

conversation, Gale Pryor—herself a working mother—makes a case for continuing to breastfeed after returning to work. She describes the health benefits of breast milk and identifies its unique qualities, but the underlying message of this book is that breastfeeding reinforces the bond between mother and child after a hard day's work. This is in keeping with the “attachment parenting” philosophy that permeates the book. Pryor advocates baby-wearing and co-sleeping, two key elements of attachment parenting. She explains how to carry a baby in a sling and describes the benefits of co-sleeping, although she neglects to give guidelines for safe co-sleeping.

Pryor presents breastfeeding and attachment parenting as tools for maintaining a secure relationship between mother and baby when they must be separated for hours each day. As she notes, mothers always have worked. In many other cultures, small children accompany their mothers as they work. What is unusual in our culture is that “we must be separated from our children while we work” (13). She describes the workplace with which she is most familiar—the world of business—and discusses the problems women face when trying to reconcile their pre-existing identities as professionals with their new identities as mothers. Pryor offers many practical solutions, such as visiting the office before returning to work to find a suitable place to pump breast milk. She briefly and inadequately describes manual expression of breast milk. She gives excellent advice, however, on how to use manual and automatic breast pumps, and how to store and handle breast milk.

Other tips in this book are as diverse as guidelines for choosing a daytime care provider for your child, and how to stop a let-down with your forearms to avoid having a wet shirt. The book offers the lay advice of one mother speaking to another. As is typical of lay advice, Pryor rarely ventures outside her own sphere of experience. In passing, she suggests the possibility of bringing one's baby to work, or having a care provider bring one's baby to work to be nursed.

By no means comprehensive, this book speaks clearly and empathetically to the reader and empowers the working mother to maintain a breastfeeding relationship with her baby. *Nursing Mother, Working Mother* is a fine addition to the reading list of any new mother hoping to balance mothering and a professional or business career.

A Life's Work: On Becoming a Mother

Rachel Cusk
New York: Picador, 2002

Reviewed by Jane Satterfield

When she became a mother, prize-winning British novelist Rachel Cusk turned to nonfiction as an appropriate vehicle for cultural analysis. In *A Life's Work*, Cusk describes “the drama of which childbirth is only the opening scene.”

Cusk's account begins with a chapter on pregnancy's "Forty Weeks" and its attendant physical and emotional difficulties: "The baby plays a curious role in the culture of pregnancy," she observes, is "at once victim and autocrat." Her larger purpose in this and subsequent chapters arranged thematically and spanning the author's two pregnancies, however, is to capture the process by which a woman is removed from "the anonymity of childlessness" and is transformed "into a mother," both "martyr and devil.... More virtuous and more terrible, and more implicated too in the world's virtue and terror."

Cusk analyzes the emotional and practical difficulties of sharing childrearing and domestic work in postmodern times: "after a child is born the lives of its mother and father diverge, so that where before they were living in a state of some equality, now they exist in a sort of feudal relation to each other." She documents power struggles with both a recalcitrant toddler and temperamental baby minders. As she reflects on the literature she reads during her children's naptimes, literature that profoundly alters her understanding of artistic expression, Cusk resists interpreting the experience of childbirth and motherhood through the lens of either archetypal life script or popular culture. Evading, and often good humoredly mocking, the well-meant but oversimplified rhetoric of how-to-manuals or the equally worn sass of girlfriends' guides, none of which adequately capture the complexities of a new mother's evolving consciousness, Cusk observes her life and thought with a novelist's dispassionate intensity, mapping the fraught terrain of postfeminist motherhood with clarity and grace.

In the nearly thirty years since publication of Adrienne Rich's groundbreaking *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Institution and Experience*, much has—and has not—changed. When she becomes a mother, Cusk maintains, a woman "exchanges her public significance for a range of private meanings, and like sounds outside a certain range they can be very difficult for other people to identify." Cusk's ability to translate this hidden range of meanings and sounds is considerable; in her hands descriptive scenes move swiftly, surprisingly, and effectively into insight and analysis, making *A Life's Work* an essential contribution to the literature of motherhood.

The Selected Papers of Margaret Sanger Volume 1: The Woman Rebel, 1900-1928

Margaret Sanger, Ed. Esther Katz
Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003

Reviewed by Roxanne Harde

In 1914, Margaret Sanger helped coin the term birth control, and she made it a fundamental tenet of women's rights. She spent the first half of the twentieth