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Featuring articles by JaneMaree Maher, Debra Langan, Lorna Turnbull, Merlinda Weinberg, Alice Home, Naomi Bromberg Bar-Yam, Chris Bobel, Kate Connolly, Maryanne Dever and Lise Saugeres, Corinne Rusch-Drutz, Orit Avishai, Susan Schalge, Kelly C. Walter Carney and many more ...

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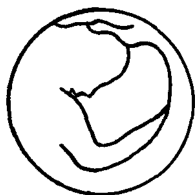

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Front Cover

Shirley Greer, "Ironies - Dress," detail, mixed media: softground etching, silkscreen text, embroidery, button, 81.2cm x 68.8cm, dress image size: 45cm x 53.5cm, 2002.

Shirley Greer is a printmaker and textile artist who pursued a formal art education in her mid-50s, after raising her family. She graduated from Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Corner Brook, NL with a BFA in 2003. Her body of work titled "Ironies" was in response to the (ironic) fact that while the work of mothering is rarely valued in our society, fine art images reflecting that work are highly valued. Shirley lives, and practices her art, in Pasadena, Newfoundland.

JaneMaree Maher

Skills, Not Attributes
Rethinking Mothering as Work

The title of Elizabeth Reid Boyd's article (2002) about mothers who stay at home full time is "'Being There': Mothers Who Stay at Home, Gender and Time." Boyd notes that this description surfaces repeatedly in how women, and others, describe what it is that constitutes motherhood. This description with its embedded sense of presence, rather than any particular form of activity, epitomises what Patrice Di Quinzio (1999) has argued is the key defining account of mothering in public discourse and in many theorised accounts, where motherhood is an all-encompassing identity, or a "state of being" (xv). Di Quinzio is critical of this formulation (xii), as is Anita Ilta Garey (1999) who suggests that this formulation institutes a problematic and artificial distinction between being and doing (11-12). This notion of being, rather than doing, predominates in thinking about and understanding mothering. In calling for mothers to "be there," we institute an impossible requirement for omnipresence and the potential for the full satisfaction of the child's needs. Reid Boyd (2002) argues for "the possibility of change" by reworking the meaning of "being there" (468), but in this article, I examine whether a new formulation of mothering as a trade might counter some of these essentialized formulations of maternal identity and move the debate forward. If motherhood is a state of being, then the labour women do, and the skills they employ to mother are rendered invisible. By contrast, if we describe mothering as a trade, we foreground the skills and the labour of women. We assign substantial importance to the materiality of the exchanges between women and their children. I focus particularly on how women combine mothering with paid work as a useful site to examine how women understand and respond to images of motherhood as being and doing. I consider how women in paid work deal with the tension between mother as an all-encompassing identity and notions of motherhood

and their own experience of working at motherhood in conjunction with paid employment. I examine some indicative pieces of research that suggest that women may understand mothering as the exercise of skills, as well as many other elements. In "Skills, Not Attributes," I look at what this research might suggest about new ways to think about mothering and focus particularly on whether this research suggests that the formulation of mothering as a trade, where women are utilizing a set of skills acquired "on the job," might offer some new ways to theorize motherhood.

As numerous scholars have noted, contemporary motherhood is "contested terrain" (McMahon, 1995: 1). In *Engendering Motherhood* (1995), Martha McMahon argues that as the relationship between motherhood and adult femininity has been unsettled in contemporary Western societies, thinking about motherhood has become increasingly difficult. Lisa Brush's (1996) "Love, Toil and Trouble: Motherhood and Feminist Politics" documents the contests and conflicts of feminist scholars seeking to reconfigure motherhood. Angela Hattery (2001) has suggested that this formulation of motherhood as an impossibly conflicted site underpins most accounts of motherhood generated in both scholarly and popular domains (6). It is important to acknowledge the accounts of struggle offered by women who mother, and particularly the struggles of those who mother in "unsanctioned" ways and contexts. But I think it is worth asking what contribution the persistent conceptualisation of motherhood as inherently conflicted makes to the struggles women experience as they mother. Barbara Pocock (2003), for example, has suggested the conflicts related to mothering in part reflect the persistence of "unrenovated models of motherhood" and argues that women's current experiences of mothering and working are undergirded by guilt (1). Anne Summers (2003) describes mothers "almost going crazy from the guilt and the pressure of the workload" (67). But are women who undertake some form of paid employment really labouring under intractable burdens of guilt as they mother? Or are there indications that women are developing more flexible accounts of mothering, ones that recognise the skill continuities between the work of mothering and other work?

In exploring this question, it seemed appropriate to focus on mothers who also do paid work as a useful initial step for two reasons. The first is that the combination of paid work and mothering activity already suggests a *work focus* that was useful for my exploration. The second factor was that much of the description of role conflict in motherhood is generated at this intersection. The conflict for women around mothering is often understood as related to the movement of women with young children into the paid workforce in great numbers over the past 30 years and changed expectations about women's roles. In Australia for example, as Belinda Probert and John Murphy (2001) have noted, despite the prevailing social expectation that mothers should not work fulltime, at least 50 percent of mothers with young children *do* work fulltime. This phenomenon is replicated in other western countries as James Albrecht,

Pers-Anders Edin and Susan Vroman (2000), Suzanne Bianchi (2000), and Claire Etaugh and Cara Moss (2001) have identified. The consistency of this phenomenon indicates that, in practice, women are finding means to operate as mothers and workers simultaneously. As well as investigating the structures that make such combinations difficult, we need to direct attentions to the ways women successfully combine these spheres and activities and what we might learn from their practices and strategic engagements.

From the outset, I want to acknowledge that this conceptualization of mothering as a trade is only one possible way to think about mothering and motherhood. This formulation draws on research into practices and experiences of mothering in Western contexts for working women and, as such, is specific in its location. As Heléna Ragoné and France Windance Twine (2000) contend in the "Introduction" to their important collection, *Ideologies and Technologies of Motherhood*, many women need to assert the essential and enduring nature of their maternal identity since political and social forces have systematically and often catastrophically interrupted their maternal practice (1). In Australia, for example, as detailed in the *Bringing Them Home* report (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1997) children were stolen from indigenous women who have claimed their status as mothers against great odds and fierce resistance, even when their children have not been returned. In instances like these, the assertion of an essential maternal identity where a woman has a clear identity as a mother might be crucial and valuable. But generating multiple and more complex accounts of mothering, and moving beyond formulaic and limited images of working mothers in crisis seems an important avenue to pursue also. Thinking of mothering as a trade, one that can be practiced alongside other activities and composed of skills and activities, counters notions of mother as an essential identity, formed by the attributes of full time presence and self-sacrifice. It posits mothering as a skilled activity with skills that are transferable across to other life aspirations and activities.

The fault line of working motherhood

In all western countries, changing patterns of women's paid employment, changing fertility rates and changing social expectations have been reflected in the movement into the workforce of women with young children in substantial numbers over the past several decades. Suzanne Bianchi (2000) identifies this "as the most revolutionary change in the American family in the twentieth century" (401). Despite the prevalence of this change across Western countries however, conflicted understandings of women's choices and preferences around mothering and paid work predominate in public discourse. On one hand, women in these western societies can apparently "choose" whether or not to have children and when, to choose paid employment in either a full-time or part-time capacity or to be full-time mothers (Hakim, 1995, 2000). But women are said to be burdened by expectations of the ideal mother who prioritises her motherhood above all else, who is patient, completely dedicated to her

children's needs and always available to respond to their demands (Arendell, 2000; Hattery, 2001; Hays, 1996; McMahon, 1995). Sharon Hays (1996) has claimed that these persistent notions of good mothering are substantial influences on how women make employment, reproductive and childcare decisions.

Teri Arendell (2000) focuses on this conflicted sense of motherhood in her account of the development of mothering scholarship, and charts a movement from the investigation of quality of mothering as it impacted on the child toward a focus on women's experiences and understandings. She also argues that there is much greater focus on "who does the relational and logistical work of child-rearing" (1192). But she later reflects, that despite attention to the activities and technical requirements of mothering, maternal identity continues to be a central focus in mothering scholarship. As Arendell notes, "with respect to identity, mothering is more powerful than either marital status or occupation" (1196). The tension between mothering as work and as identity continues to impact in thinking and research about mothering. And this is revealed particularly in accounts of the tensions inherent in combining mothering with paid work, where maternal identity and working identity are assumed to be distinct. Carol Sanger (1999) has argued that, "despite the fact of mothers working [in the paid workforce], the ideology that they shouldn't work persists with surprising vigour" (101). For Sharon Hays in *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood* (1996), the persistence of the ideology of "intensive mothering," with its implication of "being there," intellectually, emotionally and physically, is intimately connected to the increasing participation of women in the paid workforce. New expectations of maternal interest and attention provide additional sources of conflict for women combining mothering with paid employment. This discourse of conflict surrounding mothers in the paid workforce has generated a substantial amount of media copy, and has also engendered some cautionary tales such as Sylvia Ann Hewlett's (2002) *Baby Hunger*, which suggests that women are being drawn into paid employment to the detriment of their mothering aspirations, and realising, often too late, that they have missed the opportunity.

Given the predominance of such accounts, it is little wonder that accounts presenting mothering and paid work as compatible or as a pleasurable combination have received little sustained attention in public debates. Garey (1999), for example, identifies multiple "strategies of being" that are adopted by women to work through conflicts between paid employment and mothering activity (23-24). For the women in her study, "motherhood and employment are not incompatible activities in a zero-sum game" (Garey, 1999: 192). Lucy Bailey (1999) in her study of first time mothers noted that "the discursive construction of working identity had important continuities with the construction of mothering identity" in the accounts of her interviewees (342). While Bailey is focused on the language of identity, her conclusion that many of the women experienced a positive continuity of self in the transition to motherhood

indicates that women can simultaneously maintain a working identity and mother. In the next section, I focus more closely on an understanding of "work" as a crucial element of this possibility of combining the apparently antithetical spheres of work and mothering. In turning to work here, and maintaining a focus on the combination of paid work and mothering, I do not want to replicate what Fern Johnson (2001) has identified as the "problematic semantic notion of working mothers," (26) which she argues, reifies the separation of the public and private spheres and occludes the work done by mothers not in the paid workforce. But I am particularly interested in how ideas about transferable skills and capabilities might be utilized by women, the conventional accounts of juggling and balancing applied to mothers in the paid workforce do begin to open out such concepts.

The value of work as a conceptual tool

In *Constituting Feminist Subjects,* Kathi Weeks (1998) argues for the strategic value of work as constitutive. She argues that "the category of labour is ... intrinsically strategic ... its immanence and creativity cannot be separated from its practical value" (123). This formulation fits the work carried out by mothers. The affective and emotional realm, represented by the notion of "being" a mother and "being there" is constituted by the work that women do while they are being there. For the infant, the presence of the mother is indistinguishable from the provision of food, comfort and contact, all activities that are learnt and then performed by women. Although the forms of interaction change throughout the life course of the child, the labour of the mother continues to be crucial to the on-going development of the child and, simultaneously, to the constitution of her role as mother. For each child, the provision of such labour will shift according to the needs of the child and the woman, and the location in which the mothering is occurring. "Being" a mother is always "doing" things that mothers do. Weeks' formulation urges us to understand the constitutive value of the practical labour as integral to the formation of social relationships and experiences, rather than ancillary to them. In relation to mothering, this formulation directs attention to the activities that constitute interactions with children as central to motherhood, rather than the attribute of "being there."

This focus on labour moves forward and away from a discourse of attributes attached to the "mother." If we centralise motherwork, instead of maternal identity, this offers the opportunity to consider mothering as a trade, a set of skilled practices learned in situ, on the job. This paradigm shift allows for the generation of pragmatic and activity-focused descriptions of mothering that acknowledge the material work that women do and how integral this work is to experience of mothering. In the next section, I examine some recent investigations of working women and motherhood that suggest that this more flexible account of mothering as a trade is informing the attitudes and experiences of some women.

Suggestive research

In a number of recent research projects in which I was involved, where data on mothering experiences was sought from participants, I was struck by the absence of narrative references to "role conflict," guilt, or the intractable problems of combining motherwork with other forms of labour. Instead women in these studies presented accounts of "working" in a number of different spheres, very often using the same tools and strategies to successfully manage in each. Multi-tasking was effective at work and in mothering work. Children could be included in forms of work, and domestic management and mothering could be conducted in conjunction with paid employment.

This argument, that mothering work is always a contaminant of distinctions between maternal identities and other identity forms, and the public and private spheres, has found expression in a number of contemporary investigations of work and motherhood. In examining the following research, I focus on two particular themes. The first is the use of similar tools to manage aspects of mothering and working. Alison Morehead (2001) draws on her interviews with nurses in a Canberra hospital to suggest that simple dichotomies between work and family time need to be challenged and contested. Questioned about how time was managed and utilised, Morehead's respondents identified their mothering and paid employment as synchronous at times, as "they mother while at work, and some of their home time is permeated by work responsibilities" (356). They reported the use of the work telephone to "mother" while in their places of employment. Paige Edley (2001) explored the creative and resistant uses of communication technologies for women combining mothering and paid employment, suggesting that women could and did "use technology to achieve some balance in their complicated lives" (28), while acknowledging the potential for employer control that was also enabled by these technologies. The cell phone formed a crucial tool in how the women Edley interviewed managed both paid work and their mothering tasks.

The second theme identified was the creation of new landscapes where firm distinctions between mothering work and paid work were refigured. Ylva Elvin-Nowak and Heléne Thomsson (2001), in their study of the discursive construction of motherhood among employed Swedish mothers suggest that the women interviewed held potentially competing ideologies of gender equity and child-centred care in tension in their daily practices of mothering. Linda McKie, Susan Gregory and Sophia Bowlby (2002) suggest that the women they studied developed "caring scapes" as useful tools to identify the "demands of the everyday," and offer adequate "fluidity of time and space" (909) for the work they needed to do mothers and workers.

These new landscapes, created by the lateral use of skills, both technical and conceptual, across women's different spheres of responsibility, suggest new languages to describe the combination of paid work and mothering. They also suggest new ways to understand mothers' persistence in combining mothering and paid work. While Deborah Lupton and Virginia Schmied's (2002) study

of how women combine paid employment and mothering reports substantial issues for the women in their study, and indicates that "the dominance of the discourses that suggests that 'good mothers' should be devoted to their children to the exclusion of their own needs, and want to spend as much time as possible with them" (95), they did note that "nearly all of the women who had returned to work (and these were the majority of the women in the study) felt that they had gained a great deal from it" (106). In their study of twenty-six women who "creatively constructed their careers to maximize time with their families" (181), Aaron Jackson and Janet Scharman (2002) note that these women did not use the language of trade-offs or "either/or choice" (2002:184) in describing how they combined work and family. They coupled "passion and commitment with flexibility and tolerance for ambiguity" (183). Jackson and Scharman use subheadings like "Peaceful Trade-Offs" and "Pleasant Stress" to report their informants' experiences. As I earlier indicated, Lucy Bailey's (1999) informants felt that "there was a continuity ... between their conceptualisation of their mothering self and their conceptualisation of their working self" (342).

Daphne Spain and Suzanne Bianchi (1996) have argued that the gender dichotomy where women's family roles intrude on their work life, while men's work roles intrude on their family lives is one of the key difficulties for women in achieving balance between their competing roles (171). But a review of the findings cited above suggests that women may be developing strategic formulations that allow for an existence across both spheres that is not necessarily conflictive. The above research indicates that women can positively utilize this intrusion to develop their own structures to manage and integrate such demands without adopting commonly deployed dichotomies, between mother and worker, or presence and absence. Through the creative use of tools, and the development of transferable and pertinent skills, women operate effectively as both mothers and workers simultaneously.

These studies do not diminish the difficulties involved in combining mothering with other activities. But there are some indications that women may be working to renegotiate aspects of the culturally available, sanctioned images of motherhood as an all-encompassing identity that inhibits all other life aspirations. I suggest that following up on ways in which women devise creative and integrated programs of mothering work and paid employment, and focusing on the tools of this new trade might offer insight that could extend the terms of current public discussions and the "conflicted" and "contested" terrain of motherhood.

Conclusion

Brid Featherstone (1997), in the "Introduction" to *Mothering and Ambivalence* suggests that "little attention [is] given to the everyday practices that mothers carry out on behalf of, and with, their children" (7). Dorothy Roberts (1999) has identified judgements about mothers as underpinned by "omission liability" where one is always judged on what one has failed to do as a mother,

instead of what one has actually done (31). There is much more attention to the metadiscourses of quality, surveillance and identity around motherhood than there is to the activities that constitute it. But as Arendell (2000) has argued that "delineating what it is that mothers do ... [is] central in the conceptual work on mothering and motherhood" (1194), I suggest that women who mother may define many different types of activities as "work" and move across these activities without great conflict. Washing clothes, babies and cups at the office are all activities requiring the deployment of the same skill base. They can be understood as skilled tasks, rather than functions that belong to discrete identities of mother and worker. This use of the same capacities across a multiplicity of terrains suggests that mothers in paid employment may be practising a new trade, where their skills are exercised in a range of locations for different purposes. It can be argued that, in this combination of different types of work, the activities of mothering are rethought as skills, practices and capacities.

I am not suggesting in this formulation that being a "mother" is something one puts on or off. As Bonnie Fox (1998) has noted, women have "no choice" about accepting responsibility for their babies (165). Nor do I want to diminish the affective and intimate bonds women have with their children. But I am arguing that many of the attributes of motherhood are developed by motherwork, and that work is often transitory, temporally defined and activity based. The skills required to complete that work are also valid and useful in the pursuit of paid employment and many other activities. Nor should this formulation of mothering as skills be seen as applicable only where women are mothering in conjunction with undertaking paid work. Boyd Reid (2000) has argued that despite the apparent dualism between mothering conducted by women who are not in paid work and that done by women who are, there are substantial commonalities that need to be explored and understood; that caring for children almost always involves "spillover" between public and private spheres even if women are not in the paid workforce (468).

The construction of mothering as a trade, involving a set of transferable skills that have applicability across the endeavours of women's lives, does offer, in my view, some useful strategic advantages in current debates about motherhood. It focuses attention on the skills and strategies that women use to operate effectively across different spheres of endeavour. It promotes an understanding that "being a mother" is a more complex, pliable and active state than is commonly assumed. It directs attention beyond the identity model of motherhood to focus on the activities that comprise so much of the work and engagement of the mother. If maternal activity and not maternal identity can be understood as the most important aspect of mothering, many of the pervasive and reductive configurations of mothers who are not in paid employment as simply "being there" are contested, at the same time as images of working mothers endlessly battling intractable role conflicts are challenged.

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Kelly C. Walter Carney

Motherhood and Management

Motherhood is a perpetual topic of public discussion in the United States. From the colonial period, when the duty of the Republican mother to raise sons fit to serve the state was stressed, to the nineteenth century, when women claimed their moral prerogative as mothers gave them the right to advocate for abolition and suffrage, the way mothers do their job has frequently been linked to the state of the nation, and everyone feels free to weigh in on the topic. Occasionally, however, the mothers respond, as in the nineteenth century, daring to suggest that, rather than conform to social needs and expectations, society should conform to maternal needs and expectations. This is demonstrated beautifully in Harriet Beecher Stowe's (1986 [1852]) abolitionist novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* At one point, the fugitive slave Eliza and her son stop over in a Quaker settlement, governed benignly by Rachel:

> "Mother" was up betimes, and surrounded by busy girls and boys ... who all moved obediently to Rachel's gentle "Thee had better," or more gently "Hadn't the better?" in the work of getting breakfast; for a breakfast in the luxurious valleys of Indiana is a thing complicated and multiform, and, like picking up the rose-leaves and trimming the bushes in Paradise, asking other hands than those of the original mother.... Bards have written of the cestus of Venus, that turned the heads of all the world in successive generations. We had rather, for our part, have the cestus of Rachel Halliday, that kept heads from being turned, and made everything go on harmoniously. We think it is more suited to our modern days, decidedly. (222-223)

This passage is widely regarded as Stowe's model of how a society should

be governed: according to maternal principles. Rachel Halliday's calming presence, gentle methods of influence, and delegation, serve to promote individual well-being in the context of the communal good.

Today, as women become a fixture in the workplace, a workplace that moved away from the home during the Industrial Revolution, the question of motherhood is being rephrased: how can women be mothers and workers at the same time? Ann Crittenden's *The Price of Motherhood* (2001) speaks eloquently of the economic factors disadvantaging mothers, inside and outside of the home. Popular culture devotes a great deal of time to telling women that they cannot have it all, or even, it seems, much of "it;" this usually falls under the category of "debunking the superwoman myth."[1] Most of the popular books that deal with motherhood and work regard the two as in conflict; some authors, like Sylvia Ann Hewlett (2002) in *Creating a Life*, bemoan the choices many women have made (she is particularly troubled that women often postpone childbearing, or, sometimes have no children at all). Most popular books, however, bear titles like, *It's Not the Glass Ceiling, It's the Sticky Floor* (Engberg, 1999), and warn women about the difficulties of combining work and family, but also offer a modicum of hope—it may be difficult, but women do seem to be able to combine these two parts of life.

The optimism of popular reading is countered by scholarly research in the realm of business and management, which is pretty grim regarding the likelihood that a woman will be able to combine motherhood and management roles. Indeed, motherhood and paid work are often regarded as downright incompatible. As explained by Rita Mae Kelly (1997), "Women have been expected to fit in to the male model of work" (153), which does not accommodate involvement with one's children. Statistics indicate that, in 1999, although 71 percent of mothers (with children younger than 18) work, "60 percent of top women executives have no children, while only 5 percent of men in top management are childless." (Crampton and Mishra, 1999: para 12). Susan Wells (2001) observes that difficulty reconciling work/life issues has reduced the number of women in leadership roles, and even resulted in some women leaving such positions (paras 1-3). Clearly, many working women have gotten the societal message about motherhood and work, not to mention management: they don't mix.

Other writers focus on the ways that work can be made more family-friendly. Rather than stress the changes each individual woman must make, some suggest that perhaps society, or the way we work, ought to change, going so far as to suggest that such a change might benefit men as well. This is the implication of Crittenden's (2001) work, and of much of what one reads in *Working Mother* magazine, which compiles its own annual 100 list, judging companies based on issues like flexible scheduling, women's advancement, and leave time for new parents ("Making It: How We Choose the 100 Best Companies for Working Mothers," 2002: 64). Jayne Buxton's (1998) *Ending the Mother War: Starting the Workplace Revolution* simultaneously debunks

myths (particularly the Earth Mother myth) and argues for the creation of family-friendly workplaces. Although Jane White derides women who struggle to reconcile their work and home duties, insisting that the problem is that "most working mothers don't earn enough to afford... live-in nannies, carry our meals, and cleaning services that that would ease their workload on the 'second shift'" (9), she calls for wage parity rather than day care availability.

Scholarship in the field of business tends to focus on the same conflict between motherhood and management that is prominent in the popular literature, delineating the ways in which motherhood prevents women from advancement, as Veronica Nieva (1985) does in "Work and Family Linkages":

> Because women still tend to retain major responsibilities for the home whether they are employed or not, it is inevitable that home and family factors affect whether women decide to work, the jobs women take, the satisfaction they receive from working, their salary, and a host of other job-related behaviors and attitudes.... Many 'women's jobs' can be characterized as having the same service components as the wife and mother roles, and have been seen as extensions of women's primary home roles of providing nurture and support. (171-172)

Alternately, some scholars are concerned with the feasibility of various methods of accommodating business and family concerns, including corporate involvement, social programs, and increasing the husband's share of work in the "second shift" of housework and child care. Janet Chafetz (1997) addresses these concerns in her "'I Need a (Traditional) Wife!': Employment-Family Conflicts," endorsing such varied innovations as flex-time and telecommuting (120-121), suggesting improvements to family leave laws (121), proposing that pediatricians establish evening office hours (122), and "begin(ning) to take men's domestic and familial responsibilities as seriously as women's" (121).

Sally Helgesen (1995), in her landmark work, *The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership*, approaches the problem of motherhood from a managerial perspective:

> Increasingly, motherhood is being recognized as an excellent school for managers, demanding many of the same skills: organization, pacing, the balancing of conflicting claims, teaching, guiding, leading, monitoring, handling disturbances, imparting information.... As Barbara Grogan put it, "If you can figure out which one gets the gumdrop, the four-year-old or the six-year-old, you can negotiate any contract in the world." (31-32).

Helgesen (1995) is far less concerned with weighing the conflicting claims of motherhood and work, but in how the experience of motherhood prepares one for managerial work. What skills are required for both roles? To what

extent do they overlap? Are mothers indeed uniquely prepared for management roles?

This interesting and unique perspective—that motherhood is management—could be usefully applied to issues regarding the conflict between the two roles. If motherhood is regarded as a form of management, then a woman who takes a six-week childbearing leave or even goes "off-track" for a few years to attend to pre-school children might be regarded, not as "atrophied" (Crittenden, 2001: 6), but as entering a particular type of management training program. Indeed, the converse phrasing—management is motherhood—could lead to wider acceptance of programs designed to help employment and family co-exist. If management is motherhood, then flex-time and childcare options seem less objectionable. Perhaps motherhood ought not to be regarded as a managerial liability; rather, it is a positive and useful phase of a woman's working life.

In addition, regarding management and motherhood as consisting of complementary skill sets can smooth over some of the anxiety associated with the ideas of "masculine" and "feminine" management styles. Most scholarship in leadership studies seems not to be clear on the distinction between sex and gender and to rely upon culturally-constructed notions of what women, in particular, are like.[2] The Bem Sex-Role Survey, for example, purports to determine the masculinity, femininity, or androgyny of one's leadership style by determining the degree to which one identifies with adjectives like "Cheerful... Loyal... Sensitive to the needs of others... Gullible" or "Defends own beliefs... Assertive... Analytical.... Willing to take a stand" (Pierce and Newstrom, 2003: 99). The first set of adjectives is associated with the feminine sex; the second, with the masculine sex. Clearly, considering the issue as a set of behaviors useful in the performance of these two jobs can help avoid some of the problems that arise from more essentializing approaches. There are, indeed, many practical and philosophical reasons to pursue Helgesen's (1995) interesting comparison.

Unfortunately, the most important ingredient of such a study—a practical model of motherhood—appears to be unavailable in the scholarly literature. Popular literature is certainly full of books and magazines that scold mothers, idealize mothers, and advise mothers, but there is very little literature available that simply describes what it is that mothers do. Perhaps this seems too simple, too obvious, or too insignificant a topic to merit research; some, however, would argue that the traditional invisibility of women's work is a more plausible explanation for the lack of such scholarship (Crittenden, 2001: 2). The "selective inattention to the trivia of work and everyday life" (Jacobs, 1994: 21) prevalent in academia has resulted in the neglect of many aspects of experience. Clearly, the project at hand would be greatly aided by such focused scholarship, but there is not even a companion piece to Judy Syfer's (2003) famous "Why I Want a Wife" essay. This is not to say that the universities have been completely silent on the topic of motherhood. In her *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as*

Experience and Institution, Adrienne Rich (1986) tries to distinguish between the way motherhood is constructed by social forces and the way motherhood is lived out by individual women. Rich, however astute her observations and perceptive her analysis, is a poet, not a social scientist, and her work is aimed at helping individual women sort out their own experiences of motherhood; it does not provide a working model that will be helpful in this study. On the other hand, Sarah Blaffer Hrdy's (1999) *Mother Nature: Maternal Instincts and How They Shape the Human Species* investigates the motivations behind maternal behaviour (frequently regarded as "instinctive") from the point of view of an evolutionary psychologist, influenced by John Bowlby's "attachment theory," which posits that "babies are genetically programmed to seek and form an attachment to a trusted figure ... (which) is an essential aspect of emotional development in humans" (cited in Hrdy: xiii). Hrdy's scientific perspective enables her to regard the elements of motherhood with some detachment: "The fact that most of us equate maternity with charity and self-sacrifice, rather than with the innumerable things a mother does to make sure some of her offspring grow up alive and well, tells us a great deal about how conflicting interests between fathers and mothers have played out..." (12). Those "innumerable things a mother does" are the tasks that befit her for management.

Beyond the most essential biological tasks of conceiving, gestating, birthing, and lactating, Hrdy (1999) postulates a variety of "Maternal Effects" (69) based on research among animals and humans.[3] Among them, she suggests that mothers "can facilitate or impede adaptation to new conditions" (70), communicate information to children (76), provide the young with resources (80), develop the offspring's social environment (80), schemingly maneuver to promote the careers of their children (84), rely upon the assistance of allomothers (supportive colleagues) to raise their young (91), and demonstrate concern for the infant's well-being (95). As she argues that "competitiveness, status-striving, and ambition" are compatible with motherhood (110), Hrdy enters the fray on the question of how mothers combine their work and family roles. Although she concedes that women's status-seeking has become separated from their child-rearing (112), she acknowledges that maternal ambition is a powerful force to be contended with, and that modern women are finding new ways to deal with problems that have been dealt with before in our history as a race (and, she would argue, by humanity's evolutionary forebearers). Foraging women in tribal societies, for example, have had to balance the demands of child care and foraging—certainly toting a suckling child for several years can impede one's ability to forage efficiently (100-101, 109). Hrdy expresses the situation in evolutionary terms:

> ...each of us constantly makes myriad small decisions on a daily basis that in ancestral environments would have been correlated with reproductive success. Like it or not, each of us lives with the emotional legacy and decision-making equipment of mothers who acted so as to

> ensure that at least one offspring survived to reproduce. Prudent allocation of reproductive effort and the construction of an advantageous social niche in which her offspring could survive and prosper was linked to ultimate reproductive success. (1999: 114)

Hrdy's description is interesting because she considers both "reproductive efforts" and activities reflecting the mother's ambition (social and, in terms of access to food, economic ambition) to be part of motherhood.

Hrdy's (1999) research provides a working description of the job of motherhood as a set of skills engaged in to promote the survival of both the mother and the offspring, promoting a view of motherhood as a series of complex decisions and choices. Thus, mothers "manage" their children, training them, teaching them, providing a collegial atmosphere for them, networking on their behalf, and caring for them emotionally. This perspective results in a form of decisive management that is designed to promote the subordinate's independence and even eventual promotion.

This view contradicts some stereotypes about motherhood and management. Deborah Tannen (1994) attributes some male difficulty responding to women in power to the fact that, in Western culture, our primary social construct of female power is motherhood. Thus, a male subordinate whose female boss requests that he talk to her before proceeding on a new project sees this request as insulting—he is expected to "ask Mommy for permission" (Tannen, 1994: 161). However, Tannen reports that women managers sometimes use the maternal image for themselves, "if they watched out for those who reported to them" (161). These women see motherhood as a supportive form of management.

Although motherhood itself has not been studied from a management perspective, these practices which seem to characterize motherhood certainly have. At the end of his *Leadership in Organizations*, Gary Yukl (2002) lists what he believes to be the most important functions of an effective leader:

> 1. Help interpret the meaning of events.... 2. Create alignment on objectives and strategies.... 3.Build task commitment and optimism....4. Build mutual trust and cooperation.... 5. Strengthen collective identity.... 6. Organize and coordinate activities.... 7. Encourage and facilitate collective learning....8. Obtain necessary resources and support.... 9. Develop and empower people....10. Promote social justice and morality. (439-440)

Many of these activities find parallels in the list abstracted from Hrdy's (1999) study;[4] others might resonate with those who have mothered or observed mothering closely.

One might surmise that, if this mothering approach is a way that women find natural to lead, it might be a way to lead women as well. As Hrdy points

out, it is in the context of maternal care and the community of allomothers that one learns executive skills and decision-making (143). Modern mothering managers certainly could benefit from the influence of allomothers—in this case, not substitute parents, but mentors. In *Women and Work: A Psychological Perspective*, Veronica Nieva and Barbara Gutek (1981) indicate that women rarely benefit from the informal and formal sponsorship networks that function in many businesses (57). Suzanne Crampton and Jitendra Mishra (1999) refer to the dearth, not only of available mentors, but of sponsors, role models, and supportive networks, as factors that can hinder women as they seek to climb the corporate ladder (paras 16-21). In academia, the cultural and generational gap between the few older women and the younger women (Toth, 1997: 80-82) have led many of those young academics to resort to a paper mentor, in the form of Ms Mentor's advice column; her stated goal is to get women tenure: "She[5] wants women to have power in academia NOW" (Toth, 1997: xi).

Indeed, scientific research indicates that gathering together with other women is a healthful female alternative to the fight-or flight syndrome. The human hormonal response to stress includes oxytocin (a hormone which is suppressed by testosterone and enhanced by estrogen), which prompts the woman under its influence to "tend children and gather with other women... When she actually engages in this tending or befriending,... more oxytocin is released, which further counters stress" (Isaacson, 2002: para 9-10).[6] Clearly, a community of professional women helping one another is necessary to the development of a new view that connects motherhood with management.

Motherhood is a phenomenon and practice deserving of increased study. To truly establish the linkage between mothering and managing that Sally Helgesen suggests, further research is required, along the lines of the diary studies that she herself uses to discover how women lead organizations and people. Although her initial assertion that motherhood is *already* recognized as management training might seem overly optimistic, there is research that indicates that women's effectiveness as mangers is gaining some recognition. Brian S. Moskal (2003) claims that, "Women Make Better Managers," citing survey and statistical research that indicates that women excel at a variety of managerial skills. Other research indicates that women discipline subordinates more consistently than men (Bellizzi, 2002: para 1). Yet more scholars conclude that, "Women managers reduce costs because of the unfortunate and disturbing fact that they continue to command relatively lower wages" (Stites-Doe, 1997: para 6),[7] and are thus a benefit to the company's bottom line.

Jean Elshtain (1981) expands our notion of motherhood beyond mere corporate applications, suggesting that motherhood could be constructed as a moral guide for feminists:

> For women to affirm the protection of fragile and vulnerable human existence as the basis of a mode of political discourse, and to create the terms for its flourishing as a worthy political activity, for women to

> stand firm against cries of 'emotional' or 'sentimental' even as they refuse to lapse into a sentimental rendering of the values and languages which flow from 'mothering,' would signal a force of great reconstructive potential. (336)

This reconstructive force has a place in the political realm and in business; hopefully, as such principles gain wider acceptance, the longstanding enmity between work and family will cease. Regarding motherhood and management as complementary skills will make it easier for women to do both jobs, making "everything go on harmoniously," as Harriet Beecher Stowe (1986 [1852]) predicted more than a century ago.

[1]No one seems terribly worried about the superman myth, but that's another topic.
[2]I have found one excellent exception: Marie-Thérèse Claes (1999) builds her "Women, Men and Management Styles" upon a carefully structured distinction between gender and sex.
[3]These "Maternal effects," the tasks that mothers engage in, are what I mean here by "motherhood."
[4]Hrdy's (1999) "facilitate adaptation" links to Yukl's (2002) #1,2,5; Hrdy's "communicate information" links to #1,7; "provide resources" links to #8; "develop social environment" links to #1,3,6; "maneuver" links to #2; "rely upon allomothers" links to #2,4; "demonstrate concern" links to #3,10; Yukl's #9 closely approximates Hrdy's general definition of motherhood.
[5]Ms Mentor, like Miss Manners, always prefers to refer to herself in the third person.
[6]Oxytocin is also the hormone most strongly associated with lactation and nursing.
[7]None of these studies indicate how many of the women referenced are mothers—mothers are lumped together with all women.

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Debra Langan

Using Mothering at Work

Embracing the Contradictions in Pedagogy and Praxis

For the past five years, I have been researching, working on, and writing about ways of enhancing the teaching of critical perspectives, with the aim of getting students to examine dominant ideologies and taken-for-granted practices. My pedagogical approach combines a number of strategies, one of which is to bring my experiences as a mother, and the experiences of those mothers that I know, to the podium, in my practice of teaching sociology. The experience of mothering has profoundly informed my awareness of the extent to which we are socially ordered.

One example of how mothering changed my understanding stands out in my memory. About a decade ago, I read Amy Rossiter's book: *From Private to Public: A Feminist Exploration of Early Mothering* (1988). I remember reading, and re-reading what, in her words, was her central research question: "How does the way our society organizes mothering help to create the concept of 'Woman' as it exists in capitalist patriarchy?" (11). At the time, I didn't get it. And then, a year later, when I had my first child, Dylan, I got it! I understood that to be a mother is to learn a particular state of being because of the ways in which society organizes mothering; that the social arrangements of mothering dictate, in large part, a woman's experience of mothering. I then related to what Rossiter was saying:

> When my first baby was born, it became less and less possible to ignore how I myself had been formed—was being formed—within a social context....We can see mothering in the countless, minute interventions of power in daily life: to be isolated, dependent, "too fat," to have nothing to say, is to be Womaned through mothering. (Rossiter, 1988: 15)

As one invested in feminist perspectives, I saw, and resented, the isolation at home, the invisibility of my unpaid housework, and others' devaluing of my work as a mother. But at the same time, I enjoyed my social location because of the patriarchal structure: I loved being the one who should "naturally" be home with kids; only lecturing two days a week, and squeezing work in around that; being accessible to breast feed my kids for years at a time, because of the benefits of maternity leave, and of being home with them a lot after that; not being ostracized because I was the one who stayed home most with the kids.

Through feminist and postmodern social psychology, I came to understand that my "mixed feelings" were characteristic not only of my experience of mothering, but of social experiences more generally. Postmodernists argue that "people are constantly in the process of being formed and of producing themselves" (Rossiter, 1988, 22) such that "self" and identity are "fragmentary, inconsistent, and contradictory" (Gavey, 1989: 465). Kenneth Gergen's (1991) book, *The Saturated Self* provided wonderful illustrations of how in high tech society we live "multiphrenic selves" because of the multitude of possibilities as to who we might choose to "be" at any given moment. From this perspective, "people constantly reconstruct themselves as their personal circumstances and awareness change" (Unger, 1990: 141). Language is seen as the primary determinant of an individual's sense of self, or "subjectivity," "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself, and her ways of understanding her relation to the world" (Weedon qtd. in Gavey, 1989: 462). Challenging the traditional view of language as "a neutral, blank transmitter of experience," (Potter et al., 1984: 158) the postmodern premise is that "language speaks through the person ... [who] ... becomes a medium for the culture and its language" (Kvale, 1992: 36). Language conveys discourses that perpetuate particular ideologies, "common sense assumptions which are implicit in the conversations according to which people interact linguistically, and of which people are generally not aware..." (Fairclough, 1989: 2). One dominant taken-for-granted assumption is that social life is coherent, as noted by Wendy Hollway (1989): "... [T]he principal of unitariness still underpins the vast majority of discourses, amounting to a dominant ideology which suppresses those recognitions of multiplicity and contradiction" (43-44). Hollway's critique pertains also to the social sciences, where the tendency has been to render invisible the contradictory and confused qualities of social life by paradigmatic assumptions of unity and coherence (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 36-37). Postmodern analyses deconstruct these assumptions and illustrate how contradictions in discourse foster contradictions in our lived experience, what Michael Billig (1988) calls "ideological dilemmas".

Influenced by postmodern insights and by my expanding repertoires of experience as a mother and a professor, I began to identify the contradictions not only in my *experience* of mothering, but also between my ideological investments and my everyday practices as a mother. Especially as my children grew and moved more and more outside the institution of the family, I found

myself in situations where I "hid" my investments in critical analyses, and refrained from doing what I wanted to do. Caught between a sense of myself as self-determining, and a sense of myself as socially structured, I related well to Billig's (1988) concept of "ideological dilemmas." Although then, and now, I see myself as a feminist mother, I would argue that this identity is not absolute for me or for anyone else. Rather than a fixed, stable identity, feminist mothering fluctuates according to situations and over time, either extended periods of time or within short-lived periods of time. Although I and other feminist mothers practice many forms of resistance to social devaluations of mothering, I recognize a disjuncture between my ideological commitments and my practices. For example, in play groups, I have listened to other mothers talk about taking on all the domestic responsibilities, and complain about their situations, and I have refrained from sharing my critical analysis of the ways in which gender structures social relations. As a parent volunteer in Kindergarten classes, I have watched the teacher talk to children about family structure by using only a heterosexual nuclear family model, and I have not suggested alternative models. When my son cross-checked another boy in hockey (what constituted an abhorrent act of violence, in my view), instead of pulling him off the ice, I dealt with him, and those involved, in the locker room. When my daughter goes out the door looking like Shaggy from Scooby Doo, I have encouraged her to refashion herself more like the other little girls in her grade one class (with pretty pony tails, and crisp, brightly-coloured matching clothing), all the while berating myself internally because I was focusing on her appearance (setting the stage for future anorexia), and because I was more concerned about how others would respond to her appearance (and blame me for it.) In other words, although I am invested in critical feminist analyses in my classrooms and in my home, I also find myself acting in ways that perpetuate the dominant ideology, as I carry out the roles of wife and mother in the context of community. This is not to say that I never challenge dominant, patriarchal ideologies or practices, but I am keenly aware of the times that I do not.

