1-1-2024

An Autoethnographic Dialogue with Motherhood Literature

Maya Autret
Montclair State University, mayanation@gmail.com

Brad van Eeden-Moorefield
Montclair State University, vaneedenmobr@montclair.edu

An Autoethnographic Dialogue with Motherhood Literature

Abstract

This autoethnography represents the first author's journey as a mother and doctoral student researching mothers' experiences in contending with the demands of work and family. Reading across different pockets of empirical motherhood literature (work-family conflict, contemporary motherhood, maternal gatekeeping, and intensive motherhood) I became troubled by how women's realities were reflected. Pushing back against traditional methods that endorse separating my researcher identity from my maternal self, I draw on autoethnographic method to dialogue with this literature. This approach empowers me to speak out as a novice scholar uncomfortable with aspects of literature, while also navigating training in the use of traditional methods that often provide a directive to separate academic and personal identities. Importantly, doing so enables me to identify powerful insights about limitations in the literature, and how specific pockets of research can adversely affect the broader motherhood literature.

Keywords

Creative Commons License

An Autoethnographic Dialogue with Motherhood Literature

Maya Autret and Brad van Eeden-Moorefield
Montclair State University, New Jersey, USA

This autoethnography represents the first author's journey as a mother and doctoral student researching mothers' experiences in contending with the demands of work and family. Reading across different pockets of empirical motherhood literature (work-family conflict, contemporary motherhood, maternal gatekeeping, and intensive motherhood) I became troubled by how women's realities were reflected. Pushing back against traditional methods that endorse separating my researcher identity from my maternal self, I draw on autoethnographic method to dialogue with this literature. This approach empowers me to speak out as a novice scholar uncomfortable with aspects of literature, while also navigating training in the use of traditional methods that often provide a directive to separate academic and personal identities. Importantly, doing so enables me to identify powerful insights about limitations in the literature, and how specific pockets of research can adversely affect the broader motherhood literature.

Keywords: autoethnography, contemporary motherhood, intensive motherhood, maternal gatekeeping, work-family conflict

Introduction

Some scholars have long acknowledged that bias exists in social science scholarship, whereas others have been reticent to engage in such dialogue (Ortlipp, 2008). Historically, the culture of social science scholarship has been dominated by positivist approaches to knowledge creation that suggest science is objective and our use of certain quantitative methods help control the influence of potential bias. Accordingly, anything that falls outside of this normative positivistic culture is relegated to non-science. Furthermore, scholars are expected to remain detached observers and their lived experience separated (Paris, 2011) from their research. Aside from debates about methods used, such discourse also fails to acknowledge that bias can come in many forms – in the topics we choose to research, literature we select, participants we speak with, how or if we speak directly with them, as well as how we interpret their words or scores from various quantitative measures (Sharp & Weaver, 2015). Failing to recognize the many pathways with which bias can enter all research inhibits our ability to openly dialogue, critique and address such issues in the literature (Allen, 2000). Here, I aim to push back against positivist culture by drawing on autoethnographic method "to own" and make visible my biases and how they influence my reading and interpretation of the literature (Andersen & Glass-Coffin, 2016). Autoethnography is a qualitative method that seeks to affect major change in how we research by drawing on our personal experiences and feelings, speaking out more openly, and making our work more accessible (Holman Jones et al., 2016). Through this study I consider how my experiences as a mother informed my research while dialoguing openly with motherhood literature. My hope is that doing so demonstrates how being aware and reflexive with our biases and sharing them as part of the scientific process brings strength and rigor to the work we do as scholars.

My journey begins when, after years in the corporate world, I "opted out" of paid work (Stone, 2007) to stay home with my children. I felt burned out and depressed from juggling work and family demands. Eventually, I decided to pursue a Ph.D. to learn about how other mothers contend with such challenges, while caring for my three children who were approaching their middle school years at the time. Yet, from the earliest days of my doctoral program in the social sciences where my training focused first on traditional methods (i.e., methods situated in positivist and post-positivistic paradigms), I was cautioned not to allow personal experience or perspective to affect my research. Although I understood the reasoning, I was unsure how to separate my personal self from my research self. Nonetheless, I kept this concern centered. Later in the program, I took the qualitative sequence along with coursework in critical perspectives (i.e., intersectionality).

As I began my program, I started by engaging readings across the work-family conflict literature that offered many interesting and validating insights as to how other mothers experience work-family conflict (Craig & Mullan, 2011; Florian, 2018; Jolanki, 2015). At the same time, many studies seemed to oversimplify women's experiences (Smart, 2009). They lacked depth in terms of the kinds of issues I experienced, nor did I find them particularly useful in helping me understand how such situations arise in the first place. So, I expanded my search into other areas of motherhood literature.

Being in an applied program, the disconnect between theory, research, practice, and people's daily lives was discussed and problematized. My interactions with literature thrust me into this critical discourse. As I made my way from one pocket of literature to the next, I became increasingly troubled by how women's realities were reflected. Often, I felt uncomfortable (Lynch & Kuntz, 2019) with how women's words and actions were being interpreted and represented in the literature. I could not help thinking that there is so much more to our lives that is not being captured. For example, I constantly came across citations of Sharon Hays (1997) and scholars who built on her work (Johnston & Swanson, 2007). Their scholarship would render me an "intensive mother" who devotes significant time, energy, and resources to my children, and opts out of paid work to live up to an ideal of motherhood. This interpretation seemed limited. I had not wanted to give up my career to be a stay-at-home mother or live up to an ideal (Henderson et al., 2016). Nor did I want to miss out on my kids' childhood because I spent most of my waking hours at the office or commuting. I desperately wanted a balance of both, but the balance remained elusive (Stone, 2007). Thus, as I continued reading literature in search of understanding why women like me opt out, I became increasingly preoccupied with how mothers are studied.

However, I was unsure how to go about speaking out about what I was finding (Stanley, 2015), as it was my experience as a mother that made me question literature (Xu, 2022). My understanding of the positivist culture precluded projecting my maternal identity onto my readings. Moreover, as an older doctoral student in her 40s with a prior career in business who was new to academia and family science, it was important for me to remain humble in my learning. I kept wondering: "When have I learned 'enough' - and how will I know I've learned enough - to feel qualified and legitimate to push back on teachings that made me uncomfortable?"

As I was introduced and learned more about qualitative methodologies, and its more humanizing approach (Paris, 2011), I found autoethnography. Although there are many varieties of autoethnographic approaches, generally, it creates space for scholars to tap into their personal identities and lived experience (Holman Jones et al., 2016). These methods helped me identify how to move forward with my own research contributions, a process which I detail below. This study therefore uses the autoethnographic method to offer a critical reading of and dialogue with motherhood literature while drawing on my experience as a mother with the hopes of offering insights that may not be possible through traditional methods.

I draw on feminist theory to guide this work, which has long endorsed centering women's lived realities in family scholarship (DeVault, 1990). Indeed, Allen (2022) highlights reflexive autoethnographic work as feminist praxis to explore experiences, thoughts, and feelings in a way that pushes back against a cultural system that has historically discouraged such forms of scholarship with the hope that doing so will also support others in their own work. Hence, I also detail the process through which I explored research that felt personal to me while seeking new academic insights and contributions (Rutter et al., 2021; Stanley, 2015; Xu, 2022) in the hopes it helps others to do the same. Accordingly, this study is guided by the following research question: Drawing on autoethnographic methodology and feminist theory, what insights do I gain in dialoguing within and across different pockets of motherhood literature while also considering my lived experience as a mother and scholar?

The Conceptual Ambiguity of Motherhood

At the start of my Ph.D. journey, I struggled in navigating the wide expanse of motherhood literature as I sought to understand women's experiences in combining work and family that might be like mine. Here, I outline the many different lenses through which the maternal experience is studied (i.e., race, class), and the differing perspectives they offer on various facets (i.e., work, parenting). Further, I highlight motherhood as a dynamic social construct that is challenging to study, understand, and explain, and can therefore result in limitations in the literature.

Indeed, literature on motherhood is a vast field that covers many facets of maternal life (Kawash, 2011), including maternal identity (Lee et al., 2016) and gender ideology (Bulanda, 2004), to name just a few. Additionally, research continues to grow substantially to examine motherhood based on women's different social locations, including various life stages (Sheriff & Weatherall, 2009), race (Dow, 2016), economic class (Verduzco-Baker, 2017), and sexual orientation (Suter et al., 2015). Across decades of scholarship (Arendell, 2000), scholars have also advocated on behalf of mothers for challenges they face, such as the need for social policy and support (Blair-Loy et al., 2015) to address the additional burdens they carry in managing both paid work and family (Hochschild, 2012), as well as their health and well-being (Rizzo et al., 2013).

A recurring underlying theme of motherhood literature is the constant evolution of the concept of motherhood, such that it has come to be seen as a social construct (Hays, 1997; Loyal et al., 2017). Accordingly, the role of motherhood is somewhat ambiguous (Arendell, 2000), which can complicate and challenge our understanding of motherhood. For example, as middle-class mothers joined the paid workforce alongside fathers, women's historic role as primary caregiver has proliferated into multiple categories, including working mothers, stay-at-home mothers, and part-time mothers, which often entails both paid work and care work. In parallel, the importance of care as a societal norm and need – a way that communities of people relate to each other - has been further denigrated (Noddings, 1986), and care work increasingly commodified (Katz Rothman, 1989). Meanwhile, women of lower income (Seccombe, 1995) and Black women (Landry, 2000) have historically been a staple of the paid workforce but are often excluded from literature on work and family.

