I have to be with you too. I love you and I love my work." My answer is deeply etched in memory by the surrounding cultural guilt that told me that there was only one right answer: "I love you most of all, my darling." But I was obdurate in my pledge to be honest. Truly, I loved my work, even as my daughters were at the core of my being.

~

I did always love my daughters, though I was often angry with them and pushed to the limit by the strains of single parenthood. But, at first, I didn't love

my work, not with a real passion. When I took the job at The College of Wooster in 1976, Kara was five years old and Adriane a year and a half. I was thirty-one, newly divorced, and could only see this job as a temporary stopping-place, my good luck to make a living doing what I had always done: reading books. I certainly needed the income and I thought I knew something about teaching and about research, too. Reading had always been a passion. The rest was really just a way to make a living, for myself, for my daughters.

In my first year or two at Wooster, I often paced the floor in lonely tears, counted my quarters and dollars as I approached the checkout in the grocery store, fretted over childcare and child freedom. I did not feel like a professor, and, though I was developing a confidence that was unfamiliar to me, I kept asking myself whether I had any professional goals. The obvious first choice would be to carry on from my 1974 dissertation on Virginia Woolf, but I hadn't figured out how to go beyond the stale thinking I had already done, or how to escape the deeply ingrained practice of close reading, which felt sterile. Having loved grappling with ideas in my own undergraduate education and having grown up in a family of teachers, I knew something about teaching: the value of learning was woven into my worldview. But who was I, as a professor? And how did that fit into my relationship with my daughters, my life as a mother?

~

When I was first offered the job at Wooster, I had laughed at the thought that I might want to stay longer than the initial two-year contract: how could I make the life I meant to make—a life that expanded into the future—there in a small town in Ohio? But by the time I was offered another interim contract, certainly nothing tenure track or secure, I yearned to make this place my home. Any prospect of an expansive future had succumbed to my knotty personal life and my effort to keep my daughters safe. I still thought short-term—and I could hardly have imagined that this would be the rest of my life—but I was grateful for some continuity in the life I was struggling to make, year by year, patching together terminal contracts.

~

Clearly, making my life and making my living could not so easily be seen as distinct projects. When I sat in my living-room chair, I was not working in some separate space of my own, as Woolf so aptly suggested women need. But neither was I working under cover, as in the myth about Jane Austen, discreetly slipping my pages under a blotter when a guest or family member entered the drawing room. What I had gradually learned to aim for was some new balancing act: to do my work—openly and passionately—in the midst of our family life. When Kara and Adriane drifted in and out of the room, they knew that they would usually find me there at the heartbeat of the house, in the armchair with its matching hassock: books on my lap, papers on the floor around me and on the hassock, dodging my feet. Olive green, threadbare, with naked foam peering through, the armchair became a kind of alternative hearth. Here, work and family might come together, frayed threads criss-

crossing irreconcilable needs and competing demands.

I recall one morning in particular: I sat in my worn chair, desperate to make last minute class preparations for a twentieth century literature course. Kara had left for school; Pauline, our childcare giver, had not yet arrived. When Adriane, age four, came whining to my side, I scooped her onto my lap and read aloud to her from the book I held: Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!* With its arcane diction, endless sentences, and obscure meanings, it was hardly a child's book. But Adriane already loved the rhythms of language and didn't seem to care so much that she didn't get the meanings. At least on that morning, she nestled into the sound of my voice, the flow of words, and the attention I gave her, however rifted.

That same morning in class, when my students complained about the arcane language and obscure meanings, I suggested that they follow the example of my four-year-old daughter: listen to the language—actually hear it—and immerse in the flow of words. I had been advised by child-free female colleagues that I should keep my personal life out of the classroom, but I was not so sure that they understood either the hazards or the value of breaching this prohibition. This time I took the desperate measure of bringing my mother-life into the classroom; my work life was, after all, a constant presence in my home life.

~

Beneath the frayed surface of my life, other connections began to tighten. During my first year at Wooster, I had proposed a course called "Fiction by Women"; the visible focus on women led to my appointment to the Committee on the Status of Women. In 1976-77, this chain of association, tenuous as it was, pulled me into interdisciplinary work that was developing across the nation and toward an emerging discipline: Women's Studies. I was drawn into a leading role in the campus program by random circumstances and a dearth of women faculty members. But I knew I was choosing to enter a vortex of intellectual and social currents that had been pulling at me for years.

As appointed chair of the Committee on the Status of Women during my second year at the college, I received a directive: develop and propose a minor in Women's Studies. Still unseasoned and ill prepared for campus politics, I nonetheless understood duty. And so I worked with colleagues on the committee—most notably a generous and supportive male colleague, Jim Turner, from the history department—and drew up a rudimentary proposal: a smattering of "women in" courses, an experimental introductory course that was already on the books, and a new course called "Seminar in Women's Studies."

When our proposal won the nearly unanimous support of the faculty in February of 1978, I rejoiced in a triumph that was both personal and collective. In the spirit of triumph and responsibility, Jim Turner and I selected ourselves to team-teach the new course, as an overload, to a handful of eager students. In the dogma of the time, experiential insights from women's lives were central. Together, we met over lunch in the student dining hall, spring of 1979, probing

those insights, placing women's diaries and narratives in conversation with feminist theory. We argued out the meanings and repercussions of the rich but scarce texts of the era—*The Second Sex*, *Of Woman Born*, *Working It Out*, *Revelations*. Later we would add such texts as *But Some of Us Are Brave*, *The Woman Warrior*, and *Making Face, Making Soul*, but at that point we had to supplement with xeroxed materials, news items, and personal experiences. As we drew upon our own gendered life experiences, I embraced a new breach in my public facade, re-forming my nascent professional identity, provoking a new passion for my work.

Jim's daughter, Sarah, was Kara's age peer—and eventual close friend—and his wife was also an academic and friend. Jim's and my shared experiences, differentiated by gender, gave us further means for probing our emergent understandings; the Turner family became a vital part of my human community in those early years. And my teaching in Women's Studies reinvigorated my love for talking about language and literature: I was partly finding and partly making an alternative home in academic life.

Still I suffered: who was I, as a professor, as a mother? How could I be both? Vividly, I recall a conversation at the home of other friends, friends whose dinner table became the nerve center of my adult social world throughout my life in Wooster. The discussion, late at night after numerous glasses of wine, turned on the question of what it means to be human. At what moment does a child become human? Is reason—and hence choice—the sole defining human characteristic?

At one point, another friend and colleague, whom I held in highest esteem, asserted: "Really, a six-month-old baby is no different from a dog." This struck me as manifestly false and unresponsive to the real question: how do we assess human selfhood on some continuum between responding organism and pure freedom of intellectual choice? And when does a child, in fact, achieve sufficient reason to be held responsible for his or her own choices? How does a child move from being the responding organism—which a new infant seems to be—to becoming the responsible adult each of us claims to be? I called my friend's comment "stupid" but then fell into a paroxysm of silence: I couldn't speak the evidentiary base for my real thoughts.

Grappling with the loneliness of my life, I knew that my own parenting experiences were relevant to how I understood these questions, and I wanted to be able to draw upon them as part of my knowledge base. Repeatedly, I felt that I *knew* some things because of what I had lived with my daughters, but I also felt that my colleagues would see that as ordinary life, not knowledge. And, even though I'd felt supported by the experience in "Seminar in Women's Studies," I hadn't yet developed the tools for professing this kind of knowledge, integrating it into my book knowledge. Despite my emergent campus successes and affiliations, I felt split, vulnerable, still alone.

~

Sometimes, with Kara off in grade school and Adriane off in preschool, I

sat alone in my frayed chair at the heart of the house and simply settled into my solitude, resisting loneliness, guarding against interruption. In September 1979, during my first research leave—a ten week period, in which I was working on an article on Virginia Woolf—I sat in that chair and wrote in my journal: "here I can enjoy the movement of leaf shadows on the rug, wavering in the sunlight as the breeze nudges the leaves outside. Chang sits on the stereo looking out the window; the sunlight shimmers silver in his hair. With Mozart on the stereo, a cup of coffee beside me, I will savor. I will taste the available pleasures in this space of mine. Why wait for future, unavailable pleasures?" The Woolf article was languishing, though I would complete it and even publish it, again dutiful. My personal life was intractable and my professional identity was held hostage by the demands of textual analysis and professorial distance. I turned to the transient pleasures of language and sensory experience: light, the cat, music, taste. And, when my daughters later wandered through the living room, I turned again to Adriane's lively squirming body and ready questions or Kara's quieter presence and probing thought, as each in turn took her place beside my chair.

~

At the same time, another alchemy was at work. In my journal, my private self falters, sounding forlorn and inadequate, falling short of phantom standards for both professor and mother. Yet during those same years, I not only took on the public campus role of proposing and leading the early Women's Studies program; I also undertook a series of public lectures: marking my progress toward a new confluence of my personal life and my professional life.

The first lecture—as with much that I undertook in those early years—was in response to an external request, in 1979: that I participate in a symposium on critics and criticism, titled "Mimesis and Meaning." At least I chose my own title: "Female Realities in Fictional Structures." I spoke from notes for sixty uninterrupted minutes—not something I ever did in the classroom where I always felt the need to interact, to engage with what my students were thinking. But here I spoke and even gained confidence in my own knowledge in this interdisciplinary forum, buoyed by a new pleasure in public performance. Besides, I was beginning to discern a different relationship between "reality" and "fictional structure," and to seek ways to tell women's experiences beyond the confinements of traditional narrative forms.

Chafing at the limits of this old straitjacket, I soon took on another public lecture in the fall of 1980: "Feminist Literary Criticism: Two Frames of Reference or One?" As I recall, the audience here was exclusively faculty, invited faculty from other institutions as well. Here, too, I spoke from notes, poking through the fissures I discerned in the dense walls of my previous thought, using the capacity of oral delivery to dodge ideas I wasn't yet ready to confront directly. I remember citing the metaphor of Scylla and Charybdis as a frequent favorite among feminist critics: I too was trying to slip through this impossible framing of our choices. I was exhilarated by audience response, but still

tormented by all of the impossible choices that lined the cliffs of my emotional and professional life. I regularly averted my eyes from the choice that I would not make: my daughters or my work.

The Women's Studies vortex that I had been drawn into seemed to have become a maze I was trying to slip through with cagey intellect. But meanwhile I was also worming my way through an endless series of performance reviews and interim contracts. Almost before I opened my own eyes to the very real consequences, I had agreed to yet another public lecture: January 1981, under judging eyes of review committees and tenure procedures. My lecture this time was open to the entire campus: "Women: Living Stories, Telling Lives." Moving in on a paradox to which I thought I could give form, not just a conflict with which I must live, I wagered my professional future on giving clarity to ideas I was not yet sure I had settled in my own mind. I drew on strands of thought from dinner table conversations, from small lectures with oral evasions, from committee meetings and classrooms and my own private musings; I laid out the core of the argument I had been trying to make for years. What is the relationship between cultural forms and self-definition? How is gender embroiled in both of these concerns? What are women to do with the stories that they/we have been given and the contradicting insights that we garner from our rifted lives? What are the consequences when women speak—claiming an "I"—and aim for an honest rendering of our own experiences?

I had many sources of knowledge for the questions I was asking: first and always, writers who had nourished my life when I had felt little other nourishment—Virginia Woolf, Doris Lessing, Margaret Drabble, Alice Munro, Toni Morrison; but then also narrative theory, feminist analysis, scholarly inquiry into the nature of selfhood—especially psychology and sociology. For me, these were not separate inquiries but all part of the same whole. Beneath the surface of the life I thought I could not contain, I had developed an insatiable hunger to figure out the central questions about how human beings make their lives. Exhilarated by my boldness in this lecture, nourished by my life with my daughters, propelled through a successful tenure review, I nonetheless still held off the other question: what does my own experience as a mother have to do with it all?

~

Adriane's two questions about love and work are suggestive of questions that children regularly pose about parental love, present and absent. By the time she posed the second question—which do you love more?—she had already succumbed to the cultural binary, the imposed either/or choice. But her earlier question—"Do you still love me when you're doing that work?"—is the more complex expression of a child's ongoing anxiety. And it is the question I held in my heart with a resounding affirmation even as I continued with my work.

As I recall, she posed the either/or question while I was working on yet another lecture—this one to be delivered at the invitation of a former lover (still friend), at a sibling institution, about an author who would actually be in the

audience: Tillie Olsen. This was yet another situation designed to induce anxiety. My writing about Olsen had taken the form of textual analysis but it had been driven by personal circumstances. Olsen's short story, "I Stand Here Ironing," had focused questions that I myself had asked, as a single parent: what *is* the power of circumstances? How does a mother begin to understand "all that compounds a human being" (1989: 12)? How can a child overcome the hazards of her own era—or a mother determine how best to live her own life, with and apart from her children? Having written and published on this story, I was an "authority" to be invited to Kenyon College during a visit by Tillie Olsen herself. Having lived my own experience as a single mother, I nonetheless felt a need to be discreet about personal history.

As I was trying to finish this lecture, desperate for the time and focus that it required, Kara fell ill. I rushed her to the doctor, continuing, desperately, to work. Adriane hovered nearby—"Which do you love more, me or your work?"—needing attention too. Olsen's narrator begins, "I stand here ironing and what you asked me moves tormented back and forth with the iron" (1989: 1). Sitting in the doctor's office I did understand Olsen's narrator, tormented. And I understood, a bit, what it had taken for Olsen to have written this classic story, composing it as she rode the bus to work or, at night, as she moved her own iron back and forth to the rhythms of language. My lecture was titled: "Rereading Women's Lives: Tillie Olsen's Generic Female." It was decidedly born of my own experiences as a woman, as a mother.

When my former lover phoned the next week, congratulating me on my success, I spoke of my sheer exhilaration of productive solitude, my overwhelming need to *claim* that solitude as real and positive. But that was somewhat disingenuous: I was not alone and what I needed to claim was my life, and within it, my solitude *and* my commitment to my daughters. When Tillie Olsen had spoken of "the college of motherhood" in her own lecture during that same visit to Kenyon College, I had attended to that great paradox of parenthood: knowing my daughters, loving them, sharing my life with them had enriched my understanding far beyond what it would otherwise be; and yet that understanding must struggle continually to find expression, struggle against so many cultural assumptions about the meanings of motherhood—struggle, too, against all the odds which responsibility for children and interruption by children inevitably set up.

I knew that I regularly yelled at them, bemoaned their intrusions, wished them out of the room—sometimes even pounded the mattresses of their beds in sheer frustration. But not for a moment did I wish them undone. The incredible core of human connection, the mystery of human development, the particularity of their individual existences—these they brought to me; these things I would never wish away.

~

When I then went on to write my first book, it was not the proverbial first book, wrought out of the dissertation. Instead, it was wrought from the

materials of my life: from teaching and lectures and dinner table conversations—and most of all from the ongoing simmering thought process: how am I to make sense of my own life, as a woman, as a human being, as a mother?

The book became an obsession, especially during the summer of 1983 when my daughters were with their father and I completed its first draft. Threatening as it was to my experiential and intellectual foundations—in my journal I put the question: "how can I write an analytical book in which every unit of analysis implicates me in my lived experience?"—I nonetheless completed and sent it off: *Living Stories, Telling Lives: Women and the Novel in Contemporary Experience*. When this first draft was rejected in December 1983, Adriane said, "All that work for *nothing*?!" and Kara, adopting the gender-neutral usage of her generation as well as a new preteen vocabulary, said, "Those *bitches*!"

Oddly, these responses helped to push me forward. They showed my daughters to be there for me as support, and they gave me impetus to carry on: that work couldn't be for nothing. Although it took the following summer and part of the subsequent year, I dug back into the manuscript, once again wrestling my entangled ideas into some form. When we received the word in December 1984 that the University of Michigan would publish this version, my daughters were the first to rejoice with me. Indeed, by then, we were each other's primary human community in any case: on leave for the academic year in London, 1984-85, forging new outlooks on our world, weaving together new strands of the lives we shared.

~

"Do you still love me when you're doing that work?" Our children ask us the questions of our culture. But our culture remains stuck in the agonistic form of the question—we are supposed to choose between our work and our children—when really our children may be wiser than that, at least with our help. The right answer is easy—"yes, I do love you when I'm doing this work"—but the real answer is also much more complex: an affirmation of the warp and woof of our lives apart and our lives together.

Having now taught at The College of Wooster for twenty-seven years, I am still amazed that this is how I have made my life. My daughters have gone on to other lives: Kara in London, Adriane in New York. Both decided early on that they did not want an academic life. But, like their mother in this, they have chosen lives committed to words and ideas: writers both. Sharing our lives, we learned not only how to love each other better but also how to ask the ever more difficult questions. I made a life with them, for them—and for myself. But really we made our lives together: work and love, inseparable.

References

Olsen, Tillie. 1989 [1961]. "I Stand Here Ironing." *Tell Me a Riddle*. New York: Delta/Seymour Lawrence.

Anna Atkinson

Under the Circumstances

Single Motherhood in an Academic Culture of Doubt

> In order to understand what another person is saying, you must assume it is true and try to imagine what it might be true of. (qtd. in Elbow, 1986: 254).

In a moment of profound self-doubt, I recently asked a senior colleague for some reassurance that the progress I was making with my academic career was adequate. The response I received, though given in the spirit of support and encouragement, had the opposite of its intended effect. "Under the circumstances," she said, "you're doing really well." But the qualification "under the circumstances," particularly in an academic culture that esteems critique and doubt, devalues this "compliment" (if indeed it is one) to the point that it indicates condescension rather than praise. The need for that qualifier turns something that begins by sounding like a recognition of special conditions into the only nice thing one could say, under the circumstances.

And the circumstances? I married into the academy. I had just undergone a hysterectomy while in the midst of my MA year, and I suppose I thought, since I couldn't reproduce, that I should consider myself lucky that *any* man would consider marrying me, let alone another graduate student nearing the completion of his PhD. In hindsight it seems an odd thing to believe, or think, or feel, for a person who has been described ("and I mean this in the nicest possible way, Anna") as a "knee-jerk feminist." Nevertheless, married I was. And upon hearing that the Children's Aid Society "never" had infants available for adoption, I suggested to my then-spouse that we take the course for prospective adoptive parents, since there was no chance a child would be placed with us. The theory was that this would stand us in good stead later on when we went through the private adoption system.

Less than 48 hours after we completed the final home visit, our case worker called: "We have an infant in care now—when would you like to meet her?"

My husband left three days before the adoption was finalized.

I was only just getting used to being a parent when my marriage ended. I struggled with the idea of being a single mom and an academic. I doubted, at first, that I could manage. I considered giving up without completing my degree, since at the time I was only one chapter into my dissertation. I doubted I could finish. But I wanted my daughter to believe that anything is possible—and so I also had to believe. It was only a shadow of a belief, but it was better than the shadow of doubt. In the three years since, I have grown into my role as the sole custodial parent of a high-needs preschool child with Sensory Integration Dysfunction. I have begun the seemingly endless cycle of sessional teaching. But I have also finished and defended my dissertation (tripling my student loan debt-load in the process). When I crossed the stage at convocation, my daughter walked with me. It was her victory too.

Sessional teaching is exhilarating. The opportunity to engage students in a freeplay of ideas, to draw out their strengths and open their minds to new ways of looking at the world, is a challenge that inspires me daily. But sessional teaching is also debilitating. The need to create courses, write lectures, mark assignments and set examinations while being paid—on average—less than $8,000 (Cdn) per course, is such time-intensive work that it can (and often does) stop research in its tracks. Since research leads to publications, and publications lead to permanent employment, there is a constant tension between the need to work as a sessional in order to survive, and the need to stop working in order to research and publish so that you can land a tenure-track position which actually pays you to do the research that, as a sessional, you have to steal time away from teaching to do. This situation is further complicated by the fact that if you do not perform adequately in the classroom, the institution that hired you is under no obligation to do so again the following year.

But nearly everyone goes through this process. Thus, although the work is hard and not necessarily financially rewarding, the playing field on which we all compete for permanent positions is pretty much level. Or at least it is for most of us. Those of us who have obligations outside of work, particularly obligations that are as draining as parenting, appear to be at a disadvantage. The perception is that we lack both time and energy when it comes to the kind of CV-building that would position us favorably in an increasingly closed job market; and to a certain extent this is true. Add to this, as in my own case, the challenge of handling all parental responsibilities alone, while juggling straightened financial circumstances and the demands of a high-needs child, and under the circumstances, remembering to look both ways before crossing the street suddenly seems like a major achievement.

Which leads me back to where I started this essay, back to the topic of doubt. I doubted I could compete with other new Ph.D.s hungry for jobs, since the competitive playing field seemed to me to be so uneven. I lack(ed) the time,

the energy, the freedom of movement and of schedule that other academics (even sessionals) have. The fact that my daughter is now in Junior Kindergarten but cannot, because of her sensory challenges, cope with an after-school program, means that on Monday, Wednesday, and alternate Fridays, my day ends when her school dismisses at 2:30pm. And the fact that my housing and food costs are higher—not to mention the cost of daycare for the days when she is not in school—means that even book money is scarce, and travel is out of the question. All of which leads to less time and fewer resources for research purposes.

And yet, to suggest that I am "under" the circumstances is to suggest that I am somehow both pressed down by them and expending energy trying to fend them off. In fact, though, it would probably be far more accurate to talk about the circumstances being under me. My daughter, my work, my complicated schedule rushing between two universities and assorted other jobs, these circumstances are what "hold me up" in many senses of the phrase. They slow me down, certainly. But they also support me while providing an anchor; they are my inspiration and my motivation. In the end, as my own mother keeps reminding me, our circumstances do not affect us nearly as powerfully as our responses to these circumstances do.

And in fact these challenges are minor when compared to the effect of the academic culture of doubt. This is a culture that simultaneously insists on and ignores all these "circumstances," and in so doing creates a veritable minefield that makes lifting a ton of feathers look almost like a reasonable task. Because while those who know your circumstances dispense the kind of qualified praise that turns itself inside out, those who do *not* know the circumstances judge your performance with the same yardstick they use on your peers who are childless or who have a partner to shoulder some of the load. And to introduce the circumstances to these judges would be unprofessional, for the very valuable reason that you are being hired as a professional, and external circumstances have nothing (theoretically) to do with your performance on the job.

But in part the tendency to be close-mouthed about "the circumstances" is also due to the doubt in people's minds concerning how well you can function as a professional if you *are* a single parent with a high-needs child; that is, if you *are* "under the circumstances." Doubt is such a salient feature in the way our minds operate as critical thinkers that we tend to be unable to express things in terms of belief. To introduce the circumstances under which my life operates would be to introduce more reason to doubt whether my performance will be adequate in the future—or at least so it would seem. And the counterpoint to this is that people seem to find it impossible to believe that accomplishments achieved "under the circumstances" have the same validity as those that are achieved without such circumstances, as though concessions or the need for special pleading were involved in the awarding of the achievement. But the fact is that if you take away the circumstances, the accomplishments are still there. Believe me. And yet, belief is hard to come by. And it is the culture of doubt—

my own self-doubt included—that I continually find myself fighting my way out from under.

It was in reading Peter Elbow's *Embracing Contraries* that I began to understand the impact of doubt as the predominant methodological construct upon which the academy is based. Elbow traces the dominance of this mode of thought in large part to Descartes, who "sought what *cannot* be doubted and therefore remains certain" (Elbow, 1986: 256). This has led to a culture, particularly in the academy, which believes "certainty is possible if we are willing systematically to doubt everything" (257). This is certainly a trend that is traceable through Hume and Arnold, and skepticism is hardly new to the modern era. But what it has led to, in Elbow's words, is our inheritance of the assumption that "the ability to criticize a claim we disagree with counts as more serious intellectual work than to enter into it and temporarily assent" (258).

Indeed, so deeply inscribed is our culture with this methodology of doubt that there is an equally deeply rooted fear of belief. To commit to a belief is to risk being wrong, to open to the possibility of being labeled weak, a possibility Elbow relates to gendered perceptions of belief and doubt:

> With respect to gender, doubting invites behaviours which our culture associates with masculinity: refusing, saying No, pushing away, competing, being aggressive. Believing invites behaviors associated with femininity: accepting, saying Yes, being compliant, listening, absorbing, and swallowing.... A man tends to be seen as less masculine if his style is that of the believing game—if, that is, he operates by pliancy, absorbency, noninitiation, and nonaggression. A woman tends to be seen as less feminine if she shines in the doubting game and loves to win arguments and find errors in the other person's thinking. Trying to believe someone we disagree with tends to make us feel vulnerable, and our culture has seen it as the woman's role to be vulnerable (or at least to acknowledge vulnerability) (Elbow, 1986: 266).

I wonder if it is possible that motherhood, and particularly single motherhood, encourages one to be perceived as hyperfeminine (or even simply undeniably feminine) and thus incapable of participating effectively in the masculine "doubting game." The perception I *know* it creates from comments people make to me is that I cannot possibly have time to be an effective academic and scholar. This perception is not simply, I think, a result of my needing to juggle so many responsibilities at once. Elbow touches on a deeper and more fundamental issue related to the relative values accorded to belief and doubt in the academy:

> Doubt implies disengagement from action or holding back, while belief implies action. When we doubt, we tend to pause; and by pausing ... we doubt better. When we believe fully, we tend to

> act....Thus, the intellectual or academic person is traditionally seen as a critic disengaged from action. The engaged "do-er" is usually seen as less thoughtful—as though doing and thinking must be opposite. (1986: 265)

I cannot think of anything less conducive to pausing than trying to keep up with a four-year-old. But this does not automatically lead to a lack of thought. In fact, parenting—particularly, I would argue, parenting singly—is one situation wherein it is absolutely essential to combine thought and action—and maintain a balance between belief and doubt.

It was also in reading Peter Elbow's *Embracing Contraries* that I rediscovered Augustine's astonishing statement: "*Credo ut intelligam,*" I believe in order that I may understand (qtd. in Elbow, 1986: 262). If for a moment you can believe with me that a child—and single parenthood—constitute assets rather than liabilities for an academic in the throes of beginning a career, then perhaps you will understand how this may be so.

If I may make a rather outrageous parallel, single parenting is much like a closed head injury. My mother suffered one during a motor vehicle collision recently. In the ensuing months she found her thought processes had changed so that, for example, whereas she had always "just known" what day it was, she now had to visualize a calendar in order to work it out. She was somewhat concerned about this and mentioned it to her doctor, whose response was very interesting. He indicated that when high-functioning adults suffered the kind of injury she had, often the healing process was more correctly termed a compensation process. That is, the processes the brain had been using no longer functioned adequately and, while in children such injuries might heal, in adults they were less likely to—or at least took much longer. The result is that the brain finds other ways to perform these functions, and while they might seem unconventional, they certainly get the job done.

The same is true of life as an academic and a single parent. There are certainly very material and practical ways in which parenting has changed the way I function as an academic. The fact that I have no backup for my parenting means that if my daughter is ill, I have to stay home with her. I have learned to become web-literate and maintain a web-page for my students so that in the event of an emergency and a missed class, I can post lecture notes for them and assign discussion topics upon which they can report the next time we meet. I am also consistently at least two weeks ahead when writing lectures, because parenting emergencies happen, and time can quite suddenly become very scarce indeed. In fact, on the whole parenting has gifted me with an efficiency that I lacked in my salad days when I would work until midnight (and accomplish, in retrospect, very little except a feeling of self-righteousness).

Other changes in my *modus operandi* as an academic are less easily quantified but, for me, no less valuable. Although I remain a doubter, and although systematic and conscious critique remains part of both my writing and

my teaching, I have found the value of "the equally systematic, disciplined, and conscious attempt to *believe* everything no matter how unlikely or repellent it might seem—to find virtues and strengths [I] might otherwise miss" (Elbow, 1986: 258). As well as the construction and defense of arguments—which connects metaphorically to an almost militaristic attitude toward both teaching and research—there is strength and merit in the ability to "transmit an experience, enlarge a vision" (Elbow, 1986: 261), an ability Elbow associates with belief rather than doubt.

Most importantly, perhaps, the valuing of belief that has come with my experiences as a single parent has illustrated to me the importance of community. Again I will turn to Peter Elbow, as his thoughtful commentary on belief and doubt mirrors my thoughts so elegantly: "Doubting is the act of separating or differentiating and thus correlates with individualism.... Belief involves merging and participating in a community; indeed a community is created by—and creates—shared beliefs" (264). My ability to participate in and help to shape that community, through my research and writing, through my work in the classroom, and through parenting, fuels my passion for all the career paths I have chosen.

I realize that this essay must appear to border on some sort of nightmarish Pollyanna "glad game." I don't mean it to—or perhaps I do. I certainly do not advocate the purposeful creation of single parent families in the academy. But on the other hand, if in the academy we are embracing, striving to promote, and aspiring to represent diversity, then I would advocate strongly for belief in ability, and in the gift of adversity—any adversity—as a tool toward strength rather than an obstacle preventing advancement. I would suggest that having a child, and even raising a child alone, has in fact made me a better academic and a stronger critic—in part because it requires me to believe in ways that I never have before, and in part because it necessitates time management and a well-rounded life. It does not stop me from producing critical material; indeed, it spurs me on.

Ferdinand Magellan once said: "the church says the earth is flat, but I know that it is round, for I have seen the shadow on the moon, and I have more faith in a shadow than in the church." On the strength of his belief in a shadow, he became the first to circumnavigate the globe. In the end, like Magellan, it is belief that allows me to do what I do. My daughter is the shadow on my moon, and equipped with that shadow of belief, I will continue, like Magellan, to do the (im)possible and sail around the world. And I'll stop in every park, slide down every slide, and jump in every puddle I can find along the way.

References

Elbow, Peter. 1986. *Embracing Contraries: Explorations in Teaching and Learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Joyce B. Castle and Vera Woloshyn

Motherhood and Academia
Learning from Our Lived Experience

We are two women academics in a university in Canada. We are also mothers, each of us with two children. We are committed to both spheres of our lives—the public university sphere and the private family sphere—and we cherish all that is sacred in both. Yet we have learned over the years that in attempts to live both dimensions of our lives fully, we have encountered considerable conflict. In short, we have learned that the sanctity of academia does not merge well with the sanctity of motherhood.

In this paper, we share our stories and highlight what emerged as we reflected on the juxtaposition of our lives as academics and mothers. Initially, the two of us began sharing stories in an attempt to uncover ways in which our experiences as academic mothers had differed. One of us entered academia 25 years ago while the other came ten years ago, and this led us to anticipate vastly differing stories. Our stories did indeed reveal significant differences in our background experiences, career paths, university work, and future goals, but we also discovered to our surprise that our experiences as mothers were very similar. We learned not only that we had encountered the same conflicts and adopted the same strategies to manage conflict, but that, more importantly, in both our cases our development as academics had been directed by our mother selves.

Context

Our decision to engage in collaborative conversations had been driven by our desire to explore each other's experiences as mothers in academia in light of the reality that one of us had been in academia much longer than the other. Key to our decision to engage in storied conversations was a shared belief in the value of talk (Baum, 1971) and a commitment to the notion that personal narratives serve as a primary way to make meaning of our lives (Bruner, 1990;

Carter, 1993). As well, we were influenced by Van Manen's (1990) view that researchers can explore issues in collaborative conversational formats that are hermeneutic in nature and lead to the unfolding of deeper meaning as individual input is examined.

Procedure

The two of us first came together simply to talk about our experiences under broad topics such as "the demands of academia" and "working mothers," and then to record the differences in our storied experiences. Yet when we quickly discovered that despite substantial differences in our ages and academic careers, our lives as academic mothers were more similar than different, we shifted to a more formal sharing of stories in order to uncover the specifics related to our development, both on personal and professional levels. This involved each of us writing accounts of varied aspects of our lives, and then sharing and using these written accounts as the source for follow-up conversations. As we explored each other's writing, often calling on one another to expand or clarify the meaning of specific entries, we kept account of our experiences, especially as they related to conflicts and ways of managing conflict. We later searched for and negotiated themes in our writing and discourse. Finally, in efforts to understand ourselves more fully, we explored these themes in relation to the literature.

Individual lenses

Because the meaning individuals make is shaped by the norms and values of the context of their lives as well as their experiences, we offer a brief biography of our lives here to illustrate the lenses through which we interpreted our own and each other's stories, as well as the literature in the field.

Joyce. I was part of the influx of women into academia in the 1970s. Typical of women hired at that time, I came to the job from a career as a schoolteacher. Also typical of the time, I was hired for a contract position (three years). I had a masters degree only, and was told I was hired to teach at the preservice level based on my teaching record.

In accepting the position I moved from another province with my husband and two school-aged children. It was stressful for all of us to adapt to a new lifestyle in a new community where we knew no one. I often felt isolated and anxious. Yet I completed my first contract and then accepted another. After 6 years of this I was offered a tenure-stream position, which I accepted. At this point I decided to begin doctoral studies, all the while holding down my full time job and tending to my family. Juggling the demands of university work during the day and doctoral studies at night often left me feeling drained as well as guilty for not attending adequately to my family. Yet I persisted, and completed my Ph.D. in my 40s, after having worked ten years at lower ranks in the university.

My post-doctorate years brought shifts in my work and family roles. Research and publication took on increasing importance in my life and I came to greatly enjoy this aspect of my work. And like other females of my era, I contributed to the phenomenon that women are most productive during their 40s and 50s. I rose to associate professor rank and began to feel comfortable in my new role. But during these years my family responsibilities also shifted. My children were leaving home for lives of their own, requiring little of my time and energy, but aging parents began adding new responsibilities, leaving me still to deal with competing public/private demands. These demands have continued and I now find the struggle becoming even more difficult in light of the increasingly frenetic pace now characterizing academia. I am now in my late 50s and find myself wondering what goals to set for the future.

Vera. I am associate professor in graduate studies in Education. I am nearing my mid thirties and have two young children, aged 6 and 7. I fast-tracked my academic career, accepting a tenure-track research position immediately after completing a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology. I had been trained as a school psychologist, with no experience as a teacher, but I was readily hired for an education position. I credit my employment in part to the equity hiring policy at the time, but also to my strong research background at an early age—my vitae was very strong for a beginning academic.

Two years after coming to the university, I gave birth to my first child. Following a three-month maternity leave I returned to work, leaving my son in the care of my mother. One year later, I was pregnant with my second child and again prepared for a maternity leave. At this stage I also opted to fast track my progress through the academic ranks and I applied for early tenure and promotion. I was granted both, but the experience was a particularly acrimonious one and I believe that the difficulties I experienced were decidedly related to my status as a young mother-academic.

While on my second maternity leave I started part-time studies in teaching in order to obtain the teaching degree I felt I needed in my position. I completed this several years later, while continuing to maintain my full-time teaching and research position. I am married to a professional, and my husband and I continually struggle to balance our private lives with our professional work lives. As I now begin to assume increasing responsibility for my elderly parents as well as the upbringing of my own children, I worry about the impact my dual responsibilities will have, and I wonder just what this "sandwich effect" is doing to my career.

Outcomes

As we explored and reflected upon our storied experiences, we learned much about ourselves. We were struck by the extent to which we had experienced similar conflicts when merging our dual roles and then used similar strategies when dealing with the conflicts. We were also struck by the degree

to which we had both undergone substantial changes over the years in our self-perceptions, as well as by the degree to which the mothering dimension of our lives had impacted our development. And finally, we were struck by the ways in which our learning was tied to much of the literature we reviewed.

In this section we highlight the four key themes that emerged as we explored our experiences. We present these themes here in the context of selected literature and we include direct quotes from our stories to illustrate each theme. Taken together, these represent the routes we followed as we struggled to manage our lives and reconstruct ourselves.

Redefining ourselves as academics

Collins (1998) observes that the lines between teaching and mothering are often blurred, and that many women's teaching careers are shaped by a domestically-oriented ideology of teaching that views women as nurturers and caregivers. In this sense, Collins argues, many women experience a sensation of "fluidity" between their professional and personal lives. Our stories revealed that we too experienced this fluidity, but that this clashed with an academic notion of professional life. We discovered that in attempts to integrate the mothering-teaching-academic aspects of our lives, we had learned to adjust our notions of ourselves. Yet, as our stories reveal, it was our perception of ourselves as academics that we redefined.

Joyce: When I was hired for a contract position, I remember feeling relieved. I wasn't at all sure I would prove adequate for a university job and I wanted the option of returning to a school. But more importantly, I shied away from a job and career that kept me from my family. I was also relieved to be told that teaching was to be my focus—this was a role I was comfortable with, especially in relation to my home life.

Yet later, during doctoral studies, I came to redefine my work and my view of teaching. I became excited about scholarship and enjoyed researching and publishing. I still held to my view of myself as a teacher, but I came to see this role as including an academic dimension. I could now contribute even more as a teacher—by taking on research studies that generated new understandings I could pass to others. I had moved into a new space as an academic—yet this space was directed by a mothering ideology.

Vera: It was only recently that my notion of scholarship changed. When I first entered academia, I had a research-oriented view: my emphasis was publish, publish, publish. I believed that my merits as an academic were assessed by the quantity and quality of publications and grants in my vitae.

Yet over the years, my notion of scholarship shifted from work that is readily publishable to work that relates to the betterment of the community. I only fully realized this shift during an informal conversation this past summer. A colleague asked what accomplishments I was "most proud of" that year. My

greatest joy, I responded, had come from securing government funding to implement an after-school literacy program for children with literacy problems. My colleague, in turn, commented on the publication of her three books and numerous articles. I suddenly realized that the countless hours I had spent in connection with this literacy program would never be represented on a vitae. More importantly, I realized I could accept this because I felt fulfilled and sustained by this work. My notion of scholarship had changed to one more consistent with my role as mother, nurturer, caregiver.

Our words illustrate how our experiences as mothers impacted our views of academia. While we are hesitant to describe motherhood as the most significant learning opportunity in a woman's life, we readily admit that what we learned as mothers both supported and challenged what we learned as academics. For one of us (Joyce), what had been learned early on as a mother affected how academia was later interpreted and understood. For the other (Vera), later learning as a mother challenged and redefined the identity constructed earlier in an academic setting. We found that "interpersonal reasoning" and "receptivity and responsiveness" (Noddings, 2003) played a major role in our stories and that caring and nurturing relationships became central in both our home and work lives. It was the mothering dimension of our lives, then, that directed our development as academics and our conceptions of selves as scholars.

Collaborating with others

Krug (2000) stresses that motherhood leaves women feeling that they can only truly relate to other mothers; "...in having children I have crossed into a land from which there can be no return and in which only those who dwell can truly understand" (p. 54). Given that motherhood leads women to view others in a new way, it inevitably impacts one's relationships with colleagues in the workplace. In academia especially, it is well documented that many women find the academic world a hostile and lonely one, one in which feelings of discomfort and isolation add to feelings of inadequacy and guilt (Young, 1992). Our stories revealed that we also found the workplace difficult and we yearned to relate to others who understood and shared our perspectives as mother-academics.

Joyce: In my earlier years at the university I was torn between retaining a silence about my family life and seeking out opportunities to share this part of me. I recall thinking it was dangerous to acknowledge limitations around my time because of home responsibilities. I didn't want to be criticized as inferior at work because of limitations imposed by my children. Yet I still felt a need to share my experiences with others at work. At first there were few mothers available, but as the number of women increased over the years I found myself gravitating toward those who were mothers. I discovered that there was a need among all of us to be with others who understood if we cancelled a meeting

because of a sick child or failed to complete a task on time because of a family commitment. I found myself wanting to work with other women.

Vera: As a grad student, I held a steadfast belief that I was responsible for my own success and that academic merits were best evaluated at the individual level. When I was invited to join a Collaborative Centre after I came to the university, I did so more out of a desire to socialize than out of a feeling of academic need. But over the years I formed strong relationships with these women and started to realize that the quality of my work improved as a function of sharing with others. And then collaboration took on even greater meaning after the birth of my children—working with others allowed me to participate in projects and complete tasks that were now impossible to do alone. I acknowledge now that my ability to sustain an academic career is, in part, dependent on my ability to work with others.

We learned from our stories that our need to seek out others was directed by our mother self. The notion of motherhood as a means to deeper connectedness is a recurring theme in the literature. In the 1980s, Rothman (1989) referred to motherhood as "the physical embodiment of connectedness" (59). In the 1990s, Umansky (1996) held up the mother-child relation as the actualized ideal of a community, and Collins (1998) labelled motherhood as that significant "defining moment" that remains throughout a woman's life and leads her to see the world and relationships differently. In our cases, motherhood led us to seek out and sustain collaborative relationships at work.

Seeking support systems

Another recurring finding in the literature is that women who opt to have children while maintaining work outside the home suffer from a lack of adequate resources and support related to child care. According to Saunders, Therrien and Williams (1998), such support is crucial: "Without adequate child care, health services, sports facilities and budget, resources, work space and networking opportunities with women's special needs in mind, women have a hard time advancing" (217).

In Canada, Burke (1991) referred to the lack of alternate care arrangements in the 1990s as a crisis, and estimated that as many as 3 million children were in need of non-parental childcare on a regular basis. Hornosty (1998) says that the problem is exacerbated in universities where the needs for care are more diverse because of unusual working hours, meeting times, and out-of-town travel demands. But beyond the specifics of child care, a deeper problem resides in the attitude and value structure of the university. Finkel, Olswang and She (1994) documented university females' stories of having to return to work after childbirth earlier than necessitated by policy and then experiencing hostility from colleagues when attempting to change working hours or juggle times and responsibilities to attend to the mothering role. While university policies

continue to be developed to accommodate faculty who bear children, these policies vary considerably across universities, and none offer comprehensive preferential treatment such as that suggested by Hensel (1990) a decade ago when she called for conditions to include extended maternity leave and work arrangements compatible with parenting responsibilities.

In our own storied experiences, we found some of the concerns outlined in the literature, as well as others unique to each of us. Given the differences in our ages and work and home lives, the resources and support we sought differed.

Vera: The greatest testament of my mother's vitality was that she volunteered to live in my home so I could return to work after the birth of my child. I would have been much less certain about returning to my career without this arrangement. But after the birth of my second child, my mother's health began to fail and I turned to community agencies for support. Yet even with day care until 6:00pm, schedule conflicts often arose and it was not uncommon for my husband and me to argue over work time and career priorities. This always left me questioning my need for a career.

Joyce: Since my children were in school when I came to the university, day care was not a concern. But I needed different support, like more time at home when my children were there, and academic work denied me this. I would be frustrated with meetings scheduled late in the day, or classes scheduled on evenings, or conferences scheduled over times like the Easter weekend. Even more frustrating was the lack of understanding from colleagues. I hardly dared voice a concern. I knew I was expected to do the job without bringing motherhood into the equation.

In both our cases we continued to struggle to find adequate time for family, albeit in different contexts. Over the years, this led us to establish support systems to reduce the conflict and the stress. In Vera's case, as her mother's support disappeared and her children began school, she found ways to combine work and home life. In Joyce's case, as her children grew and left home, she shifted her efforts to attending to working conditions for others.

Vera: I've learned over the years to consciously arrange meetings and work sessions that include my children and have some form of "play" built in for them.... I also combine work and child care with many of my female graduate students. In fact, I include such conditions as part of any initial conversation with any potential grad students.

Joyce: As my children required less and less of my time, my personal need for support services reduced. But I came to serve on numerous committees where women's and mother's issues surfaced. I recall being so angry in one meeting when colleagues openly discussed a junior female's lack of contribu-

tion, suggesting she was a poor candidate for promotion because she devoted too much time to home life. Such injustices have taken on significance for me over the years and I now want better resources for younger women. I feel better that I'm finally speaking up.

Controlling our actions

Potts (1997) recently explored the notion of tension in academia and how it was that a group of academics in Australia had adapted to their work world during the 1960s through the 1990s. A key finding related to the deliberate power and control exercised by these individuals; they took action to manage and control their work. Potts concluded that there is a process of situational adjustment that shapes an academic's self image and that this entails "taking control." Plater (1995) cautioned that the work of academics in the new century would be so demanding that the ability to self regulate time would be a key to success.

These concepts of control and time management surfaced clearly in our stories; we both talked about constantly facing decisions around how best to control and use our time.

Vera: Like any other mother in academia, I continue to feel the incredible burden of making sure that my time is spent in an efficient manner. I am conscious that my work day is shorter than most of my colleagues and I always find myself making decisions about how this time is used.

Our stories also revealed our awareness that these demands on our time and energy were often conflicting. Edwards (1993) described both the family and higher education as "greedy institutions" which place excessive demands on women. In our attempts to control these conflicting demands, we found that the decisions we made were often difficult ones to make.

Joyce: Over the years I learned to regulate what I would do. Yet I found that what I dropped often related to my work. While I hated to turn down students wanting help, or turn down involvement in a research project, I learned that I couldn't do all of these things and still attend to my family in ways I wanted. I had tried connecting the two, bringing my work home, but that wasn't good for home life. So I learned to maintain a separateness and to say no to a number of work demands.

On reflection we realized that such decisions related to what Edwards (1993) referred to as varied emphases on connecting or separating education and family. On the one hand, we yearned for connectedness, as was evidenced in our desire to establish and maintain collaborative relationships in the workplace. On the other hand, we sought out separateness in our lives by finding ways to ensure that our work did not affect our family lives. We used

a mixture of both connection and separation to control our lives and manage our actions. Yet our emphasis on placing family life first tended always to control decisions.

Vera: I recently turned down an invitation to assume the role of a primary researcher in a charter school in the U.S.A. I knew this was a flattering offer and that this role would be higher profile that the one I now hold. But I also knew it would radically alter the shape of my family and leave me with even less time to spend at home. The cost was too high. I turned down the offer.

Joyce: This year I made what seemed to me a monumental decision—I negotiated a reduced work load. My aim was to achieve a greater balance in my life. This was a difficult decision—one I recognized as pitting individualism and intellectuality against connectedness. Yet my decision seems right to me—I'm keeping much of what matters in my life, including the excitement of academia, but letting go of some demands that keep me from meaningful nurturing relations.

Final reflections

As we reflected on the outcomes, we recognized the ways in which our learning confirmed that university environments still remain far from favorable to women's equality. Glazer-Raymo (1999) recently emphasized that one of the key myths now existing in academia is that gender inequity has become a thing of the past, and we fully concur with her contention. Indeed, despite the huge gap in the number of years we had each been in the university setting, our findings pointed out the ways in which we had both experienced inequity and the ways in which much of this was rooted in our status as mothers in academe.

Yet we must acknowledge here that we, at some level, have managed to survive the "chilly climate" in academia. In this historically patriarchal environment that has witnessed stages of gender equity (Brown Packer, 1996), both of us have somehow resisted exiting through the "revolving door." We have even managed to make a small "scratch" in the "glass ceiling" that still permeates academia. We have come to attribute our modest success to deliberate decision-making on our parts about what is important in our lives and to our forthright use of the strategies we described above.

Yet in deconstructing our development, we also have to admit to some discomfort and we wonder what price we have paid over the years as we worked our way through our identity construction. We have emphasized here the connection of our identity to our role as mothers in the private sphere, and yet our academic self has come to recognize that our construction of identity might have been shaped entirely by the underlying, more traditional belief system that women's primary responsibilities lie in the home. When we encountered conflict connecting our public and private responsibilities, it was our mothering role that received priority. So despite our claims to cherish the

independence and intellectual stimulation associated with our academic role, we were unwilling to sacrifice the connectedness associated with our mothering role to allow us to achieve more in academia. Have we, after all, simply fallen into the trap of viewing gender through a traditional male model of separation?

We realize as well that our inquiry into our own lives was a highly subjective process. And we are aware that what we ourselves experienced is not necessarily unique to women in academe; some of these experiences may arise for mothers working outside universities, and some may arise for some men who are academic fathers. Yet this does not negate the reality of our experiences or the importance we connect to understanding our conflict and managing it. We would argue that what we learned from our collaborative experience was indeed valuable. As Frank (2002) points out, "stories are attempts of a self to find identity in terms outside itself." We discovered what Frank highlights: individual stories allow us to make sense of our own worlds, but collaborative dialogic analyses of our stories allow us to link our own worlds and troubles to more public issues. We came to see and understand ourselves, both as mothers and as academics, in a new light and to recognize that our experiences as academic mothers have been, and continue to be, things that matter.

