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Maternal Measures

Figuring Caregiving in the Early Modern Period

Edited by

Naomi J. Miller

Naomi Yavneh

MATERNAL MEASURES:

FIGURING CAREGIVING IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD

To those dear "others" who helped us to become "mothers":
Hugh Miller and Ray Shattenkirk; and to our children,
who teach us what it means to be mothers every day:
Fiona, Isaiah, Damaris and Elias Miller,
and Shoshana, Raphael, Isabella and Lily Shattenkirk.

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Our collaboration as editors has been a true gestation of spirit, mind, and heart, resulting in this collection of essays that speaks to the issues of "mothers and others" in the early modern world as well as our own. We ourselves met when we were looking at the same book at an MLA book exhibit in Chicago in December 1990, and realized that we shared the same first name, and the same interests, and even the same alma mater of Princeton from undergraduate days. We also shared our experience as young mothers, leading to our first collaboration, the following December 1991, in an MLA session entitled 'This Self Which Is Not One: Childbearing, Childrearing, and the Profession'.

Further MLA sessions followed, as well as professional collaboration in Renaissance Society of America conferences and the marvelous Attending to Early Modern Women conferences every three years at the University of Maryland, College Park, where we first sketched out our hopes and ideas for this collection of essays on mothers and others, that has come to be titled "Maternal Measures", and has found a home with the Ashgate Publishing series on Women and Gender in the Early Modern World. In the meantime, children followed as well, so that our collaboration as co-editors [known to our contributors as 'the Naomis'] has also been marked by our shared experience of each giving birth to four children before receiving tenure. Thus, the dedication to this volume ...

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We leave the volume, now, to the care of our current series editors, Allyson Poska and Abby Zanger, with whom we are happy to be working.

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Notes on Contributors

Linda Phyllis Austern is Associate Professor of Music History at Northwestern University. She has published widely on early modern music, gender and culture, particularly in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England.

Emilie L. Bergmann is Professor of Spanish at the University of California, Berkeley. She is a co-author of *Women, Culture and Politics in Latin America* (California, 1990) and co-editor of *"Entiendes": Queer Readings, Hispanic Writings* (Duke University Press, 1995), and has published on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish literature, representations of the maternal in early modern Spanish and colonial Latin American culture, the poetry of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and twentieth-century Spanish women writers.

Caroline Bicks is Assistant Professor of English at The Ohio State University. She has published essays on the Anglican churching ritual, Diana at Ephesus, and childbirth communities. She is currently working on a book-length study of the early modern midwife as original narrator of England's genealogical and gynecological tales.

Mary Thomas Crane is Associate Professor of English at Boston College. She is the author of *Framing Authority: Sayings, Self, and Society in Sixteenth-Century England* (Princeton University Press, 1993) and of *Shakespeare's Brain: Reading with Cognitive Theory* (forthcoming from Princeton in 2000).

Frances E. Dolan is Professor of English, and an Affiliate of the History Department and the Women's Studies Program, at Miami University in Ohio. She is the author of *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550–1700* (Cornell University Press, 1994) and *Whores of Babylon: Catholicism, Gender, and Seventeenth-Century Print Culture* (Cornell University Press, 1999), from which her contribution to this volume has been reprinted.

Heather Dubrow, Tighe-Evans Professor and John Bascom Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the author of five books, most recently *Shakespeare and Domestic Loss* (Cambridge, 1999). Her other publications include a co-edited collection, numerous articles on teaching and early modern literature, and two chapbooks of poetry.

Glenn Ehrstine is Assistant Professor of German at the University of Iowa. His study "Theater, Culture, and Community in Reformation Bern, 1523–1555" is forthcoming from E.J. Brill in 2001.

Claire Fontijn is Assistant Professor of Music at Wellesley College, where she teaches Music History and directs the Collegium Musicum. Her previous publications on Baroque music include articles on flute-playing techniques as well as on women musicians. She is currently completing her first book, for Oxford University Press, entitled *Desperate Measures: The Life and Music of Antonia Padoani Bembo (c. 1640–c. 1720).*

Susan Frye is Associate Professor of English and Women's Studies at the University of Wyoming. The author of *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation* (Oxford University Press, 1993; 1997) and co-editor with Karen Robertson of *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England* (OUP 1999), she has published on Spenser, Shakespeare, and early modern women.

Nancy Hayes teaches English at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, her hometown. She has degrees in English from Smith College and the University of Connecticut, an MFA in Literary Translation (medieval German love songs) and a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Iowa.

Kari Boyd McBride teaches in the Women's Studies Department at the University of Arizona. Articles forthcoming in 2000 include "Gender and Judaism in Meditations on the Passion: Middleton, Southwell, Lanyer, and Fletcher" in *Discovering and Recovering the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, ed. Eugene Cunnar and Jeffrey Johnson (from Duquesne). She maintains an online bibliography on Aemilia Lanyer and is writing on country house discourse in early modern England.

Naomi J. Miller is Associate Professor of English Literature and Women's Studies at the University of Arizona. Her publications on early modern women writers and gender include a book-length study of Lady Mary Wroth, entitled *Changing the Subject: Mary Wroth and Figurations of Gender in Early Modern England* (University Press of Kentucky, 1996), a collection of essays on Wroth, co-edited with Gary Waller, entitled *Reading Mary Wroth: Representing Alternatives in Early Modern England* (University of Tennessee Press, 1990), and various essays on Shakespeare, Elizabeth Cary, and Aemilia Lanyer, as well as renaissance mothers' advice books and polemical pamphlets. She is currently working on a book-length study of early modern constructions of maternity.

Patricia Phillippy is Associate Professor of English and Coordinator of Comparative Literature at Texas A&M University. She is the author of *Love's*

Remedies: Recantation and Renaissance Lyric Poetry (1995), and numerous articles on early modern women writers. Her chapter in this volume is part of a book in progress, *The Sisters of Magdalene: Women, Death and Mourning in Post-Reformation England*, which examines material and representational aspects of women's works of mourning in the period.

Judith Rose is Assistant Professor of English and Women's Studies at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania. A poet and fiction writer as well as an academic, she has published in *The Iowa Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Virginia Quarterly*, and other journals. The chapter included here will also appear in a book-in-progress, *"The First Fruits of a Woman's Wit": Reappropriation of the Metaphor of Conception by Early Modern Women*

Kathryn Schwarz is Assistant Professor of English at Vanderbilt University. She has published several essays on representations of female martiality in the early modern period, and is the author of a book, *Tough Love: Amazon Encounters in the English Renaissance*, forthcoming from Duke University Press.

Edith Snook is a doctoral candidate at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario. She is completing her dissertation on representations of reading and metaphors of vision in early modern women's writing.

Susan C. Staub is a Professor of English at Appalachian State University. She has published articles on various aspects of Renaissance prose and poetry and has recently completed a book-length manuscript entitled *Nature's Cruel Step-Dames: Representations of Early Modern Women and Domestic Violence in the Street Literature of Seventeenth-Century England*. Her current research focuses on motherhood in early modern England.

Deborah Steinberger is Assistant Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the University of Delaware. Her research areas include seventeenth-century theater and writing by women of the early modern period. She has published articles on the theater of Molière, Donneau de Visé, Destouches and Nivelle de la Chaussée, and on the works of Françoise Pascal. Her critical edition of Françoise Pascal's epistolary collection *Le Commerce du Parnasse (1669)* is forthcoming.

Rachel Trubowitz is Associate Professor of English at the University of New Hampshire, Durham. She has published essays on a variety of topics in early modern English literature, most recently "'Nourish Milke': Breast-Feeding and the Crisis of Englishness, 1600-60" in *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 99.1 (2000), 29–49. Her book-in-progress is on nursing and nation-building in seventeenth-century England.