As a result of motherhood's shifting and ambiguous meaning, the concept of motherhood risks being vulnerable to assumptions and oversimplifications (Scharp & Thomas, 2017), as scholars attempt to streamline its complexity and scope. For example, scholarship often draws comparisons between employed and stay-at-home mothers (Johnston & Swanson, 2007) or Black and White mothers (Elliott et al., 2015). Doing so enables us to identify helpful differences between such groupings, but also ignores other facets of women's experiences regardless of class, race, or other attributes. Additionally, androcentric perspectives (Spade &

Willse, 2016), masculinist views which entail assumptions and bias, continue to prevail and affect how scholars approach and interpret the research (Autret et al., 2023). Consequently, certain facets pertaining to motherhood get overlooked. Often neglected topics include children's needs, partners' responsibility (Johnston & Swanson, 2007), maternal desire and affect, rewarding facets of motherhood (De Marneffe, 2019), and how women's experience (Tummala-Narra, 2009) and social context (Walls et al., 2016) might influence their mothering.

Thus, motherhood is an ever-evolving, ubiquitous topic that both encompasses and touches on many different aspects of life. It is simultaneously complex and prone to oversimplifications that can lead to monolithic perspectives and bias that limit our understanding of maternal experiences, behaviors, and motivations (Grabowska, 2011). Yet, gaining a deeper, more nuanced understanding of motherhood is critical to better comprehending women's societal roles (Arendell, 2000) and contributions (Hays, 1997).

Feminist Theory

Patriarchal norms remain deeply embedded in our world, such that we collectively internalize and adhere to them without realizing (Spade & Willse, 2016), thereby contributing to our own subjugation (Bordo, 1993). Feminism supports the practice of identifying, analyzing, and challenging the many ways in which such norms continue to prop up our existence (Oksala, 2011), research, and discourse (Pillow & Mayo, 2012). The Feminist Movement truly gained momentum when increasing numbers of women came together in consciousness-raising sessions. These gatherings entailed personal exchanges, questioning, provocation, and discomfort that ultimately led to a deeper understanding of their oppression, within the intersection of gender and beyond, such as race and class (hooks, 2015). In collectively becoming more aware of the structures that oppressed them, including the culture of a positivistic science, they were able to push back against them (Bartky, 1990).

Accordingly, MacKinnon (1983) asserts feminism is fundamentally not focused on structure or governance *per se*, but power. Men's ability to define our collective reality based on gendered notions has served as a means for wielding power over a structure that shapes our lives. Thus, a feminist approach to knowledge is about reclaiming power by enabling a space for women's perspectives, challenging masculinist dominance, and reframing our realities (Spade & Willse, 2016).

Within the academic setting, feminist theory calls for revisiting the very notion of knowledge and how it is derived (Campbell & Wasco, 2000). Sharp and Weaver (2015) suggest probing feelings of uncertainty and discomfort to improve one's perspective, accountability, and research. They encourage taking a more critical stance, even though doing so requires going against the grain of normative cultural discourse. Acker et al. (1991) add that applying feminist theory in social science is a means to "change the world as well as describe it" (p. 134) by examining everyday life while considering prevailing patriarchal norms. Further, they claim there is no objectivity (i.e., observers cannot be neutral), and that the research process should entail unoppressive and exploratory methods that yield knowledge women can use for liberation.

Indeed, feminist theory's cornerstone is its ability to bridle the messy space between the tangible everyday experiences of lived reality and abstract explorations of the intersections of power structures, with the aim of affecting real change (Gunnarson, 2011). Feminists have long endorsed the idea that the personal is political, which is also an important feature in autoethnography (Averett, 2009), to better make connections between personal and societal concerns (Ellis et al., 2010). Scholarship has historically tended to separate the two and avoid the emotive facets of life (Weaver-Hightower, 2012). Forcing such masculinist scripts limits our understanding of women's lived experience (Smart, 2009). Feminist theory counters such

androcentric perspectives (Hesse-Biber, 2012) by endorsing women's self-expression and emotive parlance (Allen, 2023). Better aligning our research processes with human experience enables us to learn more deeply, including that which has been taken for granted (DeVault, 1990). With these considerations, feminist theory guides this study and encourages me to speak out more openly (DeVault, 1990) about my personal experiences in pursuit of more activist aims in my research (Allen, 2023, Averett, 2009). However, I do so with the caveat that when speaking out, I represent my individual perspective as a White, cisgender, middle-class, able-bodied married woman with three children, and the many privileges my identity entails.

Methodology

A key concern about how to contribute to the literature was how to reconcile my maternal and academic self (Tamas, 2015). I was put off by the dominance of the traditional scientific method and the limitations of its lens when studying human experiences (DeVault, 2010). Qualitative method increasingly appealed to me for its more humanizing perspective and recognition of the complexity of social experiences (Paris, 2011), affect, and cognitive processes (Palkovitz et al., 2014). It also affords opportunities to analyze and identify patterns while tapping personal knowledge to ask relevant questions and deepen understanding of our findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Doing so creates more space to challenge prevailing discourse, to question, converse with it, and offer alternative perspectives and direction (Luttrell, 2010).

Eventually, I came across autoethnography, a form of qualitative method that enables researchers to draw on their own personal experience as data (Xu, 2022), center it, and reflexively examine the intersection of culture and self (Chang, 2008). Beyond yielding a final end-product – such as a finding - autoethnographic also facilitates a process (Ellis et al., 2010). A dynamic iterative loop for drawing connections between the individual, their community, and an ever-shifting social context (Allen-Collinson, 2016) rather than their separation from it (Andersen & Glass-Coffin, 2016). As such, autoethnography offers a means for academic mothers to express ideas rather than hide their maternal selves in their research (Shoemaker, 2016). Moreover, autoethnography "invites others to become involved with a life, engaged with it, and responsible for doing something." (Bochner, 2016, p. 54). "Doing" can entail simply gaining a deeper understanding that can change one's perceptions and actions. It can also lead to pushing back against the limitations of scientific research and fostering a greater appreciation for personal narrative, emotionality, and social identity, which can result in scholarship that is generally more accessible and inclusive (Holman Jones et al., 2016). Hence, autoethnography also responds to feminists' critiques of traditional methods' (DeVault, 2010) detached views that suppress, ignore, and exclude individuals oppressed due to class, gender (Tamas, 2015), and other circumstances. Moreover, the kind of reflexive work that autoethnography entails is a form of feminist practice that enables us to "resee" our world and identify opportunities for sustainable change (Allen, 2023) toward a future that is better aligned with our realities and values.

Following discussions with my advisor, we concluded autoethnographic method best aligns with my scholarly ethic (Richardson, 2006). He is my co-author for this study, in recognition of his contributions to guiding me through the Ph.D. journey I describe here, and in helping me bring this manuscript to fruition. As I immersed myself further in autoethnographic readings, I also discovered many inventive approaches to organizing stories and investigations. In considering how to structure my own, I kept returning to the many moments when I read the motherhood literature I curated in my quest to understand women with experiences like mine, and the powerful reactions I had to those readings. I had developed

a kind of relationship with the body of work and wanted my research to reflect that (Allen, 2023; Wall, 2008).

I also considered Maxwell's (2006) perspective about literature reviews being "an essential component of research rather than the foundation for research." (p. 31); literature reviews can serve as an important tool with which to construct new research, not just an understanding of the existing. As such, my readings, analysis, and reflections about the literature are crucial. Thus, conversing openly with the literature while drawing on my personal experience could potentially offer useful research outcomes. I therefore determined to structure my autoethnography as a dialogue with the literature, whereby I can speak to it directly, respond to it, validate it, reject some of its claims based on my lived experience, and perhaps even make claims of my own. In doing so, I can explicitly consider the culture of the literature and in which I experience it.

Considerations about Autoethnography

While autoethnography offers distinctive benefits, it also requires unique considerations to ensure sufficient rigor that results in quality, trustworthy findings (Wall, 2016). Particular attention should be paid to legitimacy, balancing insider and outsider perspectives, and ethics (Chang, 2008; Wall, 2016). Legitimacy with respect to autoethnography refers to the use of personal experience as data and analysis "for the purpose of" cultural understanding (Chang, 2008; Wall, 2016). Thus, throughout coding and analysis, I constantly sought to balance emotion and storytelling (Sparkes, 2016) with sufficient analysis of my experience and its tie to society (Chang, 2008; Wall, 2016) in relation to my research aims.

Concerning insider and outsider perspectives, theory and analysis enables me to maintain the right level of distance while supporting exploration of perspective (Wall, 2008), to prevent either insufficient or too much distance. As such, through reflexive practice and the process of writing memos, I constantly toggled between my academic and maternal roles (Tienari, 2019) while contemplating how my identities can offer opportunities, insights, and innovations for readers, and for the body of research more generally (Chang, 2008). My advisor also served as an outsider across the process, especially during analytic phases. Finally, in consideration of ethics, I was mindful of how those closest to me might be affected by this study's publication (Tullis, 2016). I therefore disclosed only what was necessary (Wall, 2016), carefully considering which stories to select and why they were important to include (Tullis, 2016), as well as how their accounts may differ from mine (Pelias, 2016). I also had my spouse read the final draft and incorporated all edits he requested concerning our family.