So, why have I not consistently been true to my feminist commitments? Because I am subject to the same social constraints as are many others. I live in a conservative community in Ontario. I don't want to be marginalized by the other mothers, fathers, teachers, neighbours, etc. for what I know they perceive as "extreme" views; I want my kids to have other kids to play with; I want the teachers to like my child (and this is connected to liking the parent) and so on. Although I feel safe to let my feminist identity be known within academic communities, and with my partner and my children, in my domestic community my "feminist" identity and my views fall into the category of "radical" and can jeopardize social relationships. Practicing feminist mothering, in many social contexts, requires thoughtful management.

So, back to my classrooms. As I indicated earlier, my central mission as a sociology professor is to have students understand the complexity of their own, and others', everyday experiences within the context of the larger social order.

Mothering provides endless, poignant examples of how various facets of identity (gender, race, class, sexual preference, age, ability) shape individual experience. Teaching critical analyses in my sociology courses is especially challenging, I would argue, because:

- The courses I teach are not classified as "women's studies" courses (hence, they don't come with a "Beware of Feminist Content" label).
- It's a tough job to maintain student interest, generally speaking.
- Mothering as a topic is devalued by many.
- Feminist analyses, if named such, are often met with resistance and, at times, hostility.

One of my favourite articles to get students engaged in reflexive analysis that illuminates the contradictory nature of social life is by Margaret Wetherell, Hilda Stiven, and Jonathan Potter (1987) entitled "Unequal Egalitarianism: A Preliminary Study of Discourses Concerning Gender and Employment Opportunities." They interviewed male and female fourth-year university students and asked them what they saw in their future with respect workplaces, careers and children. Students said that they believed in equal opportunities, and they emphasized the importance of couples sharing equally in things like careers and childcare responsibilities ("equal opportunities discourse"). But, during the same interviews, students stated that when it 'came right down to it,' the woman in the relationship would be the one to make compromises in her career so that she could stay home, do housework, and look after the kids ("practical considerations discourse"). What is especially interesting is that the students reproduced each of these conflicting discourses in a sense 'at the same time,' and they appeared to be unaware of the contradictions that were embedded in their depictions of the future. Their discursive productions serve to naturalize and justify inequality, while at the same time achieving positive self-presentation in terms of moral principles. The authors argue that as these kinds of unproblematic contradictions are perpetuated through discourse, they serve to reinforce *actual* inequalities between men and women in the workforce and at home.

My students' responses to the Wetherell et al. (1987) article are mixed. It's not fashionable in our society to be contradictory, for to contradict oneself is to be less-than-genuine, hence many students struggle when asked to apply this analysis to their own subjectivity. Research on student responses to critical pedagogy suggests that many others have experienced similar kinds of student struggle (Volman and Ten Dam, 1998; Lather, 1991; Bulbeck, 2001; Budgeon, 2001; Titus, 2000). While a number of explanations for student resistance have been posited, one of the reasons they wish to avoid affiliation with feminism is because it results in a disparaging identity (Langan, 1997; Myaskovsky & Wittig, 1997; Dietzel and Pagenhart ,1995; Horue et al.,2001) as "man hater" (Bulbeck, 2001; Letherby and Marchbank, 2001; Culley, 1985), "victim" (Kitzinger and Thomas, 1995; Volman and Ten Dam, 1998), "psychopath"

(Paquin 2001), or "lesbian" (Paquin 2001; Letherby and Marchbank, 2001; Culley, 1985). Student struggles, when manifest as resistance, often promote hostile classroom environments, and my experiences in this regard (Langan and Paquin, 2000) have been consistent with the reports of other women faculty and students who are invested in critical perspectives (Menzies and Chunn, 1991; Bulbeck, 2001; Kitzinger and Thomas 1995; Volman and Ten Dam, 1998; Titus, 2000; Letherby and Marchbank, 2001; Paquin, 2001; The Chilly Collective, 1995).

I have found that admitting to my own lived contradictions makes way for students to consider the contradictions in their own lives and feminist critiques more generally. While this approach is not a panacea for eliminating student struggles (which I believe are essential for the learning process), it is a way of teaching that grounds analyses in examples that I feel are accessible, both to me and to my students. My decision to share stories of my personal struggles with the compatability of mother/feminist/professor identities and actions is in keeping with Dorothy Smith's (1988) writings on "bifurcated consciousness". She notes that the work of sociology has traditionally been an objective endeavour, one that is removed from women's everyday lived realities. Smith points to the way that women who teach sociology experience a disjuncture between objective sociological information and their own social experiences. My decision to bring my personal experiences into the public realm of my teaching represents my attempt to reconcile, for myself and for my students, the sociology world and world of lived realities.

I've also involved other mothers and their experiences in my teaching project. For example, this past winter I drew on my mother's experiences with dying. For a three-month period prior to her death, as her health deteriorated, and she made the move to a nursing home, I worked hard to be there for her (she lived four hours from my home) and there for my my husband and children, and at the university for my paid work. This situation made it difficult often to prepare lectures that were entirely grounded in the literature. During long drives through Ontario, I would apply sociological analyses to the struggles that my mother, and myself, were having with the medical institutions, as she sought individual recognition (with respect to how she wanted simultaneously, to live and die) in a depersonalized bureaucracy. I integrated these analyses into my lectures. I also engage guest lecturers to impart analyses that are grounded in their experiences as mothers, for example, experiences of perinatal loss and of lesbian parenting. On one occasion, a colleague brought her children to her guest lecture, and when her five-month-old began to fuss, she picked him up, and began to breastfeed as she lectured. In subsequent class discussions, students heatedly debated her actions, and I used their discussions to illustrate the idea of contradictory investments in discourse. In the following excerpt, one of these students celebrates the guest lecturer's "success" in both the private and public realms. Still, she and others felt "unease" when those realms were brought together in the classroom:

> *We all agreed that it was empowering for us to see the image of... [the guest speaker] ... as a mother, academic and breadwinner. We were given the image of a woman who had conquered all of the domains of life. Yet, when she began to breastfeed some in our group expressed being uncomfortable with the amalgamation of her domestic and scholarly identities. One guy in our group felt uncomfortable because he felt there was a time and place for everything, he did not feel that giving a lecture was also a good time to be breastfeeding. I on one hand, thought it was good to see her doing both, yet I also felt like I was intruding on something private. Each of us felt a bit of unease. We were also upset by this unease. As feminist thinkers this was an excellent illustration of a feminist. Motherhood was not interfering with her scholarly life.... When Debra told us that contradiction is a part of feminism we were relieved because it said it was okay to be uneasy and still be a feminist.*

The vast majority of York's undergraduate students have not been mothers or fathers, so their reflective analyses do not typically focus on their experiences in these roles. Instead, frequently they centre on their family relationships. When professors model reflection for students by analyzing their own experiences, it helps students apply these kinds of analyses to their own lives. In the next two examples, students talk about their relationships with their mothers through written assignments that called for the application of critical analyses to their own life experiences.

Example #1: "Mila" was born in a country with a repressive regime. Because her parents disagreed with the dictates of the regime and her mother was a "full-fledged feminist," they moved their young family to Canada when Mila was a child. Mila recalled an incident that happened soon after she arrived in Canada.

> *One incident that I remember clearly when first coming to Canada was when I saw a female bus driver for the first time. I was utterly shocked and in a sense of disbelief. I remember saying "Look mom, it's a woman bus driver, isn't that funny?" My mother not only did not find it funny but she was furious with me. She took it so personally that until this day, I could not figure out why.... Throughout the course it has gradually helped my view of life and also enabled me to find explanation for my past experiences.... I was now able to understand why my mother got so mad when I made that comment about the woman bus driver. I now realize how hard it has been for women to achieve what they have achieved and it is these hardheaded views of women's scripted roles that brought women down for many generations. [Through this course] I realize my culture of birth and early childhood did have an affect on me and on my views no matter how much of a feminist my mother was.... I live my life today as a feminist and am proud of it.*

Example #2: "Tony" described how the critical analyses in class had led him to see the assignment of burnt steak in his family as having gendered significance:

> *My original thesis ... was that feminist issues were overblown.... There was one particular discussion in class which led to my period of antithesis. I was arguing that my mother would eat a burnt steak while leaving the good one for me because she was a parent who was sacrificing for her child, not because she was in a subordinate position to me with respect to gender. Then ... [I was asked if] ... I would let my father eat a burnt steak so I could have a good one. When I thought about my unwillingness to entertain the notion of making my father eat a burnt steak, the relationships within my family became coloured with "gendered particulars".... This enlightenment led me to analyze my own reactions to see if I was perpetuating oppressive ideologies on the women in my family. By leaving the burnt steak for my mother, but not for my father, I was implying that her status is beneath mine and mine is beneath my father's.... I only saw the burnt steak scenario as oppressive to women when its gendered particulars were pointed out to me.*

Conclusion

As a working mother, both paid and unpaid, like countless others I can attest to the difficulties in juggling work in the public and private realms. At the same time, I have found that my work as a mother and my work as an academic inform each other in ways that are meaningful to me and to my students. Access to critical analyses has made it possible for me to make sense of, and embrace, the ideological contradictions that characterize my lived realities as a feminist who is also a mother. By including in my lectures examples of the complexities involved in mothering identities and practices, I model for students ways to apply sociological analyses to their own life experiences. Acknowledging the contradictory nature of mothering, and the contradictory nature of social experience in intimate relations more generally, provides critical frameworks for students to make sense of, and potentially change, their social experiences.

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In Remembrance:
Andrea Reisch Toepell

Toepell, Andrea Reisch, PhD. In Hamilton on July 09, 2004 after a prolonged illness, peacefully and surrounded by love. Dearly loved and admired wife, adoring, thoughtful, and imaginative mother of two precious, young daughters. Loving and devoted daughter; dearest friend; caring and interested sister, sister-in-law, aunt, niece, and cousin who will be missed by extended family members, colleagues and many friends in Canada, the United States, and Germany.

Andrea was born on September 29, 1959 in Toronto and lived her full and beautiful life in Toronto and more recently in Dundas. Andrea completed her doctorate at the University of Toronto and was an Associate Professor in Applied Health Sciences at Brock University. She was very much engaged in her work and her students' learning and intellectual growth. She always supported her colleagues and students and encouraged them to fulfil their goals and to follow their paths. Her professional pursuits included pioneering research in the area of HIV/AIDS in correctional settings. She held the position of Chair of Heart Health in Hamilton-Wentworth.

Andrea's curiosity and energy led her to sail the Great Lakes and the Atlantic, swim with the penguins of the Galapagos, and watch narwhals in the Arctic. She greatly loved her garden and joyously shared her knowledge and passion for nature's beauty with her family, friends, neighbours, and in particular she hoped to instill this joy in her daughters. Music always filled her home, her car, and her heart. Wherever she went she always treasured those whom she loved and cared for. Her laughter, unparalleled kindness, and love, will continue to resonate in our hearts and minds.

A funeral service for Andrea was held on July 12, 2004. She was buried at White Chapel Cemetery in Dundas. In lieu of flowers, Andrea's family kindly requested that friends plant trees in Israel in her memory. In Toronto, donors may call 416-638-7200 or by e-mail to <tor@jnf-canada.org> or www.jnf.org or 1-800-542-TREE (8733).

Alice Home

The Work That Never Ends

Employed Mothers of Children with Disabilities

The struggle for recognition of mothers' unpaid family work has been central in feminist circles. Scholars have addressed such themes as the undervaluing of mothers' time and expertise, the gulf between idealized perceptions of motherhood and everyday realities, as well as judgments as to what constitutes "good mothering" (Read, 2000). Giving mothers voice while making their daily work visible has exposed some myths surrounding the "labour of love." It is recognised that mothers' job description includes not only child care and domestic labour but also emotion work, aimed at improving interpersonal relationships and others' wellbeing (Strazdins, 2000). Furthermore, reduced public spending has made women increasingly responsible for the "executive" components of this work, such as identifying family needs, planning, scheduling and following up, seeking resources and advocating when needs are not met (Lee, 1997, Devault, 1999).

While demand for women's unpaid labour has increased, so too has their involvement in the paid workforce. However, they continue to be ascribed the primary caring role in society (Vanier Institute, 1998), while economic, work and community arrangements are still based on assumptions of their constant availability (Cancian and Oliker, 2000). Research indicates that family division has changed little in most families, as fathers mainly "help out" while employed mothers retain responsibility for family management (Leslie, Anderson and Branson, 1991). Inequitable division of family work is only part of the problem, however, in a society where many families are headed by the mother.

These issues have spawned a burgeoning research literature on women who combine employment with child care, which has drawn attention to the costs, benefits and workload involved, as well as to the obstacles to achieving job-family balance. Research on parental role quality has shown that women's

mental health is better when the rewards and challenges of mothering are in balance (Barnett, Brennan and Marshall, 1994). The literature on multiple roles also points out that existing family-work policies and practices are overwhelmingly based on average families' needs (Kagan, Lewis, Heaton and Cranshaw, 1999). Until recently, there was little research on combining mothering children with disabilities and employment, as many mothers gave in to societal pressure to leave the workplace (Marcenko and Meyers, 1991). Despite needing to help cover the increased costs disability brings, these women faced overwhelming tangible barriers to employment (lack of adapted child care, workplace rigidity), reflecting ambivalent public attitudes regarding their right to work (Kagan et al, 1999, Shearn and Todd, 2000). Recent research indicates some women are finding ways to fit employment around their unusual mothering responsibilities (Jenkins, 1997).

This paper addresses some gaps in the mothering and multiple role literature. It presents findings from a qualitative study[1] of 40 employed mothers of children with a prevalent invisible disability, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The study deals with these women's maternal role quality and supports, as well as combining this caregiving role with paid work. Data on the benefits and costs of this combination were the main source for this paper.

This study draws on feminist work regarding women's caring as well as on family disability literature. The former stresses how the gendered distribution of caring work has been masked by depicting women as "natural caregivers." Coupled with descriptions of caring as "a labour of love," this has minimised the difficulty of the mother's work, while making it very difficult to feel justified anger that is supposedly against women's nature (Mullaly, 2002). Mothers' caring work goes unrecognised in the economy, while the substantial personal, economic and career costs they bear remain hidden (Baines, Evans and Neysmith, 1991). When caring occurs in difficult situations, women are often blamed for being "inadequate" without addressing the societal context of their mothering (Swift, 2000). For example, mothers are expected to cope with impossible family situations and offered services only when they fail to manage (Davis and Krane, 1996). Instead of seeing mothers as doing a competent job in difficult circumstances, mothers who deviate from societal stereotypes of the "good Mom" are marginalized (Garcia Coll, Surrey and Weingarten, 1998).

Mothers whose children have disabilities are one such marginalized group. Not only is their caring workload vastly greater than that of most mothers, but they also receive little support. Those in couples often receive less help than in families without disabilities (Bristol, Gallagher and Schopler, 1988), as fathers tend to withdraw to their jobs (Martin, 1996), or focus on providing economic, financial and decision making support to the mother in "her" caring role (Traustadottir, 1991). Limited workplace provisions, already inadequate for average families, do not begin to meet the flexibility needs of these families (Greenspan, 1998). When the family situation is complicated by several disabilities, severe impairment or behaviour problems, the mother's caring role

can be mobilised at any time, yet she is expected to avoid disrupting work commitments (Shearn and Todd, 2000).

This situation is especially complex when disabilities are invisible and misunderstood, as with ADHD. This neurological disability leads to behavioural, social and learning problems, which can alienate teachers, peers and the community (Harvey 1998, Dane, 1990). Two-thirds of children with ADHD have a co-existing psychiatric or learning disability, yet the complexity of this disorder and its immense family impact are unrecognised (Anasopoulos, Guevremont, Shelton, and DuPaul, 1992). Despite scientific evidence of the biological origin of ADHD, media misrepresentation has led many to question whether it is a real disability (Barkley, 1997). This obliges mothers to educate professionals and the community, while coping with a difficult child and fighting for scarce resources (Sloman and Konstantareas, 1990).

Methodology and sample characteristics

Semi-structured interviews were the method of choice for eliciting in-depth data, while ensuring full coverage of key themes by these mothers, some of whom had attentional issues caused by this inherited disorder. The pre-tested interview guide covered work and family situations, rewards and challenges of mothering children with ADHD, supports used and combining this family work with employment. The transcribed interview data were coded into categories developed and cross-checked by two researchers, then thematic content analysis was carried out using data display tables (Miles and Huberman, 1984). A purposive, contrast sampling strategy (Patton, 1990) was used to reach a diversity of Ottawa area mothers of children aged 6-17, who were diagnosed with ADHD. Forty mothers, all employed at least ten hours weekly, were recruited via publicity (pamphlets) in social agencies and the community (libraries, recreation centres), as well as through three self-help groups. One-hour interviews were carried out in summer 2002 by two researchers, both mothers of children with ADHD.

The sample includes participants in various family situations, including nearly 40 percent in blended or one-parent families and several adoptive mothers. Children in the 6-12 age group and adolescents are both well represented. There is some cultural diversity, with 30 percent French-speaking and two First Nations women. Many participants describe difficult situations typical of families living with ADHD (Barkley, 1997). Over a third have several children with this disorder, half of whom also have an additional learning or psychiatric disability, such as a mood, anxiety or oppositional disorder.

These women occupy various paid work situations but are concentrated in the public, health and education sectors. Seventy percent work full-time, often for financial reasons or because suitable part-time work is lacking. Many choosing part-time work seek more availability or wish to "not have to divide myself up so much." Over 60 percent hold professional or managerial positions, a quarter are in administrative support or paraprofessional jobs and 13 percent

are self-employed, some in artistic or communications fields. A few have additional part-time jobs, heavy volunteer commitments or post-secondary studies. Not surprisingly, it is "go-go-go all day long" on the job.

It should be noted that while every effort was made to reach a diverse population, some mothers in the private sector and service industry may have lacked time to be interviewed. Some mothers may not have heard of the study, as recruitment was prohibited in schools and hospitals without additional internal ethics procedures. For these reasons, the findings are considered to portray accurately the experiences of these 40 women, but not necessarily those of all Canadian mothers in their situation.

Findings

Before presenting the findings on combining this unpaid family work with employment, it is important to examine briefly how mothering a child with ADHD is experienced. Results on role quality indicate that the balance of rewards and challenges varies amongst mothers and can shift rapidly with children's age and changing school situation. Rewards can come from the child's interesting qualities (humour, creativity) or progress despite the disability, from mothers' new skills or personal growth. However, challenges predominate, arising mainly from the child's difficult behaviour (defiance, irritability) or a tense family climate (conflict, arguing). Behavioural and organizational problems oblige mothers to be "always on guard" for crises, while "constantly running the ship." Other challenges include the high cost of medication and professionals not covered by public health insurance, as well as mothers' lack of time, energy and options. While some mothers get support from extended family, friends and professionals, many encounter negative attitudes, as " no-one understands my challenges" or are blamed for their children's behaviour. These mothers assume the additional burden of educating family, community and those professionals who are "quick to judge and slow to act," as well as having to find and access rationed services (Home, Kanigsberg and Trepanier, 2003).

Advantages and disadvantages of employment

Mothers' reflections on the benefits of combining this challenging family work with a job are summarized in Table 1, while the costs are found in Table 2. Pros or cons are expressed as a percentage of total responses for each table and listed in order of frequency of mention. As shown in table 1, being employed brings four main *benefits* according to these mothers.

Most important (one-third of responses) is the protective effect jobs can have on maternal mental health, given the intense emotional demands of these children. Seven women report that their sanity would be endangered if they were to stay home all the time. One mother explains : "I can't imagine spending 24/7 with these kids. I'd go mad," while another adds "It's not that I don't love my son dearly. It's just that I cannot imagine *not* working, having a child whose

behaviour is as emotionally challenging as his. At work, there's just not the same emotional drain." A job offers a break from constant vigilance and incessant demands, while providing something else to think about, rather than being "totally focused on my son." Otherwise, as one mother put it, "I would be at home worrying ... and wondering what more I could possibly do."

Another benefit, feeling more competent and confident, helps explain the first. Like many employed mothers, these women derive enjoyment, intellectual and social stimulation from autonomous outside involvement, which provides societal recognition of their work. However, these mothers need even more positive feedback to counterbalance feeling like "a terrible mother," getting so few parenting rewards and sensing so little accomplishment in their family role. The enhanced confidence from working also helps some mothers advocate more effectively for their children.

Table 1:
Benefits of Employment for Mothers of Children with ADHD

Categories of benefits	% of responses
Protects sanity, provides an emotional break	33%
Provides access to support and resources	28%
Enhances confidence and feelings of competence	21%
Positive job - family spillover	18%

Work can provide increased access to support, such as emotional help and understanding of colleagues in similar situations or who have counselling skills. Tangible support (salary, benefits) allows some mothers to purchase specialized resources such as tutors or special camps and obtain coverage of insured services. Getting information about resources, services or professionals through "accidental advice and connections" is also helpful.

Less obvious are benefits that flow from positive spillover, either from job to home or vice versa. Respondents working with families realise they are doing a good job mothering and some mental health professionals use their knowledge or techniques at home. Conversely, difficult mothering can enrich job performance, such as when teachers who understand what these parents go through are more able to modify their classroom expectations. Seeing their mother employed also helps some children understand that all family members have responsibilities: "you have to go to school, you gotta get a job."

Table 2:
Costs of Employment for ADHD Mothers

Categories of costs	% of responses
Endless family work, low support = triple, quadruple workday	33%
Intense job-family role conflict, due to frequent daytime appointments and sudden school crises.	20%
Role contagion, as office work is late, both job and family work are emotionally demanding.	15%
Role overload from "the constant never having a break."	10%
Sacrifices at work (refuse promotions, quit, work part-time) or in personal life (physical and emotional health, guilt, burnout)	25%

However, these mothers pay a heavy price for these benefits. Participants suggest these *costs* go beyond those borne by most multiple role mothers, because of the increased quantity and intensity of their family work. "Having to organize myself, my workday and my other child is already a lot ... but my ADHD child is twice as much work definitely." Another woman explains "there are more demands, emotional, physical, and time-wise with a kid like mine ... more appointments, discussion with teachers, help with homework, more of everything." This added work includes arranging for and following up on extra academic and professional help, seeking accommodations and advocating with reluctant school and community authorities. However, it is the emotional intensity that mothers find most draining, because "when you have an ADHD child, you work hard every time you're with him."

There is little extra support to ease the load. Spouses work late or travel on business, extended families live elsewhere or provide only emergency care, after school programmes cannot manage these children, and direly needed respite care is rarely available. Workplace family leave policies require advance notice, part-time work with benefits is scarce and rigid job schedules still abound. Some women manage by working out of their homes, but their ADHD children respect neither their work time nor space, and "with constant interruptions, I might as well give up." This combination of limited support and

intense family demands leaves many mothers feeling "alone to raise my difficult child."

Along with their heavy workloads, these women report having to contend with particularly disruptive job-family conflict and negative spillover. When frequent day-time appointments disturb work commitments such as important meetings, criticism and career consequences can ensue. Given these children's unpredictable behaviour problems, an emotionally wrenching form of role conflict occurs when school crises strike. A typical scenario is: "You get a call saying 'L is suspended for some horrible deed and he's arriving home immediately.' Everyone assumes you can just drop everything and run." One woman even keeps her child home when she senses a crisis brewing, but most are like the mother who sees no solution to this frequently occurring situation: "I have been called at work by the school so many times that I don't think it will ever stop. I think 'What did he do now?' Then having to leave in the middle of the day to go to the school and bail him out of whatever, suspensions..."

Never knowing when this might happen leaves many mothers with negative spillover, as they are "constantly worrying about him...thinking 'please don't let him hurt somebody today'." As "he's always in my head" and office work never gets done on time, eleven mothers report they never feel "fully present" and sense they are not doing a good job anywhere. Feeling guilty about "Robbing Peter to pay Paul" is another common problem. An intense form of role contagion is experienced by mothers in the helping professions whose clients have psychiatric or learning disabilities. In this situation, the lines between paid and unpaid caregiving can blur, as "I have to think a lot before I say anything, I have to structure them and it's very similar to home." On days when clients have crises, "you go home and you're 'still on', you can never relax. There's too many emotions...and not enough energy for my child, my husband, my clients...those are the days I think I might as well quit."

Many employed mothers experience overload that is manifested in constant rush and double workdays. ADHD mothering, however, means "energy is sucked out of you," there is never "calm time" for unfinished work or rest until after 10:00pm. As a result, there is "no time to take care of my work...or myself" and several mothers have physical stress symptoms or regular sleep disturbances. To avoid burnout ("trying to do it all just about killed me"), many women make career sacrifices. They cut back on hours or effort, "let promotions go elsewhere," change to a more flexible or part-time position or leave the workplace temporarily, such as when a child was "throwing such fits everywhere that they wouldn't want to keep him." While some mothers do not question the need to make these changes, a few wonder "why is it always up to me to make the concessions" or lament "mothers with 'garden variety' kids move ahead with their careers without having to slow down or constantly apologize."

Discussion

These interview findings suggest that while combining mothering with

paid work has some commmon features, others are different when children have disabilities and some are specific to those with behavioural manifestations. Several studies have found employment brings mental health benefits to employed women (Home, 1997), such as feeling better about themselves and gaining access to stimulation, information, social network or resources. For mothers whose caring role is both demanding and devalued and who lack adequate support, however, these benefits have more survival value. Mothers' salary and benefits are necessary for single parents and other families lacking job security or benefits, even if there are no disabilities. When the latter are present, high costs coupled with the need to escape from "the emotional pressure cooker" make employment almost essential for the mother.

Employment brings a double workday to many mothers, along with overload, periodic role conflict and negative spillover (Home, 1997). When disabilities are present, however, mothers' family workload is much higher due to increased direct care along with having to coordinate contact with the "outside world." Regardless of disability type, research has shown that it is the mother who must anticipate needs, absorb new tasks and patch up any situations that fall apart (Read, 2000), which requires skills in advocacy, nursing, education, case management and service coordination. These "job requirements" go well beyond what is usually expected of mothers (Roeher Institute, 2000), yet the fact these women are doing "exceptional mothering" goes unrecognized (Greenspan, 1998). The findings from this study suggest that in many ways, the heavy invisible workload borne by mothers of children with ADHD is similar to that of mothers whose children have other disabilities.

However, there are some aspects of "ADHD mothering" that are specific to situations where children's disabilities include behaviour problems. With ADHD, mothers report that their family work is criticized as well as unappreciated. This increases their risks of depression and burnout, problems which can then be seen as contributing to their children's difficulties. Yet as Greenspan (1998) points out, if mothers feel responsible for doing a job no single person is capable of doing, it is not surprising that they end up feeling inadequate, exhausted and depressed. In addition, while the rewards of mothering usually outweigh the challenges even when children have certain special needs (Audet and Home, 2003), caring for children with ADHD offers few rewards. The emotion work is intense, as mothers engage mainly in "regulation" activities to stop children's disruptive behaviour or "help" activities to alleviate others' negative emotions. These activities are intrinsically less rewarding than those used to create positive emotions, more commonly employed in other families (Strazdins, 2000). When the difficulties of mothering children with ADHD are recognised, the burden feels lighter (Anthony and Foster, 2001), but continuing public and professional misunderstanding of ADHD mean that this understanding is often lacking.

It is clear from the findings that these mothers end up making sacrifices in

their health and well-being, their careers or in both domains. Previous research shows some mothers of disabled children feel comfortable not being "on the fast track," given their unusual caring work (Landsman, 2000). However, other studies question why the costs of caring are not counted when it affects only the mother (Traustadottir, 1991), while suggesting that society's tolerance of mothers' employment decreases when a child's disability brings extra family work. The present study indicates that mothers of children with ADHD may choose to be employed, as long as the job does not interfere with their constant availability to deal with family crises (Kagan et al., 1999). These mothers are expected to make the necessary career adjustments or else to devote all their time and energy to their combined workload.

While societal expectations of all mothers are unrealistic, what is asked of these mothers is close to impossible. It is hoped that making their voices heard through this study will make their needs more apparent. As two participants put it, it seems unfair that they are always "the last one that gets anything" because of "the work never ends."

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Kate Connolly

Maternal Activism on the Neighbourhood Level

The Ethic of Care as Motivation to Act

It has been well documented that in the North American context, women make a greater contribution to the well-being of others through acts of social responsibility than men (Almerida, McDonald, Havens and Schervish, 2001: 135; Fleeson, 2001: 85; Rossi and Rossi, 1990). Women's acts of caring are highest in their late 40s (Fleeson, 2001: 87) and include caregiving and emotional support to family members, friends and others, as well as volunteer activities addressing issues related to youth and health (Rossi, 2001). When examining their level of social responsibility, Joan Tronto (1993) suggests that women's roles as mothers, wives, and daughters predispose them to "hands-on" caregiving due to the social expectations placed upon them in their roles (132). She further suggests that caregiving becomes their fate, rather than a personal choice or desire.

Prior to entering the academy, I worked for over 20 years as a practitioner in community development on the neighbourhood level. It was with curiosity that I repeatedly observed that it was mothers who were the key leaders in any neighbourhood initiative. These initiatives typically addressed issues pertaining to recreation and social services and often required involvement with local government. These women—many of whom worked full-time in their homes—had no prior experience in neighbourhood activism, yet they accurately defined the issues, analyzed the political response required, and with great frequency managed to succeed in their political advocacy efforts. These mothers—who often felt unempowered in other parts of their lives due to poverty, lack of education, and minimal or total lack of spousal support—were successful in addressing issues for their children, their neighbours, and themselves.

In an effort to understand this phenomenon that I saw repeated in

neighbourhood after neighbourhood, year after year, I conducted a case study of a grassroots initiative led by four mothers in a southern Ontario neighbourhood. My interest in the neighbourhood initiative was to examine the role that women played, and their motivations to engage in maternal activism on the local level. River Valley (a pseudonym chosen for the neighbourhood under study) is a downtown core neighbourhood in a mid-sized city. The neighbourhood had experienced negative impacts resulting from the business activities of drug dealers and prostitutes. River Valley had become stigmatized by the larger community, and the streets felt unsafe for the residents who lived there. The four mothers who lead the neighbourhood were intensely involved in trying to restore a livable balance to their neighbourhood at the peak of its problems from 1989 to 1996. It was this time period that I examined in my study conducted in 2000-2001.

One of the emergent findings from the data analysis was that these mothers acted to protect and defend a) their own children and families; b) other children and families; c) the values they held as parents and community members; and d) the neighbourhood itself. The River Valley neighbourhood was their *home*, and the relationships they had with each other were familial. 'Community' was understood as the connections and relationships between people. As such, these mothers acted out of a moral imperative to protect and defend the *human* community.

River Valley case study

The purpose of this article is to report on an emerging finding from the River Valley case study: the influence of mothering on women's social activism on the neighbourhood level. As noted above, this case study was an in-depth qualitative exploration of a mother-led grassroots neighbourhood initiative. The case study was intrinsic (Stake, 2000: 437) by nature meaning that the intent of the exploration was to garner an understanding of the particular neighbourhood initiative that was undertaken in River Valley—the role that the women played, their motivations to act, and the strategies they used to address the issues in their neighbourhood.

The River Valley neighbourhood is located adjacent to the downtown core of the city. Demographically, the 1991 and 1996 census data (Statistics Canada, 1991, 1996) indicated that the educational level of the residents in River Valley was low when compared to the rest of the city, as were the income levels. The ethnicity of the residents indicated a fairly diverse neighbourhood, with the major ethnic origins reported as German, Vietnamese, Portuguese, and Polish. There were also smaller representations of Spanish, Yugoslavian, Croation, and Jewish.

Until 1989, the neighbourhood had been relatively stable in regards to home ownership and property maintenance. By 1989, however, residents became increasingly concerned with the number of rental units owned by absentee landlords, their lack of adherence to property standards regulations,

and the transient nature of the rental tenants. By 1992, the prevalence of crack cocaine and prostitution was evident to both the homeowners and the police, particularly as the neighbourhood was experiencing an increase in drug-related crime. A neighbourhood meeting, initiated by one of the female residents, was held and an informally structured neighbourhood group was formed. The residents most actively involved and demonstrating leadership in the group were four mothers, two of whom were full-time homemakers, and two who also worked outside the home. All four women had children, had lived in the neighbourhood for some time, and of note, were in intact marriages with their original partner.

The research design reflected a feminist perspective (Harding, 1987; Olesen, 1994: 166; Reinharz, 1992). At the root of this perspective is a concern for gender equality. Every attempt was made to ensure the inclusion of women's voices and their stories in the data collection and analysis. The four mothers who were active in the neighbourhood initiative agreed to act as community advisors to the study. As such, they were active in guiding the data collection process by offering suggestions of study participants, and by acting as gatekeepers (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 252) to introduce the study to potential interviewees. The community advisors were also invited to include issues of interest to them in the data collection activities (Olesen, 1994: 166) and they provided extensive input into data interpretation (Reason, 1994: 334).

Data collection activities consisted of four focus group interviews with the community advisors as well as individual interviews with the community advisors, municipal government officials, police services personnel, and other residents who lived in the neighbourhood. In all, 20 individual interviews were held. In addition, documents such as memos, reports, and meeting minutes were reviewed to provide a chronological account of the activities of the neighbourhood group, the issues addressed, and the strategies used to address these issues.

A semi-structured interview guide was developed for use during the interviews (Fontana and Frey, 1994: 364) in that open-ended questions and probes were used to obtain the data. All data were audiotaped and transcribed using verbatim transcriptions. N-VIVO, a data organization and management system was used to manage the data. Data analysis was organized around *processes* (i.e., resident mobilizing approaches) and *issues* (i.e., prostitution, drug dealers) (Patton 377). A process of coding, identifying themes, making comparisons and contrasts, and clustering assisted with the analysis (Creswell, 1994: 154; Guba, 1978; Huberman and Miles, 1994: 432). The use of detailed coding assisted in distilling the data into themes and proved to be a useful data reduction technique in my attempts to illuminate the central meanings of what the various study participants were saying. Lastly, having the four categories of informants (community advisors, municipal officials, police services personnel, and neighbourhood residents) provided the opportunity to conduct cross-category analysis to determine the different perspectives on the central issues

of the study (Huberman and Miles, 1994: 435; Patton, 1990: 403) and to triangulate (Denzin, 1989: 236-241) the data.

Findings

Two key themes emerged as a result of the data analysis procedures: a) mothering as a motivator for social activism; and b) protecting and defending as motivators for social activism.

Mothering as a motivator for social activism

The four mothers who gave leadership to the neighbourhood initiative were motivated to address the issues in their neighbourhood due to their roles as mothers. When asked why she thought it was the women in the neighbourhood who led the grassroots initiative, Marilyn (2000), the most active mother with the neighbourhood initiative said,

> *It's fear for our family.... We have nothing else. We can talk about our houses until we're blue in the face. They take one of our houses away, yeah, we'd be upset about it. Would we die? Never. But you take one of our kids away...or you hurt one of our kids. We couldn't survive. We know that.*

One of the police officers who acted as an ally to the four mothers by offering support and assistance with the neighbourhood initiative said:

> *...Ya' know, maybe it's just a ... a male thing ... work is more central to men in some respects, and house is something they go home to.... What women have become is very much part of their world ... their nest. They want to make sure for their children it's safe and there's a quality of life, and that's...that's somehow more inherently important to women. It's a supposition on my part, but there has to be some reason that it's always been women that ...that have driven both the community perspective and the COPS [Citizens on Patrol] programme ... it's always been women.* (Keith, 2000).

In a similar vein, one of the male residents in the neighbourhood who participated in some of the programmes or public protests planned by the four mothers said:

> *Why is it the women? Because they're the ones who make the babies and their children are threatened by all the bad that will come about in the community if they don't. Maybe it goes back to the natural instinct of being a mother. I don't know. I've always wondered this myself. Why has it been the women? Why is there not one strong man leading this instead of Marilyn or besides Marilyn? ...There are a number of men but they're all more quiet, laid back people. I'm probably as outspoken as any man in our*

> *community is, and I'm not all that outspoken, I don't think. Coincidence? I don't know.* (Jake, 2000)

As can be noted above, it is their roles as mothers that appears to be the motivator for the neighbourhood activist activities. Keeping their children safe and maintaining a quality of life that supported a *"family-based neighbourhood"* (Angela, 2000 [Municipal bureaucrat]) were the concerns that prompted these women to act.

Protecting and defending roles as a motivator for social activism

The findings also showed that these mothers were motivated to act due to their mothering roles as protectors and defenders. Not only were they protecting their own children and families, they were protecting other people's children, other people's families, their sense of values, and their community.

As mentioned above, Marilyn talked about acting out of a fear for her family and needing to protect her children. In a further discussion with Marilyn and Gwen—two of the mothers who led the neighbourhood initiative—they described the importance of their families being "whole and together." They said that without their families being intact, they would be unable to survive. For them, family was defined broadly: "as all relationships that really matter" (Gwen, 2000b). In their views, it is not the houses or the buildings that allow societies to survive, it is the people, and it was the people in the neighbourhood who were their primary concern.

Over the years, the women in River Valley developed a system of social support that consisted of things like sharing child caring responsibilities, celebrating family holidays together, as well as offering support and consolation in times of stress and fear. When the activities of the drug dealers escalated to levels of violence, information was quickly shared with each other, with offers to help if the need arose. Children were moved out of the immediate vicinity where risk was most likely to exist, to be cared for and protected by women who lived a couple of blocks away from the "hot spot" (Sue, 2000).

The people that the women were protecting and defending extended beyond their own families, neighbours, and neighbourhood friends. They were also concerned for the prostitutes and their children, and the johns' wives and their children. While the women residents were appalled and at times disgusted by what the prostitutes were *doing*, there was also a strong sense of compassion, understanding that the prostitutes were substance-addicted and working to feed their habits. At times, the residents would call the police in an effort to protect the prostitutes after they had been beaten up over drug deals that had gone bad. The ethic of the four mothers was that the prostitutes were treated like anyone else in River Valley (Marilyn, 2000), and they were protected from the name-calling and threats to their personal safety that were common in an adjacent neighbourhood.

In regard to the wives and children of the johns, the residents involved in

the River Valley initiative were often conflicted as to how they should manage the information that they had about these men. On one hand, they wanted to shame these men to get them out of their neighbourhood, but in doing so, the residents would also shame and hurt the wives and children by disclosing the information that they had. The residents were also concerned that the johns would carry sexually transmitted diseases home to their families. In describing how the neighbourhood group wrestled with this conflict, Marilyn's husband discussed the differing reactions between the males and females who lived in the neighbourhood:

> *I remember many times the discussion as to whether or not—especially when the doctors and dentists went by—as to whether or not we should phone the wives. And I think that the males would have. Like "Yeah. Let's do it. The sons of bitches." But it was always the women that would say "No. It's gonna' be devastating to the wife and the kids." In other words, the side effect was you'd hurt the loved one also, so that was the topic of discussion a lot. And we could never get ourselves to come to grips with that, 'cause ya' know, as much as we discussed it, we always moved on because we could always ... we always saw other ways.* (Brian, 2000)

In addition to protecting the individual people who were impacted by the events in the River Valley neighbourhood, the women involved in the neighbourhood initiative were protecting and defending their fundamental sense of community. Jane (2000a) talked about the terror that she felt whenever she thought that one of her friends would become defeated by the entire situation and decide to move out of the neighbourhood. For Jane, the River Valley neighbourhood provided a secure place for her to live. All of these women had their young families together and their children had gone to the same schools. As she said, "This is what makes my life possible is the fact that I've got a solid base here and if anyone attacked that—if that gets taken away from me, I'd have to create that world all over again. I *can't* even think about that."

The women were also protecting their homes. When they defined "home," it was apparent that they were not merely referring to their own four walls. Gwen's home consisted also of Sue's home, and Marilyn's home, and Jane's home (Gwen, 2000a). For these women, their homes extended into their neighbourhood and the community as a system provided their experience of "home." One of the other residents who participated in the study said that her home was her sense of peace—her sense of place—and when she had dealers pulling knives on police officers in her back yard, her sense of home was threatened (Eva, 2000).

Finally, these women were protecting the values that they wanted their children to learn as part of their family upbringing. These women were concerned that if they treated the dealers and the prostitutes with a lack of dignity and a lack of humanity, what were they in fact modeling for their

children? If they simply packed up and left the neighbourhood rather than discuss the problems, and deal with the problems head on, what would they be teaching their children (Jane, 2000a)? These women believed that it was by watching their actions, their children would learn about their values; to act in accordance with their values was to teach.