Joyce: I guess I hadn't realized when I started working with Vera just how much I had expected our storied experiences to differ. In looking back I see that at some level I must have accepted the notion that the equity problems of the '70s and '80s were gone and that young mothers in academia today did indeed have a much easier time. But sharing stories with Vera taught me more. Sure, some issues from 25 years ago have gone, and some conditions have definitely improved, but it's still no easier!

Vera: Talking with Joyce was wonderful. It was inspiring to hear her stories of being a mother in academia and to learn how she managed to balance both roles. She confirmed that it was possible to be a "good" mother and a "successful" academic. I find myself gravitating to other women like Joyce, drawing strength and encouragement from their stories and wisdom from their experiences. In turn, I hope that I can be such a model for other women entering academia. And while I hope that working conditions will continue to improve for all parents, I am also certain that creating a balance between career and motherhood will always remain a challenge.

We hope that our storied experiences and our collaborative analyses of these can serve to turn the spotlight on the recurring problems that face mothers in academia, and that this increased attention will promote plans of action by women and university communities alike, all aimed at ensuring that the ideal of gender equality in university settings is not lost.

References

Baum, G. 1971. *Man Becoming.* New York: Herder and Herder.

Brown Packer, B. 1996. "Irrigating the Sacred Grove: Stages of Gender Equity Development." *Feminist Academics: Creative Agents for Change.* L. Morley and V. Walsh, eds. London: Taylor and Francis.

Bruner, J. 1990. *Acts of Meaning.* Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

Burke, M. A. 1991. *Caring for Children: Canadian Social Trends.* Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.

Carter, K. 1993. "The Place of Story in the Study of Teaching and Teacher Education." *Educational Researcher* 22(1): 5-12.

Collins, A. 1998. "Mothers as Teachers – Teachers as Mothers." *Redefining Motherhood: Changing Identities and Patterns.*

Sharon Abbey and Andrea O'Reilly, eds. Toronto, ON: Second Story Press. 92-102.

Edwards, R. 1993. Mature Women Students: Separating or Connecting Family and Education. London: Taylor and Francis.

Finkel, S. K., Olswang, S. G., and She, N. 1994. "Childbirth, Tenure, and Promotion for Women Faculty." *The Review of Higher Education* 17(3): 259-270.

Frank, A. W. 2002. "Why Study People's Stories? The Dialogical Ethics of Narrative Analysis." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 1 (1). Retrieved November 9, 2002, from http://www.ualberta.ca/~ijqm

Glazer-Raymo, J. 1999. *Shattering the Myths: Women in Academe.* Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hensel, N. 1990. "Maternity, Promotion, and Tenure: Are They Compatible?" *Women in Higher Education: Changes and Challenges.* L. B. Welch, ed. New York: Praeger.

Hornosty, J. 1998. "Balancing Child Care and Work: The Need for a 'Woman-Friendly' University." *The Illusion of Inclusion: Women in Post Secondary Education.* J. Stalker and S. Prentice, eds. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing. 180-193.

Krug, K. 2000. "Sustaining Education: Mothers are Scholars Too." *Brock Education* 9 (2): 48-60.

Noddings, N. 2003. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education. 2nd ed.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Plater, W. 1995. "Future Work: Faculty Time in the 21st Century." *Change* 27 (3): 22-33.

Potts, A. 1997. *College Academics.* New South Wales, Aus.: William Michael Press.

Rothman, B. K. 1989. *Recreating Motherhood: Ideology and Technology In A Patriarchal Society.* New York: Norton Publishing Co.

Saunders, M., Therrien, M., and Williams, L. 1998. "Creating the 'Women-Friendly' University: A Summary of the CFUA report." *The Illusion of*

Inclusion: Women in Post Secondary Education. J. Stalker and S. Prentice, eds. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Umansky, L. 1996. *Motherhood Reconceived.* New York: New York University Press.

Van Manen, M. 1990. *Researching Lived Experiences.* London, ON: Althouse Press.

Young, B. 1992. "On Careers: Themes From the Lives of Four Western Canadian Women Educators." *Canadian Journal of Education* 17 (2).

Fiona Joy Green

What's Love Got To Do With It?

A Personal Reflection on the Role of Maternal Love in Feminist Teaching

> To open our hearts more fully to love's power and grace we must dare to acknowledge how little we know of love in both theory and practice. (bell hooks, 2000: xxix)

> Mothering/nurturing is a vital force and process establishing relationships throughout the universe. (Bernice Johnson Reagon, 1986: 88)

Conceiving and birthing my son over fourteen years ago when I was a Women's Studies graduate student transformed me. Just as I can not separate my feminism from any part of my life, I am unable to sever being a mother from any aspect of myself. As a result, my education, research and teaching are intertwined with my experience, knowledge and positioning as a feminist mother. At this point in time, I am interested in investigating how this positioning and my experiences may be useful in developing a theory of maternal-feminist pedagogy.

Like Sara Ruddick's (1989) *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace* and Susan Wendell's (1989) "Toward a Feminist Theory of Disability," I situate my exploration in the general philosophical view that distinctive ways of knowing arise out of and are tested against our lived, everyday practices.[1] Both Ruddick, as a mother, and Wendell, as a woman living with a disability, have generated theories from their personal and lived experiences. I take a similar practicalist approach by drawing upon my own experiences of mothering, research and teaching to explore the potential of developing a theory of maternal-feminist pedagogy that integrates elements of maternal practice, love and feminist teaching.

In this paper, I introduce a series of snapshots that represent personal

moments of scrutiny regarding the intersection of my feminism, mothering, research and teaching. To some degree, these illustrations are milestones in my development as a feminist mother and as a feminist teacher.[2] They are also significant moments that have contributed to my thinking about the role of maternal practice, and in particular the role of love, in feminist teaching. The purpose of this composition is to begin a discussion about the role love may have in feminist teaching and the possibility of developing a theory that integrates elements of maternal thinking with components of feminist pedagogy. I invite others to join this inquiry and to pursue further discussion around this proposition.

The personal is political: Living the intricacies of feminism, mothering and research

I first became aware of the fundamental interconnectedness of my feminism, mothering and research in 1988, when I was pregnant and writing my MA thesis "The Development of a Mother-Centred Model of Childbirth." Not only did my experiences of conception and pregnancy kindle the choice and development of my research topic, the process of investigating and writing my thesis enabled me to make meaningful connections among my life experiences, my feminist analysis and my feminist activism. For example, while still pregnant, I decided to hyphenate my son's last name to honour both his maternal and paternal ancestry.[3] I did not want to sustain or reproduce the patriarchal practice of naming children exclusively after their paternal lineage. Rather, I wanted to ensure that my child's maternal family line was visible. Through the act of choosing and registering my son's name, I learned how mothering can be a site of political activism.

As my child developed, I realized, for the first time, how males, just as females, are under immense pressure to conform to restrictive gender specific stereotypes. This was most obvious to me in 1993, when my son entered kindergarten. At this time, I was overtly pressured by other mothers to explain and "correct" the appearance of my five-year-old son, whose hairstyle more closely resembled that of a girl than that of a boy. I was not prepared for the intense social pressure to raise my son in ways that replicate patriarchal notions of masculinity. I knew, however, that fighting to create space for my son, where he could grow and develop in ways that were comfortable and appropriate for him, was essential to my love for him as a mother and integral to my feminism.

These early revelations—that mothering can be a site of feminist activism, that the socialization and development of males are influenced by patriarchy and that mothers are strongly prompted to reproduce and advocate patriarchal expectations—now appear naive. They were, however, significant to the inception of my PhD research that I would soon begin. My experiences made me want to investigate how other self-identified feminist mothers experienced the interconnection of their feminism and mothering.

Mothering and teaching: Curricula and student interaction

My mothering experiences not only concurred with and, consequently, sculpted my research, they also corresponded with and influenced my teaching. In 1989, with an MA degree in hand and a one-year-old in my life, I began teaching an introductory level Women's Studies course. Being a "new mom" significantly influenced the decisions I made about the content of the course. I spent considerable time developing the curriculum and fostering class discussion in ways that focused on issues connected to the family. I paid particular attention to the inequalities related to gender socialization, to the complexities of developing positive self-esteem in children, to the devaluation of motherwork, and to the significance of women and mothers in the lives of the children they care for.

In the following ten years I taught courses in both Sociology and Women's Studies as a stipendiary and, then, sessional instructor. My identity as a mother continued to guide my curricula and teaching practices. Issues related to mothering were fundamental to early Sociology courses addressing 'women in society' and 'sex and gender relations,' and continue to be a prominent feature in the "Sociological Perspectives on Gender and Sexuality" course I am currently teaching. Being a mother also advises the various Women's Studies courses that I have developed and taught, including two on "gender and the sciences." Investigation into historical and philosophical approaches to science are directed through several lenses, including one that focuses on assumptions made about women, mothers and the realities of mothering. Exploration into contemporary gender issues related to science, such as women's health and the environment, are also informed by a critique of myths associated with women who are mothers.

As a parent, I am acutely sensitive to issues and concerns particular to students who are mothers. I am mindful of the difficulty they may have in attending class or meeting homework deadlines due to the complexities of motherwork, which may include: caring for ill children; dealing with unpredictable childcare arrangements; or managing a multitude of other family responsibilities. I also respect and acknowledge the importance of mothering in the approaches students take in their discussions, analysis and assignments. For example, in a seminar on Feminist Research Methodologies, two students (who are not parents) are currently working on projects connected with mothering; one on lesbian parenting and the other on mother/child bonding. My openness to and support of their interest in research associated with mothering encourages them to see me as a useful resource as both a mother and a professor. I am able to help them address many of the questions they have about the topic of mothering and assist them in deciding which approach(es) they want to pursue while investigating their subject areas.

According to my students, being the parent of an adolescent affords me a particular astuteness to issues associated with sexuality and sex-related illness and disease. They often ask me how I deal with these issues in my relationship

with my now teen-aged son. In 2001, when Winnipeg School Division #1 held public meetings to discuss a new anti-homophobia policy and a revised school curriculum, students raised the issue of the lack of openness around issues of sex in their own high school education and the negative repercussions this has for youth coming to terms with themselves as sexual beings. Currently, my perspective and experience as a feminist mother continues to be sought after in class discussions on how to effectively talk with children, youth, adults and parents about sexuality and issues related to the rights and struggles of transgendered people.

Feminism and teaching: Feminist pedagogy in the classroom

I begin all of my classes, regardless of the faculty in which I teach, by introducing students to the article "What is Feminist Pedagogy?" by Carolyn M. Shrewsbury (1987). Together we explore the goal of working together to create a liberatory classroom environment where we can learn to respect each other's differences—whether they are differences of gender, sex, race, ethnicity, class, religion, sexuality, age, and/or ability—rather than fear them. Central to this vision is integrating the skills of critical thinking about the many forms of oppression and domination with respect for others. My desire, like Shrewsbury's, is to create a classroom that "becomes a place in which integrity is not only possible but normal" (1987: 6).

To help create such a space, I nurture an understanding and practice of community, empowerment and leadership that is student-centred and democratic (Shrewsbury, 1987: 8). How we imagine community within the classroom will influence the ways in which we construct systems of power among ourselves and, in turn, shape how people participate, learn and teach within that space. Central to this practice is (re)envisioning the classroom as a community of diverse learners where there is both autonomy of self and mutuality with others that coincides with the developmental needs of the participants, no matter what their identity (Shrewsbury, 1987: 10).

Empowerment embodies an understanding and practice of power as energy, capacity and potential rather than as a relation of domination (Shrewsbury, 1987: 9). Empowered students find their own voices and discover their own authenticity while at the same time respecting the power, voices and authenticity of others. Being empowered enhances both autonomy and mutuality, and recognizes our abilities to respect and to find communion with others.

Leadership within a feminist classroom requires an embodiedment of our ability and our willingness to act on our beliefs, while finding honorable connections between our needs and the needs of others (Shrewsbury, 1987: 11). Effective leaders are also effective followers, as they understand the moral and ethical nature of choices within a community and the necessity for empowerment and agency of all communal members. In such a classroom we build on the experiences of each other, see our experiences in different lights, relate our

experiences to other and new understandings, and come to think about our experiences in different ways (Shrewsbury, 1987: 6-7).

The practices of community, empowerment and leadership that I facilitate in my classroom are very similar to the ways in which I interact with my son at home and to the ways in which the self-identified feminist mothers involved in my Ph.D. research engage with their children.

Feminist mothering and feminist pedagogy

In the late 1990s, I interviewed 16, self-identified feminist mothers who lived in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada about the interconnection of their feminism and mothering. I discovered that feminism advises the parenting philosophies and practices of these women and, conversely, that their mothering shapes their understanding and practice of feminism. I also found that these mothers practice a number of feminist teaching strategies while living with and raising their children. For instance, they teach their children about various forms of domination and oppression—especially those related to gender, ethnicity, race, geographic location, class, age, ability and sexuality—and the ways in which they intersect people's lives.[4] They also participate in the feminist pedagogical practice of raising thought provoking questions and facilitating organized and focussed discussions that immerse their children in critical thinking.[5]

These mothers clearly partake in what theorist bell hooks (1988: 51) describes as a feminist pedagogy that engages people "in a learning process that makes the world 'more real than less real'... [and] work[s] to dispel the notion that our experience is not a 'real world' experience." In addition, they often exercise other strategies common to feminist pedagogy, such as developing egalitarian relationships with their children that foster collaborative learning, nourish empowerment and self-governance, and advance collective action.[6]

This discovery—that feminist mothers practice several components of feminist pedagogy—was a significant moment in my understanding of the interconnectedness of feminist mothering and feminist teaching. Feminist pedagogy is clearly not limited to the confines of the teacher/student relationship or to the classroom. Feminist pedagogy is obviously practiced in the home through the interpersonal relations feminist mothers have with their children. This epiphany lead me to wonder if feminist mothers who are teachers draw on aspects of their parenting when interacting with students in educational settings.

Attentive love through maternal practice: Preservation, growth and acceptability

> To foster growth is to sponsor or nurture a child's unfolding, expanding material spirit—whatever in a child is lively, purposive and responsive. (Ruddick, 1989: 82)

Today I understand that when I honored and facilitated my young son's wishes to wear his hair in an unconventional way as a child in kindergarten, I was practicing what Sara Ruddick (1989) calls "attentive love"—the combination of my cognitive capacity for attention and my human ability to love. While the attention practiced in attentive love by a mother is "akin to the capacity for empathy, the ability to suffer or celebrate with another as if in the other's experience you know and find yourself," it also endeavors to see the other accurately rather than to see oneself in the other (Ruddick, 1989: 121). These acts of attentive love "strengthen a love that does not clutch at or cling to the beloved" but, rather, lets the beloved grow (Ruddick, 1989: 122).

As a mother responsible for caring for her child, I am continuously engaged in what Ruddick (1989: 17) calls the maternal work of preservative love, nurturance and training.[7] I recognize that my son, like others, lives a complicated life and that his mind and psyche need persistent nurturance and attention. My respect for my five-year-old son's need to wear his hair in a way that was true to his sense of self meant that I navigated the social pressure placed on me, as his mother, and on him, as a young boy. I attempted to do this in a way that would safeguard and foster his positive self-development and self-esteem. It also demanded that I question the well-meant requirements of social acceptability placed on us by our family, friends and community, while at the same time negotiating our acceptance within these social groups.[8] My attention to my son's well-being continues to be a simultaneous act of knowing and loving (Ruddick, 1989:120).

So, what's love got to do with feminist pedagogy?

> Embracing a love ethic means that we utilize all dimensions of love—"care, commitment, trust, responsibility, respect and knowledge"—in our everyday lives. We can successfully do this only by cultivating awareness. Being aware enables us to critically examine our actions to see what is needed so that we can give care, be responsible, show respect, and indicate a willingness to learn. (bell hooks, 2000: 94)

Loving children, not by possessing or manipulating them but by acknowledging and welcoming their reality, argues Ruddick, is central to "the patient loving eye of attention" often practiced by mothers (1989: 122). Thinking about my teaching experiences of the past thirteen years, I realize that I often use this type of attention in my interaction with students. The patient loving eye of attention that I have developed as a mother meshes easily with my feminist teaching in the classroom. I find that I engage with students in ways that are similar to how I interact with my son. In both cases it feels reflexive and appropriate to listen attentively to what I am being told, to appreciate where feelings and stories are coming from, and to support the will of the person who is sharing a part of herself or himself with me. I respect the knowledge that is

being shared with me and I am committed to "nurture the unfolding, expanding material spirit" within each human being that Ruddick defines as essential to maternal thinking (1989: 57).

The synthesis of attentive love and feminist pedagogy in my university teaching appears to not only mirror elements of my relationship with my son, but to also echo what other feminist mothers have told me they practice in their parenting. My research findings show that feminist mothers engage the patient loving eye of attention as they concurrently treat their children with love and respect and educate their children to think critically about themselves, others and the world around them. They not only cultivate an awareness and value for diversity and community affiliation, they also foster an environment where autonomy and leadership are esteemed and practiced. In their commitment to exercising a love that does not clutch or cling, feminist mothers enable their children to grow as individuals in their own right. Feminists foster empowerment and self-governance in their children as they engage in the maternal work of ensuring the preservation, growth and acceptance of their children.

Although scholars addressing the principles and practice of feminist pedagogy have not directly addressed love in their discourse, other feminist thinkers have considered the importance of love in writings pertaining to political activism and liberatory education.[9] For instance, feminist theorist Marilyn Frye (1983), in *The Politics of Reality*, articulates the need for a "science of the loving eye" which allows for and demands a plurality of experiences and subjective knowledge (76). According to Frye, the loving eye, which presupposes embodied knowledge and independence, "knows the complexity of the other as something which will forever present new things to be known"(1983: 6). Rather than blindly adhering to and submitting to the ideas, ideals and knowledge of others and ourselves, the loving eye allows for critical reflection and the creation of new meanings for ourselves and for others. The loving eye, as I understand and have described here, appears to be central to the practice of feminist pedagogy which is practiced by feminist mothers in their relationships with their children and by feminist teachers, such as myself, in their relationships with students.

Feminist critic and scholar, bell hooks, addresses the importance of love in a recent trilogy on the subject.[10] In her first book, *All About Love: New Visions*, hooks (2000) notes that love—revealed through the acts of care, respect, knowing and assuming responsibility—lays "the foundation for the constructive building of community with strangers" (144). The goal of developing community within the feminist classroom, where learning and teaching can take place in an environment that simultaneously respects diversity and autonomy is supported by a love ethic that, according to hooks (2000:88), insists that "we make choices based on a belief that honesty, openness and personal integrity" need to be expressed in all of our everyday interactions with people.

In the last volume of the trilogy, *Communion: The Female Search for Love*,

hooks addresses the need for love and solidarity among women. She claims that in restoring love to its rightful place—at the centre of our lives—we can "create loving bonds, circles of love that nurture and sustain collective female well-being" (2002: xix). The goal of creating loving bonds where the well-being of individuals are nurtured and sustained, parallels one of the fundamental goals of feminist mothering and feminist pedagogy. The well-being of children is essential to the maternal work of nurturing children, while the well-being of students is integral to creating a libaratory classroom where feminist pedagogy can blossom and where students can learn.

I believe that love can be entwined with feminist mothering and with the philosophy and practice of feminist pedagogy. Although the evidence presented here may be considered sparse, I believe that elements of an 'ethic of love,' as proposed by hooks, and components of 'the loving eye,' as theorized by Frye, are found in both feminist mothering and feminist pedagogy. I am more convinced by my own experiences and by the experiences of other feminist mothers, that the act of 'attentive love' that is intrinsic to the maternal work of raising children is experienced by feminist mothers who are feminist teachers in the classroom. I believe that feminist mothers who are teachers draw on what they know about loving their children as they engage with students. I believe that love also assists them to critically examine their own actions to see what is needed, so that they can, as hooks (2002: 94) posits, "give care, be responsible, show respect and indicate a willingness to learn" as they work within the feminist classroom.

This paper is only the starting point for theorizing around a maternal-feminist pedagogy that is informed by love. I encourage readers to not only reflect upon what I have proposed here, but to also delve into further discussion regarding the role of love in teaching and how this may play a role in feminist pedagogy.

[1]For further discussion of the practicalist philosophical view, see Ruddick (1989). Belenky et. al. (1987) present various ways in which women develop distinctive ways of knowing out of their personal lived experiences in *Women's Ways of Knowing*.

[2]I am indebted to Debra Dudek for the rich conversation that helped me clarify this understanding.

[3]This decision was not made by me alone, rather, it was made with my partner and the father of our child.

[4]For further discussion of this aspect of feminist pedagogy, see: Briskin (1992); hooks (1988, 1994); Spelman (1985) and Washington (1985).

[5]See, for example: Briskin (1992); hooks (1988, 1994); Hughes (1996).

[6]Carolyn Shrewsbury (1987) speaks to these three components of feminist pedagogy, as do bell hooks (1994), Elizabeth Ellsworth (1992), and Frances Maher and Mary Kay Tetrault (1994).

[7]The motherwork of preservation, nurturance and growth differ for women depending on their social location. For example, Black feminist theorist and sociologist, Patricia Hill Collins (1991) mothers emphasizes the importance Black mothers place on teaching their children self-definition, self-reliance and the necessity of demanding respect from others due to the realities of living in a racist society. Without these skills, Black children are unable to survive the sexist, racist and class-biased society in which they live. Raising children with a political consciousness can assist in the development of self-assured and self-reliant children.

[8]Again, I must acknowledge that my partner and I were in full agreement with supporting the right of my son to make choices about his appearance that fit with his sense of self.

[9]See, for example, Frye (1983) Rose (1994). Ruddick (1983) also addresses the importance of love in understanding and working toward a politics of peace.

[10]These include: *All About Love: New Visions* (2000); *Salvation: Black People and Love* (2001); and *Communion: The Female Search for Love* (2002).

References

Belenky, Mary., Clincy, Blyth., Goldberger, Nancy., and Tarule, Jill. 1987. *Women's Ways of Knowing*. New York: Basic Books

Briskin, Linda. 1992. *Feminist Pedagogy: Teaching and Learning Liberation.* Ottawa: Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women

Collins, Patricia Hill. 1991. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge.

Ellsworth, Elizabeth. (1992) "Why Doesn't This Feel Empowering? Working Through the Repressive Myths of Critical Pedagogy." *Feminism and Critical Pedagogy*. Carmen Luke and Jennifer Gore, eds. New York, Routledge. 90-119.

Frye, Marilyn. 1983. "In and Out of Harm's Way: Arrogance and Love." *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory*. New York: The Crossing Press. 52-83.

Green, Fiona Joy. 2001. *Living Feminism: Pedagogy and Praxis in Mothering*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Interdiciplinary Program (Education, Sociology and Women's Studies, University of Manitoba.

hooks, bell. 2002. *Communion: The Female Search for Love. New Visions*. New York: Perennial.

hooks, bell. 2001. *Salvation: Black People and Love*. New York: Perennial.

hooks, bell. 2000. *All About Love: New Visions*. New York: Perennial.

hooks, bell. 1994. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom.* Boston: South End Press.

hooks, bell. 1988. *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. Toronto: Between the Lines.

Hughes, Kate Prichard. 1996. "Education for Liberation? Two Australian

Contexts." *Gender in Popular Education: Methods for Empowerment.* Shirley Walters and Linzi Manicom, eds. London: Zed Books. 102-117.

Maher, Frances and Mary Kay Tetrault 1994. *The Feminist Classroom.* New York: Basic Books.

Reagon, Bernice Johnson. 1986. "African Diaspora Women: The Making of Cultural Workers." *Feminist Studies* 12 (1): 88

Rose, Hilary. 1994. *Love, Power and Knowledge: Towards a Feminist Transformation of the Sciences.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Ruddick, Sara. 1989. *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Shrewsbury, Carolyn. 1987. "What is Feminist Pedagogy?" *Women's Studies Quarterly,* XV (3, 4): 6-14.

Spelman, E.V. 1985. "Combating the Marginalization of Black Women in the Classroom." *Gendered Subjects: The Dynamics of Feminist Teaching.* Margo Culley and Catherine Portuges, eds. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 240-244.

Washington, M. 1985. "How Racial Differences Helped Us Discover Our Common Ground." *Gendered Subjects: The Dynamics of Feminist Teaching.* Margo Culley and Catherine Portuges, eds. Culley and Portuges, eds. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 221-229.

Wendell, Susan. 1989. "Toward a Feminist Theory of Disability." *Hypatia* 4 (2): 104-124.

Joanne Detore-Nakamura

Dissertation Distress
A Room of One's Own With a Crib and a Computer

I sit at my computer, typing away, trying desperately to come up with good, solid lines and unique metaphors for an article that I'm working on, while my toddler sleeps soundly in the bed in the same room, which is also the office. I am afraid that with every click of my keyboard I might awaken her. My eyelids are heavy in need of sleep too, but I can't afford to nap. Once Emily wakes up, I will not have any time to myself. We are tired from a restless night with nightmares filled with a loss of Mommy to business trips, not of the traditional monsters under the bed. Now with me, home from my teaching job at a community college, I watch her as she sucks away earnestly on her Binky, content that Mommy is where she should be. I have about one hour and fifteen minutes, give or take, to eek away at my latest short story.

When my two-year old daughter, Emily, is awake, even checking e-mail is difficult. She climbs up on my lap or wedges herself into the back of my office chair, claiming to give me a neck massage in between "peek-a-boo," her real game. When that doesn't work, she bounces on her bed and makes another play for my attention.

"Mommy, let's be dinosaurs on the floor! Come on, Duckie (a dinosaur in *Land Before Time*, a series of children's videos)! I'm Little Foot," she pleads.

"In a minute, Em," I tell her. "Give Mommy ten minutes and we'll play."

That seems to placate her temporarily, knowing that Mommy makes good on her promises. Even so, I feel guilt for my self-indulgence and for my neglect of my daughter, even if it is for ten minutes.

Virginia Woolf never had to contend with children who vied for her attention. Having a child was certainly my choice, but Woolf was only partially right when she determined that women writers needed a room of their own and 500 British pounds to write. Writing mothers also need time and freedom from

guilt for that time away from our children. Woolf was never a mother; she probably couldn't have guessed about the amount of guilt, even with her great insight into the human mind. I say that from experience.

Even a writer like Kate Chopin, with her six children, created a character like Edna Pontellier, an artist-mother who had no guilt over mothering. Edna was the feminist ideal, perhaps, a woman-artist who would never sacrifice her artistic vision or herself. Rather than risk becoming less than she could be, she commits suicide. But Chopin had lots of help with her children. I suspect that she was able to write because of this and wrote almost only short stories because she could do it in short spurts. She rarely revised. I doubt she had time. So while she "watched" her children being tended to by nursery maids, she wrote and satisfied her artistic urges unlike her character Edna. However, there are plenty of real-life, artist-mothers like Edna who exited life by their own hands. The literary world seems peppered with such real tragic heroines—Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton—who were all mothers and who gave up on life and motherhood. Still, there are those of us who write without such personal drama. Mother-writers like Margaret Atwood, Toni Morrison, and Louise Erdrich give me hope that I can have a sane life that includes writing and children. However, despite my best efforts, I do have guilt, lots of it. Feminism isn't easy.

For years, though, I had convinced myself that feminism was easy where motherhood was concerned. Feminism was supposed to be about choices. Some women chose to stay at home with their children and some chose to continue working. Secretly, I suspected that the women who stayed home did so because they weren't really feminists. They stayed at home out of a duty to an outmoded, patriarchal system in which women belonged in the kitchen and in the nursery. I also thought that those women were less intellectually driven than I was. Surely after a maternity leave, I would be dying to head back to work for adult conversation and intellectual challenge. I decided all this before I had the baby. I would go back to work after about a five-month maternity leave. And I did. But it was the most difficult day of my life when that day came, even though I was handing my daughter over to my parents, who had recently retired and moved down the street to help me with childcare. I was incredibly fortunate, yet I still felt torn.

When Emily was born, my entire view of feminism and motherhood changed. I fell in love with my baby and felt an enormous responsibility toward her like none other I'd ever felt. Prior to my maternity leave, I had been the department chair of four disciplines with budgeting, scheduling, and staffing concerns, but the responsibility of this eight-pound baby weighed more heavily upon me. I had no real desire to return to work. However, I would like to have said that I spent a blissful five months with my baby without any thought of the outside world, but I did not. I had the pressing task of trying to finish writing my dissertation or risk starting from scratch. After finishing my doctorate course work and successfully passing my preliminary examinations, I had five

years in which to finish writing and defending my dissertation to a committee of five other professors. I had passed my preliminary exams in December of 1993. I had Emily in March of 1998. That meant that I had until November of 1998 to submit my dissertation and successfully defend it to make the December graduation deadline, or I would have to start my Ph.D. all over again from the course work level.

Not wanting to begin again after eight years of doctoral study, I decided to work at home writing the last of my dissertation during my maternity leave. I was exhausted. Up most of the night with feeding, I craved sleep like a drug addict craved a fix. During the time that most mothers retreated to their beds for rejuvenating sleep, I hit my computer and notes, slogging through an enormous, theory-ridden dissertation on women's friendship in contemporary women's novels. To help out, a friend of mine volunteered to come each day for about an hour for four weeks to watch Emily while I finished writing and editing my manuscript. It took more time than that, though. I found myself having to sneak in time to write when my husband, Eric, arrived home from work. I was so tired. My head felt empty, as if all my brain cells had been pushed out of the birth canal with the baby. I called my friend Lisa who'd had a promising career as a public relations director before the birth of her first son. She was now a full-time mother of three young boys and somehow managed to freelance in the public relations field from time to time.

"You feel brain-dead, right?" she said, matter-of-factly, as if I should have known about this syndrome from one of those "everything you ever wanted to know about the first year" books.

"Yes." I answered, stunned speechless but that was just the half of it. My one-word answer to Lisa was symptomatic of a recent problem. Complicated sentence constructions gave me undue trouble. My speech was a series of monosyllabic responses peppered with subhuman grunts and whines, a sort of pre-toddler verbal facility level. I started to enjoy watching the *Teletubbies* and understood *Barney* for the first time. Coos, smiles, and cries became languages that I understood while the complexities of psychoanalytic theory started to escape me.

Why hadn't anyone told me about this brain-sapping effect of which my one-word responses was part, which apparently everyone knew about? It must have been part of that feminist conspiracy that Christine Hoff Sommers tried to articulate in *Who Stole Feminism*, the conspiracy that withholds unpleasant information that might be antithetical to the cause. It was so volatile that even she couldn't mention it. Even the *Girlfriend's Guide to Pregnancy* steered clear of this syndrome. For me, losing my facility with language, with complex thinking was devastating. I was a woman for whom words were a livelihood; surely one of our literary grandmothers would have passed along this information.

Despite my verbal challenges, I finished my dissertation. In fact, my dissertation director told me it was much clearer than previous versions. Ah, if

he only knew. Thankfully, he accepted the dissertation and moved it onto the next stage, the defense.

Prior to my dissertation defense, I was incredibly worried that I wouldn't be able to remember anything that I had written.

The morning of my defense was dreadful. We had traveled from Florida to Carbondale, Illinois for the defense. My husband, my seven-month old teething infant, and I had spent a restless night crammed into my mother-in-law's tiny, one-bedroom house. Even after a cup of coffee, I couldn't remember the plot of the novels that I'd written about or the major underpinnings of my dissertation, yet here I was set to defend them to a five-person committee. Two hours before my defense, I tried to discuss my fears with my dissertation director, but he thought it was just nerves. I could remember feeding schedules, diaper changes, all the Teletubbies' names, and all the words to "The Wheels on the Bus." What I couldn't remember so clearly were the names of the major characters in Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* or *The Kitchen God's Wife*. They seemed to be moving between texts. Was June in *The Kitchen God's Wife* or was she the narrator of *The Joy Luck Club*? It was too late now. I was finished.

With my husband, daughter, and mother-in-law seated in the back of the room while my committee sat around a conference table, my defense began and just as surely, my daughter started blowing raspberries. The quiet was broken by loud, fart-like mouth sounds. Drool dangled like string from her chin. She stopped when my husband shushed her. The seriousness of the task at hand resumed. My committee members readjusted themselves in their chairs, reshuffled papers, folded their hands on the table and focused their attention on me. Formality encircled the room once more. My dissertation director asked me to explain the process by which I chose my dissertation topic. My mind began to clear.

Like a flashlight in the dark, his voice seemed to clear some of the fog. My words came in polysyllables, connected and coherent. I was articulate and thoughts flowed freely over the most complicated of my theoretical underpinnings. I looked around at my committee members, nodding and smiling at me. I must have been making sense. I looked at my husband, who sat beaming with Emily, my golden-haired cherub, on his lap. I looked at Emily who pursed her lips and blew the most raucous series of raspberries I'd ever heard, louder than anything one would hear in *Animal House* (the cult-classic film about a group of unruly and uncouth fraternity brothers). The flatulence-like stream continued, louder and wetter, until one by one my committee members, who'd up until this point, tried to ignore my little imp, starting throwing paternal and maternal glances her way in an effort to stifle the onslaught of steady mouth-farts. I don't know how I resisted laughter or even a verbal censure. I kept talking, as if unaffected. It must have been my training in vocal performance that pushed me to declare mentally, "The show must go on." My husband removed Emily from the room when it was clear that she was a scene-stealer like her mother.

When the two hours had elapsed after difficult, probing questions, I was asked to leave the conference room and wait in the reception area of the English department office while my committee deliberated on the success of my dissertation and defense. My mother-in-law, who had been the only family present during the entire process, said that I'd done fabulously. Emily was still blowing raspberries, thrilled by all the attention that she received from college students passing by. After about 15 minutes, my dissertation director invited me back into the room to congratulate me as Dr. Detore-Nakamura. I could hardly believe it. One of my committee members, one of the toughest, commented that my dissertation was brilliant and that my defense was exemplary. All and each committee member said it was an excellent study. If they had only known that my dissertation was written between breast feedings and diaper changes.

With my new title, I returned to Florida, back to my job and my role as wife, mother, professor, and writer. It's been almost two years since my dissertation defense. Since that time, I have penned a series of poems, several short stories, a few essays, and an article, and continued working on my novel. My brain seems to be functioning normally too. In fact, my facility with language is even better, and I've gained a new kind of respect for myself. I know that I can do anything now. I've recently gathered the courage to send some of my work off for publication consideration, something I had stopped doing even before I began pregnant. I also have a new topic now – motherhood. Some of my newest poems are about motherhood and writing, about the challenges and frustrations of it all. I try to articulate the aspects of motherhood, the good ones and the unexpected ones, that our literary foremothers didn't tell us.

As I sit here, at my computer desk, my daughter's voice rings throughout the house, echoed in baby monitors. Her father watches her now, while I write this essay. I'm not sure that he considers this "mandatory," this writing, not like the grading of papers or the finishing of a project for a grant. However, he doesn't complain much and many times serves as my first editor. I know that I couldn't do it alone, not without him or my parents who watch Emily while I work. For single mothers who write, like Toni Morrison, it must be a difficult task, writing. Writing is like breathing though, the unconscious need to write, drawing lives rather than breaths. It is like giving birth, a clichéd metaphor now, but still apt. Yet, I have found that giving birth is the least difficult task. The constant tending, watching, and nurturing that one must give to writing, as to toddlers, is the most taxing. It is the one process that makes the most demands and the one that yields the highest rewards. My draft, though, will remain in this state until I pick it up again and choose to revise it; my toddler will not. Excuse me, won't you? I need to check on my daughter.

Renee Norman

Confessions of an Aging Mother

earlier the youngest crawled into bed beside me
curling up
patiently waiting: have you slept enough?
can i turn on the TV in your room?

i dreamt disrupted scenes
of my previous day
while cartoon characters shouted
across the screen
a small warm body
curved itself back into mine
leg to leg

an aging mother
i need that extra half-sleep
would not trade the TV background
for any silence
i need the reminders of flesh
that once pulsed inside mine
feet kicking from the inside out

Debra H. Swanson and Deirdre D. Johnston

Mothering in the Ivy Tower
Interviews with Academic Mothers

From the outside a college faculty position looks like an ideal work environment for women who are mothers: a flexible schedule, autonomy, interaction with other adults, rewards for writing and researching topics of interest. Academic women, however, often perceive traditional faculty careers and research agendas to be incompatible with having and raising children (Harper, Baldwin, Gansneder and Chronister, 2001). The purpose of this study is to explore how academic women construct the meaning of motherhood. Is the meaning of motherhood constructed by academic mothers incompatible with academe? Do academic mothers construct motherhood differently than other employed mothers?

The social construction of motherhood

A number of scholars contend that the social construction of motherhood is revealed through discourse (c.f., Kaplan, 1992; Ranson, 1999; Uttal, 1996). Narratives reveal the internalization of ideologies and are the window to viewing the internal meaning systems individuals use to construct their identity and make sense of their experience (Billig, 1997; Bristor and Fischer, 1993; Gergen, 1985; Harre, 1995; Sherrard, 1997; Weedon, 1997) . For mothers, internalized ideologies create expectations for identity construction (Bergum, 1997; Woollett and Phoenix, 1991). For employed mothers, mothering role construction is often in tension with the worker/professional role identity (Blair-Loy, 2001; Hewlett, 2002).

Through the analysis of employed mother's narratives, Elvin-Nowak and Thomsson (2001) found that the meanings of motherhood were revealed through three discursive positions: accessibility, happiness, and separate spheres. The first discursive is that the psychological development and general well

being of the child is dependent upon the accessibility of the mother. This position creates expectations that mothers should be ever-present and available to their children (c.f., Ranson, 1999). The second position asserts that the happiness of the mother promotes the happiness of the child. This position allows mothers an identity outside of motherhood to pursue interests and vocations. On the other hand, it suggests that to be "only a mother" is not sufficient for the mother or her children (c.f., Peters, 1997). A mother's need to meet her own individual needs often creates a dialectical tension with the first discursive position to be ever-present and accessible to children. The third position asserts separate spheres for employment and motherhood. The worker role is separate and independent of the mother role. Elvin-Nowak and Thomsson (2001) found that employed women in Sweden attempt to balance all three of these discursive positions within a cultural framework of gender equality. Good mothers, at least in Sweden, are rewarded for being accessible yet finding fulfillment beyond their children.

Johnston and Swanson (2003) explored Elvin-Nowak and Thomsson's (2001) three discursive mothering positions in the United States. Johnston and Swanson found that women construct these discursive positions differently based on work status. Whereas at-home mothers defined maternal accessibility in physical terms (e.g., "being there"), full-time employed mothers defined maternal accessibility in emotional and psychological terms. For full-time employed mothers, presence was not as important as the nature of the interaction when present. Whereas the at-home mother discursively defined her accessibility as always present, protective, and enveloping, the full-time employed mother defined her accessibility with boundaries—sometimes present, sometimes protective, and encouraging individuality. Full-time employed mothers use boundaries to develop children's self-esteem, emotional expression, and independence.

Johnston and Swanson (2003) found that full-time employed mothers construct the happy mother-happy child discursive position by contending that mothers should have an identity outside motherhood. Yet, full-time employed mothers are not as happy as part-time employed mothers, not because of job stress, but because they feel they do not have enough time with their children. In contrast, at-home mothers construct an inverse position; they don't talk about how a happy mother makes a happy child, but rather that a happy child is the raison d'etre of a good mother.

Johnston and Swanson (2003) found that at-home mothers construct the third discursive position—separation of work and family spheres—in ways that exclude employed mothers from the definition of a "good mother." By defining "good mothering" in terms of omnipresent accessibility, at-home mothers stake out a position whereby a "good mother," by definition, has to select the family sphere and abandon the employment sphere. Full-time employed mothers try to justify their work decision by separating work and family spheres. However, in reality, they experience spillover between work and family: work

impinges on family time and family obligations impinge on work. They negotiate this definition by temporarily switching their priorities, energy, and attention from one sphere to the other. As a result, for full-time employed mothers, motherhood and employment remain in tension.

Academic mothers

Research on mothers who are also academics is limited to studies of career performance and career satisfaction (Allen, 1998; Bellas and Toutkoushain, 1999; Chamberlain, 1988; Cole and Zuckerman, 1987; Davis and Astin, 1987; Fox and Faver, 1985; Kyvik, 1990; Long, 1990). Overall these studies suggest that marriage and family do not account for the disparity in the publication records of men and women (Bellas and Toutkoushain, 1999; Chamberlain, 1988; Cole and Zuckerman, 1987; Davis and Astin, 1987). Blackburn and Lawrence (1985) conclude that sex differences in publication productivity disappear when institution, rank, and academic discipline are controlled.

However, there is some evidence that women perceive family as a hindrance to academic success (Chamberlain, 1988; Harper et al., 2001; Tack and Patitu, 1992). Whereas men see limited resources as the primary inhibitors to productive research and writing, women identify limitations that are the results of their participation in time-consuming activities, such as family, teaching, and committee work (Chamberlain, 1998; Harper et al., 2001; Tack and Patitu, 1992).

Research on academic women's job satisfaction suggests that women are less satisfied than men. Morris (1992) and Harper et al. (2001) found dissatisfaction and frustration among women at all academic levels. Much of this dissatisfaction may come from the extra expectations put on academic women. Women faculty, married or single, are expected to manage the institutional housekeeping—i.e., committee work, student recruitment, departmental social events (Cummins, 2002).

At best we can conclude that family is one factor contributing to women's real and/or perceived difficulty advancing in academe. Perhaps one of the reasons this research is so equivocal is that family roles are operationalized as demographic variables rather than constructed identities. We have little understanding of how academic mothers construct motherhood and how these constructions may impact their professor roles. The purpose of this study is to explore the accessible mother, the happy mother, and the separate sphere discursive positions (Elvin-Nowak and Thomsson, 2001; Johnston and Swanson, 2003) in the discourse of mothers in academe. Are these three discursive positions salient for academic mothers? Do academic mothers construct motherhood differently than other full-time employed mothers?

Methods

This study is part of a larger research project on the social construction of motherhood based on interviews with 95 married, middle-class mothers of

preschool age children (Johnston and Swanson, 2003). The network sampling technique was used to identify mothers with at least one preschool age child.

A subsample of these interviews are women academics from two institutions in the United States: a small, liberal-arts college and a Midwestern state university. Sixty-five percent had Ph.D.s and 35 percent had M.A.s or M.F.A.s. The academic mothers were all married and had one to four children with a sample average of two children each. The average age of the mother was 38 years. The age of the children ranged from infant to seven years.

The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended. The recorded interviews averaged two hours in length and were usually conducted in the woman's home. Questions addressed issues of work decision, identity construction, social support, and reflections on cultural role expectations for mothers. For this study, the discursive themes revealed in the narratives of academic mothers will be compared to the narrative analysis of full-time employed, part-time employed, and at-home mothers reported in Johnston and Swanson (2003). Pseudonyms will be used to protect the confidentiality of the women in our sample.

The narrative data was first coded thematically (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Themes were analyzed for frequency, repetition, and dominance of discursive interpretations (Burr, 1995; Wetherell and Potter, 1988). The analysis of discursive positions involved exploring the images and metaphors employed in women's narratives, what is said, what is not said, and what discursive dichotomies are used to construct meanings of motherhood (Feldman, 1995; Scott, 1988; and Wall, 2001).

Elvin-Nowak and Thomsson's (2001) three discursive positions were prevalent in the qualitative thematic analysis of the data and were therefore employed as an interpretive framework for analyzing the results. Accessibility concerns emerged as a discursive position when we asked the mothers in our sample how they defined a "good mother," how they could be better mothers, and what they perceived to be the greatest stressor of being a mother. The construction of maternal happiness was revealed in women's reflections on how they made their work/stay home decision, the impact of their decision on themselves and their children, and their assessment of their own happiness with their decision and motherhood experience. Mother's construction of work/family spheres was revealed in responses to questions about the separation or integration of work and family, how the two spheres influenced and informed each other, and how often they overlapped.

Results

Accessibility as a discursive position

In the narratives of academic mothers, accessibility is associated with vigilance. Academic mothers appear to approach mothering with the same kind of intensity with which they approach a dissertation: "I'm a good mother that

tries to be really on top of all these things that are happening with my child," explains Tracy, psychology professor and mother of two.

For academic mothers, good mothering is more than accessibility; it is responsibility. In fact, academic moms say that the greatest stress of being a mother is the tremendous responsibility of raising a child: "You try to do your best at everything you do to raise your kids, but there is no assurance against something you don't know. There are many different ways of doing it and your way may work for you, but it may not be the best way. Knowing that, I think, is very stressful," says Sarah, Education Professor and mother of two. Carla, English Professor and mother of four, talks about her hour commute and the panic that sometimes overwhelms her: "What did I get myself into? The hardest thing for me is watching these human beings I love grow up. I feel a different kind of responsibility for them than I do my husband. He was an adult already in my relationship with him. If he makes bad choices, I'll be there, I'll love him and I'll pick him up, but I don't feel the same kind of responsibility."

Academic mothers do not define accessibility in physical ("being there") or psychological ("esteem building") terms. Rather, academic mothers consistently construct the meaning of accessibility in terms of intimacy. Marta, Education Professor and mother of one, cannot keep the delight out of her voice when taking about her young daughter, "She just knocks me out. She's so sharp and delightful and funny. I think she knows how much we just *like her*. She knows we love her too, but we just really like her...We're physically very affectionate and she responds to that."

When asked if they were missing out on anything, academic mothers lament the possibility of missing out on developmental accomplishments: "[I worry about] missing out on the day-to-day changes, raising him the way I would raise him," bemoans Molly, psychology professor and mother of one.

Academic mothers say they have adequate time with their children, but this kind of accessibility comes at a cost. Defining accessibility in terms of an intense sense of responsibility creates work for the academic mother. "I get very defensive sometimes about the fact that I'm the one that feels like I'm responsible for everything. Like getting her from point A to point B, or making arrangements for her to go to the doctor, or picking up at daycare. I sometimes feel that working full-time and then having the responsibilities of [my daughter] and the household is more than what I'm capable of handling," sighs Anne, communication professor and mother of one. "[As a family] we try to balance all of our commitments. [Our daughter] is involved in so many things and [my husband] and I have our leisure activities that we do and then there's church...[She] is in soccer and she's starting basketball and she's in her school play and she has Kid's club through church on Wednesday and choir practice at church on Sunday evening and chemistry club. Chemistry club is a new one. [She] is just one of my three children and she's already making bombs," says Kelly, mathematics professor and mother of three.

Happy mother-happy child discursive position

When asked about their happiness, academic mothers talk about the tension between high job expectations and intense mothering expectations. Faculty mothers describe the threat to their self-identity that occurs with motherhood. Perhaps in reaction to the guilt of preserving an identity outside of motherhood, academic mothers compile intensive mothering expectations on top of already high work expectations. 'There are some evenings when I come home and feel like I'm in a time crunch. She (my daughter) doesn't have my full attention. I'm too tired to give her my best. I sometimes feel that there's a lot of pressure being that I work, there are still things that have to get done at the end of the day... [Y]ou still have to come up with time for her so that she doesn't feel like she's being cheated. Sometimes I don't feel like I'm 100 percent successful at doing that. In fact, hardly ever do I feel like I'm 100 percent successful at doing that," admits Anne, Communication Professor and mother of one.

Despite the fact that academic mothers report work and family tension, faculty mothers are confident in their decision to work. Academic moms work because they love their professional identity: "I love my work," "My identity is my work," and "I never thought or considered doing otherwise," say academic mothers. Academic mothers also believe that their employment benefits their children: "I am a role model to my child. I like the opportunities [my job] offers to my child. He does a lot of things socially that a kid would not be able to do in other settings. He'll always be around people who are interested in education and like to travel abroad," notes Celeste, Law Professor and mother of one. The fact that faculty mothers are not conflicted about their decision to work—despite the fact that they are stressed and not terribly happy—reveals the degree to which they embrace the position that to be only a mother is not good for either the mother or the child.

