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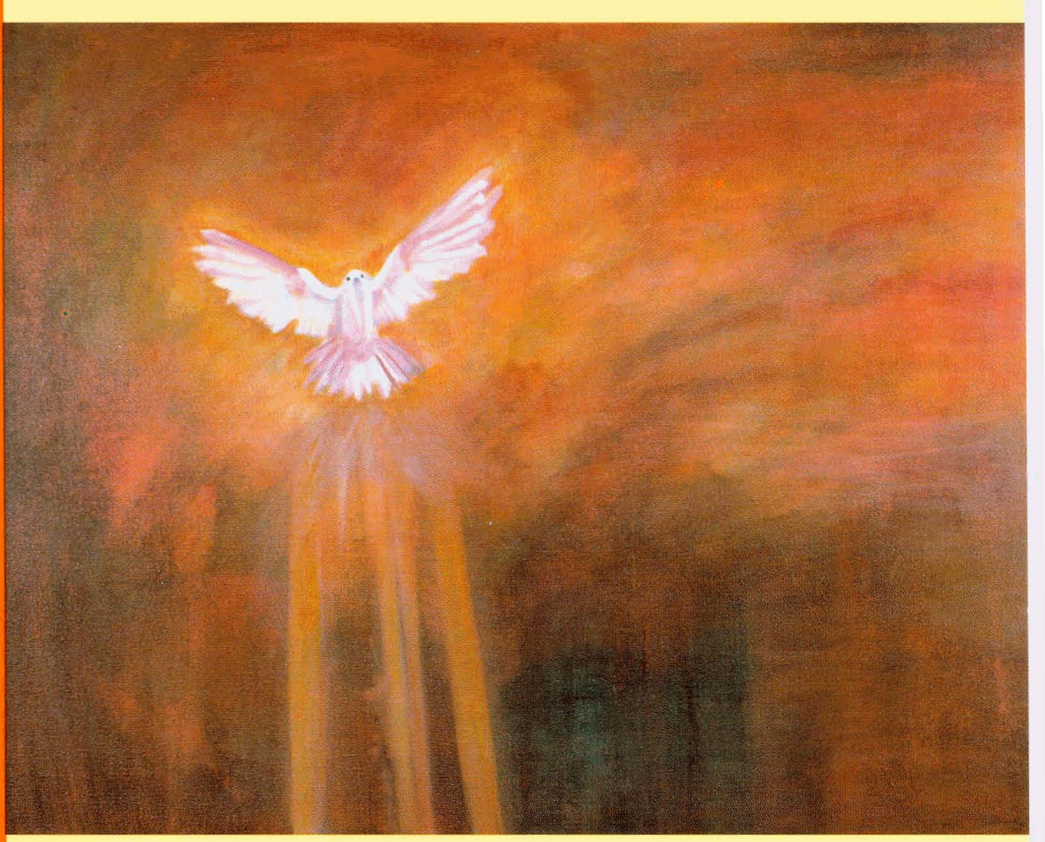

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Front Cover

"Prayer," by Gailene Powell, oil on canvas, 78 cm. x 61 cm.

This painting forms part of a series titled "Songs Before the Dawn." The series explores the bird as symbol for hope, peace and transcendence. The body of work is an ongoing collaboration between painter Gailene Powell and poet Rishma Dunlop.

Sara Ruddick

Making Connections Between Parenting and Peace

Prescript

Peace the great meaning has not been defined.
When we say peace as a word, war
As a flare of fire leaps across our eyes.
We went to this school. Think war;
Cancel War we were taught.
No peace is not left, it is no canceling;
The fierce and human peace is our deep power
Born to us of wish and responsibility
—*Peace The Great Meaning* by Muriel Rukeyser

September 21

I finished these remarks 12 days ago, shortly before "War as a flare of fire [leapt] across our eyes." The U.S. government now seems to agree on the need, and on the effectiveness, of military retaliation. A majority of citizens share their confidence that military force will make them safer, that "fighting back" with bombs and guns is necessary and desirable. There are also people (and I am one) who are sickened and horrified by the suffering that righteous attackers inflicted but who are also horrified and sickened by the suffering U.S military policies may inflict.

Across the globe people suffer from the violence of people who are certain of the justice of their cause, and from predators with power who may be moved by nothing more than self-interest or greed. Could we name these violations; speak of fear, loss and terrible grief; of poverty, insult, injustice and rage; but not so easily of Us and Them, of God on our side? Could we begin to imagine small steps toward a "fierce and human peace" that start with particular histories, take as given the strength of

particular attachments, then try to move into relations that are minimally fair and conditions that are minimally safe?

This is a journal issue devoted to mothering and fathering. From late August through mid-September I was visited by mothers and fathers—my children, their spouses, and friends; their children whose ages ranged from four months to ten years. I was able to observe the work and relations I have described here and elsewhere: welcoming respect for vulnerable bodies and spirits, loving attention, patient efforts to protect, nourish, train, and comfort. I saw or heard about anger, perplexity, the fear provoked by illness or accidental injury, discouragement, frustration, and fatigue. I also saw humour, light-hearted delight, and easy pride that I often fail to write about.

I heard nothing from these parents that would enable me to predict their opinions about military policies, and those I know best do not now speak in a single voice. I did see what a poet might call a "wish"—what I call in these remarks a deep cherishing of individual lives and a desire to preserve them. I saw responsibility that never lifted and would never be relinquished. If "peace is [a] deep power born to us of wish and responsibility," then these passions and disciplines of parenting are a resource for imagining peace.

*****

Can the work of mothering and fathering, and the thinking that this work fosters, inform and strengthen a culture of peace? I hope so. This is not because I believe that parents are inherently opposed to war and other organized violence. Skilled and devoted parents may be militarist, pacifist, or indifferent to politics; advocates of gun rights or disarmament; for or against capital punishment. They may have little interest in politics. Or they may be actively engaged in anti-violence politics without relating them to their parental work or identity. Nonetheless, or so I hope, people who make the work of caring for children an ongoing and serious part of their working lives, may acquire ways of thinking and acting that help to "create and sustain a culture of peace."

I know that there are other parents who share this hope. I have heard women and men talk about how caring for children changed not only their lives but their thinking, how they had come to different understandings of the world and their desires and responsibilities for it since becoming parents. Some sought and had found a more public forum for expressing their developing passions and insights.

I was comforted by these remarks. I too believed that the work and passions of mothering had got into my head, that my mind was changed. But during the first 12 or so years of parenting I did not consider the possibility that my relations with my children counted as "work," let alone that this work had intellectual interest. Then, when my two children were already in school full time, I became passionately absorbed in feminist analysis and politics.

The effects of feminism on my relation to mothering were twofold. It no longer seemed "natural" or inevitable for women to take up mothering; no longer seemed "natural" or fair that women who did become mothers paid a

disproportionate price in non-parental pleasure and power. The sense that becoming a mother was not inevitable but might have been chosen, that mothers, like all women, had "rights" and should be treated fairly, enabled me to take mothering seriously. At the same time many feminists were appreciating women's lives and work. The idea that there might be something of intellectual interest in mothering was strangely foreign and exciting. I began to watch mothers with their children, listen to them, read about them, remember what I had lived through as a daughter and a mother. Soon I was almost obsessively trying to articulate aspects of the maternal work and thinking that I was just beginning to recognize.

During these years of maternal fascination and feminist liberation (the cliché seems appropriate) I was also preoccupied by war. Long before I had children the possibility of nuclear disaster was present in my daily consciousness to a degree I can now barely credit. (Not that I don't recognize in a cool way current nuclear dangers. But then I didn't expect my children, barring illness or accident, to grow into adults.) I took part in my first protest against U.S. "military involvement" (as it was then labelled) in Vietnam the fall of '63 a few weeks before my first child was born. U.S. "defence" policies in Asia, Central America, and across the globe became more enraging the more I learned about them. Yet it was only during the years I became excited by feminism and obsessed with mothering, that I also developed intellectual interests in war that went beyond assimilating information and analysis from teach-ins.

My "resistance" to nuclear armament and military action continued to consist almost entirely of attending demonstrations other people organized. But issues of war began to dominate my intellectual life—the morality and consequences of conscription, just war theory and the justification of nuclear "deterrence," theories of non-violence and histories of non-violent action, war's "masculinity" and the gendering of war. While folk singers urged us to "study war no more" I read, argued, joined a woman's peace study group, devised new seminars, taught and began to write "war."

Retrospectively, it seems inevitable that my account of "maternal thinking" would emphasize the conflict, even battle, which pervades parental life. It was also inevitable that I found mothering relations a resource for resisting war and making "peace." I would have asked that of any work I taught and studied intensively at that time. Some mothers, including my own, found my account of mothering too war-like; others found it naively hopeful. I see the dire and hopeful intertwined. I continue to believe that many parents, much of the time, create with their children protective, respectful, welcoming relationships. But assault and neglect are permanent possibilities. It is these possibilities that make disciplines of non-violence necessary and thus enable mothers and fathers to contribute to a "culture of peace."

I have taken this "call" for papers as an opportunity to review a connection between mothering and peace that I made at a time when nuclear danger, U.S. militarism, feminist fervour, and my preoccupation with mothering were at

their most intense. I begin by construing war as a culture that can shift incrementally to a culture of peace. I then reflect on "fighting" in parental life. I end with a controversial question of vocabulary: whether to speak of mothers, mothering as a male inclusive activity, mothers and fathers as in this call for papers, or parents. In the course of my remarks I will speak mostly of "parents." I refer to anyone who assumes serious responsibility for children's welfare and makes the work of child care an important part of their lives. I mean to include people who are not mothers or fathers in the ordinary sense but, say, teachers or paid caregivers, a distant relative, or a neighbour, anyone who finds herself or himself parenting a child—keeping her safe, nourishing her spirit, training her in the ways of the world. At the end I will reconsider this vocabulary in terms of its implications for undermining war and creating peace.

A culture of war

To say that war is an expression of the culture from which it emerges is to say that it is more than an event, a spatially bounded phenomenon with a fairly clear beginning and end. Many wars are in some sense events. They start with attacks, mobilization, and often, across the globe, with mothers' attempts to "rescue" their sons from a military machine. Some wars seem to end when treaties are signed and bombing and other terrorizing attacks are brought to a halt. But war is not "just an event"; it is an organizing "presence" in the cultures and societies of which it is an expression.[1]

Before the first attack there must be enemies who are killable; at least one adversary must stake claims to the other's territory and goods; at least one must be seen as dangerous. Before the beginning, armies are raised, sometimes large, standing armies are maintained. Weapons are developed, manufactured, purchased, or traded—somehow acquired. Violence becomes popular and war-serving masculinities and femininities make it manly to fight and womanly to applaud, make ammunition, work in men's jobs, nurse the wounded, and also sometimes to fight. Citizens prepare for armed violence, expect it, and justify it; then "the war" can "begin."

When the organized violence of war is over, and the treaties are signed, wars live on in their legacy: the devastation of the physical and social infrastructure through which people provide for themselves and their families; the lives and psyches of combatants and non-combatants, of the children who have grown up in war, all irrevocably changed; the surfeit of arms on the streets, and of ex-soldiers trained to kill; citizens who have been schooled and practiced in the methods of violence, but not in non-violent methods of dealing with conflict; "nature" that has been poisoned, burned, made ugly and useless. The treaty of Versailles was notorious for the continuation of war in peace. More recently the Iraq war which the U.S. "won," and the Cuban battles which we either "lost" or avoided show that "peace" can include official ongoing "punishment"—retribution, reparations, domination, and deprivation. Even the best treaty is only the beginning of making peace.

State imperialist conquest and interstate combat, the most individuated of wars, are only one form of military violence; high technology conventional and nuclear weapons are only one form of arms. There are civil wars, ethnic wars, "guerrilla"' wars, and urban violence in response to social assault; house guns, light arms which trade and travel easily, home made explosives and land mines. The division between combatants and non-combatants no longer holds if it ever did; civilians —children, people with disabilities, old people, and most women—are the primary casualties of war. Factories, power plants, bridges,—the instruments of civil life—are the targets of war. Women's bodies are a battleground, rape is a weapon, female sexuality is conscripted for soldiers' "comfort." These conditions of contemporary and perhaps earlier wars were revealed once the veil of the cold war was lifted.

Feminists have been especially apt to recognize that military violence is not a distinct species isolated from other social practices. A continuum of harm, indifference, and wilful injury connects bedroom, boardroom, death row, and battlefield; school room, university, welfare reductions, and precision-guided bombs; racial profiling, racist employment practices, and nuclear "waste" in the lands of the poor. The soldier who left a "good boy" returns home an abuser; corporate entrepreneurs consider as their own whatever resources and labour they can command; government officials coolly kill the killers who have been rendered harmless. Children are taught not to hate force but to applaud it; they learn an elementary indifference to others' pain whether it is inflicted by "advanced" weapons or by illness, bad luck, social injustice, or domestic abuse. The engine of war, making kinds of people killable and dispensable, feeds the racism on which it depends. Our towns and villages, our bodies and identities are shaped by the violence we suffer and inflict. As Virginia Woolf saw in the fascist '30s:

> The public and the private worlds are inseparably connected. The tyrannies and the servilities of the one are the tyrannies and servilities of the other." (1996:142)

This portrait of a war culture is a nightmare, though it also manages to appear on the evening news. Even in the midst of battle soldiers care for each other and often enough for an "enemy." In homes, schools, hospitals, and government offices, people protect lives, foster spirits, extend their own and others' imaginative comprehension of needs and abilities to meet them. Cultures of war and cultures of peace intermingle. The world's balance seems tipped toward the culture of war. In some times and places the safety and ordinary freedoms of "peace" may disappear. But the task of peacemaking is not to create a way of living wholly new but rather to strengthen and institutionalize elements of restraint, respect, sympathy, and care that almost always survive in even the most war-like cultures.

Parenting is a part of culture, not separate and apart. Particular parenting

practices seem to imitate war. Children are treated as "objects of property"; in the worst case their bodies are subject to deliberate pain and abuse. Elements of war are occasional aspects of most parents lives, temptations to dominate, episodes of more or less willing assault. But cultures of parenting, so far as I have known them have been tipped toward peace. A shift in parenting toward still more conscious and reliable practices of peace is also a shift in the culture of which it is a part—away from neglect and assault, toward protection and response to need.

To the extent that wars are events they can be protested by events—boycotts, demonstrations, demands to "bring our troops home," "stop the bombing." When war is a "presence," a cultural expression, then resistance becomes more diffuse; to shift a cultural balance from war to peace requires incremental changes in social relations and values. In her book *Feminist Morality,* Virginia Held (1993) speaks of a feminist "revolution" as a "cultural revolution" in important ways. She does not separate culture from its material or political conditions, nor minimize the importance of economics and structures of power. She recognizes that "no lines between the symbolic and the material in human affairs are likely to be firm, or precise or lasting." But she sees feminists as trying to create "new cultural realities."[2]

Although I would be slow to speak of "revolution," either cultural or feminist, the kinds of changes that Virginia Held (1993) envisions, the words she gives us to describe them, seem helpful. Constructing new cultural realities, for example shifting the cultural balance toward peace, means changing "...the ways in which we see the world and think and feel about ourselves in it," changing "the interpretations given to, the values placed on, and especially the intended uses of configurations of power," constructing the kinds of "cultural reality that encourage human connection yet discourage domination." One aim of parenting is to create, in a situation of inherently unequal power, relations that are nearly free from domination, self-affirming "human connections" that will replicate themselves throughout life, even as they develop and change.

I will consider one aspect of parenting, conflict and combat. Parental ways of fighting partake of war and peace; many are already governed albeit imperfectly, by more or (usually) less conscious principles of non-violence. Making explicit the disciplines that parental fighting requires should, in itself, strengthen the connection of parenting with peace. Construing these disciplines in the terms of ideals of non-violence might, I hope, also contribute to the construction of "kinds of cultural reality" which take efforts to fight non-violently as an aspect of one ordinary familiar practice, namely parenting.

Conflict and combat

Conflict is a pervasive part of parents' lives and often includes combat. Parents fight with their children and on their behalf. Children fight with each other and their parents interpret these fights, sometimes trying to settle them but sometimes passionately intervening in them. Parents talk about these fights

with children and other adults, telling stories that often reflect or contribute to war-like or peace-like elements of their culture.

Two stories illustrate these points. A nameless wife and mother tells the first in praise of her husband who fought on their daughter's behalf. David Blankenhorn then retold it in a book about fatherhood.

> My daughter was about seven. We had just bought her a brand-new bike. The bike was outside on the front lawn. My daughter ... went outside and the bike was gone. Meanwhile a little boy down the street ... [also] said his bike was stolen. My husband gets in his van.... You know what he did? He took the van right to where the kids were and knocked them off both the bikes and they ran. Now, not only had he saved my daughter's bike, but the little kid's down the street. I mean everybody, the whole neighbourhood, knew what he had done. My daughter was so proud of her daddy saving their bikes. (cited in Blankenhorn, 1996: 214)

Audre Lorde tells the second story about herself, a feminist African-American and lesbian mother. Lorde had been urging her son to fight back when he was bullied, reinforcing his shame of running away. As a result of a suggestion from a "wise friend" she changes her tactics:

> And no, Jonathon didn't have to fight if he didn't want to, but somehow he did have to feel better about not fighting....
>
> I sat down on the hallway steps and took Jonathon on my lap and wiped his tears. "Did I ever tell you how I used to be afraid when I was your age?"
>
> I will never forget the look on that little boy's face as I told him the tale of my glasses and my after-school fights. It was a look of relief and total disbelief, all rolled into one. (1984: 76)

These parents are defining for their children what it means to be strong in battle, to fight, to be "so proud" of fighters, or somehow at least "to feel better about not fighting." Both of the public narrators praise the parents they speak of. David Blankenhorn celebrates a father's traditional protectiveness and the pleasure wives and children take in manly protection. Audre Lorde, both self-critical and proud, explicitly sees herself as challenging an aspect of war culture.

> This is the way we allow the destruction of our sons to begin, in the name of protection and to ease our own pain. *My* son get beaten up? I was about to demand that he buy that first lesson in the corruption of power, that might makes right. (1984: 76)

In my view, the wife's story that Blankenhorn (1996) retells sustains war

culture. A father who knocks thieving kids off their bikes although he is surely stronger and more authoritative than they, suggests that physical force is his best or only recourse. His wife in praising him seems almost to thrill to "might" that made things right. Lorde (1984) who in other contexts often spoke of herself as a warrior, seems to shift the balance of the war culture toward peace. Boys are expected to "fight back." To be beaten when you fight hard does not challenge the culture though it may decrease your popularity. To walk away from a fight without shame would, in Virginia Held's (1993) words, begin to change "peoples' aspirations for the kinds of lives to be led, and ... the way persons experience a sense of self and of a life as satisfactory."

In addition to fighting with children and for children, parents fight for themselves. Parents suffer indignities and insults; I doubt that any parent, any person, escapes them or any child fails to notice some of them. Many parents also suffer from repeated forms of social aggression that directly or indirectly implicate their children: injuries of class, racist bigotry, ethnic misunderstanding and arrogance, sexist or heterosexist contempt and insult. Parents often also have to defend their children against abuse or cruelty from other adults with whom they are intimate—for example from a lover, co-parent, or friend.

Children learn and mislearn meanings of injustice, abuse and resistance from the stories their parents tell about themselves, the actions they undertake—and from their silences. Some parents convey the advantages of indifference or appeasement. The "insulters" may wield power over the parent —a landlord, social worker, teacher, or doctor. Fighting back is risky; small humiliations do not require retaliation. Later children or the parents themselves may speak of confusion, anger and self-doubt when parents failed to protest real or perceived insults. In strong contrast some parents do "fight back," not by knocking people off their perch but by sustained battle that involves confrontation with insulting adults, meetings with teachers and principles who refuse to act, conversations with indifferent acquaintances, and whatever other practical action will prevent further insult.

In describing battle and attitudes toward it my first aim is simply to underline the importance and complexity of fighting in parents' lives, and the decisions and disciplines fighting may require. But I also aim to find in practices of parenting elements of a "culture of peace." At the time I first thought about fighting in parents' lives I was transfixed by the writings of Gandhi, King, and other non-violent theorists.[3] I deliberately focused on parenting with their concepts as a guide. This is surely an eccentric standpoint from which to look at parenting. It may also seem disrespectful of the weight of the imperialism and racism these men fought and suffered. Nonetheless, I continue to see in parenting what I then saw. No other concepts have served me as well.

I identified four principles of non-violence that imperfectly govern many parental practices. The first, and the one for which non-violence is notorious, is the *renunciation* of weapons and strategies that damage a person, cause serious long term psychological or physical harm and injury. Violence includes any

weapons that damage including words of hate and fists or other weapons of the body. The renunciation of violence is not equivalent to pacifism, the principled rejection of war-making as a practice. Most parents aren't pacifist (nor was King on my reading and even Gandhi is occasionally ambiguous). It does include renouncing violence against children and against anyone vulnerable and unarmed. And it fosters a sturdy suspicion of violence in even the best of causes.

The second principle, and just as important to Gandhi and King, is *resistance* to injustices. In practices of parenting resistance is often limited to injustices suffered by children, parents themselves, or "neighbours." Even within these limits, the commitment to resist injustices seems to be the weakest element of parental non-violence. Moreover those parents who are committed to resisting injustice while also rejecting violence may not extend their commitment to include injustice to people outside their family or beyond what they take to be "neighbourhood." The reliable extension of its attitudes and values beyond the neighbourhood is the greatest challenge parental non-violence faces.

Third, non-violence requires *reconciliation* or, if not that, at least a reliably safe mutual existence and the absence of the hatred and bitterness which, to paraphrase King, distort judgment and scar the soul.[4] Reconciliation is not the same as forgetting. Indeed, it may require remembering and holding accountable. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission signals these requirements in its name. Reconciliation does allow for personal change, 'rehabilitation', renewed trust, and moving on.

Finally non-violence requires a commitment to *peacekeeping*. Keeping the peace often involves compromises and appeasements whose aim is to avoid the wounds and misunderstanding that are part of even non-violent battle. In public and in domestic non-violence peacekeepers may be tempted to sacrifice truth with its accompanying anger for the sake of quiet, safety, and being "nice." But there are also real conflicts between peacekeeping and justice. Moreover the peacekeeping efforts for which parents, especially mothers, are blamed may often protect and preserve well enough the relationships on which children depend.

I believe that enough practices of parenting are sufficiently governed by the four principles of non-violence to provide one model of non-violent practice from which anyone can learn. Closer to home, by articulating the demands of non-violence, it is possible to reflect more precisely on the confusion and feelings of failure many parents suffer when they fight or fail to fight. These are rewards of what I might call a "method" for research on parenting. It consists in focussing on parents through lenses of concepts and values derived from "outside"—for example from anti-racist critical theory and practice or from the many recent studies of democracy. In my use of this method you look at parenting through the lenses of non-violence in the hope of finding what you want to be there. But inevitably the method also reveals failures and differences. It is also possible to assess in the light of parenting the principles that are meant

to guide. For example, a fifth principle important to both Gandhi and King, is *self-suffering*, taking on oneself and expressing the sufferings of battle. This principle I came to see as a temptation for mothers rather than an ideal. I then took a more critical look at the function of the principle as it governed public practices of non-violence.

There are intrinsic rewards of the method of being guided by concepts and values independently adopted. They lie in the details of unfamiliar, fresh observations and in the pleasure of finding in the most familiar and domestic relations analogues to affairs of state. For me there was also the 'discovery' of what I set out to find, a distinctive, imperfect, but developing project of peace. My less guided, less biased reflections on mothering were then recast in the light of their potential to become part of a practice of peace. I was not an independent objective observer, nor could I have been. But in finding what I looked for, I found a source of hope that has proved sturdy and realistic.

There is at least one defect of my particular focus, or use of the method. By directing attention to the passions and conflicts of battle, then by borrowing concepts from non-violent struggle, it is easy to lose sight of the lightness and pleasure of relations with children, of the joy, ordinary boredom and frequent fascination that lies in the work. It would be a serious distortion of parenting to look always at battle. During the years of my obsessive interest in mothering and peace I would look up from my computer or from my reading, see children and their parents apparently happy together, and feel as if I have been living a grim fantasy. During the weeks I was writing this paper I watched with fascination, as my children and their friends engaged with their children. With the passionate distance of a grandmother I delighted in their delight in each other and in the burgeoning highly individual personalities, whose spirits they treasured. But I did see moments of well managed fighting and hours of patience and hard work. I had occasions to remember the confusion and sadness that are part or parenting for both children and parents. Fighting is a reality of parenting as is sadness, disappointment, frustration, and rage. To deny these realities makes a parent feel that her children are distinctly unhappy, that only she, among parents, fails to insure their happiness. It is from the intertwining of sadness and delight, conflict and cooperation, rage and love that we might learn valuable lessons of peace.

Parents and mothers and fathers

I want to end with a postscript, to raise again the question of the language one should use in speaking of people who do the work of caring for children. When speaking of the work of child care do you call the workers mothers, mothers and fathers (as in the call for papers) or parents as I have been doing?

In earlier days I spoke of mothering as inclusive of men. I still believe, know, and have lived the fact, that men are as able as women to undertake the tasks of mothering. I have more recently argued that women are as able as men to undertake responsibilities explicitly designated to fathers: namely providing

protection and discipline. When I wrote about fathers doing mothers work I emphasised their abilities to preserve, protect, comfort, and discipline. When I spoke of mothers doing fathers' work, I emphasized that no individuals can provide for or protect children, that these are social tasks. But the message is the same: the work of caring for children is men's work and women's work. I called that work mothering and the men who did it "mother" in order to recognize that historically, and still today in most cultures, parenting was largely the life-shaping responsibility of women. I said often enough that many mothers were men, that men should not be excused or excluded from any aspect of maternal work. But this inclusive use of the term "mothering" couldn't be heard in a world where everyone still distinguishes mothers and fathers. .

I then began to find it useful to speak of parents. I could include as parents many child care workers who were neither mothers nor fathers. Some are employees, for example teachers or nannies. Others are distant relatives. Some became attached to a child by chance because they were there when a child was lonely. Anyone is a parent who takes on serious responsibility for a child and makes the work of caring for her a significant part of their life. This usage reveals parenting that is sometimes invisible. It also enables me to look in all parenting for hints of ways to see, develop, and insist on ideals of non-violence.

In these remarks, for the first time, I required myself to speak, for the most part, of parenting. It was a strain and the experiment an emotional failure. Repeatedly I wrote sentences that seemed to be really about mothers. Some I switched to 'parent', some I probably missed correcting. I wrote with a sense of self-censorship. Enchanted as I was with the inclusiveness of the language of parenting I found it not only unwieldy but suspect.

I am suspicious of my desire to deny sexual difference between parents, of refusing to distinguish between mothers and fathers. In a gender neutral language whether of parenting or mothering it is difficult to credit the value of women's birth-giving and to recognize its very different meanings for men who are also procreative. Gender-inclusive language also averts its eyes from sexuality, specifically from the heterosexual intercourse which is still at the origin of most births as well as from the sexuality that is retained in varieties of other procreative practices. And, as I knew from the outset gender neutral language masks the deeply gendered character of parents' lives, the distinctive weight and meaning that parenting still has for women in most families and cultures, the challenges that men must deal with in taking on work that is still thought to belong to women.

While I fear denying sexual differences I also fear affirming them. There is still some danger of excluding or, even more, excusing men from parental work. Then too any affirmation of difference is likely to lead to unsubstantiated and often harmful generalizations about what women do, what men do. Most important, speaking of mothers and fathers risks reconstituting parenting as inherently heterosexual at a time when the rights of gay and lesbian parents are, where they exist, still fragile.

The question of sexual differences takes on new weight in the context of trying to shift the balance in a culture from war to peace. Sharp gender division is a characteristic of most armies and militarized states. Norms of masculinity and misogynist and heterosexist charges of being a "woman" or a "fag" are regularly used to recruit, conscript, train, and discipline male soldiers. It is crucial then to insist that the emotionally laden, culturally central work of parenting is as open to men as to women.

Attitudes toward bodies are among the most important marks distinguishing cultures of war and from cultures of peace. War-making includes as a defining characteristic the willingness to injure, damage, and destroy bodies. Peace, minimally, protects bodies from war's attack. Parenting includes as a defining characteristic, a commitment to preserve children's bodily lives and to protect them from bodily harm. Mothering and fathering and occasionally parenting by "neighbours" also often includes a bone deep cherishing of individual physical bodily beings, an attitude totally opposed by war.

Fear and contempt for "different" bodies makes it easier to create them as enemies who are killable. Racist division, fear of different or strange bodies, is intrinsic to war. Denying sexual difference seems to work against that fear and contempt. But it does so by avoiding rather than confronting them .

There is nothing in parenting or mothering that precludes racism or tribalism. It sometimes happens, however, that passionate bodily cherishing of children makes it impossible to kill the enemies' children. For some mothers or parents all children in themselves become a kind of being that is "precious." Or mothers identify with enemy mothers, fathers with enemy fathers. It is a struggle within maternal and paternal thinking to extend protectiveness to "enemy" children, to identify with "enemy" mothers' and fathers' cherishing of their children's bodies. The denial of bodily difference or fear of bodily sexuality seems to work against that struggle. Children's precious bodies are sexed and sexual, as are the bodies of mothers and fathers. They cannot be sturdily cherished if their sexed identities and sexuality are washed away.

So while I do not want to affirm I also do not want to deny sexual difference. While I want to recognize all parenting persons, and also to subject them to ideals of non-violence, I do not, and in honesty cannot deny the gendered specificity of mothers' lives, and therefore of maternal work and thinking. The language of mothering and fathering, chosen by these editors, has many virtues. But that is a language I will have to learn.

Postscript: September 23

It seems that terror spread quickly after the attack. People were evacuated hundreds of miles away. Yet some people believed that the second plane was bringing help. One of the children. who visited us this September was in day care at the World Trade Centre when the planes hit. The e-mail message of his safety brought exquisite relief and with it a sharp awareness of the pain of others' loss. On a listserve someone pleads that it is not unpatriotic to learn about the policies your government pursues.

In grand gatherings people celebrate America and prepare for a "long fight." There are teach-ins, petitions, familiar efforts to break into the cycle of violence. But violence, overt and covert, has come to seem the normal condition. I wrote these remarks in what now seems a time of "peace" yet spoke of a culture of war.

This is an odd moment to write, a moment of waiting for events that will occur—or not occur—before this journal is published. I stand by the hope I expressed some weeks ago in the first words of this article. I end with a poem, a dream, in praise of keeping still.

Now we will count to twelve
and we will all keep still.

For once on the face of the earth,
let's not speak in any language;
let's stop for one second,
and not move our arms so much.

It would be an exotic moment
without rush, without engines;
we would all be together
in a sudden strangeness.

Fishermen in the cold sea
would not harm whales
and the man gathering salt
would look at his hurt hands.

Those who prepare green wars,
wars with gas, wars with fire,
victories with no survivors,
would put on clean clothes
and walk with their brothers
in the shade, doing nothing.

...

Now I'll count up to twelve
and you keep quiet and I will go.

—"Keeping Quiet" by Pablo Neruda

I want to thank Luciana Ricciutelli for her patience, reassurance, and editorial skill

amidst computer failures, miscommunications, fears of war.

[1]The idea that war is an expression of a culture is common among feminists. I have written about this in "Notes Toward A Feminist Peace Politics" (1994). Two recent versions are Schott (1995) Cuomo (1996).
[2]All phrases are taken from Chapter 1 of Held's (1993) book.
[3]I have written more extensively about non-violence in my book, *Maternal Thinking* (1995), especially Chapter 7. There I also include bibliographical references to particular theorists.
[4]From a sermon, "Loving Your Enemies," delivered by Martin Luther King during Christmas 1957 in Montgomery Alabama. This sermon can be found in almost any collection of King's writings.

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Poems by Rishma Dunlop
Paintings by Gailene Powell

Songs Before the Dawn

I've stitched my dress with continents,
bound to the equator round my waist.
I waltz to a steady rhythm, bending slightly.
—Nina Cassian, "Knowledge"

The inner – what is it?
If not intensified sky,
hurled through with birds and deep
with the winds of homecoming.
—Rainier Maria Rilke

A Chorus of Wings

The heart is a feathered thing,
a kingfisher's wing,
a dove with a flickering tongue,
releasing itself,
in the hollow rumble of

ink-tipped wings,
plumage brilliant
in nocturnal flights.
In this music,
the valves of the heart
open and close.

The beating of wings is a primal music, filling the earth with the music of heartbeats, deeply connected to birthings, to the double heartbeats of mother and infant in the womb, to the human pulse. Birds are messengers, the holders of our prayers, their songs rising before the dawn in invocations and closing our days in benedictions. Their wings throb with the joys and mournings of the earth, beating a steady rhythm that can be heard across continents. Birds are hope and faith, and homecoming, everpresent and steadfast, their wings hurled through a violent world.

Gailene Powell, "Stillness," 12" x 12", oil on canvas.

Terra Promessa: Elegy for Sarajevo

Your land
dismembers itself,
limb by limb,
crying for life,
rough-tongued
in scarlet
mouth.

On the other side of the world,
images of your children haunt me.
May you taste
the bitter stain

of the place that cradled you.
May you feel the blood-spill
of your people
salted by my tears.

May you hear
the songbirds
that gather
may their songs drown
the screams of vultures,
beating wings against
your red sky.

May these days of carnage
be softened into dust,
cleanse the skin
of your earth.

May your breath
be resurrected
by the human cantos
of mercy.

Phoenix

Hope is the thing with feathers.
—Emily Dickinson

In my garden,
the poppies have bloomed
their scarlet tissue paper petals
falling brilliant to the ground.
I gather the light of these flowers,
watch my daughters walk to the beach
their long limbs flying down the road
to the sea's embrace.

In my garden,
I read the newspaper headlines
Scent of poppies, stench of death.
Outside Kosovo's capital Pristina
along the Road to Leskovac
Makovac, Yugoslavia
Look closer
call it the highway to hell.

As ethnic Albanians
return home
this country road
reeks with the stench
of death
from houses
from mass graves
in fallow fields
overgrown
with multitudes
of flowers.

Here is a living room,
inside, a shroud of ashes
still shaped like the body of a man
who was rolled in blankets
and burned alive.

Here, the wind blows music
through walls punctured with bullet holes,
where Serbian police executed men
while they kneeled,
their words of prayer caught
in the stopped pulse
of the world.

Here is the house
used as a chamber of rape
refugees who returned home
found dozens of buttons
ripped from clothes
alongside bloody blankets
and women's underwear.

Here are the cows,
slaughtered by machine-guns,
by deliberate hands,
pistol chambers triggering
bullets through their heads.
Their carcasses lie
among fields of flowers,
the brilliant wounds of poppies
and the scent of rotting flesh
mingling with the perfume
of crushed lavender.

Here, is a black quartz watch
still ticking
next to a sleeve
in a mass grave.
Witnesses say the watch
was once on a hand
now eaten away
by animals

and everywhere
in the villages
under skies full of pitch and smoke,
women bury their men,
fathers, husbands, lovers, sons

women's labour rinsing away
the fetid stench,
scrubbing, scrubbing

In my garden
I wonder
what good are my words
all the charred utterings of poets
bearing witness
in the face of fresh horrors
how do I speak to my children
and to my students
of holocausts and human devastations
how to speak of the clawmarks of swastikas,
of the dark hearts we must claim as history

what will endure of these fragments of verse
what will reach the heart

all I can do is record and speak
and hope that silences will be broken
that comfort will be sung
through the obscenities of civilization.

In my garden
the sun blazes gold
and in its fire
a phoenix rises
as it will rise over
the burnt ashes of those fields
of wildflowers
and in the beat of bird wings
hearts will pulse again.

Rishma Dunlop and Gailene Powell

Grace: The Garden of My Familiar

We exist, given the presence of our familiars.
—Louise Bogan

The day opens
waking us to songs
multitudes of red-throated birds
sunlight streams through
shuttered windows

In the garden
the terrace spills
blooms lush against
driftwood
salvage from the beach
bursts of pinks and corals
purple embrace of clematis
and wild plum trees

a hummingbird drinks nectar
from the belled tongues
of fuschia

a scarlet bird hovers
jewel-like
in amber air

I hear the beat of your heart
in the thrumming
of its wings

my daughter Rachel
presses wildflowers
on a page of poems
gifts she writes for me

as day slips into indigo
the garden holds us
in the bowl of her hands
flesh warm and tender
rooting us
in a blue-heron sky.

Gailene Powell, "Prayer," 24" x 31", oil on canvas.

Prayer

Let the politician return home to his wife and infant daughter.
Let him lay his head down upon his wife's silk lap and let him dream.
Let him dream in blue, the color of his newborn's eyes, *tabula rasa.*

Let us hear the cries of the men and women who ache with loneliness.
Let their mouths be filled with tears and with music.
Let their solitude be the garments of angels.

Let the fearful child find an apricot, a starfish, a fistful of rubies.

Let the mothers and fathers whose children have been murdered
find boxes of moonlight.

Let the murderers lay down their weapons.
Let the taste of blood-oranges flower on their tongues.

Let the starving have their bellies filled.

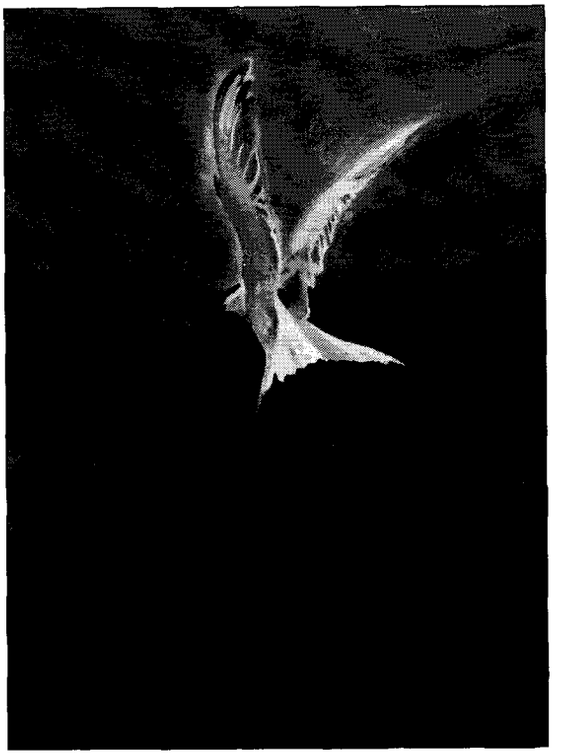
Let them have the sweetness of plums.

Let the bodies of lovers who have become strangers, touch each other again.
Let them have the thrust of love.
Let it be like the first time, when skin on skin made them transparent, coming and melting in the heat of summer.

Let us have the imperfections of moon and wind and love.

Let us hear the song
of the white dove rising
before the dawn.

Let the poet have her red shoes.
Let her have her wet vowels, her breathing consonants, her liturgy of syllables.
Let the poet be the throat of these hours.



Gailene Powell, "Night Flight," 24" x 18", oil on canvas.

Night Flight: Winter Solstice

On the eve of a performance of the Yarker Chamber Music Society
The Old Schoolhouse, Yarker, Ontario, Dec. 16, 2000

On this night
the sun melts a scarlet fire
into the violet and indigo
of the night sky.
On this night they say
the sun will return at midnight
and the dark hours will lift
across the trees.

At the Old Schoolhouse
the Chamber musicians prepare for performances,
their open tunings, the discordant keenings
of instruments.

The words "chamber music" echo hollow
through my discarded memories,
an abacus spills through my hair
burnt cinders fly from my mouth.

I drift along the edges of time
and I am a small girl in Montréal,
my velvet jumper,
my long black braids tied with ribbons,
my patent leather shoes,
in the church hall
the music solemn, mournful,
the notes held
in my mother's rigid backbone,
her stern spine pinning me into proper place.

But tonight the moon unwinds her blue
blesses the babies and friends who gather,
gary and Rena
little Hayden in his red flannel shirt
newborn Zinta, her angel breath.

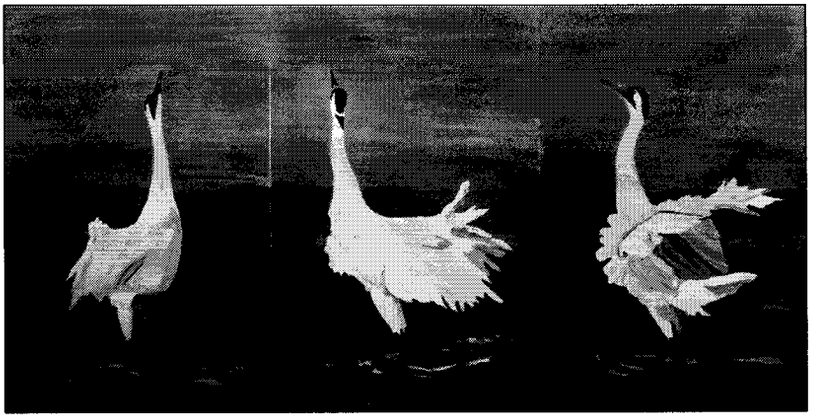
And the concert begins,
Rena's hands flying over the piano,
James on the flute.
The air weeps.

Tonight my long black hair
is unbound.
Dressed in my velvet
I think of you
my heart loosened in a *Pavane,*
cradled by a Fauré *Berceuse.*

Outside, the birds
begin their nocturnal flights
and tonight
in this roomful of people
I know we are all helpless

in the face of love
fragile as the inner flesh of
a bare wrist.

In this night music,
in the symphony of wingbeats,
the heart lightens and rises.



Gailene Powell, "Dancing Cranes," 36" x 72", oil on canvas.

The Lost Language of Cranes

I

For if Hiroshima in the morning, after the bomb has fallen,
Is like a dream, one must ask whose dream it is.
—Peter Schwenger, *Letter Bomb: Nuclear Holocaust and the Exploding Word*

Reading with my daughter
the story of *Sadako and the Thousand Cranes*
Rachel loves to tell the story
of the little Japanese girl
who is almost two
when the bomb explodes
a mile from her home
in Hiroshima.
Her family is grateful
for survival
spared the grotesque deaths
of others
they run
fleeing to the banks
of the River Ota

drenched by the black rain
falling, falling
When she is twelve years old,
Sadako runs like the wind
in school relay races
the best runner in the sixth grade
until she falters
weakened

doctors discover
Sadako has *Atomic Bomb Disease*

leukemia gnaws at her body

In the hospital, Sadako's closest friend
reminds her of the *Tsuru*, the crane
Japanese symbol of long life
of hope

If you fold a thousand cranes
they will protect you from illness
grant you a wish

Sadako tells the cranes
I will write peace on your wings
and you will fly all over the world

Sadako, determined
begins folding
folding fragments of newspapers
discarded wrappers from her medicines
making tiny paper cranes
her gifts to the world,
folding, folding against time
and memory

Sadako's mother writes:
If she has to suffer like this,
she should have died that morning
on August 6th.