Discussion

As can be noted above, 'community' for these women was defined in human terms—as the human relationships that existed in River Valley. The style of leadership demonstrated by these women consisted of facilitating networks and connections and as such, echoed the way in which they defined community as a human community and the relationships that exist there (Dominelli, 1995: 136; Stall and Stoecker, 1998: 744).

In her work on moral development, Carol Gilligan (1993) found that women defined themselves within the context of their relationships—as a wife, a mother, a daughter, a lover etc. (29). What was particularly interesting was that not only did women articulate their personal identity as the role they played in their lives, but they also attached to this identity a judgment related to their ability to care. The study participants in Gilligan's study believed that if they were to lead a moral life, they had a responsibility to care, not only for themselves and their own families, but also for people in general.

This ideal of care sees individuals connected as a human community—a collectivity—requiring care and nurturance. So was this the case with the mothers in the River Valley study—the women who gave leadership to the neighbourhood initiative found their location or position in the world through the familial-like relationships and the human community that they defined as 'home'. In order to maintain these relationships, they experienced a moral obligation to protect their children from harm, to teach their children their values about the importance of all people, and to defend the human community and the relationships that existed there. As identified in Gilligan's (1993) work, these mothers developed an *ethic of responsibility* that emerged out of their *ethic of care*. As such, these mothers had the ability to move their concerns from the individual to the community, from the personal to the political. As such, they were able to focus on broader societal issues and impacts.

In support of Gilligan's (1993) finding, Jo Reger (2001) found that feminists involved in the Cleveland chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) understood motherhood to include a mandate and responsibility to care for all members of society (93). In particular, these mothers felt a responsibility to save the rights of their children and the future generations of women. The data analysis from the River Valley case study examined in this article reported similar findings.

There are two further issues that need to be addressed. First, the River Valley case study is not a story of women who have been marginalized finally finding a voice. As Jane—one of the mothers active in the neighbourhood

initiative said, the educational level of the initiative's leaders was not highly sophisticated, nor were they financially secure. These women did, though, enjoy a degree of social privilege grounded partly in the solid marital relationships that they had. Their marriages afforded them some flexibility, financial support, assistance with childcare, etc. which allowed them to be active in the issues impacting their neighbourhood. As Jane (2000b) said, "We've come from a position where of course you say your mind. That's what you do! You're a participant in this world like everybody else and you do your thing. It's not a coincidence that we're all women. I'm not saying that's an issue. Just be careful how you capture us, because I suspect we're women of privilege in some respects."

The second question that must be asked is whether these women would have acted if they had not been mothers, but simply women who happened to reside in this neighbourhood? The four women who led this neighbourhood initiative clearly identified that they were acting out of a need to keep their children safe, and to sustain a neighbourhood stability that enabled them to live there with their families. But do women necessarily need to have children in order to be involved in maternal politics on the community level? Could they, as Sara Ruddick (1997) maintains, simply be deploying a maternal identity (372)? This question requires further consideration and study.

In closing, it can be confidently said that the women who took leadership in the River Valley initiative were acting out of their roles as mothers. They accessed their passion for protecting and defending their children and the human community that surrounded them to engage in community politics on the neighbourhood level. While their motivations to act exploit our cultural understanding of motherhood (Ruddick, 1997: 372) in a somewhat stereotypical way, these ordinary mothers achieved extraordinary success in restoring a livable balance to the space they call home for themselves, their families, and their friends.

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Lorna Turnbull

How Does the Law Recognize Work?

When a parent goes on maternity or parental leave from regular employment to give birth to, breastfeed or care for and nurture an infant, is that parent working? What do we understand to be work? When women are engaged in both market work and motherwork, what messages do we as a society send about their work? Over the past quarter century courts in Canada have had occasion to consider some of these questions and their pronouncements have been indicative of the position of mothers in Canadian society. This paper will consider a number of recent cases that have dealt with women's dual roles as mothers and workers, cases that show that despite some signs of progress, there is much that has not changed in 25 years.

In 1978 the Supreme Court of Canada decided the case of *Bliss v. A.G. Canada* which held that a woman who had been refused Unemployment Insurance[1] benefits because of her pregnancy was not discriminated against on the basis of sex.[2] For a decade thereafter a formalistic model of gender equality restricted women's ability to challenge discrimination on the basis of pregnancy. Remarkably, just a decade later in *Brooks v. Canada Safeway Ltd*, the Supreme Court had the opportunity to revisit the issue and recognized that a woman who was discriminated against because of pregnancy was discriminated against on the basis of sex and that such discrimination was contrary to both human rights legislation and the equality guarantee of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.[3] Broad language noting the weight of the burden of childbearing borne by women proclaimed that it was "unfair to impose all of the costs of pregnancy upon one half of the population." The court noted "[t]hat those who bear children and benefit society as a whole thereby should not be economically or socially disadvantaged seems to bespeak the obvious."[4] Despite such broad language (which might have suggested that discrimination against

mothering was a thing of the past) a number of recent cases seem to be taking us back to the dark days of *Bliss*.[5] Kelly Lesiuk and Joanne Miller are just two of the women whose attempts to shape or extend our understandings of what gender equality means for mothers have been rejected on the basis of formalistic *Bliss*-type reasoning .

Kelly Lesiuk is a registered nurse. Already the mother of a three year old child, she was employed on a part time basis when she became pregnant with her second child. On her doctor's advice in April 1998 she stopped working and applied for EI maternity benefits. She was turned down because she had worked only 667 hours in the qualifying period instead of the 700 hours required to demonstrate work force attachment. Ms. Lesiuk unsuccessfully appealed this denial to a Board of Referees. On a further appeal to the Umpire she argued that the 700-hour eligibility requirement violated her equality rights. The Umpire agreed, finding that the requirement discriminated against those whose childcare responsibilities made it more difficult to meet the requirement, predominantly women who are employed an average of 30 hours/ week compared to men's average of 39 hours/week. The Umpire also found that the eligibility requirements undermined the human dignity of women by promoting the view that women are less capable or valuable as members of Canadian society because they must work longer to demonstrate their attachment to the workforce. The Attorney General sought a review of the Umpire's decision by the Federal Court of Appeal, and in January 2003 that court held that Kelly Lesiuk was not discriminated against by the eligibility requirements of the Employment Insurance scheme because her human dignity was not demeaned.[6]

Just months earlier, in October, 2002, Joanne Miller was told by the Federal Court of Appeal that she was not entitled to full employment insurance benefits when she lost her job because she had previously received maternity and parental benefits in the same benefit period. The court held that the *Unemployment Insurance Act* which limits receipt of regular benefits when claimants have already received special benefits was not contrary to the equality provisions of s. 15 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Ms. Miller had been employed at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto since 1992. In 1995 she became pregnant with her second child. She went on maternity leave from her employment in March of 1996 and applied for and received 15 weeks of maternity benefits and ten weeks of parental benefits. Four days before she was due to return to her job, Ms. Miller was informed by her employer that her position was no longer available. Finding herself jobless, she applied for regular unemployment insurance benefits to replace her income while she sought new employment. On the basis of the weeks of insurable employment, a claimant in Ms. Miller's situation who became unemployed would ordinarily be entitled to 40 weeks of regular benefits. However, since Ms. Miller had already received 25 weeks of maternity and parental benefits, she was only entitled to 15 weeks of regular benefits because the operation of the Act has the effect of deducting

from the maximum number of weeks of entitlement for regular benefits any weeks of special benefits received during the same benefit period.[7]

In the cases of *Lesiuk* and *Miller* as well as the other related cases, the courts and tribunals appeared to have been unaware of the context within which women engage in market work and motherwork. This was so in spite of the ample evidence of women's lived experiences that was presented by the intervenors in these cases.[8] Women in Canada continue to experience economic disadvantages relative to men as evidenced by the continuing wage gap. Women on average earn anywhere from $0.76 to $0.52 for every dollar earned by men, depending upon the way in which the figures are calculated. Only unmarried women aged 25 to 44 who are employed fulltime approach men's earnings. These women earn $0.97 for every dollar fulltime employed men earn. Women also tend to work in traditionally female occupations with correspondingly lower "female" rates of pay. In 1992, 70 percent of all employed women worked in teaching, nursing and related health professions, clerical, or sales and service. Women are also disproportionately among the members of the part time workforce.[9] Structural characteristics of the workplace also serve to marginalize mothers as workers. Inflexible work hours and increased employer demands for overtime and shift work act as barriers to people with childcare responsibilities. Economic changes and globalization have also lead to increased contract and part-time work, particularly in sectors of the economy where women have traditionally found employment.[10] The result is increasing instability and vulnerability for workers, especially women.

Even in today's society where 71.4 percent of mothers with children under the age of 16 are working fulltime in the paid workforce, women continue to shoulder the bulk of the domestic labour associated with caring for children and running a household.[11] When childcare arrangements fail, it is mothers who take time away from work to meet the family's childcare responsibilities.[12] After a child is born, it is almost always the mother who takes leave from her employment to care for the newborn or adopted child. In 1998, women represented 98.4 percent of the recipients of maternity and parental benefits under the employment insurance scheme.[13] Finally, adequate access to employment requires adequate access to quality affordable childcare, a goal we have yet to realize in Canada where a mere third of all children with both parents or a lone parent being employed have access to licensed space.[14] All of these factors heighten women's vulnerability in the labour market, especially at a time of job loss.

Related to women's disadvantaged position in the workforce is the fact that women are also generally at a greater risk of poverty than men and, when in poverty, experience a greater depth of poverty. Women who are already disadvantaged as racialized women, aboriginal women, lone parents, immigrants or disabled women are even more likely to face these risks.[15]

Recent work by authors in Canada, the United States and Europe now reveals that some of the economic disadvantage women experience is attribut-

able to the responsibilities many women bear as mothers. Mothers may experience a reduction in expected lifetime earnings of as much as 57 percent relative to women who do not have children. The value of this loss could exceed $US one million. Laws and policies which do not take account of the impact of care giving responsibilities on earnings and workforce participation compound the disadvantage women already experience.[16]

Discriminatory attitudes about women as secondary earners also continue to operate. An employed woman is assumed to be supported by her husband who is the "real" wage earner. In reality however there are many single mothers who don't have husbands or whose former husbands are not paying adequate support, many lesbian mothers whose female partners also experience discrimination in earnings, many women whose earnings are as vital to their families' survival as are their male partners'.[17]

Such discriminatory attitudes were also prevalent in the early 1970s, at a time when child care was also less available, and when the time away from paid employment after the birth of a child averaged 6.6 years.[18] This was the time when Stella Bliss had her child. When Stella Bliss became pregnant she was fired from her job. Because of very high eligibility requirements she was unable to qualify for maternity benefits under the Unemployment Insurance program, so she applied for regular benefits for the period of time that she was available for work before and after the birth of her child. Even though she met the eligibility requirements for the regular benefits she was turned down because a provision of the *Act* denied regular benefits to pregnant women for a period of 15 weeks surrounding the expected date of birth. It was this provision that Stella Bliss challenged as violating her equality rights under the old Bill of Rights. The courts relied on the logic of pregnant persons to find that she had not experienced sex discrimination since the Act treated pregnant women differently from other unemployed persons, both male and female, "because they are pregnant and not because they are women."[19]

Such an approach to a question of gender equality is no longer correct in law or in policy and was clearly rejected by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Brooks*. The same year it decided *Brooks* the Supreme Court handed down its first decision on the equality provision of the *Charter* and set a course towards substantive equality that has evolved in fits and starts over the intervening decade.[20] The proper approach to equality claims is now accepted as being the one set out by the Supreme Court in 1999 in *Law v. Canada (Minister of Employment and Immigration)*.[21] The court set out an approach to equality that focuses upon three central issues:

> (A) whether a law imposes differential treatment between the claimant and others, in purpose or effect;
> (B) whether one or more enumerated or analogous grounds of discrimination are the basis for the differential treatment; and
> (C) whether the law in question has a purpose or effect that is

discriminatory within the meaning of the equality guarantee.[22]

A proper application of this analysis should have supported a finding that the EI provisions challenged by both Lesiuk and Miller do violate the equality rights of women who are mothers. When Joanne Miller lost her job she, unlike other workers who found themselves unemployed, was unable to rely on regular benefits solely because she had received maternity and parental benefits. The Federal Court of Appeal was unable to see this as differential treatment, noting that Miller was treated just like any other recipient of maternity, parental or disability benefits and so her claim failed. For Kelly Lesiuk, the differential treatment was recognized but the Federal Court of Appeal found that such treatment would not offend her human dignity and so her claim failed on the basis that her treatment was not discriminatory. In certain respects the reasoning of the Federal Court of Appeal in both of these cases echoes the reasoning of the Supreme Court in *Bliss* itself 25 years ago. First, in *Bliss* the court employed a formal approach to equality where likes were expected to be treated alike. Second, the court showed great deference to parliament to enact laws as it saw fit. Both of these lines of reasoning are also apparent in the *Lesiuk* and *Miller* cases.

In *Bliss*, the Supreme Court noted that men and women who were not pregnant were treated alike for purposes of the unemployment insurance scheme, and only pregnant persons, who were differently situated, were treated differently. Consequently, the denial of benefits to Stella Bliss because she was pregnant did not amount to gender discrimination. In *Miller* and the related cases the Federal Court of Appeal noted that men and women are treated exactly the same by the impugned provisions, that only people who had received maternity or parental benefits were treated differently and thus they are gender neutral and not contrary to the claimants' *Charter* rights.[23] What the Court did not advert to is that while men too may have their benefits limited, it is in fact almost exclusively women who are actually affected. In *Lesiuk*, the formal approach is not so patently obvious, but is present nonetheless. While the court accepted that Lesiuk and other part-time workers were treated differently and that that differential treatment may have been due to her gender and parental status, it held that it was not discriminatory because ultimately very few women in parental status were affected and the differential treatment was really "between those who work at or above the threshold requirement for hours and those who fall short of this threshold."[24] In both of these cases, as in *Bliss*, the laws had a disproportionately negative effect on mothers but the courts refused to recognize that effect as a violation of the claimants' equality rights.

The deference to parliament evident in *Bliss* also played out in *Miller* and *Lesiuk*. In *Miller*, the court by adopting its reasoning in the earlier related decisions, noted that a court should not "engage in constitutional tinkering" even when the adverse effects of the impugned provision are not undifferentiated in their impact."[25] In *Lesiuk*, it was in the analysis under section one of the

Charter that the court emphasized that the complexity of the EI scheme meant that the courts ought not to superimpose additional requirements even if they may be desirable to address differential impacts of the legislation.[26] Yet surely the Constitution does require courts to tinker or superimpose additional requirements when the laws enacted fail to meet the standard of equality set out in the *Charter*. Parliament may be best suited to set priorities and determine eligibility for social benefits, but when it does so in violation of a constitutional right, and cannot justify the violation under section one, then it is the role and duty of the court to "tinker" with the legislative scheme. Deference is contrary to the text and spirit of the *Charter* as well as the early *Charter* jurisprudence.[27]

Miller and Lesiuk have brought important and difficult cases before the courts to try to address the very questions that were raised in the opening of this piece. What does gender equality look like for mothers? Can a woman belong fully to Canadian society as both a mother and a worker? So far, despite the courageous challenges of women like Lesiuk and Miller, the Federal Court of Appeal has been unable to answer these questions in any meaningful way.

Perhaps some of the difficulty for the court in reaching a nuanced understanding of what equality might entail for mothers lies in the limits of an analysis that requires a claimant to demonstrate a violation of her human dignity. Much in the *Law* approach to equality turns on the concept of human dignity. Mr. Justice Iacobucci defined it this way:

> Human dignity means that an individual or group feels self respect and self worth. It is concerned with physical and psychological integrity and empowerment. Human dignity is harmed by unfair treatment premised upon personal traits or circumstances which do not relate to individual needs, capacities or merits. It is enhanced by laws which are sensitive to the needs, capacities and merits of different individuals, taking into account the context underlying their differences. Human dignity is harmed when individuals and groups are marginalized, ignored or devalued, and is enhanced when laws recognize the full place of all individuals and groups within Canadian society. Human dignity within the meaning of the equality guarantee does not relate to the status or position of an individual in society per se, but rather concerns the manner in which a person legitimately feels when confronted with a particular law. Does the law treat him or her unfairly, taking into account all of the circumstances regarding the individuals affected and excluded by the law?[28]

This definition of human dignity sounds fair and in keeping with the spirit of the *Charter*'s substantive equality guarantee. But it has been criticized by a number of commentators who have pointed out that notions of human dignity pervade many sections of the *Charter* and that equality comprises something more. There is also a fear that human dignity is too loose and malleable a

concept to protect the particular kinds of interests that are to be protected by section 15.[29] Certainly the focus of the Federal Court of Appeal on human dignity in both *Miller* and *Lesiuk* has been an impediment to their success. In both cases the court affirmed that a denial of EI benefits "could hardy be said violat[e] one's essential human dignity;"[30] since they did not reinforce the stereotype that women should stay home and care for children or suggest that women's work is any less worthy of recognition.

If human dignity has been a stumbling block for equality seeking mothers and has been challenged on a theoretical basis as well, then perhaps we should ask what is the particular essence of equality that section 15 should be used to protect and foster? Denise Reaume has surveyed a range of feminist positions to conclude that, despite their differing understandings of women's experiences and of strategies to achieve equality, all feminist approaches are concerned with the harm of exclusion.[31] She has specifically focused on implicit exclusion which occurs when rules or laws are drafted using men as the norm. Such gender neutral rules do not encompass the lived experiences of women in their design and in their operation they exclude women from full participation in the larger society.[32] Reaume offers *Bliss* as the classic example of such implicit exclusion. The *Miller* and *Lesiuk* cases provide 21st century examples of the same kind of implicit exclusion.[33]

In a recent and important article Donna Greschner has argued that the primary purpose of the equality guarantee is to protect each person's interest in belonging, simultaneously, to several communities. The communities that everyone may belong to are the universal human community, the Canadian political communities and the particular identity communities that may be demarcated by sex, race, religion or other enumerated or analogous attributes.[34] As Greschner notes, the concept of human dignity may protect an individual's interest in belonging to the universal human family, but does not go far enough to protect his or her other interests in belonging.[35] She maintains that the historical, philosophical and linguistic underpinnings of section 15 all support the conclusion that it is intended to protect belonging.[36] The complex sense of community that characterizes Canadian society is evidence of the rejection of assimilation as the only way to belong.[37]

Belonging is particularly relevant in the situation where what is at stake is a mother's interest in belonging to the "public" sphere of employment, even while she also continues to belong in the "private" sphere of child nurture. The sense of connection, of a non-autonomous identity that the word "belonging" implies, captures the encumbered reality of a mother's experience.[38] This concept of belonging, as it applies in the context of *Lesiuk*, *Miller* and the related cases, crystallizes the sense of injustice that has pushed at least five women in the past three years to challenge provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Act before the Federal Court of Appeal. These women are asking the court to recognize that they are members of the human family, the Canadian political communities and are women and mothers. They should not have to choose

between being mothers and being workers. They should not be treated as "less than full members, and not permitted to participate fully in the opportunities and riches of society."[39]

Although both Miller and Lesiuk sought leave to appeal the Federal Court of Appeal decisions to the Supreme Court of Canada, they were both turned down. This is especially unfortunate because it is vital that the Supreme Court provide some guidance and demonstrate what gender equality looks like as it applies to women who have responsibilities for bearing and raising children. This area of women's gendered lives is one that poses challenges for theorists[40] and courts alike, and the need to address it properly is vital in promoting women's equality. For the reality now is that however integrated women may have become into the public spheres of life, most still continue to have children. How we as a society allow for a "fit" between the worker and the mother roles of women determines how real equality will be for us. The Supreme Court may soon be considering an appeal from a Quebec Court of Appeal decision that determined that maternity and parental leave benefits paid out under the *Employment Insurance Act* are social welfare payments paid out not for economic reasons but because of a personal interruption in employment.[41] The practical result of this is that the federal government does not have the legislative authority to establish maternity and parental leave programs but the provinces would be free to implement their own schemes.[42] This case may provide some opportunity to the Supreme Court to speak to the question of "fit" in women's motherwork and market work. Perhaps then it will be possible to breathe life into the words of Chief Justice Dickson in *Brooks*: "Combining paid work with motherhood and accommodating the childbearing needs of women are ever-increasing imperatives. That those who bear children and benefit society as a whole thereby should not be economically or socially disadvantaged seems to bespeak the obvious."

[1] *Unemployment Insurance Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. U-1 reenacted as the *Employment Insurance Act,* S.C. 1996, c. 23.
[2] *[1979] 1 S.C.R. 183 [Bliss]*.
[3] *Part I of the Constitution Act, 1982,* being Schedule B to the *Canada Act 1982* (U.K.), 1982, c. 11 [*Charter*].
[4] *Brooks v. Canada Safeway Ltd,* [1989] 1 S.C.R. 1219 [*Brooks*].
[5] *Canada (Attorney General) v. Lesiuk,* 2003 FCA 3; *Miller v. Canada (Attorney General),* 2002 FCA 370 [*Miller*]; *Sollbach v. Canada (Attorney General)* (1999) 252 N.R. 137, 16 C.C.L.I. (3d) 161, 71 C.R.R. (2d) 109 (F.C.A.) [*Sollbach*]; *Krock v. Canada (Attorney General)* (2001), 273 N.R. 228, 2001 FCA 188 [*Krock*]; *Canada (Attorney General) v. Brown* (2001), 286 N.R. 395, 2001 FCA 385 [*Brown*].
[6] *Lesiuk, ibid.*
[7] *Miller*, supra note 5.

[8]Women's Legal Education and Action Fund in particular presented such evidence.
[9]Lorna A. Turnbull, *Double Jeopardy: Motherwork and the Law* (Toronto: Sumach Press, 2001) at 23.
[10]Statistics Canada, *Women in Canada 2000* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 89-503-XPE, 2000) at 103.
[11]Norene Pupo, "Always Working Never Done: The Expansion of the Double Work Day" in Pupo, Duffy & Glenday, eds. *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs, No Jobs: The Transformation of Work in the 21st Century* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1997) at 545-46; *Women in Canada 2000, ibid.* at 100.
[12]Turnbull, *Double Jeopardy, supra* note 9 at 22.
[13]*Women in Canada 2000, supra* note 10 at 109, 133.
[14]*Women in Canada 2000, supra* note 10 at 101.
[15]Marika Morris, "Women and Poverty: A Fact Sheet" (CRIAW: March 2002) http://www.criaw-icref.ca/povertyfactsheet.htm; *Women in Canada 2000, supra* note 10.
[16]See generally Turnbull, *Double Jeopardy, supra* note 9.
[17]*Ibid.*
[18]Janet Fast and Moreno Da Pont, "Changes in Women's Work Continuity" (Autumn 1997) 46 *Canadian Social Trends* 2.
[19]*Bliss*, supra note 2.
[20]*Law Society of British Columbia v. Andrews,* [1989] 1 S.C.R. 143.
[21][1999] 1 S.C.R. 497. The *Law* approach has been critiqued by a number of authors who note that it risks allowing the courts to slip back into the old relevancy test from the earlier cases, and placing the burden of proof upon the claimants rather than upon the state. See generally Beverley Baines, A*Law v. Canada*: Formatting equality" (Spring 2000) 11 Constit. Forum 65; June Ross, AA Flawed Synthesis of the Law" (Spring 2000) 11 Constit. Forum 74; Craig B. Davis, A*Vriend v. Canada, Law v. Canada, Ontario v. M and H.*: The Latest Steps on the Winding Path to Substantive Equality" (1999) 37 Alta. L. Rev. 683; Donna Greschner, "The Purpose of Canadian Equality Rights" (2002) 6 Rev. Constit. Studies 291; Donna Greschner, "Does *Law* Advance the Cause of Equality" (2001) 27 Queen's L. J. 299.
[22]*Law, supra* note 21 at para. 88.
[23]*See Miller, Nishri* and *Sollbach, supra* note 5.
[24]*Lesiuk, supra* note 5 at para 50.
[25]*Nishri, supra* note 5 at para. 43, emphasis added. In *Krock, supra* note 5 at para. 11, the court held that when it is "presented with an argument that a complex statutory benefits scheme, such as unemployment insurance, has a differential adverse effect on some claimants contrary to section 15, the court is not concerned with the desirability of extending the benefits in the manner sought. In the design of social benefits programs, priorities must be set, a task for which parliament is better suited than the courts, and the Constitution should not be regarded as requiring judicial fine tuning of the legislative scheme."

[26]*Lesiuk, supra* note 5 at para 66.
[27]Lorraine Wienrib, "Canada's Charter of Rights: Paradigm Lost?" (2002) 6 *Rev. Constit. Studies* 119.
[28]*Law, supra* note 21 at para. 53.
[29]*Supra* note 21.
[30]*Sollbach, supra* note 5 at para. 14.
[31]Denise Reaume, "What's Distinctive About Feminist Analysis of Law?" (1996) 2 Legal Theory 265.
[32]*Ibid.* at 273.
[33]*Ibid.* at 281.
[34]Greschner, *supra* note 21.
[35]*Ibid.* at 293-94.
[36]*Ibid.* at 315.
[37]*Ibid.* at 304.
[38]See the discussion in *Double Jeopardy*, supra note at 9, 45-46 of the theoretical challenges posed by mothers to liberalism because they are not autonomous individuals, but rather encumbered ones.
[39]Greschner, *supra* note 21 at 306.
[40]Patrice di Quinzio, *The Impossibility of Motherhood: Feminism. Liberalism and the Problem of Motherhood* (New York: Routledge, 1999) at vii-xx.
[41]*Procureur general du Quebec c. Procureur general du Canada,* [2004] J.Q. no. 277 (C.A.).
[42]In fact Quebec has already proposed a family leave program that provides more generous benefits than the current federal scheme under the Employment Insurance Act. Other provinces may decide to provide less generous benefits.

Chris Bobel

When Good Enough Isn't
Mother Blame in The Continuum Concept

Nearly ten years ago, I began collecting data for a study on women I termed "natural mothers," women who practice a labour intensive, alternative type of parenting that relies less on technology and consumerism and more on what mothers claim, "feels right" (see Bobel, 2002). In addition to consuming a whole foods diet, relying largely on holistic health care (including homebirth), cloth diapering, often home-schooling and generally, living simply, the natural mothers practice "attachment parenting."[1] I was interested in this mothering practice for a number of reasons, including the fact that it precludes work outside the home. For the natural mothers, the best kind of mothering requires a constant stay at home presence, something only a small number of women can afford to provide. For those who cannot manage to devote their full energies to mothering because they must work for pay or choose to do so for personal reasons, the dictates of natural mothering can lead to mother blame and its persistent companion, mother guilt. But why? What is it about natural mothering that carries with it the message that those who do not make themselves continually available to their babies are inadequate mothers? As I talked to the natural mothers at the center of my study, one explanation shifted into focus.

During the in-depth interview phase of the project, I first learned of *The Continuum Concept: In Search of Happiness Lost* by Jean Liedloff, originally published in 1975. And I quickly realized how vital the book was to the women I studied. For many natural mothers, Liedloff's work earned her a hallowed place as the messenger of a certain truth about the best, most instinctual way to parent. One mother described reading *The Continuum Concept* as a "mind altering experience" (qtd. in Bobel, 2002: 88). Another mother credited the book with helping her prioritize caring for her children above all else, including

her very active life as a community organizer. Still another mother spoke of the book with a pained look. As she read, she told me, she tapped into a deep sadness realizing what she missed in her own upbringing. During subsequent interviews, the book came up again and again establishing it as "the holy grail" of natural mothering.

The Continuum Concept is based on Liedloff's extended observations (over two-and-a-half years) of the indigenous Yequana[2] who inhabit the dense rain forest of the upper Caura River basin of Venezuela. During this time, Liedloff detected a contentment and joy uncharacteristic of her own Western (American) culture. Unbelievably, she writes, "The children were uniformly well-behaved: never fought, were never punished, always obeyed happily and instantly" (1985: 9). This pervasive "sense of rightness," Liedloff concludes, is the direct consequence of the Yequana way of constant baby carrying (until baby begins to crawl), breastfeeding on demand and co-sleeping. For her, these "attached" practices are rooted in a set of principles she calls "The Continuum Concept," defined as:

> The sequence of experience which corresponds to the expectations and tendencies of the human species in an environment consistent with that in which those expectations and tendencies were formed. (Liedloff, 1985: 25)

When adopted, she asserts, "continuum-correct" practices yield categorically well adjusted, confident, contributing members of their community. The book, in its 26th printing and translated into 18 languages, has a significant international following spawning "The Liedloff Society for the Continuum Concept" (www.continuum-concept.org) established to network proponents of TCC (as it's known to insiders) and maintain an active electronic discussion list with subscribers from all over the world.

The trouble with bringing the Yequana home: cultural contradictions and mismatches

My own reaction to the book produced a dizzying set of contradictions. On an academic level, the relationship between natural mothering and TCC was clear. Natural mothering, I found, embodied and extended TCC. It was no wonder that the book "spoke" to so many of my informants. But on a more intimate level, the book truly challenged me. My own child was born at home, slept in the family bed for three years and nursed for one-and-a-half years, thus, I felt validated for making choices regularly challenged by mainstream parents and child care "experts." But as the mother of the same child who wailed inconsolably for the first several months of her life and spent considerable time in a stroller, an automatic swing and even a playpen on occasion, I felt guilty. I was proud of the ways I defied convention and cared for my baby in ways consistent with the Yequana Liedloff observed, but I felt judged for the balance

her very active life as a community organizer. Still another mother spoke of the book with a pained look. As she read, she told me, she tapped into a deep sadness realizing what she missed in her own upbringing. During subsequent interviews, the book came up again and again establishing it as "the holy grail" of natural mothering.

The Continuum Concept is based on Liedloff's extended observations (over two-and-a-half years) of the indigenous Yequana[2] who inhabit the dense rain forest of the upper Caura River basin of Venezuela. During this time, Liedloff detected a contentment and joy uncharacteristic of her own Western (American) culture. Unbelievably, she writes, "The children were uniformly well-behaved: never fought, were never punished, always obeyed happily and instantly" (1985: 9). This pervasive "sense of rightness," Liedloff concludes, is the direct consequence of the Yequana way of constant baby carrying (until baby begins to crawl), breastfeeding on demand and co-sleeping. For her, these "attached" practices are rooted in a set of principles she calls "The Continuum Concept," defined as:

> The sequence of experience which corresponds to the expectations and tendencies of the human species in an environment consistent with that in which those expectations and tendencies were formed. (Liedloff, 1985: 25)

When adopted, she asserts, "continuum-correct" practices yield categorically well adjusted, confident, contributing members of their community. The book, in its 26th printing and translated into 18 languages, has a significant international following spawning "The Liedloff Society for the Continuum Concept" (www.continuum-concept.org) established to network proponents of TCC (as it's known to insiders) and maintain an active electronic discussion list with subscribers from all over the world.

The trouble with bringing the Yequana home: cultural contradictions and mismatches

My own reaction to the book produced a dizzying set of contradictions. On an academic level, the relationship between natural mothering and TCC was clear. Natural mothering, I found, embodied and extended TCC. It was no wonder that the book "spoke" to so many of my informants. But on a more intimate level, the book truly challenged me. My own child was born at home, slept in the family bed for three years and nursed for one-and-a-half years, thus, I felt validated for making choices regularly challenged by mainstream parents and child care "experts." But as the mother of the same child who wailed inconsolably for the first several months of her life and spent considerable time in a stroller, an automatic swing and even a playpen on occasion, I felt guilty. I was proud of the ways I defied convention and cared for my baby in ways consistent with the Yequana Liedloff observed, but I felt judged for the balance

of choices I made that were not "continuum correct." It seemed that my best was not good enough and my non-continuum choices would lead to my daughter's persistent unhappiness later in life. What was I to make of this powerful book? Was my guilt a signal that Liedloff spoke a truth too painful for me to face? Or, alternatively, was TCC really just another parenting straitjacket (written by a non parent) that prescribed a set of standards very few could realistically adopt?

Furthermore, what are the implications of a set of expectations extracted from a hunter-gatherer society and prescribed for parents who inhabit industrialized lives? As Petra Büskens astutely argues in her own analysis of popular parenting texts (including TCC), the elevation of the so-called "primitive" way of life is "classic romantic nostalgia for the 'noble savage' arising in conditions of destabilizing social change" (2004: 103). In addition to the ethnocentric, even racist reduction and appropriation of a constellation of cultural practices that grow out of particular material and social conditions, the directive to "simplify" and "attach" like nature intended, is an insidious set up for mothers everywhere to interpret their current parenting choices as inadequate, deficient, even dangerous. The "civilized" parent who turns her back on nature by deploying the modern conveniences of high tech strollers, solid oak cribs and scientifically tested formula, is faulted for doing irreparable harm to her child. The practice of appropriating Yequana culture produces a mismatch that leaves a void, and that void is filled by maternal blame. This perspective, I argue, inevitably feeds an already overdeveloped climate of ferocious mother blame that must be challenged; if mothers are to be truly empowered to do the best they can and believe that their best *is* good enough.

Taking my cue from Susan Douglas (co-author, with Meredith Michaels, of *The Mommy Myth: The Idealization of Motherhood and How It Has Undermined Women* [2004]) who advocates for "talking back" when mothers are held to unrealistic and damaging standards, this essay engages a textual analysis of *The Continuum Concept* as a challenge to mother blame. My aim is to reveal Liedloff's (1985) construction of mothers as omnipotent but flawed and singularly responsible for the shaping of children into adults. In Liedloff's conception, children who mature into healthy, independent and well-adjusted individuals do so *solely* because mother, eschewing conventional, culture-bound norms of parenting, kept them in close physical contact. Complex realities such as material privilege, cultural capital and social context are not factors. Characterizations of Western maternal work as necessarily and by design cruel, cold hearted and responsible for devastating outcomes in contrast to idyllic representations of indigenous people operating blissfully on instinct create a binary opposition overly reductive and disrespectful to all involved. Furthermore, while TCC advances a compelling argument for "attachment parenting," a structural analysis for *why* such mother-intensive, mother-dependant care is impractical or even unappealing for most and *what* measures must be in place to make this style of parenting a reality is largely missing from Liedloff's work.

Liedloff's context of opposition

In order to fully understand how Liedloff (1985) constructs her prescriptions for infant care, it is important to show how she relies on oppositions. The book is driven by a revelation of sorts: in order to find peace with oneself, and by extension with the world, one must find "that sense of rightness (4)" or the emotional place "where things [are] as they ought to be (4)." This "missing center of things (5)" is located in *nature*, argues Liedloff, and can only be accessed when we allow our instinct to preempt our intellect. Nature, in this conception, is lost to "civilized" westerners who, enamored with so-called progress, forget how to be fully human. This fundamental opposition casts nature against culture and neglects the reality that even nature itself is a socially constructed category. Liedloff deploys a litany of poles including "savage" versus "civilized" and "stone age" versus "modern." While the oppositions suggest attempts at irony in some cases (as in "Who is the *real* savage here?"), through their oversimplification and decontextualization, they are rendered empty categories (as Maria Togovnick [1990] has argued elsewhere).[3] Still, Liedloff deploys these categories to set up the central opposition of child versus mother (or child-centered versus mother-centered) culminating in the knock out punch of "continuum correct" versus "non continuum," or more crudely, right versus wrong. The quest for essential rightness is ended when civilized, modern mothers realize the errors of their ways and adapt the lifestyle of the Yequana. To do otherwise is perilous, causing great injury to one's child. According to Liedloff:

> it must be understood that there is no mechanism in his early life that can take account of an inadequate mother, a mother without a working continuum, one who does not respond to infant signals, one who is set against, not for, the fulfillment of his expectations. (1985: 71)

The omnipotent, imperfect mother

There is a curious and frustrating contradiction woven throughout Liedloff's (1985) work. Liedloff describes the vibrant, cooperative and joyful life of the Yequana wherein mothers share the care of infants with others. Asserting that babies themselves do not discriminate among their caregivers, Liedloff suggests a gender-neutral, age-neutral "maternity" when she writes:

> The maternal role, the only role that can relate to an infant in the earliest months, is instinctively played by fathers, other children, and anyone else who deals with the infant, even for a moment. Distinguishing between sex or age groups is not the business of a baby. (1985: 35)

In fact, Liedloff's own small photo archive of Yequana baby-carrying (accessible via the Liedloff Continuum Network) shows children carrying

babies more often than anyone else. Liedloff conveys very clearly that the Yequana regard infant and baby care as a community responsibility and practice (though mother is undoubtedly the central caregiver). This community-focus of childcare is a theme woven throughout TCC. Liedloff shows how childcare is a virtual "non activity" threaded into the everyday life of the Yequana. Babies are not the center of attention; rather, they are immediately integrated into daily work and play. Innately social, they long to be immersed in the life of their culture, as do their seldom-isolated caregivers, claims Liedloff.

But when her discussion shifts to what she terms "civilized" parenting, she speaks *exclusively* of mothers who seemingly do their mothering alone. There are no other caregivers of children in the scene. In the Introduction to the new edition (1985), for example, we hear only from mothers Millicent, Anthea, Rachel, Nancy and Rosalind. (Though fathers are mentioned, they are peripheral). While it might be argued that Liedloff is merely describing the division of childcare labour in two very different cultures (and there are plentiful data that mothers do provide the lion share of care),[4] evidence abounds that she goes beyond mere description.

Later, in her tortuous description of the Western newborn's first experiences, it is only the mother who makes the mistakes. The errant mother is characterized as selfish, cold hearted, foolish and naively reliant on parenting experts' advise. If only she thought (read: felt) for herself, Liedloff laments:

> It is standard practice in the "advanced" countries to buy a book on baby care the moment a new arrival is expected . . . Whatever it is, the young mothers read and obey, untrusting of their innate ability, untrusting of the baby's "motives" in giving the still perfectly clear signals. Babies have, indeed, become a sort of enemy to be vanquished by the mother. (1985: 35)

Setting up mothers and babies in opposition as "enemies," Liedloff (1985) shoots barb after relentless barb at "bad mothers" who have forgotten to listen to their instincts. Mother is depicted as the one who, "after much thought, has decided to allow [baby] access to her breast" (62). It is mother who naively follows her mothers' advice "that if she gives in to [the crying baby] now he (sic) will be spoiled and cause trouble later" (63). Her choice to decorate and supply a nursery demonstrates the misplacement of her priorities. In the following passage, Liedloff transforms the innocence of the standard middle class nursery into the battleground where mother wages war against her child when putting baby down for a nap:

> Softly, she closes the door. She has declared war upon him. Her will must prevail over his. Through the door she hears what sounds like someone being tortured. Her continuum recognizes it is as such. Nature does not make clear signals that someone is being tortured

unless it is the case. *It is precisely as serious as it sounds.* (1985: 63)

But in Liedloff's view, child neglect and denial of instinct are not the only transgressions. She also indicts mothers for their tendency to care *too much*, compromising a child's natural instinct to self protect. Liedloff asserts" the overprotected, weakened child is the one whose initiative has been usurped by an over eager mother" (159). Thus, mothers are not only to blame when their children, purportedly starved for touch, act out in socially unacceptable ways but their over eager care is responsible for producing weakness, too. Mothers, in Liedloff's conception, are the root of social problems.

Bad mothers, damaged children

While it may not have been Leadoff's (1985) intention, her causal link between "civilized" parenting norms and a host of problems blames mothers. The list of mother-induced consequences for denying her "unimpeachable instincts" ranges from children who run away from their mothers (86), get lost (87), suffer accidents (101-2), and lack creativity (89). Non-continuum children masturbate because they are deprived of the crucial in-arms phase (152) and adult sexuality is rendered dysfunctional, too. Per Liedloff, children who were not constantly carried by their mothers find that:

> ... in adulthood, excess energy is similarly concentrated by sexual foreplay and released by orgasm ... This incomplete release of the excess energy creates a fairly chronic state of dissatisfaction which manifests itself in bad temper, inordinate interest in sex, inability to concentrate, nervousness or promiscuity . (1985: 153)

Adults whose infantile needs were unmet (ostensibly, again, by mothers) are likely to pursue dysfunctional relationships (111-12), become homosexuals (122),[5] develop into martyrs (119), criminals (123-4), drug addicts (126) and parents who beat their children (121). Liedloff's list of syndromes or personalities attributable to in-arms deprivation includes the Casanova, the slob, the actor, the compulsive academic, the conquistador and the compulsive traveler (117-120). These deprived adults may suffer from self-induced sickness (124) and or possibly commit suicide (110-11). Even literally "burned children are a more indirect expression of the deprivation in parents" (121).