Maintaining separate spheres discursive position

Faculty mothers find it difficult to separate work and family spheres. Children are often in the office while mothers work. Mothers often work at home. Indeed, the flexibility of the academic schedule allows moms to transport children, attend school functions or stay home with a sick child during the workday. Conversely academic conferences, lecture series and campus events take mothers away from home on evenings and weekends. "Occasionally I will have to drag my son to school with me [when] he's sick and I have to get that one lecture done or turn off an instrument or something," admits Lauri, Chemistry Professor and mother of three.

Academic mothers say the spillover between work and home is stressful: "I drop my kids at daycare and I have to express my milk before I go to class. I run over to daycare to nurse at noon and then before I know it, it's time to express milk again mid-afternoon. The first thing [my child] wants to do is to nurse when [he] gets home. And you know it's really difficult going from

talking to a student to expressing milk in your office to opening the door and dealing with a student again or faculty member or writing a proposal or writing a test or something. Having that [my personal life and my work life] so intermixed is stressful. I am doing something pretty personal in a semi-public environment," continues Lauri, Chemistry Professor and mother of three.

The integration of work and family roles is also, however, perceived as a strength for many faculty mothers. "I've become less distractible and more focused...I was spending seven days a week, 10-12 hours a day in my office ... and not really accomplishing as much as I do now [that I have children], " contends Lisa, Biology Professor and mother of two. Faculty mothers want to be recognized for the ways their mother role informs their professional role and the ways their professional role makes them better mothers. The bottom line is that faculty mothers want their institutions to recognize them as mothers. "In general I find that if you want people to recognize you on the level of 'oh, I like the outfit you wore today' then you can talk about your kids. If you want people to recognize you on 'oh I like how you taught that class' or 'I like that piece of research you were talking about' then it's better not to talk about your kids at all," laughs Carla, English Professor and mother of four.

Rather than separate the public and private spheres, academic mothers perceive that the solution to work-family tension is the integration of roles. They want to be recognized as mothers and as professors; they resent having to deny a part of their identity to be taken seriously by the academy. Carla, English Professor and mother of four, explains "[I get support] to the level where people say 'oh your pictures of your kids are so cute' but they don't know my life with my kids. I mean I'm pretty sure that they would know each other's pets and their pet's habits better than they know my kids."

Discussion

Success in achieving gender-equity in the academy is partly dependent on supporting faculty's roles as parents. It is necessary to understand how academic mothers construct mothering in order to construct professional roles that support faculty who also choose to parent.

Faculty moms embrace an intensive mothering ideology (Hays, 1996). Hays describes intensive mothering as the "copious amounts of time, energy and material resources [expended on] the child ... [in this] child-centered, expert-guided, emotionally absorbing, labor intensive, financially expensive" (129) approach to contemporary mothering. Identifying academic mothers' intensive mothering expectations helps us to understand why many perceive professor and mother roles to be incompatible (Harper, et al., 2001). This study reveals that academic mothers construct accessibility in terms of intensive vigilance and responsibility, and construct work and family spheres as integrated in a work environment that seeks to keep work and family separate.

Academic mothers construct mothering differently than other employed mothers. Like other employed mothers, academic mothers talk less about

physical accessibility and more about psychological development in defining a "good mother." Yet, non-academic employed mothers seem satisfied with intermittent accessibility (Johnston and Swanson, 2003): e.g. I'm there if there's a problem. And, since psychological development of the child is a long-term process, the benefits of outside caretakers and experiences in this process can be justified. Faculty mothers, however, describe additional expectations of vigilance, responsibility and intimacy. These expectations increase the tension between professional success and motherhood; these expectations are immediate, not long-term, and are constructed as the responsibility of a 'good mother' not another caretaker.

When asked if they were missing out on accessibility, academic mothers' responses are most consistent with the responses of at-home mothers (Johnston and Swanson, 2003). Whereas non-academic employed mothers report wanting more time with their children (Johnston and Swanson, 2003), academic mothers, like at-home mothers, are much more specific in lamenting the possibility of missing out on developmental milestones.

When asked about their happiness, academic mothers did not talk about personal happiness. They talked about stress and tension. Academic moms attempt to fulfill full-time academic professional obligations and concurrently fulfill expectations more consistent with full-time at-home mothering. High accessibility expectations need to be reconstructed to be compatible with full-time employment. Keller (1994), for example, describes mothers' reliance on economic justifications for working: I am a better mother because I provide financially for my child. Uttal (1996) finds that mothers construct daycare in ways that support their constructions of themselves as good mothers. Academic mothers do construct their professional role as beneficial to their child (e.g. providing intellectual and cultural opportunities) but this construction doesn't go far enough to absolve them of the stress in meeting intensive mothering expectations.

Finally, this study suggests that academic mothers want their mother identities to be valued by the academy. The full-time employed mothers in Johnston and Swanson (2003) study did not mention this. Faculty mothers want to be recognized for the ways their mother role informs their professional role and the ways their professional role makes them better mothers.

Conclusion

Faculty moms embrace an intensive mothering ideology (Hays, 1996). Understanding academic mothers' intensive mothering expectations (Hays, 1996) helps us understand why professor and mother roles are perceived to be incompatible by many academic women (Harper, et al., 2001). Hays (1996) describes intensive mothering as the "copious amounts of time, energy and material resources [expended on] the child ... [in this] child-centered, expert-guided, emotionally absorbing, labor intensive, financially expensive" (129) approach to contemporary mothering.

It is necessary to first understand how academics construct mothering in order to construct professorial roles that support women faculty who may also choose to parent.

Every employed mother we interviewed – whether an academic or employed in some other occupation - was highly invested in her children and her mother identity. Yet, non-academic employed mothers attempt some separation of home and employment spheres; they redefine accessibility needs and expectations around employment to relieve intensive mothering expectations and increase compatibility between the demands of employment and home. Keller (1994), for example, describes mothers' reliance on economic justifications for working: I am a better mother because I provide financially for my child. Uttal (1994) finds that mothers construct daycare in ways that support their constructions of themselves as good mothers.

Modified "good mother" expectations likely contribute to non-academic employed mothers reporting less stress and greater happiness than academic mothers. Academic moms construct mothering expectations that are more consistent with full-time at-home mothering, while concurrently fulfilling full-time professional obligations. In this study, non-academic full-time employed mothers, like academic mothers, defined good mothering in terms of psychological development. Psychological development of the child is a long-term process and the benefits of outside caretakers and experiences in this process can be justified. Faculty mothers, however, described additional expectations of emotional accessibility. These expectations increase the tension between professional success and motherhood; these expectations are immediate, not long-term, and are constructed as the responsibility of a "good mother" not another caretaker. In order to model self care, fulfilling work, and healthy relationships for our children, academic mothers may need to reconstruct both mothering and the academy.

While Hays (1996) acknowledges the benefits of intensive mothering in terms of valuing secure family relationships, involvement with children, self-esteem development, nurturance and affection, and an emphasis on emotional over instrumental support for the child, she concluded that there are many negative outcomes of this mothering ideal. Does intensive mothering model self-sacrifice of women, confuse dependency with intimacy, and teach love at the cost of respect? Can it lead children to develop a sense of entitlement, a lack of initiative, and a disregard for mutuality in the give and exchange of relationships?

Idealistic intensive mothering expectations might well be tempered by Winnicott's (1987) "good enough mothering." According to Winnicott meeting a child's every need may not be best for the emotional and psychological development of the child. "Good enough mothering" frees mothers from the responsibility of meeting every need, yet still empowers mothers to be responsive, devoted, empathic and loving mothers. Thurer (1995) concludes that "Perhaps she needn't be all-empathic, after all. Perhaps she can be personally

ambitious without damaging her child. Perhaps she does not have unlimited power in the shaping of her offspring. Good mothering ... is a cultural invention," (300).

In addition to reconstructing 'good mothering' expectations, changes in the academy are needed to promote 'good parenting.' An academic career has no boundaries and is never done (Bailyn, 1993; Ostrow, 2001); there are always papers to grade, lessons to write, research journals to read, books to write, and lectures to attend.

Moreover, the traditional academic linear career progression is imposed on a non-linear process called life. Parents' scholarship may be characterized by spurts of productivity and creativity that wax and wan with demands of parenting. Whereas evaluation of scholarship has traditionally focused on early, continual, and increasing expectations of productivity, parents may need to be evaluated on non-linear and long-term contributions over the lifetime of a career. Moreover, while traditional scholarship has been characterized as an individual competitive endeavor, parents may benefit from cooperative research endeavors and research centers (Dickens and Sagaria, 1997).

Finally, this study suggests that academic mothers want their mother identities to be valued by the academy. This means that motherhood is integrated in the curriculum as an important area of scholarship (c.f, the mission of the Association for Research on Mothering). Maternal pedagogy (Green, 2002), as an extension of feminist pedagogy, must be valued by the academy. This means that mother-identity is recognized by the academy as an asset that can bring new perspectives and motivations to the academy. Harwood (2001), for example, writes about women whose mother-identity inspired them to become peace activists. At the very minimum, academics should not have to hide their mother-identity: "I like to think of my personal life as additional proof that I can juggle many tasks and a full slate of responsibilities—traits that are welcome and necessary for anyone who hopes to earn tenure" (Johnston, 2001).

Stressed and unhappy mother scholars cannot reach their full potential as scholars or mothers. We like to think we can do it all, but at what cost? Our health? Our children? Our identity as serious scholars? One could argue that academic mothers need to be more like non-academic employed mothers by changing their accessibility expectations and striving to separate the spheres of work and motherhood. Or, one could argue that the academy has an opportunity to value parenting and create a culture in which the responsibility of raising children is shared equally by mothers and fathers. Elvin-Nowak and Thomsson (2001) find that despite fathers' support for gender equity, the reality is that mothers are the ones who adapt their professional life to meet children's needs. Changes in the linear academic career track could create a climate that benefits fathers, mothers and children. Parents' creativity and productivity—and children's psychological and emotional development—could thrive in an environment that supports both involved parenting and productive scholarship.

References

Allen, H. L. 1998. "Faculty Workload and Productivity: Gender Comparisons." *The 1998 NEA Almanac of Higher Education.* Washington, DC: National Education Association. 29-44.

Bailyn, L. 1993. *Breaking the Mold: Women, Men and Time in the New Corporate World.* New York: Free Press.

Bellas, M. L. and R. K. Toutkoushain. 1999. "Faculty Time Allocations and Research Productivity: Gender, Race and Family Effects." *The Review of Higher Education* 22 (4): 367-390.

Bergum, V. 1997. *A Child on Her Mind: The Experience of Becoming a Mother.* Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.

Billig, M. 1997. "Rhetorical and Discursive Analysis: How Families Talk About the Royal Family." *Doing Qualitative Analysis in Psychology.* N. Hayes, ed. Sussex, UK: Psychology Press. 39-54.

Blackburn, R. and J. Lawrence. 1995. *Faculty at Work: Motivation, Expectation, Satisfaction.* Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

Blair-Loy, M. 2001. "Cultural Constructions of Family Schemas: The Case of Women Finance Executives." *Gender and Society* 15: 687-709.

Bristor, J. and E. Fischer. 1993. "Feminist Thought: Implications for Consumer Research." *Journal of Consumer Research* 19: 518-36.

Burr, V. 1995. *An Introduction to Social Constructionism.* London: Routledge.

Chamberlain, M. K. Ed. 1988. *Women in Academe: Progress and Prospects.* New York: Sage.

Cole, J. and H. Zuckerman. 1987. "Marriage, Motherhood and Research Performance in Science." *Scientific American* 256: 119-125.

Cummins, H. A. 2002. "Mommy Tracking Without Being on the Track: Single Women in Academe." Paper presented at the meeting of the Association for Research on Mothering, Toronto, Ontario.

Davis, D. E. and H. S. Astin. 1987. "Reputational Standing in Academe." *The Journal of Higher Education* 58 (May/June): 261-275.

Dickens, C. S. and M. A. D. Sagaria. 1997. "Feminists at Work: Collaborative Relationships Among Women Faculty." *The Review of Higher Education* 21 (1): 79-101.

Elvin-Nowak, Y. and H. Thomsson. 2001. "Motherhood as Idea and Practice: A Discursive Understanding of Employed Mothers in Sweden." *Gender and Society* 15 (3): 407-428.

Feldman, M. 1995. *Strategies for Interpreting Qualitative Data.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fox, M. F. and C. Faver. 1985. "Men, Women and Publication Productivity: Patterns Among Social Work Academics." *The Sociological Quarterly* 26: 537-549.

Gergen, K. 1985. "The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology." *American Psychologist* 40: 266-275.

Glaser, B. and Strauss, L. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research.* New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Green, F. 2002. "The Intersection of Mothering, Research and Teaching: A Maternal Feminist Pedagogy." Paper presented at the meeting of the Association for Research on Mothering, Toronto, Ontario.

Harre, R. 1995. "Agentive Discourse." *Discursive Psychology in Practice.* R. Harre and P. Sterns, eds. London: Sage. 120-136.

Harper, E. P., R. G. Baldwin, B. G. Gansneder and J. L. Chronister. 2001. "Full-time Women Faculty off the Tenure Track: Profile and Practice." *The Review of Higher Education* 24 (3): 237-257.

Harwood, G. H. 2001. "Peace Activist Women During the 1980s in the US: Motherhood, Motivation and Movement." *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering* 3 (2): 77-87.

Hays, S. 1996. *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood.* New Haven: Yale UP.

Hewlett, S. 2002. *Creating a Life: Professional Women and Their Quest for Children.* New York: Hyperion.

Johnston, D. D. and D. H. Swanson. 2003. "Defining Mother: The Construction of Motherhood Ideology." Manuscript submitted for publication.

Johnston, P. 2001, November 27. "Being Dr. Mommy." *Chronicle of Higher Education.*

Kaplan, E. A. 1992. *Motherhood and Representation.* London: Routledge.

Keller, K. 1994. *Mothers and Work in Popular American Magazines.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Kyvik, S. 1990. "Motherhood and Scientific Productivity." *Social Studies of Science* 20: 149-160.

Lie, S. S. 1990. "The Juggling Act: Work and Family in Norway." *Storming the Tower: Women in the Academic World.* S. S. Lie and V. E. O'Leary, eds. New York: GP Publishing. 108-128.

Long, J. 1990. "The Origins of Sex Differences in Science." *Social Forces* 68 (4): 1297-1315.

Morris, G. 1992. Women in Academia: A Case-Study of the University of Glasgow. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Glasgow.

Ostrow, E. 2001, January 5. "The Scholarly Parent." *Chronicle of Higher Education.*

Peters, J. K. 1997. *When Mothers Work: Loving our Children Without Sacrificing our Selves.* Reading, MA: Perseus.

Ranson, G. 1999. "Paid Work, Family Work and the Discourse of the 'Full-time Mother." *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering* 1 (1): 57-66.

Scott, J. (1988). "Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference or the Uses of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism." *Feminist Studies* 14: 33-50.

Sherrard, C. 1997. "Repertoires in Discourse: Social Identification and Aesthetic Taste." *Doing Qualitative Analysis in Psychology.* N. Hayes, ed.

Sussex, UK: Psychology Press. 69-83.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. 1990. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Tack, M.W. and C. L. Patitu. 1992. "Faculty Job Satisfaction: Women and Minorities in Peril." *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report, No. 4.* Washington, D.C.: George Washington University, School of Education and Human Development.

Thurer, S. 1995. *The Myths of Motherhood: How Culture Reinvents the Good Mother.* New York: Penguin.

Uttal, L. 1996. "Custodial Care, Surrogate Care, and Coordinated Care: Employed Mothers and the Meaning of Child Care." *Gender and Society* 10 (3): 291-311.

Wall, G. 2001. "Moral Constructions of Motherhood in Breastfeeding Discourse." *Gender and Society* 15: 592-610.

Weedon, C. 1997. *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory.* Cornwall, Canada: Blackwell.

Wetherell, M. and J. Potter. 1988. "Discourse analysis and the identification of interpretative repertoires." *Analysing Everyday Explanation: A Casebook of Methods.* C. Antaki, ed. London: Sage. 168-183.

Woollett, A. and A. Phoenix. 1991. "Psychological views of Mothering." *Motherhood, Meanings, Practices and Ideologies.* Phoenix, A. Woollett, and E. Lloyd, eds. London: Sage. 28-46.

Taina Chalal

Mother uses spellcheck

become becoming shall be a spinner a speller a sylph a shrew a scold
a nag a norn a crone a fate a wyrd weird weirdwyrd
weirdward
weirdword
a word urd urth earth
a she-bear, Skadi
rising with the steam
deep from the shadowy grey green
a mare, laughing,
streaking through the skies
a scorpion
making love to Orion.

Kathy Bischoping

The Best You Can Expect When You're Expecting ... and Beyond

A Review of Contract Language for Mothers in the Canadian Academy

How university faculty members who are mothers experience the intersection between their work and family lives is constrained, to a considerable extent, by the contracts negotiated between faculty associations and university boards of governors. As Dorothy Smith (1990) points out, official texts such as these objectify discourses, so that subjects become oriented to "*virtual* realities vested in texts" (62). Contract language pertaining to mothers may be read as a source of official discourse about motherhood, children, and families that has significant consequences for women's subjective experiences and material well-being.

For example, the lesbian mother who finds that she is entitled to no leave when her partner bears a child, the adoptive mother who learns that her paid leave will be considerably shorter than that of a birth mother, and the new mother returning to academic work who discovers that she has no recourse when her classes are scheduled at times that clash with daycare hours are all being given clear signals about what motherhood means in their workplaces. To be sure, each of these mothers may be fortunate enough to find that management makes accommodations for their circumstances. Yet even so, the discourse of the contract may continue to imbue mothers' experiences, for the experience of being accommodated by a kindly manager differs from that of being entitled to what one's fellow workers have negotiated with management.

Contracts for full-time faculty members at Canadian universities contain many a clause that can be seen as inimical to mothers. The limited entitlements described in the examples above, of lesbian mothers, adoptive mothers, and mothers returning to academic work, are all quite typical. And there are even stranger clauses. For example, a study of employee benefits conducted by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) found that at St.

Thomas University, a new parent whose partner is at home is ineligible for leave unless that partner is "certified by a medical practitioner as being incapable of caring for the child." At the University of Waterloo, mothers who wish to return to academic work within six weeks of giving birth are required to provide their employer with medical certification of their health (Policy 14.I); in 2000, similar policies were in place at four other institutions (Prentice, 2002). These equations of childcare with skiving from work, on one hand, and of the newly-delivered mother with dubious competence in the workplace, on the other, send alarming messages to mothers-to-be who browse their contracts along with *What to Expect When You're Expecting*. The bottom line on pay slips is also affected: in her recent assessment of family leave policies at Canadian universities in 2000, Susan Prentice concluded "[b]oth in the amount of money remunerated and in the mechanisms for remuneration, the entry into parenthood for the vast majority of Canadian faculty is financially punitive."

But enough of the bad news. The objective of this study is to sketch out ways in which collective bargaining can improve mothers' prospects, as a blueprint for what could be feasible for full-time faculty at institutions across Canada to attain. My approach is a practical one, based on experience in negotiations, in which I found that arguments based on concrete comparisons between my union's entitlements and superior entitlements in place at other institutions could be more productive than arguments based on theory, principle, or in-depth analysis. What works is, "they have *more*, it's not *fair*." Thus, this paper aims to identify the best contract language currently available for academic mothers.

In advocating this approach, I differ from the CAUT, which has developed a considerable body of model clauses and advises faculty associations to present them at the table. The problem is that model clauses can be dismissed as "utopian" or lacking in precedent by management negotiators, amongst whom lawyers, professionally attuned to precedent rationales, increasingly number. In following a practical imperative, my approach also differs from the more academic urge to rate institutions as "excellent," "satisfactory," or "unsatisfactory." Were I to deem a contract at a given institution "excellent" on some dimension—such as providing equal leaves to adoptive and non-adoptive parents—there would be little impetus for management and non-feminist faculty members to pursue incremental improvements, such as reimbursements of adoption-related fees, available at other workplaces (see Dubeck, 2002).

To identify the best practices, I used two data sources. The first consisted of the full texts of contracts at 50 Canadian universities in force in September 2002, obtained in most instances from a CAUT database and in five cases via internet searches (see Appendix for a list of institutions). I examined articles of these contracts that were likely to contain family-related clauses, including articles pertaining to leaves, workload, and sabbaticals. The clauses that provided the best entitlements were recorded. Second, for supplementary in-

formation on leaves, daycare availability, and tuition waiver programmes, I consulted a summary of a survey of faculty associations conducted routinely by CAUT on numerous employee benefits.

The first of these data sources is to be preferred, since faculty associations have not all complied with CAUT's survey, since information from the survey can date back to the early 1990s, and since the survey addresses a necessarily limited range of contract possibilities and reports them in necessarily sketchy terms. Moreover, contract text is particularly valuable to negotiating committees. Thus, wherever possible I have identified up-to-date article numbers and provided them in parentheses. Finally, it should be noted that, because full-time faculty entitlements are superior to those of contract academic staff, only full-time faculty contracts are examined here.

This review will examine four issues relevant to mothers in contract language. I begin with the inclusiveness and equity of leave provisions in contracts. Here I focus on clauses that provide lesbian mothers and adoptive parents with the same entitlements as birth mothers, and on clauses that challenge the essentialization of parenting as women's work. Next, I examine paid leaves for new parents, addressing issues similar to Prentice but with more recent data and further attention to the flexibility of the leave provisions. My third theme, time for exceptional circumstances such as bereavement or serious family illness, has received less attention in the literature, perhaps because contract language is oriented to routinization and standardization, and not to the exigencies of mothers' daily lives. Last, I examine contract language around daycare and tuition costs, which again have received little attention in the literature, although their impact on family finances may be as substantial as that of a leave clause.

Inclusiveness and equity in leave provisions

Prentice (2002) deplores the "familialism, inequitable sex asymmetry and gender regulation" of Canadian full-time faculty contracts. Like her, I found that many maternity, pregnancy, paternity, and parental leave provisions are organized around the assumption that a child is born to a female parent who becomes the child's primary caregiver and a male parent whose contribution to childcare spans perhaps one or two weeks. These provisions appear particularly out-of-date in light of the June 2003 changes to Ontario marriage law and its national consequences. However, the best contract language extant challenges the heterosexist and sexist biases of this model, as well as its discrimination against adoptive families.

Same-sex couples

The York University Faculty Association's contract offers an exception to the heterosexist models current at many institutions. Leave entitlements are identical there for birth mothers and "primary caregivers," defined as male or female bargaining unit members who have principal responsibility for the care

of a child (Article 19.08). The leave provisions for the parent who is not the primary caregiver are set forth in gender-neutral language. Thus, lesbian or gay male parents among York's full-time faculty have contractual entitlements identical to those of heterosexual parents.

Men as primary caregivers

The assumption that women are necessarily a child's primary caregivers, taken up by Roberta Guerrina (2001) in a fascinating analysis of feminism's equality-difference debate, is also challenged in progressive contracts at several Canadian institutions. At Brock University (Article 34.42) and University of Saskatchewan (Article 22.7.2), the equivalent of maternity leave is granted to a male employee who declares that he is the primary caregiver of a child.

At Memorial University, the (exceedingly brief) 13-week leave provided for a birth mother may be divided between the parents (Article 22.48.e). Similar clauses appear in contracts at the University of Victoria (46.1.3), University of Northern British Columbia (58.2), Carleton (as a corollary of a reference to the Employment Insurance Act in 20.7), and University of New Brunswick (32F.01b), while at Queen's University, "any Member who is the father of an infant child and who assumes at least 50 percent of the responsibility for the care of the child" is entitled to 15 weeks fully-paid leave (Article 27.4.3).

Adoptive parents

A CAUT Benefits Survey indicates that numerous contracts distinguish between the entitlements of birth mothers and adoptive mothers, or so-called "natural" or "biological" fathers and adoptive fathers, leaving adoptive parents with either no, or exceedingly brief, paid leaves. (Cuckolds would have no entitlements, were this language taken literally.) Perhaps these discriminatory policies, like the University of Waterloo policy of requiring medical certification from birth mothers returning to work early, arise from a perception of pregnancy as a state of illness from which frail birth mothers must recover with some emergency help from the biological father. Interestingly, this assumption is consistent with a United States approach in which giving birth is characterized in some contracts as a job-related temporary disability (Norrell and Norrell, 1996: 210-211). By contrast, in Sweden, leave policies are identical for men and for women, indicating that such policies could be oriented to family formation rather than to recuperation (see Parry, 2001).

On the bright side, equitable language for adoptive parents has been negotiated in the full-time faculty contracts at Memorial University (Article 22.48.c), University of Saskatchewan (22.7.3), University of Victoria (46.3.2), and York University (19.08), where an adoptive parent who is a child's primary caregiver is entitled to the same leave as a birth mother. At University of Regina, a female full-time faculty member who adopts a child has the same entitlements as a birth mother (Article 24.3.1). The entitlements of male full-time faculty

at Regina, while less than those of females, also do not discriminate on the basis of whether a child is adopted.

Further, some contracts require that adoptions be legal in order for parents to be eligible for a leave, while others allow for a broader category of coming into the "care, custody, or control" of a child. Some agreements and handbooks specify that an adoptive child must be below a certain age, such as six months, five years, compulsory school age, or 12 years (i.e., the age at which a child can be unsupervised in Ontario). Other, more family-friendly institutions, such as University of Saskatchewan and Wilfrid Laurier University, are silent about age limits.

Extensive and flexibleleave provisions

Imagine an institution where paid family leaves are of long duration, have flexible start dates, and are followed by options to reduce or reorganize workloads. While the tenure clock may stop at a faculty member's request, the accumulation of credits toward sabbatical continues during paid leave time. Although such a contract exists nowhere in Canada, all its components are in practice somewhere, at least for birth mothers, whose contractual entitlements generally exceed those of other parents.

The best-paid leaves are to be found at University of Northern British Columbia, where birth mothers receive 17 weeks maternity leave during which any difference between regular salary and EI benefits is made up fully by the employer, and can follow this with a 35-week parental leave during which EI benefits continue to be topped up to 100 percent of regular salary (57.3, 58.3). At University of New Brunswick, EI benefits are topped up to 95 percent of regular salary of 17 weeks of maternity leave plus 35 weeks of parental leave (32E, 32F.03), while entitlements are similar at Carleton (20.7). At both of these institutions, the value of clauses that had hinged on the EI Act improved suddenly when the duration of parental leaves in the Act was extended (Tardif, 2003). Although the practice of linking clauses to legislation can be chancy, since legislative amendments can claw back entitlements, the New Brunswick and Carleton provisions do far exceed those at the pack of institutions that follow. The next best entitlements are 27 weeks at 95 percent of full pay at University of British Columbia (*Old Guide for UBC Faculty*, 2001), 25.7 weeks at 100 percent of full pay at Université de Sherbrooke (23.01, 23.04), and 25 weeks at full pay at Augustana University (CAUT Survey) and University of Alberta (24.25, 24.35). This means that, at the bargaining table, faculty associations in five provinces can utilize nearby precedents of fully-paid leaves of at least 25 weeks, or the equivalent, for birth mothers.

Flexible timing of leaves is possible for faculty members at McMaster University, where if a leave falls with the "continuous period of three months free from scheduled commitments to the University" (i.e., the summer, for many faculty members), then a rescheduling can be negotiated (CAUT Survey). At University of Calgary, at the discretion of the Dean, adoption and

maternity leaves may be granted "in broken periods" (18.4.2.3, 18.4.4.2).

Many contracts permit faculty members to take unpaid leaves after their paid leave entitlements have been exhausted. Of greater interest are contract clauses that entitle faculty to ease the transition between paid leave and the return to work. At Concordia University (35.11.7) and University of Ottawa (29.2.1.6), for example, new mothers can take a reduced-time appointment for up to 30 months. At several francophone universities in Québec, contracts provide distinctive ways to reduce workload around the time that a new family member is expected or ways to meet new parents' scheduling needs. For example, at Université de Québec à Montréal, pregnant faculty members are not to be assigned courses requiring new preparation during the terms that immediately precede or follow their maternity leave (21.03). At Université de Montréal, female faculty members returning from maternity leave are entitled to a teaching reduction of one three-credit course per year, until the child reaches the age of two (6.05). At Université Laval, for two years after maternity, paternity, and adoption leave, new parents have priority in decisions about class times. Moreover, family situations are to be taken into account when assigning courses that require new preparations (6.2.11). A related clause is in place at Université de Sherbrooke (23.01).

Prentice (2002) finds stoppages of the tenure clock during women's family leaves to be present in contracts at approximately half of Canadian universities. While stoppages are automatic at several institutions, at some, such as Brock University (34.41-42), they occur at the option of the faculty member. The latter practice may be more desirable, since it offers faculty members more flexibility and since salary increases are linked to promotion at many institutions. At University of Victoria, in addition to automatic deferrals of tenure decisions for faculty who have taken parental or maternity leave, members can use grounds that their teaching, research, or service have been significantly and negatively affected by family responsibilities to apply for deferrals (20.2).

Prentice (2002) also finds that, where university contracts are explicit, pregnancy leaves are counted toward sabbatical credits. However, few contracts that I reviewed made clear what would happen if a child should newly join a family during a sabbatical. (This issue is akin to the old joke about how it is moral to pray while smoking, but immoral to smoke while praying.) One such contract is at University of Waterloo, where the missed portion of a sabbatical is to be rescheduled within three years, and is not to overlap with a regularly-scheduled *non*-teaching term. (Policy 14.III) Another is at University of Calgary, where sabbaticals can be terminated to take maternity or adoption leave, with the unused sabbatical period credited as a period of service toward the next sabbatical (16.24.2). This isn't as good as it seems: a one-year sabbatical could be transmuted into one of the six non-sabbatical years of service required for the next sabbatical to occur, amounting to a loss of 5/6 of a sabbatical.

Time for exceptional circumstances

Family-friendly contracts are also those that entitle faculty members to take short-term leaves for exceptional family circumstances. Full-time faculty at Queen's University have negotiated quite a long paid leave, of up to six months, for "an event such as illness, injury or death in a Member's immediate family ... [that] clearly requires the Member to be absent from the University for compassionate reasons" (27.2.2), but it is granted at the discretion of the unit head. Members of the Laurentian University Faculty Association are entitled to comparatively long leaves of absence of two weeks to fulfill responsibilities related to special needs of a family member, such as "resettlement of aged or disabled parents, serious illness of parents, partner of child, medical treatment of partner or child that cannot be provided in the Sudbury region." (3.51.4) Full-time faculty at Memorial University and University of Northern British Columbia also have a ten-day paid leave when a family member is seriously ill, suggesting that faculty in more remote locations have put more emphasis on negotiating leave entitlements for exceptional circumstances.

A few faculty associations have negotiated special leaves in the event of a stillbirth, serious illness of a new child, or continuous hospitalization or death of a birth mother. Full-time Faculty at francophone universities in Quebec again have distinctive entitlements: at Université Laval, Université de Montréal, and Université de Sherbrooke, women are entitled to take a maternity leave if their child is still-born within 20 weeks of the anticipated due date (6.2.05, AS 6.02, 23.04, respectively). At University of Winnipeg, if a female faculty member's adopted or newborn child is hospitalized for one week or more, then she is entitled to one week of paid parental leave per week of the hospitalization, with a maximum of 35 weeks (26.38.vi). At the Nova Scotia College of Arts and Design, if a new mother dies or is hospitalized continuously during her maternity leave, her (male) spouse can assume her maternity leave entitlements (23.06.H).

Childcare and educational expenses

On-campus daycare facilities are available at 23 of the 38 institutions at which full-time faculty associations responded to the 2002 CAUT survey. While some of these facilities have low fees, with daycares at Bishop's University and McGill University listed in the survey as charging just $5 per day, it would be even more helpful for parents to have flexibility in choosing which daycare facilities are available.

Full-time faculty at Queen's University have recently negotiated extremely attractive contract language on this issue (Appendix B). Parents are reimbursed up to $2000 per child under the age of six, for care at licensed child care centers or licensed home daycares. The clause states that "the participation rate, reimbursement levels, funding and administration of this plan will be evaluated after one year of operation." At its inception, the plan had a fund of $320 000

per year, for a faculty association with 525 members.

Members of the Queen's University Faculty Association also have one of the best tuition programs available. Numerous institutions offer tuition waivers or reductions for the spouses and/or dependants of full-time faculty. From a parent's perspective, the more lucrative programs are those that set no academic standing requirements, offer full waivers, set no maximum number of credits, and continue in place even when the faculty member retires or dies. However, almost all of these programs apply only at the faculty member's home institution. What makes the Queen's program appealing is that grants of up to $3000 per students are to be available for tuition for programs at any recognized university or college. Full-time faculty at University of Toronto have the next-best program, making available scholarships of half of the amount of University of Toronto tuition (i.e., half of $4107 for most Arts and Sciences Bachelor's programs) to students at such 4-year degree-granting institutions as University of Toronto recognizes for transfer credits (Manual of Staff Policies: Academics/Librarians 2.02.07). Finally, full-time faculty members at York University, Carleton University and Simon Fraser University have a reciprocal tuition payment entitlement, albeit limited to a small number of students per year (e.g., York 26.13).

Conclusion

The diverse array of best practices at Canadian universities can be read optimistically, as a celebration of feminist gains and effective advocacy at numerous institutions. Yet the very diversity of these local gains, coupled with the fact that precedents elsewhere make for strong arguments at the bargaining table, together suggest that national-level organizing could be more effective. That is, the good news about Queen's University Faculty Association's innovative daycare reimbursement program should be widely known amongst Canadian academic feminists and we should all be agitating for it in our own institutions. Instead, with the exceptions of the broadly-based interest in increasing leave durations and of Québec francophone institutions' concern about the transition between leave and work, transmission of ideas about what gains are possible appears to have been weak.

This study of best contract language began with a practical orientation. As such, its efficacy may be judged by whether readers who are faculty members compare the clauses summarized herein to their own contractual entitlements, educate their colleagues about the possibilities proven to be realistic elsewhere, and advocate for improvements to become priorities in the next round of negotiations.

Yet as I write this conclusion, I speculate about how this article will be read from other standpoints than my own, as a full-time faculty member and union activist at a Canadian university. As part of union organizing work, I held conversations with full-time academics who had newly become parents, and found that the legalistic complexities of contract language that a faculty

member might consult just a few times in their working lives, coupled with management resistance to meeting contractual obligations, to be significant barriers to obtaining contractual entitlements (see Bischoping, Cemer and Mulvihill, 2002: 28-34).

My conversations with part-time or sessional instructors in Canada about these issues have focused on the tremendous gaps between full- and part-time academic workers' entitlements. To United States academics, even those with full-time positions, the Canadian settlements I have described would also appear startlingly lucrative—compare, for example, the State University of New York's contract in which a faculty member with three years' experience is entitled to just 18 days of paid maternity leave, dubbed "sick leave" (State University Professional Services Negotiating Unit, 23.4). To explain this, James Turk (2003) suggests that legislation preventing most United States faculty associations from unionizing is one barrier to their advancement, while several feminist analysts such as Maureen Baker (1997), Janine Parry (2001), and Eileen Trzcinski and William Alpert (1994) take up the broader policy context in the United States.

From still other perspectives, we remain in the Dark Ages, scarcely warmed by the illumination of Swedish policy (see Parry's 2001 overview) or the innovations of the "top 100" United States workplaces selected by *Working Mother* magazine (Dubeck, 2002). Certainly more dialogue and strategizing amongst diversely-located women about the contexts, possibilities, and historical moments in which change has been created is needed in order to better mothers' expectations.

The author thanks Christiane Tardif for thoughtfully providing much new information, to Belinda Godwin for literature review work, and to CAUT for making its password-protected database available.

References

Baker, Maureen. 1997. "Parental Benefit Policies and the Gendered Division of Labour." *Social Service Review* (March):51-71.

Bischoping, Katherine, Brett Cemer, and Monica Mulvihill. 2002. *The YUFA Handbook: About YUFA and Your Collective Agreement in Plain Language.* Toronto: York University Faculty Assocation.

Canadian Association of University Teachers. "Benefits Survey." *Canadian Association of University Teachers website.* December 2002. <http://survey.caut.ca/english.htm>.

Dubeck, Paula. 2002. "Are We There Yet? Reflections on Work and Family as an Emergent Social Issue." *Sociological Focus* 35: 317-330.

Guerrina, Roberta. 2001. "Equality, Difference and Motherhood: The Case for a Feminist Analysis of Equal Rights and Maternity Legislation." *Journal of Gender Studies* 10 (1): 33-42.

Norrell, J. Elizabeth, and Thomas H. Norrell. 1996. "Faculty and Family Policies in Higher Education." *Journal of Family Issues* 17 (2): 204-226.

Parry, Janine. 2001. "Family Leave Policies: Examining Choice and Contingency in Industrialized Nations. *National Women's Studies Association Journal* 13 (3): 70-94.

Prentice, Susan. 2002. "An Overview of Family Leave Policies at Canadian Universities." Status of Women Conference, Canadian Association of University Teachers, Montréal, October.

Smith, Dorothy. 1990. *The Conceptual Practices of Power* Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Tardif, Christiane. 2003. "Re: Excerpts from Collective Agreements." E-mail to the author, 15 January.

Trzcinski, Eileen, and William T. Alpert. 1994. "Pregnancy and Parental Leave Benefits in the United States and Canada." *The Journal of Human Resources* 29 (2): 535-554.

Turk, James. Personal Interview. 9 Mar. 2003.

Appendix

Collective agreements or handbooks were available in the CAUT database for these 45 institutions: Acadia University, University of Alberta, Athabasca University, Bishop's University, Brandon University University of British Columbia, Brock University, Calgary University, Canadian Military Colleges Faculty Association, Cape Breton University, Carleton University, Concordia University, Dalhousie University, Lakehead University, Laurentian University, University of Lethbridge, University of Manitoba, McGill University, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Université de Moncton, Université de Moncton à Shippagan, Mount Allison University, Mount St. Vincent University, University of New Brunswick, Nipissing University, University of Northern British Columbia, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, University of Ottawa, Queen's University, University of Regina, Ryerson Polytechnic University, University of Saskatchewan, Simon Fraser University, Saint-Louis-Maillet, St. Mary's University, St. Thomas University, l'Université Sainte-Anne, Trent University, University of Victoria, University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University, University of Windsor, University of Winnipeg, University of Western Ontario, and York University

Using the internet, I obtained texts for five other institutions: University Laval, l'Université de Montréal, Université de Québec à Montréal, Université de Sherbrooke, and University of Toronto.

Maura McIntyre

On Daughters, Dissertations and Dementia

On the block where I grew up I had the only mother who worked outside the home. Like the other fathers on the street, on weekday mornings my mother drove away in her big black car and didn't return until evening. She always took off her suit when she came home and put her bags down in the same place, ready for morning. Lined up on the long radiator cover beside my parents bed were my mothers matching sets of purses and pumps: brown for fall, black for winter, navy for spring and white for summer. The contents: lipsticks and face powder, cigarettes, balled up wads of Kleenex, wallet and keys, moved from purse to purse as the seasons changed. Her black leather briefcase held files and papers and books, and a day timer stuffed with extra slips of paper held in place with paper clips then bound with an elastic band.

More than work, my mother always had a career that I could name. In school I remember putting up my hand and asking the teacher where to put "mother's occupation" on the form. My friends didn't talk about their mothers in those terms, their mothers were simply their mothers; it was their *fathers* who were something else too. Other Moms worked at home and were there at lunch time and when we came home from school and watched the Flintstones; other Moms did the grocery shopping and cleaned the house. Maria was paid to clean our house, and my father did the grocery shopping when he remembered. We frequently met for dinner in restaurants or ate instant boxed or frozen meals. Homemade food was occasionally produced to coincide with some culturally prescribed holiday for which my Mom felt obliged to cook or bake.

When we went to our house for lunch Bernadette with the cleavage and beehive ("are-you-sure-it-is-real?") hair taught us how to play poker in her thick French accent. My Baba ("she's confused") sat on the couch and smoked, and Mrs. Lepidis ("she keeps Baba company") sat beside her. My other

grandmother, who seemed normal by comparison (she could be trusted not to put the radishes in the freezer), lived with us when she wasn't in Ireland. For many years young men and often their girlfriends or wives came to stay at a moment's notice. They stayed for weeks, months and years, Vietnam draft dodgers who were "getting their lives in order."

*

My mother defended her doctoral dissertation when I was 18 and she was 48. It took her ten years to complete. Ten years, in which she worked full time, lost both parents, raised two children, separated from and divorced my father. Waiting for what feels like hours outside the tightly closed door of the room in which she is conducting her defense, a huge bouquet of daisies at the ready, I strain to hear the muffled sounds of my mother's voice.

I remember sitting in the kitchen and hearing the sound of her feet pacing overhead in the study.

I remember climbing the stairs late at night on my way to bed and seeing her sitting at her desk.

I remember hearing her voice as I fell asleep, muffled between rooms, speaking into her Dictaphone.

When asked why she was speaking, rather than writing her dissertation my mother explained that, for her generation, if a woman learned how to type she was at risk of being asked to do typing for men, or of becoming a secretary. She had found it prudent not to learn how to type.

August 27, 1995

Walking down the overly sterile hospital corridor wishing that I had grabbed a shower before coming, I notice my nails look particularly dirty in this environment. Checking in at the desk the evening nurse says the doctor is on the floor. She wants to speak to me.

"Wait just a minute, I'll page her," he says, touching my arm.

Almost as fast as I hear his voice over the loudspeaker, there she is, the red headed Dr. Turpie and she's smiling—click, click, click—as she approaches me, and in one motion she is opening a door and saying,

"Why don't we just step into the conference room?"

Too friendly tone, too bright eyed, I know that there is something up. I stand, and then sit on the arm of a dark green leather couch, pale green painted walls, framed floral prints—at least someone was trying to make up for no windows, I think. This must be the room where they take the family to talk about the terminal cancer diagnosis. "Stop smiling at me," I think, "Why am I here?"

And in less than five minutes I'm checking my nails again, still dirty, as I approach her room, stomach balled up. My shoes are so soft soled and quiet she doesn't look up, perched on the edge of her bed, feet dangling down, not quite reaching the floor, engrossed in reading a book propped up in the middle of the tray, dangerously close to the coleslaw. Chewing, she hasn't heard me or felt my

presence yet, standing there looping potential sentences through my head.

Looking up she begins to smile, but her expression shifts before it has even fully formed,

"What is it darling?"

She knows something is up before I have even opened my mouth, knows even though I don't think my face is giving anything away.

"Well, hi," I say, thinking that I can slow the moment down.

Looking straight at me,

"What do you mean "hi"? "What is it? You look so troubled."

She puts down the chicken drumstick she has been gnawing—Friday night, Mount Sinai Hospital, chicken. I leave her curious, worried brown eyes looking for relief from the intensity growing in my stomach, from the tightness in my throat. Moving out the window, the bright sunshine seems strange—its dinner time, but then, its late August; it's the 5:00 dinner that's early.

"Maura...?"

I take a step closer to the bed and move a pile of files and loose papers lively with yellow stickys and highlighter pen aside. Sitting down, I scan the papers, "3216 F Social Policy and ..." I start to read. A course syllabus.

"I just saw Dr. Turpie, Mom ... she caught me on my way in from the elevator...," I begin slowly, looking into her anxious face.

"And?" she says, and immediately I can see the shift from worry to relief to anger flash across her face as she understands that its not me, or the kids, its only to do with her... and she knows she's fine.

"Mom, Dr. Turpie has all the tests back. The ECG... the other scan they did last week and the scores from the tests the psychologist did," I begin. "They're saying that there's an impairment, Mom. They think it's from the coma. They're saying..." I'm looking straight at her but now she's shifting her pile of papers, standing up and moving toward the window ledge, not looking at me.

"Mom they're saying that they think you shouldn't teach, at least not this fall, till they know ... till they see how you do ... it would be a leave, a medical leave...."

She interrupts me,

"They are *so* full of shit. My courses are ready to go, classes start in five days, I'm ready to leave this place," turning to the bed she gestures with anger at her papers and books. "It's wasting my time being here.... And what do they do, they send *you* here as their messenger? Who do they think they are, those *bastards*, putting this on you?" Her voice is rising, "What do they think I will do? Are they scared of me?" Now her eyes are flashing.

June 2, 1997

I explain that I am moving them out of respect. Grant applications to SSHRC, student papers, research reports, journal articles, her curriculum vitae. Box after box—and yes, I really did already take nine blue boxes to the curb.

And yes, I will be the one to figure out where to put them in our too small house. I have already donated over a hundred books to the faculty. For sure she was an academic before computers and the vast majority of these papers are junk, but they are her papers, her remains, all that remains of her magnificent career.

*

When the kids come to our house for lunch Ezra with the waist length ("are-you-sure-they-are-real?") red dreadlocks teaches them how to play pick-me-up. Their Baba ("she's confused") sits on the couch (but smokes outside), while Ezra ("he keeps Baba company") kicks the soccer ball. Their other grandparents, who seem normal by comparison (they can be trusted not to put the radishes in the freezer), stay with us when they are visiting from out west.

October 1, 1999

It has taken longer than usual to assemble my audience, and still the lady with the blue eyes is restless and keeps wandering off. Clearing my throat I decide that I will begin today with my methodology chapter, the section on data collection methods that I want to enliven. Eleanor has taken the corner of her afghan, a brown, beige and orange affair and is slowly wrapping it around the leg of her chair. Mildred is fully alseep. Vincenzo has pulled up with his walker, turned it around while holding onto the wall bar, and is now sitting on it backwards, looking at me expectantly. My mother is following my every move with her bright brown eyes.

"The section of my dissertation that I'm going to read today I'm finding kind of dull. I'm looking for ways to make the writing more interesting," I begin.

Mildred has opened her eyes and is smiling and nodding. I feel encouraged and forge ahead.

"In the qualitative research methodology literature there is agreement that the most important factor in the interview is the quality of the relationship between the researcher and research participant..."

"Yes!" my mother suddenly blurts out, "yes!"

These are the first words she has uttered in weeks.

Monday January 8, 2000

The ultrasound technician has said that she can't tell me anything, but lying there flat on my back I know the answer by the look on her face. There is no heart beat. Twins. Heartless twins. Tears well up in my eyes. Sitting up slowly, numb with resignation, I swing my feet to the floor.

And then I hear my mother's voice in my mind's ear: "The best dissertation is a done dissertation."

Wednesday June 14, 2000

My final committee meeting is today at 2:00p.m. Tight for time I decide I can still squeeze in a brief visit with Mom. Seeing her will ground me and bring me good luck.

Locking my bike in the regular spot I notice a wide deep hole in the grass directly in front of the main entrance. Wet brown earth is piled neatly beside the hole and close beside is a tall silver birch tree, leaning precariously over to one side, root ball wrapped in burlap. I push the code buttons to enter, noticing that there are no residents sitting outside. Inside, the lobby is buzzing with activity. It turns out that today is the twenty-fifth anniversary of the nursing home. A ceremonial tree is to be planted and a giant slab cake will be cut by the homes oldest resident, who, by sheer coincidence, happens to live on the same floor as Mom.

Getting off the elevator my eyes instinctively scan to Mom's place at her table, but the furniture has been rearranged for the cake cutting and Mom isn't anywhere to be seen. A small cluster of residents is anchored near the TV and there is a commotion—something is clearly not right—at the nursing station. I catch a glimpse of Stephanie, the RPN from Newfoundland, leaning up against the door jam of the staff washroom, face in hands. She is stifling sobs, no, she is *laughing*—she is laughing hysterically. She has come completely undone and is laughing so hard that she is snorting and tears are running down her cheeks. "Oh, Maura," she says, gesturing for me to come over. "She said she didn't want to cut the cake. But we cajoled and coaxed and finally she agreed. But ... she had the last laugh. I just went to get her, and Maura, Mrs. Kendall, she had the last laugh. She *died.*"

"She *what*?" I ask, closing the door of the staff bathroom behind me.