Her mother watches Sadako,

painstaking folding,
her mother's hands
helpless to heal
wants something beautiful
in the face of death
she buys silk fabric
printed with cherry blossoms
makes a kimono
to enfold her daughter

Her small fingers
folding, folding
day after day
Sadako makes 644 cranes
before she dies

her classmates complete
her thousand cranes
place them in her coffin
as if her heart would continue
to beat in the paper wings

her mother wraps her daughter
in the softness of silk
in her cherry blossom kimono
lays flowers with the birds
so that her child could bring them
with her to the next world.

Sadako's mother asks the birds:
Why didn't you sing? Why didn't you fly?

II

A cemetery seen from the air is a child's city.
—Carolyn Forché, "The Garden Shukkei-en"

I watch my daughter and her friends
folding tiny origami cranes
for their class project,
these winged symbols of peace

spread rainbow-hued across
the kitchen table.
The paper birds criss-cross
the earth in correspondences
for peace projects
their hopeful wings trying
to tell the horrors of war
the cheery optimism of classroom curriculum.

The children will send
the paper cranes
in garlands with 100 birds each
to the mayor of Hiroshima
to be placed
with millions of paper cranes
at the foot of the Children's Monument
where the stone figure of Sadako
holds a large golden crane
above her head
arms outstretched
to the sky

I watch my children play
wonder if the power of birds
will stand strong against
exploding words and mushroom clouds
against the screams that reverberate
amidst the silence of Hiroshima's Peace Park.

III

After I noticed the flash, white clouds spread over the blue sky.
It was as if blue morning glories had suddenly bloomed...
—Testimony of Isao Kita

By the banks of the river Ota
where Sadako used to play
in the Garden Shukkei-en,

stands a stone angel holding
an origami crane.

Hibakusha,survivors
who are still alive
wander the garden,
across the pond
on the Kokoukyo Bridge,
through tea ceremonies
and the blossomings
of plums and cherries and irises

In the garden
the silence
the insistence of memory
the flash of light,
the burning heat
the shattering of glass
everywhere the cries of children
calling for their mothers

bodies stripped naked
by the blast
skin peeling
hanging from fingertips
like cloth,
mothers holding
dying children
in their arms
trying in vain
to pluck away
the swarming maggots

bones in rice bowls,
babies crawling
over dead mothers
rooting for nipples
seeking milk
their reflections shimmering
like ghosts

against a clear blue sky,
flames of fire

and then
black
sticky rain
falling, falling

on trees
on flowers
on rooftops
on people
the world
turning black

it could not be washed off

IV

...Somewhere slow
poetry is being tender with its alphabet.
—Don MacKay, "A Morning Song"

Outside my house
the morning sun spills
gilded ripples across the bay.
The cranes stilt across the mudflats.

I wonder what they know,
what we have lost,
these birds that mate for life.
Sometimes in the shallow waters
of these wetlands
the cranes dance, sending waves
flying, a language of ancient memories
a language that teaches us that after grief
it is possible to love again,
a music we have forgotten,
such sheer joy.

When the cranes lift in ascent,

cathedrals of wind
rise in their wingbones,
estuaries of morning light
lifting across continents,
a white front of radiance, their cries
like clouds of desire.

After, in the presence of still waters,
you can rest in the white light
in the grace of wings.

Gailene Powell, "Concordance," 24" x 40", oil on canvas.

Concordance

The air is a knife
The sharp intake of winter
Frost over Ladner farms
A Diebenkorn landscape
And the sky full of thunder
The beat of wings
hawks, kestrels, geese, starlings
thousands of birds
on the Pacific Flyway.

The continent is heaving
With the drumming of flight
to Asia and Africa
and South America

my heart skips a beat, shifts

a lone crane spreads its wings
hesitates
and decides to stay.

Notes

"Phoenix"
The line "Scent of poppies, stench of death" is from the title of an article by Valerie Reitman in the Vancouver Sun, Tuesday, July 6, 1999.

"Night Flight: Winter Solstice"
This poem is for gary rasberry, Rena Upitis, Zinta, Hayden, and members of the Yarker Chamber Music Society.

"The Lost Language of Cranes"
Segments of this poem were informed and inspired by Carolyn Forché's poems, "The Garden Shukkei-en," and "Testimony of Light" in her collection *The Angel of History.*

Hibakusha: The first atomic bomb used in wartime was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6th, 1945, killing between 130,000 and 150,000 people by the end of that year. The term *hibakusha* refers to survivors of the Atomic Bomb. Those who survived the bombing are rapidly aging now after struggling for many years. Segments of this poem are informed by the testimonies collected and videotaped by the Hiroshima Peace and Culture Foundation to commemorate the International Year of Peace in 1986.

Excerpts referring to Sadako Sasaki's mother, Fujiko Sasaki, are based on a letter titled "Come Back to Me Sadako," from *Record of Atomic Bombs in Japan* by Seishi Toyota, Nihon Tosho center, 1991.

When Sadako died on Oct.25, 1955, her classmates folded the missing paper cranes to make a thousand and placed them in the coffin with Sadako's body. Since then the paper crane has become an international symbol of nuclear disarmament.

Sadako's friends and classmates collected Sadako's letters and writings and published them under the title *Kokeshi*, after the name of a doll they had given Sadako in the hospital. Inspired by this collection and the remarkable effect Sadako's story had on others, Eleanor Coerr wrote the powerful book, *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes, G.P. Putnam, 1993.* A video by the same title is narrated by Liv Ullman, produced by the American Library Association.

Sadako's classmates also began a national campaign to build a monument in her memory. It was built to honor all children who suffered from the devastating consequences and effects of the nuclear bomb. The Statue of Sadako is also known as The Children's Monument. Built in 1958 with donations from school children, the monument stands in the center of Hiroshima's Peace Park

surrounded by millions of paper cranes sent from people around the world. At its base is a plaque with the following inscription:

> This is our cry
> This is our prayer
> Peace in the world

R. Shannon Duval

Artifact/Ideas and Parenting for Social Justice

In an essay entitled "Artifact/Ideas And Political Culture" Langdon Winner (1991) challenges just and peaceful citizens to consider the ways in which the development, adoption, and use of instrumental things affect our shared sense of freedom, power, authority, community, and justice. In his book, *Intermediate Man,* John Lachs (1981) introduces us to the concept of "machines that shield us" and their effects on our moral sensibility and sense of social responsibility. I propose we, as families and educators, accept Lachs' insights as well as Winner's challenge and consider the qualities of social, moral, and political life we create through the artifacts or objects we use in our daily lives.

Mediation

The first concept I'd like to discuss is that of mediation. Lachs defines mediation as "the performance of any action by some agent on behalf of another" (1978: 17). Any action is mediated when someone else does it for you—whether you request it or not. For example, if you ask someone to fix you a sandwich, and the individual does, that action is mediated. It is mediated because you got the sandwich without the experience of making it yourself. However, many actions that are performed on your behalf are not performed at your request. You may not have asked a company to produce the goods you buy, but the fact that you pay for the goods demonstrates that the company is working on your behalf. In short, any action that you request, pay for, or benefit from is done on your behalf. Lachs explains:

> In this way, actions that range from the trivial to the most momentous, from the specifically contracted all the way to the generally available, are all mediated—that is, performed by one on behalf of and fre-

> quently for the benefit of others. Almost all the actions necessary for life, for satisfaction, and for self-expression are mediated in industrial society. (1978: 17)

The most important characteristic of mediation is that the person who benefits from an action does not have the experience of performing the action—or of performing all the actions necessary to achieve the desired benefit. Lachs (1978) morally privileges this immediate experience as that from which responsibility grows. Thus we can see how too much mediation would lead to a diminishing sense of responsibility.

Mediation has four major consequences. The first is beneficial, the remaining three are costs. The beneficial consequence is our modern technical civilization. The quality of life and standard of living we enjoy all presuppose mediation. Imagine what your life would be like if you had to do everything for yourself from gathering and preparing food to creating shelter and fashioning your clothes. There would be little time left for any of the benefits of culture. However, Lachs (1978) wants us to understand that there is a cost to this mode of life.

Of the remaining three consequences, the first cost is the growing manipulation of people or the use of people as tools. When an act is mediated it means that someone else has performed that action for me. Thus there is a sense in which the person who performs that action is an instrument of my will. His or her body, mind, and energy are directed for some period of time towards fulfilling my desires. You can imagine how easy it might be for the person to become simply a means to having that desire fulfilled. There is so much mediation in society that we often cease to even think of the people that perform the actions that bring about the situations we desire. When this happens on a large scale, people begin to feel valued primarily for the tasks they perform. Thus, they may feel devalued as a human being. Lachs' (1978) point is that the more we forget about the people behind actions, the more we regard them as tools or inanimate objects. It is in this sense that our lives become depersonalized.

The second cost of mediation is the growing sense of passivity in our culture. The more we are defined by our roles, and the more others depend on us in those roles, the more uniform our actions must be. There is a sense in which we must be reliable, predictable, and almost interchangeable in our work. In each profession, there is a protocol for behaviour. The same is true in children's lives, for example, in schools. While there is room for variation, expectations are generally well understood and well observed. The more we are encouraged to follow established rules and norms, the less we are likely to recognize *ourselves* in the roles we fulfill. Our energies may become absorbed in meeting requirements and expectations in an attempt to fulfill our "obligations" or others' "expectations." When this happens we have surrendered to the role—becoming what the role demands of us.

The more we feel we are just following the rules or fulfilling requirements, the less likely we are to take responsibility for our actions. We may feel we have little choice in or control over what we do. If we feel our actions are already laid out for us by the role we play (student, spouse, parent, worker, etc.), then it is understandable that we might begin to respond passively in those roles. This passivity creates a feeling of impotence. We feel we are unable to positively change or have an effect on many of the things that are important to us because these things may depend on long, complicated chains of mediation.

The third negative consequence of mediation is what Lachs (1978) terms "psychic distance." The chains of mediation in our society are so involved that we often forget—if we have ever known—what it fully means to cause the actions that benefit us. For example, psychic distance explains why we may buy, perhaps unaware but also without investigation, clothes and toys that were made in sweatshops or eat meat that we would not catch, kill, and prepare on our own. Psychic distance is the direct result of lack of firsthand experience. It reveals itself when we cannot accept the responsibility for actions that are clearly ours. It is made possible by all the people who stand between us and the consequences of our actions. Lachs writes:

> Without firsthand acquaintance with his actions, even the best of men moves in a moral vacuum; the abstract recognition of evil is neither a reliable guide nor an adequate motive. If we keep in mind the psychic distance between the agent and his act, along with its source in impoverished personal experience, we shall not be surprised at the immense and largely unintentional cruelty of men of good will. The mindless indifference of what is sometimes called "the system" is in reality our indifference. It springs from our inability to appropriate acts as our own and thus assume responsibility for them—along with our bland perceptual life sheltered from encounter with evil. We do not know the suffering that is caused and cannot believe that *we* are the ones who cause it. (1978: 18)

How can we avoid psychic distance? Mediation cannot be abandoned. As we have seen, our society depends upon it. Rather, we must seek to ameliorate its effects. This means becoming invested in our daily activities in a real and immediate way. It means doing more things for ourselves when we can, and familiarizing ourselves with the things others are doing for us. It means fully participating in and taking responsibility for choices we consign as well as those we make.

Santa's sweatshop

Let's look at a practical example of how the chain of mediation might influence our families, and how we can remedy that. Toys are a subject near and dear to most childrens' hearts, and as the holidays gift giving season approaches

choosing and shopping for toys reaches it height. The American people spend $20.7 billion a year on toys, with more than half of these purchases made during the holiday season. Nearly 80 percent of the toys we purchase each year in the United States are imports, and 63 percent are from China (U.S. State Department Report on China, 1997).

A survey conducted by US News and World Report shows that while Americans are concerned that their children's toys may have been produced by someone else's child, mother or father in working conditions we would consider unfair, we are much more concerned with the cost and quality of the item. Some 58.5% of us always consider the cost of an item when making a purchase and 67.8% of us consider the quality, while only 15.9 percent of us consider the labour conditions under which the toy was made. And, our concern has a price. Nearly 90% of Americans when asked stated that they would pay a few cents more for a product they knew was made under fair working conditions, but only 70% would pay a few dollars more (Telenation Survey, 1996).

This is mediation and psychic distance at work. Presumably, none of us would be willing to have our own children perform sweatshop labour, nor would we want to do the work ourselves. Conditions in Chinese factories, for example, include 60-96 hour work weeks, 10-to-15-hour shifts, six to seven days a week for wages of 13 to 28 cents an hour, without benefits. Some of the most popular brands of clothes for kids are created under similarly dismal conditions. The Esprit label, for example, is the result of shifts of labour that last from 7:30 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week and pay 13 cents an hour. If we shop at Kmart, we are endorsing 70-hour workweeks for 28 cents an hour. JC Penny shoppers demand eleven-hour shifts, seven days a week for 18 cents an hour.[1] Few of us would overtly condone anyone doing such labour. Yet, when we buy toys or clothes made in sweatshops or when we are uninformed of the origin and conditions under which the toys we buy were made, we are in fact deriving benefit from, and therefore are responsible for, that labour.

Putting the joy back into Christmas

What can we, as parents interested in peace and social justice do to ensure that we are not a part of the chain of mediation that binds workers to machinery for 12 hours a day or more?

1. Reduce or eliminate chains of mediation. Make toys and games instead of buying them, and involve children in these projects. Or, buy toys from local craftspeople or artisans and involve your child in learning how the toy was made.

2. Explore the origins of toys. Involve your child in finding out the history of a toy. How has it evolved? Include in this history a "family tree" of the toy. Where was it made? By whom? Under what conditions? With the wealth of information available on the internet, parents now have many resources for verifying purchases. For example, see the Responsible Shopping Guide published by Global Exchange (http://www.globalexchange.org/economy/corpo-

rations/sweatshops/ftguide.html). If you can't find the information you are looking for, talk to your child about whether it's a good idea to choose that toy given that you don't know where it came from or how it was made. Is there another toy that you could adopt that you know more about?

3. Voice your concerns to manufacturers and retailers. Sit down with your child and write a letter, or take your child with you to talk to a retailer about your concerns. You can teach her about the importance of active involvement as well as model positive conflict resolution skills.

4. Support the Campaign for Corporate Disclosure. You have a right to know what's in the food you eat. You also have a right to know the social ingredients of the toys your children are playing with. Hold manufacturers responsible for truthful and complete disclosure through labels that reveal, for example, the factory in which a toy was assembled.

In short, teach your children that it is wrong to consume items unless we can say "yes" to each action that has produced that item. Shortening the chain of mediation is a sure pathway to peace.

Artifact/ideas

For critics of technology, the idea that we are on an irrevocable technological path—that *we cannot scale back*—indicates a loss of freedom and autonomy which is incompatible both with democratic decision making and democratic life. In his essay "Artifact/Ideas and Political Culture," Langdon Winner (1991) outlines an approach for examining the moral and political values that are inherent in the artifacts or objects we adopt. He also outlines a democratic process for making decisions about technological design and reform.

While noting that this is a time of great technological optimism, Winner (1991) is also concerned about the ways in which advancing technologies are changing our communal and political life. Winner suggests that when we face technological changes, whether as individuals, families, communities, or nations, we usually focus upon three questions:

> First: How will the technology be used? (What are its functions and practical benefits?)
>
> Second: How will the technology change the economy? (What will it contribute to the production, distribution, and consumption of material wealth?)
>
> Third: How will the technology affect the environment? (What will its consequences be for global climate change, pollution of the biosphere, and other environmental problems?) (1991: 43)

While each of these questions is important, Winner argues that there is an even more important question that is seldom asked: "What kind of world are

we building here?" With this question Winner is challenging us to look beyond an instrumentalist view of the artifacts we use. He asks us to reflect on the values we endorse and perpetuate by the adoption of particular technologies. More specifically he wants us to ask whether we are creating a world that will cultivate and honour human dignity and human relationships. "In what ways," Winner (1991) questions, "do the development, adoption and use of instrumental things affect our shared experience of freedom, power, authority, community and justice? How might we respond creatively to the role technology plays in contemporary political life?"

Consider the example of the car. The car has become a symbol of freedom for many Americans. We are free to travel privately. We are free to travel to suit our schedules. Many of us feel a greater freedom in our choices of where to live and work. Many people think nothing of living distances greater than thirty miles from their place of employment. However, upon closer inspection we see that the car symbolizes other things as well. The car symbolizes our sense of entitlement to natural resources. Cars are expensive and symbolize status and power. They also symbolize the privileging of the private over the public. Many people feel they "have" to have a car because towns and cities are increasingly organized around automobile travel rather than public transportation. The town square and public markets are overwhelmed by suburbs and strip malls. These developments change the character of community life and experience.[2]

Winner (1991) writes, "Our useful artifacts reflect who we are, what we aspire to be." We cannot separate ourselves from the technologies we embrace: they are a statement about who we are and what we believe in. In a visitor's pamphlet entitled, "The Guide to the Amish Country," the author explains why the Amish don't drive cars:

> Why don't the Amish drive cars? Because the Amish believe that cars pull people apart, and that a car distorts its owner's sense of self-importance in a world where humility is a necessary virtue.

Much of our life is dependent on technologies, and these technologies in turn shape the form of that life. Winner urges us to be aware of the symbiotic nature of this relationship. We create technologies, and they in turn create us. This relationship makes it critical that we examine the technologies we adopt. In a very real sense, in adopting them we are making ourselves over in their images.

In order to better understand this claim, Winner (1991) asks us to consider the world from the point of view of the artifacts we use. Many artifacts that once had a purely instrumental role now function as members of society. The car is only one example of this. People often say, for example, "We are a two-car family." People often name their cars and have a strong sentimental attachment to them. We attend to the fueling, cleanliness, maintenance, and insurance of cars much like the feeding, bathing, clothing, medical care, and financial

planning for children or other family members.

In adopting the car we have adopted a culture. One out of every four meals is eaten in the car. Commuters put in an average of ten 40-hour work weeks in the car each year, and commuting to work accounts for less than one-fourth of our trips and only 22.5% of traffic. Nearly eight of every ten auto miles are errands. One-third of the miles we travel is due to family chores, one-third is social and recreational, 22.5 percent is community, and eight per cent is vacations (Kay, 1997: 11-23).

Even if our uses of technologies are initially instrumental—we want to move heavy loads, get there faster, be protected from the weather—we find that there are secondary and tertiary consequences that are often both unintended and unforeseeable. For example, the deterioration of inner cities as people moved to the suburbs is an unintended consequence of the use of cars. So is the increasing isolation of those who are too young, too old, or physically unable to drive. The amount of social contact we have and desire, the amount of physical labour in which we engage, and the frequency of travel are all examples of changes in our form of life which result directly and indirectly from uses of technology.

Telephones, answering machines, televisions, and computers are other interesting examples of tools that have taken on multiple social roles in our culture. The answering machine, Winner (1991) points out by way of example, does much of the work formerly delegated to a full-time secretary. Rather than answer the phone ourselves, ask someone else to do it, or (gulp) actually miss calls, we interpose another machine between ourselves and people who are attempting to reach us. It is also not uncommon for callers to be flustered when an actual person answers the phone. Comments like "I thought I'd get your machine" or "I was just going to leave a message" are increasingly frequent. The same is true of business calls. More and more often customers are confronted with a series of electronic menus to negotiate before there exists any hope of speaking with a real person. Ironically, not only are companies unembarrassed by the impersonal nature of these menus, but the menus are often introduced as "for your convenience"!

Although not minimizing the benefits of technology, Winner reminds us that there is a political world embodied in technology. Just as political positions can be expressed in words, so too are they expressed in material objects. Material objects indicate our place in society, define standards and norms, outline possibilities, and determine who and what are excluded from public life. The adage "Actions speak louder than words" is usefully applied to our use of technology. In light of this fact, we must seek to understand whether or not the world we create through our use of technology is primarily peaceful and just. Too often, if we explore the artifacts in our homes, we find their hidden messages to be out of step with our own moral convictions

What does this mean in practical terms? 1) As in reducing chains of mediation, we need to get to know the artifact/ideas we have adopted into our

homes. Explore the idea of items as symbols and investigate with children what they stand for when deciding to use or purchase an item, or participate in a system. 2) If an item does not reflect your family's values, involve children in creative solutions for reform or replacement.

Winner leaves us with a challenge: we must decide whether we will use our artifacts and techniques to maximize human freedom or restrain it. He writes:

> If ordinary citizens are to be empowered in shaping the world to come, we must become very skillful in areas where we are now profoundly ignorant: using ideas and abilities that enable us to define and realize human freedom and social justice within the realm of technology itself.... If we cannot develop these skills or do not care to, if we fail to confront the world-shaping powers that new technologies present, then human freedom and dignity could well become obsolete remnants of a bygone era. (1991:49)

Parenting for peace

In this essay, I have tried to show that the every day items in our homes, and our every day activities communicate to our children a sense of the normal and the fair, and manifest our social consciousness. Using the examples of toys and cars, I hope to have shown that the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the technologies and techniques that keep us warm, and dry and comfortable are physical embodiments of our ethical ideals.[3] Teaching our children to seek the idea behind the artifact, and to be sure that they could say "yes" to each aspect of that artifact's production teaches them to take individual responsibility for social justice. We can heighten the moral sensibilities of children (as well as our own) by excavating the social and political messages contained in "everyday" things. I believe that as families we should strive to understand the values revealed by the items we use, and should compare these values to our own self-stated moral beliefs. In those cases where we find that we are adopting artifacts that are out of step with our own values, I suggest we engage in creative means to change or eliminate those consumptions. In so doing we will not only educate and empower children for social justice, but we will also foster a life long ability to mitigate the messages of a "consumer culture" in favour of an active and participatory citizenship which promotes peace and nurtures dignity.

[1]Statistics compiled by the National Labour Committee.
[2]For an excellent, extended discussion of this subject see *Asphalt Nation* by Jane Holtz Kay (1997).
[3]I am indebted to ARM's reviewers who have rightly pointed out that this appeal for heightened consciousness seems to be most appropriately aimed at that class of consumers who have both the time and access to resources to research the means of production of the items they consume. Even for those fortunate

enough to have access to such resources the information concerning the moral elements of an artifact's production may be difficult to find.

I'd like to say first that as a starting point in calling attention to Winner's (1991) message I am addressing an audience that is "invested in consumption." In other words, there is a class of consumers that is responsible for a disproportionate amount of consumption and yet this same class of consumers generally has both the educational background and resources necessary to make those consumption ethical. Where information cannot be found regarding consumption, I argue that a consumer must consider that fact itself to be ethically relevant and ask, "What does it mean to bring an item into my home when I cannot find out the morally relevant facts concerning its history and production?" I suggest that in these cases we might choose to forgo this item, or substitute one whose history is less obscure. At the same time, we have an obligation to lobby for disclosure from all manufacturers as to the circumstances of an artifact's production. This might take the form of supporting legislation that demands labeling which accurately reflects the production history of an item and its components. Accurate and revealing labeling further addresses a second concern: how do people who do not have access to resources such as those on the internet find the information they need and deserve to make ethical choices? Regardless of class we are all consumers, and all deserve the opportunity to make choices that are in line with our ethical principles. Putting more of the burden on manufacturers to disclose means of production, without eschewing our own responsibilities as consumers, is one way to make ethical consumption more practically accessible to consumers of all classes.

Finally, it must be admitted that these goals are "regulative ideals." In other words, all of us will occasionally consume items whose origins are not completely known to us—yet we will be better, more moral, and more democratic consumers in so far as we strive to make choices that are not only informed but are consistent with our moral views. If we allow Winner's (1991) and Lach's (1981, 1978) ideas to regulate and guide our decisions I believe we are traveling along an ethical path and making that path more accessible to others. I feel strongly that we cannot let the fact that we may not always have enough information, or that the information is not yet as available to all as it should be stop us from committing ourselves to a course of consumption that is compatible with parenting for peace and social justice.

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Cassie Premo Steele

Walking on the Backs of Whales

The night you were born I dreamt
I saw whales in the ocean, large humps
of backs rising out of the sea, grey
like your hands, and lingering there,
in the air, skin full of urchins and
moss. The sight was wondrous, like
your eyes, the first time you looked
at us, into the blue of me, the hazel
of your father, your gaze a miraculous
mix of us both. And when I was done,
with the whales and your birthing,
I began to walk back to the land,
and the water was shallow, the pain
was not bad, I was still amazed
at what I had seen, and I realized
I'd been walking on the backs of whales
the whole time. What I'd taken for earth
was the wet of their bodies, hovering firm
beneath the surface of water, providing
a path over ocean, allowing me to meet you
half way, between that world and this,
taking me gently back home to the shore
where I never before had been.

Jill Scott

terra materna

earth mother, Mother Earth,
terra materna, terra firma,
earth, dirt, mud
mummy muck, mummy mud.

you heavy soil,
root me with gravity,
wind this vortex down.
spiral me to my nadir,
surrender me
clayed slime to the deep.

chthonian magic
binds my sphered belly,
bulges me wide.
geocynclinal, this baby
earths its way to breath.

unafraid to celebrate,
it squeezes itself
a patient miracle,
and beautifies
a tiny path to grace.

a birth and a burst,
then one sententious stare,

baby gulps a first gasp
and pinks its own joy.

what force?
what potency?
what manifest will?

lend me your courage,
infant bundle,
bathe me in your pluck.

shadow me, spirit me,
embrace me in your might.
flower me open,
nurse me
from maid
to mother.
Earth.

Robin Gearing, Niloo Zand and Geordie Colvin

Engaging Fathers:
A Point of Entry in Promoting a Culture of Peace

"The supreme test of any civilization is whether it can socialize men by teaching them to be fathers."

—Margaret Meade

Introduction

While the changes and status of women's roles have been broadly debated over the last decades, research and discussion of men's roles and their positions have received little attention. Even less attention has been devoted to the consideration of the fathering roles within families. These changing roles can assist in achieving gender equality and the raising of children in ways that emphasize the qualities needed in building a culture of peace. A culture of peace is defined by values such as respect, equality, caring, empathy and cooperation. As such, a culture of peace is best viewed as a process rather than a condition requiring learning and "unlearning" certain values, attitudes, roles and behaviours.

The need to include and involve men as a means to achieving several important development objectives was highlighted in two United Nations conferences in Cairo (1994) and Beijing (1996). The Cairo Conference reported that, "... the objectives are to promote gender equality in all spheres of life, including family and community life, and to encourage and enable men to take responsibility for their sexual and reproductive behaviour and their social and family roles" (paragraph 4.25).

With the end of the twentieth century, social changes are forcing adjustments in both popular and scholarly conceptualizations of masculine and feminine gender and social roles defined by sex, specifically the father and mother roles. The dramatic movement into the work force by women; the softening of sexual stereotypes generated by the women's movement, and the

expressed longing among men for deeper relationships in their lives than those provided by the workplace have all conspired to change the way men relate with their children (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradely, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000; Pruett, 1993). Consequently, we have seen the ideal image of fathers shifted from the colonial father, to the distant breadwinner, to the modern dad, to the father as co-parent (Pleck & Pleck, 1997). Traditional households with the father as provider and the mother as nurturer and caregiver are increasingly giving way to less conventional, but increasingly modern households with more diverse roles and relationships within the family.

In recent years, a growing body of research is pointing to the benefits of a positive and nurturing father-child relationship (Minton & Pasley, 1996; Collins & Russel, 1991; Pruett, 1989; Lamb, 1987). Studies have found that a nurturing father can positively contribute to his child's ego and moral development (Schenenga, 1983), academic performance (McLanahan & Booth, 1989), sex-role and prosocial behaviour (Jeong & Choi, 1997), and communication (Ginsberg, 1995). Moreover, research has revealed that children raised with a nurturing father have decreased stereotypical attitudes (Miller, 1997; Grbich, 1995), greater internal locus of control (Williams & Radin, 1999), and less youth problems with alcohol, marijuana and sexual activity (Stern, Northman & Van Stylck, 1986). Also, strikingly, young boys raised by caring involved fathers appear to have a healthier flexibility in their socialized gender role identity (Pruett, 1989; quoted in Betcher & Pollack, 1993).

Nurturant fathering is not only a salient factor in the healthy development of young boys and girls but an important curative or transforming factor in the mental health of adult men (Pollack, 1995; Barnet, Marshall, & Pleck, 1992; Grief, 1992; Levant, 1990). Contrary to traditionally held beliefs; fatherhood is equally significant to many men as career achievement. Fatherhood appears to have a reverberating impact on men's emotional capacities for balance, mental health and even physical well being (Barnet *et al.*, 1992).

However, some authors have argued that many of the changes in the culture of fathering have remained in the realm of ideal rather than substance or behaviour (Gearing, 1998; Lelièvre, 1998). External pressures, such as feminist theory and the entry of women into the workplace, have catalysed the creation of the image of a 'new father' and modifications in the role of the father. The point of concern is that this discussion and the images generated will evolve without men, creating an image of the ideal father in which men may not have participated and to which they may not be able or want to relate. In the absence of such involvement, the myth of the "new father" can be de-motivational as it is not based on the daily experience of fathers and men (Lelièvre, 1998). This situation is closely linked to men's lack of words and opportunities to discuss and add their value to the new meaning of fatherhood. Men have identified a need and desire to come out of isolation and speak of the place of the father. A central obstacle is how to bridge these positions.

Society and the media have also influenced the ideal father-image, but very

few concrete and realistic models of committed and competent fathers are presented. A majority of present-day fathers, as shown by statistics, grew up with a physically or emotionally absent father, so they lacked the appropriate model to learn how to be a father (Lelièvre, 1998; Pollack, 1995). Regarding family expectations, there is also a significant gap between expectation and reality. Men are expected to be "involved fathers," but how does this translate into reality? Before birth, the perception that fathers have of their role is full of positive images nurtured by the social image of the "new father." These images dissipate quickly over the two years following birth, as the practical steps, knowledge and demands of "being there" is not presently readily available to men.

It is argued here that this gradual disengagement is the result of a number of individual and systemic obstacles that preclude positive involvement of fathers in the lives of their children, limiting their ability to access necessary services and supports in the community. Fathering programs,[1] practitioners, and community leaders must be able to come in contact with these men, and reach out to them. The redefinition of fatherhood must take root in contact with fathers and mothers, and with the reappraisal of manhood. There is need for programs and services that connect with men and provide them with the forums to discuss, share and enhance their understanding of the meaning and importance of their role as fathers.

Fathers' place in the promotion of a culture of peace: Redefining masculinity

The first step in developing a culture of peace is to identify and implement the underlying conditions that would promote such a goal. A culture of peace is mainly a result of interaction between human beings, and the concept of peace to a large extent connotes egalitarian relationships. Therefore, gender balance and redefinition of gender identities based on respect, equality and mutuality are crucial precursors to promotion of a sustainable culture of peace. The linking of male identity to traditional and stereotyped expectations of masculinity that involves dominance, control, authority, force and aggressiveness pose a significant challenge to engendering a culture of peace in families and society in general (UNESCO, 1997).

Clearly there are multiple causes of violence including dispossession, poverty, nationalism, racism, the concept of "honour" and diverse other situations in which violence develops. Nonetheless, there are persistent connections with masculine traits and behaviours: (a) boys' peer group life and mass media often promote a direct link between being a "real man" and the practice of dominance and violence; (b) when men feel entitled to power and status, especially with respect to women, they may be angered when they cannot achieve these "entitlements." Reactions to a sense of powerlessness may include violence against women and children; thereby potentially restoring feelings of control; and (c) extremist movements often express a "demand for dominance"

which is centered on the figure of the man, with woman cast as supporter and mother-of-warriors (UNESCO, 1997). Aggressive and dominating expressions of masculinity may be a direct source of violence. In many cases, gender ideologies may serve as the means by which other causes of conflict are converted into violent conduct. When violent masculinities are created, men and boys' recruitment may prolong or intensify armed conflicts (UNESCO, 1997). In a majority of situations the efforts to re-define manhood is a relevant strategy for peace.

From a gendered perspective, a culture of peace requires a re-definition of the masculine identity to emphasize and include greater nurturing, caregiving, emotional responsiveness and communication skills. Shifts from traditional male gender roles will have enormous implications for well being and peace in the family. It has been alluded that male violence is restrained principally by paternal investment in children, achieved through a reproductive and generative alliance with the mother in the family environment. "Fatherhood bends maleness, in particular male aggression, toward pro-social purposes" (Blankenhorn, 1996).

There is an emerging recognition that positive fathering can play a role in the reduction and prevention of domestic violence. For example, participating in the daily physical care of a child may prevent later abuse of parent-child intimacy. A man's involvement in the care of a child prior to the age of three, whether the child is his own or someone else's, significantly reduces the probability that the man will be involved later in the sexual abuse of any child (Pruett, 1993). Moreover, normalized male-child contact generated by men's participation in child rearing has also been identified an important factor in reducing male violence against women (Pruett, 1996, UNICEF, 1997). Men's self-image as nurturing people who can care for children, and spouses, is increasingly connected to the reduction of violence in the home.

Fathering is one of men's greatest opportunities for personal transformation. Men's capacity to achieve a gender-sensitive empathic form of fathering provides the opportunity for personal transformation for two reasons (Pollack, 1995). First, men can recognize the positive impact their emotional commitment has upon the well being of their children, both girls and boys. They are able to give to their children, what they themselves did not have. This altruistic transformation can often enhance men's self-esteem. This often requires identifying with and internalizing their wives' care-taking capacities and learning how to nurture. In this process, men can internalize a positive sense of nurturance that can go a long way toward de-constructing earlier lessons of socialization that diminished all things feminine and maternal.

Men wanting to impart a positive re-definition of masculinity for their sons must first find value and integrity for themselves in new roles in the family. When fathers as role models increasingly begin to perform domestic chores, assist in childcare, and provide nurture, love and guidance absent of violence to all family members, their children, and particularly sons, will begin to embody

a new image of masculinity and fatherhood. As provider and protector, fathers can help sons gain constructive survival skills in the home (Chevannes, 1995).

Given the physical and mental health costs of male violence against women and children, it is not surprising that research on the destructive consequences of male behavior is having high visibility on feminist research agenda (Goodman, Koss, & Russo, 1993). However, it is only recently that feminist theory and research has begun to address the ways in which the ideology of fatherhood has contributed to inter-locking inequalities for women in both the work place and family life (Russo, 1996; Silverstein, 1996). Feminist theorists and increasingly male clinicians and researchers agree that the re-definition of fathering to emphasize nurturing as well as providing roles will place attachment and connection at the center of gender socialization for men. This emphasis on father as nurturer has been argued as being the next essential step in the transformation of patriarchal culture.

The time has come to ask ourselves how do we move beyond documenting destructive consequences to preventing destructive behaviors in the first place? How do we support and guide men as fathers as they make necessary identity and role transitions? And finally, how do we expand our paradigm to include strengths and positive influences of fatherhood vis-à-vis a culture of respect, cooperation and peace?"

Existing obstacles to engaging fathers in the developmental experience

In recent years, many men have been striving to redefine the traditional, emotionally distant, authoritarian fathering approach with a more connected, involved and nurturing style. Yet, there are several factors that present a challenge to this transformation and perpetuate the traditional lack of attention to involved fathering practices.

Lessons gained from research and implementation programs, like fatherhood programs, suggest that major barriers to men's involvement include poverty and unemployment, father's lack of contact with their children and gender role identity (Bonney, Kelley & Levant,1999; UNICEF, 1990). Other macro-level barriers are related to the culture of a society and it's dominant ideology, services and organizations in the community.

Individual level barriers

(I) Poverty and unemployment

In many parts of the world, men view the provider role as an essential component to what manhood and fatherhood means to them (Barker & Lowenstein, 1996; Hunter & Davis, 1994; Cazanave, 1984; Brown, 1983). Supporting one's family economically is valued universally as a mark of masculinity (Brown, 1995; Bruce, Lloyd & Leonard, 1995). Studies have also suggested that the father's ability to provide financially may have a substantial influence on his involvement with his children. The provider role frequently

remains central to personal definition of fatherhood, poor and unemployed men may experience a great deal of emotional stress about their inability to fulfill their role, in addition to a loss of prestige and power in the "eyes of the world." The resulting internal conflict, combined with a perceived loss of authority and power may lead men to react by retreating and playing a marginal role in the family or no role at all, or revert to violence (Wade 1994; Taylor, 1981; Penn, 1994).

Economic circumstances do not invariably dictate paternal involvement. Many fathers who are unable to provide substantially for the material needs of their children do maintain a positive influence in their lives (McAdoo & McAdoo, 1994). Nevertheless, the experience of clinicians in community fathering programs have echoed other helping professions working with fathers and families in that they must be sensitive to the detrimental effects of socioeconomic forces on men in order to help these fathers overcome the psychological barriers that affect their ability to nurture and care for their children.

(II) Lack of contact with children

According to Blankenhorn (1996), in the United States the number of children living with their biological father has moved down from 82.4% in 1960 to 61.7% in 1990. One can estimate that with the increase number of children born out of traditional wedlock and the existing rate of divorce, up to 60% of today's children will live part of their childhood apart from their biological father. In Canada, a single mother leads one in five families. In cases where men are not custodial parents after divorce or separation, it is estimated that 30%-70% of these fathers disappear from their children's lives, seeing them once a year or less (Dowd, 1997; Carey, 1996).

Similarly, there has been a drastic increase in female-headed households in many other parts of the world (Dowd, 1997). Also, war, disease, environmental degradation, economic marginalization and political unrest have conspired to drive families apart (Dreze, 1992; Lloyd & Desai, 1992; Lloyd & Gage-Brandon, 1993). Furthermore, the lack of economic opportunities has led many men to migrate away from their homes in search of work, and even abandon their families (Bruce, Lloyd & Leonard, 1995).

(III) Lack of paternal confidence

Another obstacle to father's involvement is a lack of confidence men often have with regards to child rearing and domestic activities. The more men feel supported in the parent role by their wives, friends, community and society at large, the more they tend to stay involved in the care of their young children. Some have suggested that a kind of circle has developed in which men are presumed incompetent, and they accept that verdict and neither seek nor are given a chance to overcome their presumed incompetence (Bonney, Kelley & Levant, 1999; Bruce, *et al.*, 1995). Another perspective notes that men have

been directly and indirectly undermined in their efforts.

In China, for example, men and women believe that fathers are inherently incapable of handling infants. Consequently, men tend to avoid getting close to children. This observation is further corroborated by studies looking at mothers' attitudes and their influence on fathers' behaviour (Fagan, Newash, & Schloesser, 2000; De Luccie, 1996). A study on Italian fathers showed that the degree of a father's involvement with his children and his level of satisfaction as a parent were highly correlated with the extent of his wife's encouragement (Coley & Chase-Lansdale, 1999; UNICEF, 1997). Clearly, changes in the man's role in the family imply changes in the woman's role, and these need to be discussed and explored at the same time.

Personal gender ideologies

Gender role ideology and involvement

Role theory suggests that the father role is based on a man's internalized concept of appropriate paternal behaviours (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). This internal concept is influenced both by culturally defined norms or behaviour and by individual beliefs. How fathers define their roles influences the quality and quantity of their behaviour with their children (Ihinger-Tallman, Pasley & Buehler, 1993). Research findings suggest that men's involvement in child rearing is more self-determined than often believed (Bonney, Kelley & Levant, 1999, Aldous, Mulligan & Bjarnason, 1998; Beitel & Parke, 1998). Specifically, fathers who report more liberal gender role ideology, hold more progressive views of the father's role as nurturer and caregiver. In turn progressive views of fathering are related to father involvement in care giving activities. These findings support the centrality of fathers' gender role ideology and aspects of personality as important for active participation in caregiving.

Help seeking

The process of reaching out for help often occurs after long deliberation and perhaps some anxious trepidation. Frequently, these fears and concerns whether real or perceived frustrate entry to and participation in programs designed to support men. Fathering programs need to recognize that for program implementation to be successful social service agencies must attempt to identify and remove obstacles that impede men's ability to seek help.

Again, a man's gender role identity and his conceptions of masculinity play a part in the decision to approach service providers for help in fulfilling their fathering role. Traditional male role identity is manifested in the difficulty in perceiving and acknowledging problems and their symptoms, a difficulty to disclose negative aspects of the personality, difficulty in self-disclosure and a fear of intimacy for fear of rejection by peers (Dulac, 1997; Pollack, 1995; Pleck, 1981).

The ability to acknowledge a problem and ask for help has often been viewed by men as a contradiction to the masculine image of self-reliance and

dominance. Men's socialization and definition of their roles often devalue expressions of inner life, while implying competence, success, self-reliance, competition, mistrust of others, aggressiveness, boldness, rashness and independence rather than interdependence (Dulac, 1997; Pleck, 1981). Male patterns of socialization can shame boys and men into suppressing any expression of sadness, depression and vulnerability. Because of their process of socialization based on performance and on competition, men find it hard to admit their vulnerability and to express requests for help as this may be viewed as sign of failure, dependence and immasculinity. In this context, some authors have gone as far as suggesting that men live their lives as "emotional illiterates," directing their emotions towards two main modes of expressions: anger or violent action (Dulac, 1997). Although this is contrary to the clinical observations in some fathering programs, this concept unfortunately still remains accepted by some.

Experience shows that male qualities of care, sacrifice, giving and empathy exist, and that they could form the nexus of a positive, nurturing, respectful and proactive sense of masculinity (Pollack, 1995). However, many men need support and guidance to negotiate and foster these qualities in action.

Organizational obstacles

Lack of sensitivity to needs of fathers in health and welfare organizations

Many programs and practices within social and human service agencies, consciously or unconsciously, tend to ignore and undervalue the role of fathers. This needs to change. Misconceptions about the importance of the fathering role in healthy child development, namely a belief that only mothers are capable of a nurturing and positive relationship with children, creates a situation where fathers are painted out of the picture. Fathers, like mothers, can effectively raise an emotionally well developed and healthy child (Gearing and Campbell, 2000; Dowd, 1997).