By implication, Liedloff (1985) indicts mothers *alone* as responsible for this array of problems. This blaming represents a most unfortunate contradiction given her earlier acknowledgement that the Yequana *as a community*—not individual mothers—produce well adjusted people. In the "modern" context, where is the plurality of care?

Contributing to a legacy of mother blame

As a result, Liedloff contributes to a ferocious climate of mother blam-

ing—a climate already rife with chronically guilty mothers who chastise themselves for their inadequacies (see Caplan, 2000; Douglas and Michaels, 2004; Ladd-Taylor and Umansky, 1998). This mother blaming is not lost on readers of TCC or on Liedloff herself. Based on letters received following the 1975 publication of the book, the author includes a section in the Introduction to the revised edition (1985) aptly titled: "Why Not to Feel Guilty About Not Having Been the Only One in Western Civilization to Treat Your Child Correctly."

In this section, Liedloff quotes from a letter sent by a mother named Rachel:

> I think your book was one of the cruelest things I've ever read. I am not suggesting that you should not have written it. I am not even saying that I wish I had not read it. It's simply that it impressed me profoundly, hurt me deeply, and intrigued me greatly. I do not want to face the possible truth of your theory and am trying my best to avoid facing it.... It's a wonder to me, as matter of fact, that you were not tarred and feathered at some stage. (1985: xii)

Liedloff concludes this story by explaining that she and Rachel became good friends and Rachel herself "a great advocate of the continuum concept." So, we are led to believe a mother might feel guilty, but the guilt will quickly dissolve if she subscribes to TCC; the open-minded mother will come around to Liedloff's irrefutable logic soon enough. Similarly, another mother, Rosalind found herself "sunk in a weeping depression" after reading the book but after a time, returned to the book for earnest study and presumably, adoption of its advice.

The stories of mothers who didn't find Rachel and Rosalind's resolutions are lost to us. We can only guess about the mothers who, enraged, threw the book across the room but its indictments lingered. We can wonder about the mothers who, too, fell into a depressed state but did not have the privilege of an "understanding and patient" husband to take over care of small children. More disturbing is the thought of the legions of readers of TCC who quietly absorbed the book's message that non continuum mothers tortured their children and the damage is certain and profound. Thus, the consequence of Liedloff's romanticized portrayal of the Yequana uncritically grafting their practices onto Western lives is to blame mothers. In yet another opposition, there are those mothers who get it and those who don't, and heaven help those who don't.

But Liedloff's (1985) mother blaming is not a new exercise. Indeed, she numbers among scores of writers, including academics, therapists and others, who indict mothers for a host of disorders, disappointments and diseases. Often this bias is revealed in the research design itself that focuses *only* on mother's culpability (see Caplan, 2000). Perhaps the most infamous (though

surely not the earliest) example of mother blaming is attributed to columnist Phillip Wylie. In his 1942 book *A Generation Of Vipers*, Wylie coined the term "momism" to name the so-called destructive maternal inclination to suppress, dominate and manipulate children. Wylie went so far as to blame over-protective mothers for raising unmasculine sons unfit for military service.

The practice of blaming mother persists. In fact, the mother-blaming trend in the field in psychology is ubiquitous enough to capture the attention of psychologists Paula Caplan and Ian Hall-McCorquodale (1985). They analyzed clinical psychology journals from 1970-1982 in search of instances of mother blaming such as pathologizing mothers and their mothering and holding mothers disproportionately responsible for their children's problems. They found that "mothers were blamed for seventy-two different kinds of problems in their offspring, ranging from bed wetting to schizophrenia, from inability to deal with color blindness to aggressive behavior, from learning problems to 'homicidal transsexualism'" (as quoted in Caplan, 2000: 45). Fathers were blamed for none.

The lay community is quick to blame, too. Vicky Phares (1993) established that the type of problems blamed on mothers differed from those blamed on fathers. Mothers were regarded as more responsible for children's internalized behaviour problems (such as depression, anxiety and shyness) and fathers were rated as more responsible for their children's externalizing behaviour problems (such as aggression and argumentativeness). This research, Phares argues, should discourage "global mother-blaming" and call for finer grained analyses.

Mothers themselves, of course, tune into the blame they unfairly shoulder. Karen Seccombe, Kimberly Battle Walters and Delores James (1998) found that many "welfare mothers" attribute their social status "to popular and contemporary individualist and cultural views which put the blame on the victims" (849). At the same time mothers may express frustration for being blamed, they engage in their own self-blame, disproportionately assuming responsibility for child outcomes (Penfold, 1985; Watson, 1986). In particular, G. R. Patterson (1980) documented that compared to fathers, mothers assumed *twice* as much responsibility for their children's problem behaviours.

One explanation for internalized mother blame may be the media's unrealistic depiction of perfect mothers: beautiful, successful women who manage the care of their children effortlessly and joyfully. These depictions, argue Douglas and Michaels (2004) constitute "the new momism"—the destructive trend of featuring, for example, "yummy mummies" (gorgeous and sexy celebrity moms who belie the legions of caregivers behind the scenes). Comparing motherhood to a panopticon in which motherhood is under constant surveillance, Douglas and Michaels demonstrate the impossibility of mothers feeling good about their motherwork. The disjuncture between a glamorized media portrayal and the reality of (down and dirty) everyday mothering leads many women to question if they are good enough.

Motherhood in context: real choices for real mothers

Of course, to deny that mothers do impact their children is not only inaccurate but renders invisible the countless hours of care that mothers provide. *Mothering does make a difference and sometimes that difference is negative.* But to place complex individual and social problems squarely on the backs of mothers amounts to sexist and counterproductive scapegoating. Further, this distortion siphons attention from finding social solutions that benefit children by supporting mothers. We are *collectively* responsible for how our children turn out, because the care of children takes place in a social context.

Is it possible to make recommendations regarding better ways to parent while respecting mothers and avoiding mother blaming? Yes, if we first promote changes at micro, meso and macro levels. If we genuinely create support networks that assist mothers—all mothers—so that the work they do is valued and shared in community, there is hope for the widespread adoption of TCC (see Crittenden, 2001, for a concrete set of mother-friendly recommendations). Without structural change, however, the push for CC-parenting unnecessarily burdens already over-taxed mothers. In the modern, civilized or what Büskens (2004) refers to as "socially differentiated" world, the kind of parenting (really, mothering) Liedloff (1985) advances occurs in a "geographic and social place of invisibility and irrelevance" (106). Thus, I must beg the question: even if we concede that attached/continuum-correct parenting is best for children, is it best for mothers?

Liedloff does acknowledge the isolation in which motherhood is experienced and advocates for mothers to gather together (sharing household work is one suggestion). But in U.S. society, for example, in which 70 percent of married mothers and 79 percent of single mothers of children 18 years and under are in the labour force (Department of Labour, 2001), it is difficult to imagine the easy integration of infants-in-arms into mothers' paid work lives. Still, mothers who can imagine full time, attached motherhood—those who enjoy the material and situational privileges necessary to care for their children in the ways that Liedloff prescribes—should feel empowered to do so. But until motherhood is truly valued and spared the "global blame" for all that ails us, prescriptions for the care of children must always be weighed carefully and seen through the lens of real mothers doing the everyday situated work of mothering.

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[1]The five "tools" of attachment parenting are: 1) connect with your baby early; 2) read and respond to your baby's cues; 3) wear your baby (i.e. carry him or her

close to your body as much as possible, preferably using a "baby sling"); 4) breastfeed your baby; 5) share sleep with your baby (Sears and Sears, 1993: 5). While these techniques are hardly novel worldwide, in the contemporary American context, they are considered "alternative."

[2]The Yequana are more commonly referred to as the Makitare (see www.continuum-concept.org for links to plentiful information regarding this population).

[3]My thanks are due to Petra Büskens for introducing me to Togovnick's work.

[4]See Coltrane (2000) for a summary of this research

[5]Of course, listing homosexuality a one of a litany of "dysfunctional" childhood outcomes/problems is highly problematic.

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Merlinda Weinberg

Young Single Mothers
The Work of Proving Fitness For Parenting

The relationship between "work" and young single mothers involved with social service agencies has primarily been delineated in two ways: through conservative and feminist discourses. I argue in this paper that a third way to conceptualize labour circulates in the field of social services but is primarily unacknowledged by practitioners and policy pundits. This conceptualization revolves around the crucial and risky work of young single mothers needing to prove fitness in order to be permitted to parent their children.

As part of a qualitative study on young single mothering and social services, I interviewed five white, front-line social service practitioners. I approached directors of the umbrella organization of agencies whose mandate is work with young single mothers and gained their permission to send letters to their casework staff, soliciting volunteers. Ensuring anonymity, four participants came forward. The fifth was suggested by a practitioner in the field. The workers were employed in both urban and rural voluntary settings devoted to providing help to young single pregnant and parenting women.

After introducing the existing articulated feminist and conservative discourses of work, I will use data from the interviews with these participants to describe a third way to understand the required labour of this population. An explanation for why women must fulfill the work of proving fitness and the silence surrounding this discourse of work are also proffered.

Acknowledged discourses about young single mothers and work

There is ambivalence about whether motherhood should be valorized and women encouraged to stay home with their children, or whether they should be citizen-workers, who contribute to the market through their labour. A

feminist perspective on young women parenting has been that mothering *is* work but unpaid and rendered invisible. Feminists have noted that women have been largely responsible for the work of caring. This discourse suggests that mothering should be credited as labour and compensated accordingly. At times, workers in social service agencies give voice to this perspective. In responding to a client who feared that a family member would perceive that the only reason she became pregnant was to obtain more social assistance money, Patricia, one of the practitioners in my study replied, "If I went on maternity leave for year, I'd be getting government money. You're getting paid to be a mom and it's a really important job." Another worker, Frieda, suggested that parenting was a "job in itself ... a full-time job." This discourse emphasizes structural components and tends to factor racial and class elements into the analysis. For example, Merrick (1995: 288) refers to adolescent childbearing for African-American young women as a normative "career choice" and an alternate pathway for womanhood.

A more conservative discourse also circulates. This trope is that young single mothers are the undeserving poor who must be regulated through either the requirement of waged work or schooling in order to interrupt cycles of dependency (Fraser and Gordon, 1994: 327). It emphasizes negative dependency through reliance on the state for financial assistance. An example of an attempt to ameliorate this "dependency" is the Learning, Earning and Parenting Programme, a mandatory programme for 16 and 17-year-old parents on Ontario Works, the social assistance programme in Ontario. In this programme, youth must either be in school or working to be eligible for welfare. Their entitlement to social assistance is "subject to implicit and explicit expectations of employment" (Evans, 1995: 157) with this perspective increasing over the last decade. Patricia complained that a welfare worker was pressuring her client by asking this young mother "what her plan [was] for going back to work or going back to school," despite her client's prerogative to take a year off from work to mother a three-month old baby.

The unacknowledged work of proving fitness

While these discourses of work has been framed either as waged employment, school, or the tasks of mothering themselves, in fact, for the recipients of social services, the most pressing and often perilous work in which they engage is the fight to demonstrate their capability to mother. A third participant, Jannie, talked about clients needing to "put in the work" to establish their competence. Only through the work of proving fitness to mother will these young single mothers involved with the social service system be given the fundamental right that others take for granted.

According to Nikolas Rose (1996), Foucault utilizes the concept of "governmentality," the "deliberations, strategies, tactics and devices employed by authorities for making up and acting upon a population and its constituents to ensure good and avert ill" (328). These tactics operate through "regulated

choices made by discrete and autonomous actors" (328) to make the populace productive and effective. While governmentality has constructive and helpful components (for example, in the protection of vulnerable groups such as children) it also can be punitive. The focus of this paper is on the disciplinary aspects, to depict the extensive and, at times, brutal regulatory practices enacted upon young single mothers by social service workers, often despite those employees' best intentions. The rationale for my emphasis is to expose the difficulty and pain that accompanies the lives of these young women because their suffering is often neither recognized nor seen. It is also to identify another form of work that, while unnamed, has real material implications for these young single mothers.

Who is being governed?

The young single mothers who end up on the doorsteps of social service agencies are often the more "discouraged of the disadvantaged" (Luker, 1996: 115). These clients are at the nexus of a number of marginalized categories: they are young, living outside the institution of marriage as mothers, impoverished, and of varying racial and ethnic backgrounds. Many of these young women enter agencies with few resources or supports, rendering them vulnerable and open to intense scrutiny. The young women are often voluntary clients in name only. Jannie identified this predicament. She stated, "They really weren't voluntary." A fourth worker, Charlotte queried, "How many choices do they really have?"

These young women are perceived of as procreating without the resources to adequately care for their progeny because they have nothing to lose by waiting to bear children. This perspective defines young single mothers, "as girls from flawed backgrounds making tragic mistakes" (Kelly, 1996: 429) which will both be repeated in the next generation and impact negatively on the state through increased financial dependency. Jannie explained that her clients came from "families of young teenage moms ... [The] pattern [was] replicating itself."

Viewed as children having children (Pearce, 1993: 46) they are thought to be engaging in "out of time," negligent acts suggests Nancy Lesko (2001: 135). These young women defy the "good girl" life script of the young woman who finishes school, secures employment and marries prior to having children (Addleson, 1994: 115). It is feared that this immoderate and immature sexuality may indicate other excessive or impulse-ridden behaviours in the areas of aggression, substance use, profligate spending etc. or in inattention to their children because the focus will be on their own "selfish" needs. Lack of willpower and impulsivity are linked to assumptions about a willingness to live off the avails of the state as well. The problem of the high percentage of young single mothers living in poverty is privatized as personal irresponsibility, rather than seen as the outcome of structural disadvantage, gendered inequality, racial discrimination and/or public policy.

At the same time, there is an assumption that dependency on men as breadwinners is acceptable.

> Young women are expected to preserve their sexuality to be bargained in exchange for a man's social protection and economic support... The sexually unorthodox girl threatens not just her own future, but an entire system of social and economic relationships based on the assumption that each individual woman and her children will be supported by an individual man. (Nathanson, 1991: 208)

Single mothering is a renunciation of the need for male support and dependence. By engaging in sex outside of the bounds of conventional marriages and by mothering without the benefit of partners, they are judged as deteriorating the social fabric of society and particularly the traditional notion of the family.

How is governmentality achieved?

Expectations of what constitutes good mothering extend far beyond the absence of abuse and neglect into multiple areas of functioning for the mothers and their children. With these young single mothers, the techniques employed to govern and form the self are extensive, running the gamut from the management of limited resources to cognitive and pedagogical strategies.

Management of the body

Governmentality works on the physical body of these young women. Even before the birth of their babies, there is intense scrutiny and regulation. It has been theorized by Rosalyn Diprose and Tamsin Wilton that even in a

> normal pregnancy, what the mother does with her body—what she eats, where she goes, how and when—is open to public scrutiny. She, the mother, is a "legitimate target of moral concern" (Diprose, 1994: 26) and thus "subject to very direct state control" (Wilton, 1995: 183). (qtd. in Pillow, 2000: 202)

Programmes, such as Kick Butt for Two, a smoking cessation programme, are common fare for young single mothers, working on the notion of not just the regulation of the mother but also the unborn child as well. One of Patricia's clients, due to a history of drug usage, was required to do drug screens, urine screens, blood samples and hair analysis to provide evidence that she was not using drugs. Despite all these tests coming back negative, the hospital staff still did not allow her to breast-feed.

Limitation and management of physical resources

Another aspect of the work of demonstrating fitness includes the ability

to manage on inadequate resources. The history of social welfare in Canada is based on the principle of "less eligibility." This principle is that the assistance provided should be at a poorer standard than that of the lowest paid labourer (Swift, 1995: 47). Yet clients are expected to cope under these conditions and found wanting when they cannot. Patricia had a client who was receiving $495 a month on welfare. Despite knowing what financial assistance she was receiving, her CAS worker repeatedly questioned her as to why she could not find a two-bedroom apartment for her and her daughter. Ultimately the young mother had to give her daughter up to the Children's Aid Society. Patricia averred, "The whole reason why her child was in care was because she lost her apartment because they raised her rent again and she couldn't afford it." In the urban centres of Central and Eastern Ontario, waiting lists for public housing are between two and five years. In the interim, young women are often placed in the hotel system. Patricia referred to this system as "no tell, motel" because of how inadequate (without refrigerators or telephones) and often dangerous and frightening (rife with drugs and violence) these settings were.

Professionals who represent the child welfare system may judge, as evidence of abuse or neglect, childrearing patterns that are normative for others of different cultural perspectives or at lower-socioeconomic brackets (such as allowing an older sibling to watch the younger children). Frieda described that residents of a maternity home were required to accumulate a layette in preparation for the birth of their babies. The delineation of what was to be included extended to change tables and $40 first aid kits. Frieda commented that she believed adequate resources were a mat on the floor and having a few bandages and peroxide. She felt that agency personnel were "imposing their beliefs on young women" and that these beliefs were culturally middle-class and disproportionate to the means available to these clients, increasing the likelihood that the young women would fail in their ability to prove their competence.

Pedagogy

Because these young women are seen as the unworthy poor, the emphasis is on personal failure and altering deficiencies to improve character through training, rather than providing material resources. Social services assume that education with its emphasis on rational thinking is one of the most effective means of changing the individual and consequently the society (Enns, 1997: 37). This emphasis emerges from a liberal enlightenment tradition that values rational judgment, believing it is critical to human dignity. The emphasis is on the individual as the unit for change. Pedagogy acts by indoctrinating clients as to what is perceived of as responsible behaviour on the part of a mother. These strategies are extensive, at the same time that they operate on micro-levels. In describing the programmes provided for a residential setting, Charlotte said,

> We have a school programme running *all* morning and then we have independent living, we have addictions. We have parenting.... They're [the clients] up in the morning, they're moving all of the time and they just sometimes go *"No More...."*

Details at the level of how to change a diaper to the specifications of professionals or the correct pot in which to sterilize a bottle are all part of the training. This training acts on the governmentality of both the generation of the mothers and of their children. For example, Frieda described the technique of "hand over hand" in which mothers are taught to demonstrate appropriate touch by placing their hand over the child's and showing their child how to be gentle. This training regulates both mother and child.

Lesko (1990) states that these pedagogical strategies include "rites of redemption" (125). Kristine, the fifth social service worker in my sample, described one such rite. At a community outreach programme of a Catholic agency, young mothers who were clients went into the community to talk to other youth "about making decisions around sex ... peer pressure ... and the realities of being a teen parent—,what differences it [had] made in their life." Kristine's disagreement with the programme focus was that the mothers needed "to present to the students that this [having a child as a single mother] was a big mistake and that they [did not] regret having their kids but they regret[ed] having had sex at such an early age." She elaborated "they're also supposed to be presenting kind of the pathetic side of life like I [the client] don't have enough money and dad doesn't give me money for diapers." The mothers were coached not to answer the question "are you still having sex?" If they became pregnant again, regardless of how effective they were as speakers in the programme, they were "fired." Kristine felt it was "medieval" propaganda to insist that the young women present themselves as if they had "made a *terrible* mistake, got pregnant, had a baby and now they [were] going to live their lives in repentance for their big sin."

Psychological management

One feature in the imposition of expectations of fitness to mother is demonstration of "appropriate" feelings and attitudes. The expectation of controlled and contained emotion is a part of the work of "good" mothering. But being in a subordinate position evokes anger. Hostility and resentment are often the justifiable outcomes of oppression, racism and marginalization, not simply paranoid or dysfunctional reactions. Audre Lorde (1984) states, "Women responding to racism means women responding to anger; the anger of exclusion, of unquestioned privilege, of racial distortions, of silence, ill-use, stereotyping, defensiveness, misnaming, betrayal, and co-optation" (124). But self-governing subjects are expected to monitor and contain their own aggressive impulses. This is especially true for women in a society that is intolerant of women's assertion or aggression. Teresa Bernardez (1987) suggests that often

there is confusion and censure from practitioners for behaviours that do not conform to traditional role prescriptions of women, particularly in areas of anger or rebellion and this condemnation is "sometimes in moralistic terms" (29). Consequently anger must be suppressed and when it does leak out (for example in yelling or threatening behaviour), it is often seen as pathological. As well, non-compliance, a hostile attitude, or rage can result in the construction of the "problematic" client. Mind-set remains an important test for the provision of resources and the avoidance of punishments such as the apprehension of children.

Managing emotions extends beyond that of anger. Enduring prejudice, lack of credibility, and emotional pain, to name just a few, are part of the work these young women must accomplish. Even when one of Patricia's client's children was apprehended, the client could not wail in anguish. Her explanation, according to Patricia, was that out-of-control behaviour "would go in [her] file." Thus the discipline becomes internalized and the client, a self-regulating subject. However these young mothers are placed in a paradoxical position in dealing with psychological and emotional struggles. The "good" client is one who is self-analytical, articulate and self-disclosing. However, the more a young mother divulges to someone who is authorized to punish, the more likely she will reveal information that puts her at risk for disciplinary practices. At the same time, a woman who demonstrates openness is more apt to be judged as making progress and being seen as fit, than one who refuses to disclose. This conundrum puts clients in an untenable position from which they cannot escape.

Surveillance by social service workers

Surveillance is far-reaching. Charlotte was aware that young single mothers perceived her as "always around" and that she could "see their every move" just like "tiny" guppies in a "little tiny fish tank." Her image of them being so small and enclosed in a tank represents their powerlessness and the possibility of constant scrutiny. From the tracking of attendance in school programmes, to the regulation of clients' social assistance funds through a trusteeship programme where workers are responsible for the distribution of cheques and how clients spend money, observation operates on micro-levels. For example, according to Patricia, one client referring to her child as "my sexy boy," was "written up ad nauseum" in the clinical records and Patricia had to warn her client that she had to "really think about [her] choice of language when [she was] talking to the baby because everybody [was] watching" her.

Surveillance is frequently accompanied by conflicting expectations, making governance according to desired "standards" of mothering difficult, if not impossible. Frieda gave the illustration of training around the need to sterilize bottles for infants. She stated that within the staff group at the agency expectations of sterilizing timing were different. "So you have certain people that feel you [the young mothers] need to sterilize for ten minutes and then you

have people that feel you only need to sterilize for five minutes," suggested Frieda.

Not only different workers, but diverse agencies can take very conflicting stances about what constitutes appropriate mothering practices for any one client. Charlotte described a case in which a boyfriend with a history of violence was being verbally threatening and abusive. The Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Probation Department, the Children's Aid Society (CAS), and three levels of staff at the maternity home all had divergent requirements on how the young mother should behave in response to the threat to herself and her baby. These expectations were contradictory and consequently impossible to implement, even if the client had wished to comply.

Apprehension of children

The most lethal tool in governmentality is the threat of apprehension. Apprehension refers to the mandated responsibility of child welfare authorities to remove a child from his/her parents when that child is evaluated as being at high risk for neglect or abuse. Patricia described the pain and suffering of having one's child apprehended: "I have never heard anybody cry like that. It's like what you think a wounded animal would sound..." The Oxford Dictionary provides several definitions of the word "apprehension" (1996: 64). The meaning intended by the CAS is "to seize or arrest." The connotation of criminality that is ascribed to the young women whose babies are removed comes through in this use of the word. But equally significant is another meaning: to anticipate with uneasiness or fear, the constant state for clients under the eye of social service workers and the CAS.

Why the work of proving fitness?

The most overt aim is to ensure that children are parented adequately, thereby protecting those who are weak and vulnerable. A civil society should provide protection for those who are unable to look after themselves. There are young mothers whose own resources, both emotional and material, are insufficient to meet the challenges of successful and healthy living, thereby endangering themselves and their progeny.

Another reason for the work of proving adequacy is that in a world of limited resources, some means must be found to determine who receives and under what circumstances. With insufficient resources to give indiscriminately, strategies are necessary to separate out those eligible to receive and at what level, from others. These practices are, in part, aimed at redistributive justice; to tip the balance of resources towards the have-nots. However the pool from which this determination is made, tends to be between those with very little and those with even less, and comes at the cost of significant scrutiny. Nor is the redistribution adequate, perhaps maintaining rather than eliminating insufficiency.

Additionally the extent, depth and brutality of the "work" these young

women must fulfill suggest that more subterranean and complex forces may also be operating. An underlying assumption about the young women's potential inadequacy is that they have engaged in irresponsible sexual behaviour, too early and without an appropriate partner and consequently are at high risk of being rash in other areas as well, most significantly, their mothering ability. These young women are thought to dilute the moral strength of the civilization, both perpetuating earlier cycles of disadvantage and setting examples of such behaviour for the next generation. Consequently, one deemed as weakening the next generation is constituted as a "burden on the state, as an inadequate mother to her children and as damaging to the moral fibre of society" (Smart, 1996: 54). Through strategies of governmentality, responsibility to the social body as a whole is emphasized. Surveillance and punishment are not just directed at the "unruly" lone mothers. These tactics also act as a threat and reminder to others of the consequences of stepping out of line.

Furthermore, Edelman (1988) argues that "a problem to some is a benefit to others; it augments the latter group's influence.... The term 'problem' only thinly veils the sense in which deplored conditions create opportunities" (14). The "problem" of adequacy of mothering obscures the benefits to those with the authority to define what is appropriate mothering and what not. Furthermore, a profession must "build, control, and legitimize an occupational terrain" in order to ensure its own existence (Abramovitz, 1998: 518). Defining the "problem" of young single mothers' adequacy augments social service providers' influence and power (Edelman, 1988: 20). Additionally, one construction of problems diverts attention from other, more threatening issues such as poverty, racism and social inequity (Edelman, 1988: 27). In this way the threat of redistributing resources and up-ending privilege can also be avoided (Swadener and Lubeck, 1995: 11).

The silence surrounding the fitness discourse

For social service workers to confront the extent and severity of the disciplinary regimes of "putting in the work" to prove adequacy would require recognition of their own complicity. But practitioners view their mandate as advancing human welfare. This help is perceived of as a principled activity that claims moral goodness of the providers. Professionals are caught between an ethic that informs the work as a vehicle of social justice, and a bureaucratic regime where practitioners are responsible for social regulation and the discipline of others. For example, the primary principles of non-judgmentalism and empowerment in the counseling relationship run counter to ensuring the safety of a child, requiring the necessity to act as judges on the adequacy of a woman's mothering. Leonard (1994: 22), a social work educator, suggests that "social work is almost invariably seen as benign in its effects, or at least in its intentions and possibilities: it could hardly be otherwise, for how would we justify ourselves morally unless we believed that we were engage in an enlight-

ened, progressive, emancipatory enterprise?"

Only when professionals understand that they are not "neutral" players but have vested interests with the power to contribute to the determination of what is taken as truth, is the work of proving fitness to mother acknowledged, exposed and thus potentially altered.

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Corinne Rusch-Drutz

Stage Mothers

A Qualitative Analysis of Women's Work Experiences as Mothers in Toronto Theatre

Despite the fact that the representation of patriarchal motherhood has been ubiquitous in dramatic literature as it continues to be reified, codified and upheld as one of—if not the most—central relationships in the nuclear family, making it a much studied element of early human development and leaving it well documented in the annals of theatre history, mothering remains, with the exception of a handful of references, a topic that has been all but absent from writing on women's theatre practice. There are reasons for this dearth of scholarship, to be sure. Ostensibly, patriarchal divisions of the public and private spheres of life have deliberately relegated women's theatre practice as external from their domestic responsibilities by seeing childrearing as women's work that is separate from any they might perform in the public realm. But as Adrienne Rich (1986) and other feminist theorists (i.e., Peters, 1997; Abbey and O'Reilly, 1998; Fox, 1998; Duffy, Mandell & Pupo, 1989) have taught us, motherhood is a part of the paid labour force and is present in each and every work sector in which women participate. As feminist sociologist Bonnie Fox notes:

> Arguments about the state's control of women's roles as biological and social reproducers have been made by social historians. The focus of these arguments range from laws prohibiting reproductive choice to "experts" advice to mothers. Details about social control and exploitation aside, these arguments are important for their structural approach. The effects of motherhood are dependent upon the social context in which it occurs, so it is important to understand that context. Moreover, it is significant that since the development of a capitalist labour market, motherhood—at least women's position in the home—has defined the position of all women in that marketplace. (1998: 161)

Theatre, institution and motherwork

While certain analyses of motherhood have found a place in Women's Studies scholarship—the ways in which women have balanced motherhood and paid labour in the professional world come readily to mind—there is not one published study of the ways in which feminists have sought to interweave their mothering with contemporary theatre practice. This is not to say that there is no theory devoted to mothering in the theatre, but rather that it has been dedicated to literary analysis of motherhood in playwriting, either by women or otherwise. Part of the problem is that theatre is very rarely seen as a site for institutional inquiry. The prevailing notion in this country of an art for arts' sake ideology has allowed for a distinctly un-institutional approach to theatre studies scholarship, which fails to see it in relation to the ruling apparatus. And while feminist intervention in relation to issues of job parity for women as actors, playwrights and directors, and more laudably, canon formation, performativity and representation of women, both on the stage and in everyday life has been given considerable critical attention, women's roles in relation to the institutional order of theatre have yet to be fully addressed. As feminist theorist Sue-Ellen Case (1988) notes, "The seemingly dramatic standards which select the playwrights in the canon are actually the same patriarchal biases which organize the economy and social organization of culture at large" (534). This is not to suggest that theatre as a major socio-cultural institution has never been critically addressed, but its functioning is more than a mass producer of cultural texts, and it deserves to be scrutinized as such, which sometimes means separate and apart from its artistry.

As women's contribution to the cultural locus has been devalued in relation to the seemingly more important tasks of men, researchers have been slow to document women's work in relation to theatre practice, much less the work of motherhood, which outside of its dramatic representation is seen as beyond the realm of theatre proper. The purpose of this paper is to look at the ways in which feminist theatre practitioners have balanced their professional work and motherhood. In this analysis I wish to bridge these two non-disparate elements of women's lives by examining feminist theatre practitioners' experiences as mothers in relation to their work in Canadian theatre. By exploring the concepts of motherwork[1] and identity, I will look at the ways in which the social conditions of motherhood, childcare, and the emotional labour of motherwork interact with theatre as an institution in immediate and central ways.

My findings are based on research conducted for my doctoral thesis[2] which was a qualitative analysis of women theatre practitioners in Toronto, in which I investigated a group of twenty-five professional women theatre practitioners[3] about the ways in which they operate within theatre as an institution. Through the use of qualitative research tools and Dorothy Smith's (1987) approach to institutional ethnography as an investigative methodology (as laid out in her book *The Everyday World as Problematic*), my analysis questioned what it means

for women to work in the theatre and examined the social, political and economic conditions that enable and/or hinder them to gain work. Part of my investigative methodology was to analyze what constitutes "work" in theatre and the ways in which the term is delineated by institutional discourse, which can blur the lines between women's public and private lives.

With my goal of investigating the concept of "work" in theatre practice, I knew from the outset of my research that I would be asking my subjects about their experiences as mothers and the ways in which their mothering intersected with their paid labour. This seemed a natural line of questioning as over half of the women I interviewed were mothers. But I had no idea that this material would become so central to my findings. Certainly, I anticipated that of those participants who were mothers a number would have some interesting stories to tell about balancing their double duty; I was not, however, prepared for the overwhelming response to the topic. Even the more seasoned practitioners, who in some cases were rather accustomed to being interviewed professionally, commented on the fact that they had *never* been asked about the relationship between motherhood and their work, and were thrilled to share with me stories about their children, their partners, breastfeeding, diaper changes, daycare and finding baby sitters and all-night drugstores while on tour. One woman, so delighted to talk about her children in reference to her work, relayed the details of the homebirth of her first child after a rather unusual opening night, leaving us both in tears by the story's end. Indeed, the subject matter began to take on a life of its own and became a surprising and rich discovery.

As I took the term theatre practitioner in its most generous sense by considering all manner of work in professional theatre, my interviews were not limited to theatre's usual suspects such as actors, directors and playwrights, but designers, technicians, stagehands, theatre educators, archivists, council officers and administrators. With a strong working knowledge of my subjects' histories, I began by asking general questions about family and home responsibilities and was then able to tailor my questions to the specific nature of the participants' work using the feminist research strategy of the semi-structured open-ended interview.[4]

Results

Motherhood is tricky business in the theatre, often seen as a private and self-contained aspect of family life that has nothing to do with women's professional work. As Karen, a director and arts manager notes, by and large children are rarely seen if ever heard about in Toronto theatre. When asked about her experience she is surprised but pleased with my inquiry. She responds:

> *[I feel] that it is very difficult to have children in this community and I have three. I find that people are really not tackling that as subject matter for work. And certainly at the International Women's Playwrights Congress which I was at, I was yet again disappointed that there wasn't more*

> *discussion ... as to what that means, the bearing and raising of children and family means to artists. But that's a personal thing, of course. I mean, not every feminist is a mother and not every mother is an artist. But it's interesting. It's a question that is never really dealt with.*

Karen's narrative documents the absence of parenting discourse in the theatre community in a number of ways: in its exclusion as a topic for dramatic and performative work; its omission as an issue among theatre artists in general and the ways in which it has been by-passed as a topic for feminist theatre practitioners in particular; and its lack of address at the institutional level. Karen's experience as a mother is excluded from the Congress design, as it is peripheral to theatre organization, placing her work as a mother/artist outside the documentary practices[5] of the institution.

How to account for this? Later in the interview Karen assesses the lack of attention paid to women and children's needs within the theatre as part of a reticence to regard women as mothers in a male-oriented profession. She references her thoughts to the historical exclusion of women from early Toronto theatre,[6] suggesting that the theatre has allowed women to become part of its community but only in a strictly professional context. As she comments:

> *I think ... and this is very personal ... that there was a definite desire to be recognized as men or as men were recognized. I think that there is something about the way a woman relates in our society to having a family that is different from the way a man relates to it. Now that is not true for all women or all men ... but there are women who see ... their work as something that has no bearing on their lives as mothers.*

In this narrative Karen elucidates the male institutional standard in theatre, drawing a connection between women's lived experiences as mothers and comparing them to the notion of the single male artist to which they should aspire. Here we see one of the ways in which the gendered accounting practices of theatre organization (that is to say, theatre's method of allocating and identifying work processes) are neutralized: women may enter the cultural locus of artistic creativity, providing they identify with male experience and represent themselves in a similar fashion. Aside from the fact that men are the protagonists in the myth of the theatre artist as bohemian living in esoteric cafes off cigarettes and coffee, there are other more concrete, monetary explanations for the notion of the female, and to a lesser extent male, artist who is seen as childless, as Lissa, a writer, producer, choreographer and mother of two asserts:

> *I know that certainly in the movie industry, where there is more ready income at a certain point, you know, you can hire people to raise your children. It's very difficult to do that in theatre because you don't have*

> *enough money. So as a mom you're sort of more on the front lines of parenthood in that way, which also takes you off the front lines of theatre, because theatre is a demanding lover who wants you to spend every single minute of your waking hours with him or her.*

Lissa's observations about childcare options available to those in the film versus the theatre industry denote a conceptual distinction between not only the higher fiscal earnings of those working in film, but the distinctive nature of the time commitment necessary to theatrical work and productivity, which functions to limit choice. The language used to describe her position on "the front lines of parenthood" demarks her conflict with the wage discrepancies between the arts, placing her in discord with institutional practice, which she refers to as a "demanding lover." Moreover, Lissa's comments speak to the traditional division of labour between women and men in the home—whether or not mothers are responsible for primary child care—which becomes fundamental to the creation of art in the public sphere.

In addition to the uncertainty of long-term work and the unusual hours, theatre is a physically demanding vocation requiring late nights during the run of a performance, spurts of binge work prior to the opening of a show and extended absences from home during tours, putting the distinctive nature of the time commitment necessary to theatre making at odds with child rearing. As Maxine, a playwright, activist and performer recalls:

> *It's interesting to think about now that I've got [an] empty nest. Well, when my son was still small it meant that no matter how involved I was in a piece or in rehearsals or during tech week, I still had to think about a person. I could never become totally immersed in what I was doing to forget about this other little person. Now, he'll probably tell it from another point of view. He often felt neglected and left behind. You know, he never saw me if I'd be away touring. He resented the people that I'd left him with or ... but he also got to meet a lot of neat people. So it's been, you know, both sides of that.*

Maxine's description of the ways in which she has managed her work and mothering is useful. No matter how involved she is in the work process of a production, she cannot allow herself to become fully immersed, as she is responsible for her son. Conversely, his resentment over being left with a caregiver while his mother goes on tour illustrates the blurring of work boundaries that are particular to the local course of action of touring. As only her work in the theatre proper is accountable within the institutional order, Maxine's mothering is seen in conflict within the work process of performing.

Yet this conflict, while speaking to one of the obstacles she has had to overcome in relationship to her work and motherhood, also speaks to the gendered characteristics of the situation. Though Maxine is married, she

maintains the primary responsibility of finding childcare for her son, forcing her to leave him with people other than his parents, making him feel "neglected and left behind." Accordingly, raising her child becomes a gendered act in both the structure that organizes it under patriarchy and the division of labour that she and her husband bring to it, as in this case it remains her responsibility for arranging childcare. Maxine's experience of juggling childcare with her work in the theatre offers an understanding of the gendered organization of caring as both an activity and an emotion (McMahon, 1995: 191). Caring for her son is characterized in the day-to-day responsibility for his well-being in which she notes both the costs and rewards; because of her specialized work in theatre, her son "got to meet a lot of neat people." Joan Peters (1997) sees this type of caregiving as an all-fulfilling aspect of idealized motherhood (that mothers experience even when they themselves are not always performing primary caregiving), which she calls "sacrificial motherhood," a notion that many working women buy into because they have been conditioned to feel solely responsible for providing childcare needs, even if they themselves will not be staying at home. At the crux of this predicament is women's inability to share responsibility for childcare needs with partners, family and/or paid caregivers (41-42).

Samantha, an artistic director, director and educator offers her experience in relation to the time commitments necessary in theatre practice:

> *We're devoting so much to [the company] to keep things going, that.... Well, this anecdote can suggest the level of commitment in my own case. I had a c-section on a Monday morning and I went to a rehearsal on Saturday afternoon. A caesarean is not just having a baby—it's also major surgery. I was begging them on Friday to let me out of the hospital and take out my stitches because I wanted to get back in the rehearsal hall. Well, is that balanced?! It certainly isn't. Some called me a workaholic based on that one, and I think that "passionately committed" is a much nicer way of putting it. But I'm not the only one who's done something like that in the company.*

Here Samantha describes a number of dilemmas in relation to her attempt to balance motherhood and theatre. In order to maintain both the economic structure of her theatre company and the artistic well being of the production in which she is involved, she decides to ignore the standard recovery period necessary for a c-section in order to return to the rehearsal hall and ensure the success of her play, a move she acknowledges is unbalanced. She cites a similar level of commitment on the part of other women working in her theatre company, all of whom are attempting to maintain the viability of an organization in jeopardy. While Samantha's example of her "passionate commitment" to her company is exceptional, it acts as a useful insight into the social relations of theatre in Toronto with regard to gender. The company, a now-defunct feminist theatre group which specialized in popular theatre by bringing productions about women's issues to non-traditional venues like shelters, rape

crises centres and schools, folded when their Canada Council and Ontario Arts Council funding was slashed in the late '90s, though these granting bodies continued to fund other alternative theatres on par with Samantha's company. Upon deeper investigation, this anecdote serves to illustrate what feminist institutional theorist Anne Marie Goetz (1997) terms "a gendered dynamic" which shapes institutions. The closure of this feminist not-for-profit theatre is an example, as the private sector could not make up for the deep economic loss of public arts funding, while the public institutions failed to include women equitably amongst the "public" that they serve (Goetz, 1997: 5). The result is, as Goetz notes,

> These gendered preference systems are more than discriminatory attitudes or irrational choices on the part of individuals, or unintended oversights in policy. Nor are they deliberate policy outcomes. They are embedded in the norms, structures and practices of institutions. (5)

While Samantha's example indicates one of the ways in which the arts in general have not historically been hospitable to women, the theatre with its unusual hours, flexible scheduling, and broad spectrum of work opportunities allows for many of its members to very often lead double lives. The ubiquity of young actors posing as waiters is only one case in point. Beyond the glamorous lure of acting, many writers and designers, whose work isn't solely physically located in the rehearsal hall, find that they have some flexibility to accommodate their childcare needs, as Christine, a playwright and author, observes:

> *Well, I only have one child so it's quite different than having three or four or five children. But I'm also married to an actor and he doesn't get up in the morning and go off to work and leave me with the child . . . .But then he's only one and it's easier if you're a writer because you don't have the same kind of time pressures and the same kind of going to the office pressures and whatever—if I were an actor, though, and didn't go to rehearsals, that would be a problem . . . .If I were an actor, I wouldn't have been able to pay any attention to him because I would have been on stage. But as a writer I sit there watching and I can stop watching.*

Christine's experience as a playwright with a partner who shares in the parenting responsibilities supports her working environment, as her husband's line of work allows him to care for their son. Moreover, her position within the accounting practices of theatre grants her the opportunity to be both present and absent from rehearsals, conditions that can virtually only be enjoyed by a writer or one with a flexible role within the social order of theatre-making.

