

ial bonds and gender roles in film and television. The book comprises three sections. The first section, “Learning Bonds of Love and Nature,” examines domestic representations of love and marriage in Cold War educational films; the influence of the superhuman Wonder Woman on motherhood; the maternal characterization of flight attendants in films; and the portrayal of teen motherhood in popular culture.

The second section, “Troublesome Bonds between Mothers and Children,” focuses on challenging relationships between mothers and children. Here, film and television reflect cultural anxiety about women’s changing roles in society and the work place. A destructive parent-child relationship is reflected in the media, as if to warn mothers against securing work outside the home.

In one chapter, Sarah Arnold examines the differences between the original Japanese horror film, *Ringu*, and its American remake, *The Ring*. Although both films use a similar narrative structure, Arnold probes the differing cultural representations and expectations of motherhood. Another chapter offers a historical overview of the representation of Walter and Lena, the “dueling protagonists” of Lorraine Hansberry’s play, *A Raisin in the Sun*.

The final section of the book, “Deconstructing Family Bonds for the Twenty-First Century,” explores the friction that develops when families face conflict. Mattoon D’Amore herself, for example, studies the depiction of multi-tasking mothers as superwomen in *Heroes*, *The Incredibles*, *More of Me*, and *Nurse Jackie*. Later chapters examine the traditional definition of the family. The television show *Supernatural*, for example, redefines the traditional nuclear family as a relationship between two brothers. The role of fatherhood is looked at in the absence of a mother in the television show *Everwood*. In both instances, the loss of the mother figure forces changes in traditional masculine attributes. Lastly, *Parenthood* represents the “new normal family” on television. The series demonstrates a shift in contemporary family dynamics, focusing on support and adaptation over tradition.

The Mother of All Pregnancy Books

Ann Douglas.

Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2012.

REVIEWED BY BRITTANY IRVINE

Ann Douglas’s second edition of *The Mother of All Pregnancy Books* provides a thorough and comprehensive overview of preconception care, pregnancy,

labour, and delivery. The style in which the book is written is relaxed, sometimes humorous or touching, often metaphoric—as in the chapter titles “Riding the Infertility Roller Coaster” and “Winning at Baby Roulette.” Out of concern for mothers-to-be, Douglas provides tidbits of “Mother Wisdom” and quotations she calls “Mom’s the Word.” She also refers her readers to the Motherisk Clinic at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, where sound scientific advice is distributed by specialists, especially about complex issues such as exposure to toxic substances and medications during pregnancy.

Douglas is overt in her support of doula and birthing companions, going so far as to title one section of her book “Why Doula Are a Mom’s Best Friend.” She claims that doula are the “birthing world’s equivalent of a fairy godmother” (475), and believes women ought to hire postpartum doula. She even provides a list of the “Top Ten Reasons to Hire a Doula” (477). Most importantly, for Douglas doula can make women feel better about their birthing experiences. Doula offer companionship and one-on-one continuous care during labour and delivery; they can reduce the need for medical interventions such as epidurals, vacuum- and forceps-assisted deliveries, and caesarean sections; and they serve as cheering coaches. Douglas directs readers to contact the nearest midwifery practice group for referrals to their local area doula.

Douglas includes an invaluable appendix that lists pertinent questions intended to guide readers as they write their birth plans. She also anticipates potential deviations from those plans. For example, what would you do if your water breaks but labour does not begin? What if your pregnancy is two weeks overdue and induction is suggested? How do you intend to manage pain relief during labour? Do you or your partner wish to initiate skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth? Do you want your partner or labour supporter to cut the newborn’s umbilical cord? Do you want 24-hour rooming in with your baby? In the case of a surgical delivery, how much information would you want about what is happening beyond the surgical screen?

Mothers-to-be who carefully read Douglas’s book, heed her advice to hire a supportive doula, and follow her comprehensive guide to writing a birth plan will be as prepared as possible for pregnancy, labour, delivery, and postpartum care. The second edition of *The Mother of All Pregnancy Books* is an excellent guide for readers interested in preconception issues and pregnancy, labour, and postpartum care.