

Young Mothers, Agency and Collective Action

Issues and Challenges

Dominant discourses about young mothers typically position them as either unworthy choice-makers or passive victims of other people's intentions and actions. Drawing from critical and poststructuralist feminist theories of agency, I discuss ways of conceptualizing young mothers' agency that challenge conventional (conservative and neo-liberal) framing of agency as individual choice unfettered by historical and material constraints. I then examine the implications for programs that serve young mothers, highlighting the possibilities and risks of strategies aimed at encouraging young mothers' creative self-definitions as well as their shared sense of "we-ness" and collective action. I conclude that young mothers need opportunities to practice deflecting the negative judgments of others and effective ways of communicating their views and concerns to authority figures, thus exercising personal agency in ways aimed at promoting self-development. They also need opportunities and support to reach out to like-minded others who share their goals and strategies for action (however small-scale) aimed at collective problem-solving with regard to poverty, economic marginalization, racism, cultural imperialism, sexism, and heterosexism.

I must stress I am not an exception to your stereotyping. I am one of the many hard-working welfare moms you have degraded. We are going through a genuine struggle to be able to solely support our families. Not only are we and our children going without things you may take for granted, we also have our already shattered egos smashed by welfare bashers like you.

—Anna, age 18, letter responding to “letters targeting welfare moms,” *Midland Daily News*

Anna wrote this letter about two years after I first met her; then, she was 16

and a new mother. Enabled to return to regular high school by government funding of an on-site daycare, Anna tackled her studies with renewed drive. She said she was “determined to make something of her life.” Her words bespeak a strong sense of personal efficacy to manage her life’s circumstances, achieved individually but also born of being a member of a group commonly misrepresented.

Dominant discourses (evident in the letters to the editor that Anna contested in her reply letter) construct young mothers either as unworthy choice-makers or as passive victims. In other words, young mothers are represented as either fully in charge of their lives or without any agency. This has very serious implications, not only for individual young mothers but also for the types of programs designed for young mothers and for coalition-building in support of services and funding.

I use the term *agency* rather than choice, because the word *choice* tends to be equated with entirely self-generated and intentional actions. The common understanding of the word choice tends to mask the circumstances under which people make decisions; particular material conditions, cultural practices, and social networks influence individuals and shape their decision-making. For example, the barriers to access to contraception and abortion services, mixed messages about sexuality, and the pervasiveness of poverty, child abuse, and unequal power relations based on age, race, class, gender, and sexual orientation all shape the lives of young mothers profoundly. The word “choice” does not draw attention to the fact that more powerful and privileged people (e.g., a high school administrator who also happens to be a single mother) command a broader range of choices than many young mothers do. By contrast, the word agency spotlights human actors and social forces simultaneously; it encourages us to situate individuals in their historical context. And, as Linda Briskin has argued, “agency recognizes that the power to change is vested in the collective will and collective action, and that the power that accrues to most individuals is severely restricted” (1990: 6).

In order to move beyond discourses that position young mothers as either “bad girls” or victims, we need a theory of agency adequate to the embodied experiences of young mothers. This theory must be one that challenges conventional framings of agency as individual choice unfettered by historical and material constraints; one that accounts for the creativity of young mothers’ self-interpretations, albeit within limits; one that encourages us to consider collective identity and action. What analytic approaches might allow us to connect self-development and individual agency to the collective agency and empowerment of young women?

Critical and poststructuralist feminist theorizing about agency

Critical feminists and poststructuralist feminists alike, in theorizing agency, have emphasized how individuals’ seemingly unique and autonomous decisions and actions are shaped by language, culture, and institutions (see, e.g.,

Davies, 1991; Butler, 1990, 1993; Fraser, 1997; Benhabib, 1999). Both critical and poststructuralist theorists have helped illuminate how and why human beings often think of ourselves as freely choosing, even as unconscious desires and socio-historical forces often shape and regulate our behavior. They differ, however, in terms of the strength of their notion of agency in relation to dominating structures. They differ, too, in terms of where exactly they locate the source of agency.