Working from home, however, is not without its own problems, as Linda, a Toronto-based set designer with two young children, observes:

> *There simply aren't enough hours in the day. Part of the problem is wearing too many hats. As a designer so much of my work is initiated in my home studio. That's where I come up with my initial designs and work out what this piece is actually going to look like. But with two little ones running around, it's hard to tell them, "Mommy's working." They don't really get it. They know that I'm closing the door and all of the sudden they're out. Years ago I suppose it wouldn't have been a problem because I'd be the one at home not working. Now home means working too and the lines can get blurred.*

Linda's articulation of the inherent problems that come from working at home is certainly not unique to the theatre, but speaks to the nature of contingent work in theatre practice. As Linda's work in design is contract-based, she is hired on a project basis, with her work circumstances constantly changing. Her job is dependent on her ability to produce designs in a relatively short period of time so that they can be implemented in the production with a quick turnaround. Her double duty as primary caregiver complicates her working conditions, as her two young children do not understand her divided attention, which blurs the lines between mothering and her work at home.

In addressing motherhood and parenting in theatre one recognizes engendered practice many women continue to experience, even if much of their work is generated at home. As Linda comments, "Well, of course consciously as a woman I know that I shouldn't feel guilty about taking so much on. But it's so hard when both things really don't accommodate the other." For Linda, shifting the boundaries between her public and private life becomes a difficult mediation, one that ultimately disempowers her through guilt. Linda's experience resists any kind of neat separation between the emotional relations of motherwork, paid work, maternal identity and theatre practice. Given the conflicts that are built into her life, the expectations of her family and employers, the nature of her contingent work, the ideology she harbours about what motherhood entails—both real and romanticized—it's hardly surprising that she feels guilty and confused about her motherwork in relation to theatre practice. While the documentary practices of the institution require Linda to divide her time between mothering and working, the particulars of her situation prohibit this kind of strict separation and she is caught trying to "wear too many hats."

While the theatre has established itself as an informed context for work about women's issues, a performative space where all manner of subjects may be represented, reproduced, deconstructed and reformed, it still operates within a gendered context, as feminist dramatic theorist Sarah Werner (1998) notes,

> There is a desire to see theatre as a place that is all about taking risks, a place that is about experiment and not stasis. But clearly theatre is

> a place that allows for certain types of chance taking and not others; it is possible for theatre to be a world that pushes boundaries, but leaves some intact. There is still a strong sense that theatre is male. (111)

Though often touted as a neutral space in which to practice art, that theatre as an institution continues to be male dominated has long been recognized by feminist dramatic criticism, but as its social relations—that is to say, the concerting of its work processes as social courses of action—continue to go understudied, theatrical discourse fails to recognize that theatre practice is predicated upon the work of women's labour in the home. Here Janet, a costume designer, comments on the ways in which she wishes her work would accommodate her parenting, rather than ostracize her family commitments:

> *I would like to make my children part of my work without it being a subculture. We've fought for women's issues not to be a subculture, not to be ghettoized and I think parenthood is seen as a very large minority, [though it is] possibly the majority. It is common among people, but it is almost silent. Not talked about. You join it when you become a parent and all of a sudden some of your time is spent [dealing with] issues that other people's isn't, in your immediate circle of workers. But it's almost done on the side, as a hobby, and certainly it's considered thus.*

In this narrative Janet identifies the notion of parenthood as a separate social activity which is seen outside of the mainstream of theatre and disconnected from its practice entirely. And yet the work of mothers is part of the theatre's actuality in that the social relations of theatre extend to the private organization of the family; nevertheless, the effort of mothering is often neutralized and rendered unaccountable. Thus, in looking at artistic practice in its entirety it is necessary to take into account the ways in which generalizing systems have preconditioned individual actors as social agents, highlighting gendered modes of organization that uphold the dominant culture while placing limitations on the ways in which work is perceived within the documentary practices of the institution.

In this section of our interview Karen sums up her anger about the way she feels Canadian theatre sees women with children:

> *I spend a lot of time working for changes in Equity, Canadian Actor's Equity, through international organization along with ACTRA, surrounding the conditions for women. There was a lot of resistance among many women who seem to feel having children was a choice—that if people make it, well, "good for them," but it was rather like choosing to have a Great Dane puppy who needed a lot of walks and food and attention, and then complaining that somebody else should help you deal with the Great Dane when you went on tour. That's how it was approached. I know that*

there was a whole group who did not want to have any special treatment for women who chose to be parents, and interestingly enough, it was spearheaded by women. But not only women, but men as well, take part in child care and the costs. But it was as though, "that's your choice if you have children." So there is an intrinsic anti-family, anti-child stance within theatre in Canada.

As women's positions as mothers within the community are seen as outside the accounting practices of the institution, the lack of discourse on parenting in the theatre becomes regarded as an individual problem, not one of structural inequity. Moreover, Karen maintains that the "intrinsic anti-family, anti-child stance within theatre in Canada" is "spearheaded by women" who don't "want to have any special treatment" for those who choose to be parents. In this backlash scenario women with children are posited as those who have decided to reproduce at the cost of other women's well-being within the community. As a result, one group of women is always bound by their choice to be mothers, which privatizes their distinct needs and suppresses their appearance as active agents within their local work settings as they undergo a constant balancing act between their commitment to both childcare and theatre, of which the former does not outwardly appear as legitimate work. McMahon (1995) observes that the relational aspects of women's experience as mothers often disguises the work involved. "Because it is so often seen as an extension of caring, as an expression of love, women's daily practical caring for others is frequently not recognized as real work" (192).

Conclusion

How then to account for motherhood within the conceptual practice of theatre? As Susan Bassnett (1998) reminds us, "[a]ny discussion of the changing status of women in theatre needs to take into account the wider cultural context" (87). Therefore, we need to consider the work of mothering, the organizing, administering and maintaining of the orderliness of everyday life as it intersects with the institutional process of theatre. And while this functioning would not ordinarily be thought of as work, much less in relation to any art form, it is a vital part of theatre's economy. Women often inadvertently perpetuate their own entrapment by taking on greater amounts of work and by failing to see motherwork in combination with their paid labour, forcing them to manage more contradictory demands on their time, and accept greater stresses in their day-to-day lives (Duffy et al., 1989: 106). Though understanding the ways in which women's motherwork contributes to their professional lives is a critical project within a number of feminist communities, it is an issue that scholarly work in Canadian theatre has yet to tackle. Opening up the concept of mothering as a place for critical intervention in the theatre will help us unearth the neutralized male ideologies inherent in theatre's structures and practices and will allow us to enrich

current theatrical culture by improving the lives of its practitioners both on stage and off.

[1]Molly Ladd-Taylor (1996) defines this term as an example of both "child rearing in the home, and the maternalist reform activity characterized as 'social motherhood'" (2). Nancy Mandell (1989) also refers to it as the "energy-depleting" and "emotional work" of coordinating the lives of others (37).
[2]Interviews for this article were obtained as part of research for my doctoral dissertation, *Interviewing the Mothers of Invention: A Qualitative Analysis of Women Theatre Practitioners in Toronto,* and were taken in the years between 1995-2000. All of the participants' names have been changed.
[3]Of the 25 interviewed, 16 were mothers, all of whom continued to work in theatre after the birth of their first child. All of the women described themselves as feminists, with the exception of two in particular who aligned themselves to feminist principles but refused to support what they feel is primarily a white woman's agenda. The majority of the subjects were white women with the exception of five who were black, one who was Native, and one who was Korean. Three women openly discussed their sexuality with two self-identifying as lesbian and one as bisexual.
[4]The semi-structured open-ended interview, based on feminist standpoint theory, is the data gathering process used in institutional ethnography, which takes a materialist feminist approach. The purpose of this methodology is not to compare or contrast the subjects' narratives or to make generalizations about the data and then draw conclusions based on the findings, but, as Smith (1987) outlines it, the research begins from the standpoint of women and is a "project of creating a way of seeing, from where we actually live, into the powers, processes, and relations that organize and determine the everyday context of that seeing" (9).
[5]Here I am using Smith's (1987) term to denote theatre's institutional processes, divisions of labour, conceptual practices, discourses, taxonomies, etc. The documentary procedures of theatre recognize some experiences and local practices as valuable and essential to the functioning of the organization while failing to take into account those experiences that are necessary to it but do not enter its accounting system, that is to say, theatre's method of allocating and identifying work processes.
[6]In making this statement, I am alluding to the rise of women's *professional* participation in Toronto theatre which began about the same time as Canadian nationalism began to take hold in the late '60s, and grew alongside the rise of the alternative theatre movement. As I note elsewhere, prior to the alternative movement, which began in 1968 with the rise of Theatre Passe Muraille and was soon followed by the Factory Theatre Lab, the Tarragon Theatre and Toronto Free Theatre, at the time English-Canada's professional theatre, consisted primarily of regional theatres run entirely by men. For a more detailed

account of women's experiences during the early years of the alternative movement, see Rusch-Drutz (2001) in *Framing Our Past* and Hale (1987) in *Work in Progress*.

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Christine M. Sloss, Gary W. Harper and Karen S. Budd

Street Sex Work and Mothering

Parenting is challenging for anyone, but it is particularly so within a stressful context. Stressors known to hinder parenting include substance abuse, poverty, homelessness, poor health, victimization, and inadequate social support (Drake and Pandey, 1996; Milner and Chilamkurti, 1991; Tracy, 1994). A group of women who encounter many of these stressors, are street sex workers, individuals who exchange sex for money or drugs on the street (El-Bassul et al., 1997; Parriot, 1994; Vanwesenbeeck, 1994; Weiner, 1996). They also encounter stress from their involvement in a hazardous and stigmatized occupation (Shedlin and Oliver, 1993). While working, they must contend regularly with unsafe working conditions, victimization, difficult clients, incremental weather, police harassment, and incarcerations (Dalla, 2000; Miller and Schwartz, 1994; Sloss, 2002; Valera, Sawyer, and Schiraldi, 2001).

Within this stressful context, many women who work the street bear and raise children. Rochelle Dalla (2000) reported that of 43 current and former street sex workers in a Midwestern U.S. city, 88 percent had children, averaging 2.4 children each, and 51 percent had been pregnant while working the street. Among 91 women currently involved in sex trading at the street level in Chicago, 91 percent had children, averaging 3.4 children each, and 74 percent had experienced pregnancy following their initiation to sex trading (Sloss, 2002). Finally, in a sample of 1,963 street sex traders in New York, 69 percent had children, averaging 2.25 children each (Weiner, 1996).

The sparse research that has been conducted on mothers involved in sex trading has suggested that they encounter parenting difficulties. Although many street sex workers in the U.S. have children, very few have primary responsibility of their children (Shedlin and Oliver, 1993). In the New York study, only one fifth of the children lived with their mothers (Weiner, 1996).

In Dalla's (2000) study, only 5 of 38 street sex workers lived with their children. Those who maintain custody of their children also may have problems. Researchers found that female sex workers in Mexico City experienced shame in being mothers who engaged in sex work, often hid their work, and reported difficulties in managing their "double-lives" (Castañeda, Ortíz, Allen, García, and Hernández-Avila, 1996). Nevertheless, many reported that they engaged in sex work to provide for their children and offer them a better life.

Despite the paucity of research on women involved in both parenting and sex trading, investigators have examined how women in other professions experience and cope with dual roles (Barnett and Marshall, 1992; Hemmelgarn and Laing, 1991). While the degree to which women experience role strain varies, researchers acknowledge that balancing parenting and working is often stressful (Lepore and Evans, 1996). Managing the dual roles of parenting and street sex work may be even more stressful and problematic given the many stressors associated with this occupation. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative research was to explore female street sex workers' parenting stress and perceptions regarding the interaction of their parenting and work. Although this relationship is two-way, this article will focus primarily on how these women perceive that their street sex work affects their parenting.

Method

Participants

Participants recruited for this study were adult women who had traded sex for money on the street at least once in the previous two months, and who were mothers who had at least monthly contact with at least one biological child. They were recruited from an agency providing services to female sex workers in a large Midwestern city of the United States. They were invited to participate if they met eligibility criteria, as determined by a screening measure (questions on street sex work, parenting history, and contact with children). Of 20 women asked, none declined participation, although three failed to show for their appointments. One participant was dropped from analysis because she had engaged primarily in escort services.

The final sample consisted of 14 African-Americans, one Latina, and one Caucasian woman. Their ages ranged from 20 to 46 years with a mean age of 32. Most had experienced unstable housing in the past year, with a median of 4.5 different types of residences. All but three of the women reported being in a relationship. Participants differed in their educational attainment from having completed only elementary school to having attended college. They reported first working the street as adolescents or young adults, and had worked from seven months to 25 years. Most now worked the street independently 12 months a year, relying solely on sex work for their income. Although only one reportedly worked for a "pimp," seven said that they were currently supporting a man, and a few noted being pressured by boyfriends to trade sex.

Informants experienced an average of four pregnancies, with three women pregnant at the time of the interviews. They had given birth to between one and seven children, with an average of three. Almost half (n = 7) had suffered a miscarriage or stillbirth, and three had had an abortion. As a group, they had a total of 47 children. Although most informants (n = 14) had given up or lost custody of a child, a quarter had not been involved with child welfare and almost half (n = 7) had retained custody of at least one child. Only three mothers currently lived with at least one of their children. Two thirds of the children lived with relatives. Some women no longer saw at least one of their children (n = 4) primarily due to non-relative adoptions or caregivers living far away.

All but two mothers knew the identity of all of their children's fathers, which, in a few cases, were customers. About half of the children (n = 24) had fathers who had been in some way involved in their lives, from infrequent letter writing to primary parenting. Several fathers had not been available to their children due to choice, whereas others were unable to have contact with their children because of incarcerations (n = 7), violence (n = 5), or death (n = 3).

Procedure

Interviews were conducted at a drop-in center, and lasted between two to three hours. During each interview, the interviewer asked questions about participants' parenting and sex work, orally administered the Parenting Stress Index-Short Form (Abidin, 1990), and conducted an audiotaped semi-structured interview about participants' experiences as mothers and street sex workers. Upon completion of the interview, participants were debriefed and paid $50.

To prepare for analysis, the interviews were transcribed, edited, and entered into QSR Nudist Software (1997). A coding system was developed inductively as outlined by Patton (1990), first through coding of the hard copies of the transcripts, and then by entering these into QSR Nudist Software to allow for further coding and for conducting cross-case and comparative analyses. To assess the reliability of the coding system and of the coders, a check-coding procedure as described by M. B. Miles and A. M. Huberman (1994) was implemented. In this procedure, two coders each independently coded 20 percent of the total number of participant responses using broad coding categories. The reliability percentage was then calculated by dividing the number of coding agreements by the total number of agreements and disagreements, and then multiplying by 100. Reliability percentages of the interviews ranged from 80 percent to 92 percent and averaged 86 percent.

Measure

The Parenting Stress Index-Short Form (PSI-SF) (Abidin, 1990) is a derivative of the Parenting Stress Index (PSI) (Abidin, 1995) and measures stress resulting from parent-child interactions. It consists of 36 statements to

which participants indicate their degree of agreement on a five-point scale. In addition to a total stress score, the PSI-SF yields four subscales: Parental Distress, Parent-Child Dysfunctional Interaction, Difficult Child, and a Defensive Responding Score. The PSI-SF has demonstrated excellent reliability and correlates highly with the PSI, which has been used extensively in research and has been found to have good validity (Abidin, 1995; Hutcheson and Black, 1996).

Results

Parenting Stress

Results from the PSI-SF revealed that informants experienced high levels of parenting stress. They obtained a mean Total Stress Score of 93.6 (SD=9.9), a score above the clinical cut-off of 90 (See Table 1). Although the mean of each domain scale was high, only the Parental Distress (PD) Scale had a mean score above the clinical cut-off. Items that received the highest scores related to personal and relational difficulties. Scores on the Parent-Child Dysfunctional Interaction (P-CDI) and Difficult Child (DC) Subscales were somewhat lower perhaps because most mothers did not have daily contact with their children.

Table 1
Results of the Parenting Stress Index - Short Form

N = 16	M	SD	No. of cases above the clinical cut-off
Parental Distress	36.5	6.6	9
Parent-Child Dysfunctional Interaction	25.8	6.1	6
Difficult Child	31.3	3.4	3
Total Stress Score	93.6	9.9	11

Perceived Impact of Street Sex Work on Parenting

When asked about the effects of their street sex work on their parenting, a few informants noted positive effects, such as being able to give their children more time and money due to their work's flexibility and financial remuneration. One woman stated that because of her experiences working the street, she was not naïve about problems her children might encounter with regard to sex, drugs, and gangs, and was more prepared to handle them should they arise.

Apart from these few positive examples, the women generally believed that their street sex work was not helpful to, and even incompatible with, their parenting.

> *You can't do both at the same time. There's no such thing. There's no such thing as being a mother and a prostitute at the same time. I mean you can do it, but in some kind of way, it's gonna affect the kids.*

Because of this perception, women tried to hide their sex work involvement from their children, to separate themselves emotionally from their work when at home, and/or to compensate by spending more time with their children or giving them gifts.

> *I tried to tell him, "Babe, you can't go with me cause mommy's gonna do something you can't see. I'll be back in an hour or two, and when I came back I'll give you pizza or I'll bring you some toy." And I used to do it.*

Despite these efforts, informants acknowledged that their street sex work had impaired their parenting. They asserted that they had inadequate resources for their children, such as safe housing, because of their inconsistent and inadequate income. Over two-thirds indicated feeling stressed because of being unable to buy things that they or their children needed. Additionally, almost a third of the women believed that their work forced them to expect too much from their children; they often relied on their children to care for their younger siblings or themselves.

> *Oh, if I had a stressful day at work, when I would come in, he would always say, "Mommy, what you doin' workin'?" I would just start telling him about maybe an associate or something that got on my nerves or something, and he would say, "Oh, that's a mean lady," or something like that. And then we would just be talking and then I would say, "Oh, I'm stressed out today. Mommy doesn't feel well." And he was just affectionate. He used to always, "Oh mommy, it's gonna be better."*

Informants also shared that they were unreliable and unavailable to their children due to spending time on the streets or in jail, or losing custody of their children.

> *It [street sex work] makes it [parenting] harder. 'Cause how can I be on the street twelve hours a day and still be a mom? That's impossible.... How you gonna raise your family and you never home.*

> *If I wasn't on the street, you know, I'd probably have a job and have a place and he'd [son] be with me.*

As already mentioned, fourteen of the informants had lost their children. Circumstances mitigating these separations included drug use, neglect, fear of neglect/abuse, homelessness, exposure to violence, and incarcerations.

Other women observed that their work had resulted in them being dishonest with their children. When possible, many women chose not to discuss their sex work involvement because of feeling ashamed, believing that their children were too young, or fearing the consequences.

> *No, I always avoid the subject ... I don't know, I just don't feel comfortable with talking to him about it ... I'm ashamed I guess.*

> *She doesn't really know but when she finds out ... she'll probably hate me ... 'cause she'll feel that her mother is no good, has a pimp ... She'll feel that I wasn't mother enough to go out and get a job and take care of her the right way.*

Other mothers disclosed trying to cover up or lie about their involvement in "prostitution."

> *I don't tell her about my work on the streets ... 'cause one time she asked me why did I wear tight clothes? And I told her, "Because I liked to wear tight clothes." And she said, "Those men be looking at you all strange." And uh, so I just told her, I say well, "Sometimes I dress like this to get attention from guys so that they'll buy me what I want." I didn't tell her, ya know just straight out tell her. And then I, I told her that uh, I use drugs and that I was sick and that if I'm dressed like that, the guys will buy it. So that's all I tell her.*

Finally, informants disclosed that their involvement in street sex work had resulted in their children being exposed to negative influences, such as the sex trade, drugs, and violence. Despite their desire to shelter their children, women sometimes felt compelled to disclose their sex work and drug use because their children had heard people gossiping about them, had been asking pertinent questions, had observed their mother on the streets, and/or "deserved to know."

> *He knows that I'm workin' the streets. He knows "cause my mother told him all of that. He knows. One night he asked me and I told him the truth ... I couldn't lie to him. "Yeah, mommy works the streets. Mommy gets money for drugs."*

> *He knows that I'm a prostitute. He knows I use drugs. I'm his Mama and I would always tell him things 'cause I didn't want other little kids to say, "Oh, you mama's a hoe." He'd just be devastated. You know, they'd have something back to say.... I guess I always gave him a defense. I didn't want*

> *them to be timid. I didn't want them to be mad, but I didn't want them to be weak and timid.*

Mothers differed in how much they hid their sex work activities. Some children reportedly watched their mothers preparing for work, strolling, interacting with clients, and/or taking money from men. Given this exposure, many mothers believed that they set a poor example.

> *Well, you know, when you a parent, when your children see you do something positive, they feel it's all right. But when they see you do something negative, they also think it's all right because you're doin' it. You know what I mean? How can I, you know, how can I stand and protect you [my child] turnin' a date when I do? You see what I'm sayin'? "It's hard to get you to understand that this is a bad thing. Just because I'm doin' it don't make it right." But it's hard to get that point across 'cause this [me working the street] is what they're seein'.*

Mothers perceived that because of their street sex work, their children had experienced anxiety (for their mother's safety), sadness and anger.

> *[My work on the street] makes them sad. J, especially cause he's at the age that he knows. It gets him mad and sad, but he tries to deal with it.*

> *He says, "Momma, people get to talkin' about you [mothers' involvement in street sex work], you know, that really hurts me, you know."*

Although some mothers believed that their children accepted their work, others shared that they disagreed with their sex work involvement, and some that they would refuse to talk about it.

> *When I try to talk to her about it, she clams up on me and she'll go, "I just thought we'd talk later on it," and I'll say, "You don't wanna talk about it?" And she'll say, "Not right now." But everytime, it's not right now.*

Informants also shared ways in which their unborn children had been affected. Three mothers disclosed that their infants had died because of being assaulted while working the streets.

> *[Because I was raped] He would have had brain damage and wouldn't have been able to walk or move his arms. I was raped and beat with a two by four metal pipe.... It was April 3rd. I was two days late [past the due date]... if I hadn't been working the streets that morning, he [the perpetrator] wouldn't have been able to come up behind me and put me to sleep [knock me unconscious].*

Many women also admitted that they had exposed their unborn infants to harm because of inadequate prenatal care, insufficient rest, and/or exposure to violence and disease.

> *Oh, I was real bad because um, sometimes I would um, have sex without condoms, and sometimes I would have sex rough, and I would be bleeding, and I was six months pregnant. It's all types of things. I wouldn't go to the doctor. I didn't have no prenatal care at all.*

During the interview, informants were not specifically asked about the impact of their drug use on parenting. Nevertheless, they frequently spoke about their drug use and it became apparent that their drug use and street sex work were interrelated. For example, many participants worked the street partially to fund their drug use, and used drugs as a way to tolerate and cope with their sex trading. Given this association, it was difficult to untangle the effects of the sex work from the effects of their drug use. However, two women indicated that they believed it was their drug use, more than their street sex work that had impaired their parenting.

> *I don't really put it [parenting difficulties] on the street [sex work]. The street just get me what I want to get – the drug. I really put it on the drug.*

Similarly, when asked at another point in the interview about their parenting regrets, more informants indicated remorse about having used drugs while pregnant and parenting than having engaged in street sex work. They said that they felt guilty, ashamed, and regretful of their drug use because of its effects on their parenting, including being neglectful, impatient, and unavailable. They recognized the incompatibility of drugs and parenting.

> *You can't have a successful life [including parenting] and do drugs too. It's not gonna work. The two just don't coincide. That's like, you know, sending heaven and hell together.*

One woman stated her belief that it was her drug use that had resulted in her losing her children.

> *Drugs is what made me end up losing my kids, so it affected my ability to be a mom drastically and not be a mom.*

Perceived Impact of Dual Roles on Mothers

Throughout the interviews, mothers expressed shame, guilt, and sadness because of how they believed that they and their work may have harmed their children. They also expressed anxiety and fear that their children might be hurt while they were working (due to inadequate child care) or that they might be

hurt themselves, and thus unable to care for their children.

> *But I thought at the point where he [customer] was strangling me, all I could think about was seeing 'em. I'd never see my kids no more. And I hadn't thought about my kids. I hadn't seen my kids in a month. Outside getting high and all that stuff. And all I was thinkin' about, I'd never get that last chance to see my babies no more. I thought about how they feel not having a momma. My kids growing up, you know, "My momma dead." You know, "My momma dead."*

Informants who had lost their children shared feeling regret and grief because of this separation. They disclosed that following the loss of children, they felt depressed, suicidal, angry, and anxious, and they experienced the loss of their identity and responsibility as mothers. These reactions appeared to play a role in increasing their drug use and time working the street.

> *Well it hurt a lot... And once they took her away it's like it just messed with my head ... it made it worser, because she wasn't there. Again I started getting high. It's like just the fact that they, you know somebody came and took a child away from me.... So I just stay high all the time, for a long time, just constantly stay high just to hide the thought that she wasn't there. Then I stop hanging in the house, there wasn't no reason to be there ... she wasn't there ... I'm getting high ... so I just go working [the street].*

> *I had all that free time. You know I didn't have no responsibilities. And then like I say, I didn't know no one in the projects, so I had to learn to, you know, I had to accept that apartment, and I wasn't ready for that. So I got high to stay out ... So then I would basically sleep once a week and up the rest of the time getting high and working the streets. Now then I worked all the time.*

Given that a few informants perceived street sex work and parenting to be incompatible, and most believed street sex work to have primarily negative effects on their parenting, it follows that they might not want to continue managing both roles. In fact, when asked about future goals, half of the mothers explicitly expressed wanting to discontinue street sex work, whereas almost half (n = 7) indirectly implied this intention by stating their goal to become clean from drugs and obtain an alternative job. No women expressed the desire to stop parenting; rather twelve women explicitly spoke about their desire to become better mothers and more involved in parenting.

> *Well, I would like to have a job [legal job] and not be working the streets. I'd be off drugs and be raising my children.*
> *Yeah. I would like to get all my kids back together you know, take care of*

> *them. But I have to get myself cleaned up first before I do that. I would get myself a job [legal job]. Show 'em that I'm doing myself, you know, getting myself up too.*

Discussion

Prior research has documented high rates of pregnancy and parenting among women involved in street sex work. Not unlike other working women, these mothers must simultaneously manage their occupational and parenting responsibilities. It is clear from this study that informants experienced difficulties in parenting while involved in street sex work.

Informants revealed clinical levels of parenting stress that were higher than other groups of at-risk mothers, such as adolescents, teen wards of the state, and low-income African American single mothers (Budd, 1996; Hutcheson and Black, 1996; Nitz, Ketterlinus, and Brandt, 1995). However, their level of stress was comparable to other samples of drug using or recovering mothers (Harmer, Sanderson and Mertin, 1999; Kelley, 1998), and to another sample of sex workers (Sloss, 2002). Unfortunately, high levels of parenting stress are associated with parenting difficulties (Burrell, Thompson and Sexton, 1994; Crnic and Acevado, 1995).

One source of parenting difficulties for informants in this study was the negative impact of their street sex work on their parenting. They claimed that their work resulted in them being unavailable to their children, being unable to provide adequately, expecting too much, being dishonest or secretive, setting a poor example, and causing emotional and physical harm. Because of these effects, a few women commented on the incompatibility of street sex work and parenting, and almost all indicated their desire to discontinue working the street.

These parenting problems did not seem to originate from a lack of concern for their children. Rather, informants revealed that they cared for their children and valued their parenting role, a finding consistent with research in other western countries (Castañeda et al., 1996; Dalla, 2001; Hardman, 1997; Perkins and Bennett, 1985). Because of their desire to be good mothers, these women shared feeling inadequate, guilty, and ashamed of their parenting.

There are several reasons why street sex work may negatively affect parenting. First, it is a means of making money that is often inconsistent, unpredictable, and time-consuming. Second, street sex work is dangerous and involves the threat of victimization (Miller & Schwartz, 1995). Third, street sex work is illegal in many countries and can lead to arrests and incarcerations (Sloss, 2002). Fourth, street sex work is a stigmatized profession, thus decreasing the likelihood that sex traders will be open about their work and receive adequate services and support (Shedlin & Oliver, 1993). Finally, street sex work is related to other parenting risk factors, such as the use of drugs, which seems to provide motivation for, and a means of coping with, sex work

(Graham and Wish, 1994; Potterat, Rothenberg, Muth, Darrow and Phillips-Plummer, 1998).

These negative working conditions do seem to make parenting difficult and perhaps incompatible with street sex work. But is this incompatibility inevitable? The parenting problems noted by informants in this study might be reduced if mothers involved in street sex work were able to learn to manage their dual roles more effectively and/or if their working conditions were improved.

The first approach to dealing with this apparent incompatibility focuses on helping mothers reduce dual-role stress. One of the reasons these mothers may not manage their dual roles well is that they are exposed to so many stressors while having limited resources. Karen Hardman (1997) found that a group of mothers who were sex workers in England felt helpless to improve their parenting until they received practical help, such as welfare, parent training, health care, housing, therapy, education, and childcare. Mothers who are street sex workers may need extensive services, such as case management to improve their financial and living situations. Given this sample's desire to stop using drugs, it is clear that they also need effective drug treatment. One informant advised to other mothers, "There's nothing more important than raising those babies.... Doesn't matter what your obsession or compulsion [including drug addiction] is. Just seek help to overcome it."

Female street sex workers who are mothers may need various parenting services, including prenatal and postnatal care, parent training, family therapy, parent support, and/or parent mentoring (Sloss, 2002). These women may benefit from improved social support and the opportunity to "get together as mothers, as single mothers taking care of their kids." These mothers also might experience less dual-role strain if they acquired good, affordable, and accommodating childcare (Sloss and Harper, 2004).

To enable mothers who are street sex worker to use services, it is essential that they be relevant, accessible, non-threatening, and non-punitive. Women who live with children must not fear that their children will be removed from them should they access services. If they do lose their children, mothers should receive compassion and support in coping with this loss constructively, instead of by increasing their drug use and street sex work. Informants in this sample also gave specific advice to child welfare workers, including that they be more responsive, communicative, collaborative, and helpful to mothers.

The second approach to dealing with the parenting and street sex work incompatibility involves improving working conditions. Female sex workers in this and other studies indicated their tendency to lie about and hide their work from their families (Castañeda et al., 1996; Hardman, 1997), and not access needed services due to stigmatization (Sloss, 2002; Weiner, 1996). If sex work was less stigmatized, these mothers might experience less role strain, receive more social support, increase their service use, work more safely, and be less likely to lose their children. Their risks might also be reduced if prostitution was

decriminalized and greater measures were taken to prevent their exposure to victimization.

Alternatively, the apparent parenting and street sex work incompatibility could be addressed by enabling mothers to exercise choice about their sex work involvement. Almost all of the mothers in this sample wanted to stop working the street, a result also found in other studies (Dalla, 2000; Sloss, 2002). When asked what they would advise other women in similar situations, several informants suggested that women who do not yet have children not get pregnant until they are no longer using drugs and working the street, and that mothers working the street abandon this profession.

> *Don't not have a dream just because you're doing this [sex work]. You still have the right to have a dream, to want something better. You are not doomed to this [sex work] if you don't wanna be.*

Most informants insisted that sex work and drug use were not worth their risk and costs, particularly to children. They advised mothers to place their children first in their lives.

> *Get your life together [get off drugs and away from the streets] and be a mother to your kids because 'fore you know it, they be grown and it be too late.... Get your shit together 'fore it's too late.*

> *You can't have a successful life [including parenting] and do drugs too ... You eventually have to make a choice. I would just say make a choice, make sure that your choice be you and your kids whatever you choose to do.*

Transitioning out of street sex work would require multiple and coordinated services (Dalla, 2000; Farley and Barkan, 1998; Sloss, 2002). Women in this sample emphasized their need for drug treatment, education, housing, and employment.

To summarize, women who work the street are not sex workers alone, but hold multiple roles, one of which is that of being mothers. Because of their involvement in street sex work, these mothers risk difficulties with, and the loss of, this role. Effort should be made either to increase the compatibility of street sex work and parenting, or to enable these mothers to access alternative employment. Society must recognize the importance of their parenting role to themselves and their families, and empower them to retain or regain this role and achieve their parenting goals.

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Maryanne Dever and Lise Saugeres

I Forgot to Have Children!

Untangling Links Between Feminism, Careers and Voluntary Childlessness

This article examines the ways in which voluntarily childless women are represented in contemporary public discourse and sets these representations alongside the voices of thirty-five voluntarily childless women interviewed as part of a larger project on reproductive decision-making in the context of Australia's falling birthrate. Through the findings presented here we seek to challenge a key stereotype: the image of voluntarily childless women as selfish career-driven feminists who prioritize work, are actively anti-mothering, and live unfulfilled lives. The findings presented directly challenge popular perceptions of a simple causal link between feminism, careers and childlessness.

Professional women on a "birth strike"?

Childless women represent an enigma within cultures that hold to the idea of natural imperative in women to reproduce. The failure of some women to conform to this conventional model of femininity renders them objects of curiosity and targets of increasing scrutiny as western industrialized societies attempt to account for the actions and motivations of what is now acknowledged to be a growing proportion of women. Since 2000, there has been increasing media panic concerning Australia's falling birthrate and aging population.[1] Daily newspapers practised in carrying articles elaborating the negative impact of family responsibilities on women's career development and earning power, the near-impossibility of successfully balancing work and family life, or new findings on the potential harm caused to children by childcare, shifted focus to concentrate on the increasing reluctance of some women to reproduce (see, for example, Wynhausen, 2000; Karrelas, 2002. See also Bone, 2001; Maris, 2002; Kelly, 2002; Gallus, 2002). Our analysis of this coverage—drawn from Australia's major newspapers and from some of the

country's most influential and widely syndicated columnists and commentators—reveals that dispassionate images of women who have chosen childlessness are extremely rare and stories that validate their decisions virtually non-existent. Instead, voluntarily childless women are commonly depicted as investing in education, careers, self-development and/or consumerism at the expense of their all-too-brief window of reproductive opportunity: something it is implied they will later come to regret. In September 2001 the *Weekend Australian* newspaper opened a week-long focus on "Work and Family: The Crunch" with a lead article on the "The Birth Strike." The sketch that occupied the entire front page depicted a female executive wearing a dark, exaggeratedly man-tailored suit jacket, her arms folded in a gesture of defiance or refusal. On the desk to her right sat a baby in a paper tray labelled "out," alerting readers to the reproductive choices at stake in the supplement's coverage.

As this image suggests, in popular discourse women are represented as either career-focused or family-focused and seldom as willing or able to manage both careers and motherhood successfully. "The growing importance of women's careers," Laurie Taylor and Matthew Taylor (2001) intone in *The Good Weekend*, "may mean that having children is regarded as a practical option only for those with such low expectations that they assume they have no career to ruin, or those so well-off they can afford a surrogate family to run things while mother and father are away at work" (50). Childless women are routinely portrayed as cold, selfish and immature or as hapless and lovelorn "career girls," after the style of Bridget Jones:[2] confused, unfulfilled and neurotically lamenting their failure to "get it all together" with respect to partnering and motherhood. Either way, they are located in opposition to the archetype of the mother, the ideal toward which all "real" women should apparently strive.

Significantly, in popular discourse voluntarily childless women are depicted as exclusively middle-class, well-educated women: high-achievers who have worked hard at developing successful careers. Feminism's fatal role in the production of this new generation of childless career women is also a key feature in the contemporary media discourse. Jane Bartlett (1994) has argued that through its contribution to a broad rethinking of gender roles and to campaigns for safe contraception, "feminism has played a momentous part in a child-free woman's decision-making" (116). But in media coverage, these empowering aspects of the feminist legacy are displaced by solely negative attributions. In 2002 conservative newspaper columnist Janet Albrechtsen (2002) charged so-called "jackboot feminism" to be chiefly responsible for what she called "Australia's Great Fertility Mystery" (11). Feminism—an ill-defined, all-powerful and amorphous entity—is represented by Albrechtsen as "the real culprit" for having fostered in its followers "anti-baby" and "anti-marriage" values, "excessive individualism," "hedonistic self-gratification," and an appetite for abortion and no-fault divorce (11). Feminism is also characterized as having "failed" women by deluding them into over-investing in careers when they should have been heeding their biological clocks. One of the more high

profile dramatizations of this claim was provided in 2002 by ABC television presenter Virginia Haussegger in a revelatory autobiographical article published in *The Age* newspaper under the headline, "The Sins of Our Feminist Mothers":

> For those of us who listened to our feminist foremothers' encouragement, waved the purple scarves at their rallies, for those of us who took all that on board and forged ahead, crashed through barriers and carved out good, successful and even some brilliant careers, we're now left—many of us at least—as premature "empty nesters."
>
> We're alone, childless, many of us partnerless or drifting along in "permanent temporariness," as sociologist Zygmunt Bauman so aptly put it to describe the somewhat ambiguous, uncommitted type of relationship that seems to dominate among childless professional couples in their 30s and 40s.
>
> The point is that while encouraging women in the '70s and '80s to reach for the sky, none of our purple-clad feminist mothers thought to tell us the truth about the biological clock.
>
> I am childless and I am angry—angry that I was so foolish to take the word of my feminist mothers as gospel. Angry that I was daft enough to believe female fulfillment came with a leather briefcase.
>
> It was wrong. It was crap. (11)

Feminism, it seems, in offering women the means to stop fearing their fertility had then duped them into squandering it, very unwittingly.[3] In the same vein, those who have reproduced abundantly are characterised—or choose to characterise themselves—as having turned their backs on the so-called "feminist mantra." Columnist Angela Shanahan (2001) claimed that in having nine children, "I deliberately rejected the feminism of my generation" (15). However, as Kay Schaffer (1998) points out, "in popular discourse, 'feminism' is a scare word, a word that has been used to evoke (although no dictionary would say so) the 1970s stereotype of bra burning, man hating lesbians who made up the boiler-maker suit brigade...." (322).

Schaffer (1998) also notes that in popular discourse feminists are not seen as "real" women, because it is assumed that feminists do not want to be mothers and only mothers (or women who want children) are seen as "real women." It is this interpretation of feminism that is conveyed by Albrechtsen (2002), Haussegger (2002) and Shanahan (2001) above and deployed by Michael Duffy (2002) who says,

> So where did the myth of miserable mothers come from? It began with feminists such as Germaine Greer back in the 1960s and 1970s, out to destroy male dominance of society ... today a woman can achieve just about anything she wants to. But why did the myth persist even

> when this victory had been won? It was because of the guilt and self-interest of some feminists. Many are well-educated and successful career women who do not want to be full-time mums for more than a few years, or in some cases a few months. (31)

Work and family

Given the obvious anxiety over the link between careers and childlessness, it is not surprising that commentators such as British sociologist Catherine Hakim (2002) and popular American author Sylvia Ann Hewlett (2002) have been taken up so readily by the Australian media in this debate (see, for example, Hakim, 2002).[4] Hakim (2000) has argued that some women prefer to be home-centered, others to be work-centered, and a larger number of women chose an "adaptive" lifestyle where they combined both family and employment. In her schema, women who combine both family and employment by working part-time are said to more family-focused. Most controversially, Hakim claims that in spite of the wider opportunities and different lifestyles that many women have access to in western industrialized societies, the majority still prefer part-time over full-time employment, and mothering and domestic work over pursuing a career. Hakim's arguments have been subject to severe criticism by other scholars (Ginn et al., 1996; McRae, 2003a, 2003b; Saugeres, 2003) not least because this kind of argumentation both assumes and reinforces the naturalization of mothering and the idea of careers and motherhood as incompatible. Nevertheless, the simplicity of Hakim's arguments has made them very popular with the media and politicians. For example, Jennifer Buckingham (2003) in *The Courier Mail* uses Hakim's research to claim

> Those [women] who do not have any [babies] at all are predominantly women who are focused on their careers and are voluntarily childless ... it is important to remember that working mothers do not value their jobs and children equally. They lie closer to the family-centred than the work-centred women. (17)

What is conveyed here is that women should want to have children, they should prioritise mothering over their employment, and that they cannot hope for both careers and babies.