Naomi Yavneh is Associate Professor of Renaissance Culture in the depart-

ment of Humanities and American Studies at the University of South Florida. The author of numerous articles on reproduction and breastfeeding in the early modern period, as well as on Italian literature, gender and spirituality, she is currently completing a book, *The Body of the Virgin*.

CHAPTER ONE

Mothering Others: Caregiving as Spectrum and Spectacle in the Early Modern Period

Naomi J. Miller

During the early modern period, maternity was constantly evaluated, conceptualized and redefined, from a range of social and artistic perspectives, even as maternal practices shaped standards of care. The spectrum of early modern maternal roles and responsibilities extended well beyond actual mothers to the many female caregivers who participated and assisted in childbirth and lactation, nurtured and instructed their own and others' offspring with advice, managed the domestic production of their own and others' households, wrote polemics, ruled courts, and administered the final stages of care in illness and death. The participation of female caregivers in all areas of early modern life offered not only a spectrum of care from birth to death, but also a spectacle of caregiving powers, potentially life-threatening as well as life-giving, that were scrutinized, idealized, criticized, and represented in a range of social and literary texts as well as visual works of art and musical compositions.

The spectrum, and spectacle, of maternity in particular and of female caregivers at large in the early modern period, is the subject of the essays in this volume. Exploring such figures as mothers and stepmothers, midwives and wet nurses, wise women and witches, saints and amazons, murderers and nurturers, the contributors to the present volume examine a striking range of positive and negative constructions of female caregiving in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (with individual examples dated as early as 1340 and as late as 1812), in countries that include England, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Latin America, Mexico, and the New World. Linking the disciplines of literature, social history, music history, and art history, and attending to differences of gender, class, and race, this volume highlights a spectacular spectrum of early modern women caregivers, from prototypes to antitypes.

Recent multidisciplinary volumes of essays in the field of early modern gender studies have posed important questions regarding the variations among different disciplinary approaches. James Grantham Turner, for example, introduces his collection of essays on sexuality and gender in early modern Europe by drawing connections among historians of society, literature, and art, and by calling attention to the concomitant challenge and advantage of establishing moments of common ground among literary characters, visual images, and "real" individuals, as well as among the different national cultures of Europe.[1] In her essay collection on Renaissance culture and the everyday, Patricia Fumerton identifies a "new social historicism of the everyday," which juxtaposes material details and conceptualizations of everyday life, attending not only to factual historical data, but also to collective meanings, values, representations, and practices.[2] Similarly, Susan Frye and Karen Robertson's recent collection of essays on women's alliances in early modern England brings together a variety of literary and historic texts, examining material culture and social practice.[3]

In the present volume on early modern caregivers, the methods and materials of several disciplines appear not simply in alternating essays, but at times in the same essay, resulting in a conjunction of different disciplines and cultures that serves to revise and deepen our understanding of maternal measures both within and beyond traditional cultural and disciplinary boundaries. It is important to point out that the focus of this multidisciplinary volume on representations of maternity and female caregiving in the early modern period at once arises from and builds upon the extraordinary work of social historians over the past two decades, whose detailed archival investigations and transformative visions of the nature of history itself have reshaped our understanding of gender and culture in early modern society. As Merry Wiesner observes in her landmark study of women and gender in early modern Europe, scholars working in women's history have had to search for new sources to reveal the experiences of women and have used traditional sources in innovative ways, drawing upon sociology, anthropology, art history and literary studies for theories and methodology.[4] Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford note in their extensive survey of women in early modern England that "women are everywhere and nowhere in the archives," impelling historians to reconstruct evidence of women's lives from a wide range of indirect source material, including literary and visual representations, and necessitating techniques of "reading against the grain, of asking where women are absent as well as present in the documents."[5] The roster of social historians of gender in early modern Europe who offer an array of historical data accompanied by analyses of their own methodologies and usage of sources, and whose work contains detailed discussions of women's experiences as mothers, includes Olwen Hufton, Anthony Fletcher, Susan Dwyer Amussen, and Christiane

Klapisch-Zuber, to note only a few.[6] Standing out as a particularly important predecessor to the present volume, among a number of valuable essay collections on topics related to women and gender in the early modern period, is Valerie Fildes's *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England*, which gathered together an illuminating group of essays on social constructions of maternity that provided a starting point for further interpretive analyses of maternity in a variety of disciplines.[7]

Mendelson and Crawford, Wiesner, and many of the other historians cited above discuss how research by social historians has expanded to include the use of sources such as literary texts and visual images. So, too, the literary, musical, and art historians included in the present volume draw upon historical data and social texts to inform their analyses of early modern conceptualizations and practices of caregiving and maternity. At the same time, while historical studies of maternity have tended to present women's experiences primarily in terms of the female life-cycle denoted by the familial roles of maid, wife and widow, the multidisciplinary essays in the present volume explore a wider variety of female caregiving roles, extending from birth to death within overlapping arenas of health, education, labor, religion, and politics, as well as the family.

What gave early modern women caregivers some measure of power to shape the very societies that worked to delimit and define their roles, both within and outside the home? One answer lies in the often strikingly malleable boundaries of those social roles for women: not only as mothers and daughters, wives and widows, but also as educators and advice-givers, role models and friends.[8] The wide range of writings by and about early modern women that address social issues and experiences offers contemporary scholars the opportunity to identify interconnected realms of social existence, and to consider the flexible operation in practice of theoretical social boundaries. On the one hand, representations of women by men, whether in texts or images, at once reflected and dominated many of the gendered assumptions of the society at large. On the other hand, across a spectrum of differences in class and culture and medium, women's voices extended from intimate musings in letters and diaries to assertive and even polemical engagements, not only with skeptical male onlookers, but also with a mixed audience of other women. Whether confronting social and political customs at large, or charting a passage through life-cycles at home, from birth, childrearing, education, and household management to death, early modern women worked to define roles for themselves that tested the assumptions and sometimes reformed the practices of the societies in which they lived.

Not surprisingly, early modern women were often identified and represented, both by themselves and by men, in terms of their caregiving functions. Within the family, the roles of mothers, grandmothers, stepmothers, and mothers-in-law, as well as daughters, wives, and widows, provided women

with opportunities for authority as well as service, and for instruction as well as training. At the same time, an increasing range of caregiving roles *outside* the family placed women in positions of nurture, instruction, and even power in a variety of social settings. Women who served as midwives, wetnurses and family nurses were respected in many cases, and yet denigrated in others, when their influence and knowledge came to be perceived as a threat to existing structures of authority.[9] In instances where women served as tutors or educators in upper class families, or even as teachers through the venue of middle class mothers' advice books, both the range of their influence and the perceived challenge to more traditional sources of authority was heightened.[10] The very issue of education for women was marked by vehement debates, with variations across class lines, in which advocates of early modern women's learning, particularly women, faced opposition and hostility, and yet managed to both attain and transmit literacy in a striking range of circumstances.[11] In the case of wise women or witches, notions of sustenance and destruction were linked in ways that made explicit the implicit links between forces of nurture and rejection already associated with women in general.[12]

When scrutinizing measures of maternity, it is useful to juxtapose representations of actual and mythic mothers in different mediums of representation and different countries, in order to attend to some of the cultural undercurrents, encompassing both norms and aberrations, that shaped the spectacle as well as the spectrum of early modern women caregivers. Maternity itself was both a physical and social construct in the early modern period. The physicality of the woman's body was measured quite frequently in terms of maternal functions and responsibilities that received varying emphases across classes and cultures, raising questions as to when and how the breast and the womb serve as signs signifying "woman."[13]

