

MOTHERING IN THE THIRD WAVE

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Mothering in the Third Wave is a collection of essays that reflects the tensions and confusions of feminist motherhood in the modern age and the hope for a renewed mother ethic.

The collection strives to destroy the demeaning stereotypes of motherhood that so often predominate in both feminist and mainstream cultures. *Mothering in the Third Wave* is not a candy-coated celebration of maternity. The essayists are aware of the difficulties involved in being both a mother and a person in the modern world; they do not present pat solutions to the problems of feminist motherhood. Rather than serving as a manual for motherhood reform, this book is a snapshot of the problems mothers face in reconciling their various roles and ideals.

The essays reflect the experiences of many subgroups within feminism: lesbian mothers trying to justify their motherhood to both heterosexual and homosexual culture; minority mothers seeking to reconcile their mothering traditions with their struggles against white patriarchy; privileged mothers wrestling to integrate their maternity with their feminist beliefs.

A weakness of the collection is that almost all of the contributors are professional academics. Missing are the narratives of working-class mothers caught between the demands of child-rearing and the dehumanizing realities of the labour force, or immigrant nannies who left their own children behind in the hopes of securing Western privileges for them in the future.

The highlight of the collection is S. Alease Ferguson and Toni C. King's "Going Down for the Third Time," a tough yet hopeful examination of the effects of gangster hip hop culture on black motherhood. In this essay we see third-wave mothering at its best: reaching backwards to reclaim the wisdom of our foremothers, looking with courage at the problems of the present and ultimately moving forward towards motherhood renewed.