Sylvia Ann Hewlett (2002) in *Baby Hunger*, her widely publicized popular account of childless women, also drives a wedge between mothers and women seeking careers and deploys a discourse of accident, failure and mismanagement to account for otherwise successful women's childless status. Helen Trinca (2002) in the *Australian Financial Review* reports Hewlett saying in an interview,

> "It turns out that very few of these women felt it had been a choice,"

> she says. "Most felt that children had been squeezed out of their lives. It had been a creeping non-choice and it involved a lot of pain. (52) (See also Manne, 2002: 8.)

Hewlett (2002) classifies women into "predators" and "nurturers," arguing that the cold, aggressive career women (the "predators") not only remain childless, but partner-less too. According to Hewlett, this is because men, including the highly successful ones who work with these "predators," want "real" women, that is "nurturers" who are happy to stay at home, have babies and look after both men and babies. The message here is that women cannot be really equal to men and have careers like men because it conflicts with their biological need to have children. Being employed, but more particularly having a powerful successful role in the workplace, is construed as unnatural for women. High-powered jobs are still seen as a male preserve and the characteristics that are seen to be necessary for somebody to succeed in the workplace—being aggressive, competitive, ruthless, individualistic, ambitious—remain defined as masculine qualities. The implication is that women who try to fit into this competitive and aggressive world either actively suppress or accidentally lose their femininity (of which wanting and having children is seen as a central part) and become like men.

As we have seen, the widespread and persistent feminist backlash in popular discourse serves to reinforce and legitimate hegemonic gender ideologies through the naturalization of gender differences and mothering. These cultural representations further assume the radical incompatibility of paid work and motherhood, fuelling perceptions of a direct causal link between women's advancement in the paid labour market and rising rates of voluntary childlessness. As will be shown next, the majority of women in our study do not view themselves as successful career women and do not talk about their choice of childlessness in terms of working/mothering tension.

Me? A successful career? A feminist?

The 35 voluntarily childless women discussed here were recruited from diverse class, race and ethnic backgrounds and from five locations across the Australian state of Victoria covering inner metropolitan, outer metropolitan and regional areas. They ranged in age from 21 to 52. Each of them had either made a firm decision not to have children or had not finalized their decision in the context of their other life goals. Tietjens Meyers (2001), in her study of fertility decisions in the U.S., has identified two main groups among the women who are voluntarily childless: the "early articulators" and the "postponers" (736). The women in our research shared some of the characteristics of these two groupings. Ten out of the 35 childless women interviewed in our study could be classified as "early articulators." This means that they knew from an early age that they did not want children. In common with other research findings (see Faux, 1984; Veevers, 1980), these "early articulators" did not feel

that they had actually made an active choice; they had just never imagined themselves as having children. The remaining women interviewed can be broadly classified as "postponers." The majority of them had always imagined or assumed that they would have children, but were currently unable to reconcile motherhood with their other life aims and values. Jane Bartlett suggests that rather than making a firm and final decision *not* to have a child, women such as these may be more accurately characterised as never having made the decision to have one (99).

The first striking finding was that only three out of the thirty-five women interviewed described themselves as career women, while a further two talked about their own businesses as being at the center of their lives. Four out of these five are early articulators. For example, Abigail,[5] 32, from the regional town of Bendigo, says:

> *I'm a career person and not interested in having kids, I don't want to stay at home and be a mother, I've always had career aspirations and direction and the other thing is I'm yet to find a bloke suitable, maybe my standards are too high....*

Abigail, an early articulator, would seem to come close to the stereotypical partnerless and childless career woman represented in popular discourses. However, her decision not to have children was not the direct result of her desire for a career. All the early articulators and some of the postponers locate the basis for their lack of desire to have children to how they experienced growing up in their families. Abigail talked about how her parents' divorce when she was four and seeing her mother raising children on her own were big influences on her lack of a desire for children. In addition, she had medical problems that she believes were passed on to her by her mother and does not wish to pass these on to anyone else.

Like Abigail, Rita, 29, from inner metropolitan Maribyrnong, early on articulated her desire not to have children ("even as a child"). She lived in a heterosexual partnered relationship, held a higher degree, and was working full-time in the community sector. The only child of European migrant parents, she too spoke of the influence of her family and how her future had always been imagined for her in terms of education and a career: "It was just always that whole concept of, you know, Rita is born and she's going to university, she's going to have a career." Rita was one of the few interviewees to mention feminism, but notably it was in the context of her mother's particular choices and aspirations, rather than her own:

> *I mean, she grew up in the '60s and there were certainly a lot of changes with regards to feminism, but I think it was a lifestyle choice for her as well. I don't think she was every really particularly maternal herself. She worked full time and she really enjoyed working and her career was really impor-*

> *tant to her... there was never that concept that mothering is something that is, you know, central to one's existence....*

Of the remaining women interviewed some said that they were not very interested in having careers or simply did not think about their employment as a career. For instance, Elisabeth, from inner metropolitan Port Philip, 38, partnered and a "postponer," said

> *Not that I'm you know, incredibly ambitious or career oriented. I enjoy my job and I've just at work been given a new opportunity which I really, really am enjoying and I wouldn't like to be giving it up soon.*

It has been argued that the concept of "career" is both masculinist and middle-class. Firstly, because this term only refers to paid work as an individual pursuit separate from family responsibilities, women tend to distance themselves from the concept of career (see Hattery, 2001; Garey, 1999). Secondly, women from working-class backgrounds rarely view themselves as having a career (see Skeggs, 1997). Contrary to media discourses, as our research shows, not only highly educated middle-class women in executive jobs decide to remain childless. Indeed, several of the childless women we interviewed were from working-class backgrounds, and even though most of the women had achieved some form of post-secondary education, few of them held very high-powered jobs. For instance, Gwen, 39, an early articulator, from Port Philip, said,

> *it wasn't a career thing ... to be honest I think coming from the kind of family that I did I didn't have any expectations of working or a job or a career or anything. Like, mum didn't work and my aunts didn't work. And I had decided I didn't want children before that when I had, you know, no expectations of going on and doing—having a career or going to uni[versity] or anything.*

Even though the pursuit of a career was not a key factor for most of the voluntarily childless women interviewed, the vast majority of them had other goals and aspirations that they viewed as incompatible with having children. For these women, freedom, independence, flexibility, not having to be responsible for somebody else, embarking on a journey of self-discovery, and looking for fulfillment by pursuing either work or non-work activities were very important. Generally, they viewed having children as a potentially major disruption in their lives and irreconcilable with the lifestyles that they were used to and wished to preserve. For instance, Xena, 26 and married, from regional Gippsland, worked as a teacher but did not see herself as having a career,

> *I guess you hear a lot of people with children sort of saying they're tied down*

> *with financial things and also the fact that it's hard to get away for weekends and just the fact that it's hard to have time for yourself. I'm the type of person who needs a lot of time by myself and a bit of personal space and yeah I just do not see that happening if you have children.... Just because they are very demanding and the fact that they just take up so much time and I don't cope well with not much sleep and ... I know when I get sick or really tired I find it hard to look after myself and I think well it would be impossible for me to try and look after someone else.*

It is likely that Xena's words and other similar statements would be interpreted in the type of media coverage reviewed in this article as proof that women who are voluntarily childless are selfish, immature and afraid to take on responsibilities. Indeed, all the women interviewed were very aware of the potential for society at large to view them as selfish and immature and they were critical of this. Vera, 34, an early articulator from Bendigo, said,

> *I'm sure they all think I'm a selfish cow but I say look, you know, I have other priorities in life, I don't believe that I would make a good mother....*

However, some could not help also feeling that they *were* selfish and immature, because of the ideology they had internalised that dictated adult women should have children and structure their lives around their children. For example,

> *I can't see a child fitting into things that I want to do, and that sounds really selfish. (Sally, 22, partnered, early articulator, Maribyrnong)*

> *I've lived independently for so long I've also become very selfish ... and I think I'd find it hard to be that responsible for another person.*
> (Melissa, 31, single, postponer, Port Philip)

Our interviewees were also aware that voluntarily childless women are often represented as being cold and uncaring, as conveyed by Rosselyn and Tara from Port Philip, who answered the question of why they did not want children by simultaneously chorusing, "Because I am a heartless bitch." As noted earlier, voluntarily childless women when represented as "career women" are seen to lose their "caring" and "nurturing" instincts through having to take on masculine characteristics to succeed in the workplace. However, the women interviewed did not necessarily enact these dualisms. For instance, Louise, 32, from outer metropolitan Casey, who is a self-employed as a marketing and PR consultant talked about how she was "nurturing her baby business." A significant number of others talked about environmental concerns using a similar language of care.

The idea, prominent in media representations, that childless women must have failed to partner successfully and that this can account for their childless

state, is also challenged by our interviewees. Of the 35 women interviewed, 19 were currently partnered and, of the 16 who weren't, a number had previously been in long-term defacto or married relationships where the opportunity for children was at least present. While some of the unpartnered women expressed the idea that locating a suitable partner might lead them to have children, those who were already partnered clearly did not view children as a necessary or inevitable next stage in that relationship. Indeed, they worried that having children would in fact interfere with the quality of their relationship with their partners. Rita, mentioned earlier, talked about it this way:

> *I mean, my partner and I are really happy and we really enjoy the time that we have with one another and we have lots of things in common and, you know, it just seems that when you have a child it not only impacts on your life and your career, but also your relationship with your partner so that, you know, you possibly can't devote as much time that you would like to one another, that you have this other focus, which can be positive. But you know, can also detract from your own relationship and we're quite happy going along the way that we are. I just don't feel like we need this other being in our family for it to be a family.*

Conclusion

The findings presented here challenge the popular perception that rising rates of voluntary childlessness are the direct result of a feminist-inspired commitment among middle-class professional women to the pursuit of high-powered, high-paying careers. The women interviewed here bore little resemblance to the images of power-suited professionals promulgated in the media, coming as they did from a diverse range of class, educational and employment backgrounds. While many found fulfillment in paid employment, these women did not frame their childless status in terms of the work/mothering tension so central to popular analyses discussed here. These findings are significant in that they point to the need to interrogate explanatory frameworks that divide women into a series of hierarchically arranged feminine types—mothers and non-mothers; women who seek careers or paid employment and women who don't—and assume that their aspirations and motivations are uniform, transparent and predictable. Indeed, these findings suggest the urgent necessity of developing far more nuanced explanatory frameworks for interpreting women's choices with respect to motherhood and to work; in particular, frameworks capable of producing more complex accounts of those choosing childlessness and frameworks that do not reproduce the notion of paid work and mothering as radically incompatible. In doing so we will hopefully open up and open out what are too frequently offered to us in these discussions as seemingly closed categories of experience—e.g. womanhood, paid work, mothering—in order to make space for new ways of structuring and represent-

ing the meanings of voluntary childlessness.

[1]Like most other western industrial societies, Australia's birth rate has been steadily declining and has now fallen to around 1.7, below replacement level of 2.1 children per woman (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003).
[2]A reference to the book *Bridget Jones' Diary* (1997) by Helen Fielding and the popular film adaptations starring Renée Zellweger. The eponymous heroine struggles throughout with her "singleton" status.
[3]Haussegger was countered in the press by Wendy McCarthy—one of the generation of feminist "false prophets" named by Haussegger and a former executive director of Family Planning Australia. Wendy McCarthy (2002) observed that while second-wave feminism may have placed emphasis on women's need to control their fertility, their message was simply that women could plan their families: "we didn't say to have none" (3).
[4]Of Hakim's publications, we refer here in particular to *Work-Lifestyle Choices in the 21st Century* (2000).
[5]To preserve anonymity, pseudonyms have been used throughout this article.

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Naomi Bromberg Bar-Yam

Nursing Mothers at Work

Corporate and Maternal Strategies to Support Lactation in the Workplace

Among the goals of Healthy People 2010 are an increase in breastfeeding initiation to 75 percent of all newborn babies and an increase of babies breastfeeding at 6 months to 50 percent (Healthy People 2010, 2004). The American Academy of Pediatrics has published breastfeeding guidelines, encouraging new mothers to nurse their babies for at least twelve months and recommending that pediatricians encourage employers to support continued lactation in the workplace (AAP, 1997). State and federal legislation has been introduced protecting mothers' right to breastfeed at work and offering companies tax incentive to establish lactation support programs (USBC, 2003a; Baldwin et al., 2004). In the last 20 years a growing number of women remain in the labor force throughout their childbearing and childrearing years (Ferber, et al., 1991; Moen, 1992; USBC, 2003b). All of these factors have come together to make breastfeeding in the workplace an emerging public health issue in the United States.

Medical research addresses the benefits of breastfeeding and the risks of artificial formula feeding (Walker, 1993) and a number of studies examine women's experience of combining breastfeeding and outside employment (Auerbach and Guss, 1984; Gielen et al., 1991; Shepherd and Yarrow, 1982; Auerbach, 1990; Kearney and Cronenwett, 1991; Bar-Yam, 1998a; Dunn et al., 2004; Susser et al., 2004). This research provides a demographic picture of the breastfeeding working mother: she tends to be white, from the western part of the United States, she is older and has more formal education than her non-breastfeeding or non-employed counterparts (Ryan and Martinez, 1989; Hills-Bonczyk et al., 1993; Visness and Kennedy, 1997; Fein and Roe, 1998; Roe et al., 1999; USDL, 1999; USDHHS, 2000). Research on interactions between breastfeeding and employment is mixed; one major barrier to women's contin-

ued nursing is their need to return to outside employment in the first year post partum (Shepherd and Yarrow, 1982; Gielen et al., 1991; Visness and Kennedy, 1997). However, other research indicates that employment and nursing need not be mutually exclusive (Auerbach, 1990; Kearney and Cronenwett, 1991; Bar-Yam, 1998a, 1998b; Brown et al., 2001).

Research also points to several factors that are important in helping employed women to continue nursing successfully. They include length of maternity leave (Auerbach and Guss, 1984; Kurinij et al., 1989; Ryan and Martinez, 1989), hours worked upon return to work (Kurinij, 1989; Bridges et al., 1997), prenatal and post partum education and support (Kearney and Cronenwett, 1991), and proximity of the baby to the mother's workplace (Morse et al., 1989).

One study, examining employer attitudes, found that employers are more likely to support breastfeeding if they know employees who have successfully combined breastfeeding and work and if they know other companies where such policies have been successfully implemented (Bridges et al., 1997). The research reported here investigated the attitudes and concerns of employers regarding corporate lactation support and how women in different settings combine breastfeeding and working.

Methods

This study used both case study and individual interviews for data collection and both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques.

Two urban teaching hospitals and one insurance company formed the basis of the case studies. All three companies offered generous work/family benefits including lactation support. Cedar Hill Hospital has about 6,000 employees, 69 percent women. Watson Medical Center has 2,000 employees, 75 percent women. Lambda Insurance Company has multiple offices throughout the state, employs about 5,500 employees, 78 percent women. Names of the companies have been changed here.

Case studies, called here the Hospital/Insurance Group, involved in-person interviews with new mothers, supervisors and human resource managers and visits to the Nursing Mothers' Rooms, day care center and several departmental offices. Thirty-two people were interviewed in all three sites.

The second part of this study involved telephone interviews with twenty-three women from companies all over the country that do not offer lactation support programs. Twenty of the women in the Pioneer Group were contacted, directly or indirectly, through the Internet. A description of the research was circulated on several e-mail lists and women contacted the researcher directly to schedule telephone interviews.

In both groups, the nursing mothers included a wide range of professions and work settings, including nurses, lab technicians, secretaries, social workers, administrators, artists, stock brokers, lawyers and others. Unfortunately, none of the interviewees worked in manufacturing, education or retail sales.

Findings

This study revealed several interesting factors in maternal and corporate strategies for workplace lactation support: a continuum of levels of lactation support; four factors- time, space, support and gatekeepers, essential to successful workplace breastfeeding support; workplace philosophy and its effect on maternal and corporate strategies to support lactation in the workplace; and the unique strategies developed by new mothers with no workplace lactation support.

Continuum of workplace lactation support: definitions

Workplaces implement a range of different types of lactation support depending on available resources, needs of employees, and attitudes of the employers toward the interface between work and family demands on employees. Table 1 illustrates the continuum described here.

1. *Lactation Program:* A workplace lactation program includes several elements. The first is designated Nursing Mothers' Room (NMR). A NMR has good lighting and ventilation, privacy (locking door or "occupied" sign,) sink, electrical outlet, and often, a refrigerator. Sometimes the company provides a hospital grade breast pump and gives or sells personal supplies to the mother.

A lactation program also includes the services of a lactation consultant who meets with the mother as needed, beginning during her maternity leave to help plan the transition back to the workplace, and continuing after her return to work to ease the adjustment to the new schedule and demands. The lactation consultant may be employed by the company or paid as an independent consultant. Sometimes the lactation consultant also provides education to expectant and new fathers. Some workplaces with lactation programs also have on-site or near-site day care where mothers can nurse their babies during the day. Workers are given time necessary to pump or breastfeed.

2. *Lactation Support:* Many workplaces have policies which support continued breastfeeding without having fully developed programs. They have a NMR as well as hospital grade breast pumps or personal breast pumps that are sold, rented or given to new mothers. Time is made available for mothers to express milk during the workday.

3. *Lactation Awareness:* In some companies, it is the new mothers who make their employers aware of their needs and the employers do their best to accommodate them. Often they make some space, such as a spare office or conference room, available to workers. They do not provide equipment or education. Often, such arrangements are made within the department and do not involve company policy.

4. *No Lactation Support*: Many companies do not provide any support for nursing mothers. Unlike pregnancy, there are currently no laws protecting a mother's right to nurse her baby in the workplace and sometimes women must either express milk without the knowledge of their employers or they do not

Table 1:
Continuum of Different Types of Corporate Lactation Support.

Lactation program	Lactation support	Lactation awareness	No lactation support
1. designated equipped* space	1. designated, equipped* space	1. designated space i.e., conference room, spare office	
2. breast pumps for sale, rent or provided by employer	2. breast pumps available for sale, rent or free	2. no equipment	
3. lactation counselling from prenatal through return to work.	3. time available for workers to breastfeed or pump.		
4. time available for workers to breastfeed or pump.			
5. (optional) on-site or near site day care			

*equipment includes: electrical outlets, good ventilation, good lighting, sink, counter, comfortable chair.
optional equipment: refrigerator, reading material, tapes of pleasant music, curtain to divide the room in two when necessary.

express milk during the day. These women often feed their babies breast milk substitutes during working hours and nurse when they are at home (Morse et al., 1989; Gielen et al., 1991; Bar-Yam, 1997).

Workplace philosophy

The existence, or not, of workplace lactation support indicates different approaches to the interface among worker, workplace and family. Corporate lactation support indicates to employees that the company understands and values the importance of their roles as mothers and that they, as people, cannot be separated into "workers" and "mothers." Nursing mothers with no lactation support face the opposite situation. For them, breastfeeding in the workplace is *their* indication to their *employers* that they are both "workers" and "mothers" and that these roles cannot be separated.

Feminist scholars and activists have spent much thought and energy grappling with the issue of whether women workers are equal to men in that they can carry out the same responsibilities and tasks and should therefore be treated equally, or whether, because it is they who bear, nourish and nurture children, women are special and should receive special consideration in the workplace (Giele, 1995; Vogel, 1993).

Both of these philosophies motivated the corporations in this study to offer generous work/family benefits, including lactation support, however they resulted in different strategies for supporting nursing mothers.

The philosophy at Cedar Hill Hospital reflects the 'women are equal' approach. There, it is understood that all workers have lives outside of work and that is ethical and beneficial for the employer to help workers balance their responsibilities inside and outside of work; this balance is a human issue, not a women's issue. This philosophy at Cedar Hill Hospital has resulted in on-site day care and fitness centers, camps for school age children of employees on school vacation weeks, and earned time (workers' vacation, sick and personal leave days are put in one "account" and workers can withdraw time from that account at any time for any reason.) The lactation program is very well developed and includes two NMRs and lactation consultant services that begin before or during maternity leave and continue through the return-to-work adjustment period. Workers at the day care center telephone mothers when their babies need to nurse.

The philosophy motivating the policies at Watson Medical Center and Lambda Insurance Company reflects the 'women are special' approach. The work/family policies, including the lactation policy, developed because most of their employees are women. In order to maintain the largely female professional work force, hospitals have a long tradition of offering benefits, which account for women's family responsibilities (Bar-Yam, 1997). Lambda Insurance Company has more recently become a largely female professional workforce and generous work/family benefits are seen to increase productivity. These places view work/family balance as a women's issue. Watson Medical Center

offers generous earned time benefits, allowing women to take extended maternity leave and/or to return to their full workloads slowly without losing pay and benefits. The lactation program includes breast pumps in the postpartum unit, which are shared with postpartum patients. Lactation consulting is available informally from labor and postpartum nurses upon return to work. Lambda Insurance Company offers day care at one of its sites and Nursing Mothers' Rooms at several sites throughout the state. Lactation consultant services are not available.

While each of these workplace philosophies aims to increase the workers' flexibility and autonomy, the resulting policies affect autonomy in very different ways. Because work and life balance at Cedar Hill Hospital is seen as an important issue for all workers, their programs support a great deal of autonomy *within* the workplace environment; i.e. on-site day care and extensive lactation support. At Watson Medical Center, where work and life balance is seen as a women's issue, women have a great deal of autonomy *out* of the workplace; that is, they can stay home for longer with pay and benefits and ease their transition back into the workplace at a slower pace than their peers at Cedar Hill Hospital. Thus, because many mothers return to the workplace later and part-time, there is not as much need for an extensive lactation program. However, the women who do return early and/or full-time have more difficulty combining nursing and working. The two philosophies and their manifestations in work/family and lactation policies are also present in other types of workplaces (Stein et al., 2001).

Implementation of lactation support

Four elements are essential for successful workplace lactation support: space; time; support; and gatekeepers. Women in different settings experienced these elements very differently.

Space

It is necessary to have some designated space in the workplace for women to nurse or express milk for their babies. Women who have them usually use their offices for this. However, many women do not have their own offices and wish to continue nursing upon their return to work.

Women in the Hospital/Insurance Group, who had lactation support programs, used either their own offices or the Nursing Mothers' Room (NMR). However, a number of women in this group had difficulty using the NMR because it was too far from their own workspace to use on a 20-minute break. These women found two solutions, neither of them ideal: several women used artificial formula for their babies during the day and others switched to part-time work for the time that they were breastfeeding. This usually involved a temporary switch to another department and some financial difficulty.

Women in the Pioneer Group who did not have their own offices tended to use three spaces for pumping or nursing: lavatories; vacant offices or

conference rooms; or nursing the baby at home or in day care. Most women found using the lavatory difficult and distasteful due to lack of privacy and sanitation as well as the difficulty in relaxing enough to let down their milk.

Some women arranged to use the same space every day, but more often, they had to use whatever spare office or conference room was vacant when they needed to pump. A few women were able to arrange to nurse their babies directly in three ways: they had the baby with them at work while they were infants; they arranged child care very close to their work place and either went to the baby or had the baby brought to them to nurse. Some women used a combination of these arrangements depending on the age of the baby.

In general, women in the Pioneer Group were more creative in finding space to nurse than women in the Hospital/Insurance Group who found the NMR to be inconvenient.

Time

Women in both groups expressed concerns about time in two ways: making the time daily to pump and making more time to spend with their children.

Breastfeeding and breastmilk expression take time. How much time depends on how old the baby is when the mother returns to work. A mother of a fully breastfed infant will probably need three twenty minute breaks in an eight hour workday. As the baby begins to take solid foods, at about six months of age, the need to pump at work diminishes. Mothers who combine breastfeeding and formula feeding for their babies pump less frequently and for shorter time periods. By the age of nine months or so (usually about six months after returning to work,) most mothers no longer pump at work (Petschek and Barber-Madden, 1985).

Women in both groups reported difficulty in making time daily to pump. A bank manager who spent much of her workday in meetings described the frustration.

> What really hurt me was the type of work that I have. If I had to pump at 10:30 and I was in a meeting that started at 9:30 and just ran late, oh my goodness, here it is at 11:30, 12.... You're dying there [the discomfort of full breasts] and everybody says, "well let's go to lunch."

This research supports other research (Auerbach and Guss, 1984; Kurinij et al., 1989, Ryan and Martinez, 1989; Morse et al., 1989; Brown et al. 2001; Susser et al., 2004; Dunn et al., 2004) indicating that the length of maternity leave and the number of hours worked upon return to work have a direct bearing on successful lactation. The workplace philosophies described above result in differences in both these areas. At Cedar Hill Hospital, whose philosophy reflects the "women are equal" approach, 80 percent of the women interviewed took three months of maternity leave and when they returned to work, over half

of them returned full-time. Most of them used the on-site day care and the lactation program. However, at Watson Medical Center, which reflects the 'women are special' philosophy, the new mothers' return to work was spread out from one month to seven months and almost all of the new mothers return to work part-time.

Support

All breastfeeding mothers need support and nursing working mothers need support for both choices. Women who had workplace lactation programs felt that the programs themselves indicated the support of the workplace for their dual roles as mothers and workers. They also usually knew other mothers who were nursing or had nursed in the workplace, often meeting them at the Nursing Mothers' Room.

Although the attitude of the workplace as a whole, as manifested by human resource policies and programs, influenced supervisors' attitudes and actions, supervisors made their own decisions regarding their departments. This sometimes led to inconsistencies among departments in policy implementation. This was generally not viewed negatively by supervisors or workers, but rather as a necessity due to differing tasks and scheduling demands of each department. Supervisors and human resource managers were aware of this unevenness and continually strove to implement policies as fairly as possible.

Women who worked in places with no lactation support took pride in their roles as pioneers and educators. They educated their employers, colleagues, and other new or expectant mothers about the feasibility and benefits of nursing at work. They were part of a chain of mother-to-mother support—they sought out mothers who had nursed at work before them for practical advice and moral support. The support was returned when they served as mentors to other mothers after them. Several of the women in this study belonged to local breastfeeding support groups and even more found support on the Internet in listserve groups and chat rooms where they "met" other nursing working mothers from all over the world facing similar challenges and joys.

The women in the Pioneer Group expressed frustration at health care professionals' lack of knowledge regarding breastfeeding. One bank manager summed it up well, "It's so strange, the nursing mother just falls in between an OB-gynecologist and the pediatrician and nobody helps the nursing mother." Women had difficulty obtaining basic information about breast pumps and the unique needs of working nursing mothers.

Gatekeepers

Gatekeepers are those in each workplace who make sure that time, space and support come together. In companies that offer lactation support, the most important gatekeeper is the human resource manager who administers the program. In other places it is the supervisor who makes sure that things in the department are flexible enough that the new mother(s) can take the time and

find the space to pump. Among women in companies with no lactation support, the most important gatekeeper is often the office manager or secretary who knows which offices and conference rooms are empty and arranges schedules so that the new mother can pump as necessary.

Discussion

This research suggests several policy, training and research directions in the arena of public health and the workplace: co-operation between the public health and corporate communities regarding breastfeeding and other health related work/family issues; better training of health professionals in lactation; further research regarding effective workplace lactation policies and programs.

An increasing number of mothers of infants are in the work force. Raising the rates of breastfeeding initiation and duration are recognized public health goals. It follows that corporate lactation support is an important part of the public health strategy to meet its goals. Economic incentives such as better retention, loyalty, and productivity of workers (Bailey and Deck, 1993; Bar-Yam, 1997) are compelling reasons for companies to offer generous work/family benefits, including lactation support. Taken together, these trends create an excellent opportunity for the public health and business communities to form a partnership to improve the health and well being of workers and their families. This will require public health professionals to learn the vocabulary and culture of business and human resources in order to make effective contributions. Fora for this partnership include joint educational and policy meetings and research; promotion of current (USBC, 2004a; Baldwin et al., 2004) and future legislation that address the needs of nursing working mothers, and establishment of effective lactation support programs in corporate, government, and private workplaces.

In U.S. society, breastfeeding is viewed as a medical concern and new mothers rely on their health providers for information and guidance. However, this study suggests that the lack of knowledge of health professionals about lactation, milk expression, and the unique needs of working nursing mothers is a barrier to breastfeeding success. This problem can be addressed in two ways. First, physicians, nurses, nutritionists, and other health professionals who work with new mothers should receive ongoing education in the area of human lactation, including its physiological, nutritional, immunologic, social, and psychological aspects. Second, lactation consultants, health professionals specially trained in the area of lactation, should be part of the health care team that serves new mothers. Lactation consultant services and breast pumping equipment should be covered by third party reimbursements and referrals to lactation consultant for new mothers returning to work should be a routine part of post partum care.

This research was exploratory and its findings suggest as many questions as they answer. While some preliminary conclusions can be drawn from this small study, further research would determine how far these trends can be

generalized. This research indicates that different corporate philosophies result in different work/family and lactation policies. A larger study could determine whether the philosophies found in this study are common and whether they result in similar differences in strategies for supporting lactation and other work/family policies in other types of industries and geographic areas. Further research is also needed to evaluate the effectiveness of breastfeeding promotion and workplace lactation policies for working nursing mothers in all types of work settings.

Conclusions

This research suggests that co-operation between public health and corporate sectors to develop effective workplace lactation programs will result in more productive, loyal, and healthier workers.

New mothers rely on health care professionals for information and guidance about breastfeeding. This research indicates that they are often disappointed by the lack of knowledge of their health care providers, especially in the area of breastfeeding and work. Better education and training of perinatal health care providers and integration of lactation consultants into the perinatal health team would help new mothers successfully blend breastfeeding and outside employment.

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Orit Avishai

At the Pump

Pumping is a pain. It's to schlep all the stuff around, take all this time out of your day, and hook all this stuff up, and wash out all these bottles, and remember everything in the morning. And occasionally you forget the thermos or something, and you have to rig up some system at work. I felt it's significant labor, and it should be appreciated by my husband and my daughter and people around me should acknowledge that I was making a sacrifice (Jennifer, who spent two of her nine-hour workday at the pump).

Breastfeeding has come back into vogue in the United States in the past two decades. Recent breast-feeding campaigns tout breast milk as "liquid gold," vital for the intelligence, health, and emotional well-being of infants, promote breast-feeding as a responsible parenting choice, and depict breast-feeding as a public health concern (Avishai, 2000). Growing numbers of American women—especially educated, privileged women—are responding to these public campaigns.

Feminists and feminist organizations have been largely supportive of these campaigns. While some feminists emphasize the embodied and empowering aspects of breast-feeding (Bartlett -, 2000; Young, 1990), others focus on facilitating women's ability to combine paid employment with breast-feeding, through the practice of pumping in the workplace (Van Esterik, 1992). These feminists have joined forces with international health organizations, such as the WHO, and breast-feeding advocacy organizations, such as IFBAN and WABA, who have campaigned for legislation supportive of breast-feeding working mothers for decades. In the U.S., these efforts achieved momentum with the 1997 AAP statement on breast-feeding that advocates exclusive breast milk for infants during the first year of life (AAP, 1997). Since the late 1990s,

several states have adopted laws that require employers to accommodate lactating mothers.

For breast-feeding advocates, these gains are significant. Without facilitating measures, pumping at the workplace is a viable option only for the most privileged workers (Galtry, 2001). Pumping at work is predicated upon access to facilities and conditions that include access to a clean, convenient, safe, private, and comfortable site with electric outlets; the opportunity to pump frequently enough to maintain milk supply and avoid painful and possibly infectious engorgements; an efficient breast pump; and an adequate place to store expressed milk. Flexibility, autonomy, and control over one's work environment, including stress factors—usually attainable by professional women—are key to successful pumping (Hills-Bonczyk et al., 1993; Kurinij et al., 1989). Others, who do not enjoy such control, are effectively barred from combining breast-feeding and paid work, and usually stop breast-feeding when they return to work (Roe et al., 1999).

Though in recent years there has been a growing interest in women's experiences "at the breast" (Blum, 1999; Carter, 1995; Stearns, 1999), women's experiences "at the pump" have remained unexamined. Based on interviews with middle-class women who pump in the workplace, this paper attends to this neglected realm of maternal experience. It documents how middle class women's negotiations between "real work" and pumping produce a simultaneous double shift, how women negotiate with their failing maternal bodies, and the threat that pumping poses to hard-earned professional identities. The paper tells a pessimistic story of working mothers who often push their bodies to the limit as they attempt to meet a goal, measured in the number of ounces of milk extracted per day, and who are deeply ambivalent and conflicted about their lactating bodies. Based on these findings, this paper questions the wisdom of "lactation friendly policies." Echoing Galtry's (2001) critique of current legislation as upholding a privatized perspective on the costs of childrearing, this paper argues that given the social context in which pumping is undertaken—a context which privatizes childcare responsibilities while continuously raising the bar for "good mothering" (Glass, 2000)—successful pumping not only remains elusive for many women, but also comes at a price for those who do succeed.

This paper draws from a project that examines the breastfeeding practices and ideologies of middle-class American women. It is based on 15 in-depth, semi structured interviews with first-time working mothers, conducted in the San-Francisco area in 2000 (ten additional interviews with women who had not returned to paid employment following childbirth are excluded from this analysis). Most interviewees were in their mid- to late-30s. Twelve are white, one is Indian, and two are Latina. The women are all college graduates, and many hold professional or graduate degrees. The babies' ages ranged from six months to two years.

Before giving birth, all the women who participated in this study pursued

careers in middle-class, white-collar professions, such as medicine, accounting, engineering, law, research, and teaching. Though the employment settings and positions varied, they all shared a sense of indispensability to their employers. Twelve women negotiated part-time arrangements (ranging from ten hours-a-week for a management consultant to 50-hours-a-week for a physician). In addition, though most organizations lacked official lactation policies, they had all negotiated accommodations to fit their needs: access to a private pumping site and several pumping breaks during the workday.

Negotiating time: the doubly labouring woman

Most of the women I interviewed experienced pumping as a time-consuming task that they carefully planned and scheduled. Their narratives indicate that efficient and successful pumping (measured in ounces of milk produced per pumping session in the shortest amount of time) hinges on a plan that secures access to a private space, hot water, and a refrigerator, and optimally schedules pumping sessions to reflect the body's rhythm of milk production. All of the women who participated in this study experienced pumping as a scheduling problem and as a time-consuming activity that interferes with the "real work" that goes on in the office.

First, pumping interferes the flow of the workday. To ensure maximum results, and to avoid painful engorgements and "leaking" breasts, the women I interviewed strove to pump on a routine schedule. Most arranged the workday around their pumping routine. Angela, a high-powered 38-year-old lawyer who worked three days a week was particularly religious about her pumping routine, and she scheduled pumping into her day, along with her work-related tasks. Yet, she resented the routine interruptions; when pumping appeared on her schedule she would think "*aggghhhh*, got to go pump *again*":

> *The setup is a hassle. Getting the tubes set up, getting everything together, doing it, putting it back, washing it. From start to finish, it takes about 20 minutes. It's just the whole thing. I'm right in the middle of something. Or I can't schedule meetings because I need that break. Or I can't go from one meeting to the other. Or I have to duck out of a meeting.*

Most of the women interviewed also experienced pumping as time-consuming. From start to finish, including set up, pumping, and clean up, their pumping sessions lasted between 15 and 45 minutes. Most women pumped two or three times a day, and spent between half an hour and two hours at the pump during the workday (the amount of time spent largely depends on how "efficient" the woman is at extracting her milk).

Time is a central concern in work and family scholarship. Caught between the demands of family life and the demands of the workplace, working parents—especially working mothers—find themselves in a "time bind" (Hochschild, 1997). For the women I interviewed, the time bind is a product

of a "simultaneous double shift": pumping is experienced both as work, and as a maternal practice that competes with real work. First, the pumps' distinct noise and appearance (described by one woman as a "weird apparatus that looks faintly obscene") limit the range of interactions considered acceptable during this time. Second, handheld suction cups monopolize hand usage. Finally, some women found that work-related activities interfered with the physiological process that controls milk flow, known as the "letdown."

Ceaseless negotiations between pumping and real work were central to women's narratives. Working mothers strive to identify work-related activities compatible with pumping—driving, returning phone calls, reading email, or thinking. The goal was to transform "dead time" into productive time. Jennifer raved about a pumping accessory that "changed her life," because "you didn't have to just sit there. You could have your hands-free to work while you have this stuff hanging off your breasts. It is a lot more effective. It wasn't dead time. I could talk on the phone or make full use of the computer." Nevertheless, pumping impeded her work: she felt "chained to the desk" and inaccessible to her colleagues—pumping in the presence of co-workers was universally unacceptable. Leslie, who pumped in the car using hands-free apparatus, similarly transformed her morning commute from dead time into productive time. She says of her experience, "in my mind, the distance from Freemont to Mountain View is three ounces."

Women who did not purchase the hands-free apparatus seemingly undermined their ability to be doubly productive while pumping. Denise, a 35-year-old engineer, initially resented the time wasted at the pump. She came to appreciate the breaks from productive work when she realized that these breaks enhanced her productivity:

> *I would spend that time thinking about what I was working on. Now I can see that you're more productive if you take a break every once in a while, just stop what you're doing. Think about something else, and then go back to what you're working on. And say that was kind of silly.*

Christine, an engineer who spent two hours of her nine-hour workday at the pump, found that her body did not cooperate unless she ceased work-related activities:

> *There is that psychological thing about the letdown. I couldn't be doing the analytical work and pumping. And there was stress about having to stop work. Because I'd have a lot to do at work. I really like my job, and I like my work, and I'd want to do it. But I'd have to take these 45-minute chunks out of my day. And there were times where I really resent that.*

Christine illuminates the paradox that haunts the doubly productive woman, who strives to be productive at her desk while her maternal body is

productive at the pump. Pumps depend on cooperative bodies that allow breast milk to flow. Yet, the emotional serenity which successful pumping is predicated upon often remains elusive in the context of the workplace, precisely because pumping introduces an additional stress factor. Pumping and "real work" are thus experienced as mutually disruptive.

To conclude, pumping at the workplace emerges as a labor-intensive, time-consuming, challenging, and stressful enterprise, that hinges on strategic planning, time, space, and access to clean, hot water and a refrigerator. The narratives I collected reveal that the additional time demand entailed by pumping results in an increased time squeeze and a simultaneous double shift. To make up for time spent at the pump, many women's workday stretched longer or seeped into "family time" at home. Though most women acknowledged that pumping was physically demanding, few thought that their workload should be reduced on account; as Margaret, a 36-year-old statistical analyst put it, it was each woman's responsibility to "work it out." In line with American public policy, even though they perceived of pumping breaks as an entitlement, they privatized the responsibility for their newborns.

Managing the body: exclusivity and the failed (privatized) producer

The women who participated in this study all strove to exclusively meet all of their babies' milk requirements during the first year of life, in accordance with the 1997 recommendation of the American Association of Pediatrics. Predictably, the current cultural emphasis on breast milk as the measure of the good mother (Blum, 1999) is particularly salient for working mothers. To Christine, pumping was a sign of successful juggling, " a deal I'd made with myself, that as long as I was breastfeeding it didn't feel like I was hurting her by coming back to work." However, as I argue in a related paper, the emphasis on exclusivity is shared by both working mothers and mothers who choose *not* to return to paid employment (Avishai, 2000).

Yet, exclusivity is elusive. Most of the women who participated in this study noticed a widening gap between their babies' milk demands and the amounts they were able to supply. ("Supply" and "demand" were the terms women employed). In some cases, the gap became unbridgeable after several weeks or months of pumping. To Jennifer, this gap made sense, since "pumps just aren't as efficient at the breast. The thing that gets production up is how often you get the baby at the breast. And I didn't have a baby to get at the breast. I'm at work. I have a pump on me all the time."

Yet, the ideal—exclusivity during the first 12 months of life—remained fixed. Many women described their efforts to increase milk supply. These included attempting to drink, eat, and sleep sufficiently, adding extra pumping sessions at home, or taking herbal supplements. Many narratives conveyed a strong commitment to pumping, sometimes against all odds, and often at a

great price:

> *I needed three pumpings to keep up. She was drinking 20 ounces every day. And pumping 20 ounces in a day is really draining. There were stressful periods of feeling like "I'm running out of milk, what am I going to do." I felt like "I can't pump any more. I'm doing everything I can." It was very stressful because I was worried about not having enough [milk for her]. And it was important for me, to supply all her milk (Christine).*

Christine was one of the few who met the exclusivity goal (though she painfully noted that she fell *two weeks* short of her 12-month-target); yet, her success came at a price. Pumping left her physically and emotionally drained. Six-months pregnant with her second child at the time of her interview, she vowed not to repeat the experience.