A female organ associated at once with sexuality and maternity, the breast often functioned as a site for the sexual definition of women. Mythic representations of the breast as a symbol of femininity in the early modern period ranged from Greek legends of Amazons, described as female warriors who burned off their right breasts in order to enhance their ability to draw their bows and who destroyed or sent away their male children, to the figure of the Virgin Mary, whose breast milk served as an image of infinitely divisible grace. Representations of women's breasts in literature and the visual arts frequently alluded to metonymic images, such as lilies, ivory, and snow, which eroticized the breast as an object of masculine desire while divorcing it from connotations of unstable flow and change.[14]

In social texts, women's breasts were constructed in both maternal and erotic terms, sometimes conflating their significance as symbols of caregiving nurturance with their function as sexual spectacle. In early modern Europe, breast milk was believed to be a purified form of menstrual blood, which

changed color as it passed back and forth between the breast and the womb, bearing witness to the fluid materiality of women's bodies and their reproductive function.[15] In the same period, the breast was subject to newly eroticized interest and signification, accompanied by increased exposure and decoration of women's breasts in clothing fashions.[16] Attesting to a different set of issues, treatises on breastfeeding which proliferated in a number of early modern countries conveyed class tensions associated with the use of the breast. Although the hiring of lower class women as wet nurses for infants from upper class families had a long and established history, it gradually became an increasingly controversial practice, due to perceived associations between the quality of breast milk and maternal social status.[17]

The uterus was another female organ that came to be associated both with powers of femininity in physical reproduction, and with apparently female weaknesses such as fluidity and instability, through its link with the physical flows of blood in menstruation and childbirth and through historical associations connecting disorders such as hysteria with a "wandering womb." In the Hippocratic writings that influenced medical practices in the early modern period, certain behavioral disorders were given the name "hysteria," from *hystera*, the Greek word for womb, and treatments were prescribed in order to induce the uterus to move downward to its proper position.[18] Plato and Aristotle described the womb as an animal within an animal, with its own consciousness, capable of moving around within the lower part of the body and upsetting the bodily economy with its disturbed state.[19] Such conceptions supported stereotypes of feminine error and changeability. In midwifery manuals of sixteenth-century England, the womb was represented as so greedy for male seed that it could descend to snatch and suck semen, indicating the unsettling power of female sexual desire.[20]

In the early modern period, both breast and uterus represented life-giving nurturance and reproduction as well as the potential disruption of patriarchal order. Beyond the purview of masculine control or regulation, the female reproductive organs could serve simultaneously to validate women's caregiving roles and to undermine male social authority. When mothers and other female caregivers claimed positions for themselves as generators of their own words and images, issues of authority and authorship collided.[21]

Among many examples of male-authored treatises on maternity, Jacques Guillemeau's influential treatises on childbirth and nursing in seventeenth-century France, later translated and widely circulated in England, focus on women's functions as caregivers.[22] Guillemeau includes explicit descriptions, in some cases illustrated by woodcuts, of women's sexual organs, while addressing the issue of female sexuality seemingly only in terms of medical concerns regarding pregnancy, labor, and delivery. Although Guillemeau's nursing text opens with a straightforward recommendation that mothers nurse

their own children, substantial space is devoted to discussion of the size, shape and color of suitable breasts for nursing when wet-nurses must be selected. By contrast, in seventeenth-century England, Elizabeth Clinton offers an explicitly maternal perspective on the same issue in a treatise addressed to her daughter-in-law, in which she urges mothers to nurse their own children for reasons of spiritual as well as physical nourishment – without concomitant attention to breast size and nipple shape.[23] Female caregiving in Elizabeth Clinton's text, whether through breast milk or words of wisdom, is valued for its powerful shaping force rather than purely for the physicality of the originary female body.

"Therefore let no man blame a mother, though she something exceed in writing to her children," declares Dorothy Leigh in England in 1616, "since every man knows that the love of a mother to her children is hardly contained within the bounds of reason." Explaining the significance of her task, Leigh adds: "my mind will continue long after me in writing."[24] Expressing maternity, for Dorothy Leigh, signifies writing to excess, beyond the bounds of reason and concomitantly "hardly contained" within the boundaries of generic constraints. In fact, early modern women's varying expressions of maternity not only could not be contained within traditional generic boundaries, but also served to extend the boundaries of their caregiving roles in other capacities.

Dorothy Leigh focuses specifically upon the authority of maternal expression in writing, explaining in her dedicatory preface to her children that she could conceive of no better way of directing them than "to write them the right way."[25] While acknowledging that writing is considered "a thing so unusual" among women, Leigh locates the origins of her authorship in her "motherly affection," and asserts the authority of her words over her sons. Moreover, Leigh's claim that her mind will "continue long after me in writing" maintains the lasting power of her maternal expression. At several moments, expanding the generic boundaries of her maternal advice text, Leigh even links the authority of her written words with the text of the Bible, which her sons may learn to read "in their own mother tongue," under the direction of her "many words," so that they may gather food for the soul "out of the word as the children of Israel gathered manna in the wilderness."[26] While Leigh takes care never to substitute the authority of her text for that of the Bible, the conflation of her maternal words with the "mother tongue" of the Bible suggests her power as a mother to provide verbal and spiritual nourishment for her children.

In a variety of early modern texts and images associated with female caregivers, mothers and others offer the potential for both nurture and rejection, sustenance and destruction. Maternity was associated with a doubleness of identity that only partially coincides with the doubleness commonly associated with feminity at the time. Whereas women in general might be directed to be chaste, silent, and obedient in order to counteract the perceived power of their

sexuality, mothers in particular emerged as figures who combined the sexuality required for procreation and reproduction with considerable authority over their offspring, male as well as female. In the popular genre of mothers' advice books, authored by figures such as Dorothy Leigh, early modern women emphasized the dignity and strength that they brought to their roles as caregivers, allowing them to direct their children in particular, and their households in general, with confidence.

Authority inextricably linked with female sexuality: a powerful combination in a period that exhibited marked anxieties over the positions of women. Mothers and other female caregivers appear as both objects and agents of sacrifice in early modern texts and images, sometimes represented as madonna and monster at once. Early modern pamphlets that eulogized or condemned individual women construct maternity in particular with heightened metaphors, repeatedly locating a starting point for description in excess. In the case of Margaret Vincent, a woman who murdered two of her children in the belief that she could save their souls, since she was being forced by her husband to raise them as Protestants despite her own conversion to Catholicism, a condemnatory pamphlet entitled *A pitiless Mother* (1616) attacks her as "Tigerous" and "wolfish" for her "unnaturall" violation of the dictates of maternity.[27]

In Vincent's case, early modern codes of maternity provide the standard of measure for condemning a woman "who by nature should have cherished [her children] with her own body, as the Pelican that pecks her own breast to feed her young ones with her blood," and instead behaves more monstrously than "the Viper, the envenomed Serpent, the Snake, or any Beast whatsoever," in taking her children's blood, "nay, her own dear blood bred in her own body, cherished in her own womb."[28] Embedded in the narration of the pamphlet on Vincent is the implication that this tragedy resulted from a woman's misguided attempt to oppose an incipient and subversive maternal authority to her husband's rule. The unsettling spectacle of Margaret Vincent bears witness to the fact that maternal care, at once contested and contestatory, potentially monstrous and self-sacrificial, was an issue not simply of physical reproduction, but of domestic power as well.