Article Selection

The articles included in this study are many of which I read from the start of my Ph.D. journey. Encouraged by my program to use PsychInfo, I primarily drew from this database that comprises disciplines of sociology, psychology, and family science. In our qualitative methodology courses, we often talked about our escapes down "research rabbit holes," where, we read far and wide to explore our research interests (Lynch & Kuntz, 2019) across different pockets of literature. Additionally, PsychInfo included a great deal of international scholarships from all parts of the world. I increasingly sought out such studies, which tended to utilize qualitative methods, ask more open questions of participants, and include particularly insightful quotes that reflect women's experiences more deeply (Baum & Nisan, 2017; Murray, 2015; Zhu, 2010).

After experimenting with keywords, I ended up reading articles from several different pockets of motherhood literature, including work-family conflict literature (Greenhaus et al., 2012), contemporary motherhood (Kawash, 2011), maternal gatekeeping (Puhlman & Pasley, 2013), and intensive mothering literature (Hays, 1997). These pockets of literature comprised of a wide range of topics and intersections in relation to motherhood, including sexual orientation (Suter et al., 2015), race (Dow, 2016), economic class (Verduzco-Baker, 2017), and social policy (Blair-Loy et al., 2015).

Data

Data I drew on for the study includes notes taken on the readings of motherhood literature (Chang, 2008) described above during my Ph.D. journey, totaling more than 200 peer-reviewed articles and books. These notes typically included a summary of each article/book, key findings, and reactions and critiques. They captured my understanding and impressions of the literature during my initial readings during the early stages of my program. In revisiting these notes for this study, I also developed an Excel spreadsheet in which I created a tab for each body of literature. I logged all articles read and coded my reactions to each on this spreadsheet (see Figure 1). Further, I drafted reflexive memos throughout analysis: one for each body of literature, and another memo to capture my thoughts on the cumulative bodies of literature reviewed, including the cultural discourses evident or implicit. These latter data aided me in reflexively documenting my dialogue with the literature (Ortlipp, 2008).

Figure 1
*Screenshot of Excel Spreadsheet Used During Analysis Process*

	Author	Year	Topic	Type	Focus	Special Focus	Validat	Taught	Frustra	Notes
2	Cordero-Coma & Esping-Anderse	2018	Gender socialization	Quant	Parent's housework affects kids' gei	Parent-child influence			x	Seemed convoluted. Doesn't disc
3	Florian (2018)	2018	Work-family conflict	Quant	Measures differences in employmei	Race among women		x		
4	Blair-Loy, Hochschild, Pughc, Wil	2016	Social policy	Discourse	Assess lack of progress	Lack of social support	x			Very reflective of my experience
5	Halpern & Perry-Jenkins (2016)	2016	Gender socialization	Quant	Parent's influence on kids' ideology			x		
6	Jolanki (2015)	2015	Work-family conflict	Qual	How caretaker role is perceived/exe	Elder care	x	x		Taught about a more egalitarian
7	Masterson & Hoobler (2015)	2015	Work-family conflict	Theoretical	Expands typology model of dual ear	Impact of flexibility of workplace	x			States what seems obvious to me
8	Rollero, Fedi, De Piccoli (2015)	2015	Work-family conflict	Quant	Measures how gender and work status affect satisfaction		x	x		
9	Greenhaus, Peng & Allen (2012)	2012	Work-family conflict	Quant	Measures differences in hours worked women/men		x		x	Doesn't get at why such phenomi
10	Bulanda (2011)	2011	Gender + Ideology	Qual	Couple power relations	Later life	x			
11	Craig & Mullan (2011)	2011	Labor division	Quant	Measuring/comparing parent time	Cross-country comparisons + policy	x	x	x	Even when there are better polici
12	Roest, Dubas, Gerris (2010)	2010	Gender socialization	Quant	Measures differences in how wome	Focus on leisure	x	x		I had known this on some level, b
13	Nomaguchi (2009)	2009	Work-family conflict	Quant	Measures time/conflicted feelings between women/men		x			
14	Fagan & Press (2008)	2008	Work-family conflict	Quant	Measure impact of husband's stress on women				x	Convoluted. Shouldn't be so hard
15	Heponiemi et al. (2008)	2008	Work-family conflict	Quant	Assesses how agency on the job affects WF conflict			x		
16	Kuperberg & Stone (2008)	2008	Media	Qual	Media portrayal of women who ope	Compares to past portrayals of 195	x			Highlights overlooked realities
17	Adams, Coltrane, & Parke, 2007	2007	Gender + Ideology	Quant	Measuring time	Race, traditional ideology	x			
18	Duxbury, Lyons, &Higgins (2007)	2007	Gender + Ideology	Theoretical	Modelling: how ideology affects bel	Call for better social policy	x			
19	Stone (2007).	2007	Work-family conflict	Qual	Elaborated examination of why wor	Opting out	x			Book. Expanded explanation. Res
20	Craig (2006)	2006	Labor division	Quant	Measuring/comparing parent time on care/domestic work		x		x	Doesn't discuss the dynamic well,
21	Voydanoff (2005)	2005	Work-family conflict	Theoretical	Model explaining interplay of work, family, resources, demands, boundaries				x	Too convoluted. Had to read mult

Coding and Analysis

Although I had never seen examples of autoethnographies that drew on traditional qualitative coding processes, I felt it was necessary for my study. I wanted to ensure sufficient structure and rigor in my engagement with literature while also reflexively considering my reactions to the data (Wall, 2016). My coding and analysis processes (see Figure 2) therefore centered around methodically and iteratively rereading my notes on all the literature read

throughout my Ph.D. journey. After coding an initial sample and identifying the reactions that occurred most frequently, I refined and narrowed the list of codes to three main categories that best reflected the most common reactions: (1) "Validated," that is, the article described similar experiences, observations, or reflections to my own; (2) "Taught Social Process," that is, it offered new insights about social processes; (3) "Frustrated," that is, I found findings concerning or vexing. These categories were not mutually exclusive, and often coexisted for a given article.

Figure 2
Autoethnographic Analysis Process
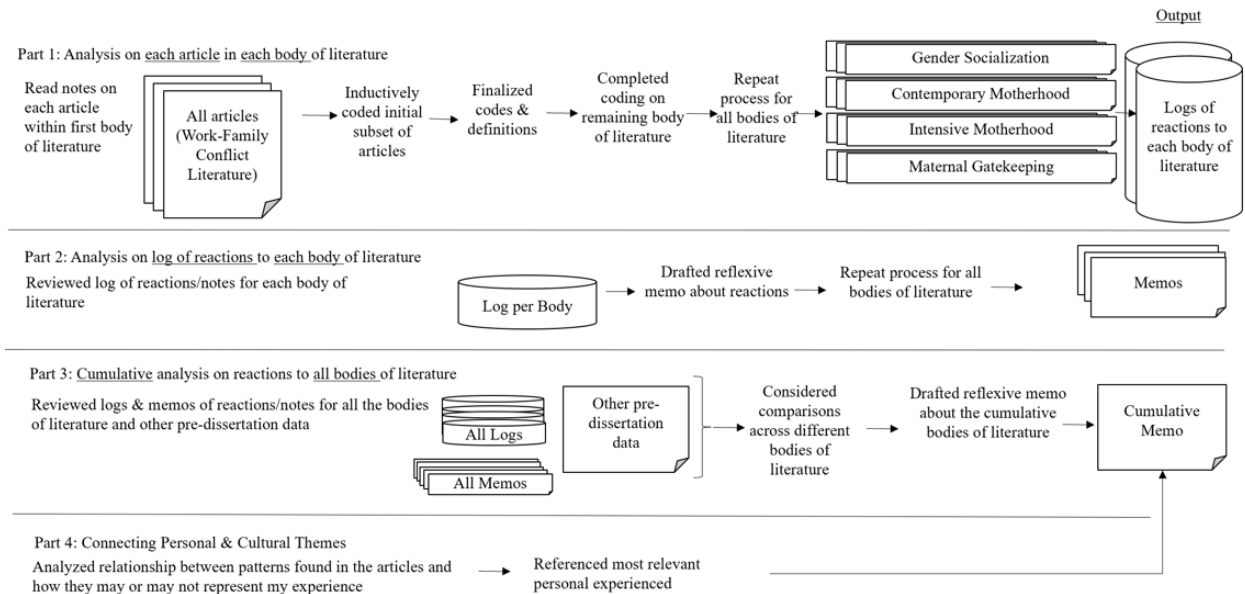
I began analysis with NVivo coding (Miles et al., 2020), reviewing my notes on "each article individually" in each body of literature, coding my reaction(s), and logging additional reaction comments. I repeated the process systematically across all articles within each body of literature in the same chronology in which I had read it from the start of my Ph.D. program: work-family conflict, contemporary motherhood, intensive mothering, maternal gatekeeping. Subsequently, I sought to draw comparisons of my reactions more cumulatively (Glaser, 1965). So, I analyzed "cumulatively" my coded reactions and notes on "each body of literature" (as opposed to reading my notes on each individual article as I had done during the first round). Next, I analyzed cumulatively my coded reactions and notes "across all the different bodies of literature combined." At each step, I logged thoughts and insights which helped me see that certain pockets of literature elicited different reactions compared to others. Finally, I considered my own experiences in relation to my reactions to the literature throughout the process, constantly zooming in and out in my role as mother and researcher, to identify important comparisons and themes. Again, throughout this process, my advisor acted as an outsider as we considered coding and analysis.