In practice and research, men's roles and issues are usually examined from the perspective of a deficit, viewing men as barriers rather than potential resource in developing a sustainable and supportive condition for woman and children (Barker, 1996). Social service agencies have a historical tendency to focus on work with mothers and to ignore fathers (Jaffe, 1983). Many fathering programs have started to successfully challenge this historical systemic obstacle. For example, given their responsibilities for case planning and service delivery on behalf of children and their families, child welfare caseworkers are key actors in determining fathers' involvement in services. Fathers are rarely involved by caseworkers in case assessments, case planning or receipt of services (O'Donnell, 1999). Furthermore, this research has shown that caseworkers usually do not pursue paternal involvement or identify lack of participation as a professional concern. Practitioners in these contexts tend to know more about fathers' problems than their strengths.

Frequently, it is difficult for practitioners working with men to detect

masculine signals that are requests for help (Dulac, 1997). For example, virile expressions of a request for help are often interpreted as aggressive behaviour or an abuse of power, rather than as a cry for help (Lelièvre, 1998).

Fathering programs in local communities need to be cognizant that men may have problems recognizing and communicating critical situations. By defining a request for help as with many communications regarding a problem or an anxiety-producing event, is an attempt to obtain support, advice or assistance in a time of distress. Some authors plainly establish the difficulties that await the promotion and implementation of programs for father involvement (Gearing, 1998). Also, it is recognised that the difficulties and obstacles, externally and internally effecting men's involvement and help-seeking behaviour, need to be openly addressed, anticipated, and minimised by the service providing programs.

Therefore, the critical questions that social service agencies need to ask in order to better engage fathers are: How can practitioners build with men the trust needed to establish the bonds of co-operation and interdependence necessary to discuss and experience the inherent difficulties of fatherhood? What type of helping environment is needed to accomplish these without awakening feelings of helplessness, loss of control, blame, guilt and failure that result from a socialization process that is performance and competition-oriented? Also, how can we move from a deficit orientation that focuses on pathologies, human difficulties, crises and inadequacies to one that uses programs in a preventative, rather than a reactive fashion?

Strategies to overcome barriers to father involvement

Organizational capacity building and training of practitioners

A new consciousness and increased capacity among agencies and practitioners constitute a pre-requisite for any successful programming initiative to positively engage fathers (Gearing, 1998; Lelièvre, 1998; UNICEF, 1997). It is necessary to foster, at the level of practitioners as well as in the general population, a wide movement of sensitization that will allow the birth of a culture of fatherhood (Gearing, 1998; Lelièvre, 1998).

One of the barriers to father's involvement in the developmental experience is organizations' inability to respond to and reach out to men. It is essential to sensitize practitioners and community leaders on the values, attitudes and prejudices held by our communities regarding men and fatherhood. Training directed at the creation of services that are favourable to men and proactive in the promotion of father involvement should be provided and has been shown to be practical and successful within community fathering programs. Practitioner training will in part catalyze a reflection on their intervention style and on their values regarding parental roles. Such training will also increase empathic understanding of men's burdens of masculinity and developmental dilemmas amoung those in the helping professions (Pollack, 1995; Rako & Mazer, 1980).

At the organizational level, the role of men in families should be a part of all situation analysis, as women and children's are at present. Since the roles of men in families may vary among cultural, religious, kinship or class groups and throughout the lifespan, it is essential to understand the actual situation before making programming decisions. All programming decisions should be based on knowledge, derived from qualitative and quantitative data of the local situation of men and women in families.

Program considerations

Integrating men-focused strategies

Social programs and human services need to be re-oriented to include the role of men in families to ensure more effective outcomes for child health and gender equality. Programs can assist families to adapt to alternative roles and responsibilities and achieve a new social dynamic where roles are redefined to place value on nurturing, caretaking and compassion. Roles and responsibilities in the family may be based on need, rather than on predetermined gender-based expectations, systemic obstacles or stereotypes. The interests of a child are best served when men and women can create a positive partnership based on mutual respect within a supportive social fabric of family and community. Human service agencies can find numerous entry points by exploring ways that male identity and their role in the family can impact on welfare outcomes within their own areas of program focus.

Strategies for involving men can be achieved by linking them with on going program activities. By integrating men-focused strategies in existing programs, agencies may not need to develop large new vertical programs. Opportunities should be explored to include men in programs dealing with child welfare and development (i.e.: child welfare services, breast feeding, pre-natal programs, etc.), employment and job training, and programs working to stop sexual exploitation and violence against women. Therefore, while such strategies demand a new consciousness and awareness for program planners and implementers, positive men's involvement can be achieved in the context of ongoing interventions and not necessarily separate initiatives.

Support and encouragement for role changes

Men's roles in families change over their lifetime; thus a life cycle perspective can be particularly useful in transforming the traditional culture regarding masculinity, power and partnership. Creative strategies to address socialization processes throughout the life cycle are proving more and more useful. Programmatic attention has begun to focus on developing life skills for boys and facilitating adaptation to changing family structures and roles for fathers (Brown, 1995; Brown & Broomfield, 1994). Working with different age groups may also speed the process of positive change.

Programs and policy initiatives are needed to support and encourage fathers as they re-negotiate their roles, recognizing that there is no one formula

for facilitating these changes, nor one image of masculinity that will be acceptable everywhere. Such initiatives therefore need be developed locally and with both gender and cultural sensitivity.

Maintaining identity as roles evolve is a crucial factor in achieving sustainable change toward constructive and positive masculinity (Pleck & Pleck, 1997). If men feel sharing the provider role and taking on domestic responsibilities is emasculating them, they are likely to resist the changes needed for a healthy role transition. In contrasting, if men begin to appreciate and value their own contribution in the household, the transition could be easier. The community and social agencies have a significant role to play in recognizing and valuing the roles by the messages they give to men in society.

Positive male models

Men's self-image as nurturing people who can care for children should be enhanced in any way possible. More equitable partnerships between men and women needs to be promoted within families and in this respect a more active role for father in child rearing must be fostered (Jolly, 1993). A vehicle for achieving such an objective is developing programs and forums for men to come together to share and discuss challenges, experiences and meanings of fatherhood. Men and women need help to re-frame participation in the household realm and child rearing as positive expression of masculinity, and not as a sign of deficit or weakness of a man.

In order to break the isolation of fathers and allow networking, the community must validate and support the efforts made by fathers. Community models of fathers who are involved and competent must be emphasized, in order to avoid the negative impact of a guilt-inducing approach. To support and encourage such changes, practitioners need to work in communities to identify positive role models and community leaders who are culturally and socially attractive for fathers, and to determine effective ways to nurture and promote them in the community.

Social marketing of programs

Before men get involved with a program or service, it is important for some to get approval from their spouse, an authority figure and/or the community (Bonney, Kelley & Levant, 1999; Lelièvre, 1998). Social marketing of programs and positive fathering images can bring acceptance to father involvement and to programs that support this involvement. Efforts toward social acceptance will address fathers but also services, community organizations, work environments, partners and mothers.

Presentations of the role of men in families as depicted in media and mobilization materials need to be examined for gender balance and to include positive views and images of nurturing fathering practices. In areas from which men have been inappropriately excluded, promotional materials (e.g. breast feeding posters, etc.) could be adopted to include them.

Experience from the developing countries shows that men's motivation to engage in programs tends to increase when appeals are made on the best interest of the child and the community (UNICEF, 1997; Engle, 1995). Programs targeting men's issues with a focus on positive fathering and gender equality in the home are beginning to see some success where such programs are able to appropriately pinpoint male motivation factors such as greater well-being for their children, or supporting stronger communities (Engle, 1995). People will rethink community values when there is demonstrable benefit to the family. Approaches can be effective in building constructive partnership between men and women, promoting child well being and developing a supportive culture of peace and cooperation within the family.

Community partnerships

Community and institutional partnerships as demonstrated with community fathering programs are crucial in any programming strategy to engage men in the developmental experience. From our experience such partnerships need to develop at a variety of levels. Potential partners may include: (a) existing men's networks (social groups, sports clubs, support groups, etc); (b) parent associations and parenting groups (e.g. pre- and post-natal classes); (c) education systems and religious organizations; (d) education and employment programs; (e) mass media for social marketing and promotion of new positive gender images; (f) other non-governmental (NGO) and community-based (CBO) organizations with an interest in improving health and welfare of women and children.

Conclusion

In the context of demographic and social transformation, the opportunity is ripe to help men and women to adapt to the changing roles and changing needs within their families and communities. Men are critical to this process, as both fathers and mothers create the most important environment in which the child will be socialized. A balancing of power within the family that is free from violence and supportive of both parents is needed to achieve a culture of peace and equality. Men are also waiting for support to become more engaged and involved in this process.

To achieve lasting change for a culture of peace and cooperation within the family and society, new socialization processes are needed. Learning and developing behaviours and attitudes that foster a culture of peace begins with the creation of a long lasting supportive environment for children through positive socialization. A life cycle approach to achieving gender equality begins with parents. There must be expectations and acceptance that men and women share child rearing as well as the provider role. Social change will be necessary for ensuring more equitable roles for men and women, and a more involved and nurturing role for men in the family as the norm. Achieving such change will require interventions with all age groups with appropriate entry

points throughout the life cycle.

To be sustainable, such transformation needs to happen beyond the family, in communities and institutions as well, since education, laws, policies and the media are all powerful socializing agents. Efforts in social marketing/promotion of positive images of fatherhood and forging strong community and institutional partnerships are essential in engaging men in the dialogue vis-à-vis gender role transformation.

Finally, in order to impart a positive re-definition of manhood for their sons, men must first find value and integrity for themselves in their new roles as caretakers and nurturers in the family. These values need to be recognized and assimilated by other systems such as the school, religious organizations, work environments, mass media and finally social service organizations. There clearly is a need to address organizational and agency level capacity gaps to create programs that involve fathers in the helping paradigm. Training and sensitization of practitioners and program planner should be central in this process.

[1]In all references to "fathering programs" the authors have incorporated data and observations from their clinical research on The Re: Membering Fatherhood Program. The Re: Membering Fatherhood Program is a group program designed to help fathers improve and enhance their emotional bond with their children.

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Upper: Rochelle Rubinstein, untitled, 6 x 4", linocut print on photograph, 2000.
Lower: Rochelle Rubinstein, untitled, 6 x 4", hand-coloured linocut print, 1999.

Faulkner Fox

Sex In Canada

Billie Holiday sings
and you wash my hair
in the deep kitchen sink.
Your fingers move like a charm,
and you kiss my neck.
It's toasty in this, your family farmhouse,
because of the old wood stove.
It must be 20 below outside,
snow four feet deep.

We go upstairs to the study,
your professor father's place of escape,
and we make love on the narrow wooden bunk,
hand-built by your father,
an ex-farm boy, now intellectual.
It's warm enough to be naked
with no blankets, stove pipe running
right along our bunk, and you push off
from the log wall–
off and into me.

There is no place like this
in my family.
Warm, well-loved, hand-built.
Welcome to the farm, you say
when I arrive, covered in wet snow.

Hot cinnamony lasagna bakes in the oven.
The next day, we make some maple syrup–
such deep, hard work that I fell asleep
at the kithcen table, holding a sieve.
We keep out some of the sap, drink it straight.
Taste the coolness, you say. Taste the winter.

This is it.
Some of it I've never even imagined.
I'm gonna have some kids with you.

Ginger Hanks Harwood

Peace Activist Women During the 1980s in the U.S.: *Motherhood, Motivation and Movement*

Women are highly visible and articulate in the peace movements of this country, active to an extent that exceeds their general level of participation in the public arena. Further, women have asserted repeatedly that they participate in the dialog on war and peace as women, claiming gender-specific rights and responsibilities for the tasks of critiquing the social ethos and generating a transformative paradigm for human community. Frequently, the claim is based on a connection between their life-tasks as creators and nurturers.

This article presents the link frequently made by these activists between mothering and concern with peace issues. It also examines their analysis of the current model for national defense and security in light of their nurturing commitments. It focuses on the way in which their lives as "mothers" motivated them to become activists and afforded them a basis from which to analyze and critique the current national defense paradigm. It then reviews the practical outcomes of women's peace activism.

Women's peace activism in the 1980s

During the 1980s, peace activist women in the United States created a public dialog concerning the social and ethical implications of the national defense policy and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Although most women were recruited into the conversation through preexisting social connections, the exchange created through these associations was political and social rather than personal and private.

While feminist activists within the peace movement were growing increasingly vocal, visible and militant, their efforts were augmented dramatically by a passionate and unexpected source: "mothers." As the result of raised consciousness around the significance of nuclear issues, thousands of previously

uninvolved women joined the peace movement. In addition to joining established peace groups, "mothers" created new organizations and actions designed to mobilize women. Peace organizations activated women's networks by constructing links between key gender identity components, experiences and loyalties. A host of new groups acknowledged themselves as "women's spaces," by including the designations "Women's," "Mothers" or "Grandmothers," in their name, i.e., Mothers Embracing Nuclear Disarmament, Grandmothers for Peace. The literature, meetings, conferences and other public presentations explored the link between women's traditional roles as nurturer and protector of the weak, young or vulnerable, and the current threat war and militarism poses to health and life. The discussion of peace, peacemaking and desired outcomes evolved as the diverse groups were drawn together in a loose coalition with other, older, more established and more diverse peace and justice groups in attempts to maximize their effectiveness. Social critique became increasingly sophisticated as groups of women usually separated by race, class, religion and geography met face to face to hear what peace (and the war system) looked like from various social or economic locations. The dialogue that ensued created a growing awareness of the nature of the threat faced by humanity and the multidimensional nature of peacemaking.

The study

In the late 1980s, 100 women from a broad spectrum of peace groups were interviewed and asked about their motivation for activism. The study was conducted to elicit activists' statements concerning motivation for involvement in the peace movement. Of these 100 women, 25 were from groups with gender-specific names i.e., Mothers for Nuclear Disarmament or Women Against Nuclear Disarmament. Another 25 were active in radical groups with strong feminist identification: Movement for a New Society, Pugent Sound Women's Peace Camp, Seneca Women's Encampment for A Future of Peace and Justice. Twenty-five women interviewed belonged to general peace organizations such as Freeze, while the final group was drawn from those whose primary connection to the peace movement was through faith-based organizations.

In addition to the individual interviews conducted, 15 peace conferences and gatherings were attended. These included large, public gatherings such as The Ribbon, Justine Merritt's project to ring the capital with a ribbon of panels from all over the world visualizing "what we could not bear to see lost in a nuclear holocaust"; the World Congress on International Peace; Colorado Women's Agenda; A New Concept of National Security: Meeting People's Needs; Women and Global Security: Forum 86; and Feminism and Non-Violence Gathering held in Tucson, Arizona in1986. The variety of gatherings ranged from conferences designed by Washington, D.C. professional activists who arranged the presence of important political figures and movie stars to contribute to the status of the meeting, to an invitation-only gathering focused

on studying the goals of feminism and nonviolence. These conferences provided an opportunity to hear women conversing on these topics informally as well as observe the responses they gave to speakers and the topics addressed.

Study Results: Mothers' arms are not nuclear arms

Mother-love and political activism

When asked, "What would you give as your prime motivation for peace work?" many women responded emphatically that they were moved to action by a sense of responsibility towards children. Concern for the wellbeing of children appeared as a motivational theme in 67 percent of the interviews, and was identified as the prime reason for activism in 36 of the 100 interviews. While children appeared as a theme more frequently among women located in religious and women-specific groups, they were strongly represented throughout the interviews. Of the 33 women who did not articulate concern for children as a motivator in the course of the interview, 24 did not have children. In a response typical of the one-third of the sample who listed children as their prime motivation for activism, one activist answered, "My motivation would be children, all the children, my children and all children" (#45). One first-time activist explained her commitment to peace work saying that she would simply play racquetball every afternoon and go to lunch with friends and shop if she did not have her children to consider. Instead, she donated time at a peace office because, "I feel like I owe it to my kids to give them a chance at an excellent life. They may blow it," she admitted, "but I don't want anyone else to blow it for them.... And I think for anyone you talk to in Beyond War, I bet 99 per cent will say 'for my children'" (#9).

Mother-power and the creation of peace organizations

The persistent concern for the wellbeing of children as a motivating factor in the interviews is consistent with successful movement recruitment efforts targeted towards women as mothers and nurturers. The link between peace activism and responsible parenthood in the nuclear age was also present in the stories related by several women who started national peace organizations. Betty Bumpers, founder of Peace Links, often recites the story of how she was forced to deal with the possibility of nuclear war, the affects that it would have on her own family, and how that moved her to engage politically. Edith Villastrago, co-founder of Women Strike for Peace, provided another example as she reflected on the centrality of motherhood in that movement's genesis. She said, "It started when my children were small and I was very concerned about the radioactive poison which was raining down on the milk and food of our children, and so a number of us got together and started Women's Strike for Peace." Thinking back on the situation she reminisced, "It just happened to be the kind of issue that concerns so many more mothers and women around the country that it just developed like wildfire" (#57).

Justine Merritt, the creative spark behind The Ribbon Peace Project, recorded the surfacing of her concern for children in the poem "The Gift":

> For months—
> or is it years?
> I have carefully,
> I have silently prayed to the Father to spare the ocean's shells;
> For the sake of one lovely shell, I've prayed,
> do not let the world be destroyed. . . .
> And for all those months of all those years,
> since an August day in faraway Japan,
> I've prayed for shells and roses and birds' song
> and hid,
> because I could not bear to see such a secret sorrow,
> hid the image of a baby's ear,
> curved, soft;
> not as hard as an ocean's shell -a baby's ear-
> no protection at all -a baby's ear-
> against the wind of a nuclear holocaust . . .
> The shell, the rose, the bird's song
> deliberate disguises to hide the babies, the toddlers,
> the children from the unspeakable .... (#40).

These lines, taken from the middle of "The Gift," reflect the prominent role of the growing awareness of the vulnerability of her grandchildren, and all children, in her motivation to move into peace activism. This concern generated a project that involved tens of thousands of people before it climaxed in the wrapping of the "ribbon" around the Pentagon on August 4, 1985. Justine Merritt's poem reflects many women's angst over the threat of nuclear armaments to the wellbeing of children.

Motherhood as a secondary and sustaining motivator in activism

Concern for children emerged as a prominent and critical factor in the motivation for sustained activism in cases where another concern was designated as the prime reason for participation. Women with long-established commitments to peace that antedated their maternity reflected the importance of their concern for children in their present labours for peace. The impact of maternity on active peace women is exemplified in the observations made by an activist attached to the staff of a national politician. "Since my son has been born, it's just so phenomenal the effect it has had. It has been sort of a recommitment for me. Peace is even more important and," she disclosed, "more urgent and makes more sense.... That has really been a strong motivation for me" (#7). Another activist who participated in several peace organizations on

a national level and whose commitments to peacemaking also antedated her maternity, revealed a similar sharpening of interest in peacemaking by virtue of the presence of children in her life. "It behooves us," she observed, "to give an all-out effort to make the quality of life better, not only for ourselves and our children, but for their children.... I am looking at grandmotherhood in a few years and how do I want society to be for my grandchildren to live in?" (#71).

"Maternal" identity and activism

The interviews and conferences revealed a "maternal" consciousness among the majority of activists: women reflected an awareness of the significance of their roles as mothers and nurturers. One activist succinctly captured the link between activism and women's gender-identity as she explained: 'We are the nurturers. We make the babies and we care for them, and that makes it easier to care for other people's babies" (#63). The tasks which follow birthing, the routine care-giving, was seen as formative in the way women develop and act on their values. "A mother has to be patient and compassionate and more mellow, not as hot-headed, because she is dealing with new life." This role, which extends beyond their responsibilities to particular individuals, and which may be anticipated by those who have not yet had children, is frequently generalized to care for life and the vulnerable in general. For many women, personal identity is inextricably linked with nurturing tasks.

Further, activist women argued that culture had encouraged them, as women and mothers, to develop and display many values and attributes, including reverence for life, sensitivity, flexibility, cooperativeness and nurture. While they did not believe that these were exclusively women's traits, they maintained that women were "allowed" to deepen these traits in ways men were not. In the words of an activist at a national conference, "We've been acculturated to be nurturers, to respect life, and I think if all humanity had that kind of nurturing spirit and love for life that I believe is inherent in women, we'd have less wars."

The possibility of a nuclear conflagration threatens the life work of the millions of women who have committed their lives to the protection of the vulnerable and the promotion of communal well-being through careful nurturing. Any plan that threatens human existence does not reflect the values and lives of the care-givers. The nuclear defense model provided by world leaders particularly lack credibility, as it destroys the very qualities that it pretends to protect. Throughout the interviews, activists remarked that mothering in the nuclear age includes protecting the children from the threat posed by those who devised plans to defend them with nuclear weapons. As Dorothee Soelle has noted: "More and more women understand that the world we want to build, the new sharing of life together we seek, is threatened by nothing as much as the militarism of the men who rule. Once you have understood what it means to be a woman, you belong on the side of peace and not among those who want to secure it unto death" (1973: 67).

Motherhood and the threat posed by military machismo

For women whose identity is centered upon the care of children, the casual attitude towards the lives expended to achieve military goals threatens the work of a lifetime. During the interviews, several women commented directly and, sometimes angrily, at the control over life that men with military mindsets possessed. It seemed crucial to them that national military conduct be made to conform to policies that promoted and ensured life rather than threatened it. "We are the creators, really, the caretakers of the creation of life. And it's stupid to pour all this energy into giving birth and rearing healthy children and then to stand around and let some fool maniac, because he is hungry for power, destroy them" (#49). In a similar vein, another activist queried, "Why should they [women] bring up these children to be killed in the war? Why should they use their whole lives nurturing and caring for these children and let them get killed because some Henry Kissinger thinks it's a wonderful idea to kill Asians? It's infuriating" (#52). For women who invest their lives in the creation and nurture of human life, the cost of nuclear weapons is too dear. For those who made the connection between nuclear armaments and the fate of their children, the mandate seemed clear.

"Our Stunning Harvest," a poem by Ellen Bass, captured this view as emphatically as any other statement:

> I want to talk to the president.
> I want to go with other mothers
> and meet with the president.
> And I want mothers from Russia there.
> And Chinese mothers
> And the head of China
> and mothers from Saudi Arabia and Japan and South Africa
> and all the heads of state and the families of the heads of state
> and the children, all the children of the mothers.
> I want a meeting.
> I want to ask the president, is there nothing precious to you?
>
> And when the president explains how it's the Russians,
> I want the Russian women to say,
> We don't want war.
> I want all the women to scream
> We don't want war, we, the people do not want war....
> I want the mothers of the children of the heads of state screaming.
> I want them to scream until their voices are hoarse whispers
> raw as the bloody rising of the sun,
> I want them to hiss
> How dare you?
> How dare you? (cited in McAllister, 1982: 67-69).

The women interviewed insisted that mothers' voices needed to be heard by those who made the decisions. A paradigm of defense that is divorced from a sense of custodial care for life produces community destruction. With the lives of those for whom they have cared and the future of the children is at stake, Mothers need to participate in the decision-making.

Mother wisdom: The nurturer's analysis of the current defense paradigm

As noted above, organizations were started and "mothers" were recruited into the movement by the threat nuclear weapons posed to life, that children would not have a future if the nuclear threat were not abated. "My prime reason for being involved in peacework is the survival of the species. I am very concerned about peace," explained one activist, "because ... if you do not have children because of a nuclear holocaust, you don't have anything" (#9). Thus, the foundation of the mothers, repudiation of the defense model was its threat to children's survival. Once within the peace community, however, they participated in an in-depth analysis of the current defense model. In small groups and large gatherings, women gathered information and examined its affects on various aspects of child development and welfare. After evaluating the evidence, they concluded that the war system impeded children's growth in several tangible ways.

Adverse affects on children's emotional, educational and moral development

Women interviewed were concerned with the negative affects of nuclear armaments on the emotional wellbeing of children. From their investigations and experiences, they concluded that children growing up in the shadow of the nuclear bomb lost the freedom of youth and were distracted from their appropriate developmental tasks under the weight of fear and anxiety they carried. In an interview for this study, Vivian Verdun-Roe, film-maker and recipient of an academy award for her film, In *The Nuclear Shadow: What Can the Children Tell Us*, talked about the ways in which teaching raised her consciousness and made her aware of children's fear that they would not have a chance to live out their lives. The film she produced presented children's perceptions that nuclear weapons threatened their existence and instilled within them feelings of insecurity and apprehension. "I really wanted the world to know what the kids were feeling," Ms. Verdun-Roe related, "and I wanted the world to take their concerns seriously and act in a responsible way in dealing with these children's concerns" (#70).

Women also identified the economic effect of military spending on resources for schools and the other domestic programs directly touching the daily lives of children. Analyzing national expenditures on education, social programs and military preparedness, they concluded that if national security in a democracy is ultimately dependent upon an informed and educated popula-

tion ready to defend its freedom, current allocations undermined rather than strengthened the nation. A popular peace poster remarks of a coveted future where "Schools will have all the money they need and the military will have to hold bake sales for missiles."

Activist women also evaluated the moral costs of living in a militarized state. Assessing military ethics in light of their own ideals, morals and standards for conduct, they determined that they wanted a world characterized by different values as the milieu for their children. Perceiving the militarization of the culture as diminishing the moral quality of life, activist women demanded that the size and expenditures of the military be reduced to a level where it does not threaten to become the controlling and defining institution of the culture. "I would say that the most important reason that I do peace work, outside of my clarity that it is what is necessary in order to be faithful to the religious call," reflected one minister in a peace church, "is my children and the wish that ... the world my children will have be different than what it is now" (#26). The different future for which she works is one in which masculinity is not measured in terms of machismo and conflicts are not resolved through violence.

"It takes a village"

The conversation within the peace movement also explored the link between the healthy growth of children and the health of the community in which they live. The discussions located children and families in the real communities in which they live and identified the ways in which mothers' work was facilitated or impeded by unhealthy communities. Activists examined the meaning of the nuclear culture for the communities that women have loved, fostered and cultivated as places where children grow and human beings experience their relatedness to others. Concerned with community on the local, national and global levels, activists identified the relationship between military spending and inadequate funding for community priorities and projects.

Review of information provided from a variety of sources revealed the inverse correlation between nuclear weapons and social justice. The peace and security women needed for their life projects was jeopardized by the build-up of weapons systems. National security paid for by depriving communities of basic necessities for the neediest of its members resulted in social alienation, deterioration and unrest. Peace secured by funds appropriated from community development projects undermined lasting peace because, "If in fact you're seeking peace on a national and global level, you have to also seek peace at home on a domestic level, and vice versa" (#71).

Activists' analysis of the economic impact of militarism on minority elements of the culture, especially women and the poor, reported an overwhelmingly negative affect. As one Denver activist explained, "There is a whole way in which poverty, peace, and women are all very interrelated, that most of the poor are women and children. I see a relationship between poverty and growing militarism" (#30). In short, assessment of the affects on militarism on

children must include the affects that it has upon the larger "village" in which children grow and develop.

Voices from the margins

Women from oppressed communities provided a particularly scathing analysis of the nuclear policy and its effects on the lives of the members of their communities. In many ways, the consequences of producing nuclear weapons are experienced daily in the neighborhoods, the circumstances and conditions under which large numbers of "their people" work and live. Their communities resemble war zones, as lack of decent housing, employment, medical care, and basic human services conspire to promote criminality, mental illness, and despair. They trace the effects of national nuclear priorities to the poverty of the women and children. One activist emphasized this noting:

> *My need is to see justice done. My need is to see children fed. My need is to find community jobs, jobs with dignity because they can't find work. So my need is to do justice. ...I realize that justice will never be done as long as governments continue to steal our resources, our finances and put them into militarism. So I don't come into this looking for a peaceful world and living happy ever after. I want some real things. I want clinics. I want daycare centres. I want real things that make a difference to the people I love.* (#47)

While the relationship between social justice and enduring peace is widely recognized and prevalent throughout the peace culture, oppressed communities continually contribute to the process of developing a more radical and comprehensive critique of the present system by championing a penetrating analysis of the current paradigm. They asserted that the current model robs their communities of necessary human and economic resources while perpetuating racism and classism. It increases the economic, emotional and social burdens of those least able to support them. It undermines the labor of women's bodies and lives and distorts the shape of both the present and the future. From the perspectives garnered as nurturers and caregivers, these women reject the present defense paradigm and indict it as destructive of community.

Outcomes of mother-wisdom and political reflections

Through revealing the significant threat that nuclear weapons pose to the fabric and meaning of women's lives (and that which they hold as most precious), activist women united women with diverse ideological affinities and concerns into a political force. Their repudiation of national defense policy through mass political action and civil disobedience expressed their resolution not to be deflected until national defense and security systems preserve and protect that which they held sacred. From collective reflection came both clarity and empowerment to speak in the political arena.

While various groups within the women's peace movement of the 1980s

utilized different strategies and methods of engagement, the overall effect was that of calling a national referendum on the "defense" policy of the United States. They made manifest the ways in which the current definitions of security, defense, public interest and peace are derivative of a worldview where individual and national supremacy and domination are the unspoken goals, the motivating reasons behind the investment in the nuclear arsenal. The various groups and actions participated in naming the ways in which the fundamental assumptions of national policy derive from a dangerous and distorted model of reality, a mode that cannot stand when confronted with the realities of women's lives.

Recognizing the vulnerability of the planet and its inhabitants, women who viewed themselves as nurturers and custodians of life demanded that national leaders take initiative in creating and establishing an inclusive and enduring peace. Anything less, they maintained, is tantamount to global suicide and will face the continued resistance of women. Not content with cosmetic changes, caregivers sought fundamental re-visioning and restructuring of national priorities and policies. National Senators and other political leaders attended the women's conferences and pledged reduction of the nuclear arsenal.

They demonstrated the inadequacy of a partial and flawed worldview that only addressed certain elements of the issues of peace and national security while ignoring other key aspects. They challenged the choice to utilize public funds to invest in nuclear weapons. They demanded public recognition of the on-going social cost of militarism.

Further, activists demythologized the authoritative stance assumed by national leaders when describing military plans and policies. They identified the imperious voice of the defense experts as attempts to intimidate individuals and stop public dialog on critical issues. They uncovered in nuclear justifications the presence of the calculating, pseudo-objective warrior who separates and disguises the human meaning of his intent by use of disassociated euphemisms (Elstain, 1987). Significantly, they recognized within the arguments defending the nuclear proliferation a distinct worldview and value system with no more objective claim to reflect reality accurately than other, less lethal, visions.

Activist women in the '80s undermined the "taken for granted" quality of the military worldview embraced by national leaders by naming it as one possible paradigm among many. They exposed it as a humanly constructed view of the world, with traceable origins and assessable results. They showed how careful analysis discloses its construction and perpetuation, its beneficiaries and its current and proposed victims. In demystifying the status quo and a revealing it as a human construct, activists made the system more transparent and resistible and introduced the real possibility of its appraisal and rejection. They made it clear to elected officials that nuclear armament was not justifiable as a defense of American women and children.

From where we are into a secure future for our children

From the perspective of activist women who have taken a custodial stance toward children, their communities or the planet, the present model of defense is dangerous and unacceptable. The plans made and pursued by those in positions of national authority lead neither to corporate nor individual security, but to incalculable poverty, suffering and death. The present model denies the reality of global interconnectedness, finite resources, the fragility of the planet, the relationship between peace and social justice, and the inestimable value of life. The "peace" produced through the taking of the world as a hostage is not lasting, just or inclusive. Such a peace does not reflect the lives and values of the women who have determined that this model shall no longer be promulgated in their names, as if it promoted their best interests.

According to the activists interviewed, it is necessary to clarify what we want for our families and communities and define peace in concrete ways before we can create it. Actions must be directed toward specific goals, specific visions of a just and peaceful society. We cannot hope our accomplishments will go past the clarity of our dreams. We begin with the dreams and work backward, asking what it will take to realize them. While imagination is the first step towards peace, in dreams begin responsibilities. There is a relationship between the desired future and the work we must do. The peace imagined by the 1980s activists is the product of careful listening, analysis, revision and courage.

Motherhood may not prove to be an adequate base for social transformation. It has not consistently withstood pressures of class, race and nationalism in past confrontations. It is, however, a fruitful place to begin the dialog. The work accomplished in circles of activated mothers demonstrates that motherhood can create a common ground for conversation, which is the starting place for all negotiation.

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Cassie Premo Steele

The First Sea

I imagined you before you were born
as a water creature, but the mind
of a mother cannot hold the depths
of what gifts will come. How could I
have known how much you would love
the land, want to walk with me on it
after swimming for such a short time
in the flesh of my body? You cry,
the crash of the cold on your toes too much,
so I take you back to the edge of land
where the trees began, and your tears
mix with the salt and sand in my milk.
You drink it in, the love of this world,
as you begin to turn away
from your mother, as we all do,
cry for where we came from,
even as we walk away and say goodbye.

Alexis Jetter

Patsy Ruth Oliver:
A Mother's Battle For Environmental Justice

Patsy Ruth Oliver was driving up and down her dusty Texas road, looking for the snake she'd run over the night before. "There goes the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers all wrapped into one package," she had muttered before backing up, taking aim at the snake, and flooring her creaky old Dodge Diplomat. "Of course, the reptiles are a lot more respectable than our enemies," she said remorsefully the next morning. "The rattlesnake is a gentleman. He warns you before he strikes."

With five children and seven grandchildren, 58-year-old Patsy Ruth Oliver was a whirlwind of a woman with mischievous eyes and a devilish wit, a gripping storyteller whose language was a mixture of grit and Gospel. Unable to remain idle while her children, her mother, her husband, and her friends began to sicken and die from the effects of toxic waste buried beneath their homes, Oliver organized her neighbours to fight back. For more than a decade, she did battle with the Environmental Protection Agency, corporate polluters, and the United States Congress to free the people of Carver Terrace from what she called their "prison of poison."

When I last saw her it was summertime in Texarkana, a faded railroad town on the Texas-Arkansas border, and the brutal humidity made it difficult to breathe. In Carver Terrace, Oliver's old neighbourhood, it smelled like someone was brushing hot, sticky tar onto a sun-scorched roof. But it was just the air, licking at the toxic soil of this suburban ghost town.

Dark patches of creosote seeped through the withered lawns, around rusting swing sets and down the cracked center of the street. Tiny bubbles of what locals call "migraine gas" floated in oily puddles. Before long, my head ached and my tongue was coated with a strange, greasy taste.

"If it starts stinging," Patsy Ruth Oliver warned, "don't scratch. Just rub.

Otherwise it will start welting." Grabbing a stick, she stabbed the ground and waited patiently for the evil-smelling muck to rise. "When it oozes up," she said almost cheerfully, "you smell it even more."

Welcome to "Toxicana," Oliver's hometown and Superfund Site No. 677, one of the worst toxic waste dumps in the country. "Every time I come back here it's like a pain in my heart," said Oliver, her voice echoing off the plywood-shuttered houses. "There's just death everywhere. There's not a house here that hasn't been affected."

In 1993, over the objections of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)—which insisted that the carcinogens lacing Carver Terrace's water, air, and soil did not pose an immediate threat—Oliver and the angry mothers of Carver Terrace finally convinced Congress to authorize a buy-out so that they could leave their homes of 25 years. This grassroots, mother-led movement handed the EPA a rare and embarrassing defeat, enabling many families to start new lives in neighborhoods free of toxic pollutants. But the saga of what many call the "black Love Canal" did not end there. The battle for Carver Terrace has become a rallying cry for the growing "environmental justice" movement, which charges that industrial polluters target minority neighbourhoods. And it transformed Patsy Ruth Oliver from a small-time hell-raiser, intent only on protecting her own family, into a formidable grassroots organizer, helping groups across the Southwest combat what they call environmental racism.

"I didn't know beans about toxics," says Oliver, her Texas drawl barely keeping pace with her words. "I was a nurse and a housewife and a mother. What did I know? But suddenly, everything I had worked for in my life was up for grabs—because of toxics. My American dream had turned into an American nightmare."

* * *

If you had half a minute, Patsy Ruth Oliver would tell you with relish that she was part Choctaw and all rebel, a bastard out of Texarkana with an unbent spirit. When her dog Terry bit her, she bit him back. As a young woman, Oliver fought segregation the same way. In the 1960s, she proudly endured being splattered with rotten eggs during sit-ins at the "whites-only" Woolworth's lunch counter, and dodged buckshot in a "wade-in" at the town lake. "That was a belittling thing," she said. "But it made us a stronger people."

She started work as a domestic at the age of ten, spent years as a nurse's aide, and ultimately landed one of the best-paying jobs there was for African-Americans in Texarkana: assembling detonators on the high-explosives line at the Lone Star Army Ammunitions Plant. It was a casual irony to Oliver that she both lived and worked in places that are now Superfund sites. She jokes that one may have saved her from the other: "If I hadn't been working swing shift, graveyard shift, and weekends at the plant, I might be dead by now."

By the early '60s, Oliver had five children and a failed marriage to a career military man. She moved with her children and her mother to a public housing project. It wasn't a bad place, she says, but she hated it there. She wanted a

backyard for her children, a flower garden for herself, and a comfortable place for her mother to call home. And so, while she worked at Lone Star, waitressed on weekends, and cooked for white families on the side, she plotted her escape. "Mama, we're going to have a house," she vowed. "I don't know how we're going to get it, but we're going to get it."

One day on the bus in 1967, Oliver heard some women talking excitedly about a new subdivision. It was named after George Washington Carver, the African-American agricultural chemist and educator. Prices were low. And for upwardly mobile blacks in segregated Texarkana, it was the only game in town. As the construction site swung into view, Oliver stood up, pulled the cord, and got off the bus. After chatting with developer Sam Weisman, she plunked down her cash, promised to return with $90 on payday, and walked away clutching a down-payment receipt for a brand-new, ranch-style brick home.

Oliver knew that her dream house lay atop the bulldozed remains of a wood treatment plant. As a girl, she had cut through the 62-acre Koppers Company yard when she was late for classes at segregated Dunbar High. But in 1967 few traces of the plant remained, and no one worried about toxic creosote waste. "It never crossed my mind," says Weisman, now retired and living in Shreveport, La. "I was just looking for a piece of property to develop for the coloured in the area." He hit pay-dirt. Preachers, teachers, and factory workers flocked to the neighbourhood's 79 modest homes, and gloried in the pride of ownership. Children raced their bicycles down Milam Street and played in the creek. And Oliver, with deep satisfaction, planted a flower garden and watched her children grow.

But over the years, odd things began to happen. After a hard rain, dark gunk would bubble up through the ground and give puddles an oily sheen. Something ate holes in the bottom of plastic swimming pools and corroded galvanized water pipes. And grass simply wouldn't grow; residents were forced to buy truckloads of topsoil to keep their lawns and gardens alive. There was no relief inside, either. The sharp, smoky smell of tar wafted from faucets, and greasy black sludge appeared in sinks and bathtubs. Cats and dogs grew listless, formed tumours, and died. And slowly, without talking to each other, without admitting it to themselves, people started to get sick.

Once robustly healthy, Oliver gradually developed a thyroid tumour and a ruptured gallbladder. Nathaniel Oliver, a sweet-tempered seaman and cook whom Patsy Ruth married in 1979, got a painful cyst on his kidney. And her mother, a vital and energetic woman, suddenly couldn't keep down any food at all. Over coffee, meeting by chance in doctors' offices or at the grocery store, the mothers of Carver Terrace started comparing notes: they'd all had upset stomachs, dizzy spells, shortness of breath, and night sweats. Their daughters were having prolonged menstrual cycles and more miscarriages than anyone could remember. Small children had frequent headaches, nosebleeds, and rashes. And people in nearly every house in Carver Terrace, it seemed, were having liver, heart, kidney, or thyroid problems.

The death toll climbed steadily. By Oliver's count, 27 people in 79 homes died, many from cancer. Some were already old and sick. But often death came inexplicably and without warning. Two women in their 40s died suddenly at work. One man got dizzy and fell through his living room window; another was found dead sitting in his bathroom.

At night, residents would sit out in their yards to escape the odor inside their homes. But there it would be, riding on the evening breeze. Some residents began to connect the old creosote plant with the odor in the air and the dark gunk in their backyards and sinks. Others tried to convince themselves the smell was rising off the nearby railroad tracks, or from a leaky car engine.

The truth did not begin to emerge until 1979, one year after leaking barrels of dioxin were discovered beneath Love Canal, New York. In response, Congress ordered the nation's largest chemical firms to identify their hazardous waste sites. The Pittsburgh-based Koppers Company, which had left a string of toxic dumps across the country, placed Carver Terrace high on its list.

Koppers knew two things that Oliver and her neighbours did not: their pretty, landscaped yards were saturated with creosote. And prolonged exposure to the oily black liquid, a distillate of coal tar, could prove deadly. Creosote exposure can induce nausea, headaches and dizziness; cause second-degree burns and rashes; and lead to cancer, kidney failure, respiratory ailments, and liver problems.

State investigators came to inspect Carver Terrace in 1980. One inspector, shocked by his readings, warned mothers that it wasn't safe for their children to play outside. The state's findings were alarming: The soil and groundwater were contaminated with arsenic, pentachlorophenol, creosote, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons—a potent carcinogen. But residents were told nothing about the study for four years.

In 1984, the bombshell dropped: Texas officials asked the EPA to place Carver Terrace on the Superfund list, the $9-billion trust that Congress established in 1980 to clean up toxic waste dumps. The EPA flew in a pack of scientists and administrators, armed with arcane explanations and a slide show. The site was toxic, they told residents, but not immediately hazardous to their health. Cleanup crews could reduce dangers to an "acceptable risk" level.

There was, however, one catch. More studies were needed before a cleanup could begin. "That may not sit well with a lot of folks, but you can't start removing the whole face of the earth," said Stan Hitt, chief of the Superfund Enforcement Office in EPA's Dallas office. "You have to study the problem."

"They studied us, all right," agreed Oliver. "To death." Over the next eight years, EPA and Koppers Company took turns analyzing Carver Terrace's water, soil and air—virtually everything, in fact, except its people. For reasons that EPA still cannot explain, residents were never interviewed.

