

Mothers Economic Rights Reading List

NOW-NJ MER Task Force Action Kit

Contemporary Motherhood and Society

The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued by Ann Crittenden, 2001. Economics journalist Crittenden details how prevailing practices and existing policies undermine the economic well-being of mothers. This is the literary cornerstone of the mothering movement. Essential reading.

If You've Raised Kids, You Can Manage Anything (Leadership Begins At Home) by Ann Crittenden, 2004. Follow-up to POM, Crittenden describes the parenting skills that are transferable to the workplace and the lessons of leadership that can be learned from raising children.

Unbending Gender: Why Families and Work Conflict and What To Do About It by Joan Williams, 2000. Williams, a legal scholar, explores how and why typical workplace practices and cultural attitudes interfere with balancing paid work and family care.

The Invisible Heart: Economics and Family Values by Nancy Folbre, 2001. Economist Folbre describes the importance of family care in economic terms and envisions a free market that places equal social value on the production of material wealth and caregiving.

Care and Equality: Inventing a New Family Politics by Mona Harrington, 2000. Harrington uses examples of political process and public policy from the Clinton administration as a framework to examine how and why care and caregiving should be placed at the forefront of American political culture.

Taxing Women by Edward J. McCaffery. Legal scholar McCaffrey identifies a gender bias in the American tax system and details how it impacts women's lives at all levels of the economic scale.

Toward A New Psychology of Women by Jean Baker Miller, PhD, 1986 (second edition). This classic of progressive women's psychology addresses the social and cultural influences on women's experience of identity conflict in their paid work and caregiving roles.

Flux: Women on Sex, Work, Love, Kids, and Life in a Half-Changed World by Peggy Orenstein, 2001. Orenstein offers insight into the lives of women who have grown up with an unprecedented sense of possibilities yet battling traditional expectations. Interviews with hundreds of women show how women navigate the opportunities and constraints of the personal and the professional lives and come up with unique models for a fulfilling life.

The Two-Income Trap: Why Middle-Class Mothers and Fathers Are Going Broke by Elizabeth Warren, Amelia Warren Tyagi, 2003.

When Mothers Work: Loving Our Children Without Sacrificing Ourselves by Joan K. Peters, 1997.

Women and their Journey into Motherhood

Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution by Adrienne Rich, 1986. Written with a stimulating combination of poetic rhythm, scholarly precision, feminist perspective, and personal reflection, **Of Woman Born** is both an engrossing read and an affirmative, potentially life-changing examination of what it means to be of woman born.

Mother Outlaws: Theories and Practice of Empowered Mothering edited by Andrea O'Reilly, 2004. An anthology of academic writings on a spectrum of progressive mothers issues. This collection has five sections: Feminist Mothering, Lesbian Mothering, African American Mothering, Mothers and Daughters, Mothers and Sons. See also other ARM journals, "Mothering , Law, Politics and Public Policy" and "Becoming A Mother".

A Potent Spell: Mother Love and the Power of Fear by Janna Malamud Smith, 2003. Using references that include classic literature, historic sources, recent academic research and personal interviews, the author demonstrates a strong link between cultural ideologies that limit women's social and political power and the manipulation of mothers' sense of emotional attachment to their children. Smith, a psychologist, accurately and eloquently describes the invisible, mental work that places a constant burden of responsibility on contemporary mothers.

Fruitful: A Real Mother in the Modern World by Ann Roiphe, 1999. Roiphe writes in a highly personal and evocative style about her experience of being a mother, wife, and feminist.

The Complete Single Mother: Reassuring Answers to Your Most Challenging Concerns by Andrea Engber and Leah Klungness. Written by the founder and director of the National Organization of Single Mothers, this comprehensive guide explains what nearly thirteen million American single mothers need to know to overcome the challenges of daily life with dignity, wisdom, and courage.

Love Works Like This: Moving from One Kind of Life to Another by Lauren Slater, 2002. This pregnancy journal offers a strikingly honest portrait of one woman's ambivalence to the approach of motherhood. Slater copes with mental illness, mood-altering medication, and the upheaval of her marriage and identity as she struggles to find meaning in motherhood while honoring her personal ambitions and limitations.

Misconceptions: Truth, Lies and the Unexpected on the Journey to Motherhood by Naomi Wolf, 2001. Based on Wolf's frustrating experience with prenatal care and a difficult childbirth, the author condemns the standards of contemporary obstetrical practice and proposes reforms. While Wolf ties the demeaning treatment women receive

during pregnancy and childbirth to the larger social and economic problems that impact mothers, the book is best read as an account of one woman's journey into motherhood.

The Mask of Motherhood: How Becoming a Mother Changes Our Lives and Why We Never Talk about It by Susan Maushart, 2000. Maushart investigates the personal, psychological and practical conflicts women commonly experience when they enter the realm of motherhood.