While Dorothy Leigh and Margaret Vincent serve to mark opposite ends of the spectrum of maternal caregiving in early seventeenth-century England, the historical circumstances of mothers and other caregivers differed considerably, not only in different countries and centuries within the early modern time period, but also across class lines, with the voices of poorer or working mothers less directly represented in many written sources.[29] Moreover, patterns of child care in particular encompassed a range of practices and behaviors beyond the explicitly instructive framework offered by many mothers' advice books, as has been well-documented by social historians of childhood.[30] Nevertheless, caregivers were often represented and judged, celebrated or condemned, in

terms of maternal measures, precisely because the spectacle of maternity offered a spectrum of female practices against which to measure the acceptable or disturbing extent of early modern women's caregiving powers.

* * *

The essays in the present volume span the disciplines of literature, music, and art history and explore a spectrum of caregiving roles and practices in Europe and the New World. The essays are grouped topically into five sections that reflect the variety of circumstances of caregiving as well as measures of maternity in the early modern period: conception and lactation, nurture and instruction, domestic production, social authority, and mortality. Each group of essays sheds light upon some of the opportunities and restrictions that marked early modern women's caregiving roles, and draws individual disciplinary and geographical views into complementary juxtaposition. Addressing both verbal and visual spectacles, social and musical "measures," and often covering overlapping topics and issues, the essays offer an interconnected series of perspectives on early modern caregivers, caretakers, and care itself.

Conception, Childbirth and Lactation

The labor of women attends the very beginnings of life, from childbirth to the nursing of newborns. The processes of conception and birth, as well as the caregiving associated with labor, delivery, and lactation, were very much the province of women in the early modern period. Indeed, while most of the published writings concerning childbirth were authored by men, women's practical influence in the birthing room remained significant throughout much of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[31] The immense significance of childbirth and nursing in figurative as well as literal terms surfaces repeatedly in a wide variety of countries and mediums throughout the early modern period, revealing some striking preoccupations with the powers of mothers and others that intertwine issues of class and race as well as gender.

Focusing on the very concept of conception, Judith Rose explores the ways in which early modern women artists manipulated "conceptual paradigms" in both verbal and visual mediums, in order to realign the relationship between maternity and artistic procreativity. In "Mirrors of Language, Mirrors of Self: The Conceptualization of Artistic Identity in Gaspara Stampa and Sofonisba Anguissola," Rose investigates the relationship between Aristotelian paradigms of conception and the sixteenth-century genesis of Stampa's *nove stile* and Anguissola's self-portraits. Rose finds that both women located in the maternity of the Virgin Mary a conceptual point of origin for their own

positions as female artists. Demonstrating how Stampa differentiates her position from that of Petrarch by representing herself as the terrestrial reflection of the Virgin, while Anguissola constructs a gallery of mirrors that link her self-portraits with her paintings of the Madonna and child, Rose locates in the spectacle of holy maternity an enabling conception of procreativity for early modern women.

Moving from conception to birth, Caroline Bicks focuses her attention upon early modern preoccupations with the caregiving authority of midwives. In "Midwiving Virility in Early Modern England," Bicks argues that the material connections among the tongue, the genitals, the umbilical cord and the hand of the midwife were inflected by larger cultural concerns about female power over the virility of the early modern male subject. Examining treatises such as *The Byrth of Mankynde* (1540), Jacques Guillemeau's *Childe-birth, or the Happy Deliverie of Women* (1612), Nicholas Culpeper's *A Directory for Midwives* (1651), and William Sermon's *The Ladies Companion, or the English Midwife* (1671), Bicks demonstrates how these texts construct female speech so as to negotiate the authors' unease with both the birthing community and the power of the midwives over the bodies of newborn males. By contrast, in the first English, female-authored midwifery handbook for women in England, *The Midwives Book* (1671), Jane Sharp reminds midwives of the need for caution, while recognizing their potential to enslave and effeminize England's virile members.

Naomi Yavneh's essay shifts the focus of the section from conception and childbirth to lactation. In "To Bare or Not Too Bare: Sofonisba Anguissola's Nursing Madonna and the Womanly Art of Breastfeeding," Yavneh compares Anguissola's realistically depicted *Madonna che alatta il bambino* (1588) with Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Madonna del latte* (1340) in particular, and with early Renaissance *Madonna lactans* in general, questioning why this almost uniquely naturalistic representation of a breastfeeding Virgin painted by a major woman artist appears at a time when the *Madonna lactans* had largely fallen out of favor as a subject. Examining post-Tridentine treatises on both images and Mary, treatises on beauty and the nature of women, and medical tractates on breastfeeding, Yavneh concludes that Anguissola's painting not only evokes the ideas of religious reformers such as Cardinal Paleotti and Filippo Neri, but draws a parallel as well between the shaping qualities of mother's milk and the power of the female artist.

Rachel Trubowitz's essay "'But Blood Whitened': Nursing Mothers and Others in Early Modern Britain," closes the section with an interrogation of the celebration of maternal breastfeeding by such domestic guidebook writers as Jacques Guillemeau (*The Nursing of Children*, 1612), Robert Cleaver and John Dod (*A godly Form of Household Government*, 1614), and William Gouge (*Of Domesticall Duties*, 1621). Her essay further charts images of nursing

motherhood and wet-nursing in early modern travel narratives which, like the domestic guidebooks, reveal a singular preoccupation with breast-milk, blood, and the racialized construction of English national identity. Trubowitz focuses upon texts that both assess and help to shape and stabilize the maternal body, the foreign body, and the body politic, in conditions of rapid social change and cultural chaos and fragmentation. Trubowitz demonstrates that the idealized images of nursing maternity enshrined by the domestic guidebooks, which construct fraught relations between lactating mothers and "others," both reflect and disseminate seemingly disparate cultural anxieties about race, Jews, wet-nurses, and the (in)coherence of English national identity – anxieties that are similarly conjoined in the works of travel writers such as Samuel Purchas (*Purchas His Pilgrimage*, 1626).

Nurture and Instruction

Early modern women themselves claimed the labor of childbirth and nursing as a justification for their continuing authority over their offspring in the form of maternal nurture and instruction. Mothers and others often chose to offer not only their bodies, but concomitantly their words, to provide their own and others' offspring with the nourishment of affection and instruction, from childhood to adulthood. Revealingly, mothers were often the figures most empowered, and even expected, to conjoin passion with instruction in the early modern period. By contrast to some masculine models of learning, in which instruction was divorced from the liabilities associated with maternal caregiving, other models, particularly those associated with maternal figures and voices, linked instruction with nurture.[32]

Emilie L. Bergmann draws attention to sixteenth-century Spanish and Latin American colonial didactic, fictional, and historical texts that construct the reproductive role of the feminine in an ideological context. In "Language and 'Mother's Milk': Maternal Roles and the Nurturing Body in Early Modern Spanish Texts," Bergmann analyses the disjunction between the proverbial commonplace ("language we drank in at our mothers' breasts") and humanistic representations of the maternal role. Bergmann finds that these texts implicitly separate the pregnant maternal body from the physical processes of nurturing through lactation, and cultural initiation through language acquisition. The essay contextualizes key texts by sixteenth-century didactic writers, including Juan Luis Vives and Fray Antonio de Guevara, as well as less well-known medical, theological and linguistic treatises, in light of the cultural discourses of empire represented by such works as Juan de Valdes' *Dialogo de la lengua* (c. 1535), the Inca Garcilaso's *Comentarios reales* (1609), and Cervantes's *El coloquio de los perros* (1613). Bergmann demonstrates the extent to which both

Valdes's and Garcilaso's use of the naturalizing metaphor of culture and language as "mother's milk" challenges the conceptual separation between maternal culture and patriarchal language.