"She stopped breathing. It must have been about fifteen minutes ago. She looks as pretty as a picture sitting in her wheelchair all dressed up ready to cut the cake. *But she's dead."*

Wiping her face with the back of her hand Stephanie has moved over to the mirror above the sink and is dabbing at her mascara with her baby finger.

Turning back toward me she takes my arm. "Oh my gosh, I know its not funny, but sometimes ... hey, do you think your mother would cut it? The cake? If you helped her? She's not that old, but she's an important person too, being a professor and all."

Friday September 22, 2000

I have been a Doctor of Education for three hours. Wined and dined and laden with flowers we wheel Mom outside to enjoy the September sun. Settling in a corner of the patio outside the nursing home I begin to tell her about the day: about the questions my committee members asked, about the dignity of my external examiner, about my beloved supervisor, about Cecelia waiting with roses. Peter drags my dissertation out of my canvas bag, sets it on Mom's lap, opens it, and starts turning pages and reading sections aloud. But it is the sleepy after lunch time of the day and the September sun is such a warm caress on our cheeks that soon we are dozing, heads on each others shoulders, the red wine from lunch drifting through us like fallen leaves.

*

I defended my doctoral dissertation when I was 39 and my mother was 70. It took me five years to complete. Five years, in which I worked part time, raised two children, cared for my mother in her home, in our home, and in a nursing home, and celebrated the twentieth anniversary of being still not married to the same man.

*

Sometimes when I walk into the cafeteria quickly, when I am distracted and preoccupied with a piece of writing and I really need a cup of tea, I hear her voice from across the room—deep, authoritative, a touch pedantic. I hear the click, click, click of her pumps moving across the floor toward me. And then I turn, disappointed, and decide to go downstairs to get a breath of fresh air. I will pick up the syllabus for my new course at the printer, I decide. I leave by the west door so that I can look at the back entrance to the faculty. I see her there again. It is 1971, she is wearing a red crochet beret, red, red, lipstick and is leaning up against the wall, laughing and smoking with a group of students. Was she really a teacher in the academe? Am I?

Andréa Riesch Toepell

Academic Mothers and Their Experiences Navigating the Academy

When I began writing this manuscript on the subject of mothering and teaching in the academe, I understood I would be writing from my own experiences and from the discussions I had with colleagues over the years who were also mothers with small children at home. I do not have research findings, for I have not conducted a study on the subject. I then realized I had not read any documentation on the subject either. Why had I not come across articles in journals that described the struggles and limitations of mothers who teach, or explored the barriers experienced by mothers who start a family after they enter the academic arena, or statistics that support the vastly different experiences male academic parents must have over female parents? As a professor in the discipline of community health sciences surely at least one journal article would have crossed my desk that examined health, stress, teaching and mothers in academe. Is it that this area of research is not perceived as important, therefore neither researched, funded nor written about? Yet we know that women are under considerable stress when juggling home and family life, nurturing children, developing their research portfolios, publishing in peer reviewed journals, competing to bring research funds to the university and getting tenured. We know that women struggle with these expectations because women talk to each other about their difficulties. It appears that this is the praxis that is making the experiences of mothering and teaching in academe a reality, but it is not documented in the type of journals most revered by the academy.

I must clarify that a plethora of documents in the field of motherhood exists in non-academic publications. My quest to find peer-reviewed articles or chapters on the specific topic of being a mother and teaching in the academy was unsuccessful and I was disappointed. I found materials that addressed other

issues related to women in academe and I have used them as resources for this paper. A description of these resources are provided below.

The lay of the land for women teaching in academe is that gender discrimination is rampant and women's contributions and accomplishments are de-valued. Women earn less than their male counterparts when matched on a host of variables including: credentials, discipline, publication history, teaching experience, grant funding awarded, appointment status, etc. (Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Sosin, Rives and West, 1998; Winkler, 2000). The gender-based wage gap does not appear to be diminishing, as West (1995) noted that female full professors were earning 89 percent of the salaries of males in 1982 and 88 percent in 1995. A wage gap still exists even after controlling for productivity, where women earn 7-10 percent less than men, and in the sciences the wage gap can be as large as $18,000 (Winkler, 2000).

Women occupy more entry level appointments than men, have a lower starting salary than men, have more disruptions (often tied to family responsibilities) to their career path than men, and hold fewer tenure-track positions (Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Liberal Education, 1991; Watzman, 1999; and Winkler, 2000). Also observed is that female scholars rise through the ranks at a much slower rate than do males (Watzman, 1999; Williams, 2001; Winkler, 2000). Studies indicate that over the past 10 to 12 years, the situation for women in academe has not changed significantly and only continues to provide more evidence of gender-bias in the academy (Glazer-Raymo, 1999).

A larger number of women compared to men drop out of academe at all stages of their career; a larger percentage of women do not obtain tenure; and a larger percentage of women are not promoted or are promoted at an older age than men (various studies as cited in Winkler, 2000). It is estimated that female applicants have to be 2.5 times more productive than the average male applicant to be viewed as equally competent (Winkler, 2000). There exists a general belief that the power and authority of men in academe are natural and appropriate attributes, while they are considered unattractive or unprofessional in women faculty (O'Connor, 2000).

In December of 1990, a summit brought together 165 former women college presidents to discuss campus issues and share information. Despite the continuing gains, it was noted that women were still choosing not to pursue leadership positions or were delaying important choices about their academic careers, preferring to follow different goals at different times in their lives (Liberal Education, 1991) and make the decisions not to further their career in order to have children (Cullen and Luna, 1993). Men, it seems, have goals that do not differ significantly over time and the attrition rate of men from the university scene is much lower than for women. For women, the family clock is ticking as does the credentials clock, which limits options for them when making time-sensitive choices such as starting a family and becoming a mother (Liberal Education, 1991).

Clearly, the academy does not provide women with an equal playing field

as for men and it differs in its expectations of men versus women. Men and women have differing experiences when working in academe, because the gender inequalities are often "subtle, elusive and normalized via everyday practices such as networking and the construction of identities and opportunities" (Husu and Morley, 2000:138). How does this biased milieu impact mothers with careers in academia?

The narrative I have prepared draws on my experiences as a mother with two very young children and recently tenured faculty member. I also draw on the little research and documentation that exists and thread these accounts and ideas as appropriate throughout. The manuscript is divided into three sections: timing the arrival of babies; fears as experienced by women faculty members who are mothers and the perception of these women by others; and ideas and suggestions to help change the experiences of mothers teaching in academe.

Timing the mommy track

In 1995 Brock University hired me on a tenure track appointment. I completed my Ph.D. three years prior, was married but did not have children yet, and living in Toronto. My husband and I were trying to start a family but immediately upon the acceptance of the appointment I went into a mode of calculating when the best time to have a baby would be now that I had a scheduled academic year to work with. I have since learned that most female professors contemplating parenthood go through this process. I expected the stressors I would be facing with teaching very large undergraduate classes, starting my research portfolio, trying to submit manuscripts to journals, living separately from my husband during the week and coming home on weekends (as the commute was 1.5 hours one way), nurturing my career to meet my eventual goals of becoming tenured and promoted. Adding the stress of trying to get pregnant followed by mothering a child seemed daunting and made me feel even more anxious. Of course we did get pregnant but later experienced our first of three miscarriages. I'm not proud to admit that I felt relieved to be off the baby track for at least a few months so that I could better focus on my career's demands, knowing that I would return to the same dilemmas running through my head at a later time. It would not surprise me if some professional women at some point in their career felt relief when discovering they did not conceive that month, as it reduces some stress.

Robin Wilson (1999) writes about female professors who say they feel pressure to plan their childbirth for late spring and early summer, as such a delivery time would be the least disruptive to the academic calendar and community, and secures them the most time at home with their infants. This rationale reflects the concern women have for other colleagues versus themselves which is likely based on the perception as expressed by colleagues. Such pressures are usually subversively expressed and never openly discussed or documented. Women risk annoying their colleagues who may be forced to fill in for them should their baby be born during the teaching months of the

academic year (Wilson, 1999). This is not an uncommon concern among untenured women faculty. While some universities and colleagues are generous with paid maternity leave, others are not, and institutional policies vary enormously. Also some universities will stop the tenure clock for 6 months to 1 year for assistant professors, but this "benefit can cause resentment and taking advantage of it can doom your career" (Wilson, 1999: 14).

For some women the timing of the birth is of paramount concern, as they feel a disruption of any sort is hazardous to their career, and worry that they will have difficulty getting back on track. Administrators can use the woman's absence as leverage for giving her poorer evaluations, delaying career advancement, or giving her difficult courses to teach that no other department member will take on (Watzman, 1999; Wilson, 1999). A colleague at Brock spoke of her dilemma in economic terms saying that over the years she invested so much time and effort into securing herself the career she desired most, she wanted to minimize her time away from the university in order to remain visible, active and not lose the momentum of productivity (her "return") she felt she needed to remain competitive for tenure.

Fears of the new mother in academe and the perceptions of these mothers

Despite newer university policies that offer parents choices concerning their leaves (time off, reduced course load, etc.), women fear taking time off to become a mother will hinder their chance to reach their goals of tenure and promotion and that they will have forever lost their opportunity for advancement (Wilson, 1999). A colleague and friend agonized over this fear and was conflicted due to it from the moment she started her appointment until her first baby was born 4 years later.

When I took one year off for maternity/parental leave I feared that upon my return I would be seen as a different person (less capable), and that I would be taken less seriously (my mind would be on my children). Of course I was a different person, I was now a mother of two very young children, but I remained the same untenured assistant professor working her way through the ranks in a professional environment that still favours males over females. This perception of me was realized when a tenured male colleague in another department saw me for the first time since my leave and asked "Oh, so you DID come back. Why? Don't you want to be with your kids? I mean, that was the point for having them, wasn't it?" (He is my age, he has four children of his own, his wife stays home with them). This assumption stunned me and lead me to think that other males in academe might have the same expectation of their fellow female colleagues who are mothers. So I was more surprised to realize the surprise from male colleagues who had written me off from ever returning to the academy because I became a mother, than I was to notice a change in perception about me or my abilities.

I still feared that the perception of me would be that I could no longer keep

up with my responsibilities or carry the weight of running our program, and that the quality of my teaching and research would suffer because I have young children at home. That perception was realized when it came time to give me an annual merit rating based on my overall performance, productivity and teaching evaluations, and I was given a lower rating than in my previous year despite having more publications and improved teaching evaluations. After discussing my disagreement with the Chair about his evaluation of me, I learned that he later raised the rating, but likely due to the Dean's persuasion and not my arguments.

I also feared that having two small children at home would not permit me to spend enough time to work on the goals I wanted to achieve professionally, and so I accepted it would take longer for me to reach my goals and tried to relax about the timing of it all. I wanted to mother my children when I got home and not do grading or writing manuscripts or grants into the night as was my pattern before they arrived, as my career demands remained the same. However, there was a significant shift in how I spent my time at home, after all, I had youngsters waiting for me and my husband, and roughly 2 hours to spend with them before we put them to bed. I still had work to complete and class preparations to review before I went to bed, and also used time on weekends to catch-up. My career demands remained the same despite my new "mother" identity.

And the fear I felt most often was that I would let my career drive my life as it did before the children arrived. Would I possibly risk losing touch with my family for the sake of my tenure, promotion and career? Would that make me a "bad" mother? Would my children and husband suffer? I wondered why I do not hear about men grappling with these same dilemmas. It would appear, from my perspective, that the structure of the university validates perceptions that reflect society's mentalities and expectations. In other words, it is not expected that men concern themselves with child care and family nurturing issues, as it is a generally assumed stereotype in society that men's focus should be on keeping up with the demands of their academic career to further their advancement. This is not a new reality, although societal expectations of men are slowly changing. However, for women the reality of being mothers teaching in the academe is not yet fully validated because women's career socialization and advancement in the academy is based on the experiences of men, for which "mothering" and "birth/baby" and "parental leave" are awkward concepts to fit in. Again from my perspective, changes in policy to support mothering faculty and fathers are starting to impact the experiences of women because very slowly the language and words attached to their experiences are being heard and making them a reality – even if not previously documented.

It is also my observation that fathers who are faculty have not experienced the juggling of home life and career to the same extent that women have, mostly because their support system is in place when they begin their academic careers, or the family is already established by the time males enter the academy. Also, society does not expect fathers to sacrifice their career advancement for the sake

of the family. As is the same for any other professional working mother, if a child becomes ill, it is typically the mother who is called upon and expected to adjust her schedule, leave work to pick up the child and nurture her/him back to health. Although a faculty member's schedule has some flexibility, caring for sick children or being the backup person should the babysitter cancel is not something easily accommodated when classes have set schedules and 400 students are waiting. From my own experience and collective anecdotes, mothers with sick young children at home are not comfortable working and teaching at the university, as they would rather be caring for their child. Further, most often it is the mother who takes children to appointments, sports activities, and classes outside of school. Female faculty find it very difficult to also juggle time for taxiing their children when career responsibilities are mounting and the pressures from the academy to perform and produce like their male counterparts remains relentless (personal communications/anecdotes with colleagues).

When today's professional woman decides to become a mother, her personal identity takes on a shift that many other people including herself may not be able to predict. Women who teach are perceived as more nurturing than male teachers, even if they are not mothers (Cullen and Luna, 1993; Winkler, 2000). This social perception and expectation of women over men is not uncommon to workplaces internationally (Winkler, 2000). Students tend to take advantage of this perception and ask female faculty over male faculty for extensions, letters of recommendations or special privileges. A few years ago a male student approached me saying he had a final exam schedule conflict and would I approve that he write my exam at another time. I inquired if the student asked the other professor for a schedule change to which he replied, "No, I figured you'd be nicer about it than him." "Oh, how's that?" I asked. "Women teachers are more motherly and they are better at taking care of students." Despite my scornful expression, the student pushed the permission sheet toward me to sign, seemingly unaware of the gendered-biased perception he demonstrated and possible offense to me. I contemplated whether my "matron" status influenced his perception of my nurturing qualities or if he would have assumed the same had I been childless at the time. His expectation reflects the sobering reality that young students need to be re-socialized when entering higher education institutions if women are going to be valued and recognized for their accomplishments as male faculty are.

A few articles describe women with promising academic careers who prepared throughout their graduate studies for an academic appointment and when a position was offered they declined because the position involved having to relocate, which the women chose not to do for the sake of supporting the needs of their husband's career advancement or having a family (Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Williams, 2001; Winkler, 2000). Here the perception is that the man's career needs are valued more, and the expectation is that women work their own career advancement around their husband's. After spending many

years preparing and training to succeed in academe, women lose their opportunity to realize their goals when partners are unwilling to relocate (Williams, 2001). The nature of the beast is that faculty appointments are only available at post-secondary institutions, and these facilities are few in most larger communities. Presumably then, experienced and qualified women academics with young children are the least able group to cease opportunities in neighbouring cities, particularly if their partner can not or will not relocate to suit her career needs.

I suspect a potential backlash is on the horizon. In an effort to protect their investment of trained and qualified academic proteges, graduate programs may quietly start to select strong females who are perceived as highly career-oriented, driven and not seemingly likely to interrupt their career advancement for the sake of having a family or partner who will not relocate. Administrators of post-doc and fellowship granting agencies are becoming more concerned about providing resources and training to women when these same women may not actualize their goals when they become mothers (Williams, 2001). It is argued that their enrollments keep other promising candidates out of programs with limited positions and resources (Williams, 2001). The perception is that it is the woman's decision not to return to her career path, however I argue that it is the social and political contexts of her gender-biased workplace that should be examined and challenged, not the woman's choice to become a mother.

How to improve the teaching mother's experiences

Research in Israel has shed some light on the challenges faced by women in academe leading to recommendations that are sensitive to the gender imbalance in the academy. Although he does not focus exclusively on faculty who are mothers, Watzman (1999) has observed that 56 percent of undergraduates are women, but only 8 percent are full professors. Female academics in Israel are concentrated at the lowest rungs of academe and are underrepresented at the tenured and top levels (Watzman, 1999). The same patterns are evident at most American universities (Winkler, 2000). It is suggested that Israeli institutions not discriminate against hiring older women who have taken longer to complete their studies in order to raise their children. Such discrimination does not encourage strong academic women to return to the academy to teach students who would otherwise benefit from their knowledge, skills and experiences. Instead, they are being punished for taking time to raise their family and juggle the demands to they complete their studies (Watzman, 1999).

Postdoctoral requirements should be made more flexible for women with young children (Watzman, 1999). To my knowledge, such recommendations have not yet been implemented in Canadian or American universities or colleges. Formal consideration is lacking for the needs of women with children who may not be able to produce research work at the pace expected of them during the critical years before they come up for tenure (Watzman, 1999).

Many female graduate students are shocked to learn what is required of them when seeking a good university position (Williams, 2001). They need extra advising from their academic mentors if they hope to have a family while at the university and still meet their career and personal goals (Williams, 2001). They also would benefit from discussions of life after graduate school and have opportunities to discuss the job-search process and the implications it has for their personal lives. The competition continues to be tougher and tougher, and married women, particularly with children, need to understand the limited choices they will face (Williams 2001).

A study by Cullen and Luna (1993) suggested that mentoring awareness can help reduce the barriers to a mother's career advancement to tenure and pay. Methods used included the promotion of sponsorship where more experienced women in academe introduced the "protege" to her own network, wrote letters of support, made recommendations, etc. Coaching the protege by teaching her "the ropes" and providing feedback also proved to be helpful. Other aspects included role-modeling, counseling and the offer of friendship (Cullen and Luna, 1993). However, they caution that not all women are very helpful to other women, suggesting that more senior women may have negative attitudes and frustrations, be envious or jealous of junior faculty struggling with new motherhood issues, when they had even less support as young mothers (Cullen and Luna, 1993).

Faculty associations can play a role in the advancement of women who are mothers. In consultation with women better policies that support mothering opportunities and promote career advancement can be developed and implemented. Extra time to apply for tenure should be offered to faculty who are mothers. The academy must work harder to retain faculty members who are mothers, and dissolve the male-oriented atmosphere that oppresses women, particularly mothers. Finally, the processes for advancement and recognition are based solely on the experiences for men. Academe needs to redefine and re-socialize what has always been a male serving process and offered little consideration for mothers teaching in the academe.

Conclusions

The future appears bleak for women academics. West's (1995) research found that the percentage of full-time women faculty in American higher education increased only 5 percent (from 26 percent to 31 percent) from 1920 to 1995 despite the gap between the percentage of women on faculties and the percentage of women recipients of PhDs almost doubling over a 13 year period (from 1981 to 1993). Women's under-representation on the academy is a constant concern. Jennie Farley summarized the frustration of many American faculty women by stating that women find it discouraging "that at this rate of change, it will be the year 3000 before they are as well represented on the faculty as they currently are in the student body" (1990:202).

From my personal observation, there are a series of differing "camps of

mothers" on campus, each carrying different burdens related to mothering and teaching when they were appointed, each having different experiences at mothering and teaching that change over the decades. The groups include senior faculty women who came to academe later in life and whose children were mostly grown at the time; women at mid-status whose children were young when they entered the academy; and younger academics who become first-time mothers only after a few years into their academic career and while untenured. And then there is a group of women on campus who are childless by choice and either single or married. Each group of women have dealt with varying degrees of difficulty related to balancing their emotional feelings concerning how they mother their children and how they mother their careers. If a poll were taken, I would venture to guess that all women faculty with children would express some feelings of dissatisfaction concerning the nurturing they give their families versus their careers, and how juggling them both well is almost impossible. Are we doomed? No, but the struggle is not over.

What is missing in the academy for young academics are role models to support them to become respected scholars, excellent teachers and wonderful mothers. Also missing is the level playing field that all academics need to succeed and achieve their desires without having to experience gender-bias, stereo-typing, discrimination or the devaluation of themselves or their parenthood. Higher education needs to redefine the work place culture to allow for the special skills and characteristics of mothering women. Additionally, higher education needs to redefine and re-socialize the male-stereotyped role of administration and dismantle the gender-biased environment that exists, as women with families are achieving a stronger foothold in the academy (albeit slowly). Having a successful professional life should not be a tradeoff to a happy family life.

References

Cullen, Deborah and Gaye Luna. 1993. "Women Mentoring in Academe: Addressing the Gender Gap in Higher Education." *Gender and Education* 5 (2): 125-137.

Farley, Jennie. 1990. "Women Professors in the USA: Where are They?" *Storming the Tower: Women in the Academic World*, ed. Suzanne S. Lie and Virginia E. O'Leary, eds.. New York: Nicholas Publishing. 194-207

Glazer-Raymo, Judith. 1999. *Shattering the Myths: Women in Academe.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Husu, Liisa and Louise Morley. 2000. "Academe and Gender: What Has and Has Not Changed?" *Higher Education in Europe* 25(2): 137-138.

Liberal Education. 1991. "Women Academic Leaders." *Liberal Education* 77(3): 61-63.

O'Connor, Pat. 2000. "Resistance Amongst Faculty Women in Academe." *Higher Education in Europe* 25(2): 213-219.

Sosin, K., J. Rives and J. West. 1998. "Unions and Gender Pay Equity in Academe: A study of US Institutions." *Feminist Economics* 4: 25-45.

Watzman, Haim. 1999. "Israeli Scholars Try to Focus Attention on Challenges Faced by Women in Academe." *Chronicle of Higher Education* 46 (10): A77-A79.

West, Martha. 1995. "Frozen in Time." *Academe* 81: 26-29.

Wilson, Robin. 1999. "Timing is Everything: Academe's Annual Baby Boom." *Chronicle of Higher Education* 45 (42): A14-A16.

Williams, Wendy. 2001. "Women in Academe, and the Men Who Derail Them." *Chronicle of Higher Education* 47 (45): B20.

Winkler, Julie. 2000. "Faculty Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion: Barriers for Women." *Professional Geographer* 54 (4): 737-750.

Ruth Panofsky

Professor/Mother
The Uneasy Partnership

> Of all the professions, that of university teaching is the one in which women have the least number of children; this is unsatisfactory if women professors are to be able to live as full a life as anyone else. (CAUT *Bulletin* cited in Dagg and Thompson, 1988: 84)

My entry to the academy and motherhood was almost simultaneous and not altogether easy. I completed a Ph.D. in Canadian Literature in 1991, a time when there were few annual job postings across the North American academy. I was fortunate, however, in obtaining a Post-doctoral Fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Hence, I settled into a position at the University of Toronto, my host institution, and tried not to think beyond tenure of the Fellowship.

The future beckoned, however, as I entered my thirties and soon realized, in spite of career uncertainty, that the time may have arrived for me to consider motherhood, which I had delayed until completion of the doctorate. One year later, in 1992, I had given birth to a son and had taken a one-year maternity leave, which thereby extended the Post-doctoral Fellowship over three years rather than the usual two.

This paper charts a circuitous route toward a tenure-stream position, a route made arduous by a harsh economy and the demands of motherhood experienced for the first time and outside the relative security of tenured academe. It offers a personal narrative that describes the difficulty of continuing one's research and creative work; marginal employment as adjunct faculty; and the conflicting desire to spend time first with one infant, and later a second. The paper will show that motherhood, when combined with working conditions that arise out of a "straitened job market" (Aisenberg and Harrington, 1988:

134), can lead to marginalization within the academy. As my own case will demonstrate, success is possible—though never easy and achieved at some price—when one has the support of family, friends, and colleagues and can avail oneself of academic opportunities that arise. As Nancy Hensel (1990) notes, all women "have a difficult time in the work force because it has not sufficiently adjusted to accommodate the special needs of women.... The career cycle has not adjusted to allow time for childbearing [when] the conflict between work and femaleness becomes most intense" (5).

The apparent flexibility of an academic career might make it attractive to women, most of whom seek to balance work and family responsibilities. Indeed, an "academic career ought to lend itself to combining motherhood and work. The hours are flexible, the job is reasonably autonomous, and for many faculty there is time off during the summer and holidays" (Hensel, 1988: 4-5).

Lotte Bailyn (1993), however, recognizes the paradoxical nature of an academic career:

> Despite its advantages of independence and flexibility, it is psychologically difficult. The lack of ability to limit work, the tendency to compare oneself primarily to the exceptional giants in one's field, and the high incidence of overload make it particularly difficult for academics to find a satisfactory integration of work with private life.... It is the unbounded nature of the academic career that is the heart of the problem. Time is critical for professors, because there is not enough of it to do all the things their job requires: teaching, research, and institutional and professional service. It is therefore impossible for faculty members to protect other aspects of their lives, and work tends to dominate. (51- 52)

In recent years, academic life has become increasingly stressful for all faculty: "the competition is tougher than it used to be; the pay is low; resources for research and travel are tight; and mobility is lessened" (Hensel, 1988: 5). For women, that stress is intensified since they continue to "assume the major responsibilities for raising a family" (Hensel,1988: 5). Faculty women "may be competing against men who have more traditional wives to take care of the home and children" (Hensel, 1988: 5). Moreover, "uninterrupted time to think, read, plan research, and engage in technical writing" (Hensel, 1988: 5) often is limited for faculty women who must attend to the more immediate needs of their children. Angela Simeone (1987) cites one professor who laments the plight of "schedule-juggling women": "We all need time for sheer musing, for reading novels [particularly if one is a professor of literature], playing music, wandering about the river. And this is precisely what efficient scholarly women do not have ... We cannot respect our eccentricities, cannot honor them where they may lead us" (125).

Despite these difficulties, faced by all academic women but especially those

who are also mothers, the fact that I am in a position to write this paper is evidence of one woman's ongoing but successful resolution of the conflict that arises when a professor becomes a mother. Today, I am a tenured faculty member in a Department of English. Sadly, the vast majority of professor/mothers will not attain the status and security of tenured employment. Research shows clearly that

> marriage and family, while having a positive effect on the careers of men, has a negative effect on the progress of women's careers. Married women, particularly with children, are more likely to have dropped out of graduate school, have interrupted or abandoned their careers, be unemployed or employed in a job unrelated to their training, or to hold lower academic rank. (Simeone, 1987: 123)

Repeatedly, research confirms faculty women's experience of the academy as unsupportive of their roles as mothers.

This is not surprising. The university, an institution shaped by men for their own privilege, has a long history of excluding women as students and professors. Until the recent participation in the academy of growing numbers of women as graduate students and junior faculty, the experience of childbearing was divorced from academic life. The rearing of children always "has been a problem visible only to those who experience it, and they ... [have been] under subtle pressures to keep it invisible" (Finkel and Olswang, 1996: 125). Further, the

> pattern of the "traditional" family—father in the workforce, mother at home—was promoted assiduously after the second World War and is perhaps more deeply entrenched in the "monastic" atmosphere of universities than it is in the workplace in general. (Council of Ontario Universities, 1988: 137)

Hence, in academe, where men are "used as the standard of comparison for the evaluation of women" (Lie, 1990: 110), professors who also are mothers frequently face systemic bias against women generally, and mothers specifically.

The problem is analyzed by Robert Drago and Joan Williams (2000), whose recent comment applies to women across the academy:

> Raising a child takes 20 years, not one semester. [North] American women, who still do the vast majority of child care, will not achieve equality in academia so long as the ideal academic is defined as someone who takes no time off for child-rearing. With teaching, research, committee assignments, and other responsibilities, pre-tenure academics commonly work many hours of overtime. Defining job requirements in this way tends to eliminate virtually all mothers,

> so it is not surprising the percentage of tenured women in U.S. colleges and universities has climbed so slowly. (48)

Faculty women are "more likely than men to hold full-time, nontenure positions, positions of lower status in the academic labor market hierarchy" (Perna, 2001: 603). The general assumption that women choose to occupy positions of lesser status is not supported by current research. In fact, the careers of faculty women are limited by a number of factors, including geographic immobility, a constrained job market, career disruptions, household responsibilities, and caring for children (Watkins, 1998: 1). In all likelihood, however, since "tenure and childbearing years will coincide" (Glazer-Raymo, 1999: 98)—in 1995, the average Ph.D. recipient was 34 years of age (Drago and Williams, 2000: 48)—a faculty woman's decision to continue in nontenure employment often is "family-driven" (Watkins, 1998: 3). In May 2001, the American Association of University Professors confirmed the unhappy fact that although "increasing numbers of women have entered academia, their academic status has been slow to improve."

When I completed the Ph.D. at York University in 1991, I was hopeful and ambitious, determined to remain in academe, and committed to further scholarly research in the field of Canadian Literature. I was aware, however, that the job market I was about to enter was painfully competitive, with few available openings across Canada and the United States. Hence, in the final year of the doctorate, as I completed the dissertation, I prepared as practically as possible for my academic future by submitting an application for a SSHRC Post-doctoral Fellowship. Fortunately, my application was successful and I could look forward to a period of intense research at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library of the University of Toronto, where I undertook a study of the writing and publishing career of novelist Mazo de la Roche. In accordance with Fellowship regulations, I also was free to teach one course per semester.

Upon graduation, my personal circumstances were not unlike those of many faculty women. I was childless but already married for six years and I had interrupted my studies to help support my spouse through law school. That support had been returned during my doctoral studies. I intended to continue within the academy but my mobility was limited by my spouse's training as an Ontario lawyer. If I were to accept a position outside of the province, he would need to requalify, a commitment to further education that appealed to neither one of us. In fact, the problem of how to balance the needs of two aspiring professionals is common to dual-career couples. My own situation was overdetermined, however, by a severely constrained job market, which offered few opportunities for employment. Hence, I settled into my position at the University of Toronto and resolved to integrate my work and my life.

Suzanne Stiver Lie notes, for the majority of women "higher degree studies often coincide with marriage and childbirth" (1990: 112, 114). Although I was married when I began my doctoral studies, I chose to postpone childbirth until

completion of the degree, feeling that caring for children would hinder my progress through the degree requirements. The desire for greater financial stability also delayed my entry to motherhood. With the offer of the Post-doctoral Fellowship, as secure a form of employment that I could anticipate for the near future, I soon contemplated pregnancy.

In the past, faculty women often felt unable to combine an academic career with child rearing, and the academy has vigorously reinforced that perception. In December 2001, the Council on Anthropology and Reproduction issued this bleak statement: "our profession provides precious little support for those of us who have attachments to other people, or devote part of our lives to the work of nurturing children and other human beings."

Increasingly, however, faculty women are refusing to choose between a career and having children; in fact, many are "refusing to believe that such a choice is necessary" (Aisenberg and Harrington, 1988: 112). Some women postpone childbearing until they have achieved tenure, but for many the delay is too risky. Princeton University President Shirley M. Tilghman candidly admits that many women in her "generation chose to forego child-bearing until the security of tenure had been granted, only to find that their biological clock[s] had stopped ticking" (1993: A23). Still, many faculty women remain childless. A recent article in the *Guardian* cites this sobering advice offered by one faculty woman: "'Don't have children. It sounds awful but it's what I think'" (Berliner, 2002: 12).

I understood the medical risks I might face were I to postpone having children indefinitely. I also understood that my decision to become pregnant, bear, and raise a child would have significant implications for my career. But having waited until I had completed the doctorate, my spouse especially was anxious to start a family and soon we embarked on the intensely personal journey toward parenthood.

For the most part, pregnancy did not interfere with my post-doctoral research. I continued my work at a steady pace and in the final trimester of pregnancy undertook an extended research trip to libraries in Kingston, Ottawa, and Montreal. Since my son was due to arrive in June, I taught until the end of the academic year.

Although I had read books on pregnancy, delivery, and motherhood, nothing could have prepared me for the experience of becoming a first-time mother. Perhaps I was naive; more likely, I was in shock. Having enjoyed the intellectual stimulation and relative freedom of the academy, I felt over-whelmed by the sheer physical task of caring for a newborn. The newness of the experience and the demands of an infant absorbed me and, for a time, I felt removed from my former self.

When I had regained sufficient composure—it has never returned to pre-motherhood level—I turned my attention to arranging childcare for my son. As much as possible, I meant to conform to "the 'clockwork' of the academic career [that] demands commitment to continuous or almost continuous employ-

ment" (Cass, 1983: 145). Moreover, since I had yet to secure a tenure-stream position, I wanted to retain contact with my colleagues at the University. Hence, I took a one-year, unpaid maternity leave from the research fellowship, but I undertook to teach two full-year courses when my son was two months old. Mistakenly, I thought teaching while caring for a newborn would prove manageable. Thus began a life of fragmentation that included nursing, childcare, teaching, and research; it continues fragmented to this day. Like the majority of faculty women who also are mothers and whose lives are "intimately tied to the important processes of birth, nurturing and care," my career has been "characterized by *discontinuity*" (Lie, 1990: 116).

For many academic women who seek a balance between career and family, particularly for those who face a constrained job market, part-time teaching may seem to offer a temporary but workable compromise. Most women, however, who still occupy the majority of adjunct teaching positions, "simply are unaware that no amount of part-time work aggregates into tenure-track eligibility; rather they see part-time teaching as a welcome way of holding on to both the life and the work" (Aisenberg and Harrington, 1988: 126).

Women's efforts to continue as members of the academy are further undermined by the lack of quality childcare. Few universities, for example, have on-sight daycare facilities. Existing facilities often are costly, with little available space. One assistant professor, the mother of two small children, comments: "I am willing to work hard to qualify myself for a top position in society, but when my children suffer because of poor childcare, I become paralysed" (Lie, 1990: 122-23). Professor/mothers, who require quality care for their children if they are to thrive in academe, understand such paralyzing fear. My own history of childcare successes and failures—ten years of institutional and in-home care—is corroborated by current research that shows the absence of satisfactory and flexible childcare arrangements to be a serious hindrance to women's participation in the academy. As Judge Rosalie Abella affirms, "Childcare is the ramp that provides equal access to the workforce for mothers" (cited in Council of Ontario Universities, 1988: 141).

My situation as an aspiring academic who also was a mother was made especially difficult, first by the straitened job market, and later, following completion of the research fellowship, by my entry into sessional employment. Determined as I was not to abandon teaching, I secured a number of adjunct and sessional positions between 1994 and 1998. The experience proved invaluable when I was hired into my tenure-stream position in 1999, but the lack of security during several years of teaching at various universities and colleges—all located in the Metropolitan Toronto area—was stressful. In addition, the time I could devote to research often was curtailed by heavy teaching loads and my desire to nurture my son (born in 1992) and my daughter, (born in 1996) when I still was seeking permanent employment.

What I could not have anticipated prior to becoming a mother was the need—biologically driven, it may well have been—to be close to my children.

In fact, my entry to the academy was complicated not only by the lack of available jobs; the desire to pursue teaching, even in adjunct positions; and the drive to continue my research, despite limited time for concentrated effort. It was shaped equally by my experience of motherhood and my deeply felt desire not be parted for long periods from my children. In the early years of my children's lives, I wanted, quite simply, to be with them as their mother. The academy, however, does not accommodate that desire. Rather, it demands full participation from all faculty, including faculty women—with or without children—who hope one day to attain the status and security of tenure.

When I became a mother, my professional commitment did not diminish; rather it coexisted alongside an equal commitment to family. Both scholarly training and motherhood had expanded my sense of self, and I determined to integrate my work as an academic with my life as a mother. The struggle to do so was and remains uneasy, but I was fortunate in several respects.

First, I have had emotional and practical support from my spouse who shares equally in caring for our children and running our household. Together, we have faced childcare crises, career difficulties, and financial setbacks. Moreover, when my son was diagnosed at age 4 with a mild chronic illness, we rallied and will continue to do so. Second, the encouragement of my former supervisor, with whom I collaborated on a scholarly book published in 1997, was sustaining. Today, he remains an ally. Finally, I was able to secure employment through my connections with the heads of several Departments of English, who would offer me teaching positions when they became available. Hence, I continued with my scholarly research and cobbled together various teaching assignments, all the while attending to my two children. When my schedule permitted, I took the opportunity to be with them; otherwise, I relied on childcare. In addition, I began to write and publish poetry that grew out of the visceral experience of mothering. Concision, however, ought not to belie the constant fatigue, persistent stress, lack of leisure, and ever-present worry over family and work that underlie this narrative. Beneath these lines of tidy prose runs a teeming river that at every bend has threatened to overflow the calm shores of a life.

By 1996, I had taught English at two universities and three colleges within the greater Toronto area. I was unsatisfied in my position as adjunct faculty, but throughout the 1990s few tenure-stream positions in Canadian Literature would become available. In the summer of 1996—when I could conceal the fact that I was four months pregnant with my daughter—I was interviewed at Ryerson University for a part-time teaching position. As a former polytechnic, Ryerson had been granted university status in 1993 and was seeking faculty with doctorates to teach its students in diverse programs.

In the fall of 1996, when I first taught a course in Canadian Literature at Ryerson, I sensed growing opportunity. Here was an institution in transition and I felt a groundswell of forward movement on campus. I continued teaching over the next two years and rarely missed a class—even when I gave

birth to my daughter in mid-semester—or an opportunity to make my presence felt among the English faculty. In 1998, while I held a sessional appointment at the University, I applied for one of two tenure-stream positions in the Department of English at Ryerson that were advertised to begin in August 1999. I just had been awarded a second significant grant—a Canada Council Professional Writer's Grant in support of a study of the novelist Adele Wiseman—which strengthened my application. When the interviews and job talks finally were complete and I had been offered a tenure-stream position in Canadian Literature, with a reduced probationary period, I felt elated and overwhelmed. It had taken me years, but I had secured a tenure-stream position. A vision of a life that combined an academic career and mothering had led to my success.

Suzanne Stiver Lie concludes:

> From a life-course perspective, women are at a *cumulative disadvantage* in academe. For most, a late start, long periods of employment outside academe, childcare breaks, and caring and administrative responsibilities in the home make it more difficult for them to establish their careers than men. This in turn results in less time for research, fewer contacts, fewer resources in the form of assistants and funding. A complex web of institutional, cultural and personal forces create barriers to women's advancement in academic careers. (1990: 124)

Whether or not they face a straitened job market, faculty women remain disadvantaged in academe. The academy continues to reward early and sustained achievement, a distinctly male model for success that often eludes women who must demonstrate academic excellence as they bear and raise their children. I have argued here that my personal story is one of triumph, but it also is one of hardship that echoes across the stories of many faculty women. Motherhood is not a luxury and women professors should not experience guilt for desiring—or not desiring—children.

It should be less difficult for faculty women who also are mothers to remain in the academy, and remedial steps recently have been taken to better the likelihood of continued success for professor/mothers. Maternity and parental leave policies have improved, for example; resources for child care have increased; and tenure decisions may be delayed to accommodate extended leave periods. But the "number of women in higher faculty ranks [still] is significantly less than the number of men" (Hensel,1990: 8). If faculty women are to move beyond the ghetto of low ranking academic positions to achieve the success that is their due, they require broad-based institutional support. If professor/mothers are to share in that success, they require all the support they can muster.

For research assistance, the author thanks Maja Baltus.

References

Aisenberg, Nadya, and Mona Harrington. 1988. *Women of Academe: Outsiders in the Sacred Grove.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

American Association of University Professors. n.d. *Statement of Principles on Family Responsibilities and Academic Work.* <http://www.aaup.org/re01fam.htm>.

Bailyn, Lotte. 1993. *Breaking the Mold: Women, Men, and Time in the New Corporate World.* New York: Free Press.

Berliner, Wendy. 2002. "Give Us a Break." *Guardian* 19 March: 12.

Cass, Bettina. 1983. "Woman's Place or Domestic Contradictions?" *Why So Few? Women Academics in Australian Universities.* Bettina Cass, et al., eds. Sydney: Sydney University Press. 122-52.

Council on Anthropology and Reproduction. n.d. "CAR Statement: 'Reproduction in (and of) the Profession of Anthropology.'" <http://www.geocities.com/anthrorepro/>.

Council of Ontario Universities. 1988. *Employment Equity for Women: A University Handbook.* Toronto: Council of OntarioUniversities, March.

Dagg, Anne Innis, and Patricia J. Thompson. 1988.*MisEducation: Women& Canadian Universities.* Toronto: OISE Press.

Drago, Robert, and Joan Williams. 2000. "A Half-time Tenure Track Proposal." *Change* 32 (6) (Nov.-Dec): 46-51.

Finkel, Susan Kolker, and Steven G. Olswang. 1996. "Child Rearing as a Career Impediment to Women Assistant Professors." *Review of Higher Education* 19 (2) (Winter): 123-39.

Glazer-Raymo, Judith. 1999. *Shattering the Myths: Women in Academe.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hensel, Nancy. 1990. "Maternity, Promotion, and Tenure: Are They Compatible?" *Women in Higher Education: Changes and Challenges.* Lynne B. Welch, ed. New York: Praeger, 3-11.

Lie, Suzanne Stiver. 1990. "The Juggling Act: Work and Family in Norway." *Storming the Tower: Women in the Academic World.* Susan Stiver Lie and Virginia O'Leary, eds. London: Kogan Page. 108-28.

Perna, Laura W. 2001. "The Relationship Between Family Responsibilities and Employment Status Among College and University Faculty." *Journal of Higher Education* 72 (5) (Sept.-Oct.): 584-611.

Simeone, Angela. 1987. *Academic Women: Working Towards Equality.* Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey.

Tilghman, Shirley M. 1993. "Science vs. Women—A Radical Solution." *New York Times* 26 January: A23.

Watkins, Regina M., Margie Herrin, and Lonnie R. McDonald. 1998. "The Juxtaposition of Career and Family: A Dilemma for Professional Women." *Advancing Women in Leadership* 1(2) (Winter): 1-7.

Renee Norman

Declaration

I am not a card-carrying placard-wielding
flag-or-bra-burning
bubble zone feminist
I am not radical
unless you count the time
I told my daughter's teacher
she was structuring Grade Six Readers' Theatre
in a very patriarchal way

I let my daughters play with Barbies
(they know the score
look at me every day)
make home-made soup
once offered to do the dishes myself
when my husband had the flu

I do not hate men
even married one
am very polite when I point out
the committee conference speakers
authors editors columnists politicians
administrators faculty
are mostly men

I am white not Anglo-Saxon
heterosexual married with 3 children
1 dog 2 cars 6 motorcycles
a writing-teaching-feminist-mother-scholar
who sees the differences between men and women
in who expects who to make the children's lunches
taking for granted they will get fed
in who remembers whose peanut butter sandwich
is spread with jam not honey and
the color of their cups

Cayo Gamber

In a Napping House

On beige paper within the parameters of the turquoise lines—a solid line, then a perforated line, then a solid line—my six-year-old daughter wrote her class work. The piece of paper came home in her backpack this afternoon. On this paper, in pencil, she has carefully printed the following words:

> There was a wakeful flea on a slumbering mouse on a snoozing cat on a dozing dog on a dreaming child on a snoring granny on a cozy bed in a napping house where everyone is sleeping.

Now, while she sleeps upstairs, I sort through all of the papers clumped together—announcements from the principal, drawings, math problems, and then this piece of paper with an orange star that has been drawn by her kindergarten teacher, Ms. Cohen, at the top. I wonder how these words came together. Is this a faithful rendering of a story they read in class?

I would ask her, but am reluctant to do so, not only because she is sleeping now, but also because if she were awake, we might end up in one of those bungled conversations. Over the last few years I have become aware how it difficult it can be to ask a child how her day has gone. I have since discovered that often I become the inadequate inquisitor and she the reluctant respondent.

"*Hey Blake,*" I would begin, "w*hen did you write this piece and where does the idea come from?*"

She would respond, in her literal fashion, "a*t school, in Ms. Cohen's class.*"

I would try again, "*Yes, but where did you get the idea for the story. I really love the image you construct here.*"

Shrugging, she would respond, "*I don't know.*"

Giving it one last try, I would say, "*Why did you receive an orange star on the piece? What were you asked to do?*"

Moving away, she would respond, "*I just did what Ms. Cohen asked me to.*"

Thus, for now, I stand admiring how she has written her class work. Each word is printed with great care. There are no misspellings. The print moves, uniformly, from left to right. The rendering is so precise that there are no margins. I am charmed by what she has written as well.

The careful order of smaller creature to larger is pleasing. I like how the images are built into one sentence, beginning at the top of the pyramid and ending at the bottom. I savour the words: slumbering, snoozing, dozing, dreaming, snoring, napping, sleeping.

I would, however, like to rid the piece of the wakeful flea. I know what it means to be the wakeful flea—the one unquiet being who seems bothersome in such a peaceful pyramid. Unbidden, in my mind, I hear wakeful conversations and see unquiet images. I hear a friend of mine, who lost her 12-year-old daughter in an unexpected, split-second horseback riding accident, saying, "You know, even if your child dies, you never stop being a parent." In my mind, I see another woman I know who lost her teenaged son in a car accident. She was on the evening news the day her son's best friend went to trial. The friend's reckless driving through rush-hour traffic had resulted in Lynn's son's death and severe injuries to two other passengers. Standing on the steps of the courthouse, with multiple microphones in her face, she said, "He needs to remember that his best friend's final moments were filled with fear and terror, and he was the cause." Every time I see this woman, in my mind I see an image of her son, and hear the words, his "final moments were filled with fear and terror."

These are the best times, I have been told, when your child is with you still, under your care, in your house. I pick up Blake's lunch box, in which I have packed a peanut-butter sandwich, a juice box, a snack-pack of pretzels, and an apple. The lunch box is tin with a black and red plaid print. It is a gift from Clark whom she likes to think of as her father. Every time I look at the lunch box I am reminded of Anne Frank's diary; the cover of her diary was decorated with the same plaid design. How do you keep the horror away; how do you banish the thoughts of children dead in horse-riding accidents; children dead in their best friends' cars; children dead, casualties of genocide? How do you keep the horror away from your child?

Will I ward off danger by standing here in the living room thinking of the worst that could happen? My hand smooths the piece of paper, and I read the words again:

> There was a wakeful flea on a slumbering mouse on a snoozing cat on a dozing dog on a dreaming child on a snoring granny on a cozy bed in a napping house where everyone is sleeping.

Wakeful as the flea, I remind myself, this is a good moment, looking at Blake's classwork, examining the evidence of her day, as she sleeps upstairs. I remind myself it is good to be here, now, in the security of a napping house, and tell myself that these wakeful cogitations are deep reminders of how much I love my dreaming child. I also realize that such cogitations are, in part, the product of magical thinking. These thoughts are a carry over from my own childhood when I believed if I just imagined the worst fully, deeply, completely, then I could prevent it from coming to pass. Watchful, vigilant, and wakeful I try to imagine the worst, hoping the magic formula will work and my daughter will remain forever safe.

Renee Norman

When Geese Fly

the 11 o'clock news:

in a campground
a young 11-year-old girl
was

when geese fly in v's
they are like punctuation marks
stop your gaze
in the text of blue sky
catch the eye
with the possibilities

my daughter read
that when geese fly in formation
they leave a space in the line
for the geese that died

in the fall
when the geese fly south
when the children return to school
i will look for
    the gaps   in
the   line

these gaps are like the words
i have crossed out of the lines
of this poem
xxxxxxxxxxxx
victims of my verbal gunshot
wham!
a word goes
a goose
a girl
all we hunters
making our marks
11-year-old commas
transform to periods
full stops

Carolyn Cunningham

Emerging Academics
Thoughts on Becoming (and Not Becoming) Mothers

On August 6, 2001, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) launched a controversial series of Public Service Announcements (PSAs) titled the Protect Your Fertility (PYF) campaign. ASRM believed they had the public's best interest at heart. A group of obstetricians and gynecologists, alarmed by the increasing number of women and men who were unaware of factors affecting their fertility, supported the campaign. Additionally, the growing number of women over 35 who were surprised to find out it would be difficult to have children in their 40s especially concerned these doctors. To this end, ASRM set out to warn the public that aging, smoking, excessive weight gain or loss, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) could cause infertility. The mascot of the campaign became a baby bottle filled with milk. In each PSA, the bottle is manipulated to signify how these lifestyle activities could affect one's future ability to reproduce. However, while ASRM proclaimed they had the public's best intentions at heart, many felt differently.