Soon men arrived in protective white "moonsuits," rubber gas masks, and disposable gloves to inspect the soil that scantily clad children played in every day. Why were EPA employees dressed for germ warfare, residents wanted to

know, when they were being told the neighbourhood was safe? "We require them to wear clothes like that to minimize potential health effects from continual exposure," explained EPA spokesman Roger Meacham.

That answer satisfied no one in Carver Terrace, where exposure was measured in decades, not days. "They couldn't answer us," said Nathaniel Oliver, a tall, gentle man who has harsh words only for the federal government, "because they'd been lying to us for such a long, long time." And so the inspectors poked and sampled, while Patsy Ruth Oliver watched from her front porch, her curiousity turning slowly to anger.

Workers shut down the sand and gravel company next door, ringed it with a wire mesh fence and posted a warning: "SOIL CONTAMINATED WITH TOXIC WASTE: KEEP OUT." Soil on their side of the fence, residents were told, was safe. "Our toxics down here are real intelligent," drawled Oliver. "They can read. They'll stay on that side of the fence."

Neighbours erected their own sign. Leroy Davis, told by his doctor that he was too sick to stay in Carver Terrace, nailed one to a tree before leaving for a nursing home. "WELCOME TO TOXIC WASTE DEATH VALLEY," it read above a skull and crossbones. "ENTER AT YOUR OWN RISK." But residents were stuck. For as word of the contamination spread, property values plummeted; one house reportedly sold for only $7,000. "We were trapped," said Oliver, "in a prison of poison."

In 1988, the EPA finally unveiled its report. It was four volumes long and took two people to carry. And it concluded that the soil of Carver Terrace could be safely removed, mechanically washed, and replaced with fresh topsoil. "What about our health?" Oliver and others demanded. Those concerns had been fully addressed in the report, they were told. And so Oliver read it, "with a dictionary in one hand because I am no chemist."

But Patsy Ruth Oliver didn't need a glossary to realize that someone had made some deadly assumptions about her community. Yes, there were contaminants in the creek, the report stated. But it dismissed that danger, saying it was "difficult to imagine" that anyone would swim in such a shallow, snake-infested, and murky brook. Yet Oliver knew that every child in the neighborhood had played there. No-one at EPA had ever asked.

She read on. Children could easily place creosote in their mouths, the study said, but "the unfavorable taste will be enough to keep a child from ingesting soils from the seep area again." That rankled, too. Oliver knew many children in Carver Terrace who used to eat "mud pies." One, Suzette Fulce, had her thyroid removed at 17.

Incredulous, Oliver read further. Eating vegetables grown in contaminated soil could be harmful, the report stated. "But only one residence in Carver Terrace has been observed to have a vegetable garden." That was too much. "People had gardens all around," Oliver said angrily. "But they didn't come looking." For years, her entire family had eaten the tomatoes, onions, potatoes, watermelons, beans, peas, turnips, collard, cantaloupe and strawberries that

Nathaniel grew in their garden.

Was that why her mother was wasting away from esophageal cancer? Why her daughters had suffered miscarriages? Why her own stomach pained her so? Nathaniel was stricken by the thought that the vegetables he had so carefully grown and cooked for his family might have poisoned them. "I got scared and I got angry," he said. "Nobody told us. We had to find out for ourselves."

Oliver had had enough. If the government had evacuated residents and purchased homes in Love Canal, NY, and Times Beach, Mo., then why must they stay in Carver Terrace? "We don't want to die out," she declared. "We want a buy-out." The EPA insisted that no buy-out was warranted. "This situation is certainly no Love Canal," Meacham said. But Oliver thought she knew what distinguished Carver Terrace from Love Canal, and it wasn't the soil. "If there's one thing I know," she said, "it's racism. I have a Masters degree in Jim Crow."

And so Patsy Ruth Oliver started to raise hell. Together with a local watchdog group, Friends United for a Safe Environment (FUSE), she pounded on doors, got petitions signed, organized a network of mothers who compiled notes on their families' ailments, and led marches through the neighborhood. No one was more surprised than Oliver for she had long been a homebody. "I could have been one of the people hiding behind their curtains and watching the march go by," she said. "But here I was leading the damn thing!"

She and other residents descended on the state capital in Austin, on EPA offices in Dallas—where officials locked their doors and sent their employees home—and on EPA headquarters in Washington, D.C. "If they can take down the Berlin Wall," she demanded, "why can't the EPA take down this invisible wall and release us?"

Soon her face was a regular feature on the front page of the *Texarkana Gazette* and her rapid-fire denunciations were a growing irritant to her targets. "She's a troublemaker," grumbled developer Sam Weisman. "She's a thorn in our side," groused EPA's Roger Meacham. "She's a lightning rod," chuckled Dave Hall, Texarkana's coordinator for emergency management. Patsy's family couldn't decide what they felt most: concern or pride. "She's going to get herself killed," Nathaniel fretted. "I couldn't have been prouder of her than if she was Sen. Carol Moseley-Braun talking about the Daughters of the Confederacy flag," said daughter Stephanie, 41.

Oliver, who had gone back to school to get her nursing degree, now turned her full attention to toxins. "Carver Terrace became a school for me," she said. "I started rubbing elbows with these rocket scientists, hoping it would rub off a little on me. Every time they said something, I was like E.F. Hutton: I listened and was very quiet." She chuckled at the memory. "Why, I was so quiet, you could hear a rat piss on cotton!"

Still, Oliver admitted, it was a bit daunting. For the environmental movement was white, and she was a black woman from the rural South. "Sometimes I was all alone," Oliver said. "Sometimes I looked like a fly in a glass of buttermilk." But she took her allies where she found them. And toxins, she

liked to say, "are equal opportunity killers—they don't discriminate."

Oliver had long prided herself on her meticulous appearance in public. Now she traded in her glamorous dresses and wigs for T-shirts and corn braids, and hit the road. Her five children mourned the lost elegance—"Patsy was like a black Auntie Mame," said Stephanie—but they cheered her on.

She flew off to address a Greenpeace summit on industrial waste in Washington, D.C., and attend Stop Toxic Polluters seminars at Tennessee's famed Highlander Center, where Martin Luther King, Jr. was once trained in community organizing. She joined several regional environmental groups that sent her to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janiero. And soon she was swapping tips with activists from across the U.S., from Navajo elders fighting an asbestos dump in New Mexico to African-American women fighting a proposed PCB landfill in North Carolina. Their revolts had sewn the seeds for a new grassroots movement: environmental justice.

"Patsy typifies what's happening in the environmental justice movement in communities of color," says Robert Bullard, director of the Environmental Justice Resource Center at Clark/Atlanta University. "It's mostly women—mothers and housewives—who get involved to protect family, home, and community. These are not traditional environmentalists. These are people talking about survival."

Encouraged by her new allies, Oliver took to the airwaves, starring in a flashy Greenpeace eco-video for VH-1, MTVs station for adults. "We don't have the complexion for protection!" charged Oliver, echoing a popular slogan. Even Rev. Jesse Jackson weighed in: "The people of Carver Terrace," he said, "have seen only poisonous creosote at the end of their rainbow."

Finally, in November 1990, Congress appropriated $5 million to purchase Carver Terrace and relocate its inhabitants. Residents were elated. But it took nearly three years for the Army Corps of Engineers—who residents felt woefully undervalued their homes—to complete its task. By that time Oliver's mother, who had marched with her daughter through the rain-drenched streets of Carver Terrace and accompanied her on the grueling 700-mile round trips to Austin, had died.

Patsy Ruth never really got over it. One official made the mistake of urging her to be patient during those endless delays. "Don't ever use that word with me," she snapped. "The most patient woman I knew is dead, stretched out in her grave. Keeping my mouth shut was the worst thing I ever did."

Back in Carver Terrace, Oliver stared glumly at the small house they once shared, which was nailed shut and posted with an U.S. Government "NO TRESPASSING" sign. "My American dream died a long time ago," she said in a low and trembling voice. "And when my mother died, it really died. It's hard for me to respond when people ask: 'How do you like your new home?' It's just a house, and it's not on toxic soil." But her mother's death forged a resolve in Oliver. "Okay, Mama, I told you I was going to get us out of here," she vowed. "'I made you that promise.' And I decided, once I got out, to carry on that fight."

She did. Oliver threw herself into environmental work across the Southwest. In the border towns of Brownsville, Texas, and Matamoros, Mexico, she joined the fight to curb chemical emissions by the nearby maquiladoras, factories built in Mexico to avoid U.S. wage and environmental regulations. Pollution in those towns was so extreme that women were giving birth to horribly malformed babies. "I know what hell looks like," Oliver said after returning from one tour of Matamoros. "Dead animals in the water, raw sewage. You can't imagine." Oliver also combatted construction of toxic waste incinerators along the Texas-Arkansas border, and rallied against operators of a Jacksonville, Ark., Agent Orange factory that wanted to burn dioxin-laden waste. In 1993, in recognition of her work, Oliver became one of the first two black women named to the board of Friends of the Earth.

Oliver was out of town so much she barely found time to enjoy the new house that she and Nathaniel had built just outside Texarkana. But she made sure to plant a flower garden, which she inspected like a hawk every morning. And the message on her answering machine was gleeful: "We always enjoy hearing from our friends," Oliver greeted callers. "And, thank God, we're out of the Toxic Twilight Zone."

But tragically, not for long. "We're out of Carver Terrace," Oliver used to say, "but it's not out of us." Just a few months after Oliver moved to her new home, her eldest daughter, Stephanie, died suddenly from a brain aneurysm. And on December 15, 1993, the day that the Army Corps of Engineers finally arrived in Texarkana to bulldoze her old house in Carver Terrace, Patsy Ruth Oliver died in her sleep.

"Friends, Neighbours Mourn Carver Terrace Leader," the Texarkana Gazette said the next day. "An Environmentalist Passes," noted the Texas Observer in a full-page obituary. The writer, a fellow Texarkana environmentalist, recalled Oliver's first speech: "We're not going to let our dreams die," she had said. "We want to leave our children a legacy of clean air, clean water, and a clean land on which to live. And not only in Texarkana, but throughout this United States of America. We want our voices heard so loud that we'll ring from the mountaintops, and from shore to shore."

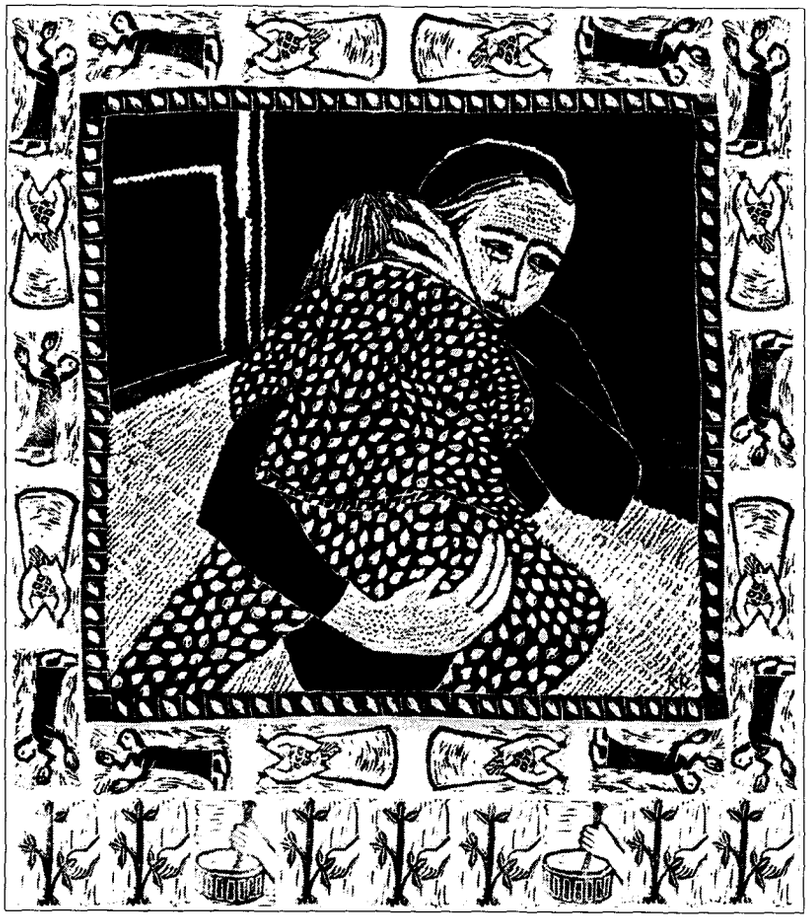
Her children have vowed to continue the work that she left off. And at the funeral, as her sons and daughters stepped forward to recall their mother's spirit, humour, and fire, they read from a program inscribed with a simple message. "So many people don't think one person can make a difference," Oliver had told her children. "But really, it has to start someplace. So let it start with me."

Diana Taylor

Making a Spectacle:
The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo

Arm in arm, wearing their white head scarves, the Mothers slowly walk around the Plaza de Mayo, Argentina's central square. Some carry huge placards with the smiling faces of their missing children. Others hang small photographs around their necks. Turning their bodies into walking billboards, they carry banners demanding "*Aparición con vida*,"—that their children be brought "back alive." On any given Thursday afternoon at 3:30pm, hundreds of women meet in the square to demand justice for the human rights violations committed by the brutal military dictatorship that abducted, tortured and permanently "disappeared" 30,000 Argentineans between 1976 and 1983, a period that came to be known as the "Dirty War." The Plaza, facing the presidential palace, lies in the heart of Buenos Aires' financial and economic district. Businessmen and politicians hurry to and fro, sometimes crossing the street to distance themselves from the Mothers. The women continue to talk and comfort each other as they walk, stopping every so often to gather around the microphone and loudspeakers from which they and their leader, Hebe de Bonafini, broadcast their accusations to the country's president. *Where are our children? We want them back alive! Why did their torturers and murders get away with murder? When will justice be done?* Until these issues are resolved, the women claim the Dirty War will not be over. Nor will their demonstrations.

The spectacle of elderly women in white scarves carrying placards with the huge faces of their missing children has become an icon of women's resistance movements, especially in Latin America where their group has become the model for dozens of similar grass-roots, human rights organizations. This article focuses on how the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo staged their opposition to the three consecutive military juntas that controlled Argentina between 1976 and 1983. While much has been written on the Mothers'



Rochelle Rubinstein, "Shelter No. 30," 90 x 100 cm., Linocut printed, softoleum printed, and embroidered silk, 1995.

movement, few people have looked at how their spectacle fit into or contested the military junta's spectacle of national identity and cohesion. As the political Fathers of the nation persecuted and killed its opposition in the name of Christian, western and family values, the Mothers made visible the violence and hypocrisy that underwrote the junta's "process of national reorganization."

In its first pronouncement immediately following the coup, published on the front page of a major centrist daily paper, *La Nación*, March 25, 1976, the junta declared itself the "supreme organ of the Nation" ready to "fill the void of power" embodied by Perón's widow, María Estela Martínez de Perón ("Isabelita"), Argentina's constitutional president. With a show of muscle, the junta undertook its exercise in national body-building, determined to transform the "infirm," inert Argentine masses into an authentic, implicitly masculine, "national being." The military heralded its accession to power as the

"dawning of a fecund epoch," although the generative process was not, as it recognized, strictly speaking "natural." "Isabelita's" government was sick; its "productive apparatus" was exhausted; "natural" solutions were no longer sufficient to insure a full "recuperation."

The military represented itself as a disciplined masculine body, aggressively visible, all surface, identifiable by its uniforms, ubiquitous, on parade for all the world to see. The display of the military leaders in church or with the Catholic archbishops aligned military and sacred power. Staging order was perceived as a way of making order happen. The junta's display both re-enacted and constituted the new social order: all male, Catholic and strictly hierarchical. The unholy trinity—Army, Navy and Air Force—were depicted as one entity, set-apart as in religious iconography, the embodiment of national aspirations of grandeur. They spoke as one central, unified subject; their "we" supposedly included everyone. Visually, the spectacle affirmed the centrality of the junta and emphasized the importance of hierarchy and rank by distancing the great leaders from their undifferentiated followers.

From its opening address, the junta made explicit that the maternal image of the *Patria* or Motherland justified the civil violence. The military claimed it had to save "her," for "she" was being "raped," "penetrated" and "infiltrated" by her enemies.[1] But "she" was also the site of the conflict, as the Dirty War was carried out in the interstices of the *Patria*, in her very entrails. General Jorge Videla, President of the junta, declared that the *Patria* was "bleeding to death. When it most urgently needs her children, more and more of them are submerged in her blood" (cited in Troncoso, 1984: 59). But it is interesting to note that *Patria*, which comes from Padre or father, does not mean *fatherland* in Spanish. Rather, the word *Patria* signals the image of motherland as envisioned by patriarchy. Thus, the word itself alerts us to the dangerously slippery positioning of the "feminine" in this discourse. There is no woman behind the maternal image invoked by the military. The term *Patria* merely projects the masculinist version of maternity—patriarchy in drag. In the name of the Patria, this nonexistent yet "pure" feminine image, the military justified its attack on its own population. However, depicting the physical site of violence as feminine had devastating repercussions on the lives of real-life women. The very notion of the feminine was split in two—into the "good" woman and the "bad" woman. On the one hand, the junta honored the symbolic image of pure motherhood associated with the *Patria*, the "good" woman, and made clear to women that their role was also to be "pure," that is non-political, mothers confined to the private sphere. On the other hand, active women were "bad" women, associated with deviance and subversion. Women who were not content to stay home were often targeted as enemies of the State.

During the Dirty War—so called because it was a terrorist civil conflict rather than a conventional war with two armed sides that abides by the international rules of war—there were mothers who were willing to go along with the junta's version of "good" women. They supported the military's

mission and encouraged it to exercise even more control over the public good. In 1977, the League of Mothers of Families, sounding much like the Christian Right in the U.S. today, urged their rulers to ensure that "education strengthened traditional and Christian values" and asked that "the media be truly instruments of culture, diffusing good examples and healthy entertainment"(Avellaneda, 1986: 148). The media, under military direction, not surprisingly carried interviews and reports on "good" women, those who were happiest in the home, looking after their children. Mothers were warned that their sons and daughters were in grave danger because the *guerrillas* were just waiting to lure them into subversion. The radio, television and magazines bombarded women with the question, "Señora, do you know where your children are?" The junta demanded that women put State interests over familial bonds.

In the midst of this brutal and repressive political climate, when most members of the opposition were either in exile, in hiding, in concentration camps or jails, the Mothers went to the Plaza de Mayo, the most public space in Argentina, to protest that it was the military that posed the gravest threat to their children. To protest the Armed Forces "disappearance" of their children, the Mothers had to manipulate the maternal image that was already rigorously controlled by the State. They claimed that it was precisely their maternal responsibilities as "good" mothers that took them to the Plaza in search of their children.

For those unfamiliar with the Mothers' movement, here is a brief overview. In 1977, fourteen women first took to the Plaza to collectively demand information concerning the whereabouts of their missing children. They had met in government offices, prisons and courts looking for any sign of their sons and daughters. Little by little, the women came to identify as a group, and called themselves simply the "Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo." They started wearing white head kerchiefs to recognize each other and to be recognized by onlookers. The Mothers realized that only by being visible could they be politically effective. Only by being visible could they stay alive in a society in which all opposition was annihilated by the military. The role of "mother" offered the women a certain security in the initial phase of their movement. The junta, which legitimated its mission with the rhetoric of Christian and family values, could hardly gun down defenseless mothers in public. So it tried dismissing the Mothers as "crazy old women" or *locas* and threatened the women individually in their homes and on their way to and from the Plaza. But even after the Mothers were threatened, they returned to the Plaza every Thursday afternoon to walk counterclockwise around the obelisk in front of the presidential Casa Rosada.

Gradually, the number of women grew. They belonged to different social classes, though the majority were working class. They represented different religious groups and came from different parts of Argentina. In July there were 150 *Madres*. Public response to their activities was mixed. Most Argentines

tried to ignore them, crossing the street to distance themselves as much as possible from the women. Some passersby insulted them. Others whispered support and solidarity. On October 5, 1977 the Mothers placed an ad in *La Prensa* demanding the "truth" about 237 disappeared persons, accompanied by pictures of the victims and the signatures and identity card numbers of the women in the movement. They got no reply. Ten days later, hundreds of women delivered a petition with 24,000 signatures demanding an investigation into the disappearances. The police tried to disperse them—spraying tear gas at the women, shooting bullets into the air and detaining over 300 for questioning. Foreign correspondents, the only ones to cover the event, were also arrested.

News of the Mothers and their anti-junta activities soon spread internationally. The battle for visibility commanded more and more spectators. Largely due to the public recognition and financial support from human rights groups from the Netherlands, Sweden, France and Italy, the Mothers were able to survive politically and financially. Amnesty International sent a mission to Argentina in 1976 to report on the disappeared. In 1977, President Carter sent Patrica Derian, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, to investigate the accusations of human rights abuses. She estimated that three thousand people had been executed and five thousand disappeared (Simpson and Bennett, 1985: 279). The United States cut military aid to Argentina and canceled $270 million in loans. The junta realized that they could not dismiss the Mothers as "mad women;" they had to get rid of them. So in December of 1977, the junta infiltrated the Mothers' organization and kidnapped and disappeared twelve women, including their leader, Azucena de Vicenti, and two French nuns who were working with the Mothers' movement. But in spite of the danger, the Mothers returned to the Plaza. During 1978, the military intensified its harassment and detentions. In 1979, it became impossible for the Mothers to enter the Plaza that was cordoned off by heavily armed police. The women would stand around the Plaza and raid it—dashing across the square before the Police could stop them, only to remind the world and themselves that this was still their space.

In 1979, the Organization of American States (OAS) sent the Inter-American Human Rights Commission to Argentina. The Mothers brought women from all over the country to testify before the commission in Buenos Aires. As many as 3,000 people lined up at a time to meet with the commission (Navarro, 1989). The junta, unable to block the investigation, launched its own counter-attack, inscribing slogans on people, and mimicking the visual strategies the Mothers used. They made up posters and used people's bodies as walking billboards marked with a pun on human rights: "Somos derechos y humanos" (We are right and human). That same year, practically banished from the Plaza, the Mothers formed the Association of the *Madres de Plaza de Mayo*. In January 1980, the Mothers returned to the Plaza, ready to face death before relinquishing it again.

The Mothers' performance of motherhood tried to bridge the schism between the "good" woman and the "bad" woman belaboured by the military. The women consciously modelled themselves on the Virgin Mary, the ultimate mother who transcends the public/private bind by carrying her privacy with her even in public. Thus, Christian and Jewish women alike initially played the *Mater Dolorosa* and exploited a system of representations and stereotypes that had so effectively limited most forms of female visibility and expression: "At first they marched as if in ritual procession: faces serious, eyes turned upward in supplication, heads covered... peaceful, rapt, pleading" (Diago, 1988: 29). The virginal role allowed the women to perform traditionally acceptable "feminine" qualities—self-sacrifice, suffering, irrationality, even as they took one of the most daring steps imaginable in their particular political arena: they affirmed their passivity and powerlessness. Yet even that virginal role—sanctified by Argentine society though it was—did not protect the women for long. The women's public exposure resulted in their being ostracized from the Church. They had gone beyond the representational constraints of the role: pain was permissible, perhaps, but not anger. Silence, maybe, but not protest. As one of the Church leaders, Monsignor Quarracino commented: "I can't imagine the Virgin Mary yelling, protesting and planting the seeds of hate when her son, our Lord, was torn from her hands" (cited in Rossi, 1989).

Over the years, the Mothers' notion of motherhood had gradually became political rather than biological. They came to consider themselves the mothers of all the disappeared, not just their own offspring. Their spectacles became larger and increasingly dramatic. They organized massive demonstrations and marches, some of them involving up to 200,000 people: the March of Resistance in 1981, and again the following year; in 1982 the March for Life and the March for Democracy; in 1983, at the end of the last military junta, they plastered Buenos Aires with the names and silhouettes of the disappeared. However, even with the return of a democratic government, their demands for information about the fate of the children and justice for their tormentors had not been addressed. In spite of the Trial of the Generals, only a handful of the military leaders had been sentenced to prison terms. All those who had served as torturers and on the para-military "task forces" that abducted, tortured and killed thousands of people were still free. In 1986, when it became clear that Raúl Alfonsín's elected government would do nothing meaningful to punish those responsible for the atrocities, the Mothers staged the March for Human Rights as a procession of masks.

The Mothers spoiled the junta's parade by responding to the military spectacle with a spectacle that inverted the focus. What had been invisible before—from domestic women to "subversives"—was now visible for the world to see. Through their bodies, they wanted to show the absence/presence of all those who had disappeared without a trace, without leaving a body. Clearly, the confrontation between the Mothers and the military centered on the physical and symbolic location of the missing body—object of exchange in this battle of

images. While the military attempted to make their victims invisible and anonymous by burying them in unmarked graves, dumping their bodies into the sea or cutting them up and burning them in ovens, the Mothers insisted that the disappeared had names and faces. They were people; people did not simply disappear; their bodies, dead or alive, were somewhere; someone had done something to them. Instead of the military's a-historical forgetting, the Mothers inscribed the time and dates of the disappearances. Instead of dismembering, remembering. The Mothers challenged the generals' claim to history by writing themselves and the "disappeared" into the narrative, literally as well as figuratively. Their bodies, inscribed with names, dates and faces were "written into the message" to borrow a phrase from Ross Chambers.[2] Opposed to the image projected by the junta of a lone, heroic male leaving family and community behind, the Mothers emphasized community and family ties. Instead of the military's performance of hierarchy, represented by means of rigid, straight rows, the Mothers' circular movements around the Plaza, characterized by their informal talk and pace, bespoke values based on egalitarianism and communication. While the soldiers' uniforms, paraphernalia and body language emphasized the performative aspects of gender, the Mothers too were highly conscious of the importance of their gender role, specifically their maternal role, and played it accordingly. The Mothers also had their "uniforms," though these may not have been immediately identifiable as such. They presented themselves as elderly, physically weak and sexually non-active women. Yet they resisted even the most brutal treatment. When the military tried to force the women from the Plaza, they marked their presence indelibly by painting white kerchiefs around the circle where they usually walked. Instead of the empty streets and public spaces mandated by the military curfew, the Mothers orchestrated the return of the repressed. Buenos Aires was once again filled with people; spectacular bodies, ghostly, looming figures who refused to stay invisible. The public spaces overflowed with demonstrators as the terrorized population gradually followed the Mothers' example and took to the streets.

However, re-defining motherhood was a painful process for the Mothers. Individually, many of the women admitted that they had lost hope of finding their children alive: "We know we're not going to find our children by going to the square, but it's an obligation we have to all the *desaparecidos*" (Fisher, 1989: 153). The tension between the biological death of their children and the living political issue of disappearance and criminal politics placed them in a conflicted situation. Were they now simply the mothers of dead children? If so, should they claim the dead bodies offered up by forensic specialists, accept compensation for their loss, and get on with their lives? Or did they need to hold onto the image of the "disappeared" in order to bring the military to justice and continue their political movement? Could the Mothers, now a political organization, survive the death of their children? By 1986, the dilemma had split the group in two.[3] The division continues to shape the political movement.

The group that now calls itself the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, headed by Hebe Bonafini (as opposed to the "Linea Fundadora" or the "Founding Group" of the fourteen original members, headed by Renee Epelbaum) felt committed to keeping the "desaparecidos" alive. They continue to demand "*Aparición con vida*" ("Back Alive") for all the disappeared. They refuse to give up the struggle until justice has been served. The Linea Fundadora, though accepting that their children are dead, continues to work to bring the perpetrators to justice. However, the women felt that many of the working class members of the organization needed the economic compensation offered by the government in order to keep up their struggle. Members of both groups travel, lecture abroad and document their history. Both groups—made up mainly by women in their 60s and 70s, continue to march around the Plaza de Mayo.

Commentators find it hard to agree on the short and long-term effects of the Mothers' activism. During the Dirty War, the Mothers provided the families of the disappeared a model of resistance to atrocity as well as a network of communication and support. The Mothers would find out information about a detained or disappeared person and transmit it nationally. The women raised money to allow families around the country to travel to ask about their missing children or to visit a political prisoner. The Mothers' organization contributed money to raise the children of the disappeared who had been left behind with relatives or friends. Long term, however, some commentators stress that the Mothers changed little in Argentina. There were fewer women voted into positions of power after the Dirty War than before. Some say that the Mothers' grass-roots movement lacked any lasting organizational structure. The women undoubtedly called international attention to civil rights violations taking place in Argentina. But that, in itself, did not topple the dictatorship. The downfall of the military came with its invasion of the Islas Malvinas, the British-owned Falkland Islands that lie off the coast of Argentina. Plagued by a crashing economy and an increasingly irate population, the military decided to bolster their popular support by taking back the islands. The Armed Forces miscalculated Britain's resolve to keep the islands—for one thing, the islands have substantial oil deposits, for another, Margaret Thatcher herself needed a boost in popular opinion. The humiliating defeat of the Argentine military, which was also held responsible for the death of a thousand very young conscripts who had not been trained or prepared for war, brought down the last of the three juntas.

Moreover, though the Mothers' spectacle was a powerful manifestation of personal courage and moral resistance to oppression, it did little to stop international aid to the Armed Forces. Though Carter took the atrocity seriously and cut aid to Argentina, the United States under Reagan increased its support of the armed forces and their "war" on subversion.

So how to assess and understand the Mothers' movement? Commentators interested in the Mothers' and other women's political groups in and outside Latin America have pointed out the many contradictions posed by their

movement—it attacked the legitimacy of the military but left a restrictive patriarchal system basically unchallenged. The Mothers won significant political power, but they claim not to want that power, at least not for themselves but only for their children. The women's shared struggle for missing children bridged class and religious barriers in Argentina, but the Mothers have not politicized those issues. They recognize that "women are doubly oppressed, especially in Catholic-Hispanic countries" (Fisher, 1989: 155), and they have formed alliances with women's coalitions in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Uruguay, Colombia, Chile and other Latin American countries. But they are not feminists, if by feminism one refers to the politicization of the women's subordinate status. Hebe de Bonafini states the following: "I don't think the Mothers are feminists, but we point a way forward for the liberation of women. We support the struggle of women against this *machista* world and sometimes this means that we have to fight against men. But we also have to work together with men to change this society. We aren't feminists because I think feminism, when its taken too far, is the same as *machismo*" (Fisher, 1989: 158). The Mothers left the confines of their homes, physically and politically, but they have not altered the politics of the home—for example, the gendered division of labor. After coming home from their demonstrations most of them still cooked and did housework for their remaining family, even in those cases in which the husbands were at home full time. The Mothers took to the streets in order to protect their children and families; nonetheless, their political activity estranged many of them from the surviving members of their families who were not prepared to accept the women's new roles: "They say if you stop going to the square, you're one of us again. My family now are the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo," says one Mother (Fisher, 1989: 156). Having left home, they have established a new *casa* (or *home*) for their new family. There, they continue their unpaid labor, their political activity. There, too, they nurture the young people who come to talk to them: "We cook for them, we worry about their problems, we look out for them much as we did for our children" (Diago, 1988: 187).

How to explain these contradictions? Some of them can be understood, I believe, by distinguishing between the Mothers' performance of motherhood and the essentialist notions of motherhood sometimes attributed to them and which, in all fairness, the Mothers themselves often accentuate. Although much has been written about the Mothers' strategy of politicizing motherhood, little has been said about the fact that motherhood—as a role—had already been socialized and politicized in their patriarchal society. What we see, then, are conflicting performances of motherhood, one supporting the military's version of social order, one defying it.[4] Once the Mothers decided to march, their self-representation was as theatrical as the military's. The Mothers' movement did not begin when the individual mothers became acquainted in their search for their children. It originated when the women consciously decided to protest and agitate *as* mothers. That *as* marks the conceptual

distance between the essentialist notion of motherhood attributed to the Mothers and the self-conscious manipulation of the maternal role that makes the movement the powerful and intensely dramatic spectacle that it has been. The women, most of whom had no political background or experience, realized that they were a part of a national spectacle and decided to actively play the role that had traditionally been assigned to them—the "good" women who look after their children. Yet, they shifted the site of their enactment from the private sphere—where it could be construed as essentialist—to the public—where it became a bid for political recognition and a direct challenge to the junta. The Mothers' decision to make their presence visible in the Plaza, stage-center so to speak, was a brilliant and courageous move. While the Plaza had often been used as a political stage throughout Argentina's history, no one had used it as the Mothers did, much less during a state of siege in which public space was heavily policed. They perceived and literally acted out the difference between motherhood as an individual identity (which for many of them it was) and motherhood as a collective, political performance that would allow women to protest in the face of a criminal dictatorship. The role of mother was attractive, not because it was "natural," but because it was viable and practical. It offered the women a certain legitimacy and authority in a society that values mothers almost to the exclusion of all other women. It offered them visibility in a representational system that rendered most women invisible. For once, they manipulated the images that had previously controlled them.

Looking beyond the maternal role, however, and looking at the individual women who walked away from the Plaza, I see a group of women who redefined the meaning of "mothers," "family" and "home" in a patriarchal society. Mothers, flesh and blood women, are now freer to act and take to the streets. They can be bold, independent, political and outraged even as they take on the role of the submissive, domestic creature. Their new "home" is a negotiated space; their new "family" founded on political rather than biological ties. What has been accepted as the Mothers" traditionalism in fact has more to do with the negotiated alliances advocated by feminists. The women may choose to adhere to their old ways, re-create a "family" and cook for the younger members of the group, but that is now a choice they exercise. Their political activism, explicitly designed to empower the new "Man," in fact made new people out of the Mothers, people with options. As Hebe says, "For me cooking for 20 is the same as cooking for one, and we like to eat together because this is also a part of our struggle and our militancy. I want to continue being the person I've always been. Sometimes I'm criticized for wearing a housecoat and slippers in public but I'm not going to change. Of course my life is different" (Fisher, 1989: 158). The performance of motherhood has created a distance between "I" and the "person I've always been." It is as if the women's conscious performance of motherhood—limited though it was—freed them from the socially restrictive role of motherhood that had previously kept them in their place. The performance offered that disruptive space, that moment of transition between the "I"

who was a mother and the "I" who chooses to perform motherhood.

The performative aspect of their movement, though seldom commented upon, was a politically vital and personally liberating aspect of the Mothers' activism in several ways. For one, the demonstrations offered the women a way of coping with their grief and channeling it to life-affirming action. Rather than trivialize or eclipse their loss, the performative nature of their demonstrations gave the women a way of dealing with it. Much as in the case of mourning rites, aesthetic distancing is an enabling response to pain, not its negation. For another, the ritualistic and "restored" nature of their demonstrations succeeded in drawing much needed public attention to their cause, both nationally and internationally. This put them in contact with human rights organizations worldwide and provided them with financial and moral support as well as the much-needed legitimacy to offset the junta's claims that the women were only raving "madwomen." Moreover, the "restored" nature of their public action in itself was a way of restoring the disappeared into the public sphere, of making visible their absence. And, by bringing motherhood out of the domestic closet, the Mothers showed up the predicament facing women in Argentina and the world over. Traditionally, mothers have been idealized as existing somehow beyond or above the political arena. Confined to the home, they have been made responsible for their children. But what happens to the mothers who, by virtue of that same responsibility to their children, must go looking for them outside the home and confront the powers that be? Do they cease to be mothers? Or must onlookers renounce notions of mothers as a-political? Their transgression of traditional roles made evident how restrictive and oppressive those roles had been. Thus their performance of mothers as activists challenged traditional maternal roles and called attention to the fact that motherhood was a social, not just biological, construct.

The Mothers' performance, like all performances, challenged the onlooker. Would the national and international spectators applaud their actions, or look away? Join their movement or cross the street to avoid them? One letter to the editor of *La Nación* asked the authorities to put an end "to the sad spectacle that we must endure week after week" (1981: 6). But there were spectators who were able to respond as reliable audiences/witnesses, either because they saw the event from a safe distance or because they felt they had nothing more to lose. They helped introduce different perspectives and disrupt the show the military was staging about itself. The fact the *Madres* could not do *everything*—i.e., seriously challenge patriarchal authority—does not mean that they did *nothing* to ruin their parade. The Mothers' efficacy and survival relied on capturing the attention of spectators—Argentines who might dare to re-interpret the junta's version of events as well as the foreign spectators who might feel compelled to bring pressure to bear on their governments.

The Mothers had the courage to show the world what was happening in Argentina. They still continue their walk around the Plaza at 3:30 on Thursday afternoons. They vow to do so until the government officially explains what

happened to their missing children and brings their murderers to justice. There has been no closure. The drama of disappearance is not over.

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[1]President Videla of the Junta in his first address to the nation on March 25, 1976 claimed that the "subversives" were "raping" the society (*La Nación*, 1976: 14) and other military spokespeople warned against "Marxist penetration" and "ideological infiltration" (*La Nación*, 1976: 1).
[2]See Chambers (1992). My discussion later on "identity politics" and "cultural politics" is based in part on his observations.
[3]I disagree with Snitow's (1989) assessment that the *Madres* split "along the feminist divide" (49). Both groups, as I see it, have an ambivalent relationship to feminism. According to the Madres de la Plaza faction, tensions started in the group after Alfonsín came to office at the end of 1983. The Linea Fundadora, they maintain, wanted to negotiate with Alfonsín and take a more pacifist line. There was also an election in the movement in January, 1986, which intensified the suspicion and resentment among the women and provoked the final rupture (see Diago, 1988: 193-195).
[4]There was a pro-military league of mothers, who called themselves "La Liga de Madres de Familia" that organized to ask the Junta for a more forceful implementation of "family values': "Of our leaders we ask for legislation to protect and defend the family, the pillar of society: an ordinance in favor of education that secures traditional and Christian values, and the necessary means so that the media can be a true instrument of culture, broadcasting good example and healthy diversion" (Avellaneda, 1986: 148).

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Renee Norman

Hannah's Child

would have been precocious
female of course
chattering away in German & English
before she let go of Hannah's desktop
to try walking

would have learned to scribble
quietly
while Mamala worked
filling papers with the dizzying marks
that fenced out a distance

loved
of course she would have been
a child of the republic
a light ahead of the dark times behind
more at ease with adults
whispering to her teddy
about Aunt Mary's blueberry pancakes.

until she begged again
to hear the story of the Holocaust
a family album of never forget
this page Buba Martha

sounding strict

turn over to someone named Walter Benjamin
the sad pallor of suicide
in the tone of voice
a puzzle
when she pointed to a framed picture
of Uncle Martin on the desk
& in the way that children can
imaged a second picture there
in her mother's measured reply
black & shadowy like a silhouette

*Aunt Mary is Mary McCarthy
Uncle Martin is Martin Heidegger
Buba Martha is Martha Arendt, Hannah Arendt's mother

Batya Weinbaum

Impact of Children on Mothers' Activism and Vice Versa:

Insights from an Examination of Oral Histories with Israeli Mothers, Summer 1999

This article suggests that motherhood might be radicalizing. It derives from follow-up I did with women activists in Palestine/Israel after an initial oral history research project[1] I carried out at the height of the *Intifada,* up through and immediately after the Persian Gulf War, between 1989 and 1992.[2] I explore the controversial area of children's impact on mothers' activism, and then suggest a possible direction of the influence a mothers' activism has on their children.

I found evidence in women's life stories to contradict traditional stereotypical notions expressed elsewhere that women having children is an impediment to political activism, making them conservative in the interest of protecting their homes. Although I did find some evidence of this commonly asserted reality, I also found some evidence of the social construction of protest[3] stemming directly from the mothering role. For example, the need to protect their children from impending danger and induction into the army can radicalize some women.[4] This radicalism might even extend to mobilizing other women and consequently having an impact on national and international life as women , as activists, and as feminists.

Additionally, contrary to traditional views that children might feel abandoned and neglected by their mothers' turns towards political work, I saw evidence to suggest that children may benefit from exposure to other possible roles for women, thus leading to a normalization of women's agency. Furthermore, their mother's activism might even stimulate the children themselves to engage in political activism of their own.

Thus, either having children or being a child of an activist can become a basis for cognitive liberation, or a transformational consciousness that propels participants into collective action.[5]

Four mothers: Emergence of a collective activist identity from the context of mothering

The first interview I will examine reveals the emergence of a collective identity as a result of repeated shared definitions[6] in this context of mothering. The interviewee was a woman aged 46 in the summer of 1999, whom I spoke with over a tape recorder in a restaurant outside her *kibbutz* in the northwest part of the country, near the border of Lebanon. After listening to the tape and jotting down further questions, I followed up with several phone calls after significant dates had passed of which she had made me aware.[7] Ronit Nahmias had four children. She was born in Algeria but had immigrated to France in 1961 at the end of the war, after independence, because "it was impossible to stay there" (1). She lived in Paris until 1969 when she moved to Israel with her parents and two brothers. She and her husband, with two children, had been placed on the *kibbutz* where she continue to live as her husband was a teacher and basketball player and the *kibbutz* was looking for some one to train children. They decided to stay as they knew they could work and raise their children, giving to community and getting so much in return (1). Later, she had twins, two girls. At the time of the interview, she had three daughters and a son. The eldest (the boy) was 22 years old and finished with the army.

Ronit considered herself a feminist. She first became aware of the women's movement when she was pregnant with her twins and had participarted in street rituals with Women in Black. Her mother had become critical of her activism, calling her crazy. Nonetheless, Ronit decided to remain active and assumed leadership of a group she founded, called Four Mothers. This group was dedicated to promoting the withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon. It was formed spontaneously when she spoke with a friend who also had a son in the army. They were concerned when a plane crashed in a border skirmish, on Feb. 4, 1997, and they knew the soldier who was killed as he was in the same group/class as their own sons. The young soldier's death brought mothers of the boys' peers closer. As Ronit relates, "we thought, this time we were lucky but it can happen (to our children) tomorrow or the day after tomorrow" (3). They decided to do something about a situation that could potentially endanger each of their sons. "It was terrible," Ronit said. "It was a nightmare. We thought this war had no purpose. We don't do anything. We just send the children who are killed, but we will never win because it's a guerilla war. Why do we stay? We want to transcend" (3). They embarked upon a path of raising cultural challenges to the codes that organize information and shape social practices.[7]

Thus, the impact of having a child—in this case, a son—on Ronit as a mother, as well as her friend who was in the same situation, was that it led her to question the role of the army. The loss of a belief in the system's legitimacy propelled Ronit, her friend, and two other mothers to demand change. They contacted members of Parliament, met with them, and when they eventually becoming frustrated with dealing through regular channels, they developed a new sense of political efficacy. They experienced the contradiction of Zionist

ideology that claims the state is there for protection of its citizens, with the reality of their position as mothers who desire to protect their children. Dialectically, this contradiction within hegemonic forces led the women to eventually become disillusioned with, and to challenge, the state and other aspects of civil society, indicting the entire state apparatus.