Glenn Ehrstine's "Motherhood and Protestant Polemics: Stillbirth in Hans von Rüte's *Abgötterei* (1531)" addresses contrasting spectacles of femininity during the German Reformation, when idealized images of maternity served as one standard against which disorderly women were measured and found wanting. Hans von Rüte's carnival play, *Abgötterei*, transforms generic boundaries by bringing matters of maternity into a carnival context, juxtaposing licentious elements of pre-Lenten celebration with the plight of two childless women praying to Mary for luck in longed-for childbirth. Ehrstine demonstrates how Rüte coopts the socially sanctioned concerns of maternity in order to criticize the cult of saints in early modern Germany, while representing mothers themselves as both caregivers and unruly women in a carnivalesque display. Contextualizing his argument with reference to contemporary representations of maternity, Ehrstine suggests that the very appearance of two would-be mothers among the victims of ecclesiastical impiety in Rüte's play acknowledges the interests of female audience members, who were active in religious instruction as well as nurture.

In "The Virgin's Voice: Representations of Mary in Seventeenth-Century Song," Claire Fontijn attends to a striking and uncollected repertory of pieces depicting the occasions of Christ's birth and crucifixion that feature the Blessed Virgin Mary, who sings in a direct, first-person voice infused with character. The strong traditions of Marian devotion in southern Europe, particularly in seventeeth-century Italy, prompted songs in which Mary dramatizes her situation, such as lullabies around Christmastime sung by the young nursing mother, and laments for Holy Week and Easter sung by the weeping mother mourning the death of her son on the cross. The essay examines eight representative works, ranging from Tarquinio Merula's "Hor ch'e tempo di dormire" (*Curtio precipitato et altri Capricij*, 1638) and Antonia Bembo's "Per il Natale" (*Produzioni armoniche*, 1697–1701) to Claudio Monteverdi's "Pianto della Madona" (*Selva morale e spirituale*, 1641) and Francesco Capello's "Dic mihi, sacratissima virgo" (*Motetti a voce sola*, 1610), in which a soprano portraying the Virgin Mary interprets her maternal role through dramatic performance. Fontijn's analysis reveals the extent to which, in many of these cases, maternal nurture and instruction are magnified through the figure of the mother of the Lord.

Edith Snook's "'His open side our book': Meditation and Education in Elizabeth Grymeston's *Miscelanea Meditations Memoratives*" explores the strategies utilized by Grymeston in her posthumously published mothers' advice book (1604) that enabled her to present herself as both mother and educator. Elaborating upon the relevance of Grymeston's feminized educational

approach to our understanding of the position of women in the history of education and of women's spirituality, the essay demonstrates how Grymeston uses her authority as a mother to instruct her son in a way that transforms both the mode and matter of his education, and thus provides a potentially disruptive moment in gendered social divisions, in religious hierarchies, and as a consequence, in disciplined ideas about gender. By establishing a connection between education and the meditative tradition, Grymeston instills the potential for the dissolution of rigid spiritual hierarchies, offering the meditative world of women as a model for men as well. Snook demonstrates that Grymeston creates a version of masculinity for her son that is not dependent upon her absence or the expurgation of femininity, even as she writes a positive intellectual, spiritual, and social identity for herself as author, mother, and woman.

Domestic Production

In a very real sense, the "working mothers" of the early modern period were responsible for a multitude of domestic duties associated with household caregiving. Women's authority within the family as a social system often originated with their maternity, while their responsibilities sometimes extended beyond their roles as mothers to other issues of domestic governance and material production.[33] In the cases of women whose class standing allowed them to use the household as a locus of social action, caregiving responsibilities enabled a certain measure of authority and definition within the domestic sphere.[34] Overall, moreover, as the data amassed by such historians as Sara Mendelson, Patricia Crawford and Merry Wiesner indicates, although upper class and laboring women performed different tasks, women's work almost always included both household responsibilities and child care.[35] At the same time, increased domestic power was not without attendant risks arising from anxieties or misinterpretations regarding the nature of women's work and the scope of their influence, as the present essays under the heading of "Domestic Production" suggest.

Nancy Hayes' "Negativizing Nurture and Demonizing Domesticity: The Witch Construct in Early Modern Germany," for example, examines the domesticity of witch figures in German tract and sermon illustrations from the late fifteenth to the late sixteenth centuries. In these illustrations, the conventional nature of such female "domestic" duties as milking or cooking has been subverted by the apparently anti-maternal intentions of their doers. When the work is represented not at the traditional hearth or in the barn, but rather outside domestic structures, its transfer to unenclosed spaces seemingly unleashes destructive forces against established social order. Depicted in the act of milking axe handles to steal milk from a neighbor's cow, or preparing

noxious concoctions over an open fire to seed hail storms, the women in these illustrations are engaged in withdrawing means of nurturance from their fellow villagers. The essay identifes a further paradox in the discrepancies between the written texts and the woodcuts that purportedly illustrate them, when the texts argue that the actual maleficia is executed by demons, with the witches merely providing signals, while the illustrations typically portray the women as acting without demonic assistance, and thus literally embodying the evil in themselves. Hayes analyses how the German witch figures negativize maternal nurture, representing the Other to the Mother.

Deborah Steinberger's "The Difficult Birth of the Good Mother: Donneau de Visé's *L'Embarras de Godard, ou l'Accouchée*" focuses upon the significance of the central theme of domestic maternity, hitherto unprecedented on the French stage, in the 1667 production by Molière's troupe of Jean Donneau de Visé's one-act comedy, *L'Embarras de Godard, ou l'Accouchée* (*Godard's Predicament, or the New Mother*). Diverging from the long comic tradition of portraying older female characters as blocking figures who obstruct the happiness of others, Donneau de Visé's Mme Godard prefigures the compassionate *mère confidentes* (mother-confidantes) of eighteenth-century sentimental comedy. Steinberger suggests that Donneau de Visé's domestic realism and his introduction of the figure of the good mother represent a larger movement that she terms the "domestication" of French comedy, which reflects changes in patterns of social space in early modern France, as well as the elaboration of the concepts of private life and family intimacy. Moving from the public space of the city square to the private space of the domestic interior, French comic stage settings begin to link measures of maternity with domestic production, although mother figures ultimately fail to maintain their presence on the stage.

Domestic reputation as well as production is the subject of Mary Thomas Crane's essay, "Conflicting Identities of Early Modern English Housewives," which explores the tensions marking the sexual and social identities of English "huswives" in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The term "huswife" itself was particularly problematic and contested in the early modern period, when it could mean simultaneously *both* "a woman (usually married) who manages her household with skill and thrift," *and* "a light, worthless, or pert woman or girl, or hussy." At a time when women's domestic roles were changing at all levels of society, the conflicting uses of this term provide a kind of paradigm of issues at stake as women became increasingly confined to and associated with domestic matters. Descriptions of "the huswife," then, can illuminate some of the roles manufactured for women as they were increasingly dissociated from the actual manufacture of goods. Crane examines an array of uses of the term in order to trace patterns of anxiety, first, over working class women's wage-earning potential within the home (with fears of concomitant sexual independence) and, later, over upper class women's increasing idleness

(with fears of concomitant sexual freedom) as they were confined to a domestic sphere where servants did most of the work.

In "Maternal Textualities," Susan C. Frye takes issue with the common critical assumption that in the early modern period the world of letters and writing was almost wholly a masculinist world. Frye examines some of the ways in which written texts – and in particular, alphabets, initials, and calligraphy – permeated women's domestic lives and helped to make those domestic lives fertile ground for later published writing by women. She argues that women's literary production, while of necessity in conversation with and in competition with that of males, may also be seen as stemming from the domestic production involved in endowing the home with textile markers of class, in cooking, food preserving, midwifery, and healing tasks. For girls and women literate enough to form letters, if only as needlework patterns, female textuality was an everyday occurrence which grew out of the forms of women's culture that simultaneously conformed to and challenged the masculinist, outsider view of their domestic roles. The essay illustrates how texts that were important in everyday women's lives were preserved in a spectrum of media, including needlework, architecture, calligraphy, and diaries, all of which provide evidence that women's domesticization of the text coincided with their entrance into the textual marketplace.