While the focus on exclusivity is undoubtedly a product of concern for babies' health and maternal guilt, at stake were also these mothers' competence as individuals. Many of the women who participated in this study were challenged by maternal bodies that failed to perform. By constructing pumping as a goal, stated in terms of ounces produced per day over a period of time, they transformed the uncharted territory of uncooperative lactating bodies into the familiar grounds of tasks, goals, and projects. For Denise, pumping was "an extension of the way I attack things. I won't take on anything I don't do 100 percent." Similarly, Jennifer explains that pumping "had to do with the whole power thing. You get really into 'look how much I pump!' And if you don't get as much one day, you're bummed. And the days you have 22 ounces you're like, 'oh my god'." When she began to supplement with formula, Jennifer was "bummed" and "sad": "It was an ego thing. 'Oh look what I can do'. And I couldn't do it anymore."

Faced with this reality, many women "succumbed," "gave in," or "allowed themselves" to supplement with formula, arriving at a comfortable compromise. Eventually, as they realize that formula intake surpasses breast milk intake, some decide to give up pumping altogether, short of their one-year goal. Some, like Denise, felt that even supplementing with formula signifies failure:

> *There were a couple of points where I thought, "well, I could stop," but I never really seriously entertained it. And at some point, it became like running a marathon. "You just seem so close, why stop now?" Then you can say "I did it for a year!" As opposed to wimping out at eight months.*

Others decided to stop pumping altogether. Pam, a 32-year-old partnered lawyer, struggled to fit pumping into her 10- to 12-hour day. Following several months of futile efforts that left her exhausted, she decided that pumping was

> *not worth it, absolutely not worth it. I was like, "I don't care how much we have allergies in the family, how guilty everybody is making me feel, but*

this is making me miserable." I was at a breaking point. I was literally "I can't do this anymore." At four and a half months, I made the decision to stop pumping. Things got much better after that.

Although the women I interviewed knew that the physiology of lactation renders *long-term* exclusivity almost unfeasible, the ideal—exclusive breast milk for the first 12 months of life—remained unaffected. Failing to acknowledge the structural challenges that inhere in the interactions between lactating bodies and the demands of a competitive, "productive" workplace, most women privatized their failures—just as they privatized maternal responsibility. Yet, women's own juggling acts contribute to their failures. The simultaneous double shift interferes with women's performance both at work and at the pump. Studies confirm that the well-rested, well-nourished, and calm woman will produce and extract more milk than a stressed woman who, like Pam, has to "wolf down sandwiches between meetings" (Huggings, 1995; Sears and Sears, 1993). Ultimately, it is women's own definition of success—a definition that fails to account for the physiological and structural limitations of the doubly productive maternal body—that sets them up for failure. Finally, even those who succeed (and it is important to emphasize that many do), often experience pumping as a physically and emotionally draining ordeal. Others are left with feelings of guilt, inadequacy, and sometimes, contempt.

The worker in the suit and the woman in the body

The ongoing negotiation between productive work and pumping also confronts professional women with a paradox. On the one hand, they subscribe to the standard of the disembodied, unencumbered professional worker (Bordo, 1993; Williams, 2000). On the other hand, the experiences of pregnancy, lactation, and motherhood bring to the surface tensions between the private/public mind/body, disembodied worker/embodied mother, often calling women's professional identities into question. Lara, an administrator who pumped in a rarely-used supply closet, summarized the paradox:

So I'm partially undressed in the closet with this weird apparatus that looks faintly obscene hanging from my breasts. For someone who's in a professional context, it's kind of a mind bender. It was a very private thing for me to do in the office.

Many narratives echoed Lara's "mind bender." Though in comparison to breast-*feeding*, pumping appears as a disembodying endeavor (Blum, 1999), in the context of the workplace pumping embodies women. Women who pump in the workplace discover that, not only is it difficult to sustain the *appearance* of the ideal, disembodied worker, but several times a day they engage in an embodied process that involves partial undressing. When off the pump, the

physiology of lactation serves as a constant reminder: lactating breasts are sensitive; if they are not relieved on schedule, they may become engorged, painful, and possibly infected. Many women talked about "exploding" breasts. Lactating breasts may also "leak." Almost everyone told me comical horror stories of milk-stained shirts. As Laura, a 38-year-old architect quipped "you think you have it altogether, everything is under control, and then you discover your silk shirt is drenched right as you walk into a meeting." The threat to professional appearance is constant, since lactating bodies cannot be turned off:

> *I couldn't go to some professional meeting and ignore it [pumping] because I would start dripping. So you have to listen to your body. But there were times where I wished I could just turn off, pretend that I'm not breast-feeding for a day. (Christine)*

Since lactating bodies transgress the image of the disembodied worker, pumping is rarely discussed at the workplace. The women who participated in this study all sensed that their colleagues did not want to be aware of the pumping process or product, and they all went to great lengths to ensure privacy while pumping and discreetness of the product, usually stored in a refrigerator accessible to others. Though everyone knew exactly what was going on behind closed doors, why a new mother had to excuse herself in the middle of a lengthy meeting, what the inconspicuous brown bag, thermos, or lunch box contained, and what the vague signs on doors conveyed, women rarely talked about "it"—nor did their colleagues inquire. Jennifer summed these sentiments. She stored her breast milk "in a paper bag, so it wasn't really obvious, in case it made people uncomfortable. I didn't want that to be an issue. I didn't go around talking about it. I wasn't trying to put it in anyone's face. I didn't bring it up at lunch."

The euphemisms women employed in the notes they hung on their doors to ensure privacy are particularly illuminating. Janine's sign read

> *I will be* available.... *It didn't say I will return, or I'm writing, or doing stuff. And I put it right at face level. Most people knew exactly what I was doing.*

Lara's sign read: "Lara is in here. And people knew what it meant." Jennifer's sign, strategically located near the door handle, said, "please knock, and wait to be invited before you enter." These signs serve several purposes: they guarantee privacy and optimize stress-free conditions, protect colleagues from possible embarrassment, and sustain professional identities.

Yet, by shrouding pumping behind euphemisms and secrecy, these working mothers convey that pumping, which signifies embodiment, sexuality, and motherhood, stands in stark opposition to the real business that goes on in the workplace. By constructing the lactating body as a scheduling and management problem, women who pump at the workplace transform the problem from one

of negotiating competing identities to one of body management. Rather than challenging the image of the ideal disembodied worker, women who pump in the workplace reproduce this image. For example, the emphasis on "pumping on schedule" in order to avoid "leaking" leaves unchallenged the norm that establishes leaking breasts as a source of embarrassment. Though individually women recognize the fallacy of the ideal worker, they nonetheless do their best to maintain its image by turning deviant bodies into a project to be managed, thereby distancing themselves "the woman in the body."

Conclusion

The women who participated in this study experienced pumping as a labor-intensive, time-consuming, challenging, and stressful enterprise—in contrast with the picture painted by parenting and breastfeeding advocacy literature, lactation experts, and internet sites (*www.breastfeeding.com*, *www.lalecheleauge.org*). In addition, women experienced pumping as a threat to their professional identities. This paper documents how women respond to this threat by constructing pumping as a project, thereby transforming the uncharted territory of uncooperative lactating bodies into the familiar grounds of tasks, goals, and projects.

These findings provide an ethnographic backdrop from which the wisdom of a body of advocacy, policy, scientific, and feminist literature that calls for "lactation-friendly" policies in the American workplace can be challenged. The current societal pressure on women to breast-feed is unaccompanied by attempts to spread the costs of breast-feeding. The difficulties faced by those who pump in the workplace illustrate the dual trend faced by modern mothers. On the one hand, the burdens placed on mothers are intensifying (Hays, 1996). On the other hand, the responsibility for children's well-being is increasingly privatized (Glass, 2000). Thus, though many of the women I interviewed viewed pumping as an entitlement, they did not expect a reduced workload. In this way, accommodations for pumping in the workplace reinforce the privatization of the burdens of motherhood, contributing to the production of drained, tired, and frustrated mothers. Indirectly, they may also reinforce a conservative perception that work and family responsibilities are inherently incompatible.

While the experiences of educated, middle class women reported in this paper do not purport to capture those of other groups of women, I argue that valuable insights may be gleaned from studying this group of women. While all women are victims of the privatization of childrearing, privileged women are best positioned to compensate for these obstacles. The difficulties privileged women reported herein suggest that other groups of women, who enjoy less flexibility, autonomy, and control over their schedule and work environment, will undoubtedly encounter greater impediments to their efforts to pump in the workplace and supply their babies' adequate breast milk.

Given the existing cultural context, I caution that activists' efforts may be

better placed elsewhere—for example, advocating for longer maternity leaves or on-site childcare. At present, the emphasis on "lactation friendly" policies simply reifies the tendency to privatize maternal responsibility, and ignores women's realities. While the current ideology of breast-feeding produces failure and success stories, these stories are intimately bound in both the structural obstacles that impede some women's access to "success," and in the current cultural hype about breastfeeding.

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Susan Schalge

Who Compares To Mother (*Nani Kama Mama*)?

The day was hot, as usual, but Mama Nyabweke and I felt the occasional breeze waft through the open sitting room of her home in Shimo la Udongo, one of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's many squatter settlements. It was mid-afternoon and we were content to sit quietly on the cool cement floor sorting scraps of cloth for her small-scale, informal sewing business. Our morning had been hectic and tiring. We had gone to several markets that morning searching for the pieces of used clothing she altered into children's shorts and women's undergarments.[1]

"*Wifi* (sister-in-law)," Mama Nyabweke called to me as we worked together that afternoon.

"*Bee* (yes)?" I asked.

She smiled and, with a twinkle in her eye, said, "You know, I am very clever, you won't meet many who are as clever as I."

Setting my work aside to give her my full attention, I smiled and said, "Truly," both agreeing with her and urging her to continue.

> *I gave birth to ten children and I've raised them all, it was all my own effort. I don't have any other responsibilities other than taking care of my children. I have helped many people but I never received help from others. When my husband died, they thought I had no strength.... People talk about me. I know many people are jealous of me and they do not like me. They are jealous because I have a good business, I have built my own house, a good house, and because I can feed my large family. No one goes to sleep hungry.*

Mama Nyabweke's story, like those of thousands of other women, illustrates many of the chief characteristics of contemporary mothering and

motherhood in Tanzania, as well as many of the societal changes that have taken place. In the following pages, I examine the experiences of poor women living and working in urban squatter settlements as they relate to perspectives on the work of mothering and motherhood. I explore how increasing numbers of female-headed households, urban poverty and the feminization of poverty have forced a reformulation of motherhood and mothering. My analysis is based on twenty months (1995-97) of ethnographic field research during which time I lived with and came to know many Tanzanian mothers.

Traditionally, mothering was not primarily thought of as an economic activity and, commonly, the difficult work of mothering was undervalued. Nowadays in Tanzania, mothering is even less so about "simple" mother-child relationships. It involves complex strategies that take into consideration traditional ideologies of gender and social organization, current political and economic realities and, above all, cleverness (*ujanja*), as Mama Nyabweke was herself quick to point out. Cleverness is essential for urban living and survival. It is based on wit and intelligence, but just as importantly, it includes elements of cunning and deceit. These constructs show that mothering and motherhood are actively created and learned, rather than naturally determined roles and capabilities. They are conditioned by the context in which they occur and influenced by the agency and subjectivity of the women who mother.

Throughout the world, women struggle to meet the ever-increasing demands of mothering and motherhood. In his review of the meaning of motherhood in mainstream U.S. society, John Gillis (2002) concludes that, "Never have mothers been so burdened by motherhood" (129). While Gillis's analysis focuses on maternity, his statement rings true for many women, especially for contemporary Tanzanian women. All of the mothers I knew worked under exceptionally difficult circumstances in tremendously competitive, and sometimes hostile, environments. Unlike many men who sought only their own survival, women worked to insure the sustenance of their children and grandchildren. In this article, I examine women's experiences of motherhood and explore the ways that the feminization of poverty creates strong connections between mothering and work.

In the North American mainstream, mothering is often assumed to be a natural role determined by the biological processes of reproduction (see Hrdy, 1999; Collier and Yanagisako, 1987). Thus, motherhood seems to be a simple matter: a woman becomes pregnant, gives birth and thereafter is selflessly devoted to the rearing of her children. In this system, the "Good Mother" is defined by intensive and child-centered care giving, nurturing and selflessness. However, mothering and motherhood encompass multiple contradictions. With the spread of new reproductive technologies it can no longer be said that motherhood is established through simple biological processes, if indeed it ever was.[2] Contemporary expectations of work and intensive mothering make pursuing the status of "Good Mother" both principle and ultimately unachievable (Barlow, 2002). It is also a job that is nearly everywhere devalued (Crittenden,

2001). In and of themselves, such contradictions, wherein mothering is simultaneously lauded and devalued, should prompt us to consider the meanings of mothering and motherhood more closely. What women as mothers do, how they do it and how they define themselves are complex issues that must be untangled and investigated, rather than assumed (see for example, Arendell, 2000; Collins, 1991; Scheper-Hughes, 1992). The tendency to essentialize motherhood is pervasive. "More than any other field of human endeavor, motherhood is like the air we breath. Because it is clear, transparent, and readily available, we often take it for granted." (Abbey, 2003: 9) This may be due, in part, to the fact that we all have mothers. Not only have we lived with and grown to understand (at least somewhat) our own mothers, many of us are ourselves mothers. But, in naturalizing motherhood and mothering we remove them from illumination and divorce them from value and analysis. The difficult and exhaustive work of mothering disappears behind the rhetoric of instinct and emotion.

I encountered similar perspectives about the "naturalness" of mothering in Tanzania. Such views are, in fact, the source for the title of this paper. During the two years that I conducted ethnographic research in the late 1990s, *kanga* (cloth worn by women) printed with the adage "*Nani kama Mama* (Who compares to Mother)" were widely popular gifts purchased for women by their children. The message of the kanga reflected traditional Tanzanian ideologies regarding motherhood, that it is women/mothers who are primarily responsible for the care of children. But it also posed a critical question for consideration in light of the rapid increase in female-headed households and urban poverty. How do mothers living in abject poverty provide for their children?

Tanzania suffered a variety of economic crises in the 1970s and '80s related to such events as the war with Uganda, increased oil prices and drought, to name but a few. These crises were followed by a decade's worth of austerity and structural adjustment measures, imposed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank as a requirement of debt refinancing, making Tanzania the world's poorest nation according to per capita income in 1995 (Tripp, 1997). The combination of these events has forced women to shoulder increasingly heavy burdens of household maintenance and childrearing, often on their own. Men, in ever growing numbers, are abandoning their responsibilities to their children, and women are picking up the slack. The dislocations brought about by increasing incorporation into a capitalist world system have necessitated the development of new roles for mothers and new ways of mothering. Thus, we must also ask, "Why do mothers stay with their children when men so often leave?"

Many East African groups were traditionally based upon systems of patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence.[3] Marriages were arranged by fathers and secured through the exchange of bridewealth.[4] In these systems women were often denied the right to own or inherit major resources such as land or cattle. Even in the few matrilineal systems, wherein descent is traced

through the mother's line, resources were often handed down from a man to his sister's sons and men controlled access to strategic resources. Women were expected to contribute their labour to production. They were also solely responsible for food preparation, childcare and general household maintenance. Similarly today, the majority of all household work falls to female members. Additionally, the burden of securing adequate household funds is primarily a woman's domain. Mothers are responsible for the health, feeding, clothing and education of household members.

While recognizing the extent of such obligations, the women I knew were eager to have children. This desire was due in part to the fact that, in Tanzania, one must take on dependants of some kind in order to achieve adult status. Women most often do this through mothering. Once a woman has a child she takes on a new status, that of mother. She is thereafter known and referred to as Mama, or Mother of so-and so.[5] While a woman may in one sense lose her individual identity through this transformation, she also achieves increased power, status and authority. Nowadays, becoming a mother often means that a woman must take on the sole responsibility of rearing and providing for her children, and eventually her grandchildren, well into adulthood. To provide for their dependants, women devote their incomes almost entirely to household needs and maintenance. A man's income and labour are, however, his to dispose of as he wishes (see Hansen, 1997).[6]

Because of the increased burdens and insecurities associated with mothering and motherhood, the women with whom I worked were very nostalgic about their idealized notions of kinship and family life in the past. As one divorced mother told me, "The children's father scorns us. Men run from their responsibilities. This is new. In the past it wasn't like that." Women characterized the past as a time when everyone knew their responsibilities and met them. The more clearly demarcated kin roles and supporting system of sanctions enforcing those roles represented greater security to a very insecure, present day urban population. One middle-aged mother who sold pastries on the streets offered this comparison:

> *A long time ago all the men tried to work hard to feed the family. For example, a long time ago, if a woman got divorced she wasn't supposed to take the children, she wasn't allowed to move with the babies because the father used to think the babies were his. But nowadays, the fathers are the first to move from home and leave their families, and behave like* malaya *(prostitutes, promiscuous) outside.*

In giving their interpretations of idealized kin relations of the past, Tanzanian women offered a powerful critique of men and contemporary gender relations. Mothers had greater responsibilities and worked harder than men. As a result, women criticized men for being self-interested, manipulative and irresponsible. Men also accused women of being manipulative and

devious, central components of cleverness (*ujanja*). Yet, more importantly, women defended their duplicity on the basis of mothering and motherhood. They felt justified in taking whatever actions they deemed necessary because they had children to support. To accomplish the complex tasks set out for them, cleverness became a successful (if not quite a good) mother's most important skill.

The Tanzanian government estimates that 23 percent of Tanzanian households are headed by women. In urban areas the rates vary from 21 to 28 percent and in squatter settlements the rates are higher yet. These percentages represent a five percent increase nationwide over the past decade. Additionally, nearly eighteen percent of all Dar es Salaam households fall below the basic needs poverty line of 7,253 Tanzanian shillings (approximately US$10-12) per month (Bureau of Statistics, 2002). Government studies identify education as a major factor influencing household income, and ultimately poverty. Not surprisingly, males are more likely to receive an education and are far more likely to continue past primary school. Yet even when education is held constant, men earn, on average, twice as much as women. Clearly, women and their children are at a much greater risk of poverty. They are also more profoundly affected by structural adjustment programs that drastically reduce, and in some cases eliminate entirely, access to essential social services such as education and health care (see Ngaiza and Koda, 1991; Kabeer, 1994). As a result, women have had to adapt to changing circumstances through the alteration of household structures, adaptive strategies and the definition of motherhood itself.

Mothering today includes not only past concerns with daily childcare and feeding, but more extensive maternal responsibility. While women have always worked to support themselves and their families, the roles and work of mothers have altered tremendously due to urban poverty. Meeting basic daily needs as well as long-term household survival has, in many cases, been placed squarely on the shoulders of women in their roles as mothers. Over the past three decades, their earnings have become absolutely essential to the survival of the majority of Dar es Salaam households (both male and female headed), with little if any help from fathers, husbands or adult sons. To meet these demands they enter into a variety of informal economic sector activities from the sale of cooked food on the streets to sewing. In the West we draw, perhaps inaccurate, distinctions between "working" and "non-working" mothers, but in Dar es Salaam more and more, work is becoming an essential element integral to the definition of mothering. While the work of the women I encountered was based upon traditional gender ideologies and divisions of labour, it is specifically aimed at meeting the demands of urban living. For example, childcare considerations limited women's options and often made their work more difficult. A fish seller clearly defined this issue when she stated, "Even if I thought about changing my business, I couldn't because I have children." Most women needed to opt for work that could be performed simultaneously with

childcare, that was flexible enough to work around children's needs, or could accommodate the presence of children.

The structure of urban households also mirrored this need for flexibility. Ideally, the household was thought of in terms of a large extended family sharing a compound, such as all the sons and unmarried daughters of a patriarch. However, urban land shortages and poverty made it very difficult for urban residents to recreate this ideal. The East African households I studied were extremely fluid; and this fluidity was a key to their survival and success.[7] The sites were dynamic and multidimensional, they were not based solely in kinship, rather economics and politics made up important aspects of household organization (see also Hansen, 1997). The maintenance and establishment of wide social networks were crucial to the survival of poor urban households headed by women. In times of trouble, which occur frequently for those living in poverty, people turned to friends and family for aid rather than governmental and nongovernmental agencies or personal savings. Therefore, a key of mothers' work was establishing social alliances. For such strategies to work, women needed to be clever.

Because women's subsistence was by no means insured, even if they did work consistently, women had to rely on a variety of other sources of support. Poverty, therefore encouraged the development of wide social networks of support, including sexual relationships. By having multiple relationships with a variety of men, women were able to gain greater security. Yet at the same time, concerns about money made trust and emotional intimacy impractical and dangerous for men as well as women. The fact that men and women were often in competition for limited resources was inescapable. This fact made *ujanja* (cleverness) a critical skill and conditioned the structure, organization and quality of their relationships. Women believed that since they worked harder for their families than men they were right and justified in cheating others, particularly men, given the opportunity. They believed they had to be clever and live by their wits so their families would survive. As one mother told me:

> *Women have greater responsibilities in the family, they always have. It's possible that the husband does not care, or his work is just to drink beer. That is why women are forced to be cheats. Women are forced to cheat for the sake of feeding their families.*

Cleverness was at the heart of the necessary skills one needed to develop in order to be successful. Women often cited their cleverness at manipulating people and situations to their advantage. Theft, lying, and the manipulation of social ties were imperative to new methods of mothering. This often placed men and women at odds over economic contributions to the household, income distribution, reproductive decision-making and their interpretations of appropriate gender roles. Increased burdens coupled with decreased support systems

lead to antagonism and mistrust. Gender relations were generally hostile as the following words of one single mother illustrate:

> *Men nowadays are liars. They usually want to solve their problem [satiate sexual desire] and forget all about what comes next.... They try to escape their responsibilities and leave their babies without any aid or support. The rates of single mothers are going up these days because men are escaping their responsibilities. They are running away from their responsibilities. They are making love, causing pregnancies and then forgetting about everything. A long time ago all men tried to work hard to feed their families.*

Without trust and the necessary social proscriptions and prescriptions, cleverness became one of the most salient features of urban life. Let me return to Mama Nyabweke's story to further illustrate these points.

Mama Nyabweke was a strong woman and, as she herself loved to point out, incredibly clever. Above all else, she wanted her children to succeed, thereby insuring her own success and good standing in the community. As her story will demonstrate, she was not above theft, lying and utilizing a variety of forms of manipulation on friends, neighbors, business associates, her own children and other family members to achieve the goals she set for her family and household.

She was born in 1948 in the Musoma Region of northwestern Tanzania. In 1970, she married and moved to Dar es Salaam. She was the second wife of Mr. Samson. Over the course of her marriage, Mama Nyabweke had ten children, three girls and seven boys. She described her situation to me in the following way:

> *My husband could not afford to handle the family because he had two wives and two girlfriends. My husband beat me often and he drank a lot, he was coming home drunk every night. I couldn't return to my father because he was dead, so I decided to follow a different route. I began to steal money from my husband each day after he returned home drunk. I also took some of the money he would leave me for household goods. For example, I would say, "Husband, we need a kilo of rice, give me some money." He would give me enough for a kilo, but I would only buy half a kilo and save the rest of the money. Eventually I stole enough money, 700 shillings, to buy a sewing machine. Before I could buy the machine, I had to talk to his friends. If I just bought the machine, he would have refused me or taken it from me. He would have been suspicious about where I got the money, maybe from a boyfriend or something like that. So I told his friends that I would tell the truth about it if my husband promised to let me begin the business and if he would believe me and not get angry.*

She would tell all, but only if she had a guarantee that she could get the

machine. The friends agreed to help her so she told them what she had done. "Then I gave the money to his friends to buy the machine for me, I did not want to give it to my husband because he would have just used the money." She got the machine and began to sew shorts for children that she sold to local shops. Her husband was later transferred to a different city in central Tanzania, but she refused to accompany him because of her business. In 1978, she bought a plot of land to build a house on and also kept this a secret from her husband. She paid for all the children's needs, including school fees, uniforms and equipment with little to no help from her husband. Mama Nyabweke was rightfully proud of her abilities and accomplishments. Had she not been "clever" in the handling of her husband, who was by most accounts a violent and erratic man, she could not have provided for her children as well as she had.

Clearly in Dar es Salaam, as exemplified by Mama Nyabweke's story, the household was not a "haven in a heartless world" as it is often portrayed in the West. *Ujanja* (cleverness) played a major role in defining the structure and organization of the household. It was the primary means of coping with urban poverty, abandonment and expectations. For women, *ujanja* was also a necessary skill as mothering became increasingly demanding and bound to work. Thus, rather than a naturally determined category or role, mothering and motherhood are positions of power—limited though they may be—and extensive knowledge. The economic realities of profound poverty bind mothering and work, making the act of mothering essential to survival on many levels.

Both proper and improper behaviour was justified under the rubric of mothering and women challenged gender asymmetry by manipulating past beliefs of mother love. Mama Nyabweke summarized her own experiences in the following manner, "Life is hard, but I have seen a lot of troubles in my life so it's all the same to me. I don't have any responsibilities other than taking care of my children." Tanzanian mothers did what they had to do to support their children. Always in the forefront of their minds they carried with them the knowledge that there were many who depended upon them. While they may not have thrived, they did get by. And so, "*Nani kama Mama*?" is, in the end, simply a rhetorical question: *no one* can compare to Mother.

[1]See Schalge (2002) for a more thorough investigation of women's informal sector labour in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

[2]Contemporary research on new reproductive technologies and assisted reproduction demonstrate the complexity of biological reproduction and maternity (see for example Rapp, 1999; Saunders, 2002).

[3]A system of social organization wherein children trace their descent through the father's line only and post-marital residence is with the groom's family. Thus, a mother is not a member of her child's kin group and contact with the mother's kin is limited.

[4]Gifts passed from the groom's family to the bride's family to compensate them for the loss of her, and to strengthen affinial ties.

[5]I often did not know the given names of many women, nor did others when I asked.

[6]Sons also contribute only minimal amounts, especially in comparison with the contributions of daughters. This is true particularly as children grow up, daughters' contributions often increase with age as sons' decrease.

[7]I utilize an expanded version of the functional definition of household used by the census bureau; that is, according to what it provides people. In the Tanzanian census, household was defined according to who ate and slept together. I consider households as sites for the organization of labour, education and socialization, meeting members' basic needs (i.e., food, shelter, physical and social protection). Additionally they serve as centers for social activities including the formulation of basic social units (e.g., kin groups and social networks).

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Errata:

Our apologies to Rhonda Shaw, whose article "Anecdotal Theory, Morality and Inappropriate Breastfeeding," published in Volume 6, No. 1 of the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering* (Spring/Summer 2004), appeared with errors in the first paragraph of the article on page 124. The corrected paragraph appears below:

It may appear, on first view, that breastfeeding and the law have very little to do with one another. On the contrary, it is because women's breasts, and the functions they perform, are potentially disruptive of dominant patriarchal norms and discourses, that the breastfeeding body is felt to be in such need of moral scrutiny and regulation. Even where no legislation exists to regulate or delimit infant feeding practices, the law finds a way to put breastfeeding in its place. A recent incident in the state parliament of Victoria in Australia, 2003, where a female Member of Parliament (MP) was removed for breastfeeding her eleven-day-old infant, illustrates my point.[1] On this particular occasion, the female MP's maternal breastfeeding body was viewed as contravening the limits of autonomous, unitary political citizenship, and her baby was deemed "a stranger" in the house. Both mother and infant were asked to leave the parliamentary chamber. Here, the legitimate legal-political model of self is clearly determined by its autonomy and separateness from the bodies of others, rather than as a mode of embodied being that acts and exists in relation to others.

[1]This incident was reported in the Australian newspapers, *The Age* and *The Australian*, on 28 February, 2003.

Folio

Photo: Tracy Carbert

Editor's Notes

In this issue of the ARM Folio I am pleased to present the poetry of Priscila Uppal. In her powerful long poem sequence titled "Poem for a Runaway Mother," Uppal explores the loss of a mother who is not described as a particular mother, for no actual description is given of the mother. Rather, the poems explore the nature of invention as a consolation for grief. "Poem for a Runaway Mother" is a detective story; the daughter narrator refuses to be "tricked" by memory, and invents her own physical evidence of her mother's existence. She invents her mother's character and her familial identity, to the point of imagining siblings. So much has been destroyed in this daughter's life, therefore everything must be created and imagined. The narrator's travels to hunt down her runaway mother occur not by the aid of memory, but through the imagination, in "the last place she knows you will look." These poems are beautifully crafted, haunting and poignant. They evoke in the reader a deep sense of mourning, made all the more surprising sometimes in the face of the unflinching voice of the narrator. Eloquently articulated, these poems demonstrate Uppal's skill as a poet in her attention to spareness and a measured precision of language, poems in which every word carries its weight. Priscila Uppal's "Poem for a Runaway Mother" is fascinating in its response to the loss of the mother, a provocative exploration of the roleof the imagination in the face of grief.

—Rishma Dunlop

Priscila Uppal

Poem for a Runaway Mother

Runaway Mother

I track you in my sleep, a rearview face
Your back a long road sleek with rain.

From town to town it seems you turn
Once a tree, a stop sign, the main exit,

Your hair the last banner to take the curve
And a barrage of dust to stun me.

Underground days, at night I pick up the trail
Wonder what you will change into next:

A lark, a border, a highway motel,
The reckless fawn I just ran over with my heart.

Migrant

You left in November, not like the leaves
But like the birds:
You flew

From the nest built by instinct

A trail of feathers to follow
Like storm clouds, floating.
My arms

The nervous grass, stiff
And unrelenting, charted clear shifts
In pattern, bent towards the wind,
Withstood

The atmosphere. Recent death, blizzard
Warnings, the season's chill: scent
Of absence. While below

The equator water continues to breed,
Trees refuse to age. You make a new home
With all the native birds I had come to
Rely on.

Unlike the Dead

Unlike the dead, your flesh gets thicker.
This year I could spin it like wool
On my lap, your hands embroidered
Into mittens, your remembered back
Tatted into a fine tablecloth.

I could lay you out like a tree trunk
Count the years you've been away
Nail the hard wood to a stand
And watch your distance grow
Steadily as moss.

You plump up in the winter, hibernate
In closets and picture frames, make
A nest in the hollow of the pillows
You once fluffed. Even trees are jealous
Of your survival techniques.

I could carve a tiny family
Out of the timeline of our parting.
I could wrap you up like a large blanket.
I could use your legs for firewood.

By Thanksgiving, I could stuff you,

Feast on this grief, and still have leftovers.

Grave Robbers

Underground we went
The basement littered with your papers.
Your things.

We opened an old wooden chest.
Your body was scarred
And staining the corners.
The smell of mould
Astonished us.

Air thick with dead flowers
I crouched in the shadows, included myself
In the company of ghosts.

It was my brother's hands that excavated.
His lap stocked with red dresses
And cheap costume jewelry,
The dust like lice, crawling
Over his skin.

Dig in, he encouraged.
No harm can be done
to a skeleton.

Mistaken Identity

The last time
I went home to see your husband,

My father,
He greeted me at the white door

And staggered.
A tired man's guilt

Shocked by
A woman's figure and long

Dark hair.
I remembered his voice once

On a cold
Afternoon, telling me *better*

To have been
Left at the altar than after ten

Years, better
To have her run from the church

Than me.
Pauses like wilted flowers

Hanging over
The children that wouldn't be.

The last time
I went home to see your husband

The yellow
Wallpaper shone a bright hope

And over
The scuffed threshold I stood

Both of us
Sobbing for the blushing bride.

Hints My Father Gave Me to Your Whereabouts

The backyard would be the first place to go:
Pick up the scattered seeds of radishes
The broken ribs of autumn's rhododendrons
Skim the shell of the pool until it dries.

With these in your pockets check the cellar
The starved bottles of better anniversaries

The withered boxes of apologetic love letters
Store the finds in a sunny place.

If nothing materializes, raid the laundry
Air out the stained sheets of your childhood
The grey hairs of last year's lint bags.
The washing machine rumbles like her tongue.

I wouldn't bother to travel. Trust me
She lives not in our bedroom, but is not
Far from home. Do not be tricked.
A needle in a haystack is not her style.

Preserve anything resembling a body.

Denial

When asked about his mother
My brother claims her death:

Sometimes to avoid questions
Sometimes because he believes it

Sometimes as a pick-up line
For women who love tragedy.

He wraps you up in white satin
And hundreds of yellow daffodils

Spell your name. He insists
We do the best to honour

Our fading memories: even if
They print in black-and-white

Even if our minds flash on
And off like movement sensors.

Still after the lonely women leave
His bed, there are nights he calls

For advice about funerals:

Who should read a eulogy

And whether or not God ought
To be mentioned in pleasant company.

The procession for your passing
Slips by in every breath.

He insists he has no mother:
Only the one we bury in conversation

Thousands of feet underground.

Prayer for the Return of a Runaway Mother

Mother, if you art not in heaven, give me
This evening a sign: a letter, a loose lock
Of greying hair, a special stone you may have held
In your palm. Tell me how to pronounce your
Hallowed name so you will answer. Have you
Traveled far in search of new cities? Where
Does your present kingdom reign?

For those who have no daily bread, even a crumb
Would bear forgiveness. Come and trespass.

Mirage

For decades your face a fountain
Denied. Dark plums of your eyes
Berries of your lips dried. Long
Crevices of your mouth and cheeks
Reservoirs of rain.

There has been such drought
In my country.

I have tapped at the trunks
Of mothers on subways
Ladies in grocery stores

Fast women on escalators skipping
Stairs on their way
For a few scarce drops to tame this thirst.

I've become bloated on the *idea* of water.

With burned eyes and stick-thin thighs
I store my wares safely.

In this desert
If time is made of sand
The day must be close at hand
To turn camel.

My many stomachs brought to your well
Too deprived to drink.

Forecast

Precipitation is
My memory. The weatherman promises
This spring the humid air we circulate
Threatens to break.

Disappearing Act

The house may be vacant
Your sleeves without a trace
Of silk scarves or high cards.
And you eluded our sight
Marvelously, like a star in daylight.
Yet still magician, we know your name.

White rabbit, white dove
Black cape, black hat.
All set symbols, all subjects speak
To your second coming.
The art of holding one's breath.

But somewhere

Underneath the wooden planks
Of this house, the ground refuses
To be tricked, will sniff out
Your secret compartment

Drag you out by the hair
In front of a stunned audience
Whisper in your ear:
Abracadabra

Exposed

It is not the photographs we preserve
But the thin, delicate layers of film

The negative markers of our halted love
That we hold dear.

Silent Auction

The hall was stale. Price tags
Like toe tags, short
And to the point, hung
On fake silver hooks:

Red satin nightgown.
Beige leather suitcase.
Three gold bracelets, and
Hundreds of shoes.
She left them all.

The men wore black
And drank martinis. The women
Clutched each other's handbags
Wedding themselves to calculators.
This ought to be worth something.

Don't touch, security reminded,
Not unless you're going to buy.

No pen to claim the inheritance,
The girl on the poster jumped
Out into the hall, tore all the treasures
From their hooks, ending the bidding.

I've paid, she screamed. *I've paid*
Dearly for these already.

A Message to any Half-Brothers or Sisters I May Have

Sure, I've thought about you. Wondered.
Asked myself a dozen questions, about where
You might live, with whom, the type of climate,
Which countries are stamped on your passports.
Sure, I have.

But don't be surprised if the day comes
When the mail I receive goes
Unanswered, when I refuse to unlatch the door,
Or when I too turn from your well-meant longing
Without a single trace or clue.

Such a dominant gene, you understand,
Must run in our family.

Hide and Seek

I

As the child who has spent too long
In darkness panics, I ran from you.
Searched the smallest places
For shelter. Ones tight as stones
And just as common, where movement
would seem a trick of the eye.

Hard statue I stood
As you scored the land, befriended
Insect, plant, rain.
The sky became a magnifying glass

And burned me.

II

We began counting. Five addresses,
Three cities, two continents,
You picked out easily
The tracks like badly forged documents.

When I wished to give up
Womanhood prevented me.

The rest you know.

III

Soon a dry darkness will be falling
Below your hand
Where I curled up once.

Your little girl waits patiently,
Almost stubbornly,
In the last place
She knows you will look.

Dedication

For you
Whose absence
Has made me messenger
Of grief

I beg
For your blessing
Over my door
My memory

Faint hand
I have
Felt frequently
In mine

Please sign
These notes
Previously
Unclaimed.

Book Reviews

The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World Is Still the Least Valued

Ann Crittenden
New York: Henry Holt, 2001

Reviewed by Aimee Berger

The Price of Motherhood is a compelling book, so well documented as to be virtually unimpeachable. It should be required reading for every first year college student, or better still, part of the high school curriculum. Maybe then we could look forward to an honest public discussion about the dangerous ideologies and policies that work against mothers and children in America. We could begin to focus on valuing the family instead of bludgeoning women with the hollow club of "family values."

Crittenden argues that women who mother face discrimination and she illustrates the myriad ways in which that discrimination has been institutionalized and perpetuated by public policy, the legal system, and the values of "turbo-capitalism." In particular, she shows how mothers and children are devalued by the childcare industry.

Crittenden debunks myths that have worked to further complicate and denigrate the work of mothers, such as the myth that children necessarily suffer when mothers work outside the home ("mothers today spend as much if not more time with their children as mothers did in the 1960's" (19); the myth that

fathers are becoming equal partners (even if a married father becomes unemployed he "will typically contribute no more than 30% of the domestic services and childcare" (24); and the most damaging myth of gender equality ("there is overwhelming and systemic evidence that mothers can never achieve economic equality in the labor market as things now stand" (44).

Through an analysis of trends, recent court cases, and comparisons of current American policies and ideologies with those of more "family friendly" nations such as Canada, Norway, and Sweden, Crittenden firmly establishes the need for and possibility of change, not only in policy but in how the United States thinks about women and family. For example, she writes in Chapter 13 that an interesting question to ask might be "why the worldwide problem of absentee fathers has been interpreted in Sweden as a call for equal partnering, while in the U.S. the same phenomenon has prompted cries for a return to traditional marriage, complete with breadwinning husband and stay-at-home wife" (246).

Crittenden's final chapter, "How to Bring Children Up Without Putting Women Down," leaves the reader with a sense of hope and call to action. She acknowledges that "Americans may never accept the kind of compassionate capitalism or caring state that western Europeans demand," but she can nevertheless "easily imagine adding care to our pantheon of national values" (258). She outlines changes in the workplace, government, family, and community that will improve the conditions for women and children, and in turn enhance the public good. She reminds us that none of these changes will occur unless we realize that our decision to mother should not necessitate our exclusion from full participation in the economy and society, and that we, along with "all the free riders—from employers to governments to husbands to communities—have to pitch in and help make the most important job in the world a top national priority—and a very good job" (258).

Balancing Family and Work: Special Considerations in Feminist Therapy

Toni Schindler Zimmerman
New York: Haworth Press, 2001

Reviewed by Linda R. Ennis

Balancing Family and Work offers hope for working mothers who seek balance in their life at home and at work. It moves from the lived reality of Toni Schindler Zimmerman to the realities and reflections rooted in the research of the other contributors to this volume. Each chapter offers a unique vantage point from which to explore the issue of "balance." Bacigalupe, Haddock, et al. and Macdermid, et al. offer insights from clinical research, while Brockwood,

et al., Zimmerman, et al., and Edwards, et al. discuss the results of their studies on accommodation, marital equality, and the impact of relocation on the resilience of children. Parker, et al. addresses the limitations of research in this area—which focuses largely on white, dual career, heterosexual couples—and argue for the need to expand the narrow definition of family. The volume concludes with an overview by Viers, et al. of the research in the field and its implications for therapists, as well as suggestions for future research. I appreciated Bacigalupe's insightful call for families, practitioners, and researchers to reject either-or choices and to search for logic in balancing family and work.

All the contributors are sensitive to the limitations of their research. As Zimmerman points out, "couples were recruited for this study on the basis of their ability to successfully balance family and work." At the end of the volume, it is encouraging to find Viers's recommendation to integrate research into therapy, an affirming view of the bridging potential of theory and praxis.

Dehumanizing Discourse, Anti-Drug Law, and Policy in America: A "Crack Mother's" Nightmare

Assata Zerai and Rae Banks
Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2002

Reviewed by Jennifer Musial

Dehumanizing Discourse, Anti-Drug Law, and Policy in America is an excellent interdisciplinary study of the rhetoric constructing the "crack mother." Zerai and Banks combine discourse analysis with quantitative research to argue for a change in public policy, one that moves away from criminalizing maternal drug use and toward rehabilitation. Following the vein of Dorothy Roberts's *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*, this text examines the social construction of the poor, pregnant woman of colour. Zerai and Banks use intersectionality, as put forth by Patricia Hill Collins, to analyze how race, class, and gender affect legislation, punishment, and public opinion.