Originally, the women had felt that speaking as mothers would give them more weight as they were pressuring members of Parliament out of no ulterior (read: party) motive. They felt that rather than expressing an interest in partisan politics, that the motivation to protect their children, perceived to arise out of mothers' "natural" urge to care for their offspring, would earn them respect. Much to their surprise, the press began to ridicule them for being stupid, emotional women who should rather "go to the kitchen" (5). As a result, they resolved to continue to resist the government , refusing to believe that because their sons had to join the army at the age of 18, that they as mothers should give up and give the army permission to do whatever they wanted with them. They responded instead by studying the subject of the conflict in Lebanon. By listening and reading, they started to become aware of different interpretations of the conflict and found there were differing opinions within the army itself. Therefore, rather than being an impediment to their personal development, being mothers (of sons in the army) had a secondary impact that led to their increasing political awareness and understanding of the issues.

The women discovered in their research that secret plans had been made under the table, that even officers within the army were recommending withdrawal from Lebanon, and that there was no other way to solve the problem. Although they discovered rational army officers, and not just "stupid" mothers, also had their ideas rejected, the women did not want to ally with one political party or another to force the issue. They began to articulate the principle that the government should be honest and level with the people. They began to utilize pressure forces such as the governmental Commission on the Status of Women (composed of women across the party spectrum), national petition campaigns, street demonstrations and rituals, letters to Parliament, television news coverage, and meetings with the Prime Minister. The women found themselves propelled to a level of political sophistication. As a direct result of their maternal urge to protect their children, these women were propelled to an increasingly higher level of political sophistication. They became the locus of expression of national concern, and received thousands of phone calls of support from across the country. They began to organize meetings with people on a national level, and this spread to small groups organizing everywhere in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem that took their cues from the Four Mothers' activities.

Ronit had been an activist as a teenager (age 16) during demonstrations that took place during the student uprising in Paris in 1968. However, it wasn't until she understood that her son might be kilied for nothing (11) that she began to express concerns that led her once again into politics, having lost her

faith in the processes of democracy. From there, she began to generalize that around the world, perhaps women can do things, even if they do not always understand the impact of their actions or the action of their governments all at once. She concluded that as women:

> *... we have something. We are very strong... women have the strength to go on, and do what they believe, even if its not something connected to them, or understood... We have inner corroboration. We can do things together. All these movements are living because women are living.* (11)

Thus a final impact of Ronit's children on her life was her transformation into an international feminist.[8] She moved from outrage, to attempts to channel through legitimate processes, and to frustration at responses from legitimate sources. She then took matters into her own hands, became educated, and discovered through the organization of women's study groups that there was a difference of opinion on the inside of governmental structures. She became a national spokesperson, spearheading demonstrations in 20 places across the country on a regular basis for two years, 1997 through 1998, and discovered her own strength and the strength of other women to work ceaselessly for political change. She ended up by concluding that it would be valuable to have a women's party, a very radical idea in Israel. To commemorate their spontaneous actions, they planted 200 trees along the border with Lebanon. In changing the country (as the withdrawal was eventually accomplished) she too was changed.

New profile: Taking leadership in response to sons' avoidance of the army

Although only one lifeline, Ronit's narrative represents the similar flow of stories of other women. For example, Ruth Hiller began to take leadership as an activist when her son said he didn't want to go to the army. His statement was unexpected, although she had been an active in Women in Black protesting the Occupation in earlier years before having to leave the organization in order to fulfill childcare and family obligations. Her son's confession led her to founding a national group and getting extensive coverage in local and national media in Israel, thus also having an impact on the imagination of others to "come out" and express similar concerns and support (22). As a teenager, Ruth had also been active in the anti-war movement and the civil rights movement in the U.S. where she grew up. However, it was the impact of her son's unwillingness to enter the army that motivated her to take a leadership role in the founding of new movements of change to alter the frame of national collective consciousness. His confession led her to talk to other mothers,whose sons also did not want to go into the army. Similar to Ronit, Ruth's response to concerns about one of her children resulted in her leading a national organization that could apply pressure on the state as a group. Ruth's goal was different, however. Her group was focused on allowing conscientious objectors

Ronit Nahmias, founder of Four Mothers

to serve undersome sort of legal status instead of going to fight in the army. This group took the name New Profile.

Like the women in Ronit's organization, the women in New Profile contacted Parliamentary leaders, wrote to the Prime Minister, and so on, a strategy originally formulated as a platform by a group she started working with, Women and Mothers for Peace. Ruth, was also motivated by the impact of her son's confession to start a study group on conscription. She came to the conclusion that "we understood as women, that the only way we could get things changed was to get up and do it" (13). Ruth also had a radical mother's point of view that transformed her into a feminist. As Ruth explained, "the men were brainwashed because that was part of the military. If it wasn't coming from a mother's point of view, we have got to stop the bloodshed, then we can never stop" (13). She was successful in organizing a conference of 150 people to bring conscription under national scrutiny.

However, Ruth suffered terrible personal pain and political disillusionment. The *kibbutz* on which she lived organized a protest against her in October of 1998, in front the *kibbutz* club house where the group was trying to meet, with signs such as "We Won't Let Auschwitz Happen Again" (14). As a mother organizing on behalf of her son Ruth didn't feel that her activism had anything to do with Auschwitz. However, she didn't feel that the protest group would listen to reason, or even talk to her group which was calling for a re-examination of conscription. The group moved its conference off the *kibbutz*, but a rift between Ruth and her immediate social environment had nonetheless occurred. The protest had placed an obstacle in the path of Ruth's group who were trying to bridge public discourse and experiential action with an integrative

Women demonstrating for peace in Jerusalem.

framework that could sustain collective action.[9] Nevertheless, a national structure grew out of that conference and the nuclei of people who signed up to work on committees. Subsequently, Ruth felt it was easier to converse with her son's classmates than with the parents of his classmates on the *kibbutz*, who were actually her immediate peers.

In addition to experiencing disillusionment with her immediate social world, Ruth experienced disillusionment with traditional peace movements within Israeli society and even with the Israeli Union of Civil Liberties that refused to support her son's case or other cases like his. Yet, like Ronit, she was propelled into international activiism when outside of Israel groups such as The War Resistors League began to lend support to New Profile's efforts to change conscription law, to humanize the army, and to demilitarize society. Like Ronit, Ruth was compelled to engage in extensive research on her own and with other women. She discovered a wealth of internal resources. As Ruth put it, "what motivates me is my madness. My need and this conviction." Her biggest fear was that her son would have to spend some time in jail. Her son had resigned himself to this possibility; the son of another activist was going to jail for the same reason and had received positive national coverage and international recognition.

Nonetheless, Ruth herself felt that the worst thing that could happen to him besides death and/or illness would be to face imprisonment (19). Thus, the impacts of her child on this mother were manifold. Being a mother stimulated her activism, brought out her leadership abilities, led her to the brink of disillusionment with the status quo, and forced her to get in touch with and to mobilize her own increasing strength to face her internal fears. She also became

a feminist as all but one member of the organization were women. In spite of his presence, the group held on to its feminism, Ruth said, because "women want to be the ones to decide. Many are active in the organization and have a lot of input and a lot of experience. There is something in being female that says we don't want war any more. This is really making peace" (21). New Profile is known and respected for its egalitarianism, which is regarded as a positive factor in the movement, as important as the general values expressed and the everyday stories told in charting movement culture.[10] Everyone is doing their share, as "there is a common interest and a common goal ... that thing of motherhood is what binds us together. It's unbelievable ... we want to keep our kids alive" (22).

Ruth, too, felt her identity as a woman had changed as a result of the activities that she took on because she was the mother of a victimized and potentially endangered son. As Ruth put it, "I was really afraid to say what I felt. You are brought up because you are a woman, especially when it comes to the question of the military, to say you don't know enough, you weren't equal. You were made to feel inferior..."(24). This was a feeling that, forced into activism by virtue of being a mother, she contradicted and overcame.

Women and mothers for peace: Earning respect from husbands and sons as activists

Although Dita Azene, another activist in one of the spin-off groups of the same period in Tel Aviv, Women and Mothers for Peace, did not support re-examination of conscription or the use of the word "mothers" in their name, she felt that she earned the respect of both her sons and her husband for her activities as "the peace activist in the family." Her sons came to the demonstrations that she organized and attended. Although she didn't consider herself a feminist as the other mothers I refer to here did, she participated in Women in Black as well as in all the demonstrations with Palestinians, because she "wanted to touch the women and to end the occupation, to help" (1). She became friends with Palestinians through her activism, and she felt her life change through her activism because she became more "like a human being" (4), not like a Jewish mother who merely cooked food. Although not she did not identify as a feminist, she was more comfortable with women because she thought they worked better together as a group, than did men. Women, she felt, were also are more willing to be visible. Thus, through her activism, Dita altered the image of women she conveyed to her sons, and provided them with a different view of womanhood. She, too, began to appear in the *Jerusalem Post*, when Women and Mothers for Peace took out an ad for peace on behalf of the destiny of the children in Israeli society. Her home, also, was deluged with phone calls (6). The impact this had on her sons was to provide them with a generalized concern and care for *all*, which goes beyond an individual mother's care for her own biological offspring. Dita feels as a woman that she is impacting on history, and that her actions challenge the more traditional

societal ideas about the role of women, and the limitation of their agency, which might otherwise be perpetuated by her sons.

Conclusions

In conclusion, more work needs to be done.[11] Nonetheless it can be seen from these few examples that the children impacted on the mothers by propelling them to action, while the action of the mothers inspired alternate visions of women and activism, in turn impacting on their children. As I mentioned, one of the sons of one of the other women I interviewed was receiving national and international coverage for refusing to go into the army, while I was there (Raz, 1999). The son had grown up in a household where his mother was always demonstrating for peace, participating in the Women in Black demonstrations, and later writing a platform for educating educators and parents to bring up children for peace and not for violence which she was circulating in the *Knesset*. Because this particular young man's mother had had numerous newspaper coverage and national interviews while he was raised, it helped him come to the logical conclusion that he should not go to the army to fight at all. Thus, his life of protest can be perceived as a direct outgrowth of his mother's political activism.

Consequently, the positive impact of children on women's activism, and, in turn, of mothers' activism on children, even if not they do not always bring about these same results, should not be overlooked in future analysis. Political action arising out of the need to protect one's own children may be generalized to a fight for larger social concerns in the long run, as has been evidenced in developments in the women's peace movement in Palestine/Israel. [12]

From examining these few life stories, we can see that consciousness, as William A. Gamson suggests in an essay called "Social Psychology of Collective Action" concerns "the mesh between cognition and culture—between individual beliefs about the social world and the cultural belief systems and ideologies" (1992: 65). To understand people's willingness to be quiescent or to engage in collective action requires an understanding of political consciousness as an active process of constructing meaning. Parenting, and specifically mothering, can play a part in this. Researchers in the future might explore the impact of women's children on their motivation to engage in collective action over time, to publicly take positions that might seem to counter nationalist understandings that might otherwise be in effect in areas of long-term violent strife and war.

[1]This research was conducted with the support of a faculty start-up grant from Cleveland State University, and with additional support from John Holm, Director of International Programs at CSU, to whom I am greatly indebted in numerous ways. For results of the earlier research see Weinbuam (forthcoming, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 1998).

[2]See Klandermans (1992) for discussion of frameworks for analysis of social construction of protest generated over the last ten years by students of social movements, to which I suggest here that the dialectic of tension in the mother's role and social location be added.

[3]Similarly, Hanks-Harwood (2000) found that 67 per cent of her interviews with women peace activists in the U.S. in the 1980s cited the desire to protect children as a motivating force bringing them to political activism.

[4]For analysis of the possible steps in transformation of consciousness, see McAdam (1988). He proposes first the loss of legitimacy; second, the loss of fatalism; and third, development of a new sense of political efficacy. See also Klandermans (1992).

[5]New social movement theorists view collective identity as such to help distinguish between "doing" and "being." See Taylor and Whittier (1992:117).

[6]For example, I called her after a planned trip by the women to try to speak to somebody in *Knesset*, and then again after certain news events to get her subsequent responses.

[7]See Melucci (1995) on how those involved in such conflicts reclaim autonomy and agency in making sense of their lives.

[8]Such personal transformation has been central to most social movements. See Morris (1984); Fantasia (1988); McNall (1988).

[9]See Gamson (1995) on the importance of monitoring media discourse that such obstacles created for activists involve.

[10]See Lofland (1995: 192) regarding implicit features of social life and explicit social construction of cultures in political movements.

[11]For example, the incidents of impact of children on mothers' activism here have been the influence of sons. Aliyah Strauss, another activist, described the impact of her daughter. Aliyah, at the time of the interview president of the Israeli chapter of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, had been active for many years around Palestinian/Israeli peace issues. This activism for peaceful coexistence began when her husband experienced conflict and disorientation during his reserve. When I asked Aliyah how she had first been exposed to feminism, she discussed the issue of *Ms. Magazine* her daughter had sent her from the States explaining that it had opened her eyes to the sex-role stereotyping in children's literature.

[12]See for example a communication from Ruth Hiller (2000) which explains an amalgamation of Women in Black, Four Mothers, New Profile, Women and Mothers for Peace, and *Bat* Shalom putting forth slogans such as "We did not get our boys out of Lebanon to die defending settlements."Not mentioned here are two women who came from the Christian Peace Teams working actively in occupied territories as human shields. Ruth wrote that on Wednesday (8 November 2000), a group of 40 women met in Tel-Aviv. They came from five women's peace movements in Israel—Four Mothers, Women in Black, Bat Shalom, Mothers and Women for Peace, and New Profile. They had the blessings of women from other peace movements who could not attend—

Women for the Sanctity of Life, Women for Women Political Prisoners, *Tandi*, and WILPF. Although they had come from all these organizations, they spoke as individuals, and their words did not necessarily reflect the views of our organizations. They sat for over three hours and accomplished the following: "1) We learned of each other's initiatives for peace and agreed to support them by attending and mobilizing others to attend. 2) We created a network of contacts around the country for information and coordination. 3) We argued about whether to take a more radical or a moderate position—based on our beliefs and on what "the situation" calls for. 4) And we wrote our first joint statement, which was faxed to all the local and foreign press this morning.... While we may never agree on the politics or the strategy, we enthusiastically agreed that we must continue this network. It is not our intention to replace any other activity. We want to support each other in the work we are doing, foster new initiatives, and perhaps also undertake some joint action. Our provisional name for ourselves: Women for a Just Peace. The Age of Generals is Over—The Time for Women Has Come!" The following was the final statement of a conference of women from a diverse range of organizations, held in Tel-Aviv on Wednesday, 8 November 2000: "We refuse to support men or women who do military service in the occupied territories. Enough killing and being killed in the defense of settlements! We did not get our children out of Lebanon so they could be sent to fight for Netzarim and Hebron."

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Renee Norman

Mother Troll

suddenly
i am the enemy
a troll
(her word not mine)
who rampages through private diaries
plunges through boxes of keepsakes
aims bug-out eyes over to the letters
crawling on the computer screen
grabbing secrets

the truth of the matter
is both more and less than that
a desire to understand and keep connected
a spilled gathering of memorabilia
beneath the changing of the sheets
a page left open that beckons
(read me)

mother troll
is not just rifling through scraps of memory
trying to steal the soul
out of teenage independence

she is making beds of netting
a place for both of us to fall upon
when blankets fray
and holes open wide
to painful words

Joanne H. Wright

Unmasking Ourselves:
Resisting the Martha Stewart-ization of Motherhood

A review essay of Susan Maushart, *The Mask of Motherhood: How Becoming a Mother Changes Everything and Why We Pretend It Doesn't*

> To see motherhood properly, I am convinced, is to see it heroically, which means making full acknowledgement of the pain, the dangers, and the risks and taking the full measure of the glory for its exquisite rewards. (Maushart, 1999: 105)

When *The Mask of Motherhood* (Maushart, 1999) went to press, the first Martha Stewart *Baby* magazine had yet to decorate the racks of grocery stores and Gap sales counters. Yet, in Martha Stewart *Baby* lies ample evidence of Susan Maushart's thesis about the mask of motherhood. Maushart is concerned with the incongruities between women's lived experiences of mothering and our cultural representations of that experience in the media, advertising, and in public and private discourse. As a magazine dedicated entirely to feeding, clothing, and decorating for babies, Martha Stewart *Baby* embodies a culturally-dominant, but nonetheless troublesome image of motherhood. It looks like a Baby Gap advertising supplement, containing countless photos of perfect designer children. We find in its pages instructions on such things as how to make an inchworm cake for your child's first birthday—a cake that would take any normal human being days to prepare and assemble. We see neat, tidy middle-class nurseries decorated to perfection with hand-sewn quilts and pumpkin-shaped pillows. More interesting, however, is what—or whom—we do *not* see: mothers themselves. Indeed, the magazine reveals almost no traces of the work of mothering at all.

Although mothers are absent from the glossy photo spreads of *Baby* magazine, they are very much at its center. Indeed, the magazine is targeted at mothers and it is selling us a particular image of what motherhood should look like. The invisibility of mothers is a sign that the work of mothering should be

neither seen nor heard. Martha Stewart *Baby* offers us a sanitized and idealized world of motherhood in which the reality of babies, the care they demand and the mess they make is confined to lighthearted quips in the small print. This is a world of consumption in which the solution to any "problem" about parenting can be found in the product information pages. With its photos of sleeping babies, its articles on the meaning of lullabies and the creation of memory quilts, Martha Stewart *Baby* also serves to sentimentalize and romanticize motherhood. We can hardly help being drawn into Martha Stewart's world because of its sheer beauty, but at the same time, it leaves most of us feeling inadequate. This kind of artificial beauty, this forced sentimentality, tends to inspire feelings of disappointment and guilt—disappointment that we don't have the time or inclination to make pumpkin-shaped pillows, and guilt that we can't make mothering look that easy or perfect.

The fundamental disjuncture between Martha Stewart's mother-absent but perfect world and the lived experiences of mothering is exactly what Maushart (1999) wants to deconstruct. She argues that mothers themselves repress this disjuncture between illusion and reality behind the mask of motherhood, a term that Maushart borrows from Adrienne Rich. The mask of motherhood is of our own design; it conceals the ambivalence, the frustration, and the conflicted emotions that many women experience in mothering behind the façade of the competent, cheerful and even serene mother. The problem is not just that we do not see ourselves reflected in the pages of Martha Stewart *Baby*, but that, in being bombarded with these wholly unrealistic images of motherhood, we internalize them and use them as the standard against which we judge our own performances. How many of us know that Martha Stewart's world is not our own, but continue nevertheless to flip longingly through the pages of her *Baby* magazine?

Of course, the mask of motherhood takes many different forms, and Martha Stewart's magazine is only one of them. The mask of motherhood can also be found in the cultural discourses about pregnancy as an unequivocally joyful experience, about labour as something that can be "managed" with drugs or, if approached with the correct attitude and birth plan, done naturally. The mask of motherhood encourages us to accept the idea that motherhood is itself a manageable experience, that it is just another task to be juggled with others. We deal in the currency of "supermom" and the myth of achieving an easy balance between career and family but, as Maushart puts it, "getting the knack of combining motherhood with a career is like getting the knack of brain surgery" (1999: 7). One friend confessed to me, "There is never a day in which I feel I am both a good mother *and* a good academic; it is always one or the other." And the older and more educated and career-oriented the new mother, the greater the "nurture shock"—or, the more dissonance she will experience between her former controlled existence and her new reality. Any woman who has become a mother knows that motherhood is not just another task—it is *the* task to end all tasks. It is life altering. Yet these kernels of insight rarely make

it into our public or private discourse about motherhood; we rarely take off the mask that Maushart has identified to reveal our true selves.

Maushart is at her most insightful, and most humourous, when she enters the fray surrounding birth and breastfeeding. The mask of motherhood, she argues, prevents us from being honest with other women about what is really involved in giving birth and in breastfeeding. Her chapter entitled, "Labouring under Delusions," takes on contemporary prenatal discourse. Never, she argues, have women been so equipped with information about childbirth, and yet been so woefully unprepared for the actual experience of it. While in our mothers' or grandmothers' generation, a "good birth" meant a live birth, a good birth in the modern lexicon refers to a "meaningful birth." As she rightly observes, "it is because we can now be so confident about a successful outcome in the form of a healthy baby that we can afford the luxury of examining birth as a process imbued with meaning in its own right" (1999: 70). Indeed, it has been invested with so much significance that we have forgotten that it is more than the *culmination* of pregnancy; it is the *commencement* of at least two new lives, that of baby and mother. In focussing most of its attention on strategies for the "good birth" rather than on coping methods for new motherhood, prenatal education ultimately fails us. After all, "[c]hildbirth is one day, more or less, in a woman's life; motherhood is forever" (1999: 71). It is not that Maushart denies the power of birthing experiences, she is merely questioning the relative weight prenatal education assigns to it.

Moreover, the obsessive preparation for birth, with the creation of the right birth plan, deludes women into believing that they can control and manage their own births. Yet my own obstetrician put it best when he stated plainly, "The thing about birth is, you can't plan it." Having the information is still better than ignorance, but having information in abundance "may produce its own brand of folly" (1999: 75). Indeed, Maushart points out that women are "encouraged to regard childbirth as a performance, a testing of their maternal mettle" (1999: 75). Unfortunately, statistical evidence shows that most women come away from the experience reporting they did not feel in control, that they were taken aback by the unmanageability of the pain, and that they did not "perform" well.

> The woman who has given birth with an epidural or via cesarean section will worry that she has somehow cheated. By contrast, her sister who endures the full nine yards of biblical travail—having bought into the mythology that all you really need for the pain is breath control, a sincere partner, and batteries for the Discman—will feel that she has *been* cheated. ("How could they have told such lies?"...) (1999:79)

As long as birth is judged as a performance, it will be difficult to avoid the competition that currently surrounds it ("My birth was great; I just squatted to

deliver the baby..." vs. "I was in agony for 36 hours..."). In this competition, the "good birth" advocates are challenged by those who, at the drop of a hat, will reveal their most horrific birth stories to the yet uninitiated. While this latter discourse of complaint and negativity may be more honest than contemporary prenatal education, it does more to inspire fear than to actually prepare women for the experience of giving birth.

In perhaps her most courageous insight, Maushart suggests that women's' "success" (however it is defined) at childbirth is largely determined by luck. The extent of both our suffering and our ability to withstand the pain comes down to pure chance—a lottery. Recognizing that "it is pure heresy to say so" Maushart contends that everything depends on the baby's positioning, timing, and "the woman's innate physical endowments" (1999: 88). This is a liberating revelation! Recognizing the lottery of childbirth might be scary for some simply because it means we have to admit to ourselves that we do not control it, but at the same time it also frees us from the trap of seeing childbirth as a test or performance.

In her chapter on breastfeeding, "Lactation Intolerant: The Worst of Breast Is Best," the author is similarly insightful and heretical. If the child-feeding pendulum has swung from pro-infant formula in the 1950s and 1960s to a strong "breast is best" ethic from the 1970s through the 1990s, *The Mask of Motherhood* is evidence that the pendulum is once again in motion. While acknowledging that breast is indeed best, Maushart rails against the breastfeeding lobby for their self-righteousness. She takes exception to the judgemental language with which breastfeeding advocates dismiss bottle-feeding ("artificial feeding") just as she calls into question the notion that breastfeeding comes easily and naturally to all women. She is most concerned with the unwritten terms of what I call the breastfeeding contract. Yes, on the surface, everybody gains: baby gets the best nourishment; mother does not have to prepare bottles; and both enjoy the unique bonding experience. But breastfed babies also tend to sleep for shorter durations, increasing their mothers' fatigue, and breastfeeding is, for a significant number of women, a very painful experience. Furthermore, "every woman who attempts to breast feed will discover what the mask of motherhood never reveals: breastfeeding is not merely an 'option' but a way of life" (1999: 151). And as a way of life, it is radically out of sync with "the expectations of everyday adult life that today's women increasingly share with men" (1999: 169). "Don't expect to be able to do anything else," a doctor friend advised me about breastfeeding. She was right—for most women new to breastfeeding, a shower is an accomplishment. Women deserve to know this when they embark on the experience. Many will choose to breastfeed anyway—and they will surrender control over their lives to do it—but how much "undue frustration and self-blame" (1999: 169) could be avoided if they entered into this contract with their eyes open?

Both our prenatal and child-rearing discourses are fraught with a primary inconsistency that exacerbates the confusion and uncertainty of new mothers.

On the one hand, we are bombarded with advice books and manuals that give us (often conflicting) technical advice on what to do for our babies. But on the other hand, this technical advice is punctuated with affirmations that we will somehow know what is best because mothering is instinctual and intuitive. Maushart observes that "the very existence of these texts implicitly (and often explicitly as well) undermines the new mother's confidence not only in her own judgment but in the accumulated wisdom of her own peers and elders" (1999: 141). As children of the information age, we have come to trust apparently objective and scientific knowledge over the experience of our mothers, sisters, aunts and grandmothers, and this, for Maushart, represents an "incalculable loss." As she puts it, "what we don't know about motherhood is what we refuse to hear and refuse to see in the lives of women around us, in the arrogant presumption that we are unique, that we will be different. Ultimately, we will pay dearly for our hubris" (1999: 144).

To a new mother, Maushart's (1999) revelations are epiphanic. And I suspect for many mothers with more experience, reading *The Mask of Motherhood* will confirm much of what they already know. Maushart articulates a whole range of contradictory experiences and emotions that otherwise go unexplained in mothering. What is missing, in her view, is a vibrant, open, and honest public conversation about both the challenges *and* the unparalleled joys of becoming a mother in late modern Western culture. This is a conversation that needs to take place between mothers themselves, and it ought to extend into the medical establishment, to prenatal classes, and perhaps especially to places like La Leche League, where one most expects an honest discourse but often comes away frustrated and even downright annoyed. Such a conversation would prevent each of us from having to "laboriously [reinvent] the wheel of motherhood"; it would prevent motherhood from being what Phyllis Chesler has called a wilderness experience. In our society, Chesler argues, pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood "are savage tests of your ability to survive the wilderness alone. And to keep quiet about what you've seen" (cited in Maushart, 1999: 12).

To alter the current situation, however, we need more than a *conversation* about motherhood, and we need to do more than change the ideals of mothering. In effect, we need to change the social and economic conditions of mothering. While Maushart (1999) recognizes the incompatibility between the tempo and expectations of everyday life in late modern Western societies and the demands of motherhood, she does not extend her recommendations to include changes to the economic organization of our society. She is right to point out that one of the fundamental challenges for women is to negotiate a "balance" between mothering and outside employment. But as long as we are governed by a market system, and as long as the structures of the market determine the arrangements of the remainder of our lives, any sort of "balance" will remain elusive. Women's places in a market economy are already precarious, and becoming a mother only increases our economic risk and heightens the

tension between public and private roles and obligations. In a sense, our failure to articulate the realities of motherhood to each other is related to our reluctance to address the indisputable contradictions of our current economic system.

Conversely, perhaps initiating a discussion about the problems with the mask of motherhood and the disjunctures between the illusions and realities of mothering will also lead us into a conversation about the need to address the larger, systemic obstacles to a more meaningful and rewarding mothering experience. As it stands, *The Mask of Motherhood* presents a rather bleak picture. But it is bleak not because it is "down on motherhood," as my doula warned me it might be when she read its suggestive subtitle, but because it exposes the faultlines in our culturally-accepted conspiracy of silence. At one and the same time, it is affirming because it identifies motherhood as something *other* than—and something far *more* than—what Martha Stewart depicts.

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Renee Norman

Caught!

hook in a trout's mouth
she calls excited
wants to let the creature loose
the cruel mangle of pin
an eagle swoops down
to grab
she so willing to relinquish

the eagle prepares her
for the futility of tenderness
but the trout
scales a glint of silver
struggling for air in light
strained through thick trees
blood staining the pocket
of her nylon jacket
(it holds a penny leaking red)

the trout tutors her
in the luxury of mercy

Joyce W. Fields and Megan Fields Emery

Preschool Books:
An Assessment of Conflict Resolution Skills Available to Young Children Through Reading

This paper is the product of one mother's love of children's books, her daughter's love of children's books, and the two of them introducing that love to an infant son.

Mothers and fathers spend a great deal of time ensuring that children of all ages are read to. Some experts recommend that this begin when the baby is still in the womb, with mother and father reading books to their unborn child in an attempt to begin early brain development and a lifelong love of reading. Children's literature serves many different functions. It takes us to far away places, serves as a means of entertainment, allows children the exploration of their feelings, informs on a variety of topics, and acts as a means of socialization for children of all ages.

Socialization has been defined as the process of shaping behavior so that children fit in with society. Through the socialization process, children learn the norms of society and also the different roles performed by members of society, including behaviors that are acceptable or not acceptable (Ormrod, 1998). Within the somewhat restricted world of early childhood, parents are the major socializing agents acting as filters by which these early social interpretations are made. Books are a common, readily available example of the wider environment for the child and are therefore, strong forces in the lives of children. Books provide examples of how we expect people to behave and what is appropriate and inappropriate in our world.

Lev Vygotsky (1978), a Russian psychologist, conducted much of his research with young children and in so doing discovered that children are taught by example and through social interaction. Through these two modalities, children learn the thinking patterns and behavior patterns which make up the culture of their communities. When parents and teachers read to children, they

open a door for a wealth of other socialization activities. Vygotsky believed that children use inner speech to guide themselves through difficult tasks and that with the guidance and support of more competent individuals, children develop increasing skills at various tasks as well as more sophisticated thought processes (Ormrod, 1998).

Vygotsky (1978) posited a zone of proximal development to explain the relationship between learning and development. He conceptualized that children are capable of learning and are, indeed, active learners from the first day of life and that therefore, learning and development are inextricably interrelated. In *Mind in Society,* he defines the zone of proximal development as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problems solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (1978: 86). Development is the internal process and learning is the external process. Vygotsky states that, "What a child can do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow" (1978: 87). Children can only learn that which is within their developmental level. If books are then, used as agents of socialization, an analysis of problem solving skills and the way adults guide the resolution of problems in story may affect the way a child will resolve conflict and solve problems in his/her future.

In the book they edited, *Making Sense,* Bruner and Haste discuss the ways children organize and make sense of their world. They suggest that, "given an appropriate, shared social context, the child seems more competent as an intelligent social operator than she is as a 'lone scientist' coping with a world of unknowns" (1997: 1). They find evidence of the relationship between the individual and the social world as demonstrated collaborativity from various researchers in various fields. They suggest that when enhancing problem-solving activity, "what in fact happens ... is that the child's own cognitive approach to the problem is challenged, either by peers directly or by parents or teachers 'scaffolding' understanding through pacing of the problem-solving process" (1997: 8). The child can, thereby, build on his/her own organization of reality through interaction with others (mothers and fathers) who have more sophisticated skills. She uses what she knows and grows by integrating the concepts presented by those who have more advanced reasoning.

The effects of parents and family as primary socializing agents for children has a long history in social research and remains a focus for current family researchers (Strand, 2000, Vandell, 2000; Harris, 2000; and Bedford, Volling, and Avioli, 2000). There is a strong relationship between parenting styles and the social development of children. There is also strong evidence that parents provide the filters for multiple socializating agents for their children. The role of sibling conflict has been found to be potentially beneficial for adult wellbeing and competence. Siblings who are allowed to resolve their own conflicts without direct parental intervention may experience increased social and emotional competence, develop self identity, experience quality sibling rela-

tionships, and subsequently, adjust their own parenting skills. Hastings and Rubin report a transaction model for socialization effects between mothers and children. They suggest that social behaviors of two year olds may influence parental beliefs and actions. "Authoritarian mothers of aggressive toddlers were most likely to report high control and anger, to blame their children for aggression, and to focus on obtaining compliance rather than teaching skills to their children. Protective mothers reported that they would use warmth and involvement to comfort withdrawn children, especially their daughters" (1999: 722).

Children reflect the coercion and negotiation strategies of their parents as discovered through observation, interviews, and questionnaires by Crockenberg and Lourie (1996). They found a longitudinal correlation between mothers' strategies and children's self-reports of social competence. Hastings, Zahn-Waxler, Usher, Robinson, and Bridges (2000) found that maternal socialization approaches predicted the ability of their young children to show concern for others and externalize problems.

In a society where children are increasingly called upon to be critical problem solvers and brokers of conflict, the examination of skills in these areas is essential. Parents and schools must deal increasingly with children who threaten each other with violence, carry weapons, observe violence in many everyday contexts, and exhibit antisocial or violent behaviors. It is not unusual for parents to express concern regarding the safety of their children in a variety of social situations. Data from the U. S. Census Bureau report that 1,613 children under the age of 18 were murder victims in 1998. Records of juvenile arrests are recorded in two categories, violent crimes and drug related crimes. Juvenile arrests for violent crimes rose from 77,220 in 1980 to 90,703 in 1998 and juvenile arrests for drug related crimes rose from 86,685 in 1980 to 148,712 in 1998. From 1990 to 1998, the total number of substantiated child maltreatment cases rose from 690,658 to 861,602. It must be noted that some of these children were victims of several types of maltreatment so the total impact of violence against children is more complex than this figure indicates. In 1998, 51 per cent of these victims were female; 13.7 per cent were under the age of one year, 24.4 per cent between two to five years, and 25.2 per cent between six to nine years of age.

Maxwell and Carroll-Lind found that children are profoundly affected by exposure to violence with the most traumatic events for children being the death of a relative, the separation of parents, being victims of abuse, direct or vicarious pain, and witnessing violence. They conclude that "family violence distorts children's socialization" (1998: 177). Ladd and Ladd investigated peer victimization and found that "high intrusive demandingness and low responsiveness were associated with peer victimization in both boys and girls and parent-child relationships characterized by intense closeness were associated with higher levels of peer victimization in boys" (1998: 1450). It is apparent that children, young children, must attain skills for understanding and coping with

conflict evident in their world. Appropriate interaction is a key element for skill building.

Berger and Luckman in *The Social Construction of Reality* emphasize, "the most important experience of others takes place in the face-to-face situation, which is the prototype case of social interaction. All other cases are derivatives of it" (1967: 28). Face-to-face interactions provide a circular reactive pattern of behaviors. I smile, you smile in return, and your smile influences my subsequent reaction. In the child's earliest experiences, these circular patterns (most frequently between mother/father and child) furnish the genesis of socialization or the awareness of "other." As development and learning advance, social roles, norms, and expectations also shape the child's construction of reality. Schema develop as organizers of reality and provide the genesis of social thought. Berger and Luckman put it best. "Man [sic] is biologically predestined to construct and to inhabit a world with others. This world becomes for him the dominant and definitive reality. Its limits are set by nature, but once constructed, this world acts back upon nature" (1967: 183). Because we are destined to inhabit a world with others, we construct this world based on the reality available to us and, in turn, our constructed reality impacts self, others, and the social environment at large. If our reality includes conflict, it must also include conflict resolution for survival and growth. Interpretations of conflict and conflict resolution are filtered by interactions with socializing agents in our socially constructed world, e.g., parents, peers, relations, books, media, and social institutions.

The effects of violence on young children and the movement toward teaching peace have found voice in recent literature. Sauertwein (1995) recognizes that young children are very susceptible to violence; that stored memories of violent acts, whether real or fictionalized, may affect their sense of reality. She provides models of antiviolence curricula. Bernat (1993), Trepanier-Street and Romantowski (1996), Betz (1994), and Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1992) report various techniques for conflict resolution in early childhood classrooms including setting clear, appropriate interactive rules, redirecting attention, and integrating face-to-face discussions of infractions as opposed to using time-out as an intervention. Killen (1995) found that preschoolers are social and sensitive to the needs of others and that aggression is rare among young children. Her findings indicate that children can and do negotiate with peers both at a young age and in the absence of adults. A number of researchers have discovered that children evidencing creativity, sociability, and friendliness are more likely to respond positively to programs emphasizing interpersonal negotiation strategies, (Dinwiddie, 1994; Adalbjarnardottir, 1995; Hartup, *et. al.*, 1988, Oboodiat, *et.al.*, 1994).

Adult involvement in conflicts between children has also been a topic of recent social science research. Sims *et. al.* (1996) observed 50 three-year-olds in day care centers and found that adults intervene when there is physical activity involved in the conflict and that this may keep children from dealing independently with resolution of interpersonal conflict. This knowledge,

coupled with DiMartino's (1990) finding that preschoolers are able to distinguish and understand different types of social conflict in the same way as adults, reinforces the fact that parents and significant adults are primary socializing agents for children. The universality of this concept is reflected in work by Killen, Ardila-Rey, Barakkatz and Wang (2000) which found that 160 preschool teachers in four countries (United States, Colombia, El Salvador, and Taiwan) held similar beliefs with regard to intervention in children's conflicts and the importance of autonomy in early childhood.

Literature has been used in a number of contexts for the socialization of children such as multiculturalism (Goldblatt, 1999; Stewig, 1992; Cole and Valentine, 2000), American identity (Steiner, 1998), gender roles (Levstik, 1983), ethnic sensitivity (Palmer *et. al.,* 1992), technology (Gertz-Hyman, 1993), career awareness (Westerberg and Sander, 1982), coping with disabilities (DeGeorge, 1998), diverse family forms (Hampton, Rak, and Mumford, 1997), social awareness of peer relationships (Bhavnagri and Samuels, 1996), social action (McGowan, 1994), moral education (Frank, 1980), and death (DeMinco, 1995). Similarly, children's literature has been used in teaching such varied classes across the curriculum as social studies (Hamman, 1995; Mitchell-Powell, 1995; Waters, 1999), geography and mathematics (Lombard and Capan, 1993), cooking (Norton and Anfin, 1997), geography (Harthern, 1992), and anthropology (Barnes, 1991).

It is consistent that children's literature, as a socializing agent, impacts learning and growth opportunities for young children. Studies by Tabbert (1979) and Krips (1997) emphasize that both reading and being read to make an important contribution to the instruction, entertainment, and socialization of young children. An examination of this contribution of children's literature in the area of conflict resolution has been the subject of only a few studies in the last decade. Reicken and Miller (1990) and Gallagher (1990) both address the use of children's books in promoting peace, cooperation, interdependence and problem-solving. Luke and Myers (1994) examined ways to use literature in helping children develop positive conflict resolution skills. They give examples of three primary books that may be used by parents and teachers in dealing with misunderstanding, peace, jealousy, and playground fights.

It was the purpose of the current research to explore the content of preschool literature in order to assess the possible impact such literature may have on preparing the child for conflict and conflict resolution in their near environment. The question under investigation was what, specifically, do children's books say about conflict. The researchers focused on three dimensions: the presence or level of conflict in the book, the strategy for resolution of the conflict, and if an other is used to resolve the conflict, who is the other most often selected.

Methodology

The methodology used in this study was a content analysis. This technique

provides data for both quantitative and qualitative analysis, "a method of measuring the unmeasurable" (Simon, 1978). Early content analysis was used by military intelligence agencies during wartime. Newspapers were monitored with exact counts made of items that could contribute to the war machine. It has been used extensively in reviewing the influence of mass media or changes in society and culture as reflected by current media. Examination of popular literature of a particular period or genre has been used to comment on political climate or historic circumstances. "...This technique is the source of much of our understanding of the contacts among cultures and the transmission of knowledge among them" (Simon, 1978: 213).

Procedures

A list of 125 children's books was compiled by collapsing the American Library Association's suggested reading list for preschoolers and the Association of Library Services to Children's suggested fiction books for preschoolers. The number of books available from this list to the researchers was 105, providing a study sample of n=105. Thus, 20 books from these two sources were omitted from the study.

Five readers were trained as a group on analyzing and coding the contents of these books. They worked independently of each other for the actual analysis. Each reader assessed all the books and coded responses on response sheets. These response sheets were then compiled and a common rating for each book was developed based on consensus of responses. The data collected were analyzed statistically using a c2 test of each of the three dimensions.

Results

The first dimension under investigation concerned the level of conflict reflected in preschool literature. Readers rated each book as being on one of four levels. Level one reflected no conflict in the book or books that were simply descriptive in nature. It included simple picture books and counting books. Of the 105 books read, 36 of them were purely descriptive. Molly Bangs' *Ten, Nine, Eight*, a book of numbers, was rated in this category. Level two were books in which one party or group experienced a need to solve a problem. The conflict depicted is a simple conflict, one in which a problem exists and there is no opposition to its resolution. Thirty-three of the books were determined to be at this level. Don Freeman's *Corduroy* is an example of a level two book. Level three books depicted situations in which one character or group had to solve a problem but experienced some opposition to the resolution of the problem. Twenty-four of the books were determined to be at this level. Wally Piper's *The Little Engine that Could* was ranked in this grouping. Level four were books depicting situations in which two or more parties or groups were involved in conflict with direct opposition between characters or situations. Only 12 books contained this level of conflict, Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* being, perhaps, the best example. While 36 books were descriptive, 69 of those read

depicted some conflict. A statistically significant difference exists between the level of conflict present in these books such that $p<.01$. See Chart I.

The second dimension under investigation concerned the strategies suggested in the books for resolution of the conflict. The following strategies were analyzed, no option, talking a solution, withdrawing, verbal fighting, physical fighting, bringing in another party to help with the resolution, and miscellaneous others. Two strategies emerged from the "other" category, persistence on the part of the character and accidental resolution. Totals in this category are larger than the sample (n=69) because in several cases, more than one strategy was suggested and/or used. Only one book offered not option for resolution. The book was entitled *Where Does Joe Go?* And was a mystery with no answer provided as to where the hot dog vender at the boardwalk goes during the winter. Fifteen books suggested talking as a method of resolution and fifteen suggested withdrawing from conflict. Only two depicted verbal fighting and three depicted physical fighting. The largest number of books, 35, offered bringing in a third party as successful resolution of the conflict. Of the 12 books offering miscellaneous other strategies, the one most often suggested was persistence. Frequently, talking was offered as a dual solution coupled with bringing in another party. Withdrawing was also suggested in concert with bringing in another party as well as with talking a solution.