Social Authority

The social authority of early modern women often originated in extensions of their caregiving powers from within the home to society at large. Combining the sexuality of generative wombs with the authority of generative words and roles, mothers and other female caregivers shared a potential for social influence that extended far beyond the boundaries of their immediate families, in association with emblematic power as well as actual political and cultural authority. Although the spectacle of such authority inevitably engendered attacks on the part of writers concerned with upholding masculinist social order, many men as well as women laid claim to the enabling spectrum of powers associated with maternity in the early modern period, whether to illuminate their own creative processes, to question the conventional parameters of domestic roles, or to authorize narratives of religious faith or historical conquest.

Linda Phyllis Austern's essay, "'My Mother Musicke': Early Modern Music and Fantasies of Embodiment," scrutinizes an array of ways in which music was allegorized as a woman in music theoretical treatises and related accounts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly in northern Protestant Europe. Sometimes likened to the mother who gave birth to strong sons who

would spring to her defense against rapists and abusers, Music alternatively became the beauteous virgin, allowing male composers to claim their progeny by such a bride in a linguistic attempt to usurp the feminine creative processes of gestation and birth, or the sexual temptress seducing unwary hearers. Moreover male composers and theorists attributed to abstract, audible music the powers and capacities most often ascribed to female caregivers. Austern analyses the strongly gendered and highly sexualized language of creative embodiment in treatises on music theory, demonstrating the ways in which male composers, theorists, performers and listeners thought of their relationship to their art in the same way in which they related to women as mother, bride, and temptress. Crossing disciplinary lines, the essay explores the ways in which the same ideas were translated into visual allegories of music, and used in portraits and images of historical, mythological, and holy figures.

Completing the internal link among essays in the volume that consider the significance of the powerful maternal model of the Virgin Mary in the early modern cultures of Italy, Spain, and Latin America, Frances E. Dolan focuses upon the practices and consequences of Marian devotion in England. Dolan examines how the yoked fear of and fascination with maternal power in the early modern period prompted efforts to grasp as well as resist such power, in a spectrum of venues that included medical treatises about reproduction, prescriptive writings on breastfeeding and other maternal conduct, legal constructions of infanticide, or autobiographical writings, witchcraft discourses and prosecutions, and national iconography. In "Marian Devotion and Maternal Authority in Seventeenth-Century England," Dolan demonstrates how the fierce debates over the extent and value of maternal authority that marked early modern England can be seen to have shaped attitudes toward such problematic issues as the apparently exceptional power of the Virgin Mary. Dolan explores the social attitudes and preoccupations that structured both attacks on and defenses of the Virgin Mary, most of which focused on three crucial, and controversial, stages in a mother's relationship to her child: pregnancy, lactation, and adulthood. Dolan points out that however misogynist their dismissals of women in general, Catholic writers' zealous reverence for the figure of the Virgin countered the sweeping misogyny of Protestant writers, creating the possibility of positive evaluations of women's caregiving contributions to society.

Even exotic spectacles of female authority in the early modern period could not be divorced from domestic associations. Kathryn Schwarz's "Mother Love: Clichés and Amazons in Early Modern England" points out that although Amazons may not seem conventionally domestic, early modern texts refuse to leave Amazonian domesticity at the edge of the world. Instead, from exploration narratives to domestic guidebooks to the frame narrative of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Amazons are imagined at home, in familiar spaces

where they most emphatically should not belong. Amazons appear not only as political analogues, exotic spectacles, or the wives of heroes, but also as examples in the rhetoric of courtship and conduct, where they do not oppose conventional domesticity, but rather are taken up to idealize it or explain the ways in which it might go wrong. Schwarz argues that, through the tension between the roles they play in myth and the function they serve as exempla, Amazons suggest the ways in which socialized heterosexuality functions as a system of roles. Imagined in intimate as well as disruptive relationship to domestic structures, Amazons as mothers both are and are not the other, presenting at once strange and familiar versions of masculinity that play out male anxieties about female powers.

Mediating between myth and history in "Native Mothers, Native Others: La Malinche, Pocahontas, and Sacajawea," Kari McBride calls attention to three historico-mythical indigenous female figures who have been canonized as central to Euro-American founding narratives: Dona Marina or La Malinche, Matoaka or Pocahontas, and Sacajawea. All three women were mothers during the period of their lives spotlighted by these originary tales, and their maternity can be seen to inflect these histories in significant ways. McBride suggests that the experiences of La Malinche with Cortez in early sixteenth-century Mexico, Pocahontas with John Smith in seventeenth-century colonial America, and Sacajawea with the Lewis and Clark expedition at the turn of the following century, can be viewed as situations where the maternal body makes possible particular narratives of conquest by its ability to delineate cultural boundaries. McBride shows how these three maternal figures come to serve as "natural" go-betweens, translating native culture to European conquerors and vice versa. All three women functioned as commodities for the traffic in women, exchangeable chattel, and yet all three were ultimately mythologized, for good or for ill, as mothers of a new people, a new dispensation, a new world. The essay considers both early modern and contemporary texts about these native mothers, in order to show how maternity functions to authorize their limited and liminal participation in dominant historical narratives.

Mortality

While the final stage of the life cycle, death, exerted destructive force over the many mothers who suffered the deaths of their children, it could paradoxically prove enabling for other early modern women, whose voices at times achieved their greatest power at the close of their own and others' lives. Even as with birth, early modern women were the primary attendants on bodies in death, to such an extent that Mendelson and Crawford conclude that deathbed scenes were "dominated by women," offering a "feminized locale" that fostered

"opportunities to construct feminine spheres of social dominance."[36] Some women, moreover, took care to ensure that their experiences lived beyond them in their words. It was the occasion of potentially impending death, after all, that allowed women who authored mothers' advice books such as Dorothy Leigh to justify the excess of their speech, given that "the love of a mother to her children is hardly contained within the bounds of reason."[37] Moving from instructional to financial legacies, an examination of wills for both women and men in early modern England indicates that women favored daughters over sons in no uncertain terms, working even on their deathbeds to offer lasting testaments to women's voices and positions in society.[38] Interestingly, male authors also used the potentially excessive passions associated with maternity to measure their own approaches to mortality, as indicated in the first essay in this section.

In "London's Mourning Garment: Maternity, Mourning and Royal Succession," Patricia Phillippy argues that maternity was constructed in the early modern period as a unique site of affective and emotional license, whose suspension of orthodox responses to loss was particularly useful to male authors in scripting difficult or ambivalent social performances. Phillippy examines the numerous elegies, lamentations, and memorials produced by London publishers in the wake of Queen Elizabeth's death in March 1603, as well as William Muggins' *London's Mourning Garment, or Funerall Teares*, published in the same year, mourning the loss to the plague of nearly 38,000 citizens between July and November 1603. Muggins' elegy shares with the elegies for Elizabeth a preoccupation with the figure of the mother as the central image through which death, its pathos, and its implications are negotiated, represented, and measured. In these examples, male writers construct maternity as a site at which customary forms of mourning are suspended and subsumed within figures of profound, inconsolable grief. By contrast, Phillippy demonstrates that representations of maternal mourning in early modern women's works focus less on transcendence than on the physical fact of death, and employ the mother's lament to empower and authorize textual performances by rooting them within the resistant body of the maternal mourner herself.