Limitations

Given the unique design of this study and the distinct concerns about autoethnographic method discussed above, it is important to acknowledge and address limitations of this study. A key limitation is that it focuses on my unique, individual experience, though I make every effort to be rigorous in my scholarship and ensure transparency into my thinking process and experiences (Wall, 2016). Notably, my dialogue with the literature reflects my White, middle-

class, able-bodied, cisgender, nuclear family identity. That said, the literature with which I dialogue here is primarily focused on the same demographic. Nonetheless, my hope is that findings in relation to my own experiences (Hemmings, 2011) help reveal limitations in how others like me are studied, as well as potential issues to be considered with respect to others who are less represented and who contend with different social constraints. Additionally, scholars increasingly reject criticisms surrounding autoethnography as overly self-centered and insufficiently serious and rigorous social science, asserting instead that autoethnography enables "critical analysis and aims to formulate theoretical understandings, with the aim of creating understanding beyond the data itself" (Stanley, 2015, p. 5). In other words, scholars can reframe their experience and see it from added perspectives (Rutter et al., 2021). Another limitation is that the articles in this sample and the concentrations of literature they represent make up only a small percentage of the much larger swathe of motherhood literature. Nonetheless, my hope is that at the very least this study prompts similar explorations that enable others to identify novel and diverse critical perspectives in the same or other bodies of literature related to motherhood.

Findings: Dialogue with Each Body of Literature

Here, I offer a high-level overview of my coded reactions in rereading my notes on every individual article for each body of literature. Details on the number of articles, their attributes, and my reactions to them are provided in Table 1.

Table 1
Details on Number of Articles, Attributes, and Reactions to Each Body of Literature

	Work-Family Conflict	Contemporary Motherhood	Maternal Gatekeeping	Intensive Motherhood
Sample	(n=30)	(n=59)	(n=18)	(n=38)
Published	2000-2020	From 1996 on	Mostly 2010-20	From 1997 on
Common Method	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative
Reactions: Validation Insights Frustration	Most (n=20) Some (n=12) Few (n=8)	Most (n=34) Most (n=51) Few (n=5)	Few (n=4) Few (n=3) Most (n=16)	Some (n=20) Some (n=23) Some (n=18)

Examples of findings for each reaction in each pocket of literature can be found in Table 2.

Table 2
Examples of Findings for Each Reaction in Each Pocket of Literature

Pocket of Literature	**Validation**	**Insights Offered**	**Frustration**
Work-Family Conflict Sample (n=30)	(n=20/30) Women take on more domestic & care work regardless of	(n=12/30) Women's employment patterns differed	(n=8/30) Focused on measuring and comparing various

Articles published in two recent decades. Mostly quantitative Reactions: most validated my experience (n=20) some offered new insights (n=12) few (n=8) frustrated.	employment status (Jolanki, 2015; Masterson & Hoobler, 2015). Mothers were challenged in reconciling work/home demands (Blair-Loy, 2001) and adapted work arrangements based on family life (Becker & Moen, 1999). Employed women and men draw on different coping strategies to contend with work-family conflict (Schnittger & Bird, 1990), which can affect their marriage. High-achieving women opt out of paid work because they felt they had no choice. After trying to scale back, they felt mommy-tracked and restricted and work culture felt less positive over time. Husbands supported wives but did not help enough (Stone, 2007).	based on race (Florian, 2018), There were significant differences in how women perceived their caretaker role when caring for elders (Jolanki, 2015) Social support affects women of different generational cohorts and race differently when pursuing careers (Blair-Loy & DeHart, 2003). Craig and Mullan's (2011) cross-country comparison of data on time spent by women and men showed that even when more family-friendly policies prevail, women still carry more of the burden at home and when men help, they do the more "fun" tasks, leaving women with the routine tasks.	facets of work-family conflict or focused on typologies, for example, categorizing couples based on traditional or not, whether they outsourced domestic work, etc., (Masterson & Hoobler, 2015). Lacked depth about lived experienced and represented a static idea of families' realities, missing the ongoing fluidity and dynamism of real life. Excluded certain categories of employment such as part-time work, volunteer work, or time spent on higher learning, all of which have taken up a substantial chunk of my time. Hence, they offered a limited view of more dynamic life processes and experiences.

Pocket of Literature	**Validation**	**Insights Offered**	**Frustration**
Contemporary Motherhood Sample (n=59) Published from 1996 on Mostly qualitative Most validated (n=34) Most offered new insights (n=51)	(n=34/59) How maternal identity evolves as children get older (Lee et al., 2016). How the ethic of care affects mothers as consumers (Burningham et al., 2014).	(n=51/59) How queer couples negotiate marriage, divorce, and heteronormativity (Allen & Goldberg, 2020) and their maternal identities (Tasker & Delvoye, 2015). How notions of good mothering compare	(n=5/59) Scholars' attempts to measure highly expansive and complex topics and realities, such as Bornstein et al.'s (2020) quantitative study on how different forms of

Few frustrated (n=5).	How maternal identity changes women's perspective on work and family (Pas et al., 2011).	across countries (Aono & Kashiwagi, 2011; O'Brien et al., 2020). How social policy influences ideology and how women internalize it (Basnyat & Dutta, 2012).	parenting knowledge across countries can affect child development. Puhlman and Pasley's (2013) proposed theoretical model of gatekeeping highlighting how mothers discourage or prevent fathers from participating in care work.

Pocket of Literature	Validation	Insights Offered	Frustration
Maternal Gatekeeping Sample (n=18) Published in recent decade. Mostly quantitative Few validated (n=4) Few taught new insights (n=3) Most frustrated (n=16).	(n=4/18) Cannon et al. (2008) assert gatekeeping can be bidirectional; paternal behavior can affect gatekeeping. Puhlman and Pasley (2013, 2017) find gatekeeping behavior is not binary, shifts over time, and manifests in different models that tend to be both bidirectional, and more role-based than gender-based.	(n=3/18) Stevenson et al.'s (2013) study explaining that mothers' work issues may not affect the child-parent relationship, but mothers' marital issues do have an impact.	(n=16/18) Allen and Hawking (1999) find women inhibit participation of fathers in parenting. Pedersen and Kilzer (2014) find that women who experience work-family conflict are more likely to gatekeep because it makes them feel more powerful at home.

Pocket of Literature	Validation	Insights Offered	Frustration
Intensive Motherhood Sample (n=38) Mostly qualitative Reactions more mixed and overlapped compared to the rest of the	(n=20/38) Guerrina (2001) calls for a more collectivistic approach to child-rearing. Kaptijn et al. (2010) find positive effects of grandparents	(n=23/38) Austin and Carpenter (2008) discuss how mothers of children with ADHD resist ideals and ostracism.	(n=18/38) Meeussen and Van Laar's (2018) and Rizzo et al.'s (2013) articles on how striving to be perfect mothers leads women to curb work ambitions to focus

| literature, with many of them – Validating (n=20) Offering insights (n=23) Frustrating (n=18). | helping working parents. | Sayer at al.'s (2004) article highlights how parenting practices have changed over time considering shifting social context. | more on motherhood, which consequently results in stress. Theodorou and Spyrou's (2013) study discusses how pregnant mothers overwhelm themselves with concerns about medical risks. |

Overall, I found a recurring pattern across my reactions to the different bodies of literature. Across all bodies of literature except Maternal Gatekeeping, my reactions were more commonly "validated" (described similar experiences) and "taught social processes (offered new insights). Conversely, most of the Maternal Gatekeeping articles "frustrated," (concerning findings), whereas this was the case among only a few of the Work Family or Contemporary Motherhood articles, and about half of the Intensive Mothering articles.

Next, I delve into each body of literature separately. My findings are presented as a dialogue with each body of literature. While this may be a novel approach to presenting findings, the intent is to offer transparency into the dynamic process of drawing connections between personal experiences, my reflections, and the literature itself (Wall, 2016), as well as new ways to understand the literature and how we can interact with it. I have attempted to do so in the following ways: (1) when describing personal experiences and feelings, I include citations from authors who have written about similar findings and sentiments; (2) I share personal anecdotes from my life alongside explicit reactions to and critical reflections on certain readings; and (3) quotes from my notes taken during initial readings of the articles at the start of my Ph.D. journey, as well as from my reflexive memos during analysis.

Work-Family Conflict

I found most articles in Work-Family Conflict to be validating. They often reflected (Blair-Loy, 2001) the challenges I experienced in reconciling the demands of work and home. Stone's (2007) book about why non-traditionalist high-achieving women opt out of paid resonated with me the most. Like many of the women in Stone's (2007) study, I felt I did not truly have a choice but to quit my job. Since my employer refused me a flexible work arrangement after my son was born, I quit and a year later gave birth to my twin daughters. After three years at home, I rejoined the paid workforce full-time at a job I enjoyed located a five-minute walk from home. I was home by 5pm to enjoy plenty of time with the children, though I was often exhausted. When a few years later we moved to the suburbs, my commute was at least an hour each way and a new management team had taken over at work. Although I was promoted, I discovered that I still earned tens of thousands of dollars less than the male peer I replaced, worked longer hours in an increasingly hostile environment, and had less time at home with my family. As Hochschild (2012) had found, I also continually carried an ever-increasingly greater share of domestic and care work compared to my husband. Additionally, as in Duxbury et al.'s (2007) study, conversations with my husband on the topic often ended in conflict, but as a child of divorce I increasingly avoided such situations.

Soon after, I found a new job with more responsibility but, like many women (Becker & Moen, 1999), I took a pay cut so I could work from home two days per week. Having more time with my children was a boon for me as they entered elementary school. I could spend more time with them and occasionally participate in activities at their school, which helped me get to know the teachers and other parents. I felt a sense of community for the first time in many years, having moved around so much in the past. However, since I was not physically in the office full-time, I was excluded from many management meetings. Meanwhile, many of my all-male colleagues who were often out in the field and not physically at the office were included in the meetings. Over time, like many who came before me (Crosby et al., 2004), I realized my career trajectory would remain limited there and when a colleague approached me with an opportunity at a higher managerial level while working primarily from home, I again switched jobs. Within a year I resigned due to the toxic environment and demands to be physically present at far-off locations at odd hours. Like many of the participants in Stone's (2007) study, I decided to take a hiatus, unsure if, when, or what job to pursue in the future. My husband was supportive, having seen the toll the past years had taken on me and how our children benefited from my increased presence.

