

connected and estranged all ethnicities. Marginalized cultures have additional childcare concerns: children must not only be healthy and safe but taught to survive in a racially divided world.

The care of children and the working mother continues to be a hot political topic and the right of women to work is still part of a large, conflicted political agenda. Working mothers continue to be viewed as pathologically neglectful both of their children and of their duty to society. Ladd-Taylor has documented the history of the relationship between working mothers and government. *Mother-Work* cautions that domestic and family issues have a serious and complex political history. They demand renewed and serious attention; they require solutions of tomorrow, not those of yesterday.

Trans Forming Families: Real Stories About Transgendered Loved Ones

Mary Boenke, ed.
Imperial Beach, California: Walter Troom Publishing, 1999

Reviewed by Fiona Joy Green

Trans Forming Families was inspired by editor Mary Boenke's personal journey of coming to terms with and supporting her middle child's transition from female to male. This is a collection of narratives written by people living in England, Iran, the Netherlands, and North America about living with trans family members. For those new to this topic, a glossary of transgender terms, a list of American National Transgender Organizations (including web sites and email addresses), and a brief reading list of transgender works published between 1990 and 1997 are included at the back of the book.

Readers will be moved by the clearly written, honest stories in this modest 146-page book. I was touched by Boenke's opening dedication to her son and to transgendered persons and their families. I developed an appreciation for the close kinship within trans communities as I read the forward and introduction written by trans activists. Examples of the intense struggles and perseverance of family and friends are woven throughout the four sections of the book: raising gender-variant children; learning from our children of all ages; inventive love relationships; and crucial others.

Each story is prefaced with a brief, contextualizing biography of the author. I felt part of a sharing circle in which people speak openly about the trials of living with, loving, and supporting people who are unhappy in their bodies. While I do not have a story of my own, I live—as we all do—among transgendered people and, as my family grows and changes, I could find myself

sharing the experiences described in this book. I felt the pain of parents who write of helping their children through puberty in bodies they hate; I relearned the importance of listening to children; and I gained renewed respect for the courage and strength it takes for children to speak of what they know and need. As I read of the love people have for their trans partners, I reflected upon the meaning of my own gender, sex, and body and those of my partner's. I thought about my relationship with my spouse and wondered how I might respond to my partner, to other family members, or to their partners should they become transgendered.

While the accounts in this volume reveal the feelings of pain, anguish, and anxiety felt by people living in bodies that do not match their internal gender identity (gender dysphoria), they also reveal the feelings of individual family members. Many speak of feelings of shock, denial, isolation, anger, depression, and finally acceptance that are associated with the grieving process of losing a loved one. Linda Milligan adds a visual dimension to these feelings with four black and white paintings entitled "Healing Through Art."

This volume, however, is much more than a chronicle of the pain, hope, and joy of loving trans people. It is a much needed resource for families dealing with the difficulties associated with gender and sex transition. Support groups and counseling for all family members can help people adjust over time to their new realities. Being open and honest about transforming identities can assist others (including school authorities, peers, colleagues, and family members) to accept trans people.

Throughout my reading of *Trans Forming Families*, I was reminded of the need for social activists to build coalitions. I see how feminist and trans activists could work together around common issues (such as sex, gender, ability, size, reproduction, race, and sexuality) to strengthen their respective political bases and strategies. Collectively and/or individually, these communities could work against discrimination and the oppression of people according to biology and work towards achieving autonomy for all individuals.

**Wake Up Little Susie:
Single Pregnancy and Race before
Roe v. Wade, Second ed.**

Rickie Sollinger
New York: Routledge, 2000.

Reviewed by Bernice L. Hausman

Originally published in 1992, this second edition of *Wake Up Little Susie* has a