Maternal excess provided the locus for recurrent examinations of mortality in monstrous as well as enobling spectacles, as in the figure of Margaret Vincent, discussed above. Early modern preoccupations with infanticide emphasized the horrors of murderous mothers to a much greater degree than murderous fathers, revealing the extent to which maternity provided a measure of life-threatening as well as life-giving powers.[39] In "Early Modern Medea: Representations of Child Murder in the Street Literature of Seventeenth-Century England," Susan Carol Staub focuses upon early modern street literature that documented instances where motherhood went awry, most particularly in examples of murderous mothers. Newsbooks and cheap

pamphlets issued after a crime or execution sought both to capitalize on the public's appetite for the sensational and, ostensibly, to spread official ideas about crime and punishment. Staub calls attention to the notable focus of this street literature on spectacles of female criminality, particularly domestic violence, with two kinds of violent crime receiving the most attention: husband murder and infanticide or child murder. While domestic texts and conduct books sought to valorize motherhood, the popular press displayed an almost obsessive concern with mothers who murdered their children. Despite the prevalence of "spinsters" in seventeenth-century court cases involving infant or child murder, the popular press chose to focus instead on married mothers who murdered their children, emphasizing the threatening aspects of female disruption of marital authority associated with these crimes. Staub demonstrates how these texts negotiate notions of sexuality and womanhood in order to maintain their conceptions of a stable, ordered society, criminalizing maternal authority in order to expose its potential danger and limit its scope.

Finally, when mothers themselves are dead, other caregivers must fill the vacuum left by their absence. Heather Dubrow explores some of the anxieties about surrogate parents that shape – and misshape – not only conceptions of caregivers in early modern England, but also many other cultural attitudes. In "'I fear there will a worse come in his place': Surrogate Parents and Shakespeare's *Richard III*," Dubrow points out that the major mortality crisis experienced by England from 1557 to 1559 produced an unusually high percentage of writers and their audience who either had stepparents, or witnessed their presence close at hand. The presence of many types of surrogate parents in the society, including wet nurses, guardians in the wardship system, and so on, indicates some measure of the complex, if vexed, relationship between caregiving, mortality, and authority in the early modern period. In particular, Dubrow observes that because surrogate parents both are and are not the parents they represent, they draw attention to the vulnerability of the individual family members they replace, while at the same time testifying to the longevity of family roles. Focusing on the widespread concern with surrogacy in *Richard III*, Dubrow analyses Shakespeare's treatment of the paradoxes and problems informing the concept of protection, as well as the interplay between loss and recovery. In *Richard III*, as in other early modern texts, the situation of a child surrounded by dubious surrogate caregivers after the loss of a parent serves as a synecdoche for the situation of families as a whole and for the family that is the state.

* * *

As the essays in this volume so amply attest, the pervasive powers of influence associated with maternity in early modern society extended not simply to actual

mothers, but to other female caregivers as well, whose standing was variably and yet inextricably linked with the strengths as well as the shortcomings of maternal authority. Midwives and wet nurses, wise women and witches, polemicists and queens: many female positions of authority fostered definitions and comparisons that used maternity as a touchpoint or measure of validation or denigration. For each woman who claimed maternal measures as a strategy of power, one can find another woman who endeavored to stake out a position that extended beyond the purview of reproduction. Often, however, it was in caregiving roles and responsibilities, whether as mothers or others, that many early modern women found the knowledge and power to connect with one another, and variably resist or even reform some of the practices and expectations that determined their standing in society. Mothering others, for better or for worse, female caregivers in the early modern period participated in a spectrum of spectacles whose collective record, explored in part by the essays in this volume, offers an opportunity to measure our current understandings of women's voices and positions as mothers and others, both in the early modern period and in our own.

Notes

1. James Grantham Turner, ed., *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe: Institutions, Texts, Images* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, xvi; see also Turner's introduction to the volume, "A history of sexuality?", esp. 2–4, 7–8.
2. Patricia Fumerton, "Introduction: A New New Historicism," in *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday*, ed. Fumerton and Simon Hunt (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), esp. 4–7.
3. Susan Frye and Karen Robertson, eds., *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), vii; see also their introduction, esp. 3–8, 13.
4. Merry Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1, 3–4. Wiesner devotes an entire chapter to "Women and the creation of culture," 146–75, where she examines women's artistic creations, musical compositions, and literary works, and examines varied restrictions on women's ability to participate in the creation of culture across time and from one geographic area to another.
5. Sara Heller Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550–1720* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 9. In their section on "Maternity," 148–64, Mendelson and Crawford emphasize that "far from being a 'natural' experience, motherhood was socially and historically constructed," while maternal experiences and responsibilities "differed according to marital status, social level, and a range of personal factors" (148).
6. While not attempting to duplicate the range of references to be found in more detail in some of the essays in this volume and in the extensive bibliographies of the studies cited here, the following list offers a starting point for further investigation:

Olwen Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996); Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500–1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988); and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, transl. Lydia Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985). Given the overlapping boundaries of the medieval and early modern periods, it seems important to note as well the related work of influential medieval historians, including Barbara Hanawalt, *'Of Good and Ill Repute': Gender and Social Control in Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), and David Herlihy, *Women, Family and Society in Medieval Europe: Historical Essays, 1978–1991* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1995), and *Opera Muliebria: Women and Work in Medieval Europe* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990). Relevant collections of essays include Marilyn Migiel and Juliana Schiesari, eds., *Refiguring Woman: Perspectives on Gender and the Italian Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Margaret MacCurtain and Mary O'Dowd, eds., *Women in Early Modern Ireland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991); Jean R. Brink, Allison P. Coudert, and Maryanne C. Horowitz, eds., *The Politics of Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Kirksville, Miss.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1989); Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard, eds., *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 2nd edn (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987); Barbara Hanawalt, ed., *Women and Work in Pre-Industrial Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy Vickers, eds., *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Mary Beth Rose, ed., *Women in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Literary and Historical Perspectives* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986); Mary Beth Prior, ed., *Women in English Society, 1500–1800* (London: Methuen, 1985); and Lindsey Charles and Lorna Duffin, eds, *Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England* (London: Croom Helm, 1985). For informative discussions of gender in art history, see Geraldine A. Johnson, *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), and Christa Grossinger, *Picturing Women in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).

7. Valerie Fildes, ed., *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England* (London: Routledge, 1990).
8. Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, 231–51, provide an illuminating analysis of a variety of records concerning early modern women's friendships, ranging from social alliances to passionate love.
9. For more detailed historical analysis of midwives, see Hilary Marland, ed., *The Art of Midwifery: Early Modern Midwives in Europe* (London: Routledge, 1993), and Jean Donnison, *Midwives and Medical Men* (New York: Schocken Books, 1977), as well as the more specialized references to midwifery practices in David Gentilcore, *Healers and Healing in Early Modern Italy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), and in David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death: Ritual, Religion and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). For historical analysis of wet nurses, see Valerie Fildes, *Wet Nursing: A History from Antiquity to the Present* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), and *Breasts, Bottles, and Babies: A History of Infant Feeding* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986), as well as George Sussman, *Selling Mother's Milk: The Wet-Nursing Business in France, 1715–1914* (Urabana: University

of Illinois Press, 1982). For more comprehensive discussion of childbirth itself, see Jacques Gelis, *History of Childbirth: Fertility, Pregnancy and Birth in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991). See also Wiesner, "The female life-cycle," in *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 41–81, and Mendelson and Crawford, "Maternity," in *Women in Early Modern England*, 148–64.