A number of critical feminists have taken inspiration from Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) work. Bourdieu's concept of subjectivity is not as determinist as certain poststructuralist accounts; he does not reduce the self to "effects" of discourses (McNay, 2003; see also Nelson, 1999, esp. p. 338 for a critique of Butler, 1990, 1993). Social practice theorists like Bourdieu (e.g., 1977; see also Connell, 1987; Holland *et al.*, 1998) argue that human beings act and make decisions within particular contexts created by our past actions and decisions and in social worlds already shaped by broader racial, gender, and class relations. One of Bourdieu's concepts for capturing this idea of agency-within-limits is *habitus*. "[W]hen habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it is like a 'fish in water'; it does not feel the weight of the water and it takes the world about itself for granted" (Bourdieu and Wacquant qtd. in Reay, 2004: 436). Yet Bourdieu also stresses that human knowledge is reflexive and that practice can be turned against what constrains it. More space opens up for agency-as-invention when individuals encounter unfamiliar circumstances or are confronted by events that prompt self-questioning (Reay, 2004).

By contrast, in the work of feminist poststructuralists like Judith Butler and Joan Scott, the source of agency and change lies in the fact that subjectivity is constituted within multiple discourses. According to Scott (1991), "change operates within and across discourses": "Subjects are constituted discursively, but there are conflicts among discursive systems, contradictions within any one of them, multiple meanings possible for the concepts they deploy" (793). Drawing inspiration from Butler's work, Edwina Barvosa-Carter (2001) argues that a subject's multiple identities are a key factor enabling agency. Certain identities may provide some critical distance and a competing perspective on other aspects of one's multiple identities.

Some disagreements among poststructuralist feminists and critical feminists persist over how to conceptualize agency's relation to human intention, autonomy, and reflexivity (e.g., Davies, 1997b; Jones, 1997; Benhabib, 1999; Nelson, 1999). With Nancy Fraser (1997), I believe researchers can steer a middle course, conceiving of subjectivity as endowed with certain "critical capacities" (e.g., reflexivity), where subjectivity and attendant critical capacities are both theorized as "culturally constructed" (214). More conceptual work needs to be done on what these critical capacities look like and how they might be enhanced. Bronwyn Davies' work provides a good starting point. Davies (1991) argues that:

Agency is never freedom from discursive constitution of self but the capacity to recognise that constitution and to resist, subvert and change the discourses themselves through which one is being constituted. It is the freedom to recognise multiple readings such that no discursive practice, or positioning within it by powerful others, can capture and control one's identity. (51)

To recap: young mothers face decisions bounded both by their external (cultural, political, and economic) circumstances as well as their internalized filters on the world that make "some possibilities inconceivable, others improbable and a limited range acceptable" (Reay, 2004: 435). Yet they also have some room to improvise "on materials provided by the gender [and other social] order[s]" (Connell, 2002: 23), and these improvisations may form the beginnings of an altered identity (Holland *et al.*, 1998; Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie, 2005, 2006).

Young mothers may evince much personal agency as they reject common *stigma stories* (Kelly, 1997). They may capitalize on the contradictions and tensions within dominant discourses about mothering to begin to forge positive identities for themselves. But ultimately, the successful telling of de-stigmatizing *counter stories* will depend on others taking up their way of speaking, too. "Effective political agency is interactional and collective" (Lovell, 2003: 14). Thus, if young mothers (and their allies) are to succeed in rewriting young motherhood, they must look to various oppositional discourses and social movements for pieces of new scripts, pieces that help them to name their experiences and link these to the ongoing quest for various forms of social justice.

Young mothers will need to join with others in various coalitions and take up their altered identities as political. Not only must they improvise counter stories, they must publicize them and persuade others to help circulate them. This is because individuals, acting alone, no matter how hard they might push the boundaries of what constitutes acceptable motherhood, cannot transform unequal power relations and dominant institutions with vested interests in stigma stories. The power necessary to bring about such social change is largely vested in collective will and collective action. For subordinated groups like young mothers, collective agency has usually been expressed in and through social movements. By contrast, "the collective agency of dominant groups of men is expressed in other ways than social movements. Patriarchal power normally operates through the routine functioning of the institutions in which the dominance of men is embedded—corporations, churches, mass media, legal systems and governments" (Connell, 2002: 145).

Implications for programs serving young mothers

Nurturing personal agency and enabling and encouraging collective agency are both important goals for programs serving young mothers. In this section, I discuss some strategies for reaching each goal, as well as the possibilities and

tensions of pursuing the two goals. Some strategies will be more feasible for stand-alone or sheltered programs than programs that support the integration of young mothers into, say, secondary schools.