A statistically significant difference exists between the strategies used for resolution of the conflict at $p<.001$. See Chart 2.

The third dimension under investigation concerned which parties were invited to help resolve conflicts. Of the 35 books depicting the use of a third party for intervention, 11 of them suggest peers as the resource. Nine depicted significant adults (teachers, grandparents), seven depicted parents (most often, mothers), three depicted authority figures (police, sheriff), and 5 used inanimate objects such as toys. There was no statistically significant difference between which significant other is used as a resource for conflict resolution. See Chart 3.

Discussion

It is interesting that only one-third of preschool books contained no conflict or need to solve a problem. This indicates that the large majority of books for young children introduce problem solving at the earliest point in literary life. A little more than half of those dealing with some sort of problem or conflict involved opposition to the resolution of the problem. At the youngest ages, then, books are socializing children as problem solvers. This has been the case for some time as the books on the list have publication dates through the last century. As children read about little engines or teddy bears with difficulties, they are seeing the world as a place where problems and even conflict exist. When they are read to, adults or more sophisticated learners, socialize children in accepting the reality of conflict and are able to guide them through the process of recognizing such abstract concepts as opposition and

resolution. They are also able to imagine (envision) outcomes at a very early age.

At this time, there are no indicators for the types of strategies most often used by children at different development stages. The strategies depicted in these books may not reflect the strategies most often incorporated by children into their repertoire of resolution skills. It is interesting to note that of the strategies depicted, talking out a solution was used exactly as often as withdrawing from conflict. It is possible that the choice between these two strategies may depend more on the personality of the child than on the technique itself. With only five books in this sample depicting any type of fighting, verbal or physical, it is clear that children's authors do not write about hostility when they write about problems and conflicts. We do know that there are potential benefits for sibling conflict (Bedford *et al.*, 2000: 53) and wonder if the depiction of more overt aggression in children's literature might not have similar results. The vicarious nature of reading may provide children with opportunities for rehearsing ways of handling fighting in their lives.

What are we suggesting when the most common strategy depicted is intervention by a third party? Are we in some way suggesting that children are incompetent problem-solvers or that they require others to handle their conflicts? It is possible that we are teaching lessons of safety; that children are safe when there are significant others available to assist them when confronted with conflict. Is this a desirable message?

The most resounding question of this research emerges when looking at preferable resources for helping resolve conflicts. The leaders of this list are peers. The contradiction here is clear. I am not competent to resolve conflict but my peer is. Ergo, I am not as competent as my peer. No wonder children are confused as to useful strategies or may not use the strategies depicted in their books. It is surprising that in only seven of these books parents are suggested as resources for conflict resolution.

Because books are socializing agents for children, they have the potential for exerting powerful influences over the way children view the near and far environment, their families, their friends, and their own potential. Three factors must be considered for incorporating these findings into daily life. The first is the use of reading materials in a child's life. Due to dramatic increases in the number of children in day care, it is possible that these books are being given wider audience than they would receive if children remained in their own homes. The second factor is the interpretation of the books given by the reader and the possibility of interactive discussion. Children who are read to are able to discuss the story as it evolves and may, therefore, have the advantage of increased experience with options and decision-making. The third factor is the developmental ability of the child to apply the material in books to his/her concrete environment.

Implications

There are far reaching implications for the use of children's literature in the

area of conflict resolution. Books provide an opportunity for discussing both conflict and the ways to resolve conflict for young children. Because these particular books are on recommended reading lists and there is conflict evident in two-thirds of them, the possibility for using them to launch such discussions is far from unique. They also provide an objective context for discussing options available for children in resolving conflict. It is less value laden to discuss Peter Rabbit's options than to discuss an individual child in a classroom or home environment. Additionally, reading these books to children creates a context for parents and teachers to understand the reliance of children on those in their near environment as resolution resources. This is the message they receive from preschool books. This provides educators and researchers additional insight into the links between the socialization process and social cognition. Parents are acting as socializers for peace when they use these reading opportunities for reality-based, face-to-face dialogues with their children.

Books open all sorts of doors for the young mind and through them, we are afforded a myriad of opportunities for helping our children grow so that they become competent contributors of society as Vygotsky (1978) theorized. Children grow through cultural interaction, building on their own experiences through interactions with more sophisticated individuals. Socialization of conflict and the resultant resolution of conflict is important for both the child and the child's society. We know our social reality is one in which children are faced with obstacles and frustrations if not, overt violence, at early ages. The fact that they spend most of their time in the care of an adult, relying on that adult for safety and role modeling, places tremendous responsibility on the shoulders of the more competent individuals who care for children. It is critical for these adults, whether parents or teachers, to teach young children necessary life skills at every possible opportunity. Reading is one of the best and most accessible ways for accomplishing this task.

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Appendix I

Rating Sheet

NAME_____
AUTHOR_____
TITLE_____

I. Presence or level of conflict

_____1.Descriptive only, no conflict
_____2.One party or group with a need to solve a problem
_____3.One party or group with a need to solve a problem with opposition to the resolution of the problem
_____4.Two parties or groups involved in conflict with direct opposition between characters or situations

II. Strategies for resolution of conflict

_____1.No options
_____2.Talking a solution
_____3.Withdrawing
_____4.Verbal fighting
_____5.Physical fighting
_____6.Bringing in another party to help with resolution
_____7.Other:

III. Significant other used as a resource for resolution of conflict

_____1.Parents
_____2.Other significant adult
_____3.Peer
_____4.Formalized authority figure (police, sheriff)
_____5.Other:

Appendix II

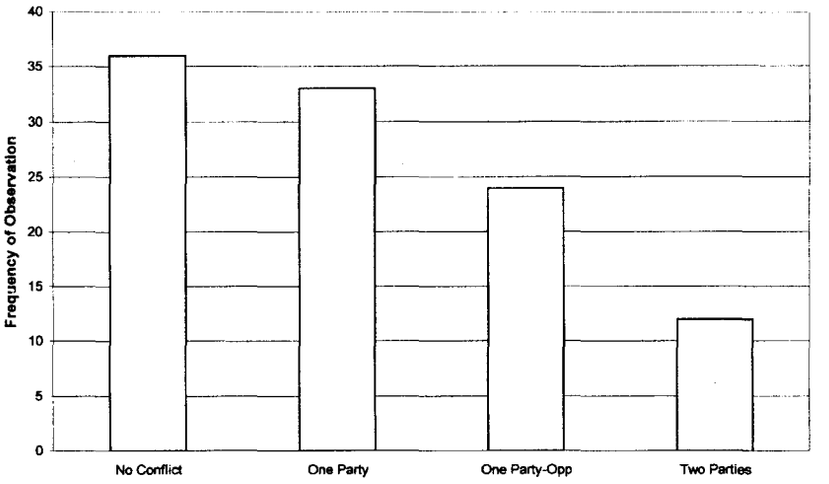
Book List by Author and Title

Allard, Harry, *Miss Nelson is Missing*
Ames, Lee, *Draw, Draw, Draw*
Anderson, Hans Christian, *Ugly Duckling*
Anholt, Catherine, *Harry's Home*
Anholt, Laurence, *Stone Girl, Bone Girl: The Story of Mary Anning*
Arnold, Marsha Diane, *The Bravest of us All*
Aylesworth, Jim, *Aunt Pitty Patty's Piggy*
Aylesworth, Jim, *The Full Belly Bowl*
Baker, Keith, *Big Fat Hen*
Bang, Molly, *Ten, Nine, Eight*
Bang, Molly, *When Sophie Gets Angry*
Battle-Lavert, Gwendolyn, *The Music in Derrick's Heart*
Bemelmans, Ludwig, *Madeleine*
Berenstain, Norman, *Clifford*
Best, Cari, *Three Cheers for Catherine the Great*
Bliss, Corrine Demas, *The Littlest Matryoshka*
Bogacki, Tomek, *My First Garden*
Borden, Louise, *Abe Lincoln and Me*
Braun, Trudi, *My Goose Betsy*
Bridwell, Norman, *Clifford, the Big Red Dog*
Brown, Marc, *Play Rhymes*
Brown, Margaret Wise*Goodnight Moon*
Burleigh, Robert, *Messenger, Messenger*
Carle, Eric, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*
Charlip, Remy, *Sleepytime Rhyme*
Chorao, Kay, *Pig and Crow*
Cole, Brock, *Buttons*
Cooke, Trish, *The Grandad Tree*
Corey, Shana, *You Forgot your Skirt, Amelia Bloomer*
Cowley, Joy, *Red Eyed Tree Frog*
Crews, Donald, *Freight Train*
Crunk, Tony, *Big Momma*
Cutler, Jane, *The Cello of Mr. O*
Daly, Niki, *Jamela's Dress*
Day, Nancy Raines, *A Kitten's Year*
DePaola, Tomie, *26 Fairmont Avenue*
Diakite, Baba Wague, *Hat Seller and the Monkeys*
Echewa, T. Obinkaran, *The Magic Tree: A Folktale from Nigeria*
Feiffer, Jules, *Bark, George!*
Field, Eugene, *Wynken, Blynken, and Nod*

Fleming, Denise, *Mama Cat has Three Kittens*
Floca, Brian, *Five Trucks*
Fox, Mem, *Time for Bed*
Frazee, Marla, *Hush, Little Baby*
Freeman, Don, *Corduroy*
Gauch, Patricia Lee, *Presenting Tanya, the Ugly Duckling*
George, Kristine O'Connell, *Little Dog Poems*
Henderson, Kathy, *The Baby Dances*
Hest, Amy, *Off to School, Baby Duck*
Henkes, Kevin, *Oh!*
High, Linda Oatman, *Barn Savers*
Hill, Eric, *Where's Spot?*
Ho, Minfong, *Hush! A Thai Lullaby*
Hopkinson, Deborah, *A Band of Angels*
Howard, Elizabeth Fitzgerald, *Virgie Goes to School with Us Boys*
Howe, James, *Horace, and Morris, but Mostly Delores*
Hughes, Shirley, *Alfie Gives a Hand*
Jay, Alison, *Picture This...*
Johnson, D. B., *Henry Hikes to Fitchburg*
Jonas, Ann, *When you were a Baby*
Jonell, Lynne, *It's MY Birthday, Too!*
Kajikawa, Kimiko, *Yoshi's Feast*
Kaplan, Howard, *Waiting to Sing*
Keats, Ezra Jack, *Peter's Chair*
Kurtz, Jane, *River Friendly, River Wild*
Kurtz, Jane, *Far Away Home*
Lester, Helen, *Hooway for Wodney Wat*
Look, Lenore, *Love as Strong as Ginger*
Lum, Kate, *What! Cried Granny: An Almost Bedtime Story*
McBratney, Bill, *Guess How Much I Love You*
McCloskey, Robert, *Make Way for Ducklings*
McMullen, Kate, *If You Were my Bunny*
McPhail, David, *Drawing Lessons from a Bear*
Marcellino, Fred, *I, Crocodile*
Martin, Bill Jr., *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See*
Mathers, Petra, *A Cake for Herbie*
Mayer, Mercer, *There's a Nightmare in my Closet*
Mollel, Tololwa M., *My Rolls and Piles of Coins*
Moore, Clement, *The Teddy Bear's Night Before Christmas*
Morimoto, Junko, *Two Bullies*
Myers, Christopher, *Wings*
Myers, Walter Dean, *The Blues of Flats Brown*
Otto, Carolyn, *Pioneer Church*
Overend, Jenni, *Welcome with Love*

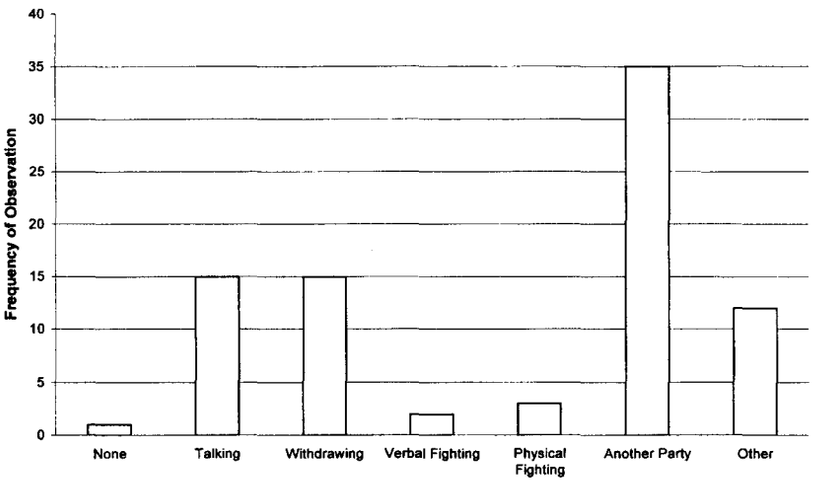
Oxenbury, Helen, *Tom and Pippo Read a Story*
Pacilio, V. J., *Ling Cho and His Three Friends*
Pallotta, Jerry, *Dory Story*
Patschke, Steve, *The Spooky Book*
Pearson, Tracey Campbell, *Where Does Joe Go?*
Piper, Wally, *The Little Engine That Could*
Pinkney, Jerry, *The Ugly Duckling*
Potter, Beatrix, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*
Priceman, Marjorie, *Emiline at the Circus*
Raschka, Chris, *Ring! Yo?*
Rey, H. A., *Curious George*
Rodowsky, Colby, *Not My Dog*
Sanders, Scott Russell, *Crawdad Creek*
Sendak, Maurice, *Where the Wild Things Are*
Seuss, Dr., *The Cat in the Hat*
Shannon, David, *David Goes to School*
Sierra, Judy, *Tasty Baby Belly Buttons*
Sis, Peter, *Trucks, Trucks, Trucks*
Solbodkina, Esphyr, *Caps for Sale*
Stanley, Diane, *Raising Sweetness*
Steptoe, John, *Baby Says*
Swope, Sam, *Gotta Go!*
Tayback, Simms, *Joseph Had a Little Overcoat*
Tafuri, Nancy, *Have You Seen my Duckling*
Waber, Bernard, *Ira Sleeps Over*
Wahl, Jan, *The Field Mouse and the Dinosaur Named Sue*
Ward, Helen, *Hare and the Tortoise*
Watanabe, Shigeo, *How Do I Put it On?*
Weiss, Nicki, *Where Does the Brown Bear Go*
Wellington, Monica, *Night Rabbits*
Wells, Rosemary, *Max's Bedtime*
Wiesener, David, *Sector 7*
Wilkowski, Susan, *Baby's Bris*
Williams, Vera B., *"More, More, More," Said the Baby*
Yolen, Jane, *How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight?*
Zagwyn, DeborahTurney, *Apple Batter*
Zimmerman, Andrea, *My Dog Toby*
Zimmerman, Andrea, *Trashy Town*
Zion, Gene, *Harry the Dirty Dog*
Zolotow, Charlotte, *My Friend John*

Chart 1



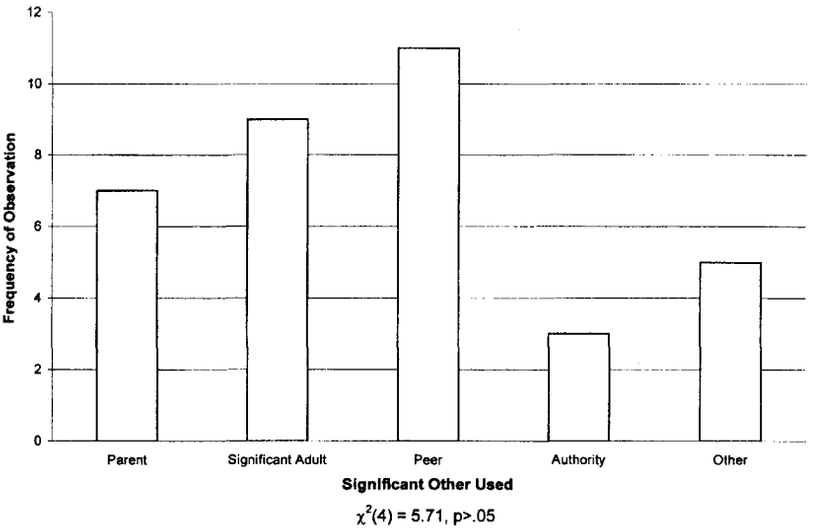
$\chi^2(3) = 13.30, p<.01$

Chart 2



$\chi^2(6) = 71.59, p<.001$

Chart 3


12
10
8
6
4
2
0
Frequency of Observation
Parent
Significant Adult
Peer
Authority
Other
Significant Other Used
$\chi^2(4) = 5.71, p>.05$

Rishma Dunlop

Copper Moon

Erratum Note:
In Arm Journal Vol.3:1, an error was made in the reference to the name of Mathew Shepard's mother, Judy Shepard. A corrected version of the poem is reprinted in this issue.

For Matthew Shepard (1976-1998)
and for his mother and father, Judy and Dennis Shepard

i

Child
of our time, our times have robbed your cradle.
Sleep in a world your final sleep has woken.
Eavan Boland, *"Child of Our Time"*

In the wake of a thousand years,
your body a scarecrow
battered silhouette against the starlight
of a grave sky
death arrives in a pick-up truck
steals your shoes and $20 for coke and cigarettes
wraps your wallet in a dirty diaper
in a garbage pail
for this and for love
you are lashed to your crucifix
your blood a bitter stain
on the place that cradled you

your face
a scarlet mask
but for the clean white tracks
of your tears

and the air around us is a knife
and the taste of death is like rust
in our mouths
and a hundred years closes
a savage end to your journey

What hope for a new century
unless your brief shining will be
an ecclesiastes
unless in this broken place
some aurora of promise is born
unless your tears cleanse
the skin of the earth
unless our children,
born of this time and the next
learn from your severed wings
and fly
follow you out of this geography
this darkest heart

I imagine you there
in the primal glow
of a copper moon
the earth curving its shadow
across the lunar surface

There will be a season for you
when the trees and air and sky are singing
and light will begin in the roses opening,
in the apples falling from trees

and there will be a time for you
when the crows will disappear
mourning doves will vanish,
when faith will rise up
with the songbirds of dawn

May your breath be resurrected
by the human cantos of mercy.
May you dance beyond these years,
your heart breaking loose
in cathedrals of winds.

May this new century
hold you,
tender as a fontanel.

ii

You, Mr. McKinney, with your friend Mr. Henderson, killed my son....
You left him out there by himself, but he wasn't alone... he had the beautiful night sky with the same stars and moon that we used to look at through a telescope. Then he had the daylight and the sun to shine on him one more time—one more cool, wonderful day in Wyoming. His last day in Wyoming. And through it all he was breathing in for the last time the smell of sagebrush and the scent of pine trees from the snowy range. He heard the wind—the ever-present Wyoming wind—for the last time.

Dennis Shepard's statements to the court, November 4, 1999

In the wake of a thousand years
I drift back on the bent neck of time
to the infant clasp of my firstborn
nursing her on an autumn night
her eyes reflecting
the milky net of stars

the earth curves its shadow
across the lunar surface
a copper moon glows over the foothills

and in this primal light
I give her to the tidal pulls of sleep and dreams,
my hand cupped beneath her heart

I remember her flight
through my cave of bones
her life spreading open
the beginning of music and light
an aperture of hope

in the folds of clean white linen
my child so new
all around her lightens and rises
claims me
the distillation of her breath
a universe,
an infinite refrain that enters me

iii

Baby boy

If anything stood out, it was the fragileness of Shepard
Fireside Lounge employees cited by Prosecutor Cal Rerucha

Outside your funeral at the Redemption Chapel
Reverend Phelps marches
with his cronies from Kansas
their signs God Hates Fags
a full-color image of you says
Matthew in Hell

and it is a time to mourn
and a time to weep
a time to remember your father
teaching you songs of childhood
Frère Jacques,
Row, Row, Row Your Boat
Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star
how I wonder what you are
up above the world so high
like a diamond in the sky

the hatemongers at the temple
are surrounded
a parade of people dressed as "Angels of Peace"
white angels for you
seven feet high with eight foot wingspans
and the crowd cheers them on

I remember
that October night

at the Fireside Lounge,
how death courted you
beer bottle and pool cue in hand
discussing your politics
wrapping the syllables
of a serpent's coil
around your open heart
your smile shining
like your patent leather shoes

iv

this was someone's child
Melissa Ethridge, "Scarecrow"

and I remember
another mother's voice
in a Laramie, Wyoming courtroom
claiming mercy for the murderers of her firstborn
Matthew stood for something
mercy for those who could not show mercy
and a father speaks to his son's killers:
I give you life in the memory
of one who no longer lives.
May you have a long life,
and may you thank Matthew
every day for it.
and I want the sanctity of scriptures
to conjure spells upon my tongue
to pray that this season too shall pass
as if the words might chant
a new scene into being

perhaps those farm fields
filled with wildflowers
the choirs of weeping
hushed in the opiate of poppies

but I see your pistol-whipped body
blood seeping into a nation
I remember the officer who cut you free
speaking of the braces on your teeth,

your school ID in the dust
she whispers to you in the ambulance
words of comfort, Baby boy
and the sound of mothers and fathers
through endless years
is a wailing of sirens in my ear

and I wonder, as I touch
the memory of my sleeping child
her tender fontanel,
as I watch her now
running fleet-footed
through corridors of time,
my anthem, my bloodline calling,
I wonder, if I could cast away stones,
if I could be so merciful
to those who would crush her

I wonder, if this new century
will hold her,
will her mother's faith in
memory's insistence,
be enough
for a millennium of mercy

Linda Rennie Forcey

Feminist Perspectives on Mothering and Peace

Introduction

In the past decade we have witnessed numerous regional wars and low intensity conflicts throughout the world, unparalleled "peacetime" military expenditures, and an extraordinary concentration of wealth in many countries including the United States. As for the latter we are told there has been "no parallel upsurge of riches ... since the late nineteenth century."[1] The gap between rich and poor has widened virtually everywhere, placing mothers and children in increasingly precarious economic positions and allowing tens of thousands of children each day to die of preventable causes throughout the world.

What is going on? Where are the voices of mothers, the caretakers of the world, the hands that rock the cradles? As we all know, the connection between women and peace is ancient; peace is often symbolized as the mother, the preserver of life, the angel in the house. Appeals to peace have often been made in the name of women and children, and there is a long history of women as peace activists. After all, don't mothers have certain essential qualities derived from their roles as nurturers that can be universalized? Aren't they really nicer, kinder, gentler? Isn't it women as mothers who might possess the special peacemaking skills required for a new, more peaceful, and more just world order?

Or, could it be that the very asking of such questions is part of the age old trap of oversimplifying the notion of "woman," denying her differences with other women, exaggerating her differences with men, and thereby lessening her power? It is these kinds of questions that are placing peace researchers squarely in the centre of the contemporary feminist debate about the nature and power of women and the social construction of mothering. For all of us concerned with

the search for theories and strategies that can best mobilize for peace and justice all people—mothers, fathers, women, and men alike—these are extremely important questions.

After defining some key terms, this paper begins with a brief outline of the feminist theoretical debate among three groups: (1) those arguing that women's differences from men are minimal and should be minimalized in the fight for equity in education, employment, and the law (the equality position); (2) those holding that women, for any number of reasons related to their nurturing qualities and mothering responsibilities, are *essentially different* from men—essentially nicer, kinder, gentler and this fundamental difference should be honoured (the essentialist position); and (3) those arguing that because language itself is socially constructed, no categories of women are natural or inevitable, and attempts to categorize must be resisted (the social constructionist and poststructuralist positions). I then show how, when we integrate feminist theoretical perspectives with feminist peace research in the emerging interdisciplinary field of peace studies, we find, not surprisingly, that this theoretical debate is replicated in feminist peace research; with peace scholars generally taking the second position, the essentialist standpoint emphasizing the caring, relational, mothering qualities of women.

Because of the nature of the field of peace studies (as defined in the section to follow), there is a special urgency, poignancy, if you will, to the debate. First, who among us can say that there could ever be too much CARING in this violent world? To argue that women are *essentially* different because they are more nurturing, more caring, is to valorize many women's experiences as peacemakers in the home. Second, as is true with all oppressed groups, this feeling of difference is a powerful conscious–raising tool to promote solidarity for collective action. Humanist aspirations for a more peaceful world, where peace by definition must include an ethic of caring and a valuing of caring labour, are at the heart of the peace studies endeavour. The central question, as Ann Snitow phrases it, is: "*How* can the caring that belongs to mother travel out to become the responsibility of everyone?" (1989: 52).

Furthermore, peace studies can be seen as a critique of one of the most male–dominated of the social sciences fields, international relations. Feminist peace research, in this sense, can be said to be at an earlier stage than feminist thought emerging from the fields of literature, philosophy, history, sociology, psychology, and anthropology. For peace researchers, a feminist standpoint that focuses on caring, nurturing, feeling, intuiting, empathizing, relating remains an important new catalyst to challenge militarism. This contribution of essentialist thinking to the field of international relations and the peace endeavor is wonderfully refreshing, comforting, energizing, and affirming for women. It poses a very different set of questions than those traditionally asked by practitioners (mostly male) in both international relations and peace studies. It is thus with more than a little ambiguity and hesitation that I myself have come to see its limitations and weaknesses, and the need to move on. I must

note at the onset, too, that while most feminist peace researchers generally take an essentialist position, they also are not comfortable with this label. They clearly acknowledge the dangers and pitfalls of this essentially polarized thinking. But, as I argue here, move on we must. This article, therefore, calls first, for feminist appreciation of the contribution of an essentialist standpoint to peace research, activism and pedagogy; second, for feminist appreciation of the importance of the poststructuralist critique of essentialism; and, third, the need to move beyond the debate with a finely tuned appreciation of a variety of approaches and a tolerance for ambiguity and more than a little theoretical untidiness.

Defining the terms

For readers unfamiliar with the fields of either women's or peace studies, definitions of mothering, feminism, and peace studies as used in this discussion to follow are in order.

Mothering is a socially constructed set of activities and relationships involved in nurturing and caring for people.[2] It is also the main vehicle through which people first form their identities and learn their place in society. As Sara Ruddick points out, mothering is the procedure by which children learn "mother–tongue," a special language in which they assimilate "a sense of what can be named and what must remain secret; what is unavoidably given and what can be changed; who is to be feared and whose authority is only a sham" (1989: 35). At the heart of mothering as it is commonly understood in contemporary Western society is an ethic of caring—of knowing, feeling, and acting in the interests of another. Although mothering usually refers to the thoughts and activities of women who have willingly assumed the responsibility for the caring, nurturing and socialization of their biological, adopted, or step children, the process of defining mothering is not this simple or clear cut. I have *all* "caring labour" in mind when I speak of mothering—from birthing labor to all kinds of teaching, to care of the disabled and of the frail elderly.[3] This is because all women, and some men too, have in one way or another internalized the socially constructed mandates of mothering in their given societies at any given point in time.

As for feminism, the general working definition with which I am comfortable can be stated quite simply. It takes as proven the historical oppression of women and stresses the interrelationship of theory and practice to eliminate it. Virginia Sapiro describes this sense of feminism more fully as:

> ... both a way of thinking about the world, and a way of acting in it. ... [It] is a perspective that views gender as one of the most important bases of the structure and organization of the social world. Feminists argue that in most known societies this structure has granted women lower status and value, more limited access to valuable resources, and less autonomy and opportunity to make choices over their lives than

> it has granted men. Feminists further believe that although this gender-based world may be organized around biological facts such as the exclusive capacity of men to create sperm and the exclusive capacity of women to bear children, gender inequality is due to the social construction of human experience, which means that it should be possible to eradicate it. (1986: 440-41)

Feminism, as I view it then, is both a way of viewing the world and an evolving social movement. As noted, feminism does not embrace one theoretical approach, but rather several. This chapter will focus on the contributions of (1) the essentialist standpoint that holds that women are essentially different from men (nicer, kinder, gentler) and should be so regarded in analyses of peace, power and gender; and (2) its feminist critics (poststructuralists and others) who argue that essentialists have been oblivious to the social construction of language itself, leaving women resistant to change and insensitive to the diverse experiences among women.

Peace studies, as defined by one widely accepted guide, is a relatively new, interdisciplinary academic field that "analyzes the causes of war, violence, and systemic oppression, and explores processes by which conflict and change can be managed so as to maximize justice while minimizing violence." It includes "the study of economic, political and social systems at the local, national and global levels, and of ideology, culture, and technology as they relate to conflict and change" (Thomas, 1987: 5). One of its primary and most controversial assumptions centres on the interrelationship of peace research, education, and action.[4]

There are within the field, of course, widely divergent views as to definitions of peace, much controversy over issues of an "implicit ideological bias," and even more worry about the "activist orientation" of peace studies curricula. My definition focuses on the values, norms and institutions of peace. It incorporates such concepts as structural violence, racism, sexism, class, religious and ethical perspectives, international law, and global cooperation. It leans toward the pro-active and methodologically qualitative bent of many, if not most, of the over 300 university peace studies programs.[5]

As a feminist, I would have to say that peace studies so broadly and positively defined can have no meaning unless it is in the context of feminist thought, particularly that of the social construction of gender and mothering. Militarism has shaped our economic priorities for the past forty years; its use of the resources and capital of this country has depleted medical, educational and social programs, thus creating a new, primarily mother/child poverty class. When the concept of peace implies that every human being regardless of sex has the right to a life that includes fulfillment of basic human needs, then much of feminist research can also be considered peace research. And much of peace research *must* focus on the intrinsic value of caring, of mothering as we have come to understand it.

Women as peacemakers and feminist theory

The gentle, caring, peacekeeping, qualities attributed to women have not always been celebrated by feminists. Virginia Woolf, the harbinger of much in contemporary feminist thought, described her relationship with Coventry Patmore's (1876) *Angel in the House* like this:

> It was she who used to come between me and my paper when I was writing reviews. It was she who bothered me and wasted my time and so tormented me that at last I killed her. You who come of a younger and happier generation may not have heard of her—you may not know what I mean by The Angel in the House.... She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult art of family life. She sacrificed daily. If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught, she sat in it—in short she was so constituted that she never had a mind or wish of her own, but preferred to sympathize always with the minds and wishes of others. Above all ... she was pure. (Woolf, cited in Noddings, 1984: 59)

In what has been referred to as "liberal feminism," the "equality position," or Stage 1 of the contemporary feminist movement, the angel in the house was if not squashed at least repressed. That is to say, the caring, peacekeeping aspects of women's activities were not the focus. Mothers certainly were not the focus. Building on the work of Simone de Beauvoir (1974) in the late '40s and Betty Friedan (1963) in the early '60s, feminists saw the glorification of mothering as an instrument of women's oppression.[6] Feminists called for the right not to mother, documented the darker side of the mothering experience, and advocated a more equitable sharing of the responsibilities for child rearing in the struggle for job equity. They argued that the institution of motherhood as currently defined was harmful to children and to mothers themselves. In fact, up until the early 1970s feminists tended to deny any important differences between women and men, thereby playing down the central role of nurturing in gender identity.

Many feminist theorists outside of the liberal camp rather than focusing on the joys of mothering began to analyze the inequities of home labour. Radical, Marxist and socialist feminists showed how capitalism combined with patriarchy made both home labor and market labor gender specific, with women's status both economically and psychologically disadvantageous. They argued that most women's work as presently carried on in home and market, including child care, helped to perpetuate male domination and the capitalist form of production.[7]

Although there was only a most tenuous relationship between feminist and peace research until the mid 1970s, portrayals of women as peace activists generally reflected this feminist theoretical position. Most peace researchers

were neither women nor feminists, and many feminists considered peace studies a diversion from the main task of liberating women. It was left primarily to a few feminist scholars (most of whom would not have called themselves "peace researchers") to acknowledge the role of earlier pioneers such as Bertha von Suttner, Jane Adams, Emily Greene Balch, and members of the Women's Peace Party and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). Their major objective was to show that some women did play a role in social and political history and could be counted among men for equal citizenship.

By the mid 1970s, however, a number of scholars had begun to argue that the first wave of feminist theorizing had invalidated ways of knowing that seemed characteristically womanly. This second wave of feminist theorizing takes a posture that seeks to discover and validate women's lives in the concrete labors of their daily experiences. The standpoint (later to be labeled "essentialist") assumes a separate female world, one in which women are essentially different from men—more caring, more cooperative, more peaceful.

With a psychoanalytic lens, sociologist Nancy Chodorow (1978), for example, argued that women, because of the ways in which they were mothered, are more caring, more nurturing, less differentiated, more relationship preoccupied than men. In fact, they spend their lives nurturing in one way or another and reproduce daughters who do the same. Carol Gilligan (1982), while acknowledging her intellectual debt to Chodorow, takes the celebration of traditional female virtues a step further. Challenging developmental theorists like Freud, Piaget, Erikson, and Kohlberg, she regards the nurturing traits so frequently associated with mothers as strengths rather than weakness. In fact, women with their mothering/caring labour are, in a certain sense, more moral than men. Women know that,

> ... in a world that extends through an elaborate network of relationships, the fact that someone is hurt affects everyone who is involved, complicating the morality of any decision and removing the possibility of a clear or simple solution. Thus, morality, rather than being opposed to integrity or tied to an ideal of agreement, is aligned with the "kind of integrity" that comes from "making decisions after working through everything you think is involved and important in the situation," and taking responsibility for choice. In the end, morality is a matter of care. (147)

Many feminists enthusiastically agreed with Gilligan (1982) that because of maternal practices women have developed an ethic of care quite different from men. They, along with Gilligan, believed this ethic amounted to a certain way of thinking characterized by such descriptive words as receptivity, relatedness, responsiveness, connectedness, intuitiveness, ambiguity, ambivalence, feelings, empathy, and caring (Belenky, Clichy, Goldgerger and Tarule, 1986). It

is a way of thinking that, actually and not just theoretically, should socialize each new generation to nonviolent behavior and to a peaceful world order.

Male violence, according to Gilligan, stems from problems in communication and men's lack of knowledge about human relationships. "If aggression is tied, as women perceive, to the fracture of human connection, then the activities of care ... are the activities that make the social world safe, by avoiding isolation and preventing aggression rather than by seeking rules to limit its extent." In this light, she contends, "aggression appears no longer as an unruly impulse that must be contained but rather as a signal of a fracture of connection, the sign of a failure of relationship" (1982: 43).

Among feminists concerned with peace studies and peace education strongly influenced by Nancy Chodorow (1978) and Carol Gilligan (1982) were Betty Reardon (1985), Birgit Brock–Utne (1985), Nell Noddings (1984), and Sara Ruddick (1989). With the Freeze movement and increased peace activism globally in the early eighties they and others began to turn to issues involving peace, but their research was of a very different kind from that being done by the World Policy Institute and male–dominated established journals such *The Journal of Peace Research* and *The Journal of Conflict Resolution.* Their perspective grew out of the realization that the process of conducting corrective and compensatory research had shown that the scientific method itself was tightly structured around such conventions mirroring ideal traits of Western white males as objectivity, freedom from values, abstract reasoning.

Betty Reardon's (1985) influential monograph, *Sexism and the War System*, growing out of her experiences with the World Policy Institute and the World Order Models Program in the 1970's and early eighties, is representative of this second stage of feminist thinking. Contending that within the field of peace studies most researchers have viewed women's issues as secondary or collateral to the central concerns of peace, she calls for an integration of feminist scholarship with peace research whereby the need for inner psychic transformation on a personal level is appreciated as much as the need for global political and economic change. She develops a feminist peace paradigm focused on the Yin and Yang aspects of being, contrasting such characteristics as gentleness and strength, receptivity and dominance, caring and competing.

One of Reardon's central metaphors is mothering: conception, labour, birth and nurture. She writes of humane and fulfilling human relationships, personal change, vulnerability, and pastoral images of peace:

> The lion can lie down with the lamb in a nurturing rather than devouring relationship, only if each is able to transform its reality by transforming itself. These transformations are what peace studies should be about. (1989: 25)

Reardon (1985) and other feminist peace researchers see an unhealthy imbalance toward male principles in modern society, leading to war, aggres-

sion, greed, and other embodiments of "manly" aspects, rather than the more conciliatory and constructive "womanly" aptitudes. "If the world itself seems under siege, and if that siege holds any community and all children hostage, the effort of world protection may come to seem a 'natural' extension of maternal work," writes philosopher Sara Ruddick (1989: 81). The logical extension of the argument is that the world would be a safer place if the female element is stressed. Clearly, according to this standpoint, mothers should find war a contradiction and global peace an integral part of their maternal work.

But, as Reardon (1985), Brock–Utne (1985), Noddings (1984), Ruddick (1989) and most essentialist thinkers readily acknowledge, women often support wars enthusiastically and vigorously. Noddings points out that "Women ... too want to belong.... An important virtue of the good woman ... is her generous support of her man's conception of honour" (1984: 203). Ruddick, however, calls this maternal trait "inauthenticity," and she laments that mothers all too often believe that their children's interests depend on their country's military strength, even though they may hate wars in general. She finds that very few mothers "take the world as an object of extended maternal care" (1989: 81,113), and she, too, fears the temptation to celebrate the caretakers while forgetting their failures. She also fears an emergent self–righteousness that while condemning violence forgets to tend to its root causes (Ruddick, 1989: 135).

In the final analysis, most feminist peace researchers cautiously yet hopefully conclude that it is women/mothers with a feminist consciousness and politics who are most likely to become truly effective peacemakers. For example, Ruddick writes: "By increasing mothers' powers to know, care, and act, feminism actualizes the peacefulness latent in maternal practice." It is her belief that "feminism is already conjoined with a peace politics that is marked by its double origins in women's traditional work and feminist resistance to abuse against women" (1989: 242).

Feminist criticism of women as peacemakers

Not all contemporary feminists are as sanguine about the nurturing attributes of women as the theorists discussed above. As bell hooks writes:

> The resurgence of feminist interest in motherhood has positive and negative implications for the feminist movement. On the positive side there is a continual need for study and research of female parenting which this interest promotes and encourages.... On the negative side, [by] romanticizing motherhood, employing the same terminology that is used by sexists to suggest that women are inherently life–affirming nurturers, feminist activists reinforce central tenets of male supremacist ideology. (1985:135)

Critics argue that essentialist theory has an exaggerated focus on the

differences between men and women. British feminist Lynne Segal, striking her central theme as to the inadequacy of polarized thinking about men and women, writes: "This has meant a minimal interest in conflicts and contradictions as they are experienced within feminine identity, a false universalizing of our own gender categories and a disregard for other social practices (outside mother–daughter bonding) as they impinge upon gender identity" (1987:148). We need to be asking a different set of questions Segal and others assert. How else can we explain diverse historical and cultural forms of femininity and masculinity? How else can we explain women's behaviour that does not conform to maternal thinking? How else can we explain mothers who send their sons to war? How else can we explain the angry, sad, and bitter stories of some mothers? How else can we understand the lives of women who do not wish to be mothers?

Even on the familial level the record of women as being inherently more life–affirming appears to be mixed. For generations we have been reading from the male perspective about the pathological implications of these mothering qualities—with mothers being blamed for all "social deviations" of their children from mental illnesses to juvenile delinquency to matters of life styles and sexual orientation. While the essentialist standpoint has done much to modify this crazy assignment of responsibility to women alone, it has not left mothers with a sense that they are standing on terra firma. Jane Flax, criticizing Ruddick's "maternal thinking" thesis argues that, "important things like rage, frustration, aggression, sexuality, irrational intense love and hate, re–experiencing of one's own childhood, blurring of body boundaries, conflict between demands of a child, one's mate, other children and other work are missing" (1984: 13). And Lynne Segal writes, "The weight of one's own children can mean a contradiction of social vision, an envy and resentment of the welfare of others. ... While it may be true that women are more concerned about peace and a better world ... this does not necessarily mean that women are any less nationalistic, racist, or committed to class privilege than men" (1987: 6).

My own conclusions from a study of mothers of sons (120 mothers with sons age fifteen and older) are that on the familial level, women's perceptions of their roles as peacemakers are far more ambivalent, complex and conflict–ridden than one might conclude from a reading of Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1982), Reardon (1985, 1989), Noddings (1984), or Ruddick (1989). Although most of the women with whom I spoke identified themselves as peacemakers within the family, some expressed ambivalence and often downright anger with their roles, especially when it was between father and son. They would say: "To be in the same room with them is to set my stomach churning. I am sick to death of it"; or "I've lied for my son so many times just to keep the peace that I hardly know how to stop!" (Forcey, 1987: 86). A woman describes how she feels it is time to detach herself from her adolescent son and his father, to abandon the mediator role for her own psychic health:

> You know, you get tired of being this intermediary. Being the sponge for everyone's pain, being the only shoulder there is to cry on, being the only one for whom they can utterly fail. There have been days when I have been so obsessed with what was going on between Lee [son] and his father that I hardly knew who *I* was or what *I* felt about anything. You know, you only owe your children so much. (Forcey, 1987: 87)

When women define peace in the family as merely the absence of conflict, as many in my study did, their communications with sons often becomes limited to the inconsequential or non-controversial. They feel impelled to sweep differences under the carpet, at tremendous cost to their own self–esteem, growth, and peace of mind, as well as that of their children. For example, a mother poignantly described how her fear of confrontation made it doubly difficult for both her and her son to come to terms with his homosexuality. Two women told me they could not bear to burden their sons with the knowledge of their battles with cancer. Another described how she could not bring herself to ask her son about his experiences in Vietnam, thereby shutting herself out of a part of her son's life both he and she needed to share (Forcey, 1987: 91). Researchers in the field of alcohol and drug addiction find that mothers of addicted sons tend to forgive, cover up, make excuses, and avoid communication on this subject while feeling angry, hurt and responsible on the inside (Forcey, 1987: 94). In what mothers of sons considered to be the line of duty, I concluded that many opted for a limited honesty and openness—one that suppresses anger and hides the self.

In the public sphere, as we have seen, most feminist peace researchers themselves readily acknowledge that the record regarding women's support of national wars is problematic at best. Women as well as men are committed to what they regard as "the national interest." Jean Elshtain writes, "The woman of republican militancy is no mere victim of events; rather, she is empowered in and through the discourse of armed civic virtue to become an *author* of deeds––deed of sacrifice, of nobility in and through suffering, of courage in the face of adversity, of firmness in *her*, and not just her polity's 'right'" (1987: 93). The old mothering myth, as expressed in the work of Simone de Beauvoir , has it that "every mother entertains the idea that her child will be a hero," and the hero is, of course, a son. "A son will be a leader of men, a soldier ... and his mother will share his immortal fame...," she asserted. Women as second sex, as other, as the inauthentic one, seeks to define herself in her son's deeds, and what better path than that of patriotism (1974: 55, 576).