10. General studies of mothers' advice books include Valerie Wayne, "Advice for women from mothers and patriarchs," in *Women and Literature in Britain 1500–1700*, ed. Helen Wilcox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 56–79; Betty S. Travitsky, "The New Mother of the English Renaissance: Her Writings on Motherhood," in *The Lost Tradition: Mothers and Daughters in Literature*, ed. Cathy N. Davidson and E. M. Broner (New York: Ungar, 1980), 33–43, and Elaine Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 266–71.
11. Of particular value for an understanding of gendered learning is Merry Wiesner's in-depth consideration of the obstacles and opportunities for women's education, "Literacy and learning," in *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 117–45. See also: Fletcher, "Educating Girls," in *Gender, Sex, and Subordination*, 364–75; Hilda L. Smith, "Humanist education and the Renaissance concept of woman," 9–29, and Jacqueline Pearson, "Women reading, reading women," 80–99, in *Women and Literature in Britain*, ed. Wilcox. More general studies of early modern educational offerings and practices include Barbara Hanawalt, "Child-rearing, Training, and Education," in *Growing Up in Medieval London: The Experience of Childhood in History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 69–89; Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning 1300–1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); R. A. Houston, *Literacy in Early Modern England: Culture and Education 1500–1800* (London: Longman, 1988); Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986); and Warren Wooden, *Children's Literature of the English Renaissance* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986).
12. Recent studies of witches include Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts, eds., *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-Century Representations* (London: Routledge, 1996); Anne Llewellyn Barstow, *Witchcraze: A New History of the European Witch Hunts* (London: HarperCollins, 1995); Deborah Willis, *Malevolent Nurture: Witch-Hunting and Maternal Power in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); and Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, eds., *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centers and Peripheries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). Earlier studies that linked witches with female healers and midwives, including Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, *Witches, Midwives and Nurses: A History of Women Healers* (New York: Feminist Press, 1973), and Thomas Rogers Forbes, *The Midwife and the Witch* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), have been challenged by more recent historical studies, from Merry Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 230–35, to David Harley, "Historians as demonologists: the myth of the midwife-witch," *Social History of Medicine*, 3 (1990), 1–26. Nevertheless, Wiesner does point out that "though midwives were not more likely to be accused than other women, the older women who hired themselves out temporarily as lying-in maids were" (230).
13. For a brief introduction to these issues, see Naomi J. Miller, "Breast" and "Uterus,"

in *Feminist Literary Theory: A Dictionary*, ed. Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace (New York: Garland, 1997). For more detailed analysis, see Jane Silverman Van Buren, *The Modernist Madonna: Semiotics of the Maternal Metaphor* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990); Marcia Ian, *Remembering the Phallic Mother: Psychoanalysis, Modernism, and the Fetish* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); Luce Irigaray, *je, tu, nous: Toward a Culture of Difference*, trans. Alison Martin (New York: Routledge, 1993); Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994); and Alice Adams, *Reproducing the Womb: Images of Childbirth in Science, Feminist Theory, and Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994). Studies that focus on the early modern period include Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), esp. Chapters 4 and 5, and David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, eds., *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

14. Wide-ranging studies of the breast include Marilyn Yalom, *A History of the Breast* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), and Fildes, *Breasts, Bottles, and Babies* (1986).
15. See Wiesner, "The female life-cycle," in *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, esp. 44–6; Crawford and Mendelson, "Menstruation," "Parturition," and "Lactation," in *Women in Early Modern England*, 21–9; and Audrey Eccles, *Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Tudor and Stuart England* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1982), 52.
16. Anne Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988), 194–9.
17. For analyses of these tensions, see Valerie Fildes, *Breasts, Bottles, and Babies* and *Wet Nursing*, as well as Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "Blood Parents and Milk Parents: Wet Nursing in Florence, 1300–1530," in *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, 132–64.
18. For more detailed analysis, see Mendelson and Crawford, "Menstruation," in *Women in Early Modern England*, 21–6, and Ilza Veith, *Hysteria: The History of a Disease* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 10, 13.
19. For a useful summary of Platonic and Aristotelian conceptions, see Robert A. Erickson, *Mother Midnight: Birth, Sex, and Fate in Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (New York: AMS Press, 1986), 15–16.
20. *The Complete Midwife's Practice Enlarg'd* (London, 1569), cited in Eccles, *Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, 29. See also Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Not of Woman Born: Representation of Caesarean Birth in Medieval and Renaissance Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), and Fildes, ed., *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England*, esp. Patricia Crawford, "The construction and experience of maternity in seventeenth-century England," 3–38, Linda A. Pollock, "The experience of pregnancy in early modern society," 39–67, and Adrian Wilson, "The ceremony of childbirth and its interpretation," 68–107.
21. Structures and practices of early modern families within different classes and cultures are covered by Herlihy, *Women, Family and Society in Medieval Europe* (1995); Alan Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction 1300–1840* (London: Blackwell, 1986); Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (1985); Ralph A. Houlbrooke, *The English Family, 1450–1700* (London: Longman, 1984); and Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Tuscans*

and Their Families: A Study of the Florentine Catasto of 1427 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983). Several anthologies of early modern writings in England provide a wealth of references to this topic, including Joan Larsen Klein, ed., *Daughters, Wives, and Widows: Writings by Men about Women and Marriage in England, 1500–1640* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Houlbrooke, ed., *English Family Life, 1576–1716: An Anthology from the Diaries* (London: Blackwell, 1988); and Suzanne W. Hull, ed., *Women According to Men: The World of Tudor-Stuart Women* (Walnut Creek, CA.: Altamira Press, 1996) and *Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for Women, 1475–1640* (San Marino, CA.: Huntington Library, 1982).

22. Jacques Guillemeau, *Childe-birth, or, The Happy Deliverie of Women* and *The Nursing of Children* (London, 1612).
23. Elizabeth Clinton, *The Countess of Lincolnes Nurserie* (Oxford, 1622).
24. Dorothy Leigh, *The Mother's Blessing* (London, 1616); excerpted *Daughters, Wives, and Widows: Writings by Men about Women and Marriage in England, 1500–1640*, ed. Joan Larsen Klein (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 293–4.
25. Leigh, *Mother's Blessing*: this selection alone excerpted in Linda Pollock, *A Lasting Relationship: Parents and Children over Three Centuries* (London: Fourth Estate, 1987), 174.
26. Leigh, *Mother's Blessing*, in Klein, 292, 295.
27. *A pitiless Mother* (London, 1616); excerpted in *Half-Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540–1640*, ed. Katherine Usher Henderson and Barbara F. McManus (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 363.
28. *A pitiless Mother*, in Henderson and McManus, 364.
29. The situation of working women has received considerable attention in recent years, beginning with the influential work of Alice Clark in *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1919, rpt. 1982), and continuing with a range of more recent studies, including: P. J. Goldberg, *Women, Work, and Life Cycle in a Medieval Economy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); David Herlihy, *Opera Muliebria: Women and Work in Medieval Europe* (1990); Merry Wiesner, *Working Women in Renaissance Germany* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1986), as well as her more recent chapter on "Women's economic role," in *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 82–114; Martha Howell, *Women, Production and Patriarchy in Late Medieval Cities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); and Barbara Hanawalt, *The Ties That Bound: Peasant Families in Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986). Valuable collections of essays on this topic include: Daryl M. Hafter, ed., *European Women and Preindustrial Craft* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995); Barbara Hanawalt, ed., *Women and Work in Preindustrial Europe* (1986); and Lindsey Charles and Lorna Duffin, eds., *Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England* (1985). A widespread study of early modern women and class issues is offered by Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (1988), while more focused attention to the upper classes can be found in Joel T. Rosenthal, *Patriarchy and Families of Privilege in Fifteenth-Century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).
30. See, for example, Louis Haas, *The Renaissance Man and His Children: Childbirth and Early Childhood in Florence, 1300–1600* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1998); Barbara Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London: The Experience of*