Nurturing personal agency

Imagine every school day, hauling yourself, an infant or toddler, a stroller, and a bag full of school books and baby gear onto public transit, only to hear an adult lecturing you about being too young to have a baby. Even the strongest willed person under these circumstances might welcome teachers and other youth support workers who nurtured her sense of personal agency. This might take different forms. In my ethnography of City and Town Schools, I observed program-based adults encouraging young mothers to advocate for themselves by helping them practice deflecting stigma and by teaching them effective ways of communicating their views and concerns to those in positions of authority (Kelly, 2000: 112-115).

Another way to nurture personal agency among pregnant and mothering young women is through self-expressive art forms. I have written about popular theater as a potential site for young mothers to enact identity and challenge stereotypes (Kelly, 1997). Anthropologist Wendy Luttrell (2003) designed a variety of art-making activities to elicit the self-representations of pregnant girls in her study: a collaborative book of self-portraits, “Who Am I?” media collages that used pictures and words from the girls’ favourite teen magazines, and improvisational role plays of the girls’ “pregnancy stories.” The activities provided the girls with opportunities to talk back to the “bad girl” versus “good girl” stereotypes and to explore with curiosity—rather than denial or correction—their sexuality, pregnancy, and motherhood, their changing bodies and lives (177; see also Wener, 2004). Each of these arts-based inquiries took place in relatively small, intimate settings, where educators and researchers had the time to get to know the young mothers well.

A pitfall to avoid in these strategies aimed at the goal of nurturing personal agency is the introduction of expert discourses that position young mothers as, above all, psychologically maladjusted and victims of abuse. On the one hand, many young mothers have experienced soul-crushing poverty, racism, and sexual abuse; experiences of unequal power relations may have eroded their sense of personal efficacy and agency. On the other hand, adults working to support young mothers may feel overwhelmed by the structural inequalities facing them. They may conclude that there is a more immediate need to provide individual counseling. But to the extent that programs for young mothers “redefine” the mother’s “problems through the categories of expert knowledge” and “individualize the source of her problem and its solution” (Young, 1997: 84), they participate in stigmatizing dominant discourses.

Even when such programs invoke feminism, it is the strand of feminism that holds out the possibility of personal agency and independence but does not emphasize collective agency. Following Jillian Sandell (1996), I call this

approach “therapeutic feminism.” Therapeutic feminism rests on the “belief that society per se cannot be changed and it is futile for us to think that it can be. We have control over only our own individual acts of transformation” (Sandell, 1996: 23). But programs do not face such an either-or proposition. Individual and collective agency need to go hand-in-hand. In fact, no doubt many of the programs that exist to serve young mothers are the result of prior collective organizing and action.

Enabling collective agency

Enabling collective influence or collective agency may seem like a tall order. Pregnant girls and young mothers, however, are already perceived as a group for various political and pragmatic reasons and often find themselves physically grouped together in classrooms, government programs, or daycares. Although young mothers comprise a diverse group, they may feel a sense of “we-ness” born of “a common cause, threat, or fate” (Snow, 2001). Collective agency is the action dimension of this shared sense of “we-ness.” An example of collective agency (and possibly a strategy for fostering “we-ness”) is when service providers and young mothers join in small or large arenas to push for changes that they see as being in their best interest.

Another, related strategy is to give young mothers access to alternative discourses and oppositional social movements. Alternative ways of framing social problems, promoted by social movements, can provide powerful resources for individuals to counter or to reject dominant discourses that shame and blame them as individuals, thereby enhancing their sense of self and their capacity to act in the world.

Young people do not, however, have equal access to these alternative or counter-discourses. For example, in a recent, interview-based study with girls aged 12 to 16, my co-investigators and I found that the working-class and immigrant girls were much less likely to have heard of feminism or to have an accurate sense of its meaning (Currie, Kelly and Pomerantz, forthcoming). To remedy this, programs can invite guest speakers representing various groups, organizations, and movements who might help young mothers locate and think about their lives in the context of wider social issues.