Reinventing the Family: the Emerging Story of Lesbian and Gay Parents by Laura Benkov. When people frame the nuclear family as morally superior, they focus on the shape of families (how many parents? of what gender combination?) rather than on the quality of relationships both within and beyond the family. At the same time, idealizing the traditional family obscures the violence and gender inequity often hidden behind closed doors.

The Mother Dance: How Children Change Your Life by Harriet Lerner, PhD, 1998. Lerner, a psychologist, offers a supportive and practical perspective on the life-altering nature of motherhood and practical advice on coping with transitions throughout the course of active motherhood.

Mother Shock: Loving Every (Other) Minute of It by Andrea J. Buchanan, 2003. Buchanan details the unimaginably difficult and unbelievably rewarding process of becoming a mother. Spanning the first three years of her daughter's life, these amusing ruminations on mothering will strike a chord with every new mother.

The Queer Parent's Primer by Stephanie Brill. This is not a book that tells you how to get pregnant or walks you through the many steps of the adoption process. Brill, a midwife and lesbian mother, has written a thoughtful and articulate book about how to be a great parent after you've started your family. She discusses language (to hyphenate or not to hyphenate? What names do our children call us?); coming out as a family and relating to others in your family; navigating the childcare and school systems; developing your family's spirituality, and more.

Dispatches from a Not-So-Perfect Life Dispatches from a Not-So-Perfect Life : Or How I Learned to Love the House, the Man, the Child by Faulkner Fox, 2004. In *Dispatches from a Not-So-Perfect Life*, her provocative, brutally honest, and often hilarious memoir of motherhood, Faulkner explores the causes of her unhappiness, as well as the societal and cultural forces that American mothers have to contend with.

Maternal Desire: On Children, Love, and the Inner Life Maternal Desire: On Children, Love, and the Inner Life by Daphne de Marneffe, 2004. De Marneffe brings her experiences and perspectives as a psychologist, feminist, and mother to this absorbing look at the enormous personal pleasure that women derive from mothering.

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Historical Perspectives on American Family Life

The Mommy Myth **The Mommy Myth : The Idealization of Motherhood and How It Has Undermined Women** by Susan Douglas and Meredith Michaels, 2004. The authors examine the past 30 years of television, radio, movies, magazines and advertising to show that the bar has been increasingly raised for "the standards of good motherhood while singling out and condemning those we were supposed to see as dreadful mothers".

Brave New Families: Studies of Domestic Upheaval in late Twentieth Century America by Judith Stacey, 2000 (second edition). Professor of sociology and women's studies, Stacey examines the family structure of two families living in California's Silicon Valley. She documents the different paths that both families take to create their unique familial structure, which is far removed from the much heralded traditional model.

Domestic Revolutions: A Social History of American Family Life by Steven Mintz and Susan Kellogg, 1988. The American family has undergone a series of transformations from its socially sanctified role as the center of society to today's private, independent unit. The authors explain just how the family has adapted and endured these changes.

Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era by Elaine Tyler May, 1988. May, a noted historian, uncovers startling connections between the Cold War and family life and challenges assumptions of the "happy days" of the 1950s.

In the Name of the Family: Rethinking Family Values in a Postmodern Age by Judith Stacey, 1996. In a collection of essays, Judith Stacey illustrates the many different types of family structures that are far from being examples of failure or despair, but models of ingenuity and flexibility.

The Feminine Mystique by Betty Friedan, 1963. Sections of Friedan's classic work on gender and equality remain highly relevant to the experience of women and mothers in a half-changed world.

The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap by Stephanie Coontz, 2000 (second edition). Coontz, a work-family researcher, dispels cultural myths about the norms of "ideal" family life.

No Turning Back. The History of Feminism and the Future of Women by Estelle Friedman, 2002. Stanford professor Estelle Friedman argues in her book that the women's movement has become a global movement which has never been more vibrant. She analyzes what feminism means and how it took root in the United States at the end of the eighteenth century and continue on to today.

Work Life Balance

Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America by Barbara Ehrenreich, 2001. Journalist Ehrenreich reports on her first-hand experience of how difficult it is to make ends meet for full-time workers in low-wage jobs.

Take Back Your Time: Fighting Overwork and Time Poverty in America by John De Graaf (Editor), 2003. This book shows how wide-ranging the impacts of time famine in our society are, and what ordinary citizens can do to turn things around and win a more balanced life for themselves and their children.

The End of Work as We Know It by Nadine Mockler, 2002. A comprehensive guide to using flexible staffing at the professional level to attract the best and the brightest talent and create the most productive workforce possible.

The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure by Juliet Schor, 1992. The author, an economist, presents an excellent discussion of the evolution of the American culture of work and consumerism. Even though our society has doubled its productivity in the past 50 years, we do not have more leisure in our lives. Schor makes compelling arguments for restructuring our work to spend more time on living.

The Second Shift by Arlie Russell Hochschild, 1989. Hochschild examines the dual-earner family and its impact on the traditional family structure.