The campaign sparked a number of mainstream media stories describing an epidemic of childlessness among professional women in the United States. *Newsweek* ran a cover story entitled, "Should You Have Your Baby Now?," which highlighted the campaign and chronicled personal stories of women who struggled with managing their professional and personal lives (Kalb et al., 2001). National Public Radio spotlighted the campaign on its popular show *Talk of the Nation* (Williams, 2001). NBC's *The Today Show* ran a series about infertility. Infertility organizations, including RESOLVE and the American Infertility Association praised ASRM for bringing attention to a taboo and personal subject.[1]

Yet not everyone appreciated this focus on fertility. The National Organization for Women (NOW) publicly denounced the campaign, claim-

ing it blamed women for their choices and used tactics designed to scare women into having children. Amy Allina, Director of the National Women's Health Network, stated the campaign made women feel anxious about their bodies (Poster, 2001). Editorials appeared in newspapers including the *New York Times, Los Angeles Times,* and the *Boston Globe.* These editorials inspired women across the U.S. to share their personal, and sometimes painful, stories about their reproductive choices. Many women wrote that they already felt so much pressure to "have it all" and they did not need to be reminded that their biological clock was ticking every time they got on a bus or drove past a billboard.

This paper examines the reception of the PYF campaign by eight female graduate students between the ages of 25 and 35, a target audience of the campaign. The data presented here is part of a larger study that explores discourses of fertility and infertility throughout the twentieth century. Using my participants' reactions to the campaign as a starting point, I argue that female graduate students who are pursuing academic careers have a complex notion of their gender identities and the social construction of motherhood.

While some research on women in academia focuses on the disparaging rate of tenure among women in academia, the need for women to adapt to male workplace standards, and lack of professional support for women, this study shows a different perspective on women and teaching in academia. My participants' understandings about the social construction of motherhood reflect some of the current challenges facing the next generation of women preparing for careers in academia.

In this paper, I first provide a theoretical framework for studying the construction and reception of the PYF campaign. Next, I offer background on ASRM and a textual analysis of the "age" ad, the most controversial ad in the PYF campaign. Finally, I analyze findings from a focus group conducted with female graduate students who viewed the campaign.

Social construction of motherhood

A social constructionist approach defines motherhood as historically situated and negotiated within cultural, political, and economic relations (Firestone, 1970; Glen, Chang and Forcey, 1994; Rich, 1986). This account separates motherhood from biological reproduction to examine how institutions define mothers. This framework includes a structural analysis of how institutions reinforce notions of motherhood, especially looking at the intersections of race, class, and gender. In this context, the essential role of women is not to reproduce. Instead researchers examine how women's reproduction serves patriarchal means. For example, nationalist discourse in the early 1900s promoted "true womanhood" as the process through which women became valuable citizens (Berg, 2002). Political leaders believed that women's central roles as mothers would propel the nation into the Industrial Revolution. This discourse promoted both Anglo and African American identity. For white

culture, encouraging women to become mothers was a way to displace fears of miscegenation and racial mixing, especially as the influx of immigration led to an apprehension about shifting power relations. For African Americans, racial uplift discourse positioned women as possessing the ability to propagate a race that was still recovering from the disastrous effects of slavery (Roberts, 1997). In both of these instances, motherhood became a vehicle for achieving a particular political and economic position.

When women adopt identities that do not include children or reproduction, the very institution of womanhood is threatened. The negotiation over this shifting definition can produce what Susan Faludi (1991) terms backlash (46). Media representations reflect these struggles. For example, the current focus of news stories about professional women's declining fertility rates reflects an ideology that values women based on their ability to reproduce, rather than their contributions to the workplace. These stories become a tool that masks the unequal sexual division of labor in the workplace. By blaming women for their lack of reproduction, instead of creating policies to accommodate mothering, the patriarchal structure of the workplace remains intact.

Since the 1990s, advanced reproductive technologies (ARTs) also threaten an essentialist definition of motherhood. Social debates about ARTs fall into two camps. On the one hand is the argument that reproductive technologies will be liberating for women (Farquahar, 1996; Haraway, 1998; Rothman, 2000). In this framework, reproductive technologies have the potential to produce alternative parenting structures, such as the option to delay childbirth or separating reproduction from the process of intercourse. On the other hand is the argument that reproductive technologies will be oppressive to women (Corea, 1995; Raymond, 1993). In this camp, theorists argue that reproductive technologies reduce women to their biological functions and further patriarchal goals.

In the current moment, the emergence of new familial patterns, such as single parenting, non-married cohabitation, blended families, and gay and lesbian parenting challenge the notion of motherhood. The nuclear family is no longer the norm, yet many ideological forces struggle to maintain it. This power struggle can be seen in the "blaming" of African-American women for social problems (Roberts, 1997). In her book *Killing the Black Body,* Dorothy Roberts (1997) chronicles how media representations in the 1980s often portrayed African American women as welfare-dependent and drug-addicted. This strategy worked to demonize female-headed households and focus on African American women as causing social problems, rather than structural problems such as racism and poverty.

In addition to new familial patterns, a growing number of women choose to remain childless, challenging women's essential role as mothers. Childless women are often the subject of political criticism and are blamed for lifestyle choices that have left them barren and miserable. Whether through contracting a sexually transmitted disease or pursuing a career, these women emerge as a

cautionary tale for the evils of feminism and sexual liberation. This discourse was especially apparent in the 1980s when media representations often depicted childless women as destitute and forever lonely (Faludi, 1991).

Myra Hird and Kimberly Abshoff (2000) challenge the notion that childlessness is a negative experience for women. Women who do not view parenthood as a central life goal are often assumed to be suffering from a psychological disturbance, childhood trauma, or having poor parental models. In their research, Hird and Abshoff found a number of reasons why women did not want children. While freedom was the number one reason given for remaining childless, personal independence, time, flexibility, educational and career goals, belief that children detract from marital relationship, and ideological convictions, such as overpopulation, were all common reasons why women did not want children (Hird and Abshoff, 2000). In fact, they found that intentional childlessness was not an immature choice, but instead one arrived at over time.

Of course, not all women who are childless have a choice. Many have gone through years of surgery and hormone treatments only to find that having a biological child was not possible. Others who may not have access to these resources face a different set of problems. Whatever choices and situations women face in their lives, the ideology of motherhood seems to be correlated with the definition of "woman."

The PYF campaign: Social construction of infertility

The theoretical framework underlying social constructionist research can be applied to discourses of infertility that arise in the 1990s and beyond. The contested definition of infertility leads the way for deconstructing the PYF campaign and understanding its implication for emerging women academics.

ASRM was founded in 1944 by a small group of fertility experts working in Chicago. These doctors were among the first to use procedures such as donor insemination and in vitro fertilization (IVF). ASRM has members from all 50 states and 100 countries. Administrative offices are housed in Birmingham, Alabama and there is a public affairs office in Washington, D.C.

According to its website, the ASRM (2001) is a "multidisciplinary organization for the advancement of the art, science, and practice of reproductive medicine." ASRM accomplishes this mission through education, research, and advocacy for patients, physicians, and affiliated health care providers. ASRM offers continuing education opportunities, such as postgraduate courses, and holds an Annual Meeting with scientific presentations, seminars, and workshops. ASRM also publishes a monthly journal titled *Fertility and Sterility*. On the political level, ASRM has an ethics committee that works with state and federal policy issues. In addition, this organization prides itself on establishing a contraceptive and infertility research center at the National Institute of Women's Health.

The PYF campaign is an extension of ASRM's public activities and is

framed as a series of Public Service Announcements (PSAs). ASRM members supported this campaign as a vehicle for educating the general public about an important health problem. However, it is clear that the ideology of the PYF campaign relies on narrow definitions of fertility and infertility. Fertility measures a woman's (and man's) ability to bear children.[2] Infertility describes a condition in which individuals are not biologically capable of reproducing. In 1993, the ASRM officially defined infertility as a disease. A disease is defined as:

> any deviation from or interruption of the normal structure or function of any part, organ, or system, or combination thereof, of the body that is manifested by a characteristic set of symptoms or signs, and whose etiology, pathology, and prognosis may be known or unknown. (Dorland, 1974: 481)

In this definition, a disease is characterized as any deviation from a biological norm. This definition is broad in scope and assumes that biology can be normalized. The danger in constructing infertility as a disease is that it marks individuals as "abnormal" and does not allow for variations that occur within biology. Some very normal conditions, such as aging, can affect both men's and women's fertility. By this definition, aging becomes a symptom of a disease.

The ASRM notes that "infertility" is defined as failing to conceive for twelve months without the use of contraception (ASRM, 2002). There is no mention of frequency of intercourse or timing of intercourse. A woman's fertility fluctuates throughout her monthly cycle and there are times throughout this cycle when a woman is not at all likely to be fertile, such as when she is menstruating. Limiting fertility to one year without using contraception, masks some biologically "normal" functions of women. This definition is dangerous because doctors will often recommend the use of medical interventions, such as hormone therapy, based on these standards. The increase in fertility treatments in the last decade reflects the implications of defining infertility as a disease. In turn, this framework can cause anxiety to women. One of my participants, responding to the construction of infertility as a disease, stated,

> Disease suggests something scary and something that you want to get medicated for. It is something that is going to cause you more panic. I guess I am thinking of the definition of twelve months. It seems like that is part of the issue of trying to have kids. It doesn't happen immediately on schedule when you planned it. Whereas if it is a disease, it is something serious. And you can catch it. You have done something wrong and got it. There is more policing. Your body is doing something wrong, which is a weird relationship with your body.

Barbara Katz Rothman (2000) argues that infertility should be considered a disability, not a disease because of its usefulness for social policy (95). Taking infertility out of the realm of a medical concept and placing it within a social category, such as a handicap, allows for a wider definition of infertility. Interestingly, pregnancy is currently defined as a disability for most insurance companies. Some argue that this framework protects pregnant women from discrimination in the workplace when they are unable to work.

I disagree with Rothman's argument. Defining infertility as a disability assumes that there is something wrong that needs to be fixed. This framework still relies on the notion that women should become mothers and that reproduction is a natural goal, rather than a choice. This disability framework focuses on women's deviation from a supposed norm, rather than allowing alternative definitions of both "motherhood" and "woman". As I will show in the results from my study, female graduate students were frustrated by such limiting definitions of motherhood, especially because their mothering choices were so varied.

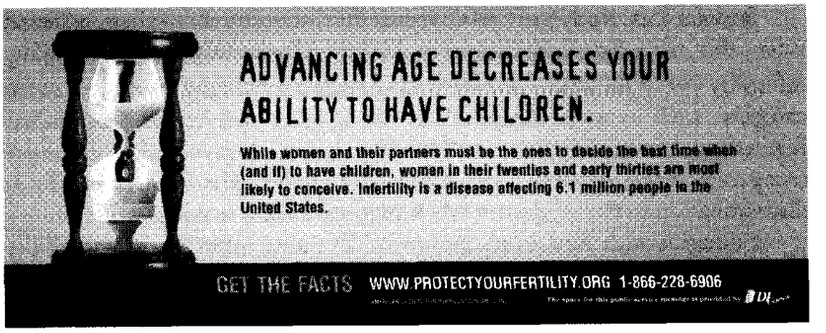
Methodology

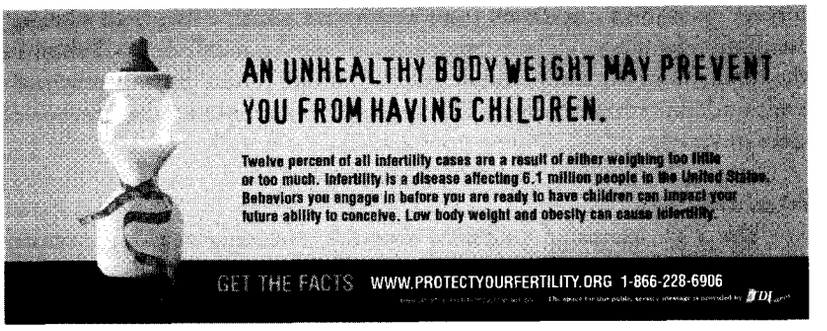
The PYF campaign contained four ads, including smoking, sexually transmited infections (STIs), weight, and age. In each ad, the baby bottle is manipulated to suggest a correlation between the behavior and fertility. In the smoking ad, there is a cigarette dropping ashes into the baby bottle. The STIs ad has a condom leaning next to the baby bottle. In the weight ad, a measuring tape encircles the baby bottle, pulling the middle tight to display an hourglass, Barbie-like figure. However, the age ad was by far the most controversial in mainstream media coverage and definitely evoked the most emotional response from my participants. In this ad, the baby bottle is upside-down, and placed within a wooden hourglass. The milk in the bottle is slowly dripping out. The text reads:

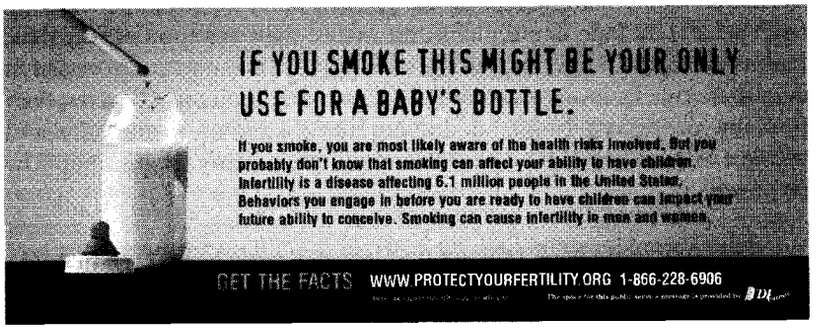
> ADVANCING AGE DECREASES YOUR ABILITY TO HAVE CHILDREN. While women and their partners must be the ones to decide the best time when (and if) to have children, women in their twenties and early thirties are most likely to conceive. Infertility is a disease affecting 6.1 million people in the United States.

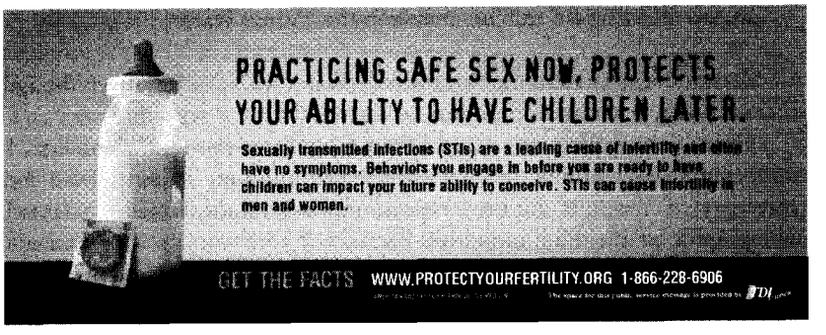
Research suggests that men's fertility decreases with age. However, the age ad clearly targets women as the ones to bear the brunt of reproduction.

In order to explore the range of reactions from the PYF campaign, I conducted a series of focus groups with female graduate students from the University of Texas at Austin.[3] Female graduate students are a targeted demographic of the PYF campaign because of their age group. Graduate students are a group in transition who are seeking education to advance their professional careers. All of the women in my sample anticipated pursuing a


ADVANCING AGE DECREASES YOUR ABILITY TO HAVE CHILDREN.
While women and their partners must be the ones to decide the best time when (and if) to have children, women in their twenties and early thirties are most likely to conceive. Infertility is a disease affecting 6.1 million people in the United States.
GET THE FACTS WWW.PROTECTYOURFERTILITY.ORG 1-866-228-6906


AN UNHEALTHY BODY WEIGHT MAY PREVENT YOU FROM HAVING CHILDREN.
Twelve percent of all infertility cases are a result of either weighing too little or too much. Infertility is a disease affecting 6.1 million people in the United States. Behaviors you engage in before you are ready to have children can impact your future ability to conceive. Low body weight and obesity can cause infertility.
GET THE FACTS WWW.PROTECTYOURFERTILITY.ORG 1-866-228-6906


IF YOU SMOKE THIS MIGHT BE YOUR ONLY USE FOR A BABY'S BOTTLE.
If you smoke, you are most likely aware of the health risks involved. But you probably don't know that smoking can affect your ability to have children. Infertility is a disease affecting 6.1 million people in the United States. Behaviors you engage in before you are ready to have children can impact your future ability to conceive. Smoking can cause infertility in men and women.
GET THE FACTS WWW.PROTECTYOURFERTILITY.ORG 1-866-228-6906


PRACTICING SAFE SEX NOW, PROTECTS YOUR ABILITY TO HAVE CHILDREN LATER.
Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are a leading cause of infertility and often have no symptoms. Behaviors you engage in before you are ready to have children can impact your future ability to conceive. STIs can cause infertility in men and women.
GET THE FACTS WWW.PROTECTYOURFERTILITY.ORG 1-866-228-6906

teaching job in academia.

Participants were asked to fill out an intake survey that measured their desire to or to not have children, their knowledge about reproductive health, and demographic information. Next, I showed participants each of the four PYF campaign ads. Participants had five minutes to write down their responses to the ads. The writing portion was intended to capture their initial reactions to the ads and to gather information that they might not want to share in a group setting. Next, I led a discussion with the group about each of the ads. These questions asked participants to evaluate the effectiveness of the ads. Participants were asked if they understood the messages conveyed by the ads and how they felt about these messages.

Findings

Of the eight women who participated in the focus group, seven were Anglo-American, and one women was Hispanic.[4] The majority of the sample was in the age group 26-30. Two women were in the age group 31-35, and one woman was in the age group 20-25. None of the participants currently had children. Only one respondent reported that she definitely wanted to have children in the future. Half of the sample reported that they definitely did not plan on having children. Three participants reported feeling ambivalent about children. Of the ambivalent group, one respondent reported, "it depends on the situation." Two respondents, who were "not sure" about having children reported that they were not sure when to fit having children into their career plans. One participant elaborated further by writing that if she did choose to have children, this path would have to accommodate her career. The ambivalent mothering group seemed to place their careers as a primary goal in their mothering choices.

Participants who did not want children listed a number of reasons for this choice, including too much responsibility, aversion to pain, lack of desire/maternal instinct, no patience, overpopulation, and an inhospitable world. These reasons follow the Hird and Abshoff (2000) study of voluntary childless women. Participants who did want children listed having a good childhood, liking friends' kids, and "it seems fun," as reasons contributing to this choice. One of the participants, who was ambivalent about having children, did not respond to this question.

Most of the sample described themselves as either somewhat knowledgeable or very knowledgeable about reproductive health issues. Only one woman responded that she was not very knowledgeable about reproductive health issues. Three reported that they knew enough about their reproductive health to understand the basics and they knew where to find answers if they had concerns. When asked where they find information about their reproductive health, "doctors" and "friends" received the highest response rate. Family, magazines, and the Internet were the second most reported sources of information. I was surprised at the number of women in the sample who definitely did

not want children. This composition of the sample could reflect both the structure of academia that does not often allow for children and for a growing acceptance of reproductive choices, including remaining without children. The other interesting characteristic of this sample is the number of women who were ambivalent about having children. These responses challenged the idea of "maternal instinct," suggesting that choice seems to be more important than instinct.

Responses to the question "Do you have concerns about your reproductive health?" were also surprising. Cervical cancer, breast cancer, and menopause where all listed as health concerns. All of the women who responded that they wanted children, also reported that they were concerned about their fertility and the ability to have children. It is interesting to note the range of reproductive health concerns, suggesting that women have a more holistic view of their reproductive health beyond procreation.

Age

The issue of age and the biological clock was a sensitive topic for this group of women. All of the participants believed that they already experienced pressure from a variety of sources to have children. The women who did not want to have children seemed to resent that they were constantly targeted to have children. The women who did want to have children felt enough pressure with trying to find a partner and balance their studies. Both groups, those who wanted children and those who did not, were offended by the age ad. The following are excerpts from their written reactions,

> *P1*: My first reaction to this ad—"F-off!" I again resent this promotion of reproduction and the implication that we'd better hurry up and get pregnant! It's obvious they're really concerned with the perfect female breeder: white and middle-class.
>
> *P2*: This ad is entirely aimed at telling women when and how to be mothers, ignoring other options for parenthood. What about men?
>
> *P3*: Interesting-this one isn't about behavior. "Women: forget about a career, have a kid before it's too late!"

When I led the discussion about the age ad, I found that there were some similarities among the women who did want children and the women who did not. Both groups felt targeted by media texts to become mothers and both groups were frustrated with the construction of age-related infertility as only a female problem. However, as the discussion progressed, some norms were established within the group. Women who did want children tended to disclose this information only at key moments rather than constantly bring it up. The women who did not want children were quite outspoken about the

societal pressure to become mothers. P7 was the most outspoken about not wanting to have children. She felt that these ads were a direct attack on her choices not to want to become a mother. In seeing the first STI ad, P7 commented, "I am just generally offended by it [the ad]. www.protectyourfertility.org makes me want to set up a counter website that says www.banishyourfertility.org." This sentiment and humor existed throughout the session. P1 was also quite vocal in expressing her view that she did not want to have children and felt there was a push in media texts to construct her as a mother. She was outspoken about this and mentioned that she did not want to be defined as a "breeder." The dynamic of women wanting to become mothers but not feeling comfortable expressing their views suggests that there may be some barriers in trying to create a sense of community among graduate students about these issues.

All of the participants were frustrated that the age ad blamed women for infertility:

> *P4*: First of all, "advanced age" sounds like folks in their 70s or 80s. Second, the initial sentence seems to be saying "sure you have a choice when to have kids, but you'd better do it soon!" This is very insincere and annoying. It also gives me the creeps that procreation is partially the choice of the woman's partner, but the woman getting pregnant is bound by her age. So if her partner wants kids, he has a right to make her hurry up and conceive? The image is predictable but also over the top.
>
> *P5*: This is good to know. Can't wait to get old. A shame the bottle has to be upside down.
>
> *P7*: Maybe we need one of a flaccid bottle for men.

Participants also felt that they were targeted in media texts because of their abnormal status of being of childbearing age and not having children:

> *P3*: This is so annoying. This hits my biggest pet peeve of the issue and leaves me amazed. Here, there is no question that the focus is <u>all</u> on women-as if we didn't get this "info" anywhere else in the media. Again, I feel like this is targeted for a very specialized segment of society. The image is also very annoying to me. I do realize I may be too acutely sensitive to this issue at the moment.
>
> *P1*: This [the age ad] is annoying. I am really tired of hearing about this one: "Women better hurry up and get on with it and have babies before god forbid they get too old."

> *P6*: We have ad nausem heard about this. We see this everywhere. I am not sure I need to see it again. We know. Are there people out there that don't know this? Well, the smoking one was the only one that I thought, maybe people don't know that connection. I don't think this information [about aging] is valuable. With the other ones, maybe if it was in an impoverished part of the city and maybe they don't have enough money to go to a fertility clinic, then maybe they can benefit from this.

In contrast, only one participant felt the ad attempted to send a positive message:

> *P4*: This one seems the most respectful and straightforward of the bunch. The major exception to that that I see is that they don't begin the most likely to conceive age group until the 20s. The "women and their partners" is a bit weird too. I think it would be better if they left off the "Infertility is a disease..." sentence.

The age ad by far evoked the most emotional reaction from my participants. They were frustrated with the text, which they interpreted as putting the burden of reproduction on women, instead of indicating that men's fertility also declines with age. They also reported that the imagery in the campaign was gender-biased. They commented that men could not relate to a baby bottle and would not pay attention to any of the ads in the PYF campaign. When I asked them how this campaign might address the issue of age more effectively, no one in the group had any ideas. Instead, they for the most part insisted that women were smart enough to know that they are not as likely to have children when they get older. They felt they did not need a public service campaign to tell them so. To them, the campaign was a dumbing-down process.

Conclusion

Women pursuing careers in academia experience a range of reactions and feelings toward motherhood. This range can be seen in my study participants' reception to the age ad of the PYF Campaign. This group expressed feeling marginalized by media texts that warned them of the factors affecting their fertility, social pressures to "hurry up" and have children, and the struggle to balance their personal and professional lives. While this group differed in their mothering choices (only one woman expressed that she definitely wanted to have children), their strong reactions to the ads suggest that the ideological assumptions within the campaign, that all women should become mothers, was troubling to this group.

Most of the women in my sample either did not want children or were undecided about their mothering choices. However, while previous research assumes that women delay childbearing in order to pursue careers, my results

show that women's decisions are complicated and nuanced. For example, some women expressed that they did not have a maternal instinct or that they had ideological reasons, such as not wanting to contribute to overpopulation, which contributed to their choices to delay or forego childbearing. These findings should guide future research in understanding how social forces shape women's choices, especially of those women entering academia.

Previous research about women in academia suggests that women delay mothering because they often have to adopt a male approach to their professional careers, such as sacrificing their personal lives for their work, negotiating grueling tenure schedules, and taking on administrative duties in addition to their teaching loads (Cohen, 2002). The emerging academics in my study did not identify any of these reasons as contributing to their mothering choices. Instead, these female graduate students were committed to finding careers in academia and eager to face the demands of academia. In fact, the women who were ambivalent about their mothering choices privileged their professional careers over mothering, stating that they would only want children if it fit into their professional careers. Participants did not explicitly link these statements to a dichotomy of male versus female standards in the workplace. Instead, participants expressed frustration in broader terms, including the external social pressures around them to become mothers. These participants seemed to be more focused on challenging norms of both "woman" and "mother" on a broader level than just in their professional careers. Even though they did not specifically identify the structure of academia itself as a factor in their mothering choices, future research should examine how female academics negotiate both social and professional definitions of motherhood.

However, tension in the group arose when women discussed their reasons for their reproductive choices. The women who did not want children were so adamant in their choices that they sometimes silenced other participants who were ambivalent about motherhood. This dynamic suggests that it may be for women to form coalitions to help each other navigate these choices in their professional careers. This finding is unfortunate because while the participants may have differed in terms of their choices, there was some common grounds when they discussed their frustration with the social construction of motherhood. Future research should examine strategies that may make women academics more likely to recognize their similarities rather than focus on their differences as a way to work toward social change. We have much to gain from understanding the dynamic of "choice" rather than framing choice as an unrestricted terrain.

This study is certainly not intended to be representative of all female graduate students in size or scope. Instead, the goal of this study is to illuminate the social shift in mothering choices that female academics may experience. These findings challenge earlier research that assumes that female academics do not choose to become mothers because the structure of the workplace does not allow them the freedom to become mothers. The findings presented here

suggest that women's choices are more complicated and include a number of factors beyond their professional careers. However, the perceived differences among the women in my study in terms of these mothering choices suggest that there may be challenges to coalition-building to continue allowing women these choices.

[1]RESOLVE, established in 1974, is a national organization with local chapters. Their mission is to provide education, advocacy, and support for men and women facing infertility. More information about RESOLVE can be found at http://www.resolve.org. Established in 1999, the American Infertility Association (AIA) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to helping men and women face decisions about reproductive health, including prevention and treatment of infertility, and providing information about the social and psychological impact of living with infertility. More information about AIA can be found at http://www.americaninfertility.org.

[2]Fertility rates are also used to measure the number of live births per 1,000 women of children of childbearing age (ages 15-44).

[3]The sample of graduate students is not random, since the purpose of this study is exploratory. These responses will be used as a way to develop a broader research study about women and mothering

[4]The lack of ethnic diversity is reflective of the make-up of the graduate school. I did not deliberately exclude women of other races. Future research should examine how race influences mothering choices.

References

The American Infertility Association. 23 March 2003. Online: <http://www.americaninfertility.org>.

American Society for Reproductive Medicine. 23 March 2003. Online: <http://www.asrm.org>.

Berg, Allison. 2002. *Mothering the Race.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Cohen, Hall. 2002. "The Baby Bias." *The New York Times*, August 4: Education Life, 1.

Corea, Gena. 1995. *The Mother Machine: Reproductive Technologies From Artificial Insemination to Artificial Wombs.* New York: Harper and Row.

Dorland, W.A. Newman. 1974. *Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary.* Philadelphia: Saunders.

Faludi, Susan. 1991. *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women.* New York: Doubleday.

Farquahar, Dion. 1996. *The Other Machine: Discourses and Reproductive Technologies.* New York: Routledge.

Firestone, Shulamith. 1970. *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution.* New York: William Morrow and Company.

Glen, Evelynn, Grace Chang, and Linda Rennie Forcey. Eds. 1994. *Mothering: Ideology, Experience and Agency.* New York: Routledge.

Haraway, Donna J. 1998. "A Cyber Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century. *Sex/Machine: Readings in Culture, Gender and Technology.* P. D. Hopkins, ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 434-467.

Hird, Myra J. and Kimberley Abshoff, 2000. "Women Without Children: A Contradiction in Terms?" *Journal of Comparative Family Studies.* 31 (3): 347-367.

Kalb, Claudia, Jaren Springen, Julie Scelfo, and Ellise Pierce. 2001."Should You Have Your Baby Now?" *Newsweek.* August 13: 40-49.

Poster, Vanessa. 2001. "Infertility is a Feminist Issue." 23 March. Online: <http://www.resolvela.org/articles/feminist.htm>.

Raymond, Janice. 1993. *Women as Wombs: Reproductive Technologies and the Battle Over Women's Freedoms.* San Francisco, CA: Harper.

Rich, Adrienne. 1986. *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution, 10th ed.* New York: W.W. Norton Company.

Roberts, Dorothy. 1997. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty.* New York: Pantheon Books.

Rothman, Barbara Katz. 2000. *Recreating Motherhood.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Williams, Juan. 2001. "Modern Women Waiting to Have Children." *Talk of the Nation.* National Public Radio. 21 August.

Rishma Dunlop

The Education of Girls

Lector in Fabula

I am reading in a school of dreams,
a lost girl in a night's tale, wandering through
a *jardin d'essais*, underfoot, the crunch of pale
green lichen on the forest floor.

Hyacinth gardens fade into a scene of
city lights and I am on Vancouver's Hastings Street.
The pages become stained with east end rot, humanity
pumping heroin through collapsed veins and
there on the corner is a woman weeping, the sound of
her pain palpable in every crack of concrete,
a prostitute whose knees have been broken by
a man with a baseball bat. I take her by the hand and
take her home with me, wash her body and her crushed limbs,
her sore-covered feet. I try to absorb her fever in my touch,
lay her down to sleep in my bed.

In the morning when I wake, she is gone,
only a cool, clear light shining on the tumbled sheets.

Tonight, I'll turn the pages of the book again
my hands inside the spine, reading the places
where memory doesn't work.

Slow Dancing: Beaconsfield 1973

There we are in a house like all the others,
freshly painted trim and gabled windows, brass-numbered
door and neatly pruned hedges, parents away for the
weekend and the basement recreation room is overflowing
with us, sweet sixteens, bodies clutched together in sweat in
the cigarette smoke and beer, slow dancing to Chicago's *Color My World* and Led Zeppelin's *Stairway to Heaven.*

My girlfriends and I wear angora sweaters our mothers
bought for us in the soft pastel shades of infants: fingernail
pink, baby blue, pale yellow, and cream. We wear drugstore
scents named for innocence and fruit: *Love's Baby Soft*, *Love's Fresh Lemon*, or the more sophisticated *Eau de Love* or Revlon's *Charlie.*

For years we have danced in ballet studios, spinning, dreaming our mothers'
dreams of Sugar Plum Fairies, our rose tight confections, pink slippers twirling
pas de deux, jetés, pirouetting our taut muscles until our toes bled. But tonight
we dance in our tight blue Levis, our mothers' voices fading as the shiver of Eric
Clapton's electric guitar strums our spines, the music claiming us and we spill
out under the streetlamps, dancing across equators into the earth's light.

On the streets of suburbia, this is the beginning of hunger.
It catches me by surprise, exploding like a kiss.

Rishma Dunlop

The Education of Girls

We learn to recite the Girl Guide promise:

I promise, on my honour, to do my best:
To do my duty to God, the Queen, and my country,
To help other people at all times,
To obey the Guide Law.

We learn the language of semaphore, how to
build campfires and lean-tos and latrines. We earn
badges, pitch tents, learn how to use an axe and chop wood,
how to tie knots, learn first aid and how to survive in the
wilderness. We learn to *Be Prepared* and to *Lend a Hand.*
We learn the Guide Law.

A Guide is obedient. You obey orders given you by those
in authority, willingly and quickly. Learn to understand that
orders are given for a reason, and must be carried out without question.

A Guide smiles and sings even under difficulty. You are
cheerful and willing even when things seem to be going wrong.

A Guide is pure in thought, word and deed. You look for
what is beautiful and good in everything, and try to become strong
enough to discard the ugly and unpleasant.

We become capable girls, soldiers in our uniforms, with our
companies and patrols and salutes. We learn to build nations and
at the close of the day, we sing Taps, the soldiers' bugle call to
extinguish the lights.

Day is done, gone the sun
From the hills, from the lake
From the sky
All is well, safely rest
God is nigh.

And our mothers kept house, did the laundry and
the cooking and the ironing, drove us to Brownies
and Girl Guides, did volunteer work, refinished furniture,
watched *The Edge of Night* and *Another World*
took antidepressants when their lives did
not resemble the glamorous adventures of Rachel

and Mac Corey, had hysterectomies at 40.
At the close of every day, they had supper ready when
their husbands returned from the city, fresh and slick,
briefcases in hand, polished shoes tapping them home past
manicured lawns along the asphalt driveways.

First Lessons: Postcolonial

Every morning my mother would
part my hair down the middle, plait
it into long braids reaching down to
my waist. I would walk with the other
neighbourhood kids to the elementary
school, absent-minded, my face always
in a book, reading as I walked, dressed like
the other girls in dark navy tunics, white blouses,
novitiate-like collars.

Those days, my knees were always scraped
and skinned from roller-skating on the concrete
slopes of Avondale Road, my skate-keys around
my neck, flying, weightless
my father continuously swabbing my cuts with
hydrogen peroxide, scabs peeking out over the
tops of my white kneesocks, my Oxford shoes.

In the classroom, we stood at attention
spines stiffened to the strains of singing
God Save the Queen to the Union Jack
recited The Lord's Prayer
hallowed be thy name, learned lessons
from a Gideon's bible.

In geography and history lessons the
teacher would unroll the giant map of
the world from the ceiling, use her
wooden pointer to show us the countries
of the Empire, the slow spread of a faded
red stain that marked them, soft burgundy
like the colour of my father's turbans.
Ancient history. Crisp whites of cricket
matches at officers' clubs. Afternoon tea
in the pavilion.

Decades later I can reconstruct the
story, move past the pink glow,
excavate the hollows of history.

I know now that if that surface was scratched
the pointer would fly along the contours of
the parchment world, across the Himalayas,
through emerald coils of steaming rivers.
Under my fingernails, the scents of spices
and teas, the silk phrasings of my mother's
saris, the stench of imperial legacy, blood
spilled from swords on proper khaki uniforms
lanced through the bodies of Sikh soldiers at
the frontlines of her Majesty's British Army.

But our teacher never said. *Remember this.*

My Mother's Lost Places

My teachers and the women in the
neighbourhood would admire the crimson
blooms on my mother's Kashmiri shawls,
exotic, intricate embroideries on the finest
wool the colour of blackest nightfall.

I know they could never imagine,
as I have only just begun to imagine,
my mother's lost places, her girlhood, the
laughter in summer houses, wild monkeys
at the hill stations of her youth, peacocks,
the heady profusions of flowers and fruit,
jasmine and roses and custard-apples and
guavas. They could not imagine her with
braids and proper Catholic uniform at the
convent school under the stern eyes of nuns
who taught them all their subjects including
domestic skills such as the tatting of lace and
embroidery stitching. They could not taste the
sweetness of Sanskrit poetry, or the star-flung
nights of Persian ghazals.
In Canada, my mother's young life gets frozen into
the icy winters of my childhood, new stories spun

in English on skating rinks, tobogganing hills and
ski slopes. A new wife, a new mother, she reads
Ladies Home Journal, learns to bake me birthday
cakes and gingerbread houses, wears Western clothes,
pedal pushers and sheath dresses and high heels, sews
me party frocks with sashes bowed in the back.

Family Life

In the 1960s they called it *Health Education*
on our report cards. Today they call the subject
Family Life.

At our school, the girls are separated from
the boys, gathered in the school gymnasium.
The nurse distributes pamphlets about
life cycles and Kotex. There is something
pristine and sanitized about it, the glossy
brochures with the beautiful fresh-faced
girl, her blonde hair swept back with pink
satin ribbon. We know we will soon become
her, young women leading Breck girl lives.

We learn our lessons well, believe we can
hold on to our well-groomed dreams.

It takes us years before we realize how many
things will make us bleed, how easy it is
for the world to rip us to pieces.

Romance

When I am sixteen, my girlfriend Jill and
I go for a walk along Lake Saint Louis as
we have done for years. It is June, we have
graduated from high school and I am still
flushed with the memory of prom night,
my pale pink gown, all of us dancing at the
Hilton, watching the sunrise over Mount Royal

leaving the hot clutch of teenage lovers at dawn
to return to suburban bedrooms.

We sit on the bench and she tells me,
weeping, *my parents are getting a divorce.*
I weep with her, my memories taking me
to those girlhood years at their family
cottage, where Jill and I would swim and
canoe, listen to the loons at night and whisper
secrets and how I thought then that her parents
were the most romantic couple on earth, her
mom so pretty and her dad so handsome, the
football coach hero to his sons and the highschool
boys and they were so beautiful and in love and
how I wanted to have what they had when I grew up.

I returned home that day, weeping,
told my mother the story, that Jill's mom and dad
were getting a divorce because her dad had been
having an affair with a young secretary, and her mom
with four kids and no training for a job would have to
sell that beautiful house by the lake where they had always lived.
My mother didn't believe me because it was Beaconsfield and
nothing ever happened like that in Beaconsfield and no one
ever spoke of divorce. She told me we were hysterical girls
with overactive imaginations.

But she was wrong. And nothing was ever the same again.

Reading Like a Girl : 1

How I loved them, the stories about the
girl detectives, spunky and brave, solving
crimes with their wits and brains and
All-American good looks. Long after my
mother thought I was asleep, late into the
night, I would read under the covers with
a flashlight.

I drove that sportscar with Nancy
Drew, dated Ned, and looked lovely and charming
and desirable at college football games.

And how I dreamed of being Cherry Ames, student
nurse, with her stylish cap and uniform, her black
hair and rosy cheeks, her boyfriends and her adventures.

And when I grew up, I became them, Nancy and Cherry.
I cut off my long black braids, styled my hair into a bob.

I became the girl detective, the nurse, capable of building
nations and soothing the hearts of men. I became Nancy and
Cherry, for awhile.

Reading Like A Girl : 2

On the autumn football fields
the cheerleaders chant and jump
their pleated miniskirts flipped into
the air, flurries of thighs gleaming.
Anything seems possible, for such
young bodies, in such a place and
time.

I remain reading my books under the
trees, losing myself in imaginary
worlds, in the tomes of *War and Peace*
and *Dr. Zhivago*, dreaming of dancing in
evening gowns and elbow-length gloves.
Books about revolution excited me,
seduced me.

I try to re-imagine the heroines,
their perpetual tragedies.
Emma Bovary, Anna Karenina.
Anna flinging her body into the locomotive
steam, her red purse on the tracks. I try to read
them and write them differently, give them
different endings, new destinies.

I want them to stay alive, to breathe, to be
plump with blood and desire, to believe that
anything is possible.

Rishma Dunlop

Princess Stories

When I was young my father called me *Princess*.
And princess stories were the ones I loved most,
especially the one about Sleeping Beauty. Her
name was sometimes Briar Rose or Aurora. The
story of the beautiful princess who pricked her
finger on the spindle of a spinning wheel, falling
under the spell of the witch who had been shunned
at her christening.

The curse of a girlchild's birth.

She slept along with the kingdom for a hundred years
until she is rescued by a handsome prince who hacked
through the dense tangle of thorns and wild rose bushes.
The curse lifted with love, his kiss on her lips,
awakening the world.

When my daughters are young, I read them princess stories
The Paper Bag Princess, The Princess and the Motorcycle
tales of strong, independent princesses of wit and courage and
intellect who do not depend on princes for survival.

Still, as I watch my girls, young women now, I am filled
with longing, something that mourns the loss of belief
that a beloved would hack through forests of thorns to
sweep a girl off her feet.

Soja

In my mother's house the scents of memory live,
in the French perfumes he gave her,
Calèche, Jolie Madame, Je Reviens,
lingerie drawers of lace and fragrant silks, lush bouquets of anniversaries.

Everywhere, photographs imprint our surfaces,
lives stilled in sepia and Kodachrome.

I know the gleam and smell of the polished leather of his shoes,
buffed every morning before he left for work.

I press my face into the crisp white cotton of his shirts,
brush my cheek against his jackets, his sweaters,
still warm with the smell of him.
I touch my teeth to the metal of his watch, his cufflinks.

I can hear his voice reading fairytales, singing the
calypso of Harry Belafonte, Punjabi ghazals and lullabies

Soja Rajkumari, soja,
Sleep, princess, sleep
Soja meethe sapne aayen
Sleep with sweet dreams
Soja pyari Rajkumari
Sleep beloved princess

In the hush, I am cradled by the sound of him,
notes love-woven, tangled through the glowing pyre.

In my mother's house
my father's ashes are acrid
in my throat.

Reading Chekhov

Reading Chekhov. Stories about love
the sadness of his characters, always meeting each other too late.
Missed lives, mourning what could have been
departing forever in railway stations.
Tears, a lorgnette raised to the eye, ice etched on windows, gaslit winter scenes
a loveless marriage in a country house in a town like all the others.

I'll read the story differently. A Chekhov love letter.

Love me through departures,
through the faltering valves of your heart,
the ticking of clocks and moving trains.
Kiss me in the cleft of each elbow, behind each knee.

Buddhist's tell us to live our days unattached
to the dust of the world
to enter the blackness.
To always see ourselves as light.

Not so easy to do when the hum of the world
dulls us in its gears.
I am trying to wear light as a garment
to find it in the paradise of afterlife under a stone
in the opened door of a commuter train.

Departure lounge at the airport.
Goodbye a salt-water word you avoid
as if it would open a wound that would never close.
Goodbye a word of red waves, fog-horn sobs, sea-wracked, tongue-uttered ache
ember of pain in the wrist, a movement toward the corrosive heart.
Goodbye a word that makes your bones scream a word you dare not breathe.

I am always naked with you.
The winds brought me newborn into your arms
to the one who would hold me through the night.

I have always known you.
My harsh blessing.
Every sweetness has the taste of your skin.
Each wound has the shape of your mouth.

Forget me. As I would forget you. For the suffering.

Remember me. As I would remember you. Claim the way the heart stops
when you come to me naked and scratched.

Climb to my bed bleeding
on the dark wind of dreams.

———

I have waited for you all my life.
Four decades to find you
and still and still a story that turns back on itself.

We are afraid, as if gentleness
has a daggered edge.

Dance with me beloved.

I am your wild, sweet girl.

I would have you as you are,
aging and heartsick with the world.

———

All night, all night you can have this book.
Turn the pages on your lap, until they become like well-worn linen
last words soft in your hands.

Meet me there in that story
afterlife of spine cracked open.

Arlene E. Edwards

Mothering the Mind

Women of Colour Creating Supportive Communities to Increase the Academic Success Rates of Minority Students

Mothering is a central concept in the communal work of women of colour, as they attempt to create and maintain strategies that are designed to ensure the survival of their communities and their people (Hill-Collins, 1987; Edwards, 2000; Gilkes, 1983, 1986; Reagon, 1990). Hill-Collins (1990) uses the term othermothering to define mothering behaviours that exist within the experience of Black women, outside their homes. This mothering is based on responsibility rather than biology (Troester, 1984), extending to the care of blood and nonblood relations (James, S. M., 1993); and informs much of the community work conducted by Black women (Edwards, 2000; Gilkes, 1986; James, J., 1993a; Neverdon-Morton, 1982). To this end, the behaviours that result resemble the extension of nurturing and supportive strategies that are motivated by recognizing a need and mobilizing resources to meet that need. Often the resources are personal to the provider and familiar to the recipient, as is the case of academic mothering, or mothering the mind. According to Omolade (1994), this behaviour often occurs as Black women engage the academy and determine ways to survive and to ensure the survival of their students.

Academic mothering takes the form of informal advisement that may be academic or personal in nature. As practiced by Black women who are faculty, staff and sometimes upper level students it takes the form of support groups or other types of groups where the ultimate goal is assistance towards success and a "passing on" of what is known. Additionally, it may include creation of support systems or organizations that provide venues for students to "exhale" and reach out to others who are similarly oppressed, but who might otherwise not feel empowered enough to transform the setting into that which is positive and supporting. To a certain extent, these women recreate the

academic setting in a marginalized way that allows them to operate within and without the power structure in terms of their own race and gender marginalization (Gathright, 1999).

The work conducted by Black women covers the spectrum of academia, community service, even militancy and extends from their history of voluntary associations and internal helping traditions (Dill, 1979; Gilkes, 1983, 1986; Harley, 1982; Hill-Collins, 1987; Shaw, 1991). Black women as mothers are aware of the social and occupational difficulties their children will face and therefore prepare them for it (Joseph, 1981). As multiple-oppressed citizens (Gilkes, 1986; Grant, 1989; Omolade, 1994; Standley, 1990). Black women are said to possess an intuitive knowledge based on personal experience of living in a society that is dominated by the White male experience. As a result, racist and sexist experiences place psychological and social limitations on the lives of Black women who must devise innovative and empowering means of success or knowledge not only for themselves, but their sisters and children as well.

Many of these academic mothers relive their own prior academic experiences in that of their students, peers or community members as they struggle to meet expectations that they could not themselves meet (James, J., 1993b). As a result, these women provide instruction on the temporary transformations that are necessary to survive and thrive until success is obtained. The similarity of experience occurs as marginalization in what James (1993b). terms a "society and culture where the White European represents both the ideal and universal manifestation of civilization." She states the need to deprogram herself from the effects of "institutional bigotry which relegated Blackness and femaleness to savage superstition, invisibility or exotica and whiteness and maleness to a paragon and the sublime" (119). Given that this is not an atypical experience, it is ascertained that similar versions will be replicated in the academic experiences of Black or other nonwhite students that Black female administrators or staff encounter. The attending knowledge of the past engenders the strategies these women engage as they attempt to ensure a successful progression for their "charges."

Underlying the practice is an assumption of community, familiarity, and similarity that almost assures the provision of services once the need is observed. Reagon (1990) ascribes the term culture-keepers to Black women who engage in community work, in that they ensure the survival of the essence of the experience of their communities. By extension, the practitioners of academic mothering have a similar goal of ensuring survival of the students they assist. There is a sense of familiarity for the student. One male student recalled his early experiences of being nurtured in this way and related his expectation of this familiar behaviour from Black women faculty members. The expectation did not extend to Black male faculty. Additionally, there is the expectation of this behaviour exhibited by how readily it is accepted when proffered to the intended recipient.

Familiarity with the presence of women of colour ushers in an expectation

that they will express mothering types of behaviour to all who are available. Numerous example are provided of Black females in administration (Dumas; 1979; Payne, 1990), academia (Omolade,1994; Andrews, 1993) and other professional settings (Garcia, 1989) who are expected to "mother" everyone in addition to fulfilling the responsibilities for which she is being paid. This role described as resulting in emotional drain when the Black woman professor is called to serve as mentor, mother and counselor to students, and the role is "compounded by the existence of similar demands placed upon Black women by colleagues and administrators" (Andrews, 1993: 190). When these behaviours are not forthcoming the woman may be penalized for not meeting familiar expectations based on the assumption that she and her colleagues have similar expectations of her behaviour in these informal relationships (Dumas, 1979; Omolade, 1994). Therefore, though the behaviours may be viewed as necessary and an extant component of Black women's work in academia, it carries a double cost through lack of recognition and the increased demand it places on their workload. The behaviours may be willingly extended to students, with the knowledge of its cost; however, the extension to empowered others, simply by dint of similarity of location, adds another burden to an already burdensome situation.