Which specific discourses of social justice, in particular, might assist young mothers in their search for personal and collective agency? This depends on the particular context, of course. In Town and City Schools, the young mothers had varying degrees of access to feminist, anti-racist, anti-poverty, Aboriginal self-determination, and youth rights discourses. For example, at City School, a “welfare rights” discourse proved to be especially powerful, particularly for Teen-Age Parents Program (TAPP) participants receiving social assistance. An anti-poverty activist, invited as a guest speaker, gave practical advice on how to successfully navigate the welfare bureaucracy. She urged the young women to think of themselves as citizens, with a right to welfare; they were doing valuable work as mothers and, by working hard in school, they had the

potential to become even better mothers, wage earners, or both. She noted the anti-poverty movement's belief that high levels of unemployment and low wages are not inevitable and encouraged TAPP participants on welfare to resist viewing themselves as justly stigmatized recipients of public charity. TAPP participants described this presentation as "excellent" and the speaker as an inspiring "social activist." Karry-Ann (age 18), for example, commented, "I feel more powerful now." Months later the participants were still discussing the importance of "standing up for your rights" (Kelly, 2003: 133).

An anti-poverty discourse also received some air time in the Young Parents Program at Town School, where Anna attended. In her letter to the editor (cited in the opening to this article), Anna tried to counter the dominant framing of young mothers as "welfare moms" leeching off taxpaying citizens. Anna contrasted "middle-class families" with two incomes to "single parents" who are "the sole support of their families" and whose "children lack any extras." She did not try to distance herself from other single parents as being somehow more responsible or exceptional; she spoke in a collective voice: "I am one of the many hard-working welfare moms you have degraded. We are going through a genuine struggle to be able to solely support our families." Her tone was unapologetic; she was proud of her hard work as a mother, as a student "on the honour roll for the first time," and as a future breadwinner. And she constructed an innovative twist on the dominant discourse by repositioning social assistance as a short-term bursary for low-income single mothers. Implicit in her letter is the notion that mothering work constitutes a vital social contribution.

Building capacity for such social critique and collective agency is far from easy, as I discovered the hard way during my ethnographic study at City School. The ethos of individualism is deeply rooted in our society, and many people consider collective action aimed at remedying perceived injustice as fostering what the head-teacher in TAPP (herself a single mother) called "unproductive anger" and a "we-they situation." She preferred to promote personal empowerment, by which she meant self-assertion, a psychological "inner strength," and individual upward mobility in a system she believed to be largely based on merit. So, when a group of young mothers decided, with encouragement from me, to write a collective letter to the Transit Authority with Willow's idea of rewriting the courtesy seating signs on buses to include parents travelling with small children and pregnant women, this teacher did not approve. As she explained to me: "If the students are motivated, they will do this on their own. In Communications [class], we do letters of complaint. I tell them to be polite, to carefully spell out their complaint." She felt I was hindering the young mothers' ability "to learn coping skills" by providing advice on writing together under the banner they elected to use to represent themselves, "concerned parents" (Kelly, 2000: 193).

Besides the difficulty of challenging the ideology of individualism, there is the additional challenge of acknowledging the differences and divisions that

hinder coalition-building. To engage in collective action, people must first share some common goals and be able to communicate across their differences. Bonnie, one of the rare middle-class young mothers at City School, reported having an easier time integrating into regular classes than most other young mothers, who attributed the difference to Bonnie being able to afford the latest clothing styles. While Bonnie acknowledged her class privilege to some extent, she seemed unaware of how her class background provided her with verbal and other resources that gave her confidence in interacting with non-parenting students and teachers. Based on the relatively easy time she had had, she began to dismiss the other young mothers' feelings of awkwardness and class-based dislocation in the wider school. Bonnie told me in a formal interview:

I could understand that some of them can't afford nice clothes because they live on their own, and my mother always feeds me money for clothes.... But I mean, there are people who go out there ... and enjoy everybody, and they shop at the Salvation Army or whatever. So I dismiss that. I thought, "It's not the clothes. It really is the person that you are here [in City School] that they judge you on."

The failure to fully recognize and acknowledge such differences within the group ended up reproducing exclusions and silences. Similarly, Aboriginal young mothers sometimes felt that White service providers and teachers as well as young mothers did not acknowledge the legacy of colonialism and racial oppression.

