

Mama, PhD

Women Write about Motherhood and Academic Life

Elrena Evans and Caroline Grant

Foreword by Miriam Peskowitz

Every year, American universities publish glowing reports stating their commitment to diversity, often showing statistics of female hires as proof of success. Yet, although women make up increasing numbers of graduate students, graduate degree recipients, and even new hires, academic life remains overwhelming a man's world. The reality that the statistics fail to highlight is that the presence of women, specifically those with children, in the ranks of tenured faculty has not increased in a generation. Further, those women who *do* achieve tenure track placement tend to report slow advancement, income disparity, and lack of job satisfaction compared to their male colleagues.

Amid these disadvantages, what is a Mama, PhD to do? This literary anthology brings together a selection of deeply felt personal narratives by smart, interesting women who explore the continued inequality of the sexes in higher education and suggest changes that could make universities more family-friendly workplaces.

The contributors hail from a wide array of disciplines and bring with them a variety of perspectives, including those of single and adoptive parents. They address topics that range from the level of policy to practical day-to-day concerns, including caring for a child with special needs, breastfeeding on campus, negotiating viable maternity and family leave policies, job-sharing and telecommuting options, and fitting into desk/chair combinations while eight months pregnant.

Candid, provocative, and sometimes with a wry sense of humor, the thirty-five essays in this anthology speak to and offer support for any woman attempting to combine work and family, as well as anyone who is interested in improving the university's ability to live up to its reputation to be among the most progressive of American institutions.

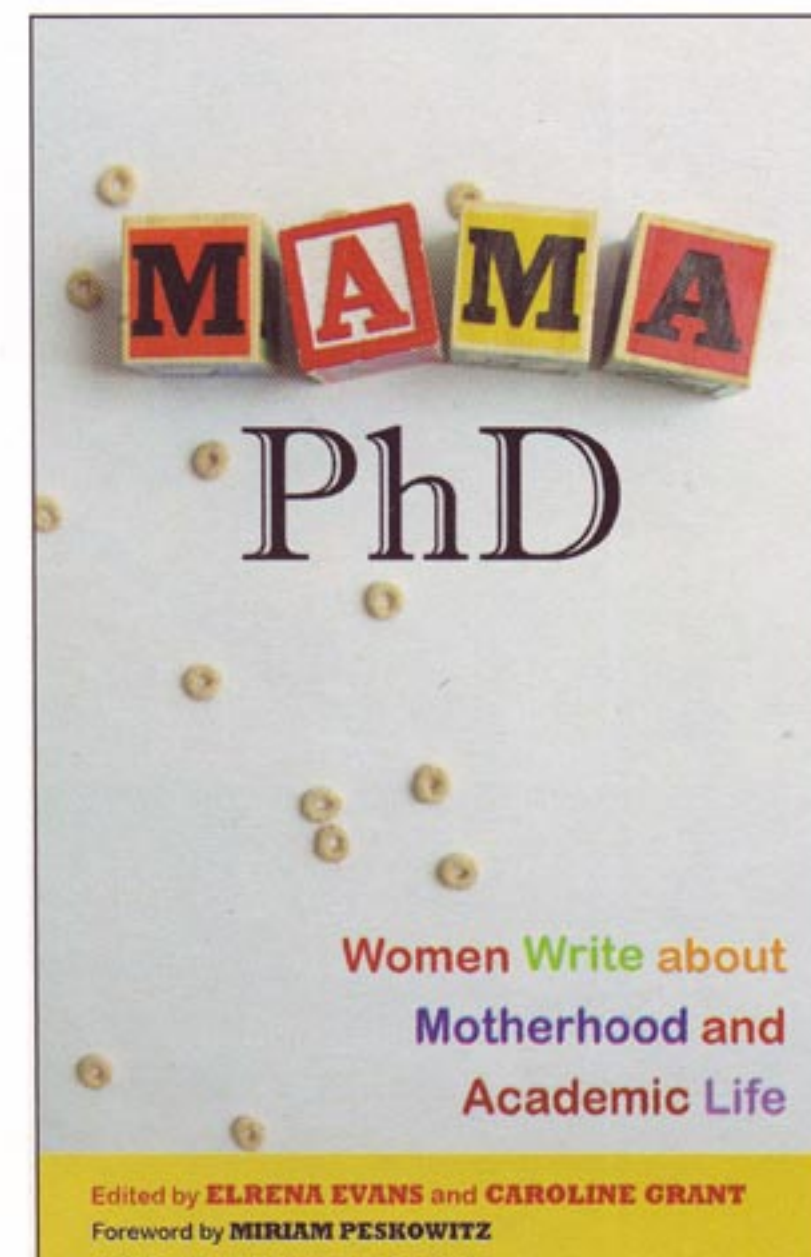


Photo by Tim Scott



Photo by Tony Grant

Elrena Evans (left) received her MFA in creative writing from The Pennsylvania State University. Her work appears in such journals as *Literary Mama*, *Brain, Child*, *Hip Mama*, and the anthology *Twentysomething Essays by Twentysomething Writers*. **Caroline Grant** (right) is an editor and columnist for *Literary Mama*. She holds a PhD in comparative literature from the University of California at Berkeley.



"Well-written, personal, insightful, and engaging, *Mama, PhD* gives an accurate glimpse into the feelings and conflicts that mothers in academia don't often reveal because such disclosure is felt to be unprofessional."—Karen V. Hansen, author of *Not-So-Nuclear Families: Class, Gender, and Networks of Care*

"All those sleepless nights and dirty diapers and baby food in your hair—where's the discursive construction of motherhood when you need it? It's here, in these smart, funny, poignant essays that struggle to balance mind and body, to balance body and soul."—Catherine Newman, PhD, author of *Waiting for Birdy: A Year of Frantic Tedium, Neurotic Angst, and the Wild Magic of Growing a Family*

"*Mama, PhD* provides invaluable lessons for young scholars—both men and women—striving to navigate family and academic careers."—Robert Drago, author of *Striking a Balance: Work, Family, Life*

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