The mothering behaviour enters the academy in much the same way that it functions in other settings. The knowledge of struggle necessary to succeed is said to empower practitioners to transform academic settings in ways that engender resistance to the status quo (Gathright, 1999). Bernard et al. (2000) provides a detailed example of academic othermothering which includes first hand reports of students who participated in such an experience.

This paper extends those findings by providing additional examples and subsequently suggesting ways in which the practice may be re-located from its marginal functioning to a component of the retention strategies and interventions that institutions engage to retain minority students. Suggestions are also made for the formal recognition of this behaviour as an example of committee work or other indirect sources of academic commitments that are measured and documented as faculty services to the university. This study presents theoretical and practical examples of the practice, and suggests additional methods of inclusion of this mode of behaviour as a possible component of the academic process with regard to the retention and graduation of minority students.

Process and outcomes

The examples presented are based on observation, participation, and the strategies designed to ensure success of minority students in graduate programs. The behaviours are deemed academic mothering because of the way in which they conform to the definitions provided earlier, as well as the strategies that were utilized. Data was not so much collected as experiences documented for later enunciation and usage in suggestions for intervention design. Instru-

mentation occurs in the form of agendas that were followed towards goals that were inherent (success in the academic programs) or circumscribed (successful accomplishment of particular academically oriented tasks).

As a result, data is provided in the form of narrative descriptions of the strategies as they were experienced, and where possible, results of the success of the strategies are presented.

Example 1: Tuesday Morning Group - Participation

This strategy was implemented by a Latina faculty member after the loss of three minority students in one semester. She conducted meetings with minority students in a graduate psychology program every Tuesday morning from 8:00-9:00am. Students met over breakfast as "in" by sharing concerns or issues related to continuing in the program. The process was unstructured in that topics emerged within the conversations that occurred, or were structured as participants practiced formal presentations or shared information on upcoming assignments. The format remained unstructured in that it resembled a drop in method so there was no specific documentation of the events. However, the experience of the assistance and safe space proved beneficial with regard to ensuring the success of the student participants.

This faculty member, in addition to conducting this group, was also available for informal meetings to rehearse ideas and for assistance navigating the department. Despite her efforts and their effect of increasing the retention of minority students in the department, this service occurred outside her expected duties and was therefore not compensated or documented as faculty work.

Example 2: Dissertation Support Group - Creation

This strategy grew as the result of two Black, female, upper-level graduate students realizing that it was impossible to survive the grueling process of comprehensive exams and the accompanying dissertation process without support. They created a support group by contacting and inviting seven other graduate students to participate. The participants represented six disciplines, all with similar experiences of lack of support within their departments, a need to "exhale" and process their experiences and a commitment to succeed. Participation was structured around an agenda, with each member receiving twenty minutes to present work for critique. Time could be donated to others if necessary. The meetings occurred monthly for four hours with check-ins during the month. A master calendar was created indicating upcoming academic events and assignments for which participants were preparing, wanted support around, or needed feedback or "hand-holding" for in order to be successful. All participants were at the comprehensive exams, thesis or dissertation stage of their programs. The meetings usually began with sharing, giving and receiving of supportive energies, and finally the academic portion. The process continued for over three years.

Example 3: Canadian Example (Mothering Conference)-Observation

This example is based on observation of an occurrence of academic mothering at the 1999 Association for Research on Mothering conference held at York University (Mothering in the African Diaspora). A group of African Canadian and African Caribbean graduate students and professors presented a dialogue on their experiences in academic settings as they attempted to pursue their interests in African-centered studies. Their presentation was intriguing because of the similarity in their experiences even though they functioned in different institutions and at different levels. What was evident was the commitment of the professors—particularly Dr. Bernard. This example of academic mothering occurred in the way Dr. Bernard ensured that each student had enough time to present their experiences, and seemed to have personal involvement in their academic lives. She concluded the presentation with the statement "we are able to be effective mentors and othermothers because others have already done it for us ... taking time to develop the brilliant minds of the future is not only a privilege but a responsibility" (Bernard, et al., 2000: 83). The group discussed plans to publish the dialogue in an upcoming ARM volume. Dr. Bernard continued the process by providing support through informal and phone conversations as well as by emails in order to ensure the success of the plans to publish.

Results

Major themes that emerge from these examples are: need, support, and urgency. These examples also engendered products in the form of degrees, articles being published and clearly the retention of minority graduate students who ultimately produced them. Need is the most prevalent theme in all the examples and the preeminent example of women of colour practicing academic mothering. In all cases a need was recognized—for retention, presentation and publication of work and completion of the degree—and resources were developed to meet it. The resources were personal and familiar to all parties. The need for retaining students was addressed in the Tuesday morning group based on recognition by the faculty member. Resources included space to engage in practices that supported students and met the recognized need. Similarly, a need was recognized in the examples seen in the Canadian group to encourage the students' professional growth through conference presentation and subsequent publication of work. This process was necessary but occurred as an example of the faculty member mothering the students from the beginning of the process until its conclusion. The dissertation support group was created based on the need for the student members to successfully navigate the final segment of graduate work.

Support occurred in all cases in a reciprocal manner between students and between students and the faculty/mothers. Actions and gestures including telephone calls, time being given and positive feedback and critiques provide

the examples for this theme. The committed presence of the faculty members in the examples is another aspect of the mothering behaviours described earlier. Support as a theme emerged in observing and participating in these engagements as resources were made available such as time, attention and feedback. Additionally, there was the expectation of support/mothering on the part of the students, which ensured the acceptance of the mothering behaviours and successful result of said behaviours once they were presented.

A sense of urgency permeated these experiences of academic mothering in that the practice occurred in light of requirements for retention, graduation and publication. In academic settings time is often of essence to ensure successful completion of assignments and responsibilities. An added burden to the experience of academic mothering is the implanting of the additional time constraints once the practice of mothering begins. This engenders the sense of urgency to have students prepared for timely submissions of work, publications or timely recovery from any experiences that may slow the process of successful completion of programs. For example, retention of students is successful if they transition through their programs in a timely manner, regardless of any experiences that may prove debilitating thus requiring more time to recover. The sense of urgency is also present in that the academic mothering occurs within the scope of the experience of the academic mother but without the benefit of time formally allocated for the process.

Resulting products from the examples include the retention of all the students who participated in the Tuesday morning group and their successful completion of the graduate degree at the academic institution. The Canadian group continued its discussions after the period in which the observation took place. The process included the provision of support from Dr. Bernard through emails, phone calls and providing feedback. As a result of this academic mothering, at least four students received their first academic publication. The dissertation support group was also successful, and at this writing, all students successfully completed their programs (M.A., M.S.W. and Ph.Ds) with one currently writing her dissertation (she suffered a major car accident and needed to recuperate).

Discussion

These three examples of mothering behaviours occurring in academia and contributing to success for the recipients of the behaviours are more of the norm than the exception. However, these behaviours, due to the marginalization of the practitioners and recipients, receive little or no informal recognition and no formal recognition. Meanwhile, the departments and resident institutions benefit in that they are able to document impressive numbers of minority students who are retained and who successfully exit their programs. The time, effort and resources that are expended not only support the notion that these departments are successful with their minority students but ensure the continued success of students who are lucky enough to find them.

These intentional communities provide strategies that work and ensure the academic survival of minority students who are likely to fail without their presence. This is failure due not to inability to produce work at the level that ensures success, but rather due to the accompanying pressures found in institutions that "practice simultaneous integration and segregation" (James, J. 1993b). Creation and maintenance of these defined spaces involves deconstructing familiarity and similarity in academic settings through determined inclusion, intentional communication and intentional presence.

Determined inclusion of this behaviour may occur as individuals, and particularly students benefit from these 'informal' extensions of care and lobby for ways to make them components of graduate and academic programs where minority students are in attendance. Inclusion may occur as intentional communication and intentional presence. Information concerning these strategies may be communicated through listserves or websites created to contact and communicate with others concerning the presence of this type of 'service' or the need for it. Intentional presence may follow as documented benefits are communicated to those in positions to make the practice of these behaviours less of a burden to its practitioners.

James (1993b) suggests the discovery and exercise of "theory rooted in practice" so that adoption of parameters is more inclusive or attentive to the experience outside of academia. She notes that many paradigms used are those of Eurocentrism, which though supporting a belief structure of White cultural hegemony, is simultaneously embraced by people/academicians who are non-White. The development of theory and movement of this type of Black women's experience "from margin to center," (hooks 1984), and exercising the role of "outsider within" (Lorde, 1984; Hill-Collins 1991), seems to signify a formal means of addressing this need.

Certainly, the examples presented have occurred and continue to do so to the benefit of the students involved and the departments in which they successfully matriculate. The strategies need not be formally defined, but may follow a format that works best for those involved. Formality is needed however in the documentation of the service and the ways in which all parties benefit from its presence. Women of colour engaging in mothering behaviours in academe is not new, which in part, contributes to the assumption of familiarity that makes this type of work seem to be part of the academic landscape of what these women do, how their charges benefit, and how the academic departments ultimately save face with regard to retaining and graduating minority students. Intentional changes are needed since this is yet another component of women's work that is taken for granted because of its familiar presence. Bernard et al.'s (2000) assertion of the position of "privilege and responsibility," coupled with that of Gilkes' (1983) on Black women "meeting community needs as an occupation," supports the recognition of Black women mothering in academia as a necessary component for minority student success, and the need to formally recognize and reward its presence.

Summary

Women of colour create and maintain intentional, supportive academic communities for minority students with a particular purpose in mind, based on a familiar process, and as a means of 'making a way out of no way'. The goal of this creation is the retention and graduation of these students through outreach that is based on a recognized need when no other support is available. In this way they practice mothering the mind (Omolade, 1994), which is the extension of nurturing behaviours into academic settings with students as children who themselves may expect this behaviour from these women. Envisioning this behaviour as mothering the mind, and the concepts of process, rationale and outcomes, involves an attempt to move a familial type of knowledge and practice away from the margin of academic experience. This movement is necessary for women of colour to relocate their methods of primary and secondary interventions from settings on the 'outside', to spaces where their bodies are invited, and where they must therefore make space for the presence of their energies and our worldviews. It is further suggested that given that these behaviours ensure and increase the retention and graduation levels of minority students in predominantly majority academic programs that they should be relocated from marginal existence to being recognized as a retention tool that is necessary for minority students in academic programs especially at the graduate level.

References

Andrews, A. 1993. "Balancing the Personal and Professional." *Spirit, Space and Survival: African-American Women in (White) Academe.* J. James and R. Farmer, eds. New York: Routledge. 179-195.

Bernard, C., W. T. Bernard, C. Ekpo, J. Enang, B. Joseph, and N. Wane. 2000. "She Who Learns Teaches." *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering: Mothering in the African Diaspora* 2 (2): 66-83.

Dill, B. T. 1979. "The Means to Put My Children Through." L. Rodgers-Rose, ed. *The Black Woman.* Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications. 107-123.

Dumas, R. G. 1979. "Dilemmas of Black females in Leadership." L. Rodgers-Rose, ed. *The Black Woman.* Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications. 203-215.

Edwards, A. E. 2000. Community Mothering: The Relationship Between Mothering and the Community Work of Black Women. *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering: Mothering in the African Diaspora* 2 (2): 87-100.

Garcia, S. 1989. "My Sister's Keeper: Negative Effects of Social Welfare and Affirmative Action Programs on Black Women." *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* 21 (1-2): 25-43.

Gathright, T. D. 1999. "Mother Wit: A Form of Resistance for African American Female Educators." Poster presented at the 7th Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action. New Haven, CT.

Gilkes, C. T. 1979. "Holding Back The Ocean With a Broom." L. Rodgers-Rose, ed. *The Black Woman.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications. 217-231.

Gilkes, C.A. Townsend. 1983. "Going Up for the Oppressed: Career Mobility of Black Women Community Workers." *Journal of Social Issues* 39 (3):115-139.

Gilkes, C.A. Townsend. 1986. "The Roles of Church and Community Mothers: Ambivalent American Sexism or Fragmented African Familyhood?" *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 2 (1): 41-59.

Grant, J. 1989. "Womanist Theology: Black Women's Experience as a Source for Doing Theology, with Special Reference to Christology." *African-American Religious Studies: An Interdisciplinary Anthology.* G. S. Wilmore, ed. Durham: Duke University Press.

Harley, S. 1982. "Beyond the Classroom: The Organizational Lives of Black Female Educators in the District of Columbia, 1890-1930." *Journal of Negro Education* 51 (3): 254-269.

Hill-Collins, P. 1987. "The Meaning of Motherhood in Black Culture and Black Mother/Daughter Relationships." *Sage: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women* 4 (2).

Hill-Collins, P. 1990. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment.* New York: Routledge.

Hill-Collins, P. 1991. "Learning From the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought." *Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research.* M. M. Fonow and J.A. Cook, eds. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 35-59.

hooks, b. 1984. *From Margin to Center.* Boston: South End Press.

James, J. 1993a. "African Philosophy, Theory, and Living Thinkers." *Spirit, Space and Survival: African-American Women in (White) Academe.* J. Joy and F. Ruth, eds. New York: Routledge. 31-44.

James, J. 1993b. "Teaching Theory, Talking Community." *Spirit, Space and Survival: African-American Women in (White) Academe.* J. Joy and F. Ruth, eds. New York: Routledge. 118-138.

James, S. M. 1993. "Mothering: A Possible Black Feminist Link to Social Transformation." *Theorizing Black Feminisms: The Visionary Pragmatism of Black Women.* S.M. James and A.P.A Busia, eds. New York: Routledge. 32-44.

Joseph, G. I. 1981. "Black Mothers and Daughters." *Common Differences.* G. I. Joseph and J. Lewis, eds. Boston: South End Press. 76-126.

Lorde, Audre. 1984. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches.* Freedom: Crossing Press.

Neverdon-Morton, C. 1982. "Self-help Programs as Educative Activities of Black Women in the South, 1895-1925: Focus on Four Key Areas." *Journal of Negro Education* 51 (3): 207-221.

Payne, C. E. 1990. "Men Led But Women Organized: Movement Participation of Women in the Mississippi Delta." *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers 1945-1965.* V. L. Crawford, J. A. Rouse and B. Woods, ed. Indiana University Press. 1-12.

Omolade, B. 1994. *The Rising Song of African-American Women.* New York: Routledge.

Reagon, B. J. 1987. "African Diaspora Women: The Making of Cultural Carriers." *Women in Africa and the African Diaspora.* R. Terborg-Penn, S. Harley and A. Benton Rushing, eds. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press. 167-180.

Reagon, B. J. 1990. "Women as Culture Carriers in the Civil Rights Movement: Fannie Lou Hamer." *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers 1945-1965.* V. L. Crawford, J. A. Rouse and B. Woods, eds. Indiana University Press. 203-218.

Shaw, S. J. 1991. "Black Club Women and the Creation of the National Association of Coloured Women." *The Journal of Women's History* 3 (2) (Fall): 10-25.

Standley, A. 1990. "The Role of Black Women in the Civil Rights Movement." *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers 1945-1965.* V. L. Crawford, J. A. Rouse and B. Woods, ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 183-202.

Troester, R. R. 1984. "Turbulence and Tenderness: Mothers, Daughters and 'Othermothers' in Paule Marshall's *Brown Girl Brownstones.*" *Sage: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women* 1 (12) (Fall): 12-17.

Renee Norman

New Westminster

I. Between the Walls, Dead Mice

in a navy wool coat
she unlocks her first front door
from out of nowhere
the realtor appears
solicitous apologetic
she longs to be alone
to take the first steps
without his sleazy regard
& only her unfriendliness
at last drives him away

the neighbour's son comes next
to offer help with boxes
she doesn't yet know
he will move away from his father's drinking
from his father's red-eyed watchfulness
with a shotgun
their bathroom window always open
too close to the back deck
she can hear this father cough
fart, pee, puke, aim
eventually she crosses all that out
with a lattice fence
the crisscrosses so close
not even light can pass through the tiny pinpoints
wood embroidery with a purpose

but that becomes the future past
this is the poem's present
when she does not realize
as she walks the echoing tiled hall
as she climbs the too-narrow stairs
to the attic rooms
childless
exactly who is empty
the self walking over red tiles
glued over self
grasping a shaky bannister
to find nails in between the grass
of the old shag rug
someone must have left them there
like leghold traps in the woods
when the vacuum floated over the shag
it would gulp one
seize up & die
the plug chewed away
by the venom of that careless leaving

whose stories gather like a hairball
in the corner of a broken tile?
bleed in the tip of a rusty nail?
linger in the smell of stale cigarette smoke
the yellow piss on blue rug
dead mice listen for them with skeletal ears
between the old walls

where termites slowly eat their way
into homelessness
while lovers lie on shag beds of nails
feel the cold metal nakedness
of empty rooms empty hearts

she fills the living room with a bed
a fridge
the rug displays an orange juice stain
near the bedsheets
when florists peer into windows
see hardwood peeled back like orange skins
they assume no one lives there
as if only rooms of fine furniture & curtains
cribs
can breathe life into old houses
the gift enclosure card
sympathy for your loss
found wet by the curb
the only sign that someone sent cut flowers
to furnish all the emptiness

II. Outside, Trees & Hedges

in the strawberry patch she pulls weeds
aborts bean plants
which would have produced a second crop
if she'd known they had more in them
could carry to a second term
if he hadn't shouted from the bathroom window
yes, pull them
it's a lot of work, isn't it?
and are you building that fence because of me?

around the Japanese plum tree
ants swarm
more ants than she has ever seen in one place
some trees in the neighbourhood have trunks
painted white
the ants avoid these
have gathered here for a conference
(did she build that fence because of us?)
the plums are delicious
she feeds her swelling belly with their red flesh

until she can't taste the embryo in pieces
until she can't hear the dotted lines of ants
or see him carrying empty bottles out of his house
returning with brown bags bulging

over the hedge which divides
another part of the yard
a small girl swings
feet in the air
her mother clanks around in the kitchen
directs the girl in for supper
with a spatula
can be heard screaming over an expensive ring
the girl lost
this ring is ruby with 2 small pearls
dropped in the grass somewhere
a bright strawberry waiting to be picked

beyond the hedge
a woman in a wheelchair
hangs wash on a low clothesline
2 dish towels 1 baby bib
& a pair of men's shorts
her husband an ex-priest
looks over the hedge daily
checks the spaces in the lattice fence
the meat on the BBQ
the garden
& her swelling belly
one day he chops down the thick hedge
in a massacre of leaves
it is an unholy act

when the baby is born
the ex-priest exclaims over her fine features
the man who carries bottles & shotguns
does not notice the squalls of a newborn
& the ring
a thoroughfare for the ants
remains lost
in the middle of the neighbourhood

Linda Davies, Sara Collings, and Julia Krane

Making Mothers Visible
Implications for Social Work Practice and Education in Child Welfare

Social work is a profession largely about women. Most front-line social workers are women, and the clients with whom they work tend to be poor women in marginalized families. This gendered nature of social work is particularly apparent in the field of child welfare practice. Here, the primary activity of ensuring the best interests of children, or more recently their protection from harm, is more aptly described as scrutinizing maternal care. Despite this emphasis, mothering has and continues to be largely invisible as a focus in its own right in social work theory, teaching, and practice in general and in the context of child welfare specifically.

The invisibility of gender in social work—especially mothering—has serious implications for practice. The day-to-day experiences of mothers are not taken into account within standard child welfare assessment and intervention practices, nor are mothers' viewpoints represented. As a result, mothers who are clients of child welfare systems may not receive the help that they need as they care for their children. Instead, mothers in contact with social services may see the relationship as controlling and unhelpful. The combination of diminishing opportunities for clinical training and the current emphasis on forensic agency procedures aimed at detecting children at risk undermines the development of positive worker-client relationships.

In this paper, we make explicit the relationship between mothering and social work practice in the arena of child welfare. We take the position that social work educators ought to consider mothering as a legitimate area of critical inquiry. The paper is divided into four sections. We begin with an examination of recent feminist theorizing around mothering, followed by an analysis of mothering in social work practice in the arena of child welfare. Drawing on our research with mothers in sexual abuse cases in the third section, we examine

how mothers are simultaneously central and invisible in child welfare practice. In the final section, we describe a graduate course on "Social Work Practice with Women as Mothers" that is offered at McGill University in order to illustrate how bringing mothering into the social work curriculum might be a useful addition to child welfare training.

Feminist theorizing around motherhood

Motherhood has been the focus of extensive feminist analysis over the last two decades (Chodorow, 1978; Glenn, 1994; Rich, 1977; Ruddick, 1989; Snitow, 1992). Feminists have taken issue with the romanticized portrait of good mothers as intuitive nurturers, naturally equipped and readily available to care for their children (Contratto, 1986). In this portrait, mothers are expected to anticipate and respond to all their children's needs and desires (Hays, 1996). Theorists challenged the claim that individual maternal responsibility for children is the ideal parenting arrangement and the one best suiting children's psychosocial needs. They pointed out the negative consequences for mothers who try to live up to the impossible ideal of the all-giving and selfless nurturer. These unrealistic expectations of mothers reinforce the persistence of mother-blame and its internalization by women when their children experience problems.

Feminist theorists argued that when mothering is seen only as an expression of caring and love, the actual labour involved in mothering and the necessary resources to care for children can go largely unacknowledged. Because mothering tasks are not socially visible, normal mothers are always expected to cope (Graham, 1982), regardless of their circumstances or resources. In contrast, feminist analysts coined the term "mother-work" to counteract the invisibility of mothering labour (Griffith and Smith, 1987; Levine, 1985; Rosenberg, 1988). The concept of "mother-work" locates mothering as an occupation and a job of perpetual shift work, where mother is always on call (Rosenberg, 1988).

Feminist theorists have also suggested that the tendency to either denigrate or idealize mothers, which is characteristic of so much popular discourse, stems from an inability to recognize ambivalence in the mother-child relationship. The romanticization of motherhood provides little space for acknowledging children's ambivalence about their mothers or, more controversially, mothers' ambivalence about their children (Featherstone, 1997). In this regard, the contributions of feminist psychoanalytic theorists are particularly promising for clinical practice with mothers. While ambivalence had previously been recognized as a normal phase of child development, some feminist analysts have begun to explore its significance in other relationships, specifically mother-child relationships. Rozsika Parker describes maternal ambivalence as an emotional position constituting a "complex and contradictory state of mind, shared variously by all mothers, in which loving and hating feelings for children exist side by side" (Parker, 1997: 17). Ambivalence is central to mother-child

relationships according to Parker, and yet it is "curiously hard to believe in" and very painful to experience. The narrow cultural construction of the good mother exacerbates the impact of these not uncommon, yet culturally taboo feelings. In the grip of these turbulent emotions, some mothers feel that their emotions are unnatural: "It is the denial of the feelings of fury, boredom or even dislike towards children, all of which are part of motherhood, that makes the burden hard for women to bear, and can so often result in these negative feelings being expressed in secret and perverse ways" (Maynes and Best, 1997: 26). The conspiracy of silence around such negative feelings leaves mothers with no place to turn to diffuse or process their feelings of ambivalence and guilt. This ambivalence can become intolerable when mothers face such compounding difficulties as a lack of support from partners, poor physical health, economic pressure, a lack of emotional support, and a child whose behaviours are difficult to manage (Featherstone, 1997). As such, these women may feel as though they are failing as mothers.

Featherstone (1995) points out how these feelings may also resonate in the relationships between social workers and mothers: "Mothers may speak the unspeakable, do the undoable—social workers may not be able to tolerate a mother asking that her child be placed, such assertions may mobilize furious anger towards a woman, anger which may arise from a multiplicity of sources, identification with the vulnerable child, as well as the chords that may be struck for those struggling with motherhood themselves" (25). In child welfare practice, the complex feelings and experiences of mothering and ambivalence are all too often eclipsed by social workers' emphasis on the protection of children from harm or maltreatment and the inability to critically examine women's experiences of mothering.

The feminist literature on mothering has grown extensively over the past thirty years. Recently, feminists influenced by postmodern theory have focussed on women's divergent and specific experiences. Rather than seeing women as united against patriarchal power, post-modern feminists reconceptualized power as a set of relations in which we are all implicated both individually and institutionally (Featherstone and Fawcett, 1995). They disputed feminist theories that position women uncritically as victims in all circumstances (Featherstone and Trinder, 1997) and they questioned the traditional feminist assumption that the interests and needs of women and children are inevitably the same—a key concern in child welfare practice. Feminists continue to rethink motherhood, with a focus on women's varying experiences in differing contexts. They emphasize the construction of maternal identity as mediated by experiences of "race," class, ethnicity, sexuality, age and ability (Collins, 1994; Luxton, 1997; McMahon, 1995).

Feminism, mothering and child welfare

The literature on mothering is particularly pertinent to the field of social work. Influenced by developments in feminist theorizing, analysts have criti-

cally examined theory and practice in child welfare, with particular attention to its gendered construction. The child welfare workforce, client population, and the assumptions about mothering and women that underlie child welfare interventions have been of particular concern to feminist social work theorists. They argue that the state mandate to protect children is far from neutral and that, in reality, it is a process of evaluating maternal capacity (Davies, Krane, McKinnon, Rains and Mastronardi, 2002; Krane and Davies, 2000). Feminists writings about child welfare have drawn attention to the disparagement of mothers who become clients of child welfare agencies, and documented how mother blame is endemic in the "helping professions" (Caplan and Hall-McCorquodale, 1985; Carter, 1999; Featherstone, 1999; Krane forthcoming, 2003; Swift, 1995). When children are harmed or neglected, mothers are the primary focus for intervention, and thus they tend to unilaterally carry the responsibility for their children's protection. This mode of practice likely emphasizes the detection of "risky" mothering rather than support of mothers in need. As a result, distrust is fostered between social workers and their clients, and mothers are further alienated from the child welfare system.

Feminists have argued that the discourse of maternal sacrifice and the accompanying invisibility of mothers' labour shape the normative expectations that social workers in child welfare bring to their investigations and assessments (Carter, 1999). As noted earlier, a growing feminist literature on mothering has challenged the unrealistic expectations placed on women to silently carry on with care taking and to nurture their children despite inadequate material and emotional resources. The overwhelming majority of child welfare clients live in poverty; women of colour and their children are over-represented on caseloads; and single mother households are extremely common. Nevertheless, client mothers are generally assessed according to standardized notions of parental capacity, which ignore the resources and support required. The assumption seems to be that "good" mothers ought to cope.

This assumption is typically left unchallenged by the lived experience of most child welfare workers. In Canada, recent university graduates often find their first employment in the field of child welfare; they tend to be young, childless, and disproportionately from white and middle-class backgrounds. Discrepant social locations and experiences between clients and workers surely have an impact on the social workers' assessments of risk and safety of children (McMahon, 1995; Pelton, 1989; Swift, 1995; Wharf, 1993). Eurocentric ideas about children's needs and parenting techniques are reflected in child welfare assessment tools, thus inscribing all mothers who are clients of the child welfare system with universal and often unworkable expectations.

Research in the area of sexual abuse intervention provides a striking illustration of how constructions of mothering play out in an arena of social work practice that centres on the protection of vulnerable children and that produces strong emotions for all.

Mothering and child sexual abuse

In the field of child sexual abuse, mother blame has a long-standing history. Indeed, explanations of child sexual abuse have always been gendered. As can be recalled, Freud's theory of sexual abuse introduced the notion of the "seductive" daughter and the "colluding" mother. These two concepts displaced blame and scrutiny away from the offending father. More recently, family systems analysis of child sexual abuse has gained popularity in practice. Though claimed by its adherents to describe—versus explain—typical relationships that surround and maintain incestuous abuse, the family systems perspective frequently implicitly or explicitly attributes blame to mothers for causing or maintaining the sexual abuse of their children (Hooper, 1992, 7).

Feminist theorists challenged mainstream conceptions of mother's complicity in the forms of her collusion, her helpless dependency or victim status, and her failure to satisfy or control her mate (Elbow and Mayfield, 1991; Faller, 1988; Holten, 1990; Hooper, 1992; Jacobs, 1990; Johnson, 1992; Krane, 1994). In contrast to stereotyped presentations of mothers as either having colluded or failed to protect their children, feminist investigations demonstrated considerable variation in women's awareness of and responses to the sexual abuse of their children. Research conducted by Carter (1999) and Krane (forthcoming 2003) found that mothers' reactions to and actions in the face of child sexual abuse disclosure varied, with a significant number of women offering their children belief, comfort, and reassurance. Citing Deblinger, Hathaway, Lippman and Steer (1993), Krane argues that social workers should expect that the discovery of the sexual abuse of one's child is rife with distress for the mother herself. In stark contrast, the distress of the mother is almost ignored. As a good mother, she is expected to instantly forego her own needs and ignore her own state of emotional trauma in order to support her child calmly and effectively. This is keeping with the mythical expectations we hold of women as mothers and underlines the invisibility of the tasks associated with mothering, especially during a crisis. Social workers in their efforts to ensure the protection of children collude by assuming mothers are, or should be, ready, willing and able to protect their children.

In instances of child sexual abuse, the child's parent or legal guardian (read "mother") is expected to know or should have known that the sexual abuse took place as ensconced in provincial child welfare legislation (i.e., Ontario, 1984, *Child and Family Services Act*). As a mother, she is open to scrutiny and characteristically found wanting for having failed to detect warning signs of abuse. This sentiment is aptly summed up in the words of a social worker participant in Krane's (1994) study:

> Mrs. Coles left her husband alone with the child on a regular basis and he encouraged her to do that. He gave her money to go out and play bingo and it was too good to be true. He gave her money to go out and play bingo! Well, did she not stop to ask what's going on?

Absent from this example is any critical examination of the husband's conduct. Though he perpetrated the offence, his behaviour is overlooked. He is held responsible and possibly punished. Nevertheless, the minimal expectations we hold of men is confirmed. On the other hand, inflated expectations of mothers hold her to a much higher standard and her responses are carefully scrutinized. In the above instance, the mother left her child with the husband and she failed to question his motives. While it is not so incredible that a husband might encourage a wife to enjoy herself, it is remarkable how "mother" is held responsible for the abuse. Even more incredible is that mother is expected to have translated his actions (i.e., "encouragement" to "go out and play bingo") into a warning sign for possible sexual abuse. Theses retrospective constructions ensure that the onus for the protection resides with "mother" and a good mother should have known (Krane, forthcoming, 2003).

Social workers' assumptions about mothers mirror larger cultural expectations of motherhood. As Krane argues (1994; forthcoming 2003), practice with mothers seems to be based on the supposition that good mothers naturally and intuitively meet the demands and needs of their children, can predict abuse, and thus can protect their children from harm. Not only does this idealization of women as mothers reinforce women's responsibility for achieving and maintaining the stability and functioning of the family, it also converts the problem of child sexual abuse into a mother's failure to protect or perform her proper maternal role. While mother-blame is most evident in child welfare practice with mothers of sexually abused children, it might be argued that the effects of unexamined constructions of mothering pervade all areas of social work practice. In order to transform constructions of mothering in social work practice, these beliefs need to be rendered visible and open to reflection and debate. An opportunity to render mothering central in social work practice has been created through a graduate seminar entitled "Social Work Practice with Women as Mothers."

Mothering and work education

In schools of social work across North America, the substantive area of the construction of mothering is invisible. This statement is not to suggest that issues of mothering and motherhood are not taken up. Implicit ideological messages about children's needs and family life are conveyed through courses and texts about child welfare, family assessment, family therapy, and couple counselling. Given that "mothering" as a socially constructed institution is not confronted, the notion of the good mother remains a powerful but unspoken subtext to most social work training.

In contrast, a course entitled "Social Work Practice with Women as Mothers" has been offered by Linda Davies at McGill University in the School of Social Work since the early 1990s. The course aims to question specific constructions of mothering through an examination of discourses on mothering including historical and cross-cultural mothering perspectives. Readings

address both the subjective experience of mothering and the objective material conditions for parenting which different groups of women experience. Students examine how historical and contemporary social work theories and practices reproduce dominant attitudes towards mothers and mothering, and they consider the practice implications of these unexamined constructions.

Learning about mothering cannot be undertaken as simply an academic and intellectual exercise. An experiential component to the course challenges students to question what good mothering means to them, as well as the sources of these notions. The fundamental purpose of the course is to begin a process of reflection and critique of our received ideas about mothering. In turn, social work students are encouraged to take these reflections into their daily practice with mothers who are involved with the child welfare system. This objective is addressed through both the course content and its process.

Course content

Course materials emanate largely from feminist literature on mothering and feminist critiques of social work practice. In seminar format, students explore such themes as the simultaneous idealization and denigration of mothers in western contexts, the silencing of maternal ambivalence, the invisibility of mother-work, and divergent maternal subjectivities that are produced through "race," class, ethnicity, sexuality, age and ability. This literature draws students' attention to the day-to-day stress experienced by poor and single mothers, the majority of whom are or will be their clients. Students also read accounts of the lived experience of particular groups of mothers, such as lesbian mothers, mothers with disabilities, teen mothers, and foster mothers. Other course topics include the participation of men in child-care and domestic work, and the implication for child welfare practice. While the content may vary from year to year depending on student interests, the quality of the class process is key for engaging students in a process of critical deconstruction of mothers and mothering.

Process

This course engages students in narratives of mothering that bring them closer to understanding how their own social locations shape their beliefs, feelings, and experiences of mothering as daughters and mothers. Class exercises and discussions ask students to draw on their personal experiences and feelings about mothering in order to connect both intellectually and emotionally to the theoretical material. Students with children speak of the sometimes overwhelming frustrations that they encounter as mothers (or fathers) and seem to enjoy a certain sense of liberation as they describe these often silenced experiences. Other students are encouraged to explore their feelings about becoming future parents in light of the romanticized myths that prevail in popular and professional culture. In this way, students are expected to interact not only as developing social workers, but also as people enmeshed in relation-

ships with their own mothers or children. These different perspectives enhance students' understandings of their practice with clients—particularly as these insights may support a sense of empathy and connection with mothers. Such a process of critical reflection runs counter to a child welfare system that encourages a detached professionalism.

The topic that is perhaps the most destabilizing for students to examine is that of maternal subjectivity from a feminist psychoanalytic perspective (Hollway and Featherstone, 1997; Parker, 1997). The concept of maternal ambivalence directly engages students, some of who are mothers themselves, in reflecting on their own individual biographies and normative yet perhaps unexamined ideas about mothering. Students are encouraged to consider notions of both manageable and unmanageable ambivalence experienced by mother clients of the child welfare system and their own emotional reactions to this ambivalence. Feminist psychoanalytic theorists suggest that a tolerance for normal ambivalent feelings among both mothers and social workers themselves would create more potential for therapeutic outcomes and a more accepting and supportive working environment of interaction between social workers and mother clients.

The focus on maternal ambivalence provides students with a supportive framework to examine their own feelings of anger and guilt that may be produced in their encounters with mothers who are not coping. As noted earlier child welfare workers directly encounter women whose mothering practice can deviate sharply from the normative construction of the good mother, and these encounters can provoke a range of uncomfortable emotions for them. Students are asked to critically explore these feelings and courageous students sometimes offer examples of their own ambivalent feelings as mothers. Moreover, by exploring the range of emotions that mothers experience, students begin to challenge the romantic fantasy of the essential harmony between mothers and children (Featherstone, 1997). While these discussions can be disconcerting, they guard against an overly intellectual approach to the course material. Integration at an emotional level is essential for social workers to engage therapeutically with mothers. In the contemporary child welfare climate, which is increasingly characterized by discourses of accountability, risk, and surveillance, we want to disrupt emotional detachment associated with a professional persona (Davies and Collings, 2001).

As with all themes in the course, an examination of maternal ambivalence requires students to connect personally and intellectually to the material. This connection is promoted through written journals that allow students to explore individually their reactions to the weekly class readings and discussion. This component requires that students move beyond a passive reading of the material and facilitates direct conversation with the class instructor. Journals complement a class process that is interactive rather than didactic without minimizing the importance of covering some highly complex theoretical material.

Conclusion

The opportunity to rethink mothering as a (western) social construction holds major implications for social work practitioners, particularly those practicing on the front lines of child welfare. Given that child welfare workers have both the mandate to protect children and the power to remove them, a judicious exercise of this mandate is called for. Social workers in child welfare have always had to manage the balance between "care and control." The critical examination of mothering, as we have described above, may prove fruitful in negotiating this tension.

We can speculate on how a critical consciousness around mothering might translate into practice with mothers in child welfare. For instance, deconstructive conversations about mothers and mothering among social workers and mother-clients might offer possibilities for more creative and insightful child welfare interventions. Such a critical discourse on mothering might avoid both the romanticization and denigration of mothers that can characterize child welfare practice with women. Elsewhere we have introduced the idea of incorporating "a mothering narrative" in social work practice (Krane and Davies, 2000) in which women tell their own stories as mothers. This narrative would give voice to the day-to-day realities of physical and emotional caregiving and provide workers and mothers with a forum to discuss these experiences. A narrative approach with mothers allows both workers and their mother-clients to reflect on and acknowledge the subjective experiences of mothering, its cultural specificity, its stresses, its emotional intensity (including the contradictory feelings of love and hate for children), and its challenges and pleasures. These discussions might support the development of a relationship with workers and clients that moves beyond blame. With trust developed, the narrative might be deconstructed. This process might involve a critical rethinking of unrealistic expectations deriving from the idealized construct of the good mother, a critical assessment of mothering capacity and an acknowledgement of the resources and supports necessary to support that capacity, and recognition of the sometimes divided interests between mothers and children.

In short, we are arguing for a more theoretically complex and contextualized approach to child welfare practice based on a respectful and sensitive relationship with mother-clients. Present-day conditions in child welfare bureaucracies do not easily accommodate this vision given the cutbacks, high caseloads, and the disappearance of supportive supervision (Davies and Collings, 2001, De Montigney, 1995; McMahon, 1995). Nevertheless, practitioners still have face-to-face encounters with mothers where there is room for creative and reflective relationships. While it is difficult to make extensive claims for one course's potential to radically change child welfare practice, the classroom does provide a space in which students can begin to critically reflect on received ideas that underlie the construction of child welfare and to consider how practice might be changed.

References

Caplan, P and I Hall-McCorquodale. 1985. "Mother Blaming in Major Clinical Journals." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 55: 345-353.

Carter, Betty. 1999. *Who's to Blame? Child Sexual Abuse and Nonoffending Mothers*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Chodorow, Nancy. 1978. *The Reproduction of Mothering*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 1994. "Shifting the Center: Race, Class, and Feminist Theorizing about Motherhood." *Mothering. Ideology, Experience and Agency*. E. N. Glenn, G. Chang, and L. R. Forcey, eds. New York: Routledge. 45-65.

Contratto, S. 1986. "Child Abuse and the Politics of Care." *Journal of Education* 168: 70-79.

Davies, Linda and Sara Collings. 2001. "Social Work and The Irrational." Paper presented at International Symposium on Critical Social Work Education, McGill University, October 2001.

Davies, Linda and Julia Krane. 1996. "Shaking the Legacy of Mother Blaming: No Easy Task for Child Welfare." *Journal of Progressive Human Services* 7: 3-22.

Davies, L; Krane, J; McKinnon, M; Rains, P., and Mastronardi, L. 2002. "Beyond the State: Conceptualizing Protection in Community Settings" *Social Work Education* 21(6): 623-633.

Deblinger, E, C Hathaway, J Lippmann, and R Steer. 1993. "Psychosocial Characteristics and Correlates of Symptom Distress in Nonoffending Mothers of Sexually Abused Children." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 8: 155-168.

De Montigney, Gerald. 1995. *Social Working: An Ethnography of Front-line Practice*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Elbow, M and J Mayfield. 1991. "Mothers of Incest Victims: Villians, Victims or Protectors?" *Families in Society* 72:7 8-85.

Faller, K. C. 1988. "The Myth of the 'Collusive Mother'." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 3: 190-202.

Featherstone, Brid. 1997. "'I Wouldn't Do Your Job!': Women, Social Work and Child Abuse." *Mothering and Ambivalence*. W. Hollway and B. Featherstone, eds. London: Routledge. 167-192.

Featherstone, Brid. 1999. "Taking Mothering Seriously: The Implications for Child Protection." *Child and Family Social Work* 4: 43-53.

Featherstone, Brid and B. Fawcett. 1995. "Oh No! Not More Isms!" *Social Work Education* 14: 25-43.

Featherstone, Brid and L Trinder. 1997. "Familiar Subjects? Domestic Violence and Child Welfare." *Child and Family Social Work* 2: 147-159.

Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. 1994. "Social Constructions of Mothering: A Thematic Overview." *Mothering. Ideology, Experience and Agency*. E. N. Glenn,

G. Chang, and L. R. Forcey, eds. New York: Routledge. 11-28.

Graham, H. 1982. "Coping: Or How Mothers Are Seen and Not Heard." *On the Problem of Men.* S. Friedman and E. Sarah, eds. London: Women's Press. 101-116.

Griffith, A. I. and D.E. Smith. 1987. "Constructing Cultural Knowledge: Mothering as Discourse." *Women and Education: A Canadian Perspective.* J. S. Gaskell and A. T., eds. McLaren. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises. 87-103.

Hays, Sharon. 1996. *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Hollway, W and Brid Featherstone. 1997. *Mothering and Ambivalence.* London: Routledge.

Holten, J.D. 1990. "When Do We Stop Mother-Blaming?" *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy* 2: 53-60.

Hooper, Carol-Ann. 1992. "Child Sexual Abuse and the Regulation of Women: Variations on a Theme." *Regulating Womanhood: Historical Essays on Marriage, Motherhood and Sexuality.* C. Smart, ed. London: Routledge. 53-77.

Jacobs, J. 1990. "Reassessing Mother-Blame in Incest." *Signs* 15: 500-514.

Johnson, Janis. 1992. *Mothers of Incest Survivors: Another Side of the Story*: Indiana University Press.

Krane, Julia. 1994. "The Transformation of Women into Mother Protectors: An Examination of Child Protection Practice in Cases of Child Sexual Abuse." Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto, Toronto.

Krane, Julia. forthcoming, 2003. *What's Mother Got To Do With It? Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Krane, Julia and Linda Davies. 2000. "Mothering and Child Protection Practice: Rethinking Risk Assessment." *Child and Family Social Work* 5: 35-45.

Levine, H. 1985. "The Power Politics of Motherhood." *Perspectives on Women in the 1980s.* J. Turner and L. Emery, eds. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press. 28-40.

Luxton, Meg. 1997. *Feminism and Families: Critical Policies and Changing Practices.* Halifax: Fernwood.

Maynes, P and J Best. 1997. "In the Company of Women: Experiences of Working with the Lost Mother." *Mothering and Ambivalence.* W. Hollway and B. Featherstone, eds. London: Routledge. 119-135.

McMahon, Martha. 1995. *Engendering Motherhood: Identity and Self-transformation in Women's Lives.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Ontario. 1984. *Bill 77: An Act Respecting the Protection and Well-being of Children and Their Families.* Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Parker, Rozsika. 1997. "The Production and Purposes of Maternal Ambivalence." *Mothering and Ambivalence.* W. Hollway and B. Featherstone, eds.

New York: Routledge. 17-36.
Pelton, Leroy. 1989. *For Reasons of Poverty: A Critical Aanalysis of the Public Child Welfare System in the United States.* New York: Praeger.
Rich, A. 1977. *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution.* New York: Virago.
Rosenberg, Harriet. 1988. "Motherwork, Stress and Depression: The Costs of Privatized Social Reproduction." *Family Bonds and Gender Divisions: Readings in the Sociology of the Family.* B. Fox, ed. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press. 379-397.
Ruddick, Sara. 1989. *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace.* Boston: Beacon Press.
Snitow, A. 1992. "Feminism and Motherhood: An American Reading." *Feminist Review* 40: 32-49.
Swift, Karen. 1995. *Manufacturing Bad Mothers: A Critical Perspective on Child Nneglect.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Wharf, Brian. 1993. *Rethinking Child Welfare in Canada.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

Petra Büskens

A Review of *Mothers and Daughters: Connection, Empowerment and Transformation*

Mothers and Daughters: Connection, Empowerment and Transformation is an eclectic collection of essays ranging across diverse cultural contexts, academic disciplines and identity formations. It is a valiant and successful attempt to grapple with this central relationship in women's lives. Divided into four parts: Mothers Telling Their Stories; Dismantling Patriarchal Motherhood; Empowering Daughters and Connecting/Disrupting the Motherline, this collection traverses a path from the mother's voice to the daughters and finally moves towards synthesis with Lowinsky's concept of the "motherline." Identity and difference are central themes connected to the daughter's passage into adulthood and the mother's journey inside and outside the institution of "patriarchal motherhood." Following Adrienne Rich, a central postulate of this book is that "outlaw" mothers who insist on their economic, political, and personal independence provide powerful models for their daughters. (Rich, 1976) Emphasis is laid on connection rather than separation, conflict rather than rupture and struggle rather than acquiescence. The collection therefore revives the taboo of passionate attachment between mothers and daughters, drawing inspiration from the Demeter/Persephone myth as well as African-American styles of mothering.

Mothers telling their stories:

Elizabeth Johnson begins this section with an examination of literary texts that feature mothers as central protagonists. Reading subordinated ethnicities into "mothering work," Johnson finds a pragmatic heroism in the lone mother who struggles. Utilising Sara Ruddick's tripartite schema of maternal practice, Johnson examines the work of preserving, nurturing and training children in order to locate maternal subjects. When represented from the mother's own

perspective—as we see, for example, in the novels by Toni Morrison and Alice Walker—this work serves to ground the reader in the mother's subjectivity rather than in her instrumentality. In her survival and the concomitant preservation of her children, the lone coloured mother therefore emerges a salient figure of empowerment. Her presence in the public sphere as breadwinner and caregiver (typically resisting adversity and discrimination) makes for a more interesting read, suggests Johnson, than the white middle-class mother whose privilege paradoxically works to silence her. Johnson speculates further that this may be the reason why mothers are more frequently represented from their own perspective in the literature on/by coloured women. In this sense, subordination is read as a paradoxical condition that may both thwart and foster autonomy; facilitate consciousness as well as suppress its expression. The exposure of maternal struggle from the vantage point of *her* labour, provides a central tool for change. We are forced to confront the mother as "self" rather than (silenced) "other."

Departing from the narrative structure of "Oedipality," the essays by Janet Burstein, María-José Gámez-Fuentes and Cath Stowers also identify feminine voices connecting (rather than separating) literary mothers and daughters. In fiction as in life, the maternal protagonist is both agent and nurturer, provider as well as she who must socialise her child(ren) into culture. Importantly, it is the mother, as first carer, who provides her daughter with the tools of language. Thus Burnstein finds, in sharp contrast with Harold Bloom's "anxiety of influence" thesis wherein the son's must "kill" their literary father's,[1] many a Jewish woman writer coming to her craft precisely through identification with her mother. It is through the internalisation of her mother's experience and the caveats this produces in the daughter's sense of self, that she forges a path to literature. Experiential gaps create fruitful moments, even if these come to rest on an archetypal divide between domesticity and art. Novelist Tova Reich gives succinct expression to this theme: "My mother has been my muse ... She has fed me the words." Burnstein elaborates, "Here there is neither usurpation nor ... revision. Instead ... language itself [is] her mother's gift ... the very source of her own power with words" (42).