Yet despite all the personal pain and silencing that can result from various inequitable power relations, I have seen groups of young mothers come together and highlight their collective identity as young women raising children, and they have arrived at provisional understandings of shared concerns and commitments that can form the basis of collective action. This is crucial, because the social safety net, such as it is, has begun to unravel. Over the last number of years, for example, British Columbia has seen provincial government funding cuts to school- and community-level support for pregnant young women and school-aged parents; those receiving social assistance have had their shelter allowance cut (Ince, 2004). It will take collective resolve and action to repair these holes in the social safety net.

Conclusion and suggestions for future research

Young mothers need opportunities to practice deflecting the negative judgments of other people and effective ways of communicating their views and concerns to authority figures, thus exercising personal agency in ways aimed at promoting self-development. They also need opportunities and support for reaching out to like-minded others who share their goals and strategies for action (however small-scale) aimed at collective problem-solving with regard to poverty, economic marginalization, racism, cultural imperialism, sexism,

heterosexism, and the like. Obviously, in many facets of life, most people do not have direct control over the material and social conditions and institutional practices that influence their daily lives. Sometimes they must put their faith in others to act on their behalf. And sometimes they must, in order to challenge systemic inequalities, act together with others on the basis of shared beliefs in an effort to further common interests.

Future research could seek out and explore examples of critical literacy and cases where young mothers have exercised collective agency as well as the links between critical reflexivity and collective action. As argued in the theoretical section on agency, analyzing selfhood or subjectivity as socially constructed does not mean that people do not have personal agency and the capacity for critical reflexivity. More theoretical and empirical research is needed to delineate these critical capacities and how they might be enhanced. In a feminist poststructuralist vein, Bronwyn Davies's work has been pioneering. For her, agency is signalled by a speaking subject who can move within and between discourses; can see how various discourses subject her; and can use the terms of one discourse to counteract, modify, refuse, or go beyond the other, both in terms of her own experienced subjectivity and in the way in which she chooses to speak in relation to the subjectivities of others (Davies, 1991). "Critical social literacy," therefore, "involves the development of a playful ability to move between and amongst discourses, to move in and out of them, to mix them, to break their spell when necessary" (Davies, 1997a: 29).

Various social justice discourses can be seen to invite such critical reflexivity; feminism does so, for example, by drawing attention to how particular performances of femininity work to subordinate women's interests to those of men. An empirical question arises: Which specific discourses of social justice (or feminism, anti-racism, anti-poverty, youth rights, etc.), in particular, assist and inspire young mothers in their search for control and positive social change, and in which specific contexts?

Future research might also productively identify and analyze collective projects that have been undertaken by young women for young women (most examples I have observed or read about are youth-adult collaborations). An exciting example is *Sistas on the Rise*, a Bronx activist group of young women of color, ages 13 to 21, created by and for young mothers (for another example, see O'Neill, 1998). *Sistas on the Rise* teamed up with a nonprofit community service organization to survey and interview young mothers who had been or were currently enrolled in one of New York City's pregnancy and parenting schools (*Sistas on the Rise*, 2005). They have publicized their findings (O'Conner, 2006) and seek to reform the system of education for young mothers. *Sistas on the Rise's* website lists their values. It is a fascinating and inspiring list that calls out for inquiry into the links between the group's critical literacy practices, its belief in the power of youth, its articulation of social justice, and its mission to "organize together around issues that are relevant to [young mothers and women of color]."