The book is arranged in two parts: part one is qualitative and part two is quantitative in nature. Part one highlights the "hostile environment" that addicted women face. The authors look at the history of "crack moms" in media coverage that demonizes poor, African American pregnant women. Next, medical studies of "crack babies" are deconstructed to point out that cocaine is not the sole factor in determining the sickliness of a child. The authors convincingly argue that "inadequate prenatal care is the strongest determinants of low birth weight while drug use is not significant" (92). Here,

the authors return to their framework: it is predominantly women of colour in lower socio-economic classes who experience obstacles to prenatal care.

In part two, Zerai and Banks use quantitative research to humanize pregnant addicts, affording them agency. Despite the "hostile environment," drug users are cast as "courageous" women who persevere in their attempts to access medical care and rehabilitation. Finally, the authors turn to grandparent advocacy. A common strategy for addicts entering treatment is to solicit the help of grandparents to care for children. Unfortunately, as the authors point out, the legal system does not value this arrangement, often making it difficult to apply for, and maintain, child custody.

Unfortunately, part two, which relies heavily on empiricism and not enough on actual women's voices, is not as strong as part one. Cocaine users' agency is described through data rather than interviews, although grandparenting is explained primarily through dialogue rather than statistics. This last piece, however, is brief and would benefit from further development.

The strongest aspect of this book is its focus on the inequality created by race, class, and gender oppression. One example of this is Zerai and Banks's explanation of why white women are seen as cocaine addicts who merit treatment while black women are perceived as crack addicts who deserve jail time. The authors examine legal rulings in cases where women have been charged with neglect and child abuse based on cocaine use during pregnancy. Deconstruction of the "dehumanizing discourse" present in the legal system and culture at large is the most intriguing section of the book.

Zerai and Banks are activists who charge, "The nightmare of 'crack mothers' can only end when the prevailing ideology that demonizes Black women is dismantled" (142). Their commitment to praxis is valuable academic and advocacy work. *Dehumanizing Discourse, Anti-Drug Law, and Policy in America* masterfully unites empiricism and rhetorical analysis; it will be a useful text in a variety of courses.

Birth: A Literary Companion

Kristin Kovacic and Lynne Barrett, eds.
Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2002

Reviewed by Miriam Jones

Anyone who has felt exasperated by the prescriptive tone of *What to Expect When You're Expecting* will delight in this collection of stories of being born, as the editors call it, as parents. From the thoughtful introduction to the final powerful poem, these pieces will resonate with readers starved for represen-

tations that reflect their own birthing and parenting experiences. Editors Kristin Kovacic and Lynne Barrett write that the texts were chosen for their focus on central questions, not particular practices: "We believe there is a language most parents speak, mostly to themselves" (xiv). They speculate that perhaps a new genre is developing—birth literature—analogous to (and possibly an antidote to?) war literature, and they refer to Margaret Atwood's "Giving Birth," in which the protagonist speculates that perhaps women don't remember giving birth because what they experience is beyond language: "events of the body" may be "indescribable" (79). This collection marks an important attempt to evoke, paradoxically, in language, some of that wordless experience.

The collection includes 64 poems, short stories and prose excerpts —62 of them previously published—divided into four sections, each of which takes their name from one of the texts: "First Stirrings," "Notes from the Delivery Room," "The Welcoming," and "Now That I Am Forever with Child," the title of the poem by Audre Lorde which closes the collection. Fifty authors are represented, of whom 20, interestingly, are men. Practically all are American, though there are one or two canonical writers, such as Margaret Atwood and A. S. Byatt, from elsewhere. Although the group may not be diverse in terms of nationality, it is inclusive of race and different sexualities. For example, the excerpt from Jesse Green's *The Velveteen Father* is a delicate description of two men meeting their adopted son for the first time: "he looked a bit like an angry monkey, but it didn't matter, I kissed him on his hot plum cheek, and so I kissed his father" (158).

The first section presents the excitement, the physical changes, the fear of losing oneself, and the realization that the road only leads one way that are characteristic of pregnancy. Many of these writers strip away the cliches and reflect the profound ambivalence many prospective parents feel. In "First Stirrings," Rosemary Bray writes wryly that "It's clear to me through the haze of sleeplessness that wanting a baby is one thing; wanting to *have* a baby is quite another" (10); "[T]his baby I had prayed for and longed for would not be joining my life, it seemed, but overtaking it altogether" (12). Others, like Jeanne Murray Walker in "Reading the *New York Times*," speak to the fears one feels bringing a child into a dangerous world. In Elyse Gasco's wonderful "You Have the Body," the protagonist, herself adopted, imagines future arguments with a teenager and worries about her ability to raise a boy.

In the second section, "Notes from the Delivery Room," many of the writers return to the theme of birth as rebirth: in "Transition," Toi Derricotte describes how the whole universe changes as she gives birth, so "why wasn't the room bursting with lilies?" (59). Lee Upton echoes this experience in "Women's Labors" when she writes, "We are out of history's singular lens" (68). There are sad stories here as well; all is not ecstatic. Hunt Hawkins's wrenching poem, "Holding Bernadette," is about a dying baby, and Eileen Pollack's tragic "Milk" is about a white mother who witnesses another woman—an African-American

woman—lose her baby due to the racism of the hospital in which they both give birth.

In their introduction, Kovacic and Lynne Barrett write that "All the work collected here is marked by its generous intention, which we share—to capture, for the benefit of those who follow, our own births as parents" (xv). And indeed, individually and collectively, these texts go a long way towards pinning down with words the transformative experiences of birthing and parenting, so that we can try to hang on to them, and remember.

Motherless Daughters: The Legacy of Loss

Hope Edelman
New York: Delta, 1994

Reviewed by Gill Rye

Like Lynn Davidman's more recent *Motherloss* (2000) (see my review in *ARM* 4.2 (Fall-Winter 2002): 239), Hope Edelman's 1994 book on the impact on girls and women of the early loss of their mother stems from personal experience. Davidman's book, like Edelman's, points to a cultural silence that surrounds the death of the mother. Edelman herself diagnoses the cause of this silence/silencing as a "cultural resistance to mother loss [which is] actually . . . a symptom of a much deeper psychological denial, which originates from the place in our psyches where *mother* represents comfort and security no matter what our age, and where the mother-child bond is so primal that we equate its severing with a child's emotional death.... Even as adults, few women with mothers want to think about mother loss; still fewer want to hear about it" (xxiii). Edelman's—and Davidman's—contributions to this painful topic go some way to challenge this personal and cultural denial and to further an understanding of the fundamental effects of mother loss.

Edelman's personal experience is supplemented by evidence drawn from a sample of women interviewed for the book in 1991 and from the case studies of a small number of selected psychotherapists. The problem of effective mourning is paramount. Edelman calls into question Freud's "detachment" view of mourning, arguing for a (life-long) process where grief "continues to get reworked" (24), as the loss can never be fully resolved. While idealization of the lost mother is a necessary stage in the mourning process ("we soothe ourselves by creating the mothers we wish we'd had" (15-16), the loss cannot be accommodated unless, Edelman argues, ambivalent feelings with regard to the mother are acknowledged. Chapter 2 covers the impact of the death of the mother during the different developmental stages of the daughter from childhood to young adulthood (and, although dealt with only briefly, into later life). Chapter 3 considers different kinds of mother loss and their effects on the

daughter, including the anticipated loss of long illnesses (which may involve "anticipatory grieving" and attendant guilt (71), sudden death, parental suicide which can be experienced, especially by children, as parental rejection, and abandonment (physical or emotional).

Edelman shows how the legacy of premature mother loss continues throughout life: the way the mother is mourned in childhood or early adulthood determines how future losses are dealt with and how "secure" a person the daughter becomes. Three chapters consider the impact on relationships: with the father, with siblings, and with intimate others. The final chapters explore the complexities of identification and differentiation in the mother-daughter relationship when the mother has died young. Despite this cataloguing of the difficult legacy of mother loss, Edelman's book ends with the assertion that some positive legacies of loss can be identified, including the insights gained, the memories that are retained, and the reparative activities of creativity and intellectual achievement.

Maternal Impressions: Pregnancy and Childbirth in Literature and Theory

Cristina Mazzoni
Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002

Reviewed by Nephie Christodoulides

In *Maternal Impressions*, Cristina Mazzoni explores the multiple meanings of maternity (pregnancy, childbirth, post-partum, breastfeeding). Maternal impressions on the fetus, impressions of the fetus on the mother, the transformed maternal body in gestation, and parturition constitute Mazzoni's main focus. Her bold reading of the continuities and discontinuities of maternity is informed by religion, literature, science, feminism, and psychoanalysis.

Mazzoni invokes the fairy tale of Rapunzel in her discussion of maternal cravings, for example, and she reads Luke's Visitation scene of Mary and Elizabeth for its significance to feminist theology and not as an example of quickening. Turn-of-the-century Italian scientists such as Paolo Mantegazza and Cesare Lombroso, known for their treatises on the nature of women, are juxtaposed with contemporary Italian feminists Adriana Cavarero and Luisa Muraro. In tracing the "insoluble dilemmas, contradictory solutions" (6) of maternity, she considers the work of Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, and Julia Kristeva, as well as nineteenth and early twentieth century Italian women novelists.

Maternal Impressions offers a wealth of information. Mazzoni transforms abstract, critical knowledge into a living text that is highly recommended to mothers, feminists, scholars, and scientists alike.

Defending Andy: One Mother's Fight to Save her Son from Cancer and the Insurance Industry

Marilyn Azevedo
Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications Inc., 2001

Reviewed by Barbara Schwartz

In *Defending Andy: One Mother's Fight to Save her Son from Cancer and the Insurance Industry,* the reader bears witness to an emotional and heartfelt story of courage, strength, and self-doubt. The reader engages in the struggles that a mother undertakes while attempting to find herself in order to assist in her son's arduous battle for his life. It is not a story about a child with cancer but about the effects of a child's battle with cancer on his mother.

Azevedo's first five chapters set the tone for the journey. Immediately, her sense of insecurity is revealed in her discussion of herself and her family. We learn about her father who was never pleased with her accomplishments; her life as a young wife and mother forced to live with her in-laws for several years; as a nurse with guilt-plagued experiences; her supportive, yet often left out, immediate and extended family; and her private fears. As a nurse who works with cancer patients, she is unable to draw upon prior knowledge to generate effective solutions or action plans. Perhaps it is that knowledge that affects Azevedo's ability to proceed in a self-assured manner. Her struggle to accept her son's condition is weakened by her poor self-esteem, yet she is able to arrange appointments with multiple doctors, drive to appointments, ask relevant questions, be supportive, and follow through with all the doctors prescribe.

Chapter 11 describes Andy's efforts to lobby in Washington, D.C. for better health insurance coverage, but only four pages provide specific information on how to work with insurance companies. Chapter 27 details how the family must fight the insurance company to pay for an experimental treatment. Azevedo shares the situation with the community which comes to Andy's aid through donations to pay for the treatment. Sadly, when Andy takes a turn for the worse, the protocol will not allow him to receive the treatment. Later, the insurance company cites Azevedo as being a key instrument in changing the processes for accessing insurance claims.

The book describes Andy's struggle to live as a teenager and his mother's struggle to live a productive life. In a direct voice, Azevedo shares Andy's journey through life and his acceptance of his death; she is not able to communicate her acceptance of Andy's situation, however. Although Azevedo admits that she "feels a sense of failure," Andy is immortalized through his mother's story of struggle and courage. Unfortunately, Azevedo does not reveal how to save someone from the insurance industry.

Defending Andy is a worthy study into the human psyche. All the reader can do is wish Azevedo well in her search for peace and self-acceptance, and continued success in her attempts to help others in similar situations.

Embalming Mom: Essays in Life

Janet Burroway
Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2002

Reviewed by Jane Satterfield

Embalming Mom: Essays in Life, a recent volume in the Iowa Series in Literary Nonfiction, tracks one woman's journey through the personal, aesthetic, and historical upheavals of the mid- to late twentieth century life. Beginning with the witty, insightful self-portrait in "I Didn't Know Sylvia Plath," (like others of her generation, the writer observed the youthful Plath's ascendence at a careful distance, ultimately following in her footsteps to a *Mademoiselle* internship, a Cambridge Fulbright, and beyond), Burroway's experience forms a vivid backdrop to her analysis of female passage through pre- to post-feminist eras.

As a teenager, Burroway reports, she possessed two conflicting "visions" of herself: artist and self-effacing mother. What she did not understand, however, "was that the choice might never be made, that my life could unroll, or lurch, or cascade, with the tension between them constant." While each of the sixteen essays included in this collection bears the stamp of this knowledge, each remains stylistically distinct. The title essay, for example, is an imaginary dialogue between the writer and her mother. "Changes," a collage essay, explores the effects of ageing on the female mind and body. Whether reflecting on the ambiguities of raising a "Soldier Son"; describing the beauty of the American landscape; negotiating ideology with daily life; meditating on her collection of photographs or tenancy of an English garden, Burroway avoids sensation and stereotype while celebrating the rewards and challenges of a life lived as writer, lover, wife, mother, and stepmother.

Essayist Philip Lopate once observed that the essay's "capacity for processing doubt is part of what makes it so stimulating and tonic." A narrator who resists wearing learning on her sleeve and is open to self-contradiction, Burroway's insights are seamlessly interwoven with "trash talk that can take the mickey out of its own best brag" ("Trash Talk"), as when her "own presumptions bang me on the forehead crude as a stepped on rake" – a literal reminder that "gaining perspective is a process never finished" ("Of the Beholder"). Burroway's essays are stimulating and tonic indeed, making *Embalming Mom* a valuable contribution to the essay tradition.

The Political Geographies of Pregnancy

Laura R. Woliver
Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002.

Reviewed by Jan E. Thomas

The Political Geographies of Pregnancy examines a broad range of reproductive issues and illustrates the ways in which women's reproductive power is being eroded. The book's five central chapters each address one of these issues: reproductive technologies; the human genome project; abortion; adoption and surrogacy; and legal controls over pregnant women's bodies. This broad spectrum of topics draws attention to the variety of subtle and not so subtle mechanisms through which pregnancy and reproduction have become disembodied from the pregnant woman and her lived experience. Throughout her analysis, Laura Woliver draws on feminist standpoint theory, feminist ethics of care, and human dependency theory. As a political scientist, Woliver is particularly interested in bringing women's voices into reproductive policy-making and practice.

To illustrate the pervasiveness of the "shifting terrains," several themes are woven throughout the book. First is the inverse relationship between medical technology and women's agency. While more technology should give women more choices, the reverse in fact has been more typical as new technologies become "standard" procedures (ultrasound, fetal monitoring, prenatal testing, for instance). A second important theme is how the focus on political and technological control of reproduction has shifted attention away from the personal, social, political, and economic context of pregnancy. Women's access to abortion or genetic counseling, economic pressures faced by some surrogate mothers, and the lack of drug treatment programs for pregnant addicts are all rendered invisible when reproduction is viewed as a medical event and the fetus is accorded political personhood, separate from the woman.

A cautionary theme is the potential abuses of these new "shifting terrains" of reproductive power (intentional and unintentional). For example, the chapter on the human genome project, suggests new genetic information might be used by insurance companies or employers to discriminate against people with specific genetic traits. As reproduction becomes the terrain of politicians, law enforcement officers arrest pregnant women for using drugs. Will they soon arrest pregnant women for smoking or having a glass of wine?

A final theme involves the corrective lens that Woliver feels we need to adopt—an ethic of justice and care. How would policy be different if we replaced values of autonomy and independence with values of nurturing and care? What if policies were made to reflect the accounts and context of the people they affect? The conclusion explores these issues with a lengthy

example of mothering special needs children. In this example, the author pulls together the various themes and tries to show the interconnections between the issues of technology, new genetic knowledge, and cultural understandings of motherhood.

In *The Political Geographies of Pregnancy*, Woliver moves beyond an analysis of the shifting locations of reproduction (the "geography") and examines the political dimensions of these changes. The book is a good overview of the variety of ways in which the state and medical professionals exert control over pregnant women. I found the introduction especially useful, but the threads that link the chapters were tenuous and difficult to follow. The conclusion begins with a postmodern view of reproduction, the body, and situated knowledge before returning to the need for society to adopt a feminist ethic of care and justice. As Woliver notes in her conclusion, "the new reproductive arrangements must imagine women's bodily integrity as essential to an integrated, coherent, individuated whole" (169). She is convincing in her argument that if the "terrain" of pregnancy and reproduction continues to shift towards medical and political control, our society will continue to move away from these goals. Women must regain control of their reproductive power.

Growing Up Again: Parenting Ourselves, Parenting Our Children. Second ed.

Jean Illsley Clarke and Connie Dawson
Minnesota: Hazeldon, 1998

Reviewed by Farah M. Shroff

This is a how-to book, written primarily for parents who come from "uneven parenting" (the authors prefer this term to "dysfunctional") backgrounds. Clarke and Dawson define parenting as "the daily demand of knowing what to do, when to do it and how to do it and then doing it" (9). They explain the range of parenting styles as abusive; conditional care; assertive care; supportive care; overindulgent; and neglectful. Many pages are devoted to defining these different parenting styles; assertive and supportive care are considered the ideal types of parenting.

Many examples illustrate the differences between parenting styles, such as the following:

> Situation: Teenage son is surrounded by pressure to use alcohol.
> The parent:
> *Abuse*: Regularly searches teen's personal belongings, listens in on

phone conversations. Slaps him around after hearing there was beer at a party he attended.

Conditional Care: Says, "I love you as long as you don't drink." Or, "You'll be the death of me if you drink."

Assertive Care: Does not offer liquor to teenagers. Offers car when appropriate so teen doesn't have to ride with peers who are drinking. Affirms love for and importance of the teen on ongoing basis.

Supportive Care: Does not drink or uses in moderation, never to intoxication. Acknowledges peer pressure to use. Asks how to be of help. Encourages teen to develop a variety of skills and awareness for coping with pressure. Celebrates successes.

Overindulgence: Offers to buy liquor for teen.

Neglect: Drinks to excess, is emotionally and/or physically absent, doesn't notice kid is drunk.

This example, which compresses the complex subject matter of alcohol and teenagers, is illustrative of the book's approach to the subject of parenting.

Clarke and Dawson warn against the effects of overindulgence, which may include inappropriate decisions; weak skills; difficulty knowing what is enough or normal; difficulty with boundaries; being stuck in double binds; and pain. Three chapters are devoted to the effects of overindulgence and one chapter is devoted to "alternatives to overindulging." Similarly, there are three chapters on denial and one chapter on problem-solving vis-à-vis denial. The prenatal period is covered in one chapter and another chapter considers developmental stages from birth to death, followed by ways to deliberately grow up again. The last chapter is devoted to the subject of adoption.

The first brief, 12 chapters concern nurture and structure, the heart of Clarke and Dawson's parenting philosophy. They discuss nurture as unconditional love; thriving and growing; and learning to love oneself and others, to say "I love you; you are lovable" (10). Because unconditional love is not enough, the authors note that limits, skills, and standards—structure—help children learn healthy habits; develop a sense of who they are and who others are; learn values and ethics; and stay safe. "Children need parents to convey the message, 'You can do this; I will teach you how; you are capable" (10). Nurture and structure work together like soft tissue/muscle and skin/bones: nurture makes the body move gracefully and structure provides an upright container. Parents learn nurturing and structuring skills from their own parents, from others, and by observing their children.

The authors are hopeful that parents who have learned negative behaviours can become loving parents. This book may help some parents achieve that goal, although the positive sections of the book are too brief. The authors suggest, for example, that it is possible to "redo" particular stages of our lives, to acquire new attitudes about who we are. A concrete illustration of this process of revision appears on page 245:

- Barbara regrets events on her fortieth birthday, so she is going to give herself a fortieth birthday party on an unbirthday date.
- Betty harbors bad feelings about the way she was fired from her job, so her support group is going to role-play a job termination that is respectful. Betty will indicate what she wants to have happen.

The book ought to have included more positive information about parenting. References to parenting styles from diverse regions, ethnocultural groups, and types of families also would have enriched this text. Although limited in scope, this collection may serve the needs of readers who are trying to understand the range of parenting styles that exist.

The Therapist's Notebook for Families

Bob Bertolino and Gary Schultheis
Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press, 2002

Reviewed by Justyna Szachowicz-Sempruch

In a crystal ball, record your vision of the future and what you have done to solve your problems. Put into a time capsule five ideas that will move you toward the future that you envision.

The "crystal ball" and "time machine" are two of the many exercises available in *The Therapist's Notebook for Families*, a carefully drafted collection of tasks for working with parents, children, and adolescents. In this book, Bob Bertolino and Gary Schultheis offer an interesting insight into family therapy: successful therapy has less to do with technique and more to do with personal factors and relationships between therapists and patients. According to the authors, therapy is meant to promote health and well-being. While reading this book, I thought of the many times I sought to solve problems but was unable to see beyond them. This book is effective in providing different strategies to help clinicians, parents, and children feel acknowledged, validated, and to effect the change they desire.

Raising children and adolescents can cause parents to doubt and blame themselves at times of difficulty. This book suggests that recovering from difficulties is an extremely important relationship skill. What matters is not that parents and children differ in significant ways but how they cope with their differences. The proposed solution-oriented exercises are designed to remind individuals of what they value and what they do well as parents or caregivers. The exercises are organized into sections intended to help family members and therapists in scaling their goals, clarifying preferred outcomes, and identifying best ways to generate solutions, augment change, and establish alliances: "What qualities do you look for in a therapist?"; "Are there other things that you

think we should be discussing instead?"; "Is there anything I should be doing differently?" The psychoanalytical treatment, as we learn from *The Therapist's Notebook*, is a client-informed enterprise, a suggestive collaboration designed to soften hostility. Sometimes therapy is a matter of listening to clients express their ideas and emphasize their strengths.

Bertolino and Schultheis also explore alternatives if solutions are not available: "if we offer an exercise and a parent does not believe in going home and trying it, then we would shift our approach." Family members may "have great ideas and we ought to attend to their voices whenever possible." In formulating such approaches, the authors suggest that words as pervasive as "always," "never," "nobody," or "all the time" imply that problems stay with us forever and give us little incentive to change negative behaviour. Focused qualifiers, such as "recently," "in the last while," and "in the past month," however, suggest that problems are temporary. Thus, rather than fixing our attention on problems, the book cleverly refocuses on positive changes in our families. We learn to write down the various things that help us recharge our batteries, to notice when children engage in behaviours that meet our approval, and to acknowledge others' points of view. Acknowledgement also means, as the authors suggest, that we pay attention to the words used by others to identify patterns that maintain problems. It is necessary to explore the patterns surrounding problems – a small change is often all that is needed to break unhelpful patterns. In fact, small changes are necessary, since these lead to further changes and solutions soon appear on the horizon. When they identify interim solutions, clients notice that they are making progress and further change occurs. This is an important therapeutic stage since often we become frustrated, anxious, or disinterested if we do not recognize progress.

The authors teach us to regard experiences as learning opportunities. If you knew that the world was to end tomorrow, what are three things you would do? What was the most meaningful thing you did in the past? What could you do in the nearest future that would move you toward becoming who you want to be? This is a change-promoting book: it helps identify the context of a problem and to sustain change once it has been achieved.

Psychological Trauma and the Developing Brain

Phyllis T. Stein and Joshua Kendall
Binghamton, NY: HMTP Press, 2004

Reviewed by Channa Verbian

In *Psychological Trauma and the Developing Brain*, Phyllis Stein and Joshua Kendall study the intimate connection between experience and genetics in understanding and treating the effects of trauma on children. The authors

ground their study in new psychological models of child development and the neurobiology of attachment. They show how early relational trauma and disturbed attachment can alter brain development, disturb emotion regulation and cognitive processing, and cause relational difficulties. Through a three-phase model of intervention that addresses safety/stabilization, symptom reduction/memory work, and developmental skills, the authors offer an alternative to drug therapy for children who suffer from the complex effects of trauma, abuse, and neglect.

Stein and Kendall emphasize that troubled children must develop emotional intelligence and problem-solving skills as tools for coping with and overcoming the effects of trauma. They also discuss the need for adequate public health policies and resources that challenge mental health professionals to look beyond children and their families to find innovative solutions to the legacy of psychological trauma and childhood abuse.

Psychological Trauma and the Developing Brain is a useful resource for professionals working in the field of children's mental health.

I Writing: The Politics and Practice of Teaching First-Person Writing

Karen Surman Paley
Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 2001

Reviewed by Kate Connolly

Certified to teach English, and having served as Director of Freshman English and Writing at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, Karen Surman Paley reports on an ethnographic study in the classrooms of two English composition professors. The author challenges the common perspective of "expressivist pedagogy as naïve, modernist, self-centered, apolitical and asocial" (139). Throughout Paley's book, the reader has the unique opportunity to "observe" two teachers assist students in their efforts to write personal narratives. Through transcripts of one-to-one student/teacher conferences, classroom discussions, and interviews with faculty and students, Paley demonstrates that personal narrative courses are much more complicated and politicized than they are typically understood to be.

Paley's main thesis is that students who are allowed to write about their lives make significant contributions to the culture of the academy. Through autobiographical narratives, persuasive discussions of social issues, and descriptive essays, private discourse can become public discourse. The key research question guiding Paley's ethnographic study is: how do faculty teach personal narrative without crossing the boundary into psychotherapy? In other words, how do writing teachers balance the "textual moment"—which *can* be assessed

—with the "psychological moment"—which *cannot* be assessed?

By observing the two teachers in their student/teacher conferences, readers gain an appreciation for the delicate balance that exists between encouraging narrative depth and expression while offering technical writing tips. In her classroom, "Helena" uses a social constructionist approach that is suited to the socio-political topics chosen for student narratives. As a result, she finds herself addressing differing political views on issues of homelessness and race. "Debby" adheres more closely to expressionism and enters the private psycho-social domain of her students. She must strike a balance between entering into a psychodrama and addressing technical issues such as grammar.

I Writing is a thoughtful study; it offers teachers who use narrative in the classroom useful ways to critiques students' work. One issue that Paley raises is how to grade or assess narrative essays. Due to the highly subjective nature of the work, which often touches on personal trauma, teachers are compelled to walk an ethical line between honouring student disclosure and applying the contract that exists between "teacher as grader" and "student as learner." More guidance from Paley on how to navigate this potential conflict would have been helpful.

Paley's writing style engages readers. For the most part, her discussion is passionate, informed, and theoretically grounded. She challenges teachers who bring personal narrative into their classrooms to employ high ethical standards, and to do so with the compassion necessary to encourage students to write of their lives with honesty and depth.

Assignation at Vanishing Point

Jane Satterfield
Denver, CO: Elixir Press, 2003

Reviewed by Monika Lee

The photo on the front cover of electrical lines extending vertically into space is an apt metaphor for a collection of poems whose direction is consistent and endless. These poems, with their clean density, their elliptical messages, and their exploration of time as linear space reflect an intellect steeped in art, literature, popular culture, and philosophy. The literary echo is pervasive, but not intrusive. The words of Charlotte Bronte, the Velvet Underground, Wittgenstein, Sartre, Baudelaire, de Quincey, and many others merge at the vanishing point of Satterfield's anticipative voice. The vanishing point is paradoxical, assigned and yet forever reaching into an unattainable future or lost ("Archaeology"or "Stanton Moor") in an irrecuperable past.

The poems in the first section of the volume lean backward in time. The voice is courageous, honest, and pondering. The purpose of the book declares

itself as "—not only to get somewhere but to know / where you have been—" ("Fugue"). The poems in the second section balance themselves precariously in a risky present—dangerous because it slips away from "the shattered histories you love so much" ("Ordnance Map") and because "this interval" exposes us frighteningly and beautifully "where everything and I am open" ("Erotica"). In the third section, the poetic voice, ever lucid and always contingent, speaks both sceptically and longingly of destiny and desires: "I came here / with my eyes open, not by some hazard of fate" ("Letter from Exile: *On This Transitory World*").

Satterfield is at her best when she allows emotion to crack through abstraction. "Double Exposure," one of the finest poems in the book, locates a Wittgensteinian thought about utterance and silence in the metaphor of the frustration of an unexplored kiss—the kiss of clouds passing silently in the sky and the desire that urges a language embedded in silence: "We madden with what we cannot speak." Similarly, the elegiac tone of "Late Letter, Tidmarsh Mill, 19" beseeches a lost lover (husband?) to "say you will remember it." In these poems, what is left unsaid, the elliptical moment ("yr power of altering me—"), usually marked with a dash, is painful and evocative. Such moments intensify and focus the abstruser musings of the poet/philosopher, as do the details of memory ("your eyes hazed jungle green / singed stars, lamps and blessings, your beautiful face").

The book ends with a superb homophonic translation of Baudelaire's "La Muse Venale," called "Mercenary Muse," a poem that merges body and anticipatory moment in a superbly erotic celebration.

Contributor Notes

Orit Avishai is a doctoral candidate in the Sociology Department at the University of California at Berkeley. Her dissertation, titled "Constructing Jewish Femininities: Purity and the Sexual Culture of Modern-Orthodox Jews in Israel," extends earlier work on women's bodies into different terrain, including Israeli religious and intellectual discourses and political and ethical divides.

Naomi Bromberg Bar-Yam is trained in social work, childbirth education and social policy. Her research and writing interests include prenatal testing, breastfeeding as a social movement and in the workplace, human milk banking and parenting. She writes the political issues column for the *International Journal of Childbirth Education.*

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.

Aimee E. Berger, Ph.D. is a graduate of the University of Dallas (B.A. in English, 1990), the University of South Carolina (M.F.A. in Creative Writing and Graduate Certificate of Women's Studies, 1994) and the University of

North Texas (Ph.D. in English, 2000), she currently teaches in the Women's Studies program there. She is a member of the NWSA Feminist Mothering Task Force, and advocates, in the classroom and beyond it, for greater recognition of mother's work.

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.

Chris Bobel is Assistant Professor of Women's Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston. She is the author of *The Paradox of Natural Mothering* (2002). Currently, she is at work on her second book, a study of health, environmental and anarchist activists who challenge the culture of concealment surrounding menstruation.

Karen S. Budd is Professor of Psychology at DePaul University in Chicago. She participated in the development of an innovative juvenile court clinic at the Circuit Court of Cook County in Chicago, which provides evaluations of children, parents, and families for use in forensic decisions. She is a board member of the APA Division of Child, Youth, and Family Services and Illinois Association for Infant Mental Health. In 2004, she was a Fulbright Fellow at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic. Her professional interests include assessment of minimal parenting competence, parenting interventions related to child maltreatment, and cultural issues in parenting.

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."*

Kelly C. Walter Carney is an Associate Professor of English at Vanguard University in Costa Mesa, California. She entered her institution's MA program in Organizational Leadership seeking to develop the management skills demanded of her role as chair of the Division of Modern Languages and Literatures. Her B.A. in English and German from Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma and Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Penn State prepared her for classroom work and literary scholarship, but not administration. To date, the bulk of her research and teaching has been in areas of American literature, including Native American and Chicano/a literature, environmental literature, and women writers. This essay grows out of her participation in the leadership program.

Nephie Christodoulides has a BA and MA from Emerson College in Boston, and a Ph.D. from Stirling University in Scotland. She is currently teaching at the University of Cyprus. Her research interests include motherhood, twentieth-century poetry. Her book, *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking: Motherhood in Sylvia Plath's Work* was published in September 2004 by Rodopi Press.

Kate Connolly, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Applied Human Sciences at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec. Through case study methodology, she explores the role of women in mobilizing residents to address neighbourhood needs and issues. Other research interests include neighbourhood trauma, community capacity, and community development.

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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 has recently completed 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.

Linda R. Ennis, Ph.D. is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist in private practice and a lecturer in the Faculty of Education at York University. She has published and presented her research at many conferences in Canada and the U.S. in the areas of combining motherhood with employment, as well as, paternal involvement and maternal employment. Dr. Ennis has been interviewed for television and magazines on parenting and women's issues.

Gary W. Harper, Ph.D., M.P.H., is currently a Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychology at DePaul University in Chicago where he is program director of the Clinical-Community track of the Clinical Psychology doctoral training program, and co-director of the Center For Community and Organization Development. The focus of his research is on HIV prevention

and treatment issues with various groups of adolescents and young adults who are marginalized in our society, including urban ethnic-minority female adolescents, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender youth, homeless youth, and youth living with HIV. Much of his work is focused on developing and evaluating culturally appropriate community-based HIV prevention/intervention programs, and involves partnerships with community-based organizations.

Alice Home is professor of social work at University of Ottawa, where she teaches group work and research at the graduate level. Her previous research deals with women studying at university, who also have family and job responsibilities. Dr. Home is the mother of two adolescents with ADHD.

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.

Miriam Jones is an Assistant Professor of English in the Department of Humanities and Languages at the University of New Brunswick, Saint John. She recently co-founded and continues to co-direct the new Gender Studies Programme at UNBSJ. She has published, and continues to work, on infanticidal women in 18th- and early 19th-century literature. She has a son, two and a half years old.

Debra Langan is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at York University and mother to Dylan (10) and Katie (8). Preparation for these positions included employment as taxi driver, waitress, and Probation Officer. Langan's recent work involves discourse analyses in the areas of violence against women, intimacy, and critical pedagogy.

Monika Lee has had poems published in numerous Canadian literary journals, including recent credits in *Event, Atlantis, The Fiddlehead, Antigonish Review, Canadian Literature, Ariel,* and *Qwerty*. Her poetry book, *slender threads* will be published in 2004 with HMS press (Electronic Books in Print). She lives in Lobo, Ontario, with her two daughters and husband.

JaneMaree Maher hold degrees in arts and law from the University of

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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 19th- and 20th- century American literature, African American literature, women's literature, Victorian fiction, women's studies, theory and criticism.

Jennifer Musial is a PhD student in Women's Studies at York University. Her research focuses on representations of the pregnant body in popular culture. It has been published in ARM's journal and *Not Just Any Dress: Explorations of Dress, Identity, and the Body*. She has also appeared on *Planet Parent* on TV Ontario.

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 is co-editor/editor of seven books on motherhood: *Redefining Motherhood: Changing Identities and Patterns* (Second Story Press, 1998), *Mothers and Daughters: Connection, Empowerment and Transformation* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), *Mothers and Sons: Feminism, Masculinity and the Struggle to Raise our Sons* (Routledge Press 2001) *From Motherhood to Mothering: The Legacy of Adrienne Rich's Of Woman Born* (SUNY, 2004), *Mother Outlaws: Theories and Practices of Empowered Mothering* (Women's Press, 2004), and *Mother Matters: Mothering as Discourse and Practice* (ARM Press, 2004) and author of *Toni Morrison and Motherhood: A Politics of the Heart* (SUNY, 2004). She is currently at work on three edited books: *Feminist Mothering, Motherhood: Power and Oppression* and *Women's Voices Across the Third Wave* and writing *Reconceiving Maternity*. 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 worldwide, and is founder 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. As well she had been interviewed widely on this topic including appearances on "More to Life," "Planet Parent," "Canadian Living Television," "Sex TV," "Next.New.Now," CBC radio and *Time Magazine*. Andrea and her common-law spouse of 21 years are the parents of a 19-year old son and two daughters, ages 14 and 17.

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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.

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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 six 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. With Paul Gagné, she has two children, Nicolas, born in 1993, and Anna, born in 1995.

Jane Satterfield's poetry collections are *Assignation at Vanishing Point* (Elixir, 2003) and *Shepherdess with an Automatic* (WWPH, 2000). Her poems, essays, and reviews have appeared in many magazines, including *Antioch Review, Massachusetts Review, Seneca Review*, and elsewhere. She teaches at Loyola College in Maryland where she chairs the Modern Masters Reading Series.

Lise Saugeres was a postdoctoral fellow in Women's Studies and Sociology in the School of Political and Social Inquiry at Monash University, Melbourne in 2003-4. She researches in the areas of gender relations and identities, parenting and the family, social care and welfare, and work-life balance.

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Farah M. Shroff, Ph.D., is an educator, researcher, activist, in public health and social issues. She is editor of and contributor to the book "The New Midwifery: Reflections on Renaissance and Regulations" (Women's Press, 1997) as well as other publications in holistic health, women's health and parenting. She lives in Vancouver with her children and partner.

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Priscila Uppal was born in Ottawa in 1974 and currently lives in Toronto. She has published four collections of poetry: *How to Draw Blood From a Stone* (1998), *Confessions of a Fertility Expert* (1999), *Pretending to Die* (2001), and *Live Coverage* (2003); all with Exile Editions. Her first novel, *The Divine Economy of Salvation* (2002), was published to international acclaim by Doubleday Canada, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill US, and translated into Dutch and Greece for publication by Anbos-Anthos in the Netherlands and Belgium and by Modern Times Publisher in Greece. She is an Assistant Professor of Humanities and Coordinator of the Creative Writing Program at York University.

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Andrea O'Reilly is Associate Professor in the School of Women's Studies at York University and Director of the Association for Research on Mothering. She is author and editor of several books on mothering including *Toni Morrison and Motherhood: A Politics of the Heart*, also published by SUNY Press; *Mothers and Sons: Feminism, Masculinity and the Struggle to Raise our Sons;* and *Mother Outlaws: Theories and Practices of Empowered Mothering.*

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One must be a member of ARM to submit an abstract.

——Call for Papers——

The Association for Research on Mothering (ARM)
invites submission of abstracts for our 2005 Mother's Day conference:

Young Mothers

May 6-7, 2005
York University, Toronto, Canada

This conference will explore, from a variety of perspectives and disciplines, the experiences and perspectives of young mothers, and representations of young mothering. 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, performances, storytelling, visual arts and other alternative formats.

Confirmed keynote speakers include:

•**Allison Crews**, editor of www.girlmom.com and founder of the National Coalition to Empower Teen Parents
•**Deborah Davis**, editor of *You Look Too Young to be a Mom: Teen Mothers Speak Out on Love, Learning, and Success*
•**Elaine Bell Kaplan**, author of *Not Our Kind of Girl: Unraveling the Myths of Black Teenage Motherhood*
•**Deirdre Kelly**, author of *Pregnant with Meaning: Teen Mothers and the Politics of Inclusive Schooling*
•**Bee Lavender**, co-editor of *Breeder: Real-Life Stories from the New Generation of Mothers*

If you are interested in being considered as a presenter, please send a 250-word abstract and a 50-word bio by **March 15, 2005** to:
Association for Research on Mothering
726 Atkinson, 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
or visit our website at www.yorku.ca/crm
One must be a member of ARM to submit an abstract.
Full and partial membership subsidies are available for
young mothers in financial need.

Call for Papers

The editorial board is seeking submissions for Vol. 7.2 of the *Journal of The Association for Research on Mothering* (ARM) to be published in Fall/Winter 2005.

The journal will explore the subject:

Grandmothers and Grandmothering

The journal will explore the topic of grandmothers and grandmothering from a variety of perspectives and disciplines. We welcome submissions from scholars, students, activists, artists, grandmothers 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 us at arm@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 , 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, 2005.

To submit work to the journal, one must be a member of ARM and memberships must be received by May 1, 2005.

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A Politics of the Heart

ANDREA O'REILLY

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Mothering is a central issue for feminist theory, and motherhood is also a persistent presence in the work of Toni Morrison. Examining Morrison's novels, essays, speeches, and interviews, Andrea O'Reilly illustrates how Morrison builds upon black women's experiences of and perspectives on motherhood to develop a view of black motherhood that is, in terms of both maternal identity and role, radically different from motherhood as practiced and prescribed in the dominant culture. Motherhood, in Morrison's view, is fundamentally and profoundly an act of resistance, essential and integral to black women's fight against racism (and sexism) and their ability to achieve well-being for themselves and their culture. The power of motherhood and the empowerment of mothering are what make possible the better world we seek for ourselves and for our children. This, argues O'Reilly, is Morrison's maternal theory—a politics of the heart.

"Motherhood is critically important as a recurring theme in Toni Morrison's oeuvre and within black feminist and feminist scholarship. An in-depth analysis of this central concern is necessary in order to explore the complex disjunction between Morrison's interviews, which praise black mothering, and the fiction, which presents mothers in various destructive and self-destructive modes. Kudos to Andrea O'Reilly for illuminating Morrison's 'maternal standpoint' and helping readers and critics understand this difficult terrain. *Toni Morrison and Motherhood* is also valuable as a resource that addresses and synthesizes a huge body of secondary literature."

— Nancy Gerber, author of *Portrait of the Mother-Artist: Class and Creativity in Contemporary American Fiction*

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New from the Association for Research on Mothering

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"An excellent collection that illustrates both the variety of exciting approaches contemporary feminist scholars are bringing to the study of motherhood, and the very complex relationship of ideology and women's experiences of motherhood."

—Patrice DiQuinzio, Director of Women's Studies, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania

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Association for Research on Mothering

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