Similarly, Stowers examination of Michele Roberts" fiction finds a "journeying back to mother" as the central literary device. These journeys are initiated by loss and return to "pre-Oedipal" symbiosis, albeit this time via the narrative twist of role reversal. Typically it is the daughter who cares for an ailing or otherwise incapacitated mother. The return home brings forth her mother's story hitherto locked in a crypt of silence; a theme also elaborated by Gámez-Fuentes. Drawing on Julia Kristeva's concept of "permanent alteration: never one without the other," Gámez-Fuentes analyses three short stories by three Spanish writers foregrounding "especially empowering and positive portrayals of the mother-daughter relationship" (48). Her texts are concerned with identity and difference and the extent to which mothers and daughters sustain connection through revolving identification. It is through the (femi-

nine) "Other," Gámez-Fuentes contends, that identity is forged, relinquished, subverted and elaborated. The short stories all represent powerful instances of this relational flow, where empathy provides the grounds for recognition. Outside the Oedipal nexus, daughters and mothers speak a language of tenacious reciprocity. For example, Carmen Laforet's maternal protagonist speculates on her daughter's separation to the "white house." Paradoxically, the move away will bring her closer to her mother's experience. In this sense, separation invokes connection. In the mother's voice,

> ... [W]hat she [my daughter] will learn every day in this white house, what will gradually separate her from me—work, friends, new dreams—will bring her so near to my soul, that eventually I will not know where my spirit ends nor where hers starts. (52)

However, while the essays in this section seek to subvert the hegemony of Oedipal narrative structures (as the rupturous paradigm for independence), the Oedipus story remains a ubiquitous reference point, forcing the reader to question the extent to which either: a) the Oedipus myth (as re-read by psychoanalysis) remains relevant for the "mother-daughter plot"; or b) whether the writers themselves are "unconscious" of their ongoing affinity with it. To put it bluntly, if Oedipus is so unimportant why do we keep hearing about him? Perhaps we could hear little more about his daughter Antigone and her relationship with her mother who was, of course, also her sister; an interesting symbolic position implying precisely the kind of mutuality across generational difference many of the authors are aiming at. Nevertheless, the concern to "write in the realities of mothering" (65) including ambivalence, breakdown, loss, poverty and abandonment alongside love, attachment, passion, journey and reunion, is the emotional territory traversed by these essays.

Dismantling patriarchal motherhood:

In this section—perhaps the books finest—the dichotomous categories that bind and alienate mothers are prised apart and set in new relation. Typically, "good" and "evil," "madonna" and "whore," "selfish" and "selfless" generate spurious divisions while minimising the range of subject positions available to women. Integration of maternal complexity is therefore explored by Susan Whitcomb in her analysis of the "maternal poets" (such as Adrienne Rich, Anne Sexton and Maxine Kumin) and by Jeanne Wiley in her dexterous re-reading of the Cinderella fairy tale. Both explore the "step-mother" and "fairy god-mother" as conduits for undiluted maternal rage and love respectively. In this sense, they exploit pre-existing dichotomies, albeit for subversive feminist ends. Similarly, Ivy Schweitzer examines the (black) "mammy" and the (white) "mummy" as caricatures of wholesome, loyal (though threateningly sensual) worker on the one hand, and pure, disembodied figurehead on the other. Both are reductive stereotypes organised to benefit existing power

relations: man over woman, white over black, rich over poor. The mechanism of "splitting," similarly preserves maternal "goodness" while creating a dissociated category of evil. However, whereas the "maternal poets" speak as ambivalent mother, we see Cinderella speaking as frustrated, oppressed daughter.

Wiley analyses the "patriarchal script" behind this familiar tale brilliantly drawing on Angela Carter's literary pastiche "Ashputtle" and Marianne Hirsche's notion of the "female family romance." Importantly, as the women vie for Cinderella's coveted transformation and so compete themselves out of alliance and into aggression, we witness the destruction of mother-daughter (sister-sister) ties. Only the ephemeral fairy god-mother survives this filial carnage and she does so by having no needs of her own or, in other words, by being an archetypal "good mother." By dint of magic she facilitates her daughters' passage from nasty, self-interested women to loving, chivalrous men, and by doing so illuminates Cinderella's path to adulthood. The lie, suggests Wiley, resides in the dream of independence via masculine agency. The promise of freedom evaporates the same moment as Cinderella's (always already) vicarious surname. She has won precisely her mother's place as someone else's symbolic and domestic appendage. Of course the double-bind lies in the mirage of romance. For a courtly moment, marriage—or more properly the wedding itself—appears to transcend Cinderella (read: every bride) beyond her gender-specific limitations.

This is a theme explored by a number of the essays, particularly those concerned with adolescent depression in girls as well as the pervasive phenomenon of "mother-blaming." When the daughter rejects her mother (or, as Paula Caplan more accurately reminds us, rejects her subordination and lack of identity) and uses marriage as her escape, she winds up in the same position herself, albeit minus her matrilineal kin. In this way, the daughter procures her freedom at the expense of her mother; an all too familiar trope implicating women in a cycle—or "family romance"—of rupture and betrayal (Hirsch, 1989). Mrs Prince Charming, it transpires, forfeits both her fiery "roots" *and* her feminine attachments. Cinder-ella might stop sweeping ashes for her (step) mother but one suspects her time at the conjugal castle would hardly be cause for celebration. Before long we all know she'd be washing his socks and bemoaning the day she let romance cloud her judgement. "It begins," says *the old wives tale*, "when you sink in his arms and ends with your arms in his sink!"; a finding supported by Andrea Doucet and Gillian Dunne's subsequent essay on the division of domestic labour between heterosexual and homosexual couples. No matter how hard they try, extensive literature indicate heterosexual couples typically end up with sexist divisions of labour disadvantaging women's labour-market participation and self expression. Cinderella, it transpires, would be better off marrying her sister if she wants more equitable arrangements!

The familiar trope of "cultural contradiction," or, in other words, the difficulties of combining mothering with political and economic activity,

emerge with poignancy. No mother can do it alone. She needs some combination of partner, parents, a nanny, childcare, sisters, relatives and/or friends, yet how this is achieved reflects widely divergent socio-economic and ethnic positions. While a culture of "other-mothering" prevails in African-American culture minimising isolation, conflicts between home and work and, of course, the arduousness of childcare, this exists alongside pervasive discrimination. However, where a husband may bring ease of economic and social struggle, marriage typically ushers in dependence and isolation, compromised access to paid work and much more domestic labour. (Hochschild, 1989; Bittman and Pixley, 1997; Maushart, 2001). Despite the myth that women now "have it all," there is no "feminine subject position" that comfortably accommodates relationships, children and work. Structurally we do not have a system that supports this position, because we do not yet have a society that reflects women's interests as mothers. Combining motherhood with not only work but also relationships, creativity, leisure, even sleep, therefore remains intensely difficult in contemporary western societies.

Empowering daughters:

In this section, a focus on the daughter assumes centrality; while the kind of mothering most empowering to daughters is also advanced. In the articles by Andrea O'Reilly, Barbara Turnage, Sharon Abbey and Charlotte Harris we see a strong relationship to a strong culturally validated mother is integral to the self-esteem and independence of young African-American women. Lone coloured mothers in spite of, or perhaps because of, the hardships they face, tend to generate more extensive support networks, engage more fulsomely in paid labour and assume psychological and social centrality in the lives of their children. In this way, they model precisely the kind of autonomy that permits their daughters to assume likewise. Coming from a "long line of irate uppity black women," to quote the poem in O'Reilly's title, is likely to serve a daughter well. As Patricia Hill Collins has also noted, the issues that preoccupy white middle-class mothers (isolation and identity) are not the same as those confronting black mothers (employment and racism) (Hill-Collins, 1991). Concomitantly, there appears a greater degree of estrangement in more privileged, typically white, mother-daughter relations. (See, for example, the contrast between Sharon Abbey and Charlotte Harris in their co-authored autobiographical piece). Daughters, it transpires, are most empowered by "strong mothers" not, in echo of Miriam Johnson, by "weak wives." (Johnson, 1988; O'Reilly, 1998).

Not surprisingly then, rejection of the mother epitomises second wave feminism's first attempt—through the eyes of the (resentful) daughter—at maternal scholarship. Canonical feminist texts such as *The Reproduction of Mothering* by Nancy Chodorow and *My Mother/My Self* by Nancy Friday promulgate the daughters independence from the mother given the structural subordination of mothers and their concomitant investment (however uncon-

scious) in "reproducing" this same oppression in their daughters. The mother is here configured as an emotional obstacle, the dead weight of tradition, obstructing her daughter from the newfound spoils of freedom. We return invariably to Cinderella: out of the frying pan and into the fire!

Re-read by Marilyn Hirsch and Paula Caplan, however, interdependence and attachment to the mother are interpreted as signs of psychological health rather than pathology (Hirsch, 1989; Caplan, 1989). Similarly, taken out of a model of Oedipal rupture, synthesis of attachment and independence (or identity and difference) remains the prevailing psychological goal for daughters. Remaining attached without boundary collapse (and loss of identity) is also taken up in an interesting philosophical essay by Deborah Orr. Using Wittgenstein's idea of the socially embedded individual, Orr aims to challenge the "illusion of the autonomous and isolated willing and choosing ego of liberal ethics" (164). In Caplan's account it appears typical and advantageous for the daughter to remain emotionally attached to her mother, notwithstanding the western cultural emphasis on separation. She must, however, be respected as "her own person" and, in turn, respect her mother's "own person." As the authors of *Mother-Daughter Revolution* write, "Separation and autonomous are not equivalent: a person need not separate from mothers emotionally to be autonomous" (de Bold, Wilson and Malave, 1994: 36).

Mother-blame is therefore located within the "script" of patriarchy and a central means by which women are cut off from their mothers. In an interesting essay by Astrid Henry, feminism itself crops up as a "bad mother" for "third wave" feminists such as Naomi Wolf, Rene Denfield, and Katie Roiphe. While ostensibly in good relations with their own mothers, the feminism of their mother's generation is disparaged as collectivist and sexually repressive. A short step suggests Henry, from overt maternal rejection. We see traces of Bloom's "anxiety of influence" here, as *mother figures* are toppled from their bra-burning thrones. (Has Naomi Wolf inadvertently re-written Cinderella as she takes unceremonious leave from Gloria Steinem's castle for her own special marriage with feminism? Her book was afterall entitled *Fight Fire with Fire*!)

However, while the essays in this section advocate "strong mothers" and caution wisely against "mother blame," there is a crucial discussion missing. What of the daughter who cannot find resonance with her mother's experience but who does not blame her? Or of the mother who provided opportunities (through her own life choices and struggles) that were neither utilised nor appreciated by her daughter? What of the adult daughter who cannot find or obtain satisfaction in "attachment" with her mother because their differences are too large, their personalities too "different," their experiences too divergent? I have known of two cases in apparent reverse: one where—counter intuitively—the daughter (still in her twenties) has opted for a traditional marriage and quiet suburban life raising children while her mother (in her 50s) is an outspoken academic feminist; the other, where the daughter's conflict with her father has leaked into all family relationships, including with her mother who

is unable or unwilling to countenance her daughter's position.

These estrangements are painful to all parties, do not involve mother blaming or escape, but do involve relational complexity and breakdown. While inevitably caught within the nexus of patriarchal subject positions (self-interest versus self-sacrifice), the breakdowns contain unique interpersonal features in which resonance and connection simply cannot be found despite concerted efforts. The interpersonal ramifications of estrangement beyond the simplistic framework of overt rejection *by the daughter of the mother* would have proved a useful addition to this collection. The inability to be heard, mirrored, supported or comprehended by one's mother *or* daughter exists as one relational possibility on a continuum from attachment through separation and beyond. While Nancy Friday may have sensationalised this issue, it has not lost its relevance for contemporary mothers and daughters, especially those who remain estranged from one another.

Connecting/disrupting the motherline:

This problem is at least partly ameliorated by Naomi Lowinsky's (1992) concept of the "motherline." Lowinsky contrasts separation with narrativised continuity, though provides a key place for "disruption." The "motherline" is a genealogy of embodiment as well as an origin myth. In Lowinsky's terms, women and adolescent girls benefit immensely from their mother's (and mother's mothers) "coming of age" stories, including stories of girlhood, menstruation, adolescence, sexual experience, relationships, romance, marriage, pregnancy, abortion, miscarriage, birth, lactation, loss, divorce, suicide, friendship, education, career, work, immigration, menopause and death.[2] For Lowinsky, the motherline situates a woman in her femininity, animates, contextualises and supports her own experiences and is especially useful at key turning points in her life. She highlights middle age as a unique moment in the motherline where a woman may have the privilege of knowing herself in the tripartite position as adult daughter, mother of an adult daughter and grandmother. She knows the experience of wrestling for separation (from her own mother) and hankering for attachment (with her daughter). In this way, she can know herself, her mother and her daughter through significant life-cycle transitions. This unique experience puts her between three generations and signals her corporeal past and future.

The articles by Joonok Huh and Andrea Liss explore—again through the prism of ethnic "difference'—the possibility of disruption to this line. With Huh a complex transition from traditional Korean femininity to educated western(ised) woman generated a disruptive level of complexity. Huh's mother assumed a traditional position as wife and mother within the hegemonic framework of "Asian" domesticity. She was a "good" woman who sacrificed for her family. Part of this sacrifice, however, involved supporting her daughter to study abroad, in a western country (America) where, inevitably, she liberalised her views. When Huh became pregnant with her first child, however, old

stories returned as she felt full with internalised Asian culture. Returning to questions of normative Korean femininity clarified her sense of an identity caught "between cultures." Giving birth to a daughter who has an ambivalent relationship to her Korean heritage again situates Huh between cultures. She writes,

> Whenever I visit my mother in Korea and need to play the daughter role for her, I wish my mother would let me be my own person instead of insisting that I be a Korean woman. She asks me at least to pretend I am a Korean woman while in Korea. When I resume my mother role upon coming back to the United States, I am confronted by my daughter's question, the same one that I raise to my mother while on the other shore. She is not happy with me for reminding her that she is Asian-American, not American ... I locate myself between my American daughter and my Asian mother ... in a space that is neither Korean nor American but is both ... On a personal level, I lose myself and gain my mother or lose myself and gain my daughter. (268-9)

Huh finds points of disjuncture with both her mother and her daughter given the geographic, cultural and educational divides between them. She stands at the cross roads between tradition and modernity, between Asia and "the west," between mother and daughter. Yet through her a crucial bridge is formed.

With Andrea Liss cultural difference between mother and daughter are explored in Ngozi Onwurah's film *The Body Beautiful.* Grand differences of race, age, beauty and health are conflated inside an intensely intimate mother/daughter bond. Difference is subverted through identification yet revealed through structural constraint: the mother is plain, the daughter beautiful; the mother is white, the daughter black; the daughter growing, the mother "disfigured" by cancer and partial mastectomy. Deploying unusual cinematic techniques, including maternal voice over inside the daughter's reminiscences, Onwurah generates a clever pollination of mother-daughter selves. In Liss's terms, "the two women's voices are rarely spoken through their bodies and are not directed at each other as in the relay of traditional dialogue" (281). As one interprets the others life, a unique synthesis is crafted. Nevertheless, racial difference between the mother and daughter highlight points of incommensurability. As the daughter nestles into her mother's breast she reflects poignantly, "to a world that sees only black and white, I was made only in the image of my father. Yet she has molded me, created the curves and contours ... I may not be reflected in her image but my mother is mirrored in my soul" (278)

Ngozi Onwurah, a Nigerian-British woman, cast her own white mother in what Liss calls a "narrative documentary style with a courageous and strategic use of autobiography" (280). Like Onwurah's mother, the maternal protagonist "Madge" has undergone a partial mastectomy. The film therefore examines

both the taboo of the "disfigured" woman and the transformation of the mother-daughter relationship through the turbulence of adolescence. As others recoil in horror at the mothers scarred remains of a breast, the teenage daughter confronts her mother's subjectivity as if for the first time: seeing her as other's see her. Madge adds, in what Liss calls "one of the film's most wrenching admissions," "Somewhere between the rheumatism and the mastectomy, I had been muted" (283). The mother and the daughter confront each other in part through the patriarchal standard of female beauty. There is both polarity and symmetry in their "aging/ripe" bodies and sadness in the mother's loss of the male gaze. Liss highlights the accomodations that must be made by women while bringing us back to the awareness of the filmmaker daughter and her actor mother. Boundaries always "fluctuate between intense intimacy and painful separation" (286).

Motherline stories—of love and loss, of health and illness, of work and creativity, of happiness and despair—may anchor mother-daughter relationships otherwise vulnerable to silencing or estrangement. Typically, the mother and daughter are connected by a common surname belonging to the male head of household. The mother has lost her "maiden" (read: father's) name and the daughter will also. This practice—integral to the institutionalisation of patriarchy—works to maintain symbolic divisions between women. The "motherline" acts as its own bridge linking grandmother to mother to daughter to granddaughter through narrative. Oral history is here the antidote to an otherwise pervasive destruction of symbolic ties.

Conclusion:

The abiding theme in this collection of essays on mothers and daughters is connection through conflict and difference. It foregrounds the tension of maintaining closeness through generation, through difference, through structural constraint and through emotional turbulence. The mother's voice and life story as well as her body constitute the physical, emotional and social context within which her daughter can claim a grounded female identity in the world. In this sense, the critique of "patriarchal motherhood" exists coterminous with the empowerment of daughters. As the mother is conceived an agent in her own right, so the daughter can claim this agency for herself. The mother can expand her daughter's horizon, quite simply and quite difficulty, by expanding her own (Rich, 1976). That is, by being the woman she hopes her daughter can become. Like Persephone, the daughter too must return in cycles to her mothers house of stories, for it is through these stories that she will create her own.

This essay is dedicated to my mother Jenny and my daughter Mia.

[1]Bloom postulates the "anxiety of influence" model as an explanation for the male writers' "coming of age" typically predicated on a creative rejection of his predecessors. In this model, the literary sons must kill their literary fathers in

order to find their pens (or is that their pen(ise)s?)

[2]Interestingly, one of the most beautiful things my father did when I became pregnant was write me a story about his mother. It was a traumatic story of her passage from Eastern to Western Germany at the close of the second world war. My grandmother and her three small children, including my infant father, confronted a Russian soldier at the border. On orders to shoot Germans trying to get to the west, my grandmother pleaded for her life and for permission to return home. She was given both after a tense and emotional exchange. Neither could understand the other's language but fortunately armistice prevailed. As a mother, I imagine my grandmother in this situation and feel immense admiration for her bravery and sadness at her struggle to care for small children under gruesome wartime conditions. In the motherline (which I believe may also be transmitted by sons (of mothers) to the daughters (of mothers)) are found stories so crucial to one's experience, it seems remarkable how easily they are forgotten.

References

Bittman, Michael and Jocelyn Pixley. 1997. *The Double Life of the Family: Myth, Hope and Experience*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Caplan, Paula. 1989. *Don't Blame Mother: Mending the Mother-Daughter Relationship*. New York: Harper Collins.

Chodorow, Nancy. 1978. *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

deBold, Elizabeth, Marie Wilson and Ideisee Malave. 1994. *Mother-Daughter Revolution: From Good Girls to Great Women*. New York: Bantam.

Friday, Nancy. 1977. *My Mother/My Self: The Daughter's Search for Identity*, New York: Delacorte Press.

Hill-Collins, Patricia. 1991. "The Meaning of Motherhood in Black Culture and Black Mother-Daughter Relationships." *Double Stitch: Black Women Write About Mothers and Daughters*. Patricia Bell-Scott et al., eds. New York: Harper Perennial.

Hirsch, Marianne. *The Mother/Daughter Plot: Narrative, Psychoanalysis, Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 1989. *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home*. New York: Viking.

Johnson, Miriam M. 1988. *Strong Mothers, Weak Wives*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lowinsky, Naomi. 1992. *Stories from the Motherline: Reclaiming the Mother-Daughter Bond, Finding our Female Souls*. Los Angeles: Tarcher.

Maushart, Susan. 2001. *Wifework: What Marriage Really Means for Women*. Melbourne: Text Publishing,

O'Reilly, Andrea. 1998. "'Across the Divide': Contemporary Anglo-American Feminist Theory on the Mother-Daughter Relationship." *Redefining*

Motherhood: Changing Identities and Patterns. Sharon Abbey and Andrea O'Reilly, eds. Toronto: Second Story Press. 69-91.

O'Reilly, Andrea and Sharon Abbey. Eds. 2000. *Mothers and Daughters: Connection, Empowerment and Transformation.* Rowman and Littlefield.

Rich, Adrienne. 1976.*Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution.* New York: Norton.

Ruddick, Sara. 1989.*Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace.* Boston: Beacon.

Book Reviews

Things My Mother Told Me

Gillan, Maria Mazziotti.
Toronto: Guernica, 1999.

Reviewed by Melissa Hamilton Hayes

Gillan begins this collection of narrative poems with something her mother told her: "When you do something with your hands ... you have to put your love into it, and then, it will be sacred. See?" (7). In fact, this is what Gillan does in her poetry. Poetry may not be as tangible as her mother's homemade bread or summer vegetable garden, but Gillan infuses her poems with love – love for each word, each turned phrase, each recollection of a dying mother or a newborn baby—to create something sacred.

Although the title implies a focus on her mother and their relationship, Gillan's poems are wide ranging in subject. This collection is about strained relationships, superstition, love, food, husbands, wives, and the pain of growing up smart and shy in a world that values outgoing girls with blond ponytails. In fact, a large part of this book is about growing up as an Italian Catholic girl in Paterson, New Jersey. We learn about Gillan's immigrant roots and Catholic heritage, her youth and emergence into womanhood.

This collection also concerns Gillan's life as a mother and recalls experiences both rewarding and heartbreaking. She writes of her strong daughter and her granddaughter: "you are sharp and smart, all energy and pepper, / a quicksilver girl with an open heart" (88). In "My Son Tells Me Not to Wear

Poet's Clothes" she expresses her frustration and anxiety as a mother: "I cannot / find a way to make him understand that I love him ... it's as though I am chasing / him down a path but he's always faster than me" (10).

Her own mother's life and words, however, serve as framework for Gillan's volume. The poems tenderly recount her mother's life, the gifts she gave and what she taught her daughter: "treasure my children and keep them close . . . I know what my mother meant when she told me my children were the only treasure I'd ever need" (95). Early poems in the collection recount her mother's prolonged illness and eventual death. In these powerful poems, Gillan uses lyrical free verse to capture the images and feeling of love between mother and daughter, a daughter's pain in letting go of a dying mother. In "Brushing My Mother's Hair," "Singing to My Mother," and "My Mother's Garden II," Gillan captures the physicality and tenderness of care between an aging mother and her grown daughter and the visceral quality of their attachment. This is a moving collection that reveals Gillan as both mother and child.

Double Jeopardy: Motherwork and the Law

Turnbull, Lorna A.
Toronto: Sumach Press, 2001.

Reviewed by Fiona Joy Green

In commonplace language, Lorna Turnbull—Assistant Professor of Law, feminist, wife, and mother of three children—critiques North American law for placing women in double jeopardy. Through the effective use of statistics and specific decisions made by provincial courts of appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada, she shows how the structure and practice of Canadian law and, to a lesser extent, American law takes power away from women. Her impressive study of legal cases regarding pregnancy, breastfeeding, and taxation demonstrates how the subordination of mothers is initiated and perpetuated by the law.

Chapter one describes how the law fails to provide adequate support for those in caregiving roles. Chapter two defines law, its hierarchal structure and adversarial system, and the various ways feminist thinkers have challenged the supposed separation of law from the political sphere. Chapter three explores how the law embraces the social characterization of "good" and "bad" mothers and is not responsive to mothers' lived experiences. Focusing on the Canadian income-tax system, Turnbull provides specific examples of double jeopardy for mothers who are employed and unemployed.

Chapter four explores how legal and cultural attitudes towards pregnancy

inform legal attitudes towards mothers and mothering in general. Chapter five, "The Legal Characterization of Motherwork," reveals how heterosexism, homophobia, class bias, racism, and a lack of understanding of the realities of poverty in the lives of mothers continue to influence the practice of law and the lives of mothers. Simply stated, the law is often blind to the realities of mothers. In chapter six, Turnbull discusses income-tax rules and their impact on mothers and on motherwork. By comparing the tax systems of Canada and the United States, she illustrates how mothers, depending on their social location and particular situation, may or may not benefit from these differing tax systems.

The final two chapters are the most exciting, as the author proposes how law and legislation can be used together as a strategy for social change. This approach, Turnbull stresses, must be part of an overall strategy that includes political lobbying, grassroots organizing, and other approaches to bring about social change. By explaining the incremental nature of legal change and how the traditional male model of litigation is hierarchical in its organization, Turnbull exposes the limitations as well as the potential benefits of litigation as a strategy for social change. In doing so, she shows that the law can be used to help transform rather than simply reform women's inequality.

Turnbull elucidates the many problems around motherwork in Canadian law and legislation. She successfully implements Charlotte Bunch's four elements of feminist theory. She describes the situation of mothers in relation to the law, provides textured analysis, and offers a vision and a strategy for changing that relationship. Other fine features of the book include a table of cases and a glossary of legal and feminist terms. This book will be useful to readers interested in taxation, income tax law and legislation, and to students and teachers of Women's Studies. A valuable resource, *Double Jeopardy* also will appeal to mothers, academics, and activists interested in mothering, motherwork, and their relationship to the law.

Unbroken Homes: Single-Parent Mothers Tell Their Stories

Paterson, Wendy A.
Binghampton, NY: Haworth Press, 2000.

Reviewed by Diana L. Gustafson

When a marriage ends in divorce, the resulting family structure is often referred to as a broken home. This negative image seems to be supported by literature that associates single-parent families with a variety of social ills, such as delinquency and drug abuse, and that labels those emerging from such families as damaged or broken (4). As the title suggests, *Unbroken Homes* presents the

stories of five single mothers whose families are not broken but function successfully to meet the needs of parent and child.

The purpose of the book is to deconstruct the image of the broken home by using constructivist, feminist critical theory to interpret the social context in which single mothers restructure family life and offer "a new action theory of resistance and change" (6). Wendy Paterson uses a phenomenological case study approach to collect and interpret data about five financially secure, well-educated, professional women (four white women, one black woman). Although these narratives do not represent "every woman's story" (17), they serve as a counterpoint to existing literature about single mothers who face the challenges of poverty, lack of education, and other social inequalities.

There are three reasons I believe this book is particularly suited to an undergraduate audience in sociology, psychology, and women's studies. First, stories about more privileged women add complexity to the meta-narrative of single-mother families. Although Paterson uses the tired metaphor of the story quilt, the narratives are richly descriptive of the histories and experiences of parenting and family life before and after divorce. The voices of Judith, Kathleen, Shawna, Lyn, and Sarah are heard clearly in extensive quotes drawn from interviews. While this technique adds considerably to the length of the book (409 pages including references and index), the text is well organized and written in accessible language.

Second, I recommend this book for its literature review. Entitled "What is Family? Mothering, Fathering and Being Single," the second chapter introduces the prevailing myths of family life. The survey continues with the main theories that have shaped Western thinking about families, with specific attention to the gendered division of family roles, parenting labour, family relationships, and divorce law in America.

Given the strengths and ambition of this book, I am disappointed that Paterson does not analyze her findings through the promised feminist critical lens. Feminist critical analysis assumes the interconnectedness of gender, race, class, and other systemic oppressions (Giroux, 1997). Instead, Paterson uses gender as a singular and uncomplicated category to explicate issues such as guilt and independence. A feminist critical analysis would have exposed the relative homogeneity of the participants and revealed more explicitly how they use their social location as a valuable resource (Harris, 1993) in negotiating their lives after divorce. Instead, Paterson claims "the only *common* denominator for these five families is *difference*" [emphasis in original], pointing to the differences in personality, individual motivation, and child-rearing practices (358). In these ways, Paterson's approach is more typical of liberal feminism than critical feminism. I am not suggesting, however, that race and class go unmentioned. Paterson acknowledges the power of social location in shaping women's experiences. This is the reason she studies "mainstream mothers whose priorities are not focused on fighting poverty to survive" (85). Yet, the analysis fails to examine in a sustained and comprehensive way how class privilege

modifies these women's experiences. The same may be said of Paterson's way of looking at race. When analyzing Shawna's story, Paterson draws on literature about black families to discuss the way race shapes the experiences of the only woman of colour in her study. By contrast, race is not used to explore the relative privilege enjoyed by white participants, as I would expect in feminist critical analysis.

While Paterson demonstrates reflexivity, another key element of feminist critical analysis, by acknowledging that her interpretation of the findings emerges from her own ideologies and values, she does not reflect critically on the ways that her location as a white, middle-class, professional woman shape her interpretation of the data. Paterson mobilizes a white, middle-class subjectivity that focuses on individual characteristics, decision-making, and interpersonal relations without examining how race and class privilege organize the qualitatively different experiences of women in her study group.

The challenge to the stereotypic image of the broken home lead by less privileged single mothers is made possible by holding out the image of the unbroken home lead by more privileged single mothers. While the intention is to erase the link between deviance and single-mothering, the outcome (whether intended or not) is to distance more privileged women from this negative association. This move entrenches rather than challenges the raced, classed, and gendered construction of motherhood and leaves single mothers to compete with each other on the "margins of 'respectable' motherhood" (Fumia, 1999: 90).

While I argue this book evades the feminist critical analysis that it intends, its conclusions and agenda for change may serve as valuable resources for an undergraduate audience. This brings me to the third reason I recommend this book. In keeping with Paterson's conclusions, the recommendations for change are broadly stated, liberal entreaties to recognize the diversity of families and the individuals that emerge from them. A professor with a firm grounding in critical feminist theory may revisit these data with students and help them examine the power of white, middle-class subjectivity to construct normalcy and deviance in knowledge about mothering. Students would learn from and build upon Paterson's quality data to develop a more complex understanding of how gender is articulated through race and class to shape the experiences of single mothers and their families.

References

Fumia, Doreen. (1999). "Marginalized Motherhood and the Mother-Lesbian Subject." *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering* 1 (1): 86-95.

Giroux, Henry A. (1997). Rewriting the Discourse of Racial Identity: Towards a Pedagogy and Politics of Whiteness." *Harvard Educational Review* 67 (2): 285-320.

Harris, Cheryl I. (1993). "Whiteness as Property." *Harvard Law Review* 106 (8): 1707-1791.

Sing Your Own Song: A Guide for Single Moms

Orange, Cynthia.
Minnesota: Hazelden, 2001.

Reviewed by Susanna Jones

The subtitle of this book, *A Guide for Single Mothers*, is a misnomer. It suggests the book is intended for single mothers, when in fact the book will appeal to a much wider audience. I applaud Cynthia Orange for her candid and complex description of life as a single mother. More importantly, her brilliant therapeutic insights and the plethora of resources she presents transcend the boundaries of single motherhood. Any wanna-be parent, soon-to-be parent, single parent post divorce, for that matter anyone seeking a thoughtful examination of parenting should pick up a copy of this book.

The book presents both a macro view and a micro view of the family. In the opening chapter "Redefining Family," Orange provides a succinct analysis of family formation—rooted in an historical context—and dispels the pervasive myths and stereotypes of single mother-headed families. Given that today's cultural wars continue to promote "traditional" family values—in fact we see a resurgence of this in marriage initiatives being promoted by the government – it becomes even more essential to normalize and legitimate single motherhood. Despite growing demographic trends, single mothers are continually placed at the margins of society. Single mothers need texts such as this that value their families and expose the joys and challenges of single motherhood.

The remaining chapters proactively address common concerns of single mothers: the need for community, providing male role models for children, ensuring self-care for mothers, strategies for "raising resilient children," and the role of grandparenting and elder care in the lives of both the single mother as well as her child(ren). Each chapter is rich in information that strikes a beautiful balance between strategies for self-care and child-care. Each chapter also refers to seminal works and key resources, and includes anecdotes from single mothers themselves and concrete exercises (referred to in the text as "Take a Minute").

In chapter six, "The World Out There," Orange states, "According to the Children's Defense Fund's statistics for 2000, 50 percent of America's poor children live in female-headed families. Poor children in any family situation—single-parent, two-parent, or no-parent—are at a higher risk when it comes to getting an education and a good-paying job. It's poverty, not parenting that's the culprit, and single mother households bear the brunt of the burden of poverty" (126). The book highlights the need for community as a material resource and an emotional sounding board to help single mother families grapple with difficult situations. This push towards community is also a

political gesture, one that fosters a new way of thinking and acting in the world that debunks the pervasive push to "do it alone." This book will be an inspiration to readers.

Mothers and Children

Chase, Susan E., and Mary F. Rogers.
New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001.

Reviewed by Erika Horwitz

As a student and researcher, I always am searching for useful literature on the subject of mothers and mothering in Western society. *Mothers and Children* is an insightful book that reviews important topics about the social constructions of motherhood. Further, the authors seek to give voice to mothers themselves by including a series of narratives that illustrate their points.

In part one, "The Social Constructions of Motherhood," Chase and Rogers suggest that ideologies and practices around mothering are historically and culturally specific. They point out that the current constructions of motherhood have a negative impact on mothers and their children. The authors examine feminist views about motherhood, the historical roots and impact of the social discourses of "good" versus "bad" mothers, and the subject of "father absence." I was particularly impressed by their emphasis on the importance of fathers' (or father figures') loving participation in the lives of children and by their arguments against the notion that nuclear families are superior to other types of families. This section of the book offers an excellent summary of the dominant discourse on mothering and its impact on the lives of mothers and their children.

In part two, the authors explore the connection between women's bodies and motherhood. They point out how social constructions of motherhood have led to a view of mothers as asexual and they emphasize the importance of reclaiming mothers as sexual and erotic beings. The authors also examine how mainstream medicine has shaped reproductive and birthing practices and they highlight the importance of choice. Part two concludes with an examination of the complexities of infertility and the medical technologies aimed at "helping" women to conceive.

Part three focuses on the topic of "Mothering in Everyday Life." In discussing the actual experiences of mothers, the authors emphasize the importance of social change in supporting mothers and children. They discuss the relationships of mothers and children, "othermothering," and mothering as political action. This last section in the book illustrates the struggles of contemporary mothers. It touches on the importance of involving others ("othermothering") in raising children, not only for the benefit of mothers who

can then focus their attention on other matters, but for children who currently are growing up with limited adult connections on which to rely for nurturing and guidance. The authors also discuss mothers as social activists.

Most important, *Mothers and Children* gives voice to mothers. Jeannine O. Howitz, for example, who considers herself a feminist mother, provides the reader with a compelling message: mothers' work is work. Through her narrative, we glimpse the struggles of a mother who is trying to make sense of (and survive) the social constructions of motherhood that contradict her views and experience. This book is inspiring and educational at a deep level.

The New Midwifery: Science and Sensitivity in Practice

Page, Lesley Ann, ed.
Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 2000.

Reviewed by Christine Brook

This outstanding book builds on Lesley Page's previous contributions in the fields of continuity of care, evidence based practice, and the humanization of maternity services. Written for midwives and midwifery students, the book addresses issues which will enable midwives to develop woman-centred practice and to practice with increased autonomy, in keeping with changes to maternity services being demanded by childbearing women in many parts of the industrialized world.

The book contains three sections: effective and appropriate care; transition to parenting; and adaptation and growth in pregnancy, birth and early life. The first section covers evidence based practice in the context of sensitive midwifery practice. The marrying of the humanization of midwifery practice with the scientific evidence for practice creates a wonderful juncture of the art and science of midwifery practice, contextualizing the professional need for scientific reasoning within the context of humanistic care. The second section focuses on the transition to parenting, in particular the social and emotional experiences of childbearing women and their families, and midwifery practices that can support and promote healthy adaptation. The third section focuses on the physiology of childbearing and midwifery practices to support early parenting.

Throughout the book the primacy of the relationship between childbearing women and their midwives is recognized. This relationship can contribute towards enabling women to meet their needs and have a satisfactory, indeed life enhancing experience of childbearing and maternity care. A good relationship is not sufficient on its own, however, and the professional responsibility of midwives to maintain their scientific knowledge base is emphasized at all times.

It is also recognized that midwives require knowledge related to the social, cultural, psychological, and emotional experiences of childbearing women and their families, in addition to knowledge of the physical sciences and midwifery practice.

It is refreshing to see the physical aspects of childbearing presented at the end rather than the beginning of the book. The book commences with an emphasis on the woman-midwife relationship and midwifery practice. The contribution of political and organizational factors in affecting or mitigating against changes in maternity services is also discussed.

All chapters are written concisely and present up-to-date knowledge, usually accompanied by an historical overview and suggestions for practice. The chapters written by midwives often include anecdotes from practice, which validate both midwifery practice and childbearing women's experiences, reinforce the usefulness of combining anecdotal evidence with scientifically validated research, and make for delightful reading.

This book would make a worthwhile contribution to the library of any midwife or midwifery student.

Baby Catcher: Chronicles of a Modern Midwife.

Vincent, Peggy.
New York: Scribner, 2002.

Reviewed by Michelle Moravec

With her background in obstetrical nursing, natural childbirth education, and birth centre administration, Peggy Vincent's decision to become a licensed midwife with a specialization in home births seems almost expected; however, as *Baby Catcher: Chronicles of a Modern Midwife* aptly illustrates, Vincent's experiences as a midwife were anything but the expected.

As a young nursing student at Duke University, Vincent became disillusioned with traditional obstetric practices that gave labouring women no control over their experience of childbirth. The occasional pregnant women who "thrived on the challenge and the passion" of birth and refused to submit to the drugs and procedures considered necessary by the medical establishment showed Vincent that women could make their own decisions about what was best for their delivery.

Inspired by the sweeping changes wrought by the various social movements of the 1960s, Vincent set out to transform women's experiences of childbirth. In Berkeley, California in the early 1970s, Vincent began working as a labour and delivery nurse just as the Lamaze movement gained popularity. However, her own labour and delivery convinced her that a formulaic approach to natural childbirth did not empower women anymore than the stuffy practices

of traditional medicine. Over the years, she developed a childbirth education course centred on the notion that "every birth is different" (52).

As the women's health movement rapidly transformed the field of women's health during this period, more women began seeking out alternative methods of childbirth and, in 1974, Vincent had the opportunity to witness firsthand the work of a "lay" midwife. She found the woman's skill so impressive that she began contemplating a career in midwifery. In her work as a nursing coordinator at a local birthing centre, Vincent enjoyed a degree of autonomy unheard of in conventional medical settings, but she still faced "physicians who believe that normal childbirth is a retrospective diagnosis" (58). After fifteen years as a nurse, Vincent retrained as a midwife and spent the next fifteen years attending home births. Although most of Vincent's narrative is inspirational, she sounds some cautionary notes. The number of home births, for example, has been severely curtailed by the ongoing difficulties faced by American lay midwives in acquiring malpractice insurance and medical back up from physicians and hospitals.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of *Baby Catcher* is Vincent's style. Although she has delivered over more than 2,500 babies, each case she recounts reflects the joy and awe she feels at the moment of birth. Deftly, she interweaves memoir and case studies with an overview of the transformations over the past forty years in childbirth practices in the United States. *Baby Catcher* is a valuable work for health care professionals, scholars of pregnancy and birth, and the general reader interested in issues of women's health and pregnancy.

Families As We Are: Conversations From Around The World

Huston, Perdita.
New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY, 2001.

Kerima Kostka

Perdita Huston, who has worked for several international organizations as well as specialized agencies of the United Nations, spent more than four years interviewing several generations of families of all socioeconomic backgrounds in eleven countries throughout the world (Japan, China, Bangladesh, Thailand, Mali, Uganda, Egypt, Jordan, El Salvador, Brazil, USA). Her approach is one of "empowerment": to let those who have little voice speak about themselves.

Her book is a testament to these voices and illustrates—as only personal interviews are able to do—family life in its richness and complexity, as well as its changes and challenges, throughout the twentieth century. While listening to these individuals, one begins to see striking parallels between all countries.

One universal trend is the undermining of traditional, multigenerational family structures by urbanization, economic shifts, and emigration. A second positive trend is an increased regard for individual rights and democratic values. In all interviewed families, elders tell of the profound changes they have witnessed during their lifetimes and of their accompanying fears and hopes.

At the same time, the subsequent generations are aware of what they have lost and gained. One important improvement named by women and men (especially younger men) alike is the increasing equality of women and men within and outside the family. At the same time, more than one fourth of households worldwide are headed by women (in some nations 30 to 40 percent)—due to the emigration of men in search of work, divorce, widowhood, or abandonment.

Other universal problems that will be faced in the future include the loss of natural resources, physical and mental health concerns, especially alcohol and substance abuse, women's reproductive health and sex education, domestic violence, and HIV/AIDS.

While showing that traditional family structures are dissolving, Huston also demonstrates that such a constricted concept of the family is no longer adequate. Instead, she shows that families come in all shapes and sizes and she broadens the concept of family to include non-biological relations (such as street children protecting each other or groups of prostitutes living together and caring for one another's children). In creating new structures of support, these non-traditional families are adapting to the challenges of the modern world.

At the same time, conservative notion of the "traditional" family is still being forced upon individuals in all parts of the world. As Huston emphasizes, this is the wrong approach: if our main concern is childrens' well-being, we need to support these newly evolving types of families. Children will be protected best by adults who love and care for them, regardless of their marital status, gender, sexual orientation, or biological relationship.

Although I would have liked her to include a European country—Europe is not exempt from the difficulties faced by the rest of the world—Huston's book elucidates the urgent need for reform and her demands are universal.

Two for the Summit: My Daughter, the Mountains, and Me.

Norman, Geoffrey.
Toronto: Penguin, 2000.

Reviewed by Sylvia Moore

"I had followed my daughter to the top, which was not the way I had expected

it to be or the way that it had always been. But I surely wouldn't have made it any other way. Or had it any other way, either."

Geoffrey Norman takes the reader on a spiritual and physical struggle up Aconcagua, one of the highest mountain peaks in the world. He describes the events leading up to this mid-life adventure (he has just turned 50), takes us back over a series of glimpses of his life as a father, and then carries us up the mountain as if we are watching though a camera mounted on his shoulder. His daughter walks alongside him, rising to the challenge of the climb while Norman struggles, realizing at some point that he, in fact, may not make the summit. His daughter may succeed where he might fail, and at that moment she is no longer his little girl. The child becomes the leader, challenging the parent to succeed.

The mountain is a metaphor for parenting – a laborious and joyous experience that changes over time. When he realizes that he may not make the summit, Norman decides to talk to his daughter: "The kind of talk that you have a lot, but never get used to having, I suppose, when you are a dad. The kind where you say things that have to be said but that you wish you didn't have to talk about. I decided, as I had many times, to put the talk off as long as possible."

I waited for Norman to share his thoughts on parenting and middle age. In fact, he put off the talk, both with his daughter and with the reader. I waited to read about his deep feelings for his daughter but he never articulated them. Nonetheless, I believe Norman descended the mountain a changed man, changed in spirit and in his connection to his daughter. I wanted Norman to describe these changes. Unfortunately, it is as if Norman's whole story has not been told.

The Big Rumpus: A Mother's Tale from the Trenches

Halliday, Ayun.
Seattle: Seal Press, 2002.

Reviewed by Patricia R. Payette

Ayun Halliday has been called a new generation's urban Erma Bombeck. Writing from her family's tiny Brooklyn apartment, Halliday demonstrates a Bombeckesque dry humour for reporting the absurd and hilarious everyday details of raising children. *The Big Rumpus* grew out of Halliday's pen-and-ink photocopied 'zine called the *East Village Inky* that she describes as "an anticorporate, consciousness-raising, feminist call to arms," actually a cleverly disguised collection of amusing rants, raves, and lovingly-drawn cartoons about the minute details of her family life and their colourful adventures in the East Village.

Inky is the nickname of Halliday's four-year-old daughter India, a sylph-like creature whose love of being unclothed makes her appear destined to take after her mother, a former performance artist. With impish Inky and her baby boy Milo, Halliday struggles in the motherhood trenches, determined to be true to herself while she raises kids in the "culinary and cultural diaspora" of New York, a city that she embraces as the anithesis of the soul-deadening suburbs of her Midwestern childhood. Halliday is a stay-at-home mom while her husband temps at Citibank, and she finds the only way to fight off the "isolation and despair" of her radical new lifestyle is to create a 'zine that gives full expression to her mothering self and her artist self. *The Big Rumpus* gives her room to elaborate on the topics covered in her 'zine – taking a stand in the working mothers versus stay-at-home mothers debate (she concludes that we each must do what works for us), reliving the adventures of breastfeeding Inky into late toddlerhood, discussing how she fights the commercialization of the holidays, and why she convinced her husband not to have their son circumsized.

Throughout *The Big Rumpus*, Halliday is insightful, funny, and candid about what she perceives as her strengths (she dresses Milo in Inky's hand-me-downs despite the disapproval of other playground mothers) and foibles as a parent (Inky swears like a sailor). I felt my own feelings about the challenges of motherhood validated when Halliday confesses, "the baby had me in such a choke hold that I felt nostalgic for the days when mopping the floor didn't require hours of strategic preparation." What Halliday expertly avoids is sweet sentimentality and the cliches that abound in other tales about becoming a mother. Even her soul-baring report of Inky's first two weeks spent in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and her love letter to Milo at the book's conclusion crackle with her quick wit. "Nobody wants to read about a perfect mother," writes Halliday, and so *The Big Rumpus*, like the *East Village Inky* before it, is a highly readable account of an imperfectly real mother.

The Politics of Fertility Control

McFarlane, Deborah R., and Kenneth J. Meier.
New York: Chatham House Publishers.

Reviewed by Sandra Jarvie

In *The Politics of Fertility Control*, McFarlane and Meier examine what "looms behind abortion policies" and review the politics of fertility control in the United States over the past thirty years. Convinced that nearly all induced abortions are preventable by effective contraception, McFarlane and Meier suggest "that abortion politics are part of a larger political struggle about values" which they term "morality politics."

This book provides an historical perspective on the use, control, and social importance of contraception and abortion. It covers the 1960s through to the 1990s and considers the politics and policies concerned with family planning and abortion and their implications for women. The authors point out that sexuality is framed by "strong moral overtones in American society." They contrast "ideal" sexual behaviour with the "real" sexual behaviour of most adolescent and adult Americans, a contrast that has serious implications for fertility control policies. McFarlane and Meier argue that American public policies reflect the extreme moralistic beliefs of people but not their actual behaviour.

Interestingly, McFarlane and Meier found that abstinence is ineffective as a long-term method of contraception; instead, the promotion of contraceptive knowledge, contraceptive development, and contraceptive services is far more efficacious for women. Their findings are supported by research that has "concluded that about 80 percent of the decline in overall pregnancy rates was due to improved contraceptive use."

Expecting Trouble: What Expectant Parents Should Know about Prenatal Care in America

Strong, Thomas H., Jr.
New York: New York University Press, 2000

Review by Maria Mikolchak

Three years ago, pregnant with my fourth child, in perfect touch with my own body, and fully convinced that, at least in my case, the main outcome of prenatal care would be a waste of time for me and profit for the obstetrician, I had my first prenatal visit after 32 weeks of pregnancy—in time to discuss practical matters of where to give birth.

Thomas Strong's *Expecting Trouble: What Expectant Parents Should Know about Prenatal Care in America* fully supports my attitude toward prenatal care that, at the time, many considered negligent of my own health and potentially harmful to my unborn baby. Strong's book calls into question the prevailing (and unconfirmed) assumption that prenatal care is a form of preventive medicine that can reduce the number of premature births and/or infant deaths in the United States. The author shows that in Europe, where the average number of prenatal visits is less than in the States, the mortality rate is significantly lower. In fact, the United States is ranked 23 among industrialized nations for its mortality rate. Strong suggests that it is the quality—not quantity—of prenatal care that is important.

There are many problems with prenatal care in the United States. First, obstetricians persist in regarding pregnancy as a disease rather than a natural condition for many women. The medicalization of pregnancy leads to the high cost of prenatal care but it does not improve pregnancy outcomes. At the same time, obstetricians actually spend very little time with their patients. During a typical office visit, women are assessed by a nurse or technician and they see the doctor briefly. Strong argues that neither routine examinations nor an obstetrician's hasty appearance influence the outcome of pregnancies.

Strong also raises two important issues related to prenatal care and health care in the United States in general. First, fetal interests often overshadow women's interests. Second, domestic violence, the single most common cause of injury to women, is ignored by most obstetricians.