References

- Barvosa-Carter, Edwina. 2001. "Strange Tempest: Agency, Poststructuralism, and the Shape of Feminist Politics to Come." *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies* 6 (1/2): 123-137.
- Benhabib, Seyla. 1999. "Sexual Difference and Collective Identities: The New Global Constellation." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 24 (2): 335-361.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Briskin, Linda. 1990. *Feminist Pedagogy: Teaching and Learning Liberation*. Ottawa: Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women.
- Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Butler, Judith. 1993. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*. New York: Routledge.
- Connell, R. W. 1987. *Gender and Power*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Connell, R. W. 2002. *Gender*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Currie, Dawn H., Deirdre M. Kelly and Shauna Pomerantz. forthcoming. *Girl Power: Beyond the Slogan to Lived Feminisms*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Davies, Bronwyn. 1991. "The Concept of Agency: A Feminist Poststructuralist Analysis." *Social Analysis* 30: 42-53.
- Davies, Bronwyn. 1997a. "Constructing and Deconstructing Masculinities Through Critical Literacy." *Gender and Education* 9 (1): 9-30.
- Davies, Bronwyn. 1997b. "The Subject of Post-Structuralism: A Reply to Alison Jones." *Gender and Education* 9 (3): 271-283.
- Fraser, Nancy. 1997. "False Antitheses: A Response to Seyla Benhabib and Judith Butler." *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition*. New York: Routledge. 207-223.
- Holland, Dorothy C., William, Jr. Lachicotte, Debra Skinner, and Carole Cain. 1998. *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Ince, Judith. 2004, December 21. "Teen mom support fraying says report." *The Tyee*. Retrieved December 23, 2004 from: <http://www.thetyee.ca/News/2004/12/21/TeenMom>.
- Jones, Alison. 1997. "Teaching Post-Structuralist Feminist Theory in Education: Student Resistances." *Gender and Education* 9 (3): 261-269.
- Kelly, Deirdre M. 1997. "Warning Labels: Stigma and the Popularizing of Teen Mothers' Stories." *Curriculum Inquiry* 27 (2): 165-186.
- Kelly, Deirdre M. 2000. *Pregnant with Meaning: Teen Mothers and the Politics of Inclusive Schooling*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Kelly, Deirdre M. 2003. "Practicing Democracy in the Margins of School: The Teen-Age Parents Program as Feminist Counterpublic." *American*

- Educational Research Journal* 40 (1): 123-146.
- Kelly, Deirdre M., Shauna Pomerantz, and Dawn Currie. 2006. "No boundaries?' Girls' Interactive, Online Learning about Femininities." *Youth and Society* 38 (1): 3-28.
- Kelly, Deirdre M., Shauna Pomerantz, and Dawn H. Currie. 2005. "Skater Girlhood and Emphasized Femininity: 'You Can't Land an Ollie Properly in Heels.'" *Gender and Education* 17 (3): 129-148.
- Lovell, Terry. 2003. "Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self." *Theory, Culture and Society* 20 (1): 1-17.
- Luttrell, Wendy. 2003. *Pregnant Bodies, Fertile Minds: Gender, Race, and the Schooling of Pregnant Teens*. New York: Routledge.
- McNay, Lois. 2003. "Agency, Anticipation and Indeterminacy in Feminist Theory." *Feminist Theory* 4 (2): 139-148.
- Nelson, Lise. 1999. "Bodies and Spaces Do Matter: The Limits of Performativity." *Gender, Place and Culture* 6 (4): 331-353.
- O'Conner, Julie. 2006, January 30. "Profile of a Fiasco: New York's Pregnancy Schools." *The Columbia Journalist*. Retrieved February 9, 2007 from: <http://www.columbiajournalist.org/section.asp?subj=city&issue=79>
- O'Neill, Kelly. 1998. "No Adults are Pulling the Strings and We Like it That Way." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 23 (3): 611-618.
- Reay, Diane. 2004. "It's All Becoming Habitus': Beyond the Habitual Use of Habitus in Educational Research." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 25 (4): 431-444.
- Sandell, Jillian. 1996. "Adjusting to Oppression: The Rise of Therapeutic Feminism in the United States." *"Bad Girls"/"Good Girls": Women, Sex, and Power in the Nineties* Eds. Nan Bauer Maglin and Donna Perry. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. 21-35.
- Scott, Joan W. 1991. "The Evidence of Experience." *Critical Inquiry* 17: 773-797.
- Sistas on the Rise. 2005. *Pregnant and Parenting School Survey Results*. Bronx, New York. Retrieved February 9, 2007 from: <http://www.sistasontherise.org>
- Snow, David A. 2001. "Collective Identity and Expressive Forms" [Electronic version]. *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Eds. Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes. Amsterdam: Elsevier. 2212-2219.
- Wener, Abby R. 2004. "Don't Tell Me Who I Am: Narratives of Young Women Who Are Mothers." Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of British Columbia, Vancouver.
- Young, Iris Marion. 1997. "Punishment, Treatment, Empowerment: Three Approaches to Policy for Pregnant Addicts." *Intersecting Voices: Dilemmas of Gender, Political Philosophy, and Policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 75-94.