This myth needs revision, however. In my mothers of sons study I discovered many women who encouraged their sons to join the military not at all for reasons of patriotism but rather because they view the military as the only available means of shifting the mothering responsibility—be it psychological, social or economic—from themselves alone (Forcey, 1987: 117-135). I con-

cluded that mothers who turn to be military in search for such things as help in making their sons more mature, more self disciplined, less addicted to drugs and alcohol, or better trained for a job certainly were not to be castigated. Similarly, Barbara Omolade points out that African American women have a legacy of support of war because the military represents economic opportunity and social status for black men, and now black women too. "Few black women can live outside the dilemmas posed by this predicament. Which war zone does she protect her son from: the military or the street?" (1989: 184). Ironically, while many mothers like myself celebrate the recent talk of base closings and troop cutbacks, many other mothers lament the prospect of a demilitarized society because they have no where else to turn but to Uncle Sam.

And what about ordinary women outside of the United States who by no choice of their own are participants in national political conflicts? An emerging literature is providing portraits of women who have sacrificed bravely and fought fiercely for principles beyond the familial (see, for example, Ridd and Callaway, 1987; Agosin, 1987; Fourtouni, 1986; Gioseffi, 1988). For example, Marjorie Agosin tells a moving story of the *arpilleristas,* women in Chile who make the small appliqued and embroidered wall hangings that portray the suffering of women and their families under the repressive military dictatorship of Pinochet. It was the upheaval in their personal lives (the arrests, "disappearances," exiles, and deaths of their sons and loved ones), that obliged them to take political action and learn to speak as a collective voice. As one woman put it, "Because of all this suffering we are united. I do not ask for justice for my child alone, or the other women just for their children. We are asking for justice for all" (cited in Agosin, 1987).

Another example of this emerging literature are the ten essays in *Women and Political Conflict,* edited by Rosemary Ridd and Helen Callaway (1987), describing women's experiences in the war in Cyprus, the Islamic revolution in Iran, the national struggle in Northern Ireland, the ideological conflict within an Israeli kibbutz, the Breton separatist movement in France, and the struggle by Turkish migrants in West Berlin to maintain their ethnic identity. It needs to be pointed out, however, that while rich with portraits of courageous women, this book, like others, concludes that these women see themselves as powerless beyond their genius to survive, and, the editors argue, "in terms of the wider political systems, must be seen as relatively so."

As I have written elsewhere, these books give voice to women whose lives have been turned upside down by political conflict (Forcey, 1988). The stories serve to remind those of us who care about women's and peace issues that the terrible cost of war and political conflict is paid by women as well as men; that women have used their informal powers to express their political will, bravely and even heroically. The books also remind us how cautious we must be about embracing a theoretical perspective that celebrates "mothering" values and virtues while minimizing the fact that this gender construct falters before broader power structures. The experiences of many women involved in conflict

throughout the world illustrate the fact that the force of what women as nurturers do on the interpersonal level—whether in the family or the work place—is painfully problematic in the global arena.

In addition, what about the women who *choose* to be part of their country's political and military conflicts? What about the growing numbers of women, including mothers, serving in the United States military since 1973, for example? The National Organization for Women (NOW) supports the move for women to be eligible for combat on the perfectly rational ground of professional opportunity equity. Congresswoman Pat Schroeder has written a bill to adopt a Pentagon group's suggestions that the Army test women in combat roles. Also, syndicated columnist Ellen Goodman has come down on the side of women in combat, arguing that "any war that isn't worth a woman's life isn't worth a man's life." And what about the voices of the eager young American women who served in the Persian Gulf War pleading for the privilege of combat duty.

Poststructuralism

With this growing literature on women's relationship to issues of peace and war, it has become clearer than ever that men throughout the world continue to have greater access to power, wealth, and privilege than women. However, it also has become clearer that feminists are having increasing difficulty coming to agreement on the theories and strategies needed to explain and challenge these inequities. Feminist peace theorizing now fluctuates ambivalently around a standpoint (one increasingly supported by men in the field) that focuses on the identification of essential psychological/sociological differences between men and women and one that acknowledges the distortion and disadvantages of this stance. It grapples with this difference versus equality debate both on theoretical and strategic levels. The tension, writes Anne Phillips, is "built into the feminist project. Men and women are different; they are also unequal; feminists will continue to debate and disagree over how far the inequality stems from the difference, and how far the difference can or should be eliminated" (1987: 22).

That it is time, however, to move beyond the difference versus equality debate is the emerging consensus at least outside the peace studies field. As long as women find themselves in the political context of these present times, comments historian Ruth Milkman:

> ... feminist scholars must be aware of the real danger that arguments about "difference" or "women's culture" will be put to uses other than those for which they were originally developed. That does not mean we must abandon these arguments or the intellectual terrain they have opened up; it does mean that we must be self-conscious in our formulations, keeping firmly in view the ways in which our work can be exploited politically. (1986: 394-5)

Joan Scott, taking Milkman's point further, argues that the equality–difference debate can be an intellectual trap, one out of which feminists must move. "When equality and difference are paired dichotomously, they structure an impossible choice. If one opts for equality, one is forced to accept the notion that difference is antithetical to it. If one opts for difference, one admits that equality is unattainable." How then, Scott asks, "do we recognize and use notions of sexual difference and yet make arguments for equality?" The only response, she answers, is a double one: "the unmasking of the power relationship constructed by posing equality as the antithesis of difference, and the refusal of its consequent dichotomous construction of political choices" (1988:172). In other words, feminists need to recognize that the antithesis of difference is not equality but rather sameness; and the antithesis of equality is not difference, but rather inequality.

The analytic perspective Scott and many contemporary feminist social scientists find most valuable for moving beyond the difference versus equality debate is poststructuralism. This approach, based on the borrowings from the humanities with its attack upon the methodological assumptions of modern science, on the one hand, and its questioning of the status of all knowledge on the other, is providing a major challenge to the essentialist standpoint in the fields of international relations and peace studies.[8] In this context, it is referred to as "the third debate"—a loosely defined and evolving cluster of attitudes toward theory and practice that takes into account a whole range of analytical approaches and "for all its heterogeneity has a number of thematic connections that help to identify it and explain its over arching critical purpose" (George, 1989: 270).[9]

Poststructuralism does not have one fixed meaning; rather, it is applied to a wide range of theoretical positions derived from the work of Derrida (1976), Kristeva (1986), Althusser (1971), and Foucault (1966, 1873, 1979).. In its myriad, it can be defined as a broadly interdisciplinary approach that disputes the underlying assumptions of most social sciences—epistemological foundations, the Enlightenment heritage (faith in the idea of progress and rationality), and a social science methodology modeled after the hard sciences with its search for generalizations, simplifications and verifications. Rather than focusing on personality, behaviour, attitudes, goals, and choices it turns attention to language, symbols, alternative discourses, and meaning. It holds that knowledge is grounded in language and language does not reflect "reality." And it is language itself that creates and reproduces a world that is never definitive but always in transition (Rosenau, 1990: 86). In some senses, It is really easier to say what poststructuralism is not, than what it is. This is partly because it resists definition on empirical grounds and partly because it is still in its infancy. Poststructuralism's positive identity has yet to be formed. Its proponents, however, do agree that it aims "to destabilize and render open to question all claims to an absolute foundation"(Rosenau, 1990: 102).

In her discussion of the contribution poststructuralism can offer contem-

porary feminism, linguist Chris Weedon (1987) articulates a specific version that is able to address the questions of how social power is exercised and how social relations of gender, class and race might be transformed. This is not to say that the differences among forms of poststructuralism are not important; but rather, that they are not equally productive for feminism.[10] Poststructuralists, according to Weedon, deny the assumption that women and men have essential natures. They refuse to "fall back on general theories of the feminine psyche or biologically based definitions of femininity which locate its essence in processes such as motherhood or female sexuality." This does not, however, "rule out the specificity of women's experiences and their difference from those of men, since, under patriarchy, women have differential access to the discursive field which constitutes gender, gendered experience and gender relations of power in society"(1987: 167).[11]

Clearly influenced by poststructuralism, Carol Cohn's (1989) widely discussed essay, "Sex and Death in the World of the Defense Intellectuals," is another example of new directions toward which feminist peace research may be turning. Cohn considers how the language of the defense intellectuals is a reflection of the ideas that express and construct men's power in relation to women. It is a language tenaciously rooted in and around us, reinforcing sexism and militarism. Cohn describes her own transformative process, that of learning the language while participating in a Harvard–MIT summer program on nuclear weapons designed for college teachers, followed by a year as a participant observer at the Center on Defense Technology and Arms Control.

The language (she calls it technostrategic) is clearly masculine, one based on a uniquely male rational conceptual system that excludes human beings and connections. Her own transformation went through several stages: Stage 1: learning to listen to white men in ties discussing clean bombs and clean language, missile size, fathers, sons and virgins, domestic bliss, male birth and creation, God and nuclear priesthood; Stage 2: learning to speak the language (noting the allure of power and white male privilege) and feelings of control, escape from thinking of oneself as victim; Stage 3: learning to dialogue and finding that it could not be done in English (she notes, for example, that the word "peace" is not part of the vocabulary, one must use "strategic stability" instead); and Stage 4. feeling the Terror as she realized that she herself was being transformed, that not only was she speaking in this language—she was thinking in it.

The transformative process Cohn (1989) describes is truly a dilemma for feminist peace researchers—one for which Cohn offers no simple answers. The dilemma is this: women will not be listened to by those in power if they cannot speak the language—yet the very process of learning the language leaves them unable to speak their concerns, i.e., to stay connected to human lives, to be caring, nurturing, mothering. Cohn suggests that the language itself may not really articulate the "rational" strategies upon which nuclear weapons development and deployment decisions are in fact made. Rather technostrategic

discourse might be functioning more as a gloss, an ideological curtain behind which the actual reasons for these decisions are made. Nevertheless, she believes women have two tasks: one is a deconstructive project that involves first learning and than deconstructing the language ("beating the boys at their game"); the other is a reconstructing project to create "alternative visions of possible futures"—with "diverse voices whose conversations with each other will invent those futures" (Cohn, 1989: 64).

Preferring the term postmodernism to poststructuralism, political scientist Christine Sylvester defines the project as:

> a form of critical theory which questions secure knowledges and practices and seeks to open up policy processes to those who have been spoken for and "protected" by purveyors of certitude and security. It is a community—of radical doubters, tolerant dissenters, neo–anarchists, seekers of knowledge at the hyphens of lived experience. Unabashedly pro–women, it also is alert to other groups historically silenced within the master discourses of androcentric modernity. (1989a: 1)

From this position, Sylvester (1989b) challenges the theses of essentialists like Brock-Utne (1985, 1989), Reardon (1985, 1989), Chodorow (1978), and Ruddick (1989), arguing that women are not naturally opposed to war and for peace, and that peace and war are all of a piece, rather than negations of each other. At this moment in time, she argues, that piece is patriarchal. It is patriarchy itself that damages and distorts women's perspectives as well as those of men: women may be embracing (and calling our own) peacemaker images that reflect and serve the prevailing gender order, leading to a denial that liberation brings pain, confusion, and loss. She questions the value of what she calls "establishment–supporting gender expectations" for the end of patriarchal society as we now know it. "It is inappropriate," concludes Sylvester,

> to draw sharp conclusions about interrelationships of women, peace–lovingness, women warriors, and strategies for tipping patriarchal war–peace pieces in more feminist directions. This thinking is very much in process and is also healthfully incoherent. Suffice it is to say we should carefully examine claims that war and peace are negations of each other, and that women are unified in a natural or conditioned opposition to war and embrace of peace. (1989b: 57)

The feminist challenge for peace studies

The challenge for feminist peace researchers, as I see it, is to recognize such dilemmas as those highlighted by Cohn (1989) and Sylvester (1989b). It is to acknowledge the tension between needing to act as women who value mothering/caring labor and needing an identity not over determined by our gender.

The challenge is about difference and equality; it dramatizes women's differences from men and from each other—and it sees the necessity of sometimes making common cause. It is about resisting claims that some categories (like mothering) are natural and inevitable.

It is to remember that, as literary critic Ann Snitow points out, "in a cruel irony that is one mark of women's oppression, when women speak *as women* they run a special risk of not being heard because the female voice is by our culture's definition that–voice–you–can–ignore." And it is to remember that, again as Snitow puts it, "the alternative is to pretend that public men speak for women or that women who speak inside male–female forums are heard and heeded as much as similarly placed men" (1989: 40).

This is not to argue that poststructuralism offers the only acceptable theoretical approach to feminist peace research. On the contrary, I fear there is a danger that rigidly self-defined poststructuralist advocates, particularly those on the extremely skeptical side, can lessen the critical and constructive voices of women for peace. As Marx put it, "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world ... the point, however, is to *change* it." If we can do nothing more than acknowledge the multidimension-ality of all reality, than where does this leaves us? It is difficult, to say the very least, to be part of this community of radical doubters and also to be part of the feminist peace activist community.

After having considered feminist analyses of women's diverse experiences as peacemakers and nonpeacemakers on many levels from the familial to the international, I conclude that the argument that women because of their nurturing capacities are essentially different from, and perhaps on some levels better at peacemaking than, men should be neither dismissed out of hand nor embraced as the *truth*. Rather, I argue for a more complex picture, one that sees the essentialists and their poststructural critics as part of the whole picture—part of the changing social construction of gender. I argue that both positions are politically vital catalysts for developing strategies for change—a "don't throw the baby out with the bath water" position.[12] As Sara Lennox has recently pointed out, this means "acknowledging both similarity with men and difference from them; seeking solutions to women's problems in (or from) both the public and the private sector, the public and the private sphere; understanding women's embodiment as both natural and cultural; and both making universalist claims to women's common humanity and insisting on differences among them" (1992: 652).

Feminist peace researchers, then, must be both radical doubters *and* believers. Lynne Segal puts it this way: "What guarantees we have...come from women's and men's engagement in a whole variety of political campaigns against militarism and arms production, and more" (1987: 201). The challenge for a feminist peace studies is to honor the special mothering peacemaking skills of many women (and men) while questioning impulses to universalize them. The challenge, to put it another way, is to be ever vigilant of the age old trap of oversimplifying the notion of "mother," denying her differences with other

mothers and other women, exaggerating her differences with men, and thereby lessening her power. And, most importantly for me as a feminist peace researcher, peace educator, and peace activist, the challenge is continue to reflect upon, value, and question the feminist assumptions, theories, and strategies that can best mobilize mothers and fathers, women and men for a more peaceful and just world.

[1]See conservative political analyst Kevin Phillips' (1990) description of wealth in the Reagan aftermath.

[2]This is the definition agreed upon by Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Elsa Barkley Brown, and myself as organizers of a conference entitled "Contested Terrains: Constructions of Mothering," held at the State University of New York at Binghamton, October 12–13, 1990. The approach is closely linked to feminist theoretical work on the concept of gender as a central organizing feature of political, cultural, and social life developed over the past 15 years. We agree with Belenky, *et al.*, that "all knowledge is constructed...that answers to all questions vary depending on the context in which they are asked and on the frame of reference of the person doing the asking" (1986: 137–38).

[3]I agree with Sara Ruddick's (1989) position, in *Maternal Thinking*, that mothering is hard to define precisely. She takes the position, however, that while maternal work is central to caring work it is not the whole and should not be made to stand for it. I find the lines between "caring labor" of most women and mothering to be fuzzier. See also Nancy Hartsock (1983); and Nell Noddings, (1984).

[4] COPRED (the Consortium on Peace Research, Education and Development) by its very title illustrates this point.

[5]It should be emphasized that it is my sense of the field based on my work with COPRED and the Peace Studies Association PSA. Others may disagree, particularly in the greyer area of conflict resolution. George A. Lopez has developed a useful conceptual map of peace studies for those beginning or developing peace studies programs. It includes three areas of substantive foci: 1) causes and consequences of violence; 2) methods for reducing or resolving violent conflict; and 3) the values, norms, and institutions of peace (1989: 76).

[6]I discuss their contributions to mothering more fully in my book *Mothers of Sons: Toward an Understanding of Responsibility* (1987).

[7]See for example, Benson (1969); Vogel (1973); Molyneux (1979); Gimenez (1978). For a history of the contributions of early radical feminists see Echols (1989).

[8]See Rosenau (1990) for a skeptical overview of poststructuralists' challenge to international relations.

[9]See also Lapid (1989) and Rosenau (1990).
[10]This is the position taken by Weedon (1987: 20). In this article I have chosen to use the term "poststructuralism" rather than "postmodernism" for convenience and because there is considerable overlap, with some even finding the terms synonymous. See, for example, Walker (1988: 86).
[11]I choose to focus on poststructuralism's more moderate, feminist adaptation from an international relations perspective as a useful framework for understanding power and for developing strategies for peace and change.
[12]Most of the essays in Hirsch and Keller (1990) also argue that feminists must take a "both/and" position on this difference debate.

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Book Reviews

Motherlove: Reinventing a Good and Blessed Future for Our Children

Esther Davis-Thompson
Philadelphia: Innisfree Press, 1999

Reviewed by Trudelle Thomas

Motherlove opens with a poem by Lucille Clifton that captures the uplifting spirit of the book: "Come celebrate/ with me that everyday/ something has tried to kill me/ and has failed." This is a devotional book that promotes a strong and empowering spirituality, rooted in an African American Christian tradition. The author values shared mothering and acknowledges the difficulty of mothering in a hostile environment. She promotes a spirituality that values human dignity, self-assertion in the face of injustice, and spiritual empowerment of both self and children (not self-abnegation). Davis- Thompson's emphasis on power and on "collective motherspace" makes me think of the work of sociologist Patrica Hill Collins, who says that such qualities distinguish how African American women define motherhood.

In her introduction Davis- Thompson writes, "We have to start running headlong into the Spirit for the only safe vehicle to carry us, and our children, into the future... We ourselves need a strong, positive, unshakable self image... We must feed ourselves a daily diet of Hope, Faith, Courage, Lovingkindness." She writes from experience; she is pictured at the back of the book with her husband and ten children, ranging in age from 3 to 21. She has a degree in English and a teaching certificate in Early Childhood Education. In addition to raising children, she teaches college and writes freelance.

This book is organized along the same lines as other devotional "one-day-at-a-time" books with 120 entries, each a page or so long meant to be read easily in one sitting. It is divided into two sections, each of which includes sixty meditations. The first half, "Motherspace," focuses on strengthening one's own spirituality through roots, self-care spiritual-nourishment, "Collective

Motherspace," etc. In this section, Davis- Thompson urges mothers to meditate to be kind to themselves, and to "settle yourself into the womb of God's sweet motherlove." The second half of the book, "Motherlove," focuses on a mother's relationship with her children (of all ages), with themes including dicipline, influences, authority, and spiritual inheritance. She uses inclusive language throughout.

Most meditations are proceeded by a quotation and followed by a brief affirmation, such as "I will point my child in the direction of his honorable self." Davis- Thompson quotes a rich variety of sources, including Audre Lorde, Renita Weems, Wayne Dwyer, Deepak Chopra, and T.D. Jakes. There are also many biblical quotations. The book is beautifully put together with a colourful mural on the cover by African American artist Kimberly Camp; Gracing many of the pages are black and white African-inspired graphics.

There is nothing radical or earth-shaking about this book. The author is articulating for contemporary mothers a long standing tradition and she admirably fulfills her purpose of inspiring readers. I found myself wishing for more details, anecdotes, and illustrations. The book does not attempt to be scholarly, analytical, or even narrative; it is pithy, terse, and wise. It is superior to other similar books because it is so unsentimental; it does not idealize self-sacrifice or submission to men (the way so many devotional books do), and it is not at all legalistic. This is valuable reading for any mother (including Euro-Americans) who want daily inspiration for the gritty work of raising children today, especially those who were not nurtured well themselves. It speaks to "other mothers" such as fathers, teachers, mentors, and grandparents. Indirectly, it will interest scholars who seek insight into African American spirituality.

Motherlove is being marketed to African American mothers of all ages (including teen mothers, battered women, and low-income women); the publisher also promotes workshops by the author and a book-donation program for needy women.

Mothering: Ideology, Experience, and Agency

E. N. Glenn, G. Chang and L. R. Forcey, Eds.
New York: Routledge, 1994

Reviewed by Leigh M. O'Brien

This book brings together an interdisciplinary group of scholars who "provide a variety of perspectives on mothering as a socially constructed set of activities and relationships" (ix). The first chapter, which serves as an introduction,

presents an overview of social constructions of mothering organized around five themes: diversity in mothering; ideology and the construction of mothering; deconstructing (or, as the author puts it, "decomposing") mothering; the politics of mothering; and mothering and the difference-equality knot.

These five themes are addressed in detail in the chapters that follow. Overarching premises are reflected in the following quotation from the first chapter:

I propose looking at mothering as a historically and culturally variable relationship "in which one individual nurtures and cares for another." Mothering occurs within specific social contexts that vary in terms of material and cultural resources and constraints. How mothering is conceived, organized, and carried out is not simply determined by these conditions, however. *Mothering is constructed through men's and women's actions within specific historical circumstances* [italics added]. Thus agency is central to an understanding of mothering as a social, rather than biological, construct. (Chang, 1994: 3)

The reader sees exactly how mothering *is* constructed in chapters such as "Diverted Mothering: Representations of Caregivers of Color in the Age of 'Multiculturalism'" (Part 1); "Beyond Mothers and Fathers: Ideology in a Patriarchal Society" (Part 2); "Working at Motherhood: Chicana and Mexican Immigrant Mothers and Employment" (Part 3); and the chapter that still resonates in my head, "Mothering under Slavery in the Antebellum South" (Part 4).

The book's strength is also its weakness, however. A very broad focus illuminates the subject of mothering, but the volume does not achieve coherence. I was left with an expanded but partial understanding of the book's general themes. Perhaps more editorial direction, more linking of themes across the four parts, would have made the book more accessible and hence more useful.

I do not hesitate, however, to recommend this book to those interested in how mothering is viewed through diverse eyes and constructed in varying circumstances. Dipping in at will may well provoke a reader's thoughts and reflections on the connections between mothering and gender/race/social class, feminism, and culture. For it *is* crucially important that we hear diverse voices telling of mothering experiences, and that we become aware of the ideologies impacting views and practices of mothers and mothering. We are all diminished if we "buy into" an essentialized, universal, or overly deterministic conception of mothering; we must acknowledge the agency inherent in mothering and support those who do the hard work of mothering in multiple contexts.

The Mother Dance

Harriet Lerner
New York: HarperCollins, 1998

Reviewed by Renee Norman

Having danced my way through one of Harriet Lerner's other books *The Dance of Deception,* I sashayed eagerly through her latest offering, *The Mother Dance* (1998), and it was worth the energy on several levels.

Since my own work is centred on women's autobiographical writing, including the mothering theme, I especially appreciated the personal voice Lerner uses in this latest dance. The book is full of amusing anecdotes, disarmingly authentic confessions of incompetence, and the message that as mothers, we are not perfect and that is okay. Lerner deconstructs some of the mothering myths (such as "mothers never express hate") which some of the fathers have perpetuated. Reading her wise words while sidestepping the explosive landmines buried in life with three daughters aged 11, 14, and 16, *Mother Dance* was a timely read, one which made me feel better about my mistakes and motherly indiscretions. Lerner conveys one of the basics of mothering: you do your best, then hope your children do not rewrite it in into *Mommie Dearest.* And she offers a great deal of support through her dance of words, support backed not only by personal experience, but by references to other work such as Adrienne Rich's *Of Woman Born,* and her own expertise as a therapist.

The book is divided into four parts: the prelude—pre and postpartum; the theme—living with children; variation on the theme—older and bigger children; and finally, a glissade into other issues such as how we will feel when they leave for college (called launching).

Lerner is careful to include lesbian mothering, stepmothering, blended families, and single mothering in the configurations of the dance. Chapter titles such as "Will Your Child Become a Serial Killer?" demonstrate her humour and practical, no-nonsense approach.

As I picked up the book in between hanging laundry or devising a course outline, I often felt I was in therapy with Lerner. Taking into account these interruptions, the book is uneven, as Lerner tackles everything from birth to empty nest and all the possibilities in between. At times, the book veered wildly off the mother dance. It is also about gender roles, marriage, families, and relationships, all part of the mothering experience, of course. But Lerner sometimes pulls herself back to the central topic as if she has herself realised that she suddenly danced way beyond mothering. In fact, the book should be titled *The Family Dance,* since Lerner rightly refuses to let fathers off the hook.

Most interesting is Lerner's underlying therapist philosophy, that our family histories and stories shape us, our parenting techniques, and how we

relate with our own children. I particularly related to her Jewish upbringing as it reminded me of parts of my own. Harriet is a self-confessed worrier, and she fights with her husband. For every psychiatrist or psychologist you ever have wanted to send to therapy, Harriet does the heart good by freely writing about the times she has dispensed great advice but has not taken it herself. Mother dance or family dance, Harriet's dancing is at times like all of ours, full of good intentions and really loud yelling.

Creating Balance in Your Child's Life

Beth Wilson Saavedra
Chicago: NTC/Contemporary Books, 1999

Reviewed by Carol Hult

Pressured to help our children adapt to a fast-paced world, we have filled their days with lessons, sports, and homework. But does relentless activity serve their best interests? In *Creating Balance in Your Child's Life,* Beth Wilson discusses the importance of including both scheduled and unscheduled time in our children's lives. It is essential, she writes, to teach our children about balance and to allow them "unrushed time" in which to play, imagine, and feed their spirits.

The signs of over-stressed, out-of-balance children are everywhere: stomachaches, anxiety, shortened attention spans, chronic fatigue. Wilson cites the need for children to be offered time to rest and recharge. She says a parent needs to "trust the cadence" of her child's development. Wilson's challenge to me, as a mother of three, is to identify and nurture each child's unique strengths.

To help us understand temperament, Wilson offers several tools including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. While this personality test is often used in educational and corporate settings, it also allows parents to see the vital aspects of a child's nature. That knowledge can be applied to decisions made daily on the child's behalf: choosing schools and activities, setting TV limits, structuring unhurried time. Rather than defining balance universally, we need to respect individual needs. A quiet, intuitive child who is tuned into the feelings of others may need small class settings and regular time alone to think things over. A lively, extroverted, intellectual child may need plenty of active stimulation but also ways to slow down.

Several chapters explore key components of balance. "Nourishing with Nature" describes how a connection to the natural world helps children to connect with themselves, with others, and with a higher source. "Communication and Balance" discusses the significance of actively listening to our

children. "Building Character and Optimism" offers ways to teach empathy, courage, humour, and other qualities that instill an essential inner sense of power. Another chapter considers ways to create balance in the electronic age.

The book's strength is not in mining any one area but in covering a wide territory. Each chapter offers insight, advice, and resources for further exploration. As a whole, the book is an effective catalyst as well as a reference guide for busy parents who themselves need more time to pause and reflect. This brings me to another desire: for help with my own balance. Perhaps I need to turn to Wilson's previous book *Restoring Balance to a Mother's Busy Life*. One of Wilson's greatest gifts is her focus on mothers as well as children. She knows that creating lifestyles that support today's families involves everyone.

Wilson's voice is compassionate and realistic. Speaking from experience as well as observation, she knows that motherhood is not easy. She understands the challenges of raising a spirited child and the desire to help one's child excel in a competitive world. But she is wise to question a path that disregards the need for rest and rejuvenation and offers a model of parenting that attends to our instincts rather than societal pressures.

Reunion: A Year in Letters Between a Birthmother and the Daughter She Couldn't Keep

Katie Hern and Ellen McGarry Carlson
Seattle: Seal Press, 1999

Reviewed by Amy Cuomo

Reunion is a moving account of a relationship between two women who are biologically mother and daughter, yet complete strangers. Linked by their joy in writing, as well as their biology, the women reveal themselves to one another as they begin a process of discovery. Katie Hern and Ellen McGarry Carlson are writers whose love of craft is apparent in their letters. Their correspondence is humorous, occasionally painful, and uncompromisingly honest. The book reads like a finely crafted epistolary novel and gives its audience the furtive pleasure of reading another's mail. *Reunion* encapsulates the year in which Katie and her birthmother Ellen first make contact after a separation of twenty-six years. The letters and emails, which constitute the book, provide the reader with extraordinary insight into adoption and tell of their remarkable journey. The book is arranged chronologically and begins with Katie's letter of introduction to her birthmother. The letters are intimate and revealing. The early letters are particularly provocative and raise the question, "What do we choose to

reveal when we wish to tell another who we really are?" Katie tells Ellen about her family, her relationship with her lover Cara, and her participation in the "Lesbian Avengers." Questions of identity, inexorably linked with adoption, recur in Katie's dialogue. Over the course of the year, Katie comes to realize the profound impact that being adopted has had on her life. Ellen's early letters tell the story of Katie's birth and how she came to give up her daughter for adoption. Ellen provides a personal glimpse into the history of adoption in the U.S. in the late 1960s. She articulates the shame associated with becoming pregnant out of wedlock; her lack of control; and the pain she felt when sent away from her family.

Ellen and Katie's letters, emails, and phone calls eventually lead to a meeting. The book's climax takes place offstage as details of their meeting are revealed only in letters. Pictures of Katie and Ellen together signify their reunion. The second half of the book shows the difficulties in reunions between birthmothers and their children. Overwhelmed, Katie withdraws from Ellen to sort out her feelings. Eventually, she and Ellen are able to establish a solid friendship and arrange for subsequent meetings. Their discussion about adoption continues, however,since Katie's brother Matt is also searching for his birthmother. Matt's search for his birthmother, which results in rejection, provides a much-needed counterpart to Katie and Ellen's success story. In an afterward to the letters, the women assess their relationship and their journey. Katie reveals that her adoptive mother has been terribly hurt by Katie's search and subsequent relationship with Ellen.

This book is an absolute must for anyone seeking a birthmother and for readers concerned with mother-daughter relationships. *Reunion,* makes clear that the process of uniting a birthmother with her child can come with a tremendous price- a price which many are willing and eager to pay. To paraphrase Katie Hern, I too have become aware that, in addition to all the good, adoption involves a tremendous loss.

Raising Up Queens: Loving Our Daughters Loud and Strong

Esther Davis-Thompson
Philadelphia: Innisfree Press, 2000

Reviewed by Erika Horwitz

In *Raising Up Queens,* Esther Davis-Thompson takes on the difficult task of voicing the experience of raising daughters. She speaks to black women of their struggles as mothers and women in North America. Davis-Thompson talks

about the importance of pride in being a woman and a mother. She discusses the struggles in destructive marriages where women are treated as punching bags and end up broken. Davis-Thompson provides her readers with a fascinating look at the experience of depression and pain, and suggests that depression may be one way a woman can slow down to listen to her inner self. The author also addresses the unforgiving aspects of a culture where black women have children during adolescence without having the chance to finish high school. Their dreams and hopes become shattered and their growth becomes stunted by the guilt that overtakes them. Davis-Thompson encourages her readers to rise above guilt, to listen to their pain, and learn the lessons and strengths it brings.

The book is abound with words of wisdom. Davis-Thompson believes mothers should speak to their daughters so that their daughters can voice their feelings. She suggests that we can help our daughters develop into strong, self-loving women by taking an inner journey and acknowledging our own pain, values, limitations, and love.

Raising Up Queens focuses on mothers as the main driving force in our daughters, development. Even though mothers are ever-present in their girls' lives, there are many other factors that influence development. If "mothers are the garden we grew in" (121), it is important to note that gardens grow in a vast soil. We must avoid placing sole responsibility for a daughter's development on her mother.

Boys Will Be Men: Raising Our Sons for Courage, Caring, and Community

Paul Kivel
Gabriola Island, B.C.: New Society Publishers, 1999

Reviewed by Marybeth Holleman

When I gave birth to my son nearly ten years ago, I began a search for books that would help me raise him to be emotionally, mentally, and physically whole- outside of the burdens and boundaries of stereotypic masculinity. I bristled at terms like "mama's boy," as I did at suggestions of well-meaning friends and relatives that I should stop breast-feeding, "especially since he's a boy." Instead, we took our son's name, James, and called him Jamie- both because of its gender-neutrality and because it suits him. I nursed him until he was five, still let him sleep with me when he wants, and cuddle him every morning.

Kivel's *Boys Will Be Men,* is one of the books for which I searched then, but in vain. It follows in a long-overdue line of books about raising boys to be compassionate and responsible human beings. Extending from and comple-

menting the excellent books, *The Courage to Raise Good Men* by Silverstein & Rashbaum and *Real Boys* by Pollack, Kivel takes the task of raising our sons out into the streets. First, Kivel challenges us to "see every boy as one of our sons." Kivel says we must first learn to have empathy for all boys before we can successfully help any boy have empathy for himself and others. Second, he emphasizes community over the nuclear family. He urges us to teach our sons how to get ahead *and* get together.

Specific chapters provide hands-on suggestions for parents in nearly all aspects of a boy's life, from family rules to sports to relationships with women to homophobia. Kivel shows us how to become allies with our sons and how to help them become allies with themselves and others. In keeping with the overall theme of reaching out beyond the nuclear family, the final chapters focus on community action. The connection between individual and community is central to Kivel's message. In his words, "Personal awareness is only useful if it can be connected to social practice."

The book is graced with beautiful black and white photographs by Kathy Sloane. Kivel makes appropriate use of questions throughout the book- some to ask ourselves, some to ask our sons- to help us consider our own situations and to help us communicate with our sons. Finally, Kivel has compiled an extensive, topically-arranged resource list of books and organizations.

This book would be more complete, however, with a chapter on the non-traditional family in all its evolving forms, including shared custody/two homes, single parenting, absent parents, and blended families. Kivel refers far too briefly to the real and important issue of divorce and its impact on pact.

Our Sons Were Labeled Behaviour Disordered: Here Are the Stories of Our Lives

Joy-Ruth Mickelson
Troy, NY: Educator's International Press, 2000

Reviewed by Justyna Sempruch

Their sons are diagnosed as hyperactive, severely depressed, and possibly suicidal. In school, administrators segregate them in Behaviour Disordered classrooms, and consult psychologists. Pharmacotherapy is strongly suggested and sophisticated vocabulary is used to make their mothers feel helpless.

In *Our Sons Were Labeled Behavior Disordered,* Ruth Mickelson intertwines her academic discourse with personal stories (letters) written directly to the interviewed mothers. She chooses narrative inquiry as her research method and includes the testimonials of mothers daunted by professional opinion. Moth-

ers, trapped in socially determined constructions, are left to their own devices, but it is not always bad to let mothers speak and decide for their children, argues Mickelson. Who could claim to know their sons better? Who knows what is it like to live in the world of antidepressants, unable to communicate? It is while listening to mothers that Mickelson is able to see the boys as individuals and to define their frustration, despair, and hope. To recognize them, she concludes, is not to summarize, evaluate, or diagnose them but to try and live with them every day. The theme of hope emerges repeatedly throughout the mother's stories.

Little is heard from mothers, Mickelson argues correctly, since they often are stereotyped and humiliated along with their children. Dismissive and inappropriate statements, such as "Find me a BD kid and I'll find you his BD mom," shut too many doors and limit potential treatment. Mickelson repeatedly emphasizes that her letters do not provide clear cut, black-and-white pictures but complex kaleidoscopic realities that should uncover the individual buried under "a load of labels." Her study confirms that behavioural analyses are valuable only as ongoing interpretations.

Self-Esteem – A Family Affair

Jean Illsley Clarke
Center City, MN: Hazelden, 1998

Reviewed by Debbie Dickinson

Self-esteem is a catch all phrase that puts most parents in a quandary. How do we raise responsible and confident children and encourage independence and creativity? How do we best shape our children's emotional well being? These questions are adequately answered in Jean Illsley Clarke's book, *Self-Esteem, A Family Affair.* The title itself places the responsibility for the emotional wellness of children on the entire family. Positive self-esteem can be achieved through advising and supporting children and by acknowledging that both parents and children need reassurance. As a result, the responsibility for children's self-esteem does not fall wholly on one parent. In the past, for example, mothers have been blamed for the problems of low self-esteem, especially in their daughters.

Through examples, exercises, and worksheets, parents are guided in the skillful negotiation of problem solving which clearly set out the expectations for families. With these tools in each chapter, parents have a template that can assist in the process of fostering a positive attitude in our children. Let us not

confuse self-esteem with self-centredness, as the author points out. Many children who seem to have a high level of self-confidence are hiding under negative feelings of self.

This book is valuable for parents, teachers, caregivers, and extended family members who deal with children and have the ability to enforce positive self-esteem on a day to day basis. Most parents may also consider that once their children become teenagers or young adults that it is too late to make changes to encourage positive self-esteem. Jean Illsley Clarke points out that it is never too late to instill positive self-esteem and gives examples of ways to interact with children of all ages. The author suggests that parents can use her book to feel better about their parenting abilities during various stages of family life.

Family Pictures: A Philosopher Explores the Familiar

Laura Duhan Kaplan
Chicago and LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court Press, 1998

Reviewed by Shelley M. Park

In *Family Pictures*, Laura Duhan Kaplan provides snapshots of family life as reflected through the lens of philosophy. The book is written, in part, for a philosophical audience to whom Kaplan commends storytelling as a methodology that blends "outer and inner lives," effecting a symbiosis of "concrete routines with abstract thought about their larger meanings" (138). Yet, this delightful book is readily accessible to an interdisciplinary audience. Indeed, any person with a family life—in particular, those with parents, children, lovers, in-laws, or pets—will find material here that invites self- reflection, as well as considerable laughter. Whether on a Hawaiian honeymoon, chasing a toddler in an art museum, wearing her deceased mother-in-law's clothes, suffering from back pain, or killing fleas in her living room, Kaplan sees both the humour in, and the spiritual meaning of, her everyday activities. In taking us on her journey, she provokes us to do the same.

Family Pictures is divided into three sections: Marriage, Adult Daughter, and Mothering. ARM readers will take special interest in the latter two sections. In the second section, Kaplan explores her relationship with her mother, her mother-in-law, and her father. Kaplan reflects honestly and self-critically upon her frustration with her mother-in-law's superficial emphasis on social etiquette and her mother's equally adamant resistance to social expectations. While Kaplan seems to identify most closely with her father, Kaplan's criticisms of her mother-in-law's spiritual shortcomings and her mother's

social and ethical faux pas give way to an admiration for their ways of being in the world. Kaplan finally honours both mothers, reflecting on the lessons to be learned from each. Her mother-in-law's decisive sense of order helped to establish harmony in a household that gives way to self-interest after her death (44-45). And her mother's "shocking" refusal to assume the role of caretaker provokes others to re-examine their static self-characterizations (53-55). By these stories, we come to understand how parental strengths and weaknesses are not always easy to disentangle and how various styles of parenting may each be effective in their own right.

In the final section, Kaplan draws on her own experiences of mothering to reflect on questions of pacifism, loss of identity, dreams of death, and the ethical imperatives of parenting that enable us to bridge the self-other divide. Kaplan neither romanticizes nor devalues her experience of mothering, and chooses instead to reveal the ambivalences, ambiguities, and complexities that accompany that experience. Looking at her vulnerable newborn, for example, prompts Kaplan to explore the contradiction between the "increased esteem for the value of human life" that emerges from mothering and the potential for violence against others that emerges from a mother's singular commitment to advancing her own children's interests (84-85). Chasing her toddler through an art exhibit, Kaplan acknowledges the attraction of the "dream of silent passivity and subordination" embodied in fairy tales such as *Sleeping Beauty* while simultaneously denying that this is the type of relationship she wants. Many feminist mothers will share Kaplan's ambivalence concerning this "dream of relief from mothering" (97).

Overall, however, Kaplan's portraits of mothering are happy family pictures that reveal the "comfortable life" of a middle-class, professional woman (x). Women with less comfortable lives doubtlessly would provide narratives of mothering that differ from Kaplan's. This is one shortcoming of theorizing based on first-person experience. A strength of Kaplan's method, however, is its ability to "weave a tapestry of ideas, relationships, regrets, and joys" in which others may "both lose themselves and find themselves" (125). In theorizing her experience, Kaplan is not seeking to universalize that experience, but hoping to learn from it and, in sharing her learning, to provoke others to reflect on their stories.

Lost Fathers: The Politics of Fatherlessness in America

Cynthia R. Daniels, ed.
New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1998

Reviewed by Wendy Schissel

Cynthia Daniels's contributors respond to a significant demographic fact: more than 50% of American children will live without their fathers at some point in their lives. Some of the authors of *Lost Fathers* see in this statistic a rationale for family dysfunction and youth criminogenesis. Some see it as a measure of the new plurality of families. Some authors point out the gender, race, class, or biodeterminist bias of reading fatherlessness as a negative. Still others, including Daniels, see the rhetoric of fatherlessness as a way to move public focus away from the hardships of single motherhood and the feminization of poverty back to a masculinist focus.

Among the good, the bad, and the ugly politics of this collection many things become clear. The good may be found in Robert L. Griswold's astute "The History and Politics of Fatherlessness" which advocates a demythologizing of an ideologically coherent fatherhood past. Juxtaposed against Griswold's thoughtful history is David Popenoe's bad sociology. In "Life Without Father," rife with the politics of hate directed against children but masquerading as advocacy for children, Popenoe cites fatherlessness as the "major force" behind juvenile crime and teen pregnancy. Problems abound in this paper from its sensationalized language to its poor statistics. Teenage boys of single mothers are not "notoriously prone to trouble" (38) as the good sociology of Mike Males (not cited) proves. Contrary to what Popenoe would have readers believe from the "evidence" and "recent research" he never cites, juvenile violent crime in the U.S. is not increasing.

The ugliest suggestion in the entire collection is that marriage and fatherhood are perceived in our society to be the only ways to tame the savage beast that is male. This powerful, bioevolutionary assumption is alive and well in the heterosexist rhetoric of "family values." Even uglier is the reality of systemic racism in those "values." In the best essay of the collection, "The Absent Black Father," Dorothy Roberts explains that "if missing fathers are perceived as the cause of society's ills, it is largely because Black culture is considered the benchmark of social degeneracy and female-headed households are the emblem of culture. It is the absent *Black* father who epitomizes the male component of family breakdown and its deplorable repercussions" (46). It is poverty that causes so much fatherlessness in America, not degeneracy, racial or otherwise.