Obstetricians' expertise is invaluable for treating complicated cases of pregnancy. Strong argues, however, that the prenatal care of low-risk women (approximately 97 percent of all pregnancies), should be left to certified nurse-midwives who, as research shows, are the most effective providers of prenatal care. Mothers, too, should be trusted to make informed choices during pregnancy and delivery. Strong also points out that the role of the partner/spouse should not be underestimated and that men should become visible in the pregnancy/birth process.

According to Strong, to radically change the poor pregnancy outcomes in the United States it is necessary to address the larger social ills of racism, socioeconomic problems, and the inaccessibility of abortion. A third-generation doctor and a second-generation obstetrician, Strong views women as agents in the process of pregnancy and birth and he addresses women's needs in prenatal care.

The Birth Book: Everything You Need to Know to Have a Safe and Satisfying Birth

Sears, William, and Martha Sears.
New York: Little, Brown, 1994.

Reviewed by robin a. cryderman

As a staunch midwifery advocate, I was prepared to dislike a book that claimed to offer "everything" about birthing; I expected another medicalized birth training manual. However, this text, by a husband and wife team who have birthed eight children of their own and have published seven other books on pregnancy, babies, and child-raising issues, is an admirable achievement. Their text brings to life the motto of the International Childbirth Education

Association: "Freedom of choice through knowledge of alternatives" (137). Clearly and calmly, *The Birth Book* takes the reader through pregnancy and birth in three sections: "Preparing for Birth," "Easing Pain in Labor - What You Can Do," and "Experiencing Birth."

The authors intend to empower women to take control of their births, regardless of setting: "Women need to take more responsibility for their birthing decisions. At no time in history has obstetrics been more ripe for a change" (27). Their philosophy rests on two ideological pillars: "what's good for the mother is good for the baby" (152), and birth is an embodied experience that should and can be fully experienced by the mother and her support person(s). They criticize standard medical language and practices that have led to high cesarean rates: "historically in obstetrics, interventions have become common practice long before their usefulness or their safety has been proven" (75). Their discussion takes into account whether a birth takes place at home, in a birth centre or hospital, with a doctor or a midwife. The authors strongly advocate for midwives and doulas at each and every birth and are critical of many "standard" hospital routines. This even-handed approach is welcome and should put an expectant mother at ease.

The rhetorical features of this practical book are one of its many strong points. It is arranged in columns, two to a page, with bolded headings that indicate the content of the paragraph(s) to follow. Throughout the book, there are boxes containing summarized information; they stand out and can be located easily. For example, the section on easing pain includes boxes entitled "Pain - A Useful Signal," "Humor at Birth," and "Music to Birth By." There are sketches throughout, illustrating pregnancy exercises, birthing positions, a baby's position during the stages of labour, labouring positions, the various positions a baby can take *in utero*, and forceps delivery. These illustrations are clear, simple, and useful, and, to the authors' credit, show a diverse range of ethnic groups and body types. There are numerous boxes that list resources specific to the topic at hand, and a good reference and additional reading list. The section of birth stories and the authors' experiences in every discussion serve to personalize the large amount of detailed information provided.

What I find most impressive, though, is the even-handed approach the authors take towards birthing sites, practices, and situations: "Determining the birth you want and finding out how to get is what this book is all about. This is a system-fixing, not a system-bashing book" (xi). The authors recognize that institutions will be slow to change, and that it is up to birthers to demand change. This book does provide expectant parents with "everything" they need to know, and is a must-read for first-time mothers, or any mother who wishes to have a happy, embodied birth experience.

Blessed Events: Religion and Home Birth in America

Klassen, Pamela E.
Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Reviewed by Amy Mullin

Blessed Events explores childbirth as a life-shaping experience. Pamela Klassen is a feminist scholar of religion who home-birthed her own children. The book is based on the author's interviews with forty-five home-birthing North American women from a variety of religious traditions (predominantly Christian, Jewish, New-Age, and atheists). While the women are mostly middle class and Euro-American, they vary not only in their religious affiliations but also in their commitment to feminism. Some are feminist activists, others are ambivalent about feminism, and still others view themselves as appropriately subordinate to their husbands. What they share is an interest in and respect for women's experience in childbirth, and a commitment to women's right to exercise control over the place of birth and the choice of birth attendants. Most of the home-birthing women were attended by certified nurse midwives and direct-entry midwives, but a few were attended by doctors or family members.

The two major issues Klassen explores are tensions between feminist and traditionalist understandings of the meaningfulness of childbirth and how agency "may be afforded to or denied women as they derive religious meanings from childbirth" (4). While she respects the women's narratives, and presents each sympathetically, Klassen is not uncritical. For instance, relying upon work in religion, anthropology, and feminist theory, she contests their understanding of home birth as natural.

After an introductory chapter explaining her theoretical approach and her method of selecting and interviewing the women, the second chapter explains what it means for relatively privileged North American women to home-birth. She discusses the history of changing childbirth practices in North America, and the social, legal, and financial repercussions faced by women who choose to home-birth.

The next chapter takes on the controversy over the safety of home-birthing, and debates about whether it involves self-sacrifice or selfishness on the part of women. Klassen shows us how risk is conceived differently by advocates and critics of home birth, before moving on to an analysis of how religion and spirituality are involved in women's interpretations of their birthing experiences. In this chapter, Klassen both explains and contests the distinction between religion and spirituality in scholarship and in popular discourse. The next three chapters analyze the meaning home-birthing women give to their homes, their bodies, and their pain. For instance, the women view

their bodies as animals, machines, and sources of spiritual power. Pain is seen as uncontrollable, intermixed with pleasure, something to be endured, something that can be overcome, and a source of enlightenment. Klassen is careful to explore both the potentially harmful and the potentially liberating ways home-birthing women make sense of their childbirth experiences. The final chapter explores the political significance of women's choices about childbirth.

Blessed Events will appeal most to those in the alternative birth movement, but it will be of interest to anyone committed to exploring female embodied experience, as well as those interested in relations between religion and spirituality. While the interviews themselves are intriguing and Klassen writes clearly, the book is sophisticated theoretically and will be most fully appreciated by those fascinated by how the experiences of home-birthing women both reflect and shape politics, culture, and religion.

Mothering Daughters: Novels and the Politics of Family Romance, Francis Burney to Jane Austen

Greenfield, Susan.
Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002.

Reviewed by Bonnie A. Nelson

In *Mothering Daughters*, Susan Greenfield offers illuminating interpretations of *Evelina*, *The Italian*, *Wrongs of Woman*, *Belinda*, *Adeline Mowbray*, and *Emma* and argues that these early novels emphasize "the centrality of mother-child attachment and ultimate separation that psychoanalysis inherited" (20). She also explores such topics as breastfeeding debates, women's rights to child custody, and "the role of maternity in colonial and abolitionist discourses" (14).

Greenfield connects the great resemblance of Evelina to her mother with the historical question of legitimacy. "The father has the lawful right to name the daughter, but the mother's imprint proves a more reliable record of marriage, kinship, and legitimacy" (37). Greenfield includes a fascinating discussion of "imaginationist" theories which erroneously "suggested that a mother's imagination and desire affected her child in utero, primarily in negative ways" (48). Burney, Greenfield argues, turns such theories upside down when Evelina, "through her uncanny resemblance to her mother ... is able to correct the injustices perpetrated against both of them" (42).

In "Gothic Mothers and Homoerotic Desire," Greenfield offers a psychoanalytic reading of *The Italian*, a work she believes "linger[s] on the daughter's physical desire for her parent" (57). Using the term "homoerotic" rather than

"homosexual" because it is "descriptive" and does not "connote a form of modern sexual identity" (63), Greenfield examines the threat that mother-daughter love "poses to compulsory heterosexuality" (60).

In her chapter on *The Wrongs of Woman*, a book that focuses "on the law, which discriminates against women of all classes and favors men by treating the female body and its offspring as male property" (86), Greenfield discusses the "politics of maternal breastfeeding" and how breastfeeding influenced the passage of the Infant Custody Bill (1839). "Supporters of the act repeatedly drew on images of breastfeeding to demonstrate the naturalness of maternal custody rights" (84). Greenfield believes Maria's famous court defense "logically extended ... might include a defense of the mother's right to child custody" (99).

Greenfield explores "the rise of maternal ideals" in Opie's *Adeline Mowbray; Or, The Mother and Daughter*, and she examines "inadequate mothers," like Lady Delacour in *Belinda* and Mrs. Mowbray, and the necessity of surrogate mothers. Savanna, an escaped mulatto slave, is the surrogate in Opie's novel. "Though [Opie's] novel condemns slavery, it also suggests the value of importing West Indian women to England to perform the maternal and psychological work biological maternity cannot guarantee" (134). Savanna's role "prefigures the 'racialized history of child care' that grew out of colonial slavery" (134).

"The Riddle of *Emma:* Maternity and the Unconscious" best exemplifies Greenfield's general thesis that "the mother's absence highlights her indispensability" (13). Emma's "internal troubles ... stem from the very motherlessness nobody acknowledges as a problem" (146). "Though there are a wide variety of ways to account for Emma's mistakes," Greenfield believes that each mistake "can be explained as her unconscious reaction to her mother's absence" (153). Since the novel encourages readers "to understand Emma as she herself cannot, *Emma* might be said to anticipate the role of the modern psychotherapist" (153).

Underpinning Greenfield's compelling analysis is a wealth of careful research. Her three approaches—historical, literary, and psychoanalytic—will appeal to scholars in a variety of disciplines.

A Slant of Sun: One Child's Courage

Kephart, Beth.
New York: William Morrow, 1998.

Reviewed by Trudelle Thomas

A Slant of Sun is a carefully crafted memoir by a mother who is coming to terms with her young child's developmental problems. As the book opens, Kephart is

a freelance technical writer married to an architect from El Salvador. They are both ecstatic over the birth of their first child, a boy named Jeremy. The early chapters are a tender account of Jeremy's first years.

When Jeremy is a toddler, Kephart notices disturbing quirks in his development: a tendency to withdraw, obsessions with certain toys or clothes, a reluctance to talk. At two and a half years old, Jeremy is diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Delay-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS), a little-understood set of symptoms that includes social, language, and behavioural impairments. There is no clear course of treatment for PDD. Kephart writes, "We saw our child disappearing—a rapid descent into silence. We met with doctors. We were given terminology. The terminology was a dark room, a dead end, an imbroglio not an enlightenment" (234). The rest of the book describes the parents' desperate efforts over the next five years to "pull" Jeremy back into the world of human interaction.

Late in the memoir, Kephart summarizes her quest: "We haven't healed our son—we have given our son the room to heal himself—a safe place, the right friends, information, conversation, a buffer from the world when he needs that buffer. We have learned to look for ... people and institutions that understand that kindness is the deepest cure, that there is always room for hope" (240). But along the way Kephart is not at all sure they will find kindred spirits, kindness, or hope. Much of the book recounts her difficult search for schools, therapists, and friends for her disturbingly "different" child. She often doubts herself; her marriage falters; neighbours and "professionals" are sometimes cruelly judgmental.

As I read, I recalled the comment of poet Pattiann Rogers: "To write well of ... [motherhood] requires overcoming the many examples of poor literature ... To write with power of the subject means creating new perspectives." Kephart succeeds in creating a new perspective—no small accomplishment—an unsentimental close-up of the interplay between a mother and a young child at risk.

Kephart is a gifted writer working with difficult material. Motherhood is by nature highly charged and this mother is often in agony—angry, confused, lonely, in the dark – even as she is fiercely committed to her son's well being. She conveys these emotions through understatement. One chapter, following Jeremy's diagnosis, is made up of nine lines, ending "I am earth beneath storm, the air inside a snapped reed. I scream my helpless anger into an empty room" (77). Kephart is equally skilled in conveying the joy of Jeremy's gradual recovery.

Both mother and child come across as human. Kephart is a night owl and a loner who loves to ice skate. Jeremy loves a green hat, toy cars, the Red Baron. My favourite sections are Kephart's interactions with Jeremy as they talk or play in such places as their home, a park, or a fast-food restaurant. Their conversations prove to be key to Jeremy's recovery, "stretching him bit by bit from compulsion toward conversation" (238).

This book is of special interest to any parent of a child with PDD, OCD, autism, or other "special needs," especially neurological needs. I could use *A Slant of Sun* in classes that address language acquisition, speech therapy, or the power of literacy. Potential readers include anyone interested in fine writing about one woman's discovery of her deepest sources of strength. *A Slant of Sun* was a finalist for a National Book Award (U.S.) in 1998.

Before Deportation

Feiner, Herta.
Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1999.

Reviewed by Ruth Nemzoff

Before Deportation by Herta Feiner contains eighty-five pages of letters from a German-Jewish mother living in Berlin to her half-Aryan daughters at boarding school in Gland, Switzerland. The letters cover the period January 1939 to December 1942. Amidst the trivia of daily concerns and the usual parental affectionate expression of love is a powerful description of pre-deportation Nazi-Germany, with its insidious erasure of freedoms and rights for Jews in Germany. The Nazi machinery left few aspects of life untouched. Their gradual encroachment in each sphere of life occurred in small increments, allowing the Jews to adapt to the changes. They manipulated this human capacity for adaptation and ensnared the Jews in their trap.

We learn, for example, that at first the Nazi government allowed the flow of mail; then they required a special stamp; next they limited the length of the letters; subsequently they limited the number of letters that Jews could send. Finally, they stopped mail delivery altogether. We learn that slowly the Jewish schools were diminished, first by forced moves to smaller quarters, then by staff reductions and, in time, by shortened school hours.

At first the spouses or parents of Aryans were protected. Finally, no one was protected. We see the effectiveness of the gradually tightening noose when this loving mother actually asks her daughters to return to Germany in the belief that their Aryan status could protect both mother and daughters.

Although this book is not as powerful or emotionally wrenching as Elie Weisel's *Night*, its very ordinariness demonstrates the thorough and methodical way the Nazis were able to lure the Jews to their deaths. This book helps answer the question, "Why didn't the Jews see what was happening?"

Recollections of My Life as a Woman: The New York Years

di Prima, Diane.
New York: Viking, 2001.

Reviewed by Batya Weinbaum

Diane di Prima writes about being both a mother and a poet. Coming of age in New York in the 1950s, di Prima participated in the Beat literary movement, edited a literary journal with then Leroy Jones (now Baraka), associated with dancers, hung out in the Village, kept journals, and had babies. En route to her job at the legendary Phoenix Bookstore, she walked her months-old baby girl in a stroller down the streets of the Village.

Di Prima's story of connecting with the physical desire of her body to have a child, all the while feeling that a man was "incidental and unimportant to the process" (157), resonates with the experience of many women today. She set out to find a father for her child, refused to use birth control, and for the first time in her life felt at war with her art. "I was a poet, I had work to do" (161) had been the dictum guiding her life. Then, her guiding sense changed: "But this simple thing that was looming ahead of me, just a little way down the road, this inevitable, as I felt it, next step in life: to have a baby, to become a mother, this seemed to hold the essence of what I needed now to know. To be. In order to be a woman and a poet. There should, it seemed to me, be no quarrel between these two aims: to have a baby and be a poet" (162).

Unfortunately, di Prima experienced conflict. Former male mentors and friends would lecture her inappropriately. She felt she had "enough to do after childbirth just recovering without being subjected to unwanted pressure and moralizing" (167). For inspiration and strength, di Prima drew on her female lineage. Her mother had raised her on Pearl S. Buck's novel, *The Good Earth*, in which "the woman has her baby in the field and goes right back to work" (168). Her mother raised her to believe that women had to bear more pain than men. Hence, she felt empowered and invincible as she birthed her first child, "more than a little arrogant and impatient (168). She finally was whisked away into an elevator and "shoveled into a cot in a labor room" where she was surrounded by "six or eight screaming, moaning, or semi-unconscious women" (169). Even the brave poet had to lose some of her bravado then.

This book—which focuses on one woman's struggle to be both a mother and a poet—will be useful in courses on motherhood.

Contributor Notes

Anna Atkinson is with the Institute of Women's Studies at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

Patricia Bell-Scott is Professor of Child and Family Development & Women's Studies and an Adjunct Professor of Psychology at the University of Georgia in Athens. She was founding co-editor of *SAGE: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women* and principal editor of the award-winning anthology, *Double Stitch: Black Women Write about Mothers and Daughters*. She is co-editor of the first text in Black women's studies, *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks are Men: But Some of Us Are Brave*, as well as editor of *Life Notes: Personal Writings by Contemporary Black Women, and Flat-footed Truths: Telling Black Women's Lives*. She specializes as a teacher and writer in black women's narratives.

Mary Kay Blakely is an Associate Professor at the Missouri School of Journalism. She is the author of three books, including *Wake Me When It's Over—A Journey to the Edge and Back* (Times Books/Random House) and *American Mom—Motherhood, Politics and Humble Pie* (Algonquin/Pocket Books), and her essays have been collected in numerous anthologies. A Hers columnist for the *New York Times* and currently a contributing editor to *Ms.* and the *Los Angeles Times* magazine, she has published essays and articles about social issues in *Mother Jones, Life, Working Woman, McCalls, Redbook, Psychology Today, Self, the Chicago Tribune, the New York Times Book Review* and numerous other national publications. Her work has been translated and published in Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, England and Italy. She now teaches Advanced Writing at the University of Missouri and is the director of the New York Summer Journalism Program at the New School University.

Katherine Bischoping is Associate Professor of Sociology at York University, Toronto. Her research interests include qualitative methods, survey research methods, and pedagogy. She has served in the York University Faculty Association as Information Officer and Bargaining Committee Chair, as well as on the Canadian Association of University Teachers' Collective Bargaining and Economic Benefits Committee.

Christine Brook is at the University of Queensland in Australia in Social Work and Social Policy.

Paula J. Caplan, Ph.D., is the author of *THE NEW Don't Blame Mother: Mending the Mother-Daughter Relationship* and eight other books. She is a Visiting Scholar at the Pembroke Center for Research and Teaching on Women at Brown University and is former Professor of Applied Psychology and Head of the Centre for Women's Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. She is also a playwright, actor, and director, and her play, CALL ME CRAZY, includes a monologue delivered by "Amalia Freud" (Freud's mother) that is partly about mother-blame and being a mother. She lectures and teaches workshops about mothers and daughters, as well as other subjects, and has helped organized social and political action about various matters, including sexism in psychiatric diagnosis and in the use of psychotropic drugs. Her most recent work on the latter is addressed in part in her recent article in the *National Women's Health Network's "Network News."*

Joyce Castle is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. Her teaching and research interests are in literacy development, teacher development, leadership, collaboration, and women's issues within these contexts.

Taina Chalal is a Ph.D. candidate in Women's Studies at York University who does work on women writers, subjectivity, and transnational processes. She is a peace activist who lives in Northwestern Ontario. She organizes arts festivals, book clubs, coffee houses, and poetry readings. She is a mother and a prize-winning poet.

Sara Collings is a doctoral student in the School of Social Work and Education Faculty, McGill University. Her Ph.D. research involves an examination of social work practice with mothers. She is also involved in a SSHRC funded research project investigating how different facets of young women's identities as mothers are constructed and reproduced through everyday practices across three organizations addressing the needs of young mothers.

robin a. cryderman earned her MA in English at the University of Victoria (1997), and currently teaches first year composition and literature courses as a

sessional with the English Department. A mother of two, she works from a radical feminist spiritual perspective, combining activism and research in women's issues (particularly sexuality, birthing, infanticide, and sexual/domestic violence) with studying women,s writing, their lived experiences, and their constant struggle against discourses that perpetuate social inequalities and systemic violence against women, children and men. She is currently looking at modern masculinity and gender role representation in speculative fictions. In her spare time she is a midwifery advocate, a volunteer advocate for victims of so-called domestic violence, and secretary/treasurer for Cupe 4163 (Educational Employees, University of Victoria) who hopes one day to be able to change consciousness at will.

Carolyn Cunningham is pursuing her Ph.D. in the Department of Radio-Television-Film at the University of Texas at Austin. Her current research interests focus on the impact of new technologies on women's lives.

Linda Davies is an Associate Professor at the McGill School of Social Work. Her teaching and research interests include mothering, child welfare and qualitative research. She is currently involved in a SSHRC-funded research project investigating how different facets of young women's identities as mothers are constructed and reproduced through everyday practices across three organizations addressing the needs of young mothers, the majority of whom are poor and parenting alone.

Joanne Detore-Nakamura, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Humanities at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, FL. Her creative work has been published in The Philosophical Mother Magazine, the Journal of ARM, Slow Trains, Voices in Italian-Americana and will be included in the forthcoming anthology, Sweet Lemons: Writing with a Sicilian Twist. Her recent essay on feminist pedagogy appears in the new anthology *Fractured Feminisms* published by SUNY Press (July 2003). She is currently co-editing an anthology of essays about working mothers and childcare and continues her research on women and motherhood. She shares her life with her husband, Eric, and their five-year old daughter, Emily.

Patrice DiQuinzio is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Director of Women's Studies at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA, USA. She is the author of *The Impossibility of Motherhood: Feminism, Individualism, and the Problem of Mothering* (Routledge, 1999) and is co-editor with Iris Marion Young of *Feminist Ethics and Social Policy* (Indiana University Press, 1997). Her articles on philosophical problems in theorizing motherhood and on motherhood as a model for citizenship have appeared in *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy and Women and Politics*. She is currently at work on a project analyzing contemporary instances of US women's civic engagement conducted

under the sign of motherhood, such as the Million Mom March and Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Cheryl Dobinson is the Co-ordinator of ARM. She holds an MA in Sociology from York University and her studies have focused on women, youth and sexuality. Her work has been published in *The Journal of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Identity*, *The Journal of Homosexuality*, *Herizons* and *Fireweed*. Cheryl also publishes a bi women's zine called *The Fence* and is currently completing a community based research project on bisexual health and wellness issues in Ontario.

Rishma Dunlop is a professor of Literary Studies and Fine Arts Cultural Studies in the Faculty of Education at York University, Toronto. She is a poet and fiction writer whose work has won awards and has appeared in numerous books, journals, and anthologies, nationally and internationally. Rishma Dunlop was a finalist for the 1998 CBC/Saturday Night Canada Council Literary Awards for poetry. Her novel, *Boundary Bay*, was a semi-finalist for the inaugural Chapters/Robertson Davies Prize in 1999. She is the author of two volumes of poetry, *Boundary Bay*, (2000) and *The Body of My Garden*, (2002). She is also the editor of *Child: An Anthology of Poetry and Prose (2001)*. She is the mother of two daughters and a frequent contributor to ARM.

Miriam Edelson is a social activist, mother and writer living in Toronto. Her creative non-fiction and commentaries have appeared in The Globe and Mail, The Toronto Star, CBC Radio, This Magazine as well as other periodicals. Born in New York, Edelson spent her teens in Toronto and completed graduate studies in political science at Carleton University. She is fluent in French and is currently pursuing doctoral studies in sociology and bio-ethics part-time at the University of Toronto. Her particular area of interest is social policy regarding the care of medically-fragile infants. Edelson has worked in the trade union movement since 1980, specializing in communications and human rights issues. She lives in Toronto with her daughter Emma.

Arlene E. Edwards is a community psychologist whose areas of interest center on: informal, community-based work of women of colour, and, the methods and processes that they use which may be transferred from the informal to formal applications. To this end, her work focuses on attending to the ways through which practical empowerment and educational strategies that women of colour engage to address community issues may inform theoretical perspectives that in turn inform research, intervention, and policy development. Research areas of interest include: the use of education as a tool of liberation and empowerment, investigating methods used by women of colour to address community health issues, participatory evaluation, and participatory intervention design.

Kathryn Feltey is an associate professor of sociology at the University of Akron. Her research and teaching interests are in the areas of gender, inequality, and violence. She is currently analyzing interview data with women living in institutional settings including prison, shelters, and transitional housing.

Alice Fothergill is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Vermont. Her research and teaching interests are in the areas of family, gender, and inequality. Her forthcoming book, *Heads Above Water: Gender, Class, and Family in the Grand Forks Flood,* explores women's experiences in a natural disaster. In addition to her research with Professor Feltey, Professor Fothergill is currently conducting a qualitative study of daycare.

Joanne S. Frye is Professor of English and Women's Studies at The College of Wooster (Ohio). She is author of *Living Stories, Telling Lives: Women and the Novel in Contemporary Experience* and *Tillie Olsen: A Study of the Short Fiction,* as well as articles on Virginia Woolf, Gail Godwin, Maxine Hong Kingston, Tillie Olsen, and issues in feminist literary criticism. She is completing a memoir of her experiences as a mother, tentatively titled *Placentas and Other Hungers.*

Cayo Gamber is an Assistant Professor of Writing, The George Washington University. In her research she interrogoates how competing voices negotiate, regulate, and/or affirm lesbian mothers; how popular culture icons—such as the Barbie doll and Nancy Drew—both encode uncontested conceptions of mass production and consumption, and, encode alterity as these icons are subverted, redefined, and personalized by individual consumers; and how war and memory are codified by personal, political, collective or national cultures of commemoration.

Fiona Joy Green, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor and Co-ordinator of the Women's Studies Programme at the University of Winnipeg, where she teaches courses on feminist research methodologies, gender and the sciences, and supervises the Women's Studies Practicum. Her interdisciplinary dissertation (Women's Studies, Education and Sociology) entitled *Living Feminism: pedagogy and praxis in mothering* draws heavily on Adrienne Rich's *Of Woman Born.* Previous work related to her doctorate (from the University of Manitoba) is published in the inaugural edition of the *Journal for the Association of Research on Mothering.* Her most recent academic project involves the use of graffiti and postering by female students in washrooms as a strategy to nurture consciousness raising and to celebrate and participate in political activism. She is also involved in developing the Margaret Laurence Women's Studies Centre in downtown Winnipeg, which aims to provide a space to bridge the gap between local grassroots feminists/feminism and academic feminists/feminism. Fiona and her spouse of 18 years share in the parenting and life of their teenaged son.

Diana L. Gustafson is an assistant professor of social sciences and health at the Faculty of Medicine, Division of Community Health at Memorial University in St. John's, NL. Her research and teaching interests cover a range of health-related, social justice issues concerning paid and unpaid caring labour. Dr. Gustafson is the author of several articles, the editor of "Care and Consequences: The Impact of Health Care Reform" (2000 Fernwood) and a forthcoming anthology entitled, "Unbecoming Mothers: The Social Production of Maternal Absence."

Melissa Hamilton Hayes is a doctoral candidate at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research interests include twentieth-century American and Women's literature as well as issues of maternity. Her dissertation investigates women's spiritual writing. Just as important, she is a partner to her husband, Bryan, and a mother to her young son, Hamilton Lee.

Erika Horwitz holds a Ph.D. in Counselling Psychology. Her area of research is mothers' resistance to the dominant discourse on mothering. She is currently in the process of writing a book on this topic. She is a public speaker, she has presented her work at numerous conferences as well as to mothers in Canada and in Mexico. She is also a therapist in private practice in Vancouver, Canada, and the mother of two great teenaged girls.

Sandra Jarvie is a social researcher and writer. She is an advocate for adequate social supports and laws to protect mothers and their babies from unnecessary separation caused by abuse, violence, and poverty. Currently she is the Alberta representative for and Vice President of the Canadian Council of Natural Mothers.

Miriam Johnson is a retired Professor of Sociology at the University of Oregon whose teaching and writing has been focused on gender and the family throughout her career. She is the author of a book entitled *Strong Mothers, Weak Wives* and co-author with Jean Stockard of a text on sex and gender. She and her husband of many years live in Oregon where they both taught sociology. They have two children, one married and one single. Currently she is affiliated with the Council on Contemporary Families, which attempts to get accurate research information out about the many different kinds of contemporary families besides the so called "ideal" nuclear family that now exist in the U.S. and Canada.

Deirdre D. Johnston (Ph.D. University of Iowa) is Associate Professor of Communication at Hope College, Holland, Michigan. She has published numerous articles and books on persuasion, conflict, and media effects on children. Her current research on the social construction of work and motherhood has appeared in *Sex Roles*, and *the Journal of Mass Communication and*

Society. She is currently working on a book with collaborator Debra Swanson that explores the rewards and limitations of each work choice – full-time, part-time or at-home—and seeks to help mothers make an informed choice about what is the best decision for them.

Susanna Jones is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at Long Island University in Brooklyn, New York where she has taught courses in Social Work, Social Welfare and Public Policy, Sociology of the Family, and Marriage and Family. Her current research interests focus on working-class single mothers in New York City, exploring the intersections of their "singleness" and their "motherness." She is also interested in caregiving and expanding current conceptions of care work.

Kerima Kostka lives in Frankfurt, Germany. She has a Masters Degree in Educational Studies and was participant at the International Women's University in 2000. Recently, she has completed her dissertation which deals with privatization and deregulation in German, American and British family law. She is currently working for a German youth organization.

Julia Krane is an associate professor in the School of Social Work at McGill University. Her research, teaching and practice centre on violence against women and children. Her book, *What's Mother Got To Do With It* (2003, University of Toronto Press), explores mother blame in the context of child sexual abuse investigation and intervention. Julia Krane is one of the investigators on a SSHRC-funded project that examines how different facets of young women's identities as mothers are constructed and reproduced through everyday practices across three organizations addressing the needs of young mothers, the majority of whom are poor and parenting alone.

Susan MacCallum-Whitcomb spent a decade in academia teaching American Literature and publishing widely on the subject of Maternity Poetry. Her critical anthology, *"This Giving Birth": Pregnancy and Childbirth in American Women's Writing*, co-edited with Dr. Julie Tharp, was published by Popular Press in 2000. The mother of two young children, Susan recently moved to Halifax where she works as a freelance writer and reseacher.

Maura McIntyre is Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre for Arts-informed Research in the Department of Adult Education and Counselling Psychology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, Canada. She teaches and practices group work in counselling. Her research and writing are mainly in the areas of caregiving and Alzheiemer's disease and arts-informed research methods.

Maria Mikolchak earned a doctorate in Comparative literature and a Graduate

Certificate in Women's Studies from University of South Carolina. She is Assistant Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at St. Cloud State University. She also serves on the Women's Studies Committee. Her latest projects include teaching a Gender Seminar in Moldova and launching a Rape and Agression Defense course for women at St. Cloud State. Maria is the mother of two daughters, Lisa and Varia, ages 16 and 14, and two sons, Andrei and Alexei, ages 10 and 3.

Carolyn Mitchell, professor of English and Director of women's studies, earned her Ph.D. from Boston College, her master's from Michigan State University and her bachelor's from Hunter College. The author of a number of books and articles, her interests include nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature, African American literature, women's literature, Victorian fiction, women's studies, theory and criticism.

Dolana Mogadime is an assistant professor in the Undergraduate and Graduate Faculty of Education at Brock University in St. Catharine's (Ontario, Canada). Mogadime's current research interests include ethnography in urban schools and the inclusion of African Canadian history and the diaspora experience within the context of the official school curriculum. Over the past decade, Mogadime has centered on investigating the lived realities of Black women's lives. Beginning with the homeplace, Mogadime's research on her mother's life history and work as a political activist educator in both South Africa and Canada has extended the growing field of research on Black women's contribution to the education of children in Africa and the African diaspora. This work has been published in various feminist journals such as *Canadian Woman Studies* special issues on "Women in Education," and "Looking Back, Looking Forward: Mothers, Daughters and Feminism.," as well as in the *Journal of the Association of Research on Mothering* special issue on "Mothering in the African Diaspora." Dolana Mogadime recently completed her Ph.D. studies in Sociology and Equity Studies in Education at the University of Toronto.

Sylvia Moore is a therapist, teacher and former special education administrator. She is the single mother of four children of Aboriginal ancestry. She is interested in the role of the mother in nurturing children of mixed cultural heritage. She works in the field of narrative therapy and the development of the self through the stories we tell.

Michelle Moravec directs the women's center and is an assistant professor of history at William Paterson University of New Jersey. Her research interests focus on women's activism in the United States, particularly second wave feminism. Her recent publications include editing the women's movement section of the Encyclopedia of American Social Movements and "Mother Art:

Feminism, Art and Activism" in the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*.

Amy Mullin is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto. She has three children (two, five, and seven) and shares their care with a variety of other paid and unpaid caregivers.

Bonnie Nelson is Associate Professor of English and Women's Studies at Kansas State University where she teaches women's contributions to the development of the novel and the drama in eighteenth-century Britain. Her articles on gender appear in such journals as *Women's Writing, Keats-Shelley Journal*, and *Theatre Survey*.

Ruth Nemzoff is the former assistant minority leader of the New Hampshire State Legislature and the first female Deputy Commissioner of Health and Welfare in the state. She is currently an adjunct associate professor at Bentley College and a resident scholar at Brandeis University's Women's Studies research Center where she worked on this review. Dr Nemzoff holds a Bachelor's degree in American Studies from Barnard College, a Master's degree in Counseling from Columbia University and a Doctorate in Administration, Planning and Social Policy from Harvard University. She and her husband, Harris Berman have four children and live in West Newton, Massachusetts.

Renee Norman, Ph.D., is a poet, writer, and teacher whose poetry, essays, and stories have appeared in literary and academic journals as well as newspapers. Her doctoral dissertation received the Distinguished Dissertation Award from the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies. Her interests include three daughters, women's autobiographical writings, the Fine Arts and arts-based pedagogy, research, and curriculum. Her book, *House of Mirrors* was published by Peter Lang, NY.

Andrea O'Reilly, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the School of Women's Studies at York University where she teaches a course on motherhood (the first course on Motherhood in Canada; now taught to more than 200 students a year as a Distance Education course), and the Introduction to Women's Studies course. She has presented her research at numerous international conferences and she is the author of close to two dozen articles and chapters on motherhood and Toni Morrison. She is co-editor of *Redefining Motherhood: Changing Identities and Patterns* (Second Story Press, 1998), *Mothers and Daughters: Connection, Empowerment and Transformation* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2000) and the special 20th anniversary issue of *Canadian Woman Studies* (Fall 1998) on Mothers and Daughters. She is editor of *Mothers and Sons: Feminism, Masculinity and the Struggle to Raise our Sons* (Routledge Press 2001) and

Mothering Against Motherhood: The Legacy of Adrienne Rich's Of Woman Born (SUNY, forthcoming). Her book *Toni Morrison and Motherhood: A Politics of the Heart,* also with SUNY, is in press. She is currently completing *From Motherhood to Mothering: Towards a Feminist Theory of Maternity* and editing *Mothering A Movement: Conversations with the Pioneer Feminist Scholars on Motherhood.* O'Reilly is founding president of the Association for Research on Mothering, (ARM); the first feminist association on the topic of mothering-motherhood with more than 500 members from around the world, and is founding and editor -in-chief of the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering.* In 1998 she was the recipient of the University wide "Teacher of the Year" award at York University. She has conducted numerous community workshops on motherhood, mothers and daughters, and mothers and sons. As well she had been interviewed widely on these topics including appearances on "More to Life," "Planet Parent," "Canadian Living Television,","Sex TV" and "Next.New.Now." Andrea and her common-law spouse of 23 are the parents of an 18-year old son and two daughters, ages 13 and 16.

Ruth Panofsky is Associate Director of the Joint Graduate Programme in Communication in Culture (Ryerson/York Universities). She also is Book Review Editor of the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering.* Her most recent publications include *Adele Wiseman: Essays on Her Works* (2001) and *Lifeline* (poetry, 2001).

Patricia R. Payette is a college administrator and freelance writer with a Ph.D. in English. She has a research background in the areas of contemporary ethnic fiction by women, feminist film studies and Victorian literature. Her essay on being a feminist wife and mother was recently published in the anthology *Jane Sexes It Up: True Confessions of Feminist Desire* (Four Walls, Eight Windows Press, 2002).

Joanna Radbord is a lawyer with the firm of Epstein, Cole, and is a lesbian who is planning a pregnancy with her spouse. Her practice focusses on family law and gay and lesbian equality rights, and she is particularly interested in the legal regulation of lesbian mothering. Joanna was involved with *M. v. H.*, the first Supreme Court of Canada decision to successfully challenge the definition of "spouse" as restricted to opposite-sex couples. She was counsel to a lesbian father in *Forrester v. Saliba*, which states that transsexuality is irrelevant to a child's best interests. She is currently co-counsel to the eight same-sex couples seeking the freedom to choose civil marriage in Ontario. In that case, the federal government's arguments largely centre on reserving procreation and child-rearing for heterosexuals only.

Sara Ruddick is the author of Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace. She has co-edited three anthologies, most recently *Mother Troubles: Reflections*

on Contemporary Maternal Dilemmas. For many years she taught at The New School University in New York City where she lives.

Lori Saint-Martin is a professor in the literature department at the Université du Québec à Montréal. She has published two books of short fiction, *Lettre imaginaire à la femme de mon amant* (1991) and *Mon père, la nuit* (1999), French translations of 6 English-Canadian novels, in collaboration with Paul Gagné (one of which, *Un parfum de cèdre*, a translation of Ann-Marie MacDonald's *Fall on Your Knees*, won the Governor General's award for translation in 2000), and several books of non-fiction on women's writing in Québec, including *Le nom de la mère. Mères, filles et écriture dans la littérature québécoise au féminin* (*The Name of the Mother: Mothers, Daughters and Writing in Quebec Women's Fiction*), 1999. A book-length feminist study of Gabrielle Roy's fiction, *La voyageuse et la prisonnière: Gabrielle Roy et la question des femmes*, is forthcoming from Éditions du Boréal. Her current research project is on fathers and children in contemporary Québec fiction (supported by SSHRC grant). With Paul Gagné, she has two children, Nicolas, born in 1993, and Anna, born in 1995.

Debra H. Swanson is Associate Professor of Sociology and Deirdre D. Johnston is Associate Professor of Communication at Hope College. This research was funded by grants from the Hope College Frost Center for Social Science Research and the Ruth M. Peale Faculty Development Fund. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the ARM conference, Mothering and Teaching in the Academe: Teaching Motherhood, Being a Mother-Teacher and Doing Maternal Pedagogy, May 4-5, 2002, York University, Toronto, Ontario.

Trudelle Thomas is a Professor of English at Xavier University, a Jesuit university in Cincinnati, Ohio where she teaches courses in writing and literature. She writes creative nonfiction and publishes academic essays in the areas of Composition Studies, nature writing, and autobiography. She is currently completing a book about motherhood and spirituality, *Spirituality in the Mother Zone*.

Andréa Riesch Toepell, Ph.D., is Associate Professor in the Department of Community Health Sciences at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. Her research areas include population health, educational development, aging women and physical activity, and HIV/AIDS prevention and education planning for very marginalized communities. Over the past few years Andréa's additional research interests include mothering and teaching in the academe.

Kathleen Vaughan is a doctoral candidate and artist-in-residence at York University's Faculty of Education, exploring art as a mode of knowing in her

own work and bringing hands-on visual arts experiences to student teachers. Her research interests include the pedagogies of place, links between craft traditions and storytelling, and the role of familiarity and surprise in learning. Her visual art incorporates paint, photography, encaustic, and textiles, and has been exhibited in Ontario and Quebec. She is assisted in all things by her dog, Auggie.

Vera Woloshyn is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at Brock University where her primary teaching responsibilities are in graduate studies. Her research interests and publications focus on topics related to effective learning strategies and teaching techniques, and the balancing of personal and professional lives.

Call for Papers

The editorial board is seeking submissions for Vol. 6.2 of the *Journal of The Association for Research on Mothering* (ARM) to be published in Fall/Winter 2004.

The journal will explore the subject::

Mothering and Work/ Mothering as Work

The journal will explore the topic of mothering and work/mothering as work from a variety of perspectives and disciplines. We welcome submissions from scholars, students, activists, policy makers, artists and others who work or research in this area. We also welcome creative reflections such as poetry, short stories, and artwork on the subject.

If you are interested in writing a book review, we have books in need of a review, or if you know of a recent publication that you think would be relevant, please contact Cheryl Dobinson at cjdobins@yorku.ca

Submission Guidelines
Book reviews are to be no more than two pages (500 words), articles should be 15 pages (3750 words).
All should be in MLA style, in WordPerfect or Word and IBM compatible.

For more information, please contact us at:
Association for Research on Mothering
726 Atkinson College, York University,
4700 Keele Street,
Toronto, ON, Canada M3J 1P3
(416) 736-2100 x 60366,
Email: arm@yorku.ca Website: www.yorku.ca/crm

Submissions must be received by May 1, 2004.

To submit work to the journal, one must be a member of ARM and memberships must be received by May 1, 2004.

Call for Papers

The Association for Research on Mothering (ARM) invites submission of abstracts for our 8th Annual Conference

Mothering and Feminism

October 22-24, 2004
York University, Toronto, Canada

This conference will explore, from a variety of perspectives and disciplines, the intersections between mothering, motherhood and feminism. It will also examine developments in the field of maternal feminist scholarship, the experiences and perspectives of feminist mothers, and representations of mothering and feminism.

We welcome submissions from students, activists, scholars, artists and others who work or research in this area. Cross-cultural, historical and comparative work is encouraged. We encourage a variety of types of submissions including academic papers, workshops, creative submissions, performances, storytelling, visual arts and other alternative formats.

——Call for Papers——

Confirmed keynote speakers include:

Christina Bobel,
author of *The Paradox of Natural Mothering*
Andrea Buchanan,
author of *Mother Shock: Loving Every (Other) Minute of It*
Patrice Diquinzio,
author of *The Impossibility of Motherhood*
Ariel Gore,
author of *Breeder* and *The Mother Trip*
Sharon Hays,
author of *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood*
Susan Maushart,
author of *The Mask of Motherhood*
Andrea O'Reilly,
editor of *Mothers and Daughters* and *Mothers and Sons*,
author of *Toni Morrison and Motherhood*

If you are interested in being considered as a presenter, please send a 250 word abstract and a 50 word bio by **March 1, 2004** to:

Association for Research on Mothering
726 Atkinson College, York University,
4700 Keele Street
Toronto, ON, Canada M3J 1P3
Call us at (416) 736-2100 x 60366,
or email us at arm@yorku.ca

One must be a member of ARM to submit an abstract.

Call for Papers

The Association for Research on Mothering (ARM)
invites submissions for a one-day conference
in honour of Mother's Day on:

Grandmothers and Grandmothering

May 1, 2004
York University, Toronto, Canada

This conference will explore, from a variety of perspectives and disciplines, the experiences, perspectives and representations of grandmothers, grandmothering and grandmotherhood. It will also examine the role and impact of older women as grandmother figures in communities and social movements, regardless of their family status. We are seeking submissions from students, activists, scholars, practitioners and artists. Cross-cultural, historical and comparative work is encouraged. We welcome a variety of submission types including academic papers, workshops, and creative submissions.

The conference will open with a keynote address by
Hope Edelman, author of
***Motherless Daughters* and *Mother of My Mother*,**
on "Mothers' Mothers: The Maternal Grandmother
as Matriarch, Role Model, and Guide."

Topics can include, but are not limited to:

•grandmothers as primary caregivers •the impact of grandmothering on mothering •the impact of mothering on grandmothering •the motherline •mothering across generations •othermothering/community

Call for Papers

(grand)mothering •intergenerational maternal experiences •changing family relationships •the subjectivity of becoming a grandmother •stereotypes of grandmothers •representations of grandmothers: artistic, popular culture, media •changing views of self and by others upon becoming a grandmother •generational conflict and mothering styles •grandmothering and public policy •issues for immigrant grandmothers •invisibility and power of grandmothers •grandmothers of influence •ethnic and racial diversity of grandmothers •health and disability issues for grandmothers •elder care/role reversal—mothering grandmothers •grandmothers and the preservation of culture •relationships between grandmothers and grandchildren •motherloss and grandmothering •grandmotherloss •grandmother deities and goddesses •the crone •grandmothering and spirituality •grandmother wisdom—idealization or disparagement? •grandmothering and sexuality •lesbian/bisexual/queer/trans grandmothers •grandmothers and activism •the benefits of being a grandmother •grandmothers and poverty •AIDS and motherloss in Africa—the role of grandmothers •grandmothers and paid work •grandmothers and reproductive work •"young" grandmothers •baby boom grandmothers •feminist grandmothers •modeling grandmotherhood •radical grandmothers

We welcome submissions from a variety of disciplines.
If you are interested in being considered as a speaker, please send a 250 word abstract and a 50 word bio by September 1, 2003 to:

Association for Research on Mothering
726 Atkinson College,
York University,
4700 Keele Street,
Toronto, ON, Canada M3J 1P3
Call us at (416) 736-2100 x 60366,
or email us at arm@yorku.ca

One must be a member of ARM for 2003 in order to submit an abstract. Membership must be received with your submission.

Call for Papers

The Association for Research on Mothering is pleased to announce the publication of

Teaching Motherhood: A Collection of Post-secondary Courses on Mothering/Motherhood

This 90-page collection of syllabi from post-secondary courses across North America is an excellent resource guide for people teaching and researching in the area of mothering and motherhood. The collection begins with an article by Andrea O'Reilly, President of the Association for Research on Mothering, on designing a feminist course on mothering-motherhood, and contains 19 informative and detailed motherhood course descriptions (including extensive reading lists) in fields as diverse as English, Women's Studies, Law, Social Work, Sociology and Anthropology including:

- Mothering and Motherhood: Images, Issues and Patterns, Sharon Abbey
- Re-visioning Motherhood in Modern Western Culture, Lisa Algazi
- Women, Family and Law, Susan B. Boyd
- Theories and Politics of Motherhood, Lara Foley
- Feminist Perspectives on Motherhood, Joanne S. Frye
- Women with Adult Children in Fiction, Film, Pop Culture, and Their Own Words, Margaret Morganroth Gullette
- Mothers and Daughters in Contemporary Women's Writing, Andrea O'Reilly

To order this booklet please send $8 plus $2 shipping (Cdn/US) to the address below. For more information please contact us at the address below or visit our webpage.

Association for Research on Mothering (ARM)
726 Atkinson College, York University, 4700 Keele Street
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M3J 1P3
Email: arm@yorku.ca Webpage: www.yorku.ca/crm
Phone: 416 736 2100 Ext. 60366

Please make cheques payable to ARM. At this time we only accept Canadian and US funds, in the form of cash, cheque or international money orders.

Association for Research on Mothering

ARM 2004
MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please indicate your membership option
(one year and two year memberships/subscriptions are available):

Full ARM Membership includes: subscription to the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*) • members directory •listserve •reduced conference fees

❑ individual $ 65.00 Cdn/US* ❑ institution $ 85.00 Cdn/US*

❑ 2 yrs/ind. $120.00 Cdn/US* ❑ 2 yrs/inst. $170.00 Cdn/US*

Sustaining Full ARM Membership: as a sustaining member, your extra contribution will help ensure that ARM, a non-profit organization, can continue to meet its operating costs. 2003 sustaining members will receive a free copy of ARM's new publication, *Teaching Motherhood: A Collection of Post-Secondary Courses on Mothering-Motherhood.*

❑ individual/institutional sustaining membership $100.00 Cdn/US*

❑ 2 yrs individual/institutional sustaining membership $200.00 Cdn/US*

Basic ARM Membership includes: •members directory •listserve •reduced conference fees

❑ individual $40.00 Cdn/US* ❑ student/unwaged $30.00 Cdn/US*

❑ 2 yrs/ind. $70.00 Cdn/US* ❑ 2 yrs/student/unwaged $50.00 Cdn/US*

Subscription to the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*: (a biannual publication)

❑ individual $27.00 Cdn/US* ❑ institution $47.00 Cdn/US*

❑ 2 yrs/ind. $52.00 Cdn/US* ❑ 2 yrs/inst. $92.00 Cdn/US*

Mail in your membership form today!
Just fold here and tape together.

Stamp

Association for Research on Mothering
726 Atkinson College,
York University
4700 Keele Street,
Toronto ON M3J 1P3
Telephone: (416) 736-2100 x 60366
Email: arm@yorku.ca
Website: www.yorku.ca/crm