

and “wade” becomes “chiefly, to go through a tedious task, a long or uninteresting book.”

Mostly, though, *Arcana* evokes the gut-wrenching paradox that women love their bodies and their babies with every fibre of their being; that this unwavering love for the growing fetus forces them to make hard decisions because when the circumstances are not right for mothering, mothers turn to murder. No woman wants to be a Medea.

True Confessions

Renee Norman

Toronto: Inanna Publications, 2005.

Reviewed by Dorsía Smith Silva

Renee Norman's poems in *True Confessions* cover a range of experience, from her complex relationship with her mother to the daily struggles of womanhood. Her poems are bound together by the various experiences of women as daughters, mothers, grandmothers, and poets. The end result is a fresh, appealing collection that balances love, nostalgia, humour, fear, and anger.

Norman opens the first section, “This is How It Begins,” with “Chop.” The poem describes a parenting role-reversal, in which the speaker affectionately helps her mother undress like she does her “youngest child / when her head is stuck.” The tone quickly changes in “Repairing Damage” when the daughter starts to “break / and fight back” with her mother for lecturing her “children / who should have known better.” Mother-daughter tension also resonates in “Mother's Madness,” as the daughter once again disapproves of her mother's commands to her children: “is this what you want them to remember? / stop running up and down the stairs / stop teasing your sister.” Norman returns to the intimate bond between mothers and daughters in “For Sara at Twelve.” The mother here tenderly recognizes her connection to her daughter: “the same knots tangle / your hair and mine / we both squint through / glasses spotted with breath.” These moving poems best illustrate the profound emotions shared by mothers and daughters.

In the second and third sections, “If I Call Myself” and “When Geese Fly,” Norman reflects upon the strength of women and the domestic responsibilities of mothers. With “On the Tongue,” she describes how women come together to share pain: “when Nicaraguan poet Daisy Zamora recites / a poem about her mother / when mature students read personal narratives aloud / one mother's lost child is each particular sadness.” In the poem “In the Bathroom Thou Shalt Eat Stones,” Zamora reappears as a symbol of brave women who fearlessly “eat

stones” while others prefer the easy life of eating “bonbons.” Also of note are the poems “Woman Flees,” “The Queen of Between,” and the choreo-styled “Sex Secretaries in Search of a Poet,” which examine the constant struggle of mothers working outside and inside the home to find time for themselves.

In the final section, “Giving Thanks,” Norman returns to her role as a daughter—to both mother and father—and granddaughter. Although these poems evoke the speaker’s warmth for her family, they border on trite sentimentality. Lines such as “for weeks I have been talking to my father / through my mother / inserting care and concern in the phone lines / passing by the heart” (“My Father, Driving”) lack the emotional poignancy found in some of the poems in the earlier sections. Nonetheless, Norman’s collection is a pleasure to read and paints a wide landscape of the lives of women.

The Development of Judgment and Decision Making in Children and Adolescents

Janis E. Jacobs and Paul A. Klaczynski, eds.
Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005.

Reviewed by Tatjana Chorney

In a society where we often hear about large numbers of youth suffering from moral and ethical apathy, lacking a clear sense of orientation with regard to their own individual future and the future of the world at large, making poor choices when it comes to drugs and sex, and where parenting and parental involvement are areas of increasing interest to scholars and the general public, a book dealing with the decision-making practices and patterns among children and adolescents is welcome news.

This collection of ten essays seeks to elucidate the social, contextual, and cognitive aspects of judgment and decision-making. The rationale for the book comes from a perceived dearth of developmental research concerning the cognitive, emotional, and contextual processes underlying the development of judgment. While most traditional theories of cognitive development regard it as a “unidirectional progression from either intuitive thinking to logical, scientific reasoning ... or from states of limited understanding and complexity to more advanced understanding and computational complexity,” the essays hope to serve as a starting point for those interested in new models of thinking about the development of judgment that include a “broader array of explanatory variables and contexts” (xii). Thus, part one presents three developmental models offering different explanations of “what develops” and the relative importance of various cognitive and contextual components important