It appears that many of the debates over fatherlessness are just new ways of avoiding necessary structural changes. As the final, fine essay of the book "Fatherhood and Its Discontents: Men, Patriarchy, and Freedom" by Drucilla Cornell makes clear, we need public policy that acknowledges and supports the multiple family forms that respond to economic hardships and puts the focus where public policy should be: on children and their care.

No Parent is an Island

Paula Johanson, Illustrated by Julie Van Alstine
Calgary, Alberta: Temeron Books Inc, 1995

Reviewed by Farah M Shroff

This collection of short stories is a fun and at times, touching look at the lives of the author's family. Paula Johanson writes about being the mother of twins in two very different parts of Canada: downtown Victoria, British Columbia and a remote farm north of Edmonton, Alberta. The book contains autobiographical stories that reflect upon Johanson's everyday experiences of mothering.

Many of the stories are humorous. Once, Johanson finds her children covered in Vaseline. They had tried to crawl away but had covered themselves and the floor in Vaseline and could not make a get-away. She describes many other such mischievous moments and has a page called "My Christmas Wish List" that includes business cards that read, "Don't tell me I'm a good parent-offer to BABYSIT." Most new mothers would benefit from a stack of Johanson's business cards.

Johanson's chapter on the birth of her children echoes much of the literature on hospital birth: traumatic, overly controlled by uncaring obstetricians, unnecessarily invasive. Having her partner and a friend with her during the intense and painful delivery makes an enormous difference. Nevertheless, shortly following the birth of her babies, she experiences severe depression which she attributes in part to insensitive hospital care. She also describes her experience as a new mother as being in "splendid isolation," meaning that for weeks in a row she would speak to only three adults. Many of her friends ignore her and others speak patronizingly to her. She describes being treated as someone with a very low IQ. In Johanson's case, these forms of mother-mistreatment result in clinically diagnosable mental health concerns, for which she seeks therapy over the course of one year.

For the first few years of her chilren's lives, Johanson is a stay-at home

parent and she writes about being misunderstood. Friends could not comprehend how a dynamic professional could have a strange new focus- "babbling all day and hanging around parks." She found a support group of other mothers in which she was able to find her voice and share her concerns and joys. One of the biggest topics of discussion was about paid labour.

Johanson soon starts writing about her experiences as a parent and begins to sell her stories. She leads writing workshops and slowly moves herself back into the paid workforce. Her children then move into daycare.

Johanson's partner, especially his sense of humor, is a constant feature of her stories, from the time of their separation to their reunion, although the status of their relationship is never made clear. Most feminists will appreciate the story of her partner's vasectomy, as he acts on his belief that birth control is not just a woman's concern. In fact, Johanson's partner writes the last story in the book "Bernie Gets the Last Word."

Canadian Families: Diversity, Conflict and Change, Second Edition

Nancy Mandell and Ann Duffy, eds.
Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, 2000

Reviewed by Lorna A. Turnbull

This collection of articles provides a thorough, critical assessment of the situation of families in Canada today. It will provide an excellent classroom resource for courses across a range of disciplines. Organized in three parts, the book traces the history of family diversity, current family situations, and future challenges faced by families in our ever-changing world.

The first part of the book, "Families in Historical and Social Context," challenges the myth of the husband/breadwinner and wife/homemaker model of the family. Chapter One demonstrates how the traditional family is a historical anomaly of the post Second World War period and how diversity is, in fact, the norm. The authors note the significant number of single parent families that existed historically because of the impact of death and desertion. They also note the impact of classism in defining family norms, showing how, among poorer and non-white families, both husband and wife were commonly employed outside of the home. Chapter Two includes an examination of the role of the child in the parent-child relationship, recognizing that contrary to traditional theories of socialization, children have an impact upon their parents

and childrearing is, in fact, interactive. A statistical depiction of contemporary diversity among families is provided in the third chapter. The author illustrates the way many of the changes in family life have had a negative economic impact on women.

Specific diversities in contemporary Canadian families are examined in part two, "Welcoming Family Diversity". Each author shows how myths about the traditional family and prejudices against diversity have resulted in harmful experiences for many people. Lesbians and gay men have experienced significant discrimination in family formation, as illustrated in Chapter Four, and lesbian and gay youth often endure physical and verbal harassment, social isolation, and rejection by their families of origin and peers. In Chapter Five, the author illustrates how state policies founded on racism have adversely affected family formation among Aboriginal Canadians, immigrants and people of colour. The final chapter in Part Two shows the devastating consequences on families of poverty, noting that structural inequalities have widened the gap between "have" and "have not" families.

"Confronting Change" is the final part of this excellent collection. Chapter Seven offers a critical perspective on feminist inspired legal reform in the area of family law. The author despairs of the failure to conceptualize women's varied situations and the corresponding detriments that many women suffer upon the implementation of monolithic legal changes. Chapter Eight argues that single mothers are not long-term users of social assistance but rather struggle against destructive social policy to avoid long-term dependencies. The penultimate chapter explores the lack of effective policy solutions to the problem of family violence and attributes some of this difficulty to prevailing beliefs in the myth of family harmony and prosperity. The tenth chapter reviews the unique situation of aging families with an emphasis on the importance of intergenerational caregiving.

The editors conclude their opening remarks with the following thought:

> Family diversity characterizes our past and present arrangements. Acknowledging diversity enables us to recognize the dynamic nature of families, interacting as they do with the ever-changing social, political, cultural and economic contexts that surround and shape daily life. Postmodern families embrace change, celebrate diversity, revel in contradiction and work to demolish violence. (14)

This is a great place from which to move forward.

The Day Kadi Lost Part of Her Life

Kim Manresa, photos; Isabel Ramos Rioja, text
North Melbourne, Australia: Spinifex Press, 1998

Reviewed by Ruthe Thompson

Documentary literature and film on the practice of female genital mutilation may prepare readers for the painful images in this difficult book, but the volume's format makes its content particularly unsettling. Presented as a collection of photographic illustrations withsentence-long captions, the book looks like an over-sized children's book or coffee-table volume. Yet the photographic journey of four-year-old Kadi and her younger sisters on the day of their ritual circumcision is hardly child's tale or display text. This important book depicts in graphic detail the emotion and betrayal experienced by "every little girl who lives in a community where to be loved, married, and held in high esteem requires you to be genitally mutilated," as Dr. Olayinka Koso-Thomas writes in the book's prologue.

Award-winning Spanish photographer Kim Manresa captures Kadi's innocence and foreshadows her suffering. On the volume's front cover, the young African girl looks sideways at the camera, arms open and chest bare as she dresses just after waking on the day she and her three- and one-year-old sisters travel to a remote village to be mutilated. Kadi's expression in the cover shot is guileless, though not wholly trusting of the stranger with a camera. She gains confidence in subsequent photographs, sticking out her tongue and mugging playfully for the photographer. The reader is struck by the young girl's enthusiasm and lack of concern on this day when her sexual organs will be damaged forever: she obviously has no idea what is in store for her.

Journalist Isabel Ramos Rioja's brief captions describe the scene in each photo, while her introductory text gives the history and global incidence of female genital mutilation and a longer narrative of the day spent with Kadi and her sisters. Rioja describes their father's arrangements for the mutilation, despite government proscriptions against female circumcision in their country. Manresa's photographs emphasize Kadi's pain during the cutting rather than the procedure itself, although the book includes close-ups of a woman's hands excising the clitoris of another one-year old girl on a different occasion in the same country. Like the rest of the book, these close-up shots are illustrative rather than clinical. The substitution of a different child in these images is noted opposite the title page and does not detract from the book's documentary quality.

Manresa's final photograph, reproduced on the back cover as well as inside the volume, again shows Kadi looking sideways. But unlike the cover shot, her gaze turns away from the camera towards the wall of the hut where her sexual

organ has been removed with a dull razor, and without anaesthetic. Behind her, the female "buankisa," or circumciser, washes the girls' blood from the area. In this photo, Kadi's formerly open, easy stance has closed. Her arms wind a piece of dark fabric tightly around her naked frame, and her facial features are newly marked with pain, mistrust, and despair. Eyes narrowed, Kadi's feet stand slightly apart and unsteady on the hut's dirt floor. Bloody footprints mark the earth behind her. Blood from a chicken sacrificed before the mutilation spatters the walls.

Like this final shot, earlier photographs of the weeping Kadi and her sisters underscore the girls' suffering. These photos depict the aftermath of what seems from the prefatory text to be a "sunna" circumcision entailing partial or total excision of the clitoris—the type of female genital mutilation most practiced in central Africa where the book's events apparently take place. A single drawback to this volume is its lack of specific context. There is only a partial indication of where Kadi lives, making it difficult to ascertain what country she is from or what kind of female genital mutilation typically is performed in her culture. It seems to be primarily a Muslim region, though Rioja notes that Christians and animists in the area also practice the tradition. The country is called "sub-Saharan" and Rwanda is mentioned in Rioja's introduction, but this information is not given straightforwardly. The omission may be deliberate, as Rioja writes that the Ministry of Health in Kadi's country has "initiated one of the most significant anti-female circumcision campaigns in any African country." While powerful, the book would be stronger still with more precise information.

Boundary Bay

Rishma Dunlop
Winnipeg: Staccato Chapbooks, 2000

Reviewed by Cassie Premo Steele

In the best of these poems, hawks and herons, wetlands and berries fade, and couples come into focus- a mother and daughter; a daughter and her potential lover; a husband and wife; a woman and her lover. These are intimate poems of love for our daughters'delicacy (even as they paint their fingernails blue); of longing for a husband's presence as the years, like tides, wash him away; of the need for grounding in the lives we have chosen, even as we remember those from whom we have walked away.

In the stunning first poem, "Stories from Boundary Bay," the mother as artist presents herself: "the mother writing poems of girls / the art on white sheets like love." It is this love- of girls, of art- that grounds: "our children's needs / relentless magnets / anchoring us to earth." The book is dedicated to the poet's daughters, and in the first section, entitled "Slippage," the speaker watches carefully over her growing daughters, her dying mother, and her companion nature, and emerges a sensual, embodied but fragile and lonely woman.

In the second section, "The Body of My Garden," the wife / lover / woman takes over. These poems, while not ostensibly about motherhood, invoke the melancholic question of where the marriage goes after children arrive. In a geographic motif, the husband / lover / loved one takes off, like a heron over the bay, leaving the woman behind either metaphorically or literally as the one to care for the children, while she writes (in "Correspondence," "Variations of Blue: Foreign Correspondence," and "Autograph") and sings (in "Invocation," "Song of," and "Prelude") to those who are gone.

This absence becomes a substitute for desire, a need tinged with anger, as in "Hunger": "the terrain of marriage / leaves me starving / mouth full of love." Sometimes such longing turns beautiful, as it does in the best poem in the collection, "Valentine." At other times, emotion in the face of long absence simply sustains us, as in these lines, from "Variations of Blue: Foreign Correspondence":

> when you write of this blue intensity of tears
> I know that such a response to blue
> will survive the passing of years,
> the crumbling of bones, our distances and silences
>
> such a response to blue
> wraps a lyric shawl around my throat,
> close to the pulse of blood
> I will always know your presence
> as an alphabet; it spells my name.

Everyday Acts Against Racism: Raising Children in a Multiracial World

Maureen T. Reddy, Ed.
Seattle, WA: Seal Press, 1996

Reviewed by Nicole Willey

Maureen Reddy makes a distinction early in her introduction between "nonracist" mothering and "antiracist" mothering. When, in conversation, she cites one of her major goals in parenting as rearing "antiracist" children, another mother quickly agrees that she, of course, practices "nonracist" parenting. But the difference is key. Reddy exposes "nonracist" parents in their guilt of considering "nonracism" an end, a struggle already finished. The mothers and mothering Reddy focuses on in this collection are in the midst of struggle. They recognize that "everyday acts against racism" must be instilled in children, and are the only hope in eventually changing oppression.

Everyday Acts Against Racism teaches anyone engaged in mothering (this can include women and men, biological and adoptive mothers, and teachers/community workers who mother children) practices that, slowly but surely, change children (and mothers) into committed antiracism advocates. The contributors to this collection, mothers who are, admittedly, mostly women and mostly college professors (i.e. middle class), write eloquently their personal stories of mothering their own children in antiracist practices, teaching antiracist practices in their classrooms, and striving to make antiracist connections in their adult lives. This collection is also about the heroic that can be found in ordinary, everyday acts that each one of us is capable of practicing.

This is not to say that the authors always agree with each other. Some writers are completely anecdotal and compelling on a personal level, while others academically enmesh the personal and the political. Tones range from pessimism about the enduring nature of racial injustice, to a wholehearted belief in changing the world, one act at a time. Some mothers shelter their children from racism until they are old enough to understand it cognitively, others believe discussion about racism should start even before children can understand what the word might mean. Some advocate almost constant confrontation and conflict, while others see the necessity of choosing battles and retiring from the fight for at least a moment. What these mothers agree on, however, is the politicized space of mothering (in the home, in the community, in the classroom) the opportunity to raise antiracist humans. These essays also share the conviction that sexism and racism are connected and that they complicate each other in a myriad of ways. Feminist, antiracist mothering, then, becomes the goal for these individuals.

As a reader involved with mothering in the community and the classroom, though not inside my home (yet), this collection enthralled me. Theory has met practice in a triumphant and hopeful way in this book. No reader will agree with or find resonance with each essay, but the wide range of voices balances out any inconsistencies. This book is a call to arms for anyone concerned with racial injustice, the future of our children, the practice of teaching as a political act, and/or the importance of mothering. Invigorating and intensely personal, it is a book I will read again, assign to students, and recommend to everyone who is involved with children.

Born in Bondage: Growing Up Enslaved in the Antebellum South

Schwartz, Marie Jenkins.
Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000

Reviewed by Roxanne Harde

Previous examinations of parenting and growing up enslaved have tended to be either fictive, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1853), or autobiographical, such as Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) and Frederick Douglass's autobiography (1845). Historian Marie Jenkins Schwartz's thoroughly researched *Born in Bondage* moves beyond Stowe's well-intentioned novel and the personal narratives of Jacobs and Douglas to present the experiences of the average parent and child under slavery. Schwartz counters the widely held view of paternalistic slave owners as men who determined the life and welfare of human property in this examination of "the experiences of a bound but resilient people as they learned to negotiate between acts of submission and selfhood, between the world of commodity and community, as they grew to adulthood" (18). She makes her readers aware of the individuality of each slave, individuality the practice of slavery attempted to remove.

Schwartz argues her thesis through a chronological study that follows the life cycle of the enslaved from birth through youth to young adulthood and the formation of a family. While Schwartz draws heavily on archival material and the records of slaveholders, her chief sources are compilations of slave narratives, in particular the forty-one volume *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*, compiled by George P. Rawick and published through the 1970s. She weaves her resources into a fluent narrative that makes immediate the concerns and personalities of the slaves she cites. For example, from the

narratives of particular slaves and from plantation records she concludes that transfer of young women from the house to the field occurred in order to encourage slave marriage and childbearing (187). Slaves and the condition of slavery are also made accessible through photographs and illustrations and endnotes serve as supplement and reference. The book does not, however, have a bibliography and the index is spotty; Frederick Douglass, for example, appears in the text but not in the index.

The strength of *Born in Bondage* lies in Schwartz's articulation of slavery from the contrasting perspective of the slaves and their owners. For example she juxtaposes the slave community's view of a baby as the continuation of a people (47) and the slaveowner's view of the child as commodity. Schwartz delineates the difficulties encountered by slave families who struggled to forge and maintain family relationships in the face of owners who "discounted the desire of slaves for separate housing for their families and appropriated the slave mother's time for their own use because they recognized no need for slaves to maintain a separate family identity" (74). The problems of maintaining subjectivity in the face of slavery form an undercurrent throughout the text, and Schwartz carefully articulates the especial problems of raising children to be aware of themselves as individuals under the restrains of slavery. She makes clear the value of community and family in raising children to know what it meant to be a slave, but also what it meant "to be a man or a woman, a husband or a wife, a parent or a child" (211).

Women of the Far Right: The Mothers' Movement and World War II

Glen Jeansonne
Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996

Reviewed by Jeanne-Marie Zeck

Glen Jeansonne has written an important book documenting the leaders and ideologies of mothers' organizations in the United States during World War II. In his book, Jeansonne dispels a number of myths about bigots. They are not, he claims, the victims of ignorance or economic deprivation; bigots are individuals whose anxieties and insecurities are "obsessive and unrealistic." To justify their fears, they find scapegoats and imagine conspiracies. No amount of education or financial security will transform bigots into fair-minded people, Jeansonne insists.

The Mothers' Movement began in 1939 in California just after Germany invaded Poland and war was declared. Eventually the movement flourished on

both coasts and in the Midwest. Most members of these groups were upper-middle-class conservative white women adhering to patriarchal definitions of womanhood and motherhood. Most of them were not, Jeansonne states, feminists. Priding themselves on their roles as protectors of their sons, they were fervently anti-war. Further rationale of many groups was that FDR was surrounding himself with Jews who were linked to the Soviet Union. Members of the Mothers' Movement felt threatened by The New Deal which, they believed, jeopardized the class system and white supremacy. The women thought that England and the U.S.S.R. were headed for defeat. Consequently, they wanted the U.S. to support Germany. They viewed Hitler as a good Christian protecting a truly Christian nation. They agreed that Jews were the cause of many economic and social problems and, like Hitler, they considered extermination an acceptable solution.

Jeansonne describes the methods the mothers' organizations used in dispensing their philosophies: they organized rallies and marches, gave radio broadcasts, created newspapers, wrote pamphlets and books, and made speeches before Congress and the Senate. Although ultimately members of the Mothers' Movement were not as influential as they hoped to be, "the mothers helped create the conditions that led to McCarthyism and the government suppression of suspected internal enemies," Jeansonne asserts.

Jeansonne's is a well-organized, well-documented study. In the early chapters, the author establishes the context for the women he discussed and their beliefs. In the body of the book, he describes a number of specific organizations such as the Los Angeles-based National Legion of Mothers of America. He also gives in-depth biographical information for a number of the leaders. Jeansonne devotes a chapter to the mass sedition trial powered by FDR, another chapter to the effects of the Mothers' Movements, and concludes with an epilogue in which he states, "Tolerance is an attitude that evolves over a lifetime, an evolution that depends greatly on one's sense of security and on reinforcement from families, friends, peers and religious institutions".

This book may help readers demythologize women as loving nurturers. If we are tempted to lionize women, this book will challenge our assumptions. As Jeansonne states, the Mothers' Movement "raises questions about isolationism, gender and morality, and women's history ... It is a disturbing tale, which nevertheless must be told if we are to be honest about our history."

This book would be an excellent resource in classes on women's studies, World War II, isolationism, racism, anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, and Jewish Studies. It is also an excellent resource for anyone concerned about issues of peace and justice.

Contributor Notes

Patricia Bell-Scott is Professor of Child and Family Development & Women's Studies and an Adjunct Professor of Psychology at the University of Georgia in Athens. She was founding co-editor of *SAGE: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women* and principal editor of the award-winning anthology, *Double Stitch: Black Women Write about Mothers and Daughters*. She is co-editor of the first text in Black women's studies, *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks are Men: But Some of Us Are Brave*, as well as editor of *Life Notes: Personal Writings by Contemporary Black Women, and Flat-footed Truths: Telling Black Women's Lives*. She specializes as a teacher and writer in black women's narratives.

Mary Kay Blakely is an Associate Professor at the Missouri School of Journalism. She is the author of three books, including *Wake Me When It's Over—A Journey to the Edge and Back* (Times Books/Random House) and *American Mom—Motherhood, Politics and Humble Pie* (Algonquin/Pocket Books), and her essays have been collected in numerous anthologies. A Hers columnist for the *New York Times* and currently a contributing editor to *Ms.* and the *Los Angeles Times* magazine, she has published essays and articles about social issues in *Mother Jones, Life, Working Woman, McCalls, Redbook, Psychology Today, Self, the Chicago Tribune, the New York Times Book Review* and numerous other national publications. Her work has been translated and published in Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, England and Italy. She now teaches Advanced Writing at the University of Missouri and is the director of the New York Summer Journalism Program at the New School University.

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 at the University of Toronto. 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."*

Geordie Colvin is the father of a teenaged son and daughter. He works for Turning Point Youth Services in Toronto, where he is a member of the Consultation and Therapeutic Services Team working with adolescents and their families.

Amy Cuomo is an instructor in Department of Mass Communication and Theatre Arts at the State University of West Georgia. She is currently teaching a course on Images of Women on Stage and Screen and is particularly interested in how reproductive issues are represented in drama and film.

Debbie Dickinson is an undergraduate student at Atkinson College, York University. She majors in Women's Studies and started her university education as a mature student. Her biggest supporters are her husband Michael and her children, Jaclyn, Kelly and Christopher.

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 U.S. 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 Administrative Co-ordinator for ARM. She holds an MA in Sociology from York University and her studies have focused on women, youth and sexuality. Her work on sexual identity has been published in *Herizons* and *The Journal of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Identity*. Her most recent publications include a co-authored article on lesbians and film in *The Journal of Homosexuality* and a piece on transsexual legal issues for *Fireweed*.

Rishma Dunlop is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at York University. Her current research and teaching interests are poetry, women, and the academy, literary studies and the imagination, arts-based research and alternative practices in educational research. Her poetry and essays have won awards and have been published in: *Literator* (South Africa), *Poetry Nottingham International* (UK), *Room of One's Own, English Quarterly, Canadian Woman*

Studies, Contemporary Verse 2, Dandelion, JCT, Grain, Event, Whetstone, Canadian Journal of Education, Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering, Redefining Motherhood: Changing Identities and Patterns. Rishma Dunlop was a finalist in poetry in the 1998 CBC Canada Council Literary Awards. Her first novel was a semi-finalist for the Chapters/Robertson Davies Prize in 1999. Her collection of poetry titled *Boundary Bay* was published by Staccato Press in June 2000.

R. Shannon Duval is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Mt. Mary College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her teaching and research interests include philosophy of technology, ethics, and social and political philosophy. She is the editor of *The Encyclopedia of Ethics* (1999) and co-author of *Engineering Ethics (2000).*

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.

Megan Fields Emery is a Graduate Student at the University of South Carolina working toward a Master's in Teaching degree with emphasis in early childhood education.

Joyce W. Fields is Assistant Professor in the Human Relations Department at Columbia College where she teaches the Child and Family Studies curriculum.

Linda Rennie Forcey, Professor Emerita of Human Development and Women's Studies in the School of Education and Human Development at Binghamton University, is a political scientist by training, mother to six, and grandmother to seven. Her research focuses on the intersection of peace studies and feminist theorizing. She has authored, edited, or co-edited a number of books and articles relating to women and peace, including *Mothers of Sons: Toward An Understanding of Responsibility* (Praeger, 1987) *Peace: Meanings, Politics, Strategies* (Praeger, 1989, *Yearning to Breathe Free: Liberation Theologies in the U.S.* with Mar Peter-Raoul and Robert Fredrick Hunter, Jr. (Orbis, 1990); *Mothering: Ideology, Experience, Agency,* with Evelyn Nakano Glenn and Grace Chang (Routledge, 1994); and *Peacebuilding for Adolescents: Strategies for Teachers, Administrators, and Community Leaders,* with Ian M. Harris (Peter Lang, 1999).

Faulkner Fox is an essayist, poet, and performance poet, currently at work on a collection of personal essays critiquing contemporary ideologies of motherhood. The working title of the book is: *What's Wrong With Me?: Notes From An Ambivalent Mother*. Her essays on mothering have appeared in Salon Magazine's "Mothers Who Think" column and *Brain, Child: The Journal For Thinking Mothers*. A recent essay, *Get A Wife*, was nominated for a Pushcart Prize in November. Faulkner has two sons, a three-year-old and a six-year-old, and she teaches writing workshops at the University of Texas at Austin.

Robin Gearing, a father of two, has worked as a family therapist in various settings, focusing on the parenting roles of mothers and fathers. His research examines the nurturing bond between fathers and their children. Robin works with families at the Hospital for Sick Children and in private practice.

Ginger Hanks Harwood is an assistant professor of religion and ethics at La Sierra University in Riverside, California. She has worked on peace and justice issues ever since she was an undergraduate and focused her dissertation on peace activist women. A mother of three, she has been particularly interested in both the possibilities and limitations of social change through socially-conscious parenting.

Roxanne Harde is a doctoral candidate at Queen's University. Her thesis explores the intersections between American women's poetry and contemporary feminist theologies. She has published articles on American women's writing, contemporary novels, and feminist theory in journals such as *Critique, Legacy*, and in several collections.

Marybeth Holleman is a mother, an adjunct professor of Creative Writing and Women's Studies at the University of Alaska Anchorage, and a writer. Her essays and articles have appeared in journals and anthologies including *North American Review, Orion, American Nature Writing 1999* (Sierra Press), and *Solo: On Her Own Adventure* (Seal Press.) She is at work on a book of creative nonfiction about her relationship with Prince William Sound, Alaska. She lives with and learns from her ten-year-old son James, partner Rick, and husky dog Keira in Anchorage, Alaska.

Erika Horwitz holds a Master of Arts degree is currently in the third year of the Doctoral Program in Counselling Psychology at the University of British Columbia. Her dissertation is focused on mothers who are actively resisting and negotiating the currently dominant discourse on mothers. She is the proud (and at times overwhelmed) mother of two girls who ongoingly inspire and challenge her: Stephanie and Leigh-Ann.

Carol Hult is the mother of three teenage daughters and is a writer of both

critical and creative nonfiction. She received her M.A. in English and M.F.A. in Writing from the University of Alaska. Her publications include the essay "Writer in the House" which appeared in the inaugural issue of the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*. She is currently writing about travels in Crete with her 19 year-old.

Alexis Jetter is a freelance journalist, Darmouth College adjunct professor and commentator for Vermont Public Radio. Her article about Patsy Ruth Oliver is reprinted from *The Politics of Motherhood: Activist Voices from Left to Right* (University Press of New England: 1997), which she co-edited with Annelise Orleck and Diana Taylor. Jetter's articles have also appeared in *Vanity Fair, The New York Times Magazine, Life, Vogue and Health.* She lives in Thetford Center, Vermont, with her partner and their two young children and is currently writing a biography of her late mother, Evelyn Jetter, a pioneering engineer and inventor.

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.

Susan MacCallum-Whitcomb spent a decade in academia, teaching American literature and publishing widely on the subject of maternity poetry. Her critical anthology, *"This Giving Birth:" Pregnancy and Childbirth in American Women's Writing*, co-edited with Dr. Julie Tharp, was published by Popular Press in 2000. The mother of two young children, Susan recently moved to Halifax where she works as a freelance writer and reseacher.

Judy MacDonnell is continuing her antihomophobia work in community contexts and in Sociology and Equity Studies in Education at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. This paper, based on her Masters' thesis, was presented at the Mothering and Fathering Conference: Visioning, Creating and Sustaining A Culture of Peace, November, 2000.

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.

Ruby Newman teaches women's studies and humanities at York University and lectures widely in the community on literature by and about women. She is the mother of two sons and a daughter.

Renee Norman, Ph.D., is a poet and writer who teaches drama, Language Arts, gender and autobiography courses in the education faculty at the University of BC. Her poetry and essays have been published in literary and academic journals as well as newspapers and anthologies. A piece on writing and mothering was recently broadcast on *First Person Singular*, CBC. Her book, *House of Mirrors: Performing Autobiograph(icall)y in Language/Education* was published by Peter Lang, NY. She is the mother of three school-age daughters.

Leigh O'Brien is an Associate Professor of Education and Director of the Graduate Early Childhood Education (ECE) program at Nazareth College of Rochester (New York) where she teaches ECE and Social Foundations courses. Her current research interests include teacher preparation for a democratic society, the role of narrative in education, women and education, and self-study of my own pedagogy. Before going into higher education, she spent seven years as a preschool teacher and administrator. She has an eight-year-old daughter and builds on what she's learned as a mother to add to her understanding of what she thinks should happen in education settings.

Andrea O'Reilly, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the School of Women's Studies at York University where she teaches courses on Toni Morrison, on motherhood, and on mothers and daughters. She has presented her research at numerous international conferences and she is the author of more than a dozen articles and chapters on these topics. She is co-editor of *Redefining Motherhood: Changing Identities and Patterns* (Second Story Press, 1998), *Mothers and Daughters: Connection, Empowerment and Transformation* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2000) and the special 20th anniversary issue of *Canadian Woman Studies* (Fall 1998) on Mothers and Daughters. She is the author of *Toni Morrison on Motherhood* (forthcoming from Ohio State Press) and editor of *Mothers and Sons: Feminism, Masculinity and the Challenge to Raise our Sons* (Routledge Press 2001). In 1998 she was the recipient of the University wide "Teacher of theYear" award at York University. O'Reilly is founding president of the Association forResearch on Mothering, (ARM) and is founding editor/ publisher of the ARM journal. She has conducted numerous community workshops on motherhood, mothers and daughters, and mothers and sons and has been interviewed widely on these topics. Andrea and her common-law spouse of 18 years are the parents of a sixteen-year old son and two daughters, ages eleven and fourteen.

Ruth Panofsky is the Journal's book review editor. She is a member of the Department of English at Ryerson University where she teaches Canadian Literature. She is author of *Adele Wiseman: An Annotated Bibliography* (1992) and co-editor of *Selected Letters of Margaret Laurence and Adele Wiseman* (1997).

Shelley Park is Associate Professor and Chair of Philosophy at the University of Central Florida. Her intellectual interests include feminist theory and its applications to issues of mothering, adoption, memory, and self construction. She lives in Orlando, Florida with her partner, two young daughters, and "Red Emma," a chow dog.

Gailene Powell is a visual artist, arts-educator, and a Graduate Student at the University of British Columbia. Her areas of research include embodied ways of knowing, feminist theory and arts-based research methods. Gailene is a member of the *Red Shoes Collective*, a feminist artist/researcher collective. Her work has been widely exhibited. Gailene Powell has had a long-standing, on-going collaboration with poet Rishma Dunlop, resulting in numerous collaborative gallery exhibitions, publications and conference presentations.

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 focuses 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 8 same sex couples seeking the freedom to choose civil marriage in Ontario. In that case, the federal government's arguments largely centre on reserving procreation and child-rearing for heterosexuals only.

Rochelle Rubinstein is a Toronto printmaker, painter, fabric and book artist. Her work is exhibited internationally and can be found in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, among others. Her special interest is community art and she has facilitated many projects with battered women and women with eating disorders. She is the mother of three.

Sara Ruddick is the author of *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace*. She has co-edited three anthologies, most recently *Mother Troubles: Reflections on Contemporary Maternal Dilemmas*. For many years she taught at The New School University in New York City where she lives.

Lori Saint-Martin is a professor in the literature department at the Université du Québec à Montréal. She has published two books of short fiction, *Lettre*

imaginaire à la femme de mon amant (1991) and *Mon père, la nuit* (1999), French translations of 6 English-Canadian novels, in collaboration with Paul Gagné (one of which, *Un parfum de cèdre*, a translation of Ann-Marie MacDonald's *Fall on Your Knees*, won the Governor General's award for translation in 2000), and several books of non-fiction on women's writing in Québec, including *Le nom de la mère. Mères, filles et écriture dans la littérature québécoise au féminin* (*The Name of the Mother: Mothers, Daughters and Writing in Quebec Women's Fiction*), 1999. A book-length feminist study of Gabrielle Roy's fiction, *La voyageuse et la prisonnière. Gabrielle Roy et la question des femmes*, is forthcoming from Éditions du Boréal. Her current research project is on fathers and children in contemporary Québec fiction (supported by SSHRC grant). With Paul Gagné, she has two children, Nicolas, born in 1993, and Anna, born in 1995.

Wendy Schissel is the mother of two young adult sons. She is an Associate Member of the Women's and Gender Studies Department at the University of Saskatchewan and co-owner of two Oxford Learning Centres. She holds a PhD in English, but her research interests are in the area of social justice for women and children.

Jill Scott is Assistant Professor of German at Queen's University and the mother of a one-year old boy. She has published in the areas of German literature, women writers and opera and is currently completing a book manuscript entitled *Electra after Freud: How the Electra Myth Threatens Oedipus in Twentieth-Century Literature.*

Farah M Shroff, Ph.D., is an activist, educator and researcher in the field of public health. 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.

Cassie Premo Steele, Ph.D. is a poet and writer who lives in Columbia, South Carolina. She has published books on the poetry of witness and creative ways to embrace menstruation, and currently is writing a book on motherhood, healing, and the Irish famine. She teaches part-time in the Women's Studies Program at the University of South Carolina and specializes in courses on motherhood, feminist theory, and writing as a way of healing.

Justyna Sempruch has completed her M.A. studies in English and Russian Literature in Austria at the University of Klagenfurt and entered the PhD program in the Department of Modern Languages and Comparative Studies at the University of Alberta. Since 1998 she has continued her academic projects at the University of British Columbia in The Programme of Comparative Literature. Currently, she is writing her Ph.D. thesis on *The Witches in*

Diaspora which is an interdisciplinary project across gender, culture and philosophy. In Canada, she has been teaching undergraduate courses in Comparative Women's Literature, German and Polish Languages.

Diana Taylor is Professor and Chair of Performance Studies at New York University. She is the author of *Theatre of Crisis: Drama and Politics in Latin America* (1991), which won the Best Book Award given by New England Council on Latin American Studies and Honorable Mention in the Joe E. Callaway Prize for the Best Book on Drama, and of *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's 'Dirty War'*, Duke University Press, 1997. She co-edited *Holy Terrors: Latin American Women Perform* (*Women and Performance,* 2001), *Defiant Acts: Four Plays by Diana Raznovich* (Bucknell, 2001), *Negotiating Performance in Latin/o America: Gender, Sexuality and Theatricality*, Duke University Press, 1994, and *The Politics of Motherhood: Activists from Left to Right*, University Press of New England, 1997. She has edited three other volumes of critical essays on Latin American, Latino, and Spanish playwrights. Her articles on Latin American and Latino performance have appeared in *The Drama Review, Theatre Journal, Performing Arts Journal, Latin American Theatre Review, Estreno, Gestos, MLQ* and other scholarly journals. She is a contributing editor of *TDR, Theatre Journal,* and *Theatre Research International.* Diana Taylor is founding Director of the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, funded by the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Trudelle Thomas, in addition to being a mother and stepmother to five, is an Associate Professor of English at Xavier University in Cincinnati where she teaches courses in writing and literature. She's written for *College Composition and Communication, The International Journal of Children's Spirituality, The Journal of American Culture*, and others. She's currently working on a book about the spirituality of motherhood.

Ruthe Thompson is an assistant professor of communications at Roosevelt University in Chicago. She holds degrees in English and journalism from University of California, Berkeley and a doctorate in English from University of Arizona. Thompson completed her first documentary film, *Breast Cancer Diaries*, in 2001, and is currently in production of a second film about gender politics in academia. Her entry on feminist artist Judy Chicago's "Dinner Party" installation appears in the forthcoming *International Encyclopedia of Censorship* (Fitzroy Dearborn). She has authored numerous articles for national magazines, publishing most recently in *American Artist and New Age.*

Lorna A. Turnbull is Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Manitoba. She has also taught in Women's Studies at York University and in law at Osgoode Hall Law School and Columbia University

School of Law. Her work is in the area of legal regulation of motherwork and equality for mothers. Her book *Double Jeopardy: Motherwork, Taxation and the Law* is due out from Sumach Press in November 2001.

Batya Weinbaum currently teaches multicultural education at Cleveland State University. She founded and edits the journal *FEMSPEC*. University of Texas recently published her *Islands of Women and Amazons: Representations and Realities*, and is also bringing out her *Searching for Peace on Hostile Grounds: Interviewing Grassroots Women in Palestine/Israel 1989-1999*.

Marybeth White currently mothers three children; Heather (eleven), Sean (nine), and Rheanna (two). While mothering she completed her Honours Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and Religious Studies at York University. She has facilitated support groups for breastfeeding mothers and advocated for the legislation of midwifery in Ontario. Her areas of interest include Buddhism, Existentialism, and Feminist Philosophy.

Nicole Willey is currently pursuing her Ph.D. at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. Her primary focus is postcolonial and feminist theory as it relates to the writings of American women. She is currently working through the intersections between gender, class and race in nineteenth-century sentimental novels by women. She will be presenting on Harriet Wilson's Our Nig at an upcoming conference in New Orleans.

Joanne H. Wright is currently a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Political Science at Rutgers University. Her postdoctoral research investigates the representations of consent and sexual violence in public discourse and in feminist theory. She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from York University.

Niloo Zand has worked both nationally and internationally on programs and policies to assist those under-serviced and in need. She is currently working and advocating for different organizations in Toronto.

Jeanne-Marie Zeck is an assistant professor in the English and Drama Department at MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Illinois. She is also a single parent to a first-year college student. American, African-American, and women's literature are her areas of expertise.

Call for Papers

The editorial board is seeking submissions for Vol. 4.2 of the *Journal of The Association for Research on Mothering* (ARM) to be published in Fall/Winter 2002.

The journal will explore the subject:

Mothering and Literature

The journal will explore the topic of mothering and literature from a variety of perspectives and discplines. We welcome submissions from students, activists, scholars, artists and others who research in this area. We also welcome creative reflections such as: poetry, short stories, and artwork on the subject.

If you are interested in writing a book review, we have books in need of a review, or if you know of a recent publication that you think would be relevant, please contact Cheryl Dobinson at cjdobins@yorku.ca

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Book reviews are to be no more than 2 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:

ARM: 726 Atkinson College, York University,
4700 Keele Street, Toronto, ON, Canada, M3J 1P3.
Call us at (416) 736-2100, x60366, or email us at arm@yorku.ca
or visit our website at www.yorku.ca/crm

Submissions must be received by May 1, 2002.

To submit work to the journal, one must be a member of ARM and memberships must be received by May 1, 2002.

Call for Papers

The Association for Research on Mothering (ARM), with
McLaughlin College, York University
invites submissions of abstracts for our 6th annual conference on

Mothering, Law, Politics and Public Policy

October 18-20, 2002
York University, Toronto, Canada

The position and experience of mothers in contemporary societies is significantly affected by various forms of legal and political regulation. The political and legal contexts in which mothers live shape the choices that they make about their mothering. This conference will explore, from a variety of perspectives and disciplines, the impact of laws and policies on the experience of mothering. It will examine the formulation and implementation of public policies affecting mothers as well as mothers' responses to and experiences of these policies. The various positions mothers may occupy in the realm of law, politics and public policy will also be considered. We welcome submissions from students, activists, scholars, policy makers, artists and others who research in this area. Cross-cultural and comparative work is encouraged.

Topics can include, but are not limited to:

•Surrogate motherhood and reproductive technologies •Maternity and parental leave •Workplace benefits •The "work-family dilemma" •Adoption policies •Mothers as politicians •First Nations/aboriginal mothers •Immigrant and refugee mothers •Race and racism in law and policies affecting mothers •Child custody •Child support and spousal support •Breastfeeding—legal and public policy considerations •Child care •Income tax rules relating to dependents •Issues for lesbian/bi/trans/queer mothers •Challenges facing mothers with disabilities, or mothers

caring for children with disabilities •Child protection legislation •Social security for mothers •Home-based mothering •Mothers and grassroots organizing •Incarcerated mothers and mothers in the criminal justice system •Childbirth choices •Gender equality in the lives of mothers •Maternal subjectivity and the creation of law and public policy

There will also be 'Open Stream' Sessions on the General Topic of Mothering -Motherhood.

If you are interested in being considered as a presenter, please send a 250 word abstract and a 50 word bio by May 1, 2002 to:

Association for Research on Mothering
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4700 Keele Street, Toronto, ON, Canada M3J 1P3
Call us at (416) 736-2100 x 60366, or email us at arm@yorku.ca

Note: One must be a member of ARM to submit an abstract.

Association for Research on Mothering

ARM 2002-2003 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please indicate your membership option (one year and two year memberships and subscriptions are available):

Full ARM Membership includes: biannual newsletter • members directory • listserve • annual conference • thematic conference • special events • advance notification of upcoming events • information mailings • subscription to the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*)

❑ individual $65.00 Cdn/US* ❑ institution $85.00 Cdn/US*
❑ 2 yrs/ind.$120.00 Cdn/US* ❑ 2 yrs/inst. $170.00 Cdn/US*

Basic ARM Membership includes: biannual newsletter • members directory • listserve • annual conference • thematic conference • special events • advance notification of upcoming events • information mailings

❑ individual $40.00 Cdn/US* ❑ student/unwaged $30.00 Cdn/US*
❑ 2 yrs/ind. $70.00 Cdn/US* ❑ 2 yrs/student/unwaged $50.00 Cdn/US*

Subscription to the *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*: (a biannual publication)

❑ individual $27.00 Cdn/US* ❑ institution $47.00 Cdn/US*
❑ 2 yrs/ind. $52.00 Cdn/US* ❑ 2 yrs/inst. $92.00 Cdn/US*

Available back issues (Please add $3.00 per issue to cover shipping costs):

Vol. 1 No. 2 "Lesbian Mothering" ❑ $15.00 Cdn/US
Vol. 2 No. 1 "Mothers and Sons" ❑ $15.00 Cdn/US
Vol. 2 No. 2 "Mothering in the African Diaspora" ❑ $15.00 Cdn/US
Vol. 3 No. 1 "Becoming a Mother" ❑ $15.00 Cdn/US
Vol. 3 No. 2 "Mothering, Fathering, and ... Peace" ❑ $15.00 Cdn/US

**Non-Canadian residents must pay in U.S. funds to cover mailing costs. Please make cheque payable to ARM in either Cdn. funds, U.S. funds, or international money orders. Important note: ARM membership must be renewed annually in January.*

Please indicate the following:

Name_____
Address_____
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Ten key words to describe interests in the area of mothering/ motherhood:_____
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Permission to include in membership directory: ❑ yes ❑ no
Would you like to be added to ARM listserve?: ❑ yes ❑ no

To join ARM please send this completed form and payment to the address indicated on the back of this page!

Mail in your membership form today!
Just fold here and tape together.

Stamp

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