

evade their mandated responsibilities, in part because working to accommodate the needs of young mothers may be misconstrued as affirming their sexual behaviour and reproductive labour.

Policy implementation, subject to the vagaries of local control rather than federal oversight, is inconsistent and contradictory. This pattern is intensified by the absence of case law on school-aged mothers as a basis for guiding or compelling services. Rather than working to provide equal opportunity, schools construct self-sufficiency and advancement as women's individual responsibility ("it's your mess, you deal with it") to avoid the presumed fate as a future "drain" on social and economic resources. Young mothers bear the burden of such beliefs with education unequal to that of their non-mothering peers.

Among the text's most powerful chapters is Pillow's analysis of contemporary abstinence-education initiatives (chapter 6) that not only dictate what constitutes legitimate sexual activity but provide the very backdrop for cultural narratives of teen mothers as deviant. In other chapters, Pillow exposes the intensely racialized/classed threads infusing narratives about pregnant/mothering teens as a "contaminating" force and "social problem," as well as schools' differential treatment of young women on the basis of race and class. Pillow ends the text with a vision of education *for* teen mothers, detailing ways schools can better serve students through providing "access to make up tests or work...the provision of appropriate seating" for pregnant women, "access to bathroom breaks," and more flexible scheduling (62). Pillow charges schools to acknowledge their role as a "front line service provider" (79) for these young women.

This informative, theoretically sophisticated text is a useful call to action for school workers committed to equitable schooling practices, for scholars interested in gender and education issues, and for advocates for the rights of young mothers to reach their full human potential.

## **It Could Happen to You: *Diary of a Pregnancy and Beyond***

Martha Brockenbrough.

Riverside, NJ: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2002.

### **Reviewed by Linda Liebenberg**

*It Could Happen to You* is both entertaining and enlightening. Martha Brockenbrough, a young professional who worked for Microsoft, takes the reader through her personal journey as a mother, from its beginnings when she decided to have a baby through to her daughter Lucy's first birthday. Brockenbrough's diary does not offer a prescriptive, academic, or theoretical view of motherhood.

Instead, by describing her fears and emotional turmoil in a raw and honest manner, leavened with humour, she provides an insider's view of what it is to be a fallible mother.

Included in Brockenbrough's narrative are memories of childhood, family, dating, and marrying Adam, her partner. These memories are well placed and serve to contextualize Brockenbrough's emotions and the reasoning behind her sometimes hysterically funny behaviour. She shares changes in personal perspective and how these changes come about—argely the result of the unfamiliar turmoil she experiences in her role as a new mother. We read of Brockenbrough's decision to follow her childhood dream of pursuing a writing career and not return to her former job. She also weighs her relationship with Adam—before and after the arrival of their daughter—and, for perspective, includes commentary from Adam, himself.

A down-to-earth writer, Brockenbrough addresses many niggling fears and concerns that parents-to-be may have, continually reminding readers that, despite best intentions, parents are ultimately human and babies are not automated washing machines that function in accordance with parenting books, guides, and manuals:

One of the baby books I read said that most parents understand their baby's cries after three weeks. That wasn't reassuring at all. Not only was I really tired and pretty much useless when she was three weeks old, I also had only a fuzzy idea of what she needed. Because the book said I should have known better, I was a confirmed failure. As a failure all I would do to soothe her was try a little of everything. I actually nursed her and changed her diaper simultaneously once. And once is the number of times I will ever do *that*. (130)

In this delightful book, Brockenbrough writes as a friend who shares her experiences and offers kind counsel: "it is not going to work out the way you think it is going to work out, all the books and manuals are not going to be all that helpful (but read them anyway), and in the end it is all going to okay!"

## **Great with Child: *Letters to a Young Mother***

Beth Ann Fennelly.  
New York: W.W. Norton, 2006.

### **Reviewed by Jane Satterfield**

In the 30 years since Adrienne Rich's groundbreaking *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Institution and Experience*, there has been an explosion of literature about