

or fatigue, without feeling unworthy of the position you have attained or are striving for. For mothers in the academy this situation is compounded by also instinctively wanting to have healthy, happy, and well adjusted children. As mentioned by French and Baker-Webster, “No one wants to be “that” colleague who is always late for meetings and unreliable to finish assigned tasks. In the same sense no one wants to be “that” mother who forgets a play date or who can never volunteer to help at the Parent Teacher Association” (171-172). The widely acknowledged term “publish or perish” is mentioned in reference to the pressure that academic mothers face whether or not they have successfully stopped the “tenure clock.” The stories convey the mother academics’ challenges and successes that have been achieved largely through lack of sleep, hard work and dedication, and in some cases inspiration and support from key administrators or colleagues who have gone out of their way to assist them in lessening the load especially before tenure.

In the introduction and the epilogue to *Mothers in Academia*, Mari Castañeda and Kirsten Isgro juxtapose the personal stories of the contributors with the neoliberal oppressive structures and policies that these women face as they navigate the academy with children through their graduate degrees, tenure, and the competitive pressures to manage grants, publish in acceptable outlets, and disseminate research findings. In the epilogue they call into question the flexibility of the academic workload and the ‘rhetoric of choice’ that is often used to suggest that women have somehow put themselves in these positions by ‘wanting it all’ and have a choice around mothering or taking on an academic career. Near the end of the book Castañeda and Isgro respond to this anticipated criticism around choice by stating, “Our choices do not occur in isolation because we often make them accompanied by social pressures and judgements as well as by institutional rules” (229).

Got Teens? The Doctor Moms’ Guide to Sexuality Social Media, and Other Adolescent Realities

Logan Levkoff and Jennifer Wider
Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2014

REVIEWED BY EMILY JANUARY PETERSEN

When my husband and I decided that it was time to have “the talk” with our oldest daughter, we turned to books. I gathered books from the library for children, and we settled down as a family to read them. My husband squirmed on the corner of the couch and his face turned an unnatural shade of red; I

read aloud and talked calmly with our daughter about the issues. As Logan Levkoff, Ph.D. and Jennifer Wider, M. D., authors of *Got Teens? The Doctor Moms' Guide to Sexuality, Social Media, and Other Adolescent Realities* (2014), realized, "talking about sex may be much easier for some parents than it is for others" (74). Luckily, parents have their book to help us engage in awkward conversations. Levkoff and Wider's book is meant to guide parents through difficult conversations with their budding teenagers. They invoke rhetorics of motherhood to establish ethos, beginning by discussing their children and ending with "Sure, we may be doctors, but we are mothers first" (261).

While Levkoff and Wider are academically trained, they use a friendly voice to identify with readers: "So here we are. Let us be your friends. Imagine us sitting next to you.... We're laughing, we're talking, we're sharing stories, and we're going to give you the facts and support that you need to tackle challenging subjects" (5). They recognize that parents may not know how to accomplish conversations about puberty and sexuality; their book is a friendly companion for doing so. Peppered among the advice and knowledge of the book are personal opinions and connections to the subjects. When discussing bras, they write, "[I]ntermediary bras, or bralettes, are super comfortable. Truth be told, Logan would still much rather wear those" (57). It is a tone that appeals to parents, but might even appeal to a teenager if she or he picked up this book with questions. What is most appealing is their sensitivity to different parenting frames. They share rules and ideas specific to their situations, but recognize, "Our rules may not align with yours" (238). They encourage discussion with parenting partners and with children to establish best family policies.

Policies might be needed given the pitfalls and advances of contemporary life. Children's experiences are highly mediated with screens and gadgets; Levkoff and Wider offer information about and ways for discussing uses of social media and other technologies. Levkoff and Wider, as savvy users of social media, are aware of trends both of interest and harmful to teenagers. They mention, "an entire Facebook movement dedicated to the appreciation of women's pubic hair, called Bring Back the Bush" (69); they warn about emotionally harmful hashtag contests on Instagram. They furthermore address how such practices affect dating and social lives, educating parents about what to expect. For example, "Dating today often appears to be more of a group activity where people meet en masse and partner up. In a way, it seems like the natural extension of a Facebook-based adolescent world" (107). Such information gives parents an understanding of how and why teenagers behave and socialize the way they do.

The information for and about teenagers in this book is so broad that I could only see one area that needed more discussion: rape. The book men-

tions rape in passing several times, and abusive relationships are covered in detail, complete with checklist for identifying signs of abuse, including depression (122). However, only one page is devoted to discussing rape in detail with a list of helpful guidelines. I would have liked to see a discussion of how rape can be both a stranger crime and a dating crime. This book, devoted to informing parents, could have explored the rape culture on many university and high school campuses nationwide and the lack of reporting. The authors did acknowledge, “rape and assault aren’t just women’s issues. Many boys and men don’t report their assaults or rapes” (123). Perhaps this is a subject too large to tackle in one book; however, more information is needed to prepare teenagers and their parents.

A key idea is that there is no “normal.” For each example given, Levkoff and Wider share possible time frames for development, reminding readers “that there is a wide range of normal” (50). In addition, they share cultural or ethnic differences, accounting for situations that would be the same across various backgrounds. All discussions are meant to normalize the function of the human body to reassure parents and teenagers.

In fact, the most useful part of this book is the “scripts” provided to parents for talking about the issues. Throughout, the authors shared sample conversations for approaching sensitive topics. A myriad of topics were discussed with grace and ease. I found myself surprised and delighted at how much information was given about bullying, gay and lesbian relationships and orientations, depression and anxiety, eating disorders, transgender identity, condom use, visiting the gynecologist, gaining weight, fat shaming, critical thinking about the media, sexting, social media guidelines, and circumcision.

The best contribution of this book is the advice to build a good relationship with your teen. Levkoff and Wider are more concerned with the relationships parents build with their children rather than the prescriptions they cite for particular situations. Parents can successfully be part of the transition by connecting with their children. “And don’t just tell them that you understand—*show* them” (13). They suggest telling stories from the past of teenage gawkiness and even bringing out embarrassing photos. They warn against shaming and promote open communication and trust. This is the type of relationship I want my two daughters to have with me. No matter what issue affects the teen in your household most, being able to talk about it supportively and openly is the most critical part of being a parent.