Throughout my readings of work-family conflict literature, I also discovered many new insights, primarily relating to women of different backgrounds, such as race (Florian, 2018), age (Jolanki, 2015), differing levels of social support over time (Blair-Loy & DeHart, 2003) and geographies (Craig & Mullan, 2011). Yet, these findings only whetted my appetite to understand the reason for these dynamics and complexities so we could learn how to improve our circumstances. For example, in my readings I noted, "Authors do not account for differences when there is one child or more than one child. The addition of a child, or two, can completely change the domestic dynamic." This certainly was the case in my house. Additionally, the nature of the caregiving tasks changes substantially as the children grow; my kids need me in different ways as they grow older, but not necessarily less. Yet, most studies focus on single snapshots in time and on younger children.

I also felt frustration, as many articles seemed overly focused on measuring and comparing various facets of work-family conflict or focused on typologies (e.g., categorizing couples based on traditional or not, or whether they outsourced domestic work, etc.; Masterson & Hoobler, 2015). They lacked depth about lived experience and represented a static idea of families' realities, missing the ongoing fluidity and dynamism of a real life, such as my own. Articles also often excluded certain categories of work such as part-time employment, volunteer work, or time spent on higher learning, all of which have taken up substantial chunks of my time. Hence, they offered a limited view of more dynamic life processes and experiences.

Contemporary Motherhood

Finding myself with more questions than answers in the work-family conflict literature, I went on to read more broadly about contemporary motherhood. Here, too, I found validation on a variety of findings, such as how our ethic of care affects us as consumers (Burningham et al., 2014), how our maternal identity evolves as our children grow older (Lee et al., 2016), and changes our perspective on work and family (Pas et al., 2011). Many of the articles also offered insights, particularly about women who live different realities than I do but which I still found relatable. Examples include articles about how queer couples negotiate marriage, divorce, and heteronormativity (Allen & Goldberg, 2020) or how notions of good mothering compare across countries (Aono & Kashiwagi, 2011; O'Brien et al., 2020).

Only a few articles in this category frustrated me and here again scholars attempted to measure highly expansive and complex topics and realities. For example, Bornstein et al. (2020) quantitatively studied how different forms of parenting knowledge across countries can

affect child development. How could one distill such complexity into a few measures? Another remarkable article was Puhlman and Pasley's (2013) proposal for a more advanced theoretical model of gatekeeping, a practice where mothers discourage or prevent fathers from participating in care work. I noted at the time: "Lots to critique here: it looks at power relations in a calculated and theoretical way as opposed to an approach that accounts for the more complex and relational realities of marriage and parenting. Also, no discussion of context, work/life/culture. Also, why is it all one-sided negative on the mother?" As my first introduction to maternal gatekeeping literature, I was surprised by the authors' assertions but would soon discover that Puhlman and Pasley (2013) are trying to course-correct some of the more harmful claims made by earlier studies. This article prompted me to explore more of this literature.

Maternal Gatekeeping

I found few articles on Maternal Gatekeeping that validated my experience, though I could relate or agree to some of their claims. For example, Cannon et al. (2008) assert that gatekeeping can be bidirectional and paternal behavior can affect gatekeeping. Puhlman and Pasley (2013, 2017) find gatekeeping behavior is not binary, shifts over time, and manifests in different models that tend to be both bidirectional, and more role-based than gender-based. I noted: "This article reflects that this dynamic is more complex than other gatekeeping articles from the past." I also discovered helpful insights, such as Stevenson et al.'s (2013) study explaining that mothers' work issues may not affect the child-parent relationship, but mothers' marital issues do have an impact.

However, most articles in this pocket of literature frustrated as they seemed biased and full of assumptions, although their methods appeared sound and rigorous. For example, Allen and Hawkins (1999), an oft-cited article, explains gatekeeping as "a collection of beliefs and behaviors that ultimately inhibit a collaborative effort between men and women in family work by limiting men's opportunities for learning and growing through caring for home and children" (p. 200). While most of the article focuses on identifying women's flawed behaviors in gatekeeping the reason for such behaviors remains ambiguous, that is, it is unclear whether fathers' low involvement is the reason for gatekeeping or vice versa. If the issue is that fathers are not doing their share, why harp solely on mothers' behaviors? And is it not an essentialist perspective to expect women to know and do most of the work and expect less of the father? I noted: "Women have learned to become doctors, lawyers, astronauts, stock traders, etc. And they did so despite men's reticence. Surely men can learn how to change diapers satisfactorily. Why must we be so much more understanding of men, their challenges, and sensitivities, and then take the blame when they fall short?"

In another study, Pedersen and Kilzer (2014) find that women who experience work-family conflict are more likely to gatekeep because it makes them feel more powerful at home. Here, like in most of these articles, the focus is on the mother's shortcomings, rarely on the father's responsibility. Meanwhile, Schoppe-Sullivan et al. (2008) emphasize that maternal encouragement affects paternal behavior. Here, I note:

> So, I work a full day, just like my husband. Except I must work harder to prove myself, for less pay. Then, when coming home to overwhelming care and domestic work, I should take time to encourage him to help? If I don't, it's my fault he doesn't do his share? This all makes me feel power-*less*, not power-*ful*. And then, if I complain again, we fight. I'm too tired to fight.

In reflecting truthfully with myself on this literature, I recall times when my husband complained that my standards were too high. Indeed, I wanted the diapers fastened properly so that pee and poop wouldn't leak, so I wouldn't have to bathe the kid again and do extra laundry. I also recall many weekends when I sat with our children in the living room, playing, reading, watching movies together, but felt my husband's detachment. I was never sure if I had done something to push him away or if he simply wanted to be elsewhere, often escaping into the garden for hours. Did we have different needs, desires, or a sense of responsibility with respect to the children? Were these differences distancing us from each other?

Now that our children are teenagers, in retrospect we discovered that we have both been overwhelmed in adapting to the constant demands and changes in our lives, our children, and work. We could not understand or articulate these challenges clearly at the time. Yet, reading this body of work while considering my experiences, I feel misrepresented, as though my reality is reflected in a distorted mirror. Certainly, some mothers may gatekeep to some degree at some point. Yet, the complexity and unfairness of many of our realities is omitted and misunderstood in this literature.

Intensive Motherhood

In my readings on Intensive Motherhood literature, my reactions were more mixed than other pockets of literature. Of those I found validating, I agreed with Guerrina's (2001) calls for a more collectivistic approach to child-rearing. I also concurred with Kaptijn et al.'s (2010) findings on the positive effects of grandparents helping working parents. I had experienced this firsthand when my mother lived with us for several years though she too was employed full-time. Meanwhile, articles such as Sayer at al. (2004) offered me new insights, highlighting how parenting practices have changed over time in an ever-shifting social context.

Articles that frustrated me most included Meeussen and Van Laar's (2018) and Rizzo et al.'s (2013) articles on how striving to be perfect mothers leads women to curb work ambitions to focus more on motherhood, which consequently results in stress. I kept thinking how my reduced work ambitions and stress levels had everything to do with inflexibility and feeling undermined at work, and my partner's reticence to help; it had little to do with chasing any ideals.

To sum up, my readings across these pockets of literature offered important scholarly findings and perspectives about women's experiences. However, it also reflected biases, assumptions, limitations, and distortions. Furthermore, I do not doubt that many women are influenced by intensive mothering ideology or that they gatekeep - to some degree. But the way it is currently studied represents a monolithic perspective of a hegemonic influence and ignores women's social contexts, motivations, and agency (Autret et al., 2023).

Dialogue Across the Bodies of Literature

While reading and reflecting on the various pockets of motherhood literature, COVID-19 raged. I found myself surrounded by my kids and husband day and night, suddenly saddled with homeschooling, preparing additional meals, cleaning up more, worrying more about their physical and mental health. Like many (Guy & Arthur, 2020), my reality became more intensive. But I kept wondering:

> Am I an intensive mother but too consumed by ideology to know it? Or is this reality intense and what else can I do but respond to the call of duty? We're living in crazy times. My husband can't shirk Zoom meetings to teach the kids

> or prepare lunch. He's our "breadwinner." I can wake up earlier or stay up later
> to work on my research.

The fact that I was immersed in literature disparaging women's dedication to their children only furthered my ambivalence about whether I was an intensive mother and what that meant. All I knew was that I cared about my family, not just my work, and why was that an issue?

I also became increasingly disheartened with academia. It seemed so much time, energy, and resources expended on research resulted in a seemingly distorted perspective of women's lives. However, returning to the literature through this autoethnographic study in a reflexive, systematic, methodical fashion has helped me resee the literature differently (Allen, 2023; Chang, 2008). Rather than perceive it as one body of motherhood scholarship with useful, validating findings, and bias and distortion, I was able to see each pocket of literature on its own and compare them to each other. For example, analyzing my notes on work-family conflict literature, I was surprised to find that so many of the articles validated and enriched with new insights about social processes. Prior to rereading my notes, I had inadvertently conflated this earlier body of literature with my most recent readings on intensive mothering and gatekeeping. As a result, work-family conflict literature had become tainted by the problematic perspectives in the intensive mothering and gatekeeping literature. That said, my earlier frustration with work-family conflict literature still holds true. While these studies reflect our society, they lack sufficient depth and understanding of women's complex realities (Pillow & Mayo, 2012).