The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work by Arlie Russell Hochschild, 1997. Hochschild exposes the time bind of American families: parents putting in more hours at work to support their families, which creates more stress at home and a time crunch in both places. In the last chapters, Hochschild proposes that parents unite to liberate themselves from the tyranny of work.

What's Happening to Home: Balancing Work, Life and Refuge in the Information Age by Maggie Jackson, 2002. Not a book exhorting families to return to another time, this is instead a provocative look at work and family that challenges us to examine our lives and find our own solutions. Jackson, a workplace columnist for the Associated Press, shows how work is creeping into the home and asks whether we need a home and what it provides us. From there, she examines what we can do to create a haven. She believes that everyone (woman, man, or child) can contribute to the creation of a home.

When Work Doesn't Work Anymore: Women, Work, and Identity by Elizabeth Perle McKenna, 1998. McKenna offers interviews and commentary that address personal and professional conflicts experienced by women trying to balance a rewarding personal or family life with a successful career.

The Mom Economy: The Mothers' Guide to Getting Family-Friendly Work by Elizabeth Wilcox. Wilcox tells moms how to negotiate terms of employment that suit their lifestyles and allow them to meet their kid's needs. This practical volume helps moms get what they need most from the workplace-and find the work that works.

The Naked Truth : A Working Woman's Manifesto on Business and What Really Matters by Margaret A. Heffernan, 2004. It's a collection of stories from women about their experience in the workplace with Ms Heffernan tying it all together along the way. She talks a lot about motherhood (she has two kids herself) and about our desire to bring our whole selves to work and how workplaces don't work for women and mothers. At the same time, it's a very uplifting book about the paths many women are forging for themselves and how women are changing the workplace in a way that's better for workplaces too.

Magazines for Mothers

Brain, Child Magazine: The Magazine for Thinking Mothers (www.brainchildmag.com) This award-winning quarterly is devoted to exploring the experience of contemporary motherhood from varied and original perspectives. High quality features include commentary, essays, reviews and fiction.

Working Mother Magazine: (<http://www.workingmother.com>) The monthly magazine for women seeking work/family balance.

Mothering Magazine: (<http://www.mothering.com>) The Natural Family Living Magazine - Birthplace of the Natural Family Lifestyle. Mothering celebrates the experience of parenthood as worthy of one's best efforts and fosters awareness of the immense importance and value of parenthood and family life in the development of the full human potential.

Websites for Mothers

Mothers' Movement Online: (<http://www.mothersmovement.org>) "Resource for mothers and others who think about social change." Website with latest news and opinion on the mothers movement, women's rights and feminism. A wealth of information for the feminist mother with an online community active on site.

Contact: Judith Stadtman Tucker

E-mail: editor@mothersmovement.org

The Philosophical Mother: (<http://philosophicalmother.typepad.com>) "a website for intelligent thoughtful, creative, feminist, and open-minded mothers."

Hipmama: (<http://www.hipmama.com>) Hip Mama is a magazine bursting with political commentary and ribald tales from the front lines of motherhood. Edited and published by Ariel Gore (print) and Bee Lavender (online), the zine started as a forum for young mothers, single parents, and marginalized voices, but has grown to represent progressive families of all varieties. Hip Mama maintains the editorial vision that qualified it for the title "conservative America's worst nightmare."

Women's Enews: (<http://womenenews.com>) "Women's eNews is the definitive source of substantive news--unavailable anywhere else--covering issues of particular concern to women and providing women's perspectives on public policy. It enhances women's ability to define their own lives and to participate fully in every sector of human endeavor."

Association for Research on Mothering (ARM): (<http://www.yorku.ca/crm/>) The first international (academic/journal) feminist organization devoted specifically to the topic of mothering-motherhood. Groundbreaking research.

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Recommended Articles Available Online

"A Mothers Place is in the Women's Movement" by Elizabeth Bauchner, Women's Enews, 03/10/04.

"Motherhood and it's Discontents: Why Mothers Need a Social Movement of Their Own" by Judith Stadtman Tucker, The Mothers Movement Online, March 2003.

"New Mothers Test California Leave Law" by Rebecca Vesely, Women's Enews, 08/10/04.

"The Mommy Wars: The Case for a Cease Fire" by Kim Pletcha, Parent:Wise Austin Magazine, May 2004.

"Professionals Who Are Mothers Take a Hit (Again)" by Emily Bazelon, 03/10/04

"The Opt-Out Revolution" by Lisa Belkin, NY Times Magazine, 10/26/03.

"There They Go Again" by Katha Pollitt, The Nation, 11/7/03

"Gathering The Mothers" by Peggy O'Mara, Mothering Magazine, Issue #119.

(Note: Many of the books cited were compiled by the Mothers and More organization. Find out more about their great work for mothers' economic rights at www.mothersandmore.org.)

For more information regarding NOW-NJ Mothers' Economic Rights Task Force, Chapter MER TF development, or to receive additional action kits, please contact Laurie Pettine at mertf_info@nownj.org or 973-214-2643.