I had similarly forgotten how much of the contemporary motherhood literature focuses on maternal identity, which offers helpful insights into women's experiences. Yet, my identity as a mother is deeply intertwined with my identity as a woman, employee, wife, daughter, citizen, etc., (Tamas, 2016). These other identities are often ignored in motherhood literature, as are relational dynamics with others (Palkovitz et al., 2014). As such, there remain many more facets to uncover of women's realities to better understand their identities (Laney et al., 2014).

My retrospective look at gatekeeping literature also prompted an important realization. When I first read the literature, I was taken aback by the level of accusation against women for men's lack of involvement. When I returned to the literature, I still found myself shaking my head with dismay as I reread my notes, but I also realized that more recent articles are expanding the gatekeeping model to reflect the greater complexity inherent in couples sharing parenting responsibility (Puhlman & Pasley, 2017). Additionally, recent articles seem to focus less on laying all blame on women and taking a somewhat less biased perspective (Cannon et al., 2008).

As for intensive motherhood, my initial impressions still hold true. Although it focuses on the important topic of maternal ideological influence, women's experiences are examined in a limited way. Scholars focus on how women mother intensively but rarely why and do not sufficiently address women's agency (Autret et al., 2023). As such, the scholarship reflects a narrow perspective of women's actions, motivations, and intentions in their mothering. Further, at times it seems as though scholars are more focused on illustrating the intensive mothering phenomenon rather than understanding women's experiences. To learn about women's lived realities, we must avoid questions loaded with assumptions and instead ask them to explain in their own words about their social context, past experiences, desires, motivations, and certainly their agency (Kawash, 2011; Palkovitz et al., 2014). Doing so can help us better understand their complex, ever-changing, multi-faceted, relational realities (Smart, 2009),

Discussion

In response to calls for new approaches to researching motherhood (Arendell, 2000), I have drawn on autoethnographic method to openly dialogue with motherhood literature. No other qualitative method I know of would have allowed me to speak out in such a way. Doing so has enabled me to tap into my personal experience and critically examine issues and identify powerful insights both within and across different pockets of motherhood literature. Specifically, I have found that some pockets, namely gatekeeping and intensive mothering, entail more problematic perspectives than others and can affect one's view of motherhood literature. Additionally, through this process I have come to better appreciate even the literature with the most problematic perspectives, finding that some scholars are beginning to identify and contend with bias, assumptions, and masculinist perspectives (Puhlman & Pasley, 2017).

As such, a broader implication of these findings is that our positionality matters, how we study motherhood matters, and to echo Moore and Abetz, (2016), "how we communicate about motherhood matters." (p. 60). In other words, every article published has the potential to make a significant impact, not only on the narrow focus of its research question, but also on larger bodies of literature. In my case, a single article on gatekeeping (Puhlman & Pasley, 2013) impressed and diverted me in my research focus to a pocket of motherhood literature that holds very different assumptions from other areas of scholarship I had read (Hemmings, 2011). And it tainted my prior readings on motherhood. However, in my case, my experience as a mother led me to resist harmful claims of gatekeeping literature. Other scholars who have not experienced parenthood, or who have experienced it differently from me, may be more likely to accept, endorse, and even build on those same problematic assumptions, and evolve the literature while maintaining such perspectives. This concern is heightened in the context of neoliberal doctoral education which often focuses on producing higher quantities of manuscripts perpetuating traditional research methods, while discouraging novel contributions that take more critical and innovative approaches (Lynch & Kuntz, 2019).

Accordingly, as feminist theorists have advocated (Kawash, 2011), drawing on methods that allow for greater transparency and reflexivity with respect to our positionality can support us in achieving a better understanding of women's lived realities (Fonow & Cook, 1991). Of course, even with the best intentions, our work may inadvertently entail assumptions, biases, and oversights (Sharp & Weaver, 2015). Still, while we cannot help but reflect, read, and write from within our individual positionality we can be more mindful and honest about how it can impact our research (Averett, 2009). As found in this study, "leaning into" our subjectivity (Lynch & Kuntz, 2019) can significantly aid our scholarship if appropriate academic rigor is applied (Wall, 2016). Mining and analyzing personal experience while applying academic rigor can yield added dimension to our research. Certainly, it is crucial to respect distance and boundary between research and personal experience (Wall, 2016). However, when balancing the two in a way that respects such boundaries, we can gain powerful insights that traditional methods do not allow (Kawash, 2011).

For example, although I am interested in conducting a similar analysis on fatherhood literature, I am not sure whether I could identify potential issues as effectively as I did on motherhood literature. Or as effectively as a father! Tapping into my personal experience as a mother may not afford the same level of insight when studying fatherhood as it had with motherhood (Weaver-Hightower, 2012). Moreover, I would relish the opportunity to read an autoethnographic dialogue with fatherhood literature by a scholar who is a father. Additionally, it would also be useful to undertake a similar analysis of various parenting literature, such as helicopter or mindful parenting, to identify if similar assumptions and biases undergo those areas of scholarship. Particularly since they fall under the umbrella of "parenting," which does not connote gender in the same way as "mothering."

As such, I offer examples of guiding questions that have supported me as I navigated the tensions of academic and personal applications to research throughout my doctoral journey. When finding oneself with relatable personal experiences, feelings, or reactions to literature and wondering how to add one's own contributions, consider:

1. What are my open, honest reaction(s) to this article. Be mindful that there may be multiple, varying, even conflicting reactions.
2. Where do these reactions stem from? What experience(s)/personal anecdote does the article and/or reaction recall? How does my experience compare with key points made in the article? Is it similar? Does it contrast? How? Why?
3. As I read more articles in the same pocket of literature, what trend do I find across these various articles? Do reactions vary or conflict? How so?
4. What is my critique of the article/literature? Articulate it as a general statement.
5. How can I frame my statements/questions in ways that critique the article/literature from a less personal/centrist perspective? That is, how can my question/critique be applicable to other researchers who do not share my experiences or perspective?
6. How can I frame my questions in ways that can add important contributions to the literature? For example, by filling a gap, highlighting a point that is unclear, calling out an assumption or bias, offering an alternative perspective, etc.

To sum up, this study offers unique contributions to both autoethnographic and motherhood literature. To my knowledge, no other study has drawn on autoethnographic methods to offer a personal, open dialogue with several pockets of motherhood literature. Most literature reviews in relation to motherhood have focused on comparing and contrasting pockets of literature to each other or across time (Arendell, 2000) based on theoretical differences (Lavee & Dollahite, 1991) or findings on topical issues, such as work and family (Blair-Loy et al., 2015). Here, I have drawn connections between the deeply personal – my experience as a mother - and several pockets of motherhood literature. Further, while many scholars have spoken out about limitations within motherhood literature (Grabowska, 2011), they often do so as part of an introduction or conclusion to a study focused on a specific aim (Johnston & Swanson, 2003), as opposed to a systematic critique of shortcomings with research practice, as I've outlined here.

Additionally, detailing the method developed here to dialogue with the literature relative to my own experience may serve as a reference for other scholars seeking to question and speak out about their own discomfort (Lynch & Kuntz, 2019) with a body of literature. My hope is that more scholars can speak more openly in their research while applying appropriate rigor (Wall, 2016) to enable a better understanding of lived realities, which can result in improved practices and policies that support mothers and families (Spade & Willse, 2016) in the important context of care work. Finally, employing an exploratory method in which I leaned into and centered my own bias has enabled valuable insights (Allen, 2000) into motherhood literature, the inherent bias that persists within, and how such problematic perspectives can limit our understanding of women's lives (Grabowska, 2011). I hope scholars continue exploring these limitations in motherhood literature and push back against traditional methods to further deepen their understanding of mothers' experiences.

References

Acker, J., Barry, K., & Esseveld, J. (1991). Objectivity and truth: Problems in doing feminist research. *Women's Studies International Forum, 6*(4), 423-435. https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-5395(83)90035-3

Allen, K. R. (2000). A conscious and inclusive family studies. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 62*, 4-17. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00004.x

Allen, K. R. (2023). Feminist theory, method, and praxis: Toward a critical consciousness for family and close relationship scholars. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 40*(3), 899-936. https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075211065779

Allen, K. R., & Goldberg, A. E. (2020). Lesbian women disrupting gendered, heteronormative discourses of motherhood, marriage, and divorce, *Journal of Lesbian Studies, 24*(1), 12-24. https://doi.org/10.1080/10894160.2019.1615356

Allen, S. M., & Hawkins, A. J. (1999). Maternal gatekeeping: Mothers' beliefs and behaviors that inhibit father involvement in family work. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 61*(1), 199-212. https://doi.org/10.2307/353894

Allen-Collinson, J. (2016). Autoethnography as the engagement of self/other, self/culture, self/politics, self/futures. In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 281-299). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315427812

Andersen, L., & Glass-Coffin, B. (2016). I learn by going: Autoethnographic modes of inquiry. (2016). In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 57-83). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315427812

Aono, A., & Kashiwagi, K. (2011). Myth or fact: Conceptions and realities of Japanese women/mothers. *Feminism & Psychology, 21*(4), 516-521. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353511422927

Arendell, T. (2000). Conceiving and investigating motherhood: The decade's scholarship. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 62*(4), 1192-1207. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1566731

Austin, H., & Carpenter, L. (2008). Troubled, troublesome, troubling mothersThe dilemma of difference in women's personal motherhood narratives. *Narrative Inquiry, 18*(2), 378–392. https://doi.org/10.1075/ni.18.2.10aus

Autret, M., van Eeden-Moorefield, B., Lee, S., & Khaw, L. (2023). Examining ideology and agency within intensive motherhood literature: A content analysis. *Feminism & Psychology, 0*(0). https://doi.org/10.1177/09593535231184719

Averett, P. (2009). The search for Wonder Woman: An autoethnography of feminist identity. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work, 24*(4), 360-368. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1996.tb00324.x

Bartky, S. L. (1990). *Femininity and domination: Studies in the phenomenology of oppression.* Routledge.

Basnyat, I., & Dutta, M. J. (2012). Reframing motherhood through the culture-centered approach: Articulations of agency among young Nepalese women. Health *Communication, 27,* 273-283. https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2011.585444

Baum, N., & Nisan, R. (2017). Mothering babies: Issues and experiences of women from a traditional, collectivist society in a modern, individualistic one. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 48*(7), 1119-1130. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022117713154

Becker, P. E., & Moen, P. (1999). Scaling back: Dual-earner couples' work-family strategies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 61,* 995–1007. https://doi.org/10.2307/354019

Blair-Loy, M., & DeHart, G. (2003). Family and career trajectories among African American female attorneys. *Journal of Family Issues, 24*(7). https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X03255455

Blair-Loy, M. (2001). Cultural constructions of family schemas: The case of women finance executives. *Gender and Society, 15,* 687–709. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124301015005004

Blair-Loy, M., Hochschild, A., Pughc, A. J., Williams, J. C., & Hartmann, H. (2015). Stability and transformation in gender, work, and family: Insights from *the second shift* for the next quarter century. *Community, Work & Family, 18*(4), 435-454. https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2015.1080664

Bochner, A. P. (2016). Putting meaning into motion: Autoethnography's existential calling. (2016). In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 50-56). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315427812

Bordo, S. (1993). Feminism, Foucault, and the politics of the body. In C. Ramazanoglu (Ed.), *Up against Foucault: Explorations of some tensions between Foucault and feminism* (p. 179). Routledge.

Bornstein, M. H., Yu, J., & Putnick, D. L. (2020). Mothers' parenting knowledge and its sources in five societies: Specificity in and across Argentina, Belgium, Italy, South Korea, and the United States. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 44*(2), 135-145. https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025419861440

Bulanda, R. E. (2004). Paternal involvement with children: The influence of gender ideologies. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 66,* 40–45. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0022-2455.2004.00003.x

Burningham, K., Venn, S., Christie, I., Jackson, T., & Gatersleben, B. (2014). New motherhood: A moment of change in everyday shopping practices? *Young Consumers, 15*(3), 211-226. https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/YC-11-2013-00411/full/html

Campbell, R., & Wasco, S. M. (2000). Feminist approaches to social science: Epistemological and methodological tenets. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 28*(6), 773-791. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005159716099

Cannon, E. A., Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J., Mangelsdorf, S. C., Brown, G. L., & Sokolowski, M. S. (2008). Parent characteristics as antecedents of maternal gatekeeping and fathering behavior. *Family Process, 47*(4), 501-519. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1545-5300.2008.00268.x

Chang, H. (2008). *Autoethnography as method.* Left Coast Press.

Craig, L., & Mullan, K. (2011). How mothers and fathers share childcare: A cross national time-use comparison. *American Sociology Review, 76*(6), 834-861. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122411427673

Crosby, F. J., Williams, J. C., & Biernat, M. (2004). The maternal wall. *Journal of Social Issues, 60*(4), 675—682. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0022-4537.2004.00379.x

De Marneffe, D. (2019). *Maternal desire: On children, love, and the inner life.* Scribner.

DeVault, M. (1990). Talking and listening from women's standpoint: Feminist strategies for interviewing and analysis. *Social Problems, 37*(1), 96-116. https://doi.org/10.2307/800797

DeVault, M. L. (2010). From the seminar room. In W. Luttrell (Ed.), *Qualitative educational research: Readings in reflexive methodology and transformative practice* (pp. 146-158). Routledge.

Dow, D. M. (2016). Integrated motherhood: Beyond hegemonic ideologies of motherhood. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 78,* 180-196. https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12264

Duxbury, L., Lyons, S., & Higgins, C. (2007). Dual-income families in the new millennium: Reconceptualizing family type. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, (9)*4, 472-486. https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422307305488

Elliott, S., Powell, R., & Brenton, J. (2015). Being a good mom: Low-income, Black single

mothers negotiate intensive mothering. *Journal of Family Issues, 36*(3), 351–370. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X13490279

Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2010). Autoethnography: An overview. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 12*(1). https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-12.1.1589

Florian, S. (2018). Motherhood and employment among Whites, Hispanics, and Blacks: A life course approach. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 80*, 134-149. https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12448

Fonow, M. M., & Cook, J. (Eds.). (1991). *Beyond methodology: Feminist scholarship as lived experience*. Indiana University Press.

Glaser, B. G. (1965). The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis. *Social Problems, 12*(4), 436-445. https://doi.org/10.2307/798843

Grabowska, M. (2011). Bringing the second world in: Conservative revolution(s) socialist legacies, and transnational silences in the trajectories of Polish feminism. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 37*(2), 385-411. https://doi.org/10.1086/661728

Greenhaus, J. H., Peng, A. C., & Allen, T. D. (2012). Relations of work identity, family identity, situational demands, and sex with employee work hours. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 80*(1), 27-37. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2011.05.003

Guerrina, R. (2001). Equality, difference and motherhood: The case for a feminist analysis of equal rights and maternity. *Journal of Gender Studies, 10*(1), 33-42. https://doi.org/10.1080/095892301300050555

Gunnarson, L. (2011). A defense of the category 'women'. *Feminist Theory, 12*(1), 23-37. https://doi.org/10.1177/146470011039060

Guy, B., & Arthur, B. (2020). Academic motherhood during COVID-19: Navigating our dual roles as educators and mothers. *Gender Work Organization, 27,* 887–899. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12493

Hays, S. (1997). *The cultural contradictions of motherhood.* Yale University Press.

Hemmings, C. (2011). *Why stories matter: The political grammar of feminist theory.* Duke University Press.

Henderson, A., Harmon, S., & Newman, H. (2016). The price mothers pay, even when they are not buying it: Mental health consequences of idealized motherhood. *Sex Roles, 74,* 512-526. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-015-0534-5

Hesse-Biber, S. N. (Ed.). (2012). *The handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis.* Sage. https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483384740

Hochschild, A. (2012). *The second shift: Working families and the revolution at home.* Penguin Books. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-013-9764-8

Holman Jones, S., Adams, T. E., & Ellis, C. (2016). Introduction: Coming to know autoethnography as more than method. In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 17-48). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315427812

hooks, b. (2015). *Feminist theory: From margin to center.* Routledge.

Johnston, D. D., & Swanson, D. H. (2007). Cognitive acrobatics in the construction of worker-mother identity. *Sex Roles, 57,* 447-459. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9267-4

Jolanki, O. (2015). To work or to care? Working women's decision-making. *Community, Work & Family, 18*(3), 268–283. https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2014.997194

Johnston, D. D., & Swanson, D. H. (2003). Invisible mothers: A content analysis of motherhood ideologies and myths in magazines. *Sex Roles, 49*(1/2). https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1023905518500

Kaptijn, R., Thomese, F., van Thilburg, T. G., & Liefbroer, A. C. (2010). How grandparents

matter: Support for the cooperative breeding hypothesis in a contemporary Dutch population. *Human Nature, 21,* 393–405. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12110-010-9098-9

Katz Rothman, B. (1989). Women as fathers: Motherhood and child care under a modified patriarchy. *Gender and Society, 3*(1), 89-104. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124389003001006

Kawash, S. (2011). New directions in motherhood studies. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 36*(4), 969-1003. https://doi.org/10.1086/658637

Landry, B. (2000). *Black working wives: Pioneers on the American family revolution.* University of California Press.

Laney, E. K., Carruthers, L., Lewis Hall, M. E., & Anderson, T. (2014). Expanding the self: Motherhood and identity in faculty women. *Journal of Family Issues, 35*(9), 1227-1251. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X13479573

Lavee, Y., & Dollahite, D. C. (1991). The linkage between theory and research in family studies. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 53*(2), 361-373. http://hdl.lib.byu.edu/1877/7787

Lee, J., Chung, K., Park, H., & Burns, E. (2016). Dimensions of maternal self-concept at three stages of motherhood. *Journal of Child Family Studies, 25,* 2924-2938. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-016-0433-6

Loyal, D., Sutter, A. L., & Rascle, N. (2017). Mothering ideology and work involvement in late pregnancy: A clustering approach. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 26,* 2921-2935. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-017-0786-5

Luttrell, W. (2010). Reflexive writing exercises. In W. Luttrell (Ed.), *Qualitative educational research: Readings in reflexive methodology and transformative practice* (pp. 469-480). Routledge.

Lynch, S., & Kuntz, A. (2019). A critical autoethnography of a doctoral students' research journey: Learning to take risks in the academy. *Curriculum Studies in Health and Physical Education, 10*(2), 156-171. https://doi.org/10.1080/25742981.2019.1588762

MacKinnon, C. A. (1983). Feminism, Marxism, method, and the state: Toward feminist jurisprudence. *Signs, 8*(4), 635-658. https://doi.org/10.1086/494000

Masterson, C. R., & Hoobler, J. M. (2015). Care and career: A family identity-based typology of dual-earner couples. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 36*, 75–93. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1945

Maxwell, J. (2006). Literature reviews of, and for, educational research: A commentary on Boote and Beile's "Scholars before researchers." *Educational Researcher, 35*(9), 28-31. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X035009028

Meeussen, L., & Van Laar, C. (2018). Feeling pressure to be a perfect mother relates to parental burnout and career ambitions. *Frontiers in Psychology, 9*(1213), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02113

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Focusing and bounding the collection of data: The substantive start. In M. B. Miles & A. M. Huberman (Eds.), *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (pp. 16-25)*.* Sage Publications.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2020). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook.* Sage Publications.

Moore, J., & Abetz, J. (2016). "Uh oh. Cue the [new] mommy wars": The ideology of combative mothering in popular U.S. newspaper articles about attachment parenting. *Southern Communication Journal, 81*(1), 49–62. https://doi.org/10.1080/1041794X.2015.1076026

Murray, M. (2015). Back to work? Childcare negotiations and intensive mothering in Santiago de Chile. *Journal of Family Issues, 36*(9), 1171–1191. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X14533543

Noddings, N. (1986). *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics & moral education.* University of California Press.

O'Brien, K. M., Yoo, S., Kim, Y. H., Cho, Y., & Salahuddin, N. M. (2020). The good mothering expectations scale: An international instrument development study. *The Counseling Psychologist, 48*(2), 162-190. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000019889895

Oksala, J. (2011). How is feminist metaphysics possible? A Foucauldian intervention. *Feminist Theory, 12*(3), 281–296. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700111417667

Ortlipp, M. (2008). Keeping and using reflective journals in the qualitative research process. *The Qualitative Report, 13*(4), 695-705. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2008.1579

Palkovitz, R., Trask, B. S., & Adamsons, K. (2014). Essential differences in the meaning and processes of mothering and fathering: Family systems, feminist and qualitative perspectives. *Journal of Family Theory & Review, 6,* 406-420. https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12048

Paris, D. (2011). 'A friend who understand fully': Notes on humanizing research in a multiethnic youth community. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 24*(2), 137-149. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2010.495091

Pas, B., Peters, P., Eisinga, R., Doorewaard, H., & Lagro-Janssen, T. (2011). Explaining career motivation among female doctors in the Netherlands: The effects of children, views on motherhood and work-home cultures. *Work, Employment and Society, 25*(3), 487–505. https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017011407973

Pedersen, D. E., & Kilzer, G. (2014). Work-to-family conflict and the maternal gatekeeping of dual-earner mothers with young children. *Journal of Family Economic Issues, 35,* 251-262.

Pelias, R. J. (2016). Writing autoethnography: The personal, poetic, and performative as compositional strategies. In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 384-405). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315427812

Pillow, W. S., & Mayo, C. (2012). Feminist ethnography: Histories, challenges, possibilities. In S. N. Hesse-Biber (Ed.). *The handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (pp. 187-205). Sage. https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483384740

Puhlman, D. J., & Pasley, K. (2013). Rethinking maternal gatekeeping. *Journal of Family Theory & Review, 5,* 176-193. https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12016

Puhlman, D. J., & Pasley, K. (2017). The maternal gatekeeping scale: Constructing a measure. *Family Relations, 66,* 824-838. https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12287

Richardson, L. (2006). Skirting a pleated text: De-disciplining an academic life. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Emergent methods in social research* (pp. 1-11). Sage Publications.

Rizzo, K. M., Schiffrin, H. H., & Liss, M. (2013). Insight into the parenthood paradox: Mental outcomes of intensive mothering. *Journal of Child Family Studies, 22,* 614–620. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-012-9615-z

Rutter, N., Hasan, E., Pilson, A., & Yeo, E. (2021). "It's the end of the Ph.D. as we know it, and we feel fine...because everything is fucked anyway": Utilizing feminist collaborative autoethnography to navigate global crises. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 20,* 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069211019595

Sayer, L. C., Bianchi, S. M., & Robinson, J. P. (2004). Are parents investing less in children? Trends in mothers' and fathers' time with children. *American Journal of Sociology, 110*(1), 1-43. https://doi.org/10.1086/386270

Scharp, K. M., & Thomas, L. J. (2017). 'What would a loving mom do today?': Exploring the meaning of motherhood in stories of prenatal and postpartum depression. *Journal of*

Family   Communication,   17(4),   401-414.
https://doi.org/10.1080/15267431.2017.1355803

Schnittger, M. H., & Bird, G.W. (1990). Coping among dual-career men and women across the family life cycle. *Family Relations 39*(2), 199-205. https://doi.org/10.2307/585724

Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J., Brown, G., Cannon, E. A., Mangelsdorf, S. C., & Sokolowski, M. S. (2008). Maternal gatekeeping, coparenting quality, and fathering behavior in families with infants. *Journal of Family Psychology, 22*(3), 389-398. https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.22.3.389

Seccombe, W. (1995). *Weathering the storm: Working-class families from the industrial revolution to the fertility decline.* Verso.

Sharp, E. A., & Weaver, S. E. (2015). Feeling like a feminist fraud: Theorizing feminist accountability in feminist family studies research in a Neoliberal, postfeminist context. *Journal of Family Theory & Review, 7*(3), 299-320. https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12080

Sheriff, M., & Weatherall, A. (2009). A feminist discourse analysis of popular-press accounts of postmaternity. *Feminism & Psychology, 19*(1), 89-108. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353508098621

Shoemaker, D. B. (2016). Autoethnographic journeys: Performing possibilities/utopias/futures. In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 517-537). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315427812

Smart, C. (2009). Shifting horizons: Reflections on qualitative methods. *Feminist Theory, 10*(3), 295-308. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700109343253

Spade, D., & Willse, C. (2016). Norms and normalization. In L. Disch & M. Hawkesworth (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of feminist theory* (pp. 551-571). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199328581.001.0001

Sparkes, A. C. (2016). Autoethnography as a mode of knowing and a way of being. In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 512-516). Routledge.

Stanley, P. (2015). Writing the Ph.D. journey(s): An autoethnography of zine-writing, angst, embodiment, and backpacker travels. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *44*(2), 143–168. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241614528708

Stevenson, M. M., Fabricus, W. V., Cookston, J. T., Parke, R. D., Coltrane, S., Braver, S. L., & Saenz, D. S. (2013). Marital problems, maternal gatekeeping attitudes, and father-child relationships in adolescence. *Developmental Psychology, 50*(4), 1208-1218. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035327

Stone, P. (2007). *Opting out? Why women really quit careers and head home.* University of California Press.

Suter, E. A., Seurer, L. M., Webb, S., Grewe, B., & Koenig Kellas, J. (2015). Motherhood as contested ideological terrain: Essentialist and queer discourses of motherhood at play in female-female co-mothers' talk. *Communication Monographs, 82*(4), 458-483. https://doi.org/10.1080/03637751.2015.1024702

Tamas, S. (2015). Ghost stories. *Emotion, Space and Society, 19,* 40-44. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2015.10.003

Tamas, S. (2016). Who's there? A week subject. In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 186-203). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315427812

Tasker, F., & Delvoye, M. (2015). Moving out of the shadows: Accomplishing bisexual motherhood. *Sex Roles, 73,* 125-140. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-015-0503-z

Theodorou, E., & Spyrou, S. (2013). Motherhood in utero: Consuming away anxiety. *Journal of Consumer Culture, 13*(2), 79–96. https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540513480163

Tienari, J. (2019). One flew over the duck pond: Autoethnography, academic identity, and language. *Management Learning, 50*(5), 576-590. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507619875887

Tullis, J. A. (2016). Self and others: Ethics in autoethnographic research. In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 244-261). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315427812

Tummala-Narra, P. (2009). Contemporary impingements on mothering. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis, 69*, 4-21. https://doi.org/10.1057/ajp.2008.37

Verduzco-Baker, L. (2017). "I don't want to be a statistic": Mothering practices of low-income mothers. *Journal of Family Issues, 38*(7), 1010–1038. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X15610616

Wall, S. (2008). Easier said than done: Writing an autoethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 7*(1), 38-53. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690800700103

Wall, S. S. (2016). Toward a moderate autoethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 15*(1), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406916674966

Walls, J. K., Helms, H. M., & Grzywacz, J. G. (2016). Intensive mothering beliefs among full-time employed mothers of infants. *Journal of Family Issues, 37*(2), 245-269. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X13519254

Weaver-Hightower, M. B. (2012). Waltzing Matilda: An autoethnography of a father's stillbirth. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 41*(4), 462–491. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241611429302

Xu, X. (2022). An autoethnography of an international doctoral student's multidimensional identity construction. *The Australian Educational Researcher, 50*, 1423–1437. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-022-00557-w

Zhu, J. (2010). Mothering expectant mothers: Consumption, production, and two motherhoods in contemporary China. *Ethos, 38*(4), 406-421. https://www.jstor.org/stable/i40043148

Author Note

Maya Autret, Ph.D., is a researcher, writer, and teacher with a passionate focus on motherhood, feminist theory, women's studies, and autoethnography. email: ma2410@columbia.edu

Brad van Eeden-Moorefield, Ph.D., is a professor and associate department chair for Social Justice Initiatives in the Department of Family Science and Human Development at Montclair State University. His research is situated in a social justice space and focuses on strengthening diverse families. He also is committed to scholarship that brings researchers and practitioners together to collaboratively develop culturally responsive and evidence-based practices. email: vaneedenmobr@montclair